

Terms of Reference

Fire and Emergency NZ Medical Response

Focus Group

Introduction

Fire and Emergency New Zealand respond front line resources to medical emergencies alongside the emergency ambulance sector – that is both St John New Zealand and Wellington Free Ambulance. Since December 2014 there has been a national response from Fire and Emergency to almost every out of hospital cardiac arrest in the community, with results showing that rates of survival are increasing and can be directly attributed to this response. Particular Brigades (generally in more remote areas) have also undertaken extra training to respond as First Responder Units, enabling a response to potentially life threatening incidents and the provision of treatment prior to the arrival of Ambulance.

Fire and Emergency have in place a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with both ambulance services, helping to define how each organisation is to work with the other for the best interest of New Zealanders.

Purpose and Function

The key function of the Medical Response Focus Group is to discuss and advise on matters that will continue to contribute towards building a unified response to medical incidents for Fire and Emergency. They will promote a collaborative forum for recommendations of change, helping to improve the performance of Fire and Emergency for medical response through the review of policies, systems, processes and outcomes, interagency communication and training. They will monitor the implementation of the conditions described in the Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) between each organisation and Fire and Emergency and will advise on changes that may be required for the MOU moving forward.

Aims

The specific aims of the Medical Response Focus Group are to:

- Ensure Safety Health and Wellbeing considerations are at the forefront of all decisions with the health and safety of our personnel paramount
- Review and discuss medical matters that arise nationally, or that are raised from the various stakeholder groups in each organisation
- Provide a link between frontline response staff and Executives across the organisations, to ensure significant medical matters can be raised and resolved and to ensure feedback is provided and disseminated
- Identify and recommend areas for research and encourage the application of findings which provide advantage to the community
- Ensure there is a consistency in approach, communication and practice in all things medical across the organisations and their stakeholders
- Monitor the effectiveness of medical response structures and processes at all levels, and ensure improvements are implemented as required
- Advise and recommend changes to training content and delivery

- Advise and recommend on equipment procurement/purchase involving items that may have an impact on medical response/rescue

Operations

The Medical Response Focus Group is a forum where operational medical response concerns can be discussed and resolved wherever possible. It provides a link to the management and leadership teams for each organisation, while ensuring stakeholders are able to contribute actively and collaboratively. The group can discuss and identify trends as they have arisen through incident reporting, along with the aim of identifying training needs.

The group is primarily an advisory group to provide guidance and recommendations to organisational management, through each of the key stakeholders. Although the group will provide constructive recommendations on appropriate operational matters, it is not a decision making body for organisational strategy.

Reporting

The Medical Response Focus Group will provide reports to the stakeholder organisations annually, or as required. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Progress against identified performance trends
- Significant achievements or programmes
- Organisational issues or concerns
- Strategic level decision or funding needs
- Training delivery in terms of numbers and coverage
- Undertake an annual review of the MOU with both ambulance services and recommend any changes to content

Membership

Membership for the Medical Response Focus Group will be convened with representatives from the following, who will meet quarterly.

- Fire & Emergency New Zealand x 1 – (chair)
- Fire & Emergency New Zealand, National Advisor Medical Response x 1
- St John New Zealand x 1
- Wellington Free Ambulance x 1
- New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union x 1
- The United Fire Brigades Association of New Zealand x 1
- Fire and Emergency Commanders Association x 1
- Rural Professionals Association x 1
- Fire & Emergency Comcen Dispatcher x 1
- Frontline Ambulance Officer x 1

All Group members are expected to actively participate in discussions and work collaboratively to provide recommendations according to their roles and the levels of delegated authority held within their representative organisation.

All group members will be given the schedule of meetings, with members who are unable to attend able to provide a substitution. A quorum is not required for the meeting to proceed, with any items of controversy to be deferred to the next meeting if members are not present.