

Australian Capital Territory

Emergencies (Chaplaincy and Family Support Program) Commissioner's Guidelines 2012

Notifiable instrument NI 2012–275

made under the

Emergencies Act 2004, s 11 (Commissioner may make guidelines).

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Emergencies (Chaplaincy and Family Support Program) Commissioner's Guidelines 2012*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after it is notified.

3 Commissioner's Guidelines

I make the *Commissioner's Guidelines relating to the Chaplaincy and Family Support Program* at Schedule 1 to this instrument.

Mark Crosweller AFSM FAIM
Emergency Services Commissioner
23 April 2012

Schedule 1

**ACT EMERGENCY SERVICES
AGENCY**

COMMISSIONER'S GUIDELINES

relating to

Chaplaincy and Family Support Program

April 2012

OVERVIEW

The ACT Emergency Service Agency (ESA) Chaplaincy and Family Support Program is a field ministry that has been established for the purpose of supporting, nurturing and expressing the spiritual and religious beliefs and values of the members of the ESA and their families, and to give whatever assistance possible to ancillary units associated in support of the Service, irrespective of religion or denominational affiliation.

The program focuses on three main areas of ministry, that of physical, cognitive and spiritual development. The Chaplaincy continually provides a proactive and reactive response service on a 24 hour / 7 day a week basis.

Proactive Responses

- Visitation – Fairbairn Headquarters, Hume Training Centre, Stations, Sheds, Units
- Training - Basic Firefighters and related topics
- Weddings - Including pre-marital counselling
- Families - Everyday stress and family management
- Crisis Line - 24hrs alcoholism, domestic violence, substance abuse
- Network Resources - Establishing a network of available resources to assist staff, members and families, ie; referrals
- Informal Counselling - On site recognition, leads management or member to think and say “Oh, by the way.”
- St. Florian’s Day

Reactive Responses (in accordance with any existing policies of the ESA and its Services)

- Crisis Response - Emergency callout 24hr / 7 day a week basis
- Crisis Intervention - Mediation or intervention, trauma management
- Line of duty deaths - Notifications and family support
- Funerals or Memorial Services
- Infant and Adult Christenings and Dedications
- Visitation - To sick or injured staff, volunteer members or their families
- Critical Incident Support - Assistance to CISS team during debriefing

INTRODUCTION

Fire and Emergency Services throughout the world have traditionally engaged chaplains to provide spiritual counselling, pastoral care and support to their staff and volunteers.

This is in keeping with the nature of emergency service work, where staff and volunteers often deal with traumatic incidents that may adversely affect their work performance, personal and emotional well being.

Chaplaincy and Family Support Services sit beside the Critical Incident Support Service (CISS) Peer Support Officers (PSO), and Employee Assistance Program, which aims to ensure the health and welfare of our staff and volunteer workforce. Chaplains can additionally provide support to staff and volunteers regarding personal issues that may have wide reaching impact. Chaplaincy and Family Support is also available to staff and volunteers and their families who may be impacted by trauma.

The ACTESA Chaplaincy and Family Support Program is intended to represent the whole religious community, and chaplains can be drawn from all Religions, Denominations and Centres of Worship.

The Chaplaincy and Family Support Program is coordinated Territory wide under the direction of the Emergency Services Commissioner at ESA Headquarters at Fairbairn.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHAPLAINS

The nature of emergency response work means that Chaplains may be called on an ad-hoc basis and at times this will involve emergency calls for support.

Chaplains:

- function as members of the ACTESA Chaplaincy and Family Support team to provide religious services, spiritual support and pastoral care for all ACTESA staff/ employees, volunteers and, where required, for staff and volunteers and their families who have been impacted by trauma;
- conduct memorial services on special occasions, as may be requested from time to time; and
- advise the ACTESA on matters of religion, faith and the effective delivery of chaplaincy services.

Staff and volunteers may also ask Chaplains to be involved in personal events, such as Dedications, Christenings, Funerals, Cremations, Burials and Weddings.

As part of their role, Chaplains will:

- participate in induction and orientation activities, to meet ACTESA staff and volunteers and become familiar with organisational and functional arrangements, work practices and relevant organisational procedures to help to provide an insight into workplace culture;
- provide counselling and support on a non-denominational basis, or link clients with representatives of a particular faith and background when appropriate;

- observe the requirements of confidentiality and professional ethics; and
- attend meetings with other Chaplains for business, fellowship and support.

Chaplains should remain objective in relation to ACTESA staff and volunteer human resource practices and issues such as disciplinary proceedings, complaints, promotions, and compassionate transfers or industrial relations issues.

It is not intended that Chaplains will have an advocacy role and, in these situations, staff and volunteers already have access to formal processes or appeal mechanisms to put forward their case. However, Chaplains may counsel and help staff and volunteers to explore their options or refer them on to the appropriate resources for further information or advocacy.

Chaplains are accountable:

- in matters of religious practice to their own religious authority;
- in matters of procedure to the ACTESA; and
- in matters regarding professional ethics to their own professional bodies.

Inappropriate behaviour or failure to adhere to guidelines and policies

Inappropriate behaviour or failure by an ACTESA Chaplain to adhere to the ACTESA or Service guidelines and policies, and which continues after appropriate counsel by the ACTESA, may result in withdrawal of appointment to the Chaplaincy Service.

Before any possible action takes place, ACTESA Chief Officers and Managers should initially discuss any concerns about a Chaplain's activities or behaviour with the Emergency Services Commissioner who may decide to make a referral to the relevant religious governing authority for advice or resolution if required.

In the event of a Major Incident or Disaster

If a Chaplain is formally notified by the ACTESA in the event of a major incident or disaster, they should proceed to the site and on arrival follow instructions on the *Chaplaincy Incident Action Procedure* (refer Attachment A) for ACTESA Chaplains.

Chaplains should not proceed to such incident or disaster sites without the approval of the lead agency incident commander / controller or the Emergency Services Commissioner.

The ACTESA will issue a copy of the *Chaplaincy Incident Action Procedure* (refer Attachment A) in advance to all Chaplains for future use.

Once on site, the Chaplain will work with the incident controller or their appointee. The Chaplain will seek out the Safety and Welfare Officer, CISS Peer Support Officers, and other emergency service chaplains who may be present.

RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF ACTESA CHAPLAINS

Selection Criteria

Consistent with best practice in other Australian emergency services, preference for appointment of Chaplains will be given to clergy who are:

- accredited for ministry from within denominations having official status with the National Council of Churches and/or the NSW / ACT Ecumenical Council;
- currently in parish ministry or who have at least 5 years parish or specified ministry experience in addition to other specialist training;
- able to complement the existing composition and range of denominations in the ACTESA; and
- willing to attend routine calls for support, as well as major incidents, in order to establish a profile, rapport and the trust of staff and volunteers.

In addition, it is desirable for Chaplains to have any of the following attributes, training or skills:

- ability to work in a highly specialised environment, where staff and volunteers have a strong workplace culture and individual identity;
- ability to provide counselling and support on a non-denominational basis;
- proven moderate religious views;
- awareness of the support available in local congregations and ability to link clients with representatives of other faiths;
- completion of a Chaplaincy Training Course to the level of Introductory Pastoral Education, experience with a health service, another emergency service, or the defence forces;
- completion of the Basic Firefighter Course (*Chaplains are not permitted to enter a fire ground without this qualification*), First Aid Training and any other training prescribed by the Chief Officers; and
- qualifications in counselling or critical incident support.

Recruitment and Appointment Procedures

Chaplains are appointed by the joint approval of the head of Denomination and the Emergency Services Commissioner.

Before initial appointment, all new Chaplains will need to agree to probity screening, which includes a criminal record check, and to sign a declaration under the relevant Child Protection legislation. The Director Support Services will facilitate this process. New Chaplains are responsible for informing their denominational head of their appointment with the ACTESA.

Induction and orientation activities should be arranged for the Chaplain. This should include:

- introductions to all Services and Business Unit's staff and volunteers and other local chaplains;
- information on the ACTESA's operational and corporate structure;
- other employee support services (i.e. CISS peer support and employee assistance programs);
- information on the nature of emergency service work including typical emergency scenarios in which they could be involved; and
- relevant ACTESA procedures.

Following initial appointment of a new ACTESA Chaplain, there will be a six-month trial period for both parties to confirm their suitability, before an offer of full appointment is issued under the signature of the Emergency Services Commissioner following the recommendation of all Chief Officers and the Director Support Services.

In making a full appointment, the ACTESA will need to ensure that:

- the Chaplain demonstrates a willingness to function in a diverse and inter-faith environment. Notwithstanding the inter-faith nature of ACTESA Chaplaincy, sensitivity to an individual's denomination or faith will necessitate referral of staff and volunteers to another Chaplain, Priest, Minister, Rabbi or Sheikh of a particular denomination or faith. Sacramental rites and other matters of religious diversity can also require attendance by clergy of a specific denomination or faith;
- the Chaplain is willing to conform to all relevant policies of the ACTESA in the undertaking of their duties and is prepared to function as a team member within these guidelines; and
- the Chaplain acts as a liaison between the ACTESA and the Heads of Churches.

CORPORATE SUPPORT FOR CHAPLAINS

The Emergency Services Commissioner will provide corporate support for the Chaplains, and:

- promote the role of the Chaplains throughout the ACTESA; and
- provide information about Chaplains to new staff and volunteers.

The Chaplains are responsible for promoting their role and availability to staff and volunteers as appropriate. Officers and Managers of the ACTESA and its Services and Business Units should also assist in promoting chaplaincy services, especially when they are aware of staff and volunteers, their families, or members of the community who would benefit from access to a Chaplain.

Chaplains are usually not paid for their time spent in providing ministry for the ACTESA, as most full time and part-time Chaplains are paid by their own religious centres. An annual Honorarium may be paid to offset out of pocket expenses.

The Emergency Services Commissioner will make suitable arrangements to cover ancillary costs from the chaplaincy budget for Chaplains who have been requested by ACTESA to travel out of area in support of special operations.

This could include reimbursement for air travel, private vehicle usage, phone costs and any consumables, as relative to ACTESA activities and access to a pool vehicle for long distance travel.

Chaplains are provided with uniforms, ie shirts or blouses, trousers or skirts or culottes, shoes or boots, standard or cold weather jacket, and wet weather gear.

Uniform issue also includes a purple hard hat and reflective vest, labelled “chaplain”, which are essential for attendance on-site at an incident or disaster.

Jackets, blouses and shirts are provided with epaulets that are labelled with “chaplain” and a cross, or other symbol consistent with their religious affiliation, to clearly distinguish Chaplains.

AVAILABILITY AND ACCESS TO CHAPLAINS IN TIMES OF NEED

ACTESA staff and volunteers and other employees are able to refer themselves to a Chaplain if they wish, 24 hours a day; 7 days a week; or a work colleague, manager or family member may suggest contact. Volunteers or staff who have been involved in a critical incident may wish to see a Chaplain, and managers can help facilitate this by making details readily available about chaplaincy services, as appropriate.

Critical incidents may include situations such as: Fires, MVA, child death, multiple dead on arrival, prolonged or failed rescue, rescue where children are involved, massive trauma/multiple trauma incident, victims or relatives known by the crews, suicide of a staff member or volunteer, serious workplace injury or death, and assault or threat to a staff member or volunteer’s personal safety.

In the case of prolonged rescue, especially where a victim has traumatic or critical injuries, the incident controller in attendance should arrange for a Chaplain to be present, after consultation with the injured or family. Alternatively, the Chaplain can organise for a representative of a particular faith to be present, if requested.

Chaplains should also notify the Senior Chaplain to be off-call whenever they are on leave, or during attendance at conferences, study programs or to other pastoral responsibilities.

Uniform Allocation Guide - Chaplain

Cloth Cap – Superintendants Labelling	1	Not Annually /1off
White Shirts s/s or l/s	4	Annually
Navy Tie	2	As Required
Navy Trousers	4	Annually
Black Shoes/Boots	2	Annually
Jumper Navy - sleeves or sleeveless	1	Not Annually
Black Basket Weave Belt	2	Not Annually
Shirt Buttons and Rings	6	Not Annually
Raincoat	1	Not Annually / 1off
Silver Tie Pin	1	Not Annually
Hat / Cap Badge	1	Not Annually / 1off
Name Badge	3	Not Annually
Blue Hardboards	4	As Required
Chrome Chaplain Wreath	4	Not Annually
Chrome Chaplain Cross	4	Not Annually
Chrome Chaplain Bar	4	Not Annually

Official Dress Uniform and Vestments

Dress Tunic + Buttons	1	Not Annually / 1off
Purple Velvet Gorgets – Deputy Chief Officer	1	Not Annually
Purple Hardboards	2	Not Annually
Chrome Chaplain Cross	4	Not Annually
Chrome Chaplain Bar	4	Not Annually
Chrome Chaplain Wreath	4	Not Annually
Preaching Scarfs and Stoles	3	Not Annually / 1off
Black Gloves	1	Not Annually

Attachment A

CHAPLAINCY INCIDENT ACTION PROCEDURE

PRIORITY

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING MUST BE WORN ie. CHAPLAIN'S SAFETY HELMET AND REFLECTIVE TABARD. THIS WILL ENSURE YOU ARE PROPERLY IDENTIFIED.-

NOTE: A Chaplain must have completed as a minimum the Basic Firefighter Course to be permitted to enter a fireground.

Following notification from the ACTESA the Chaplain will:

- When directed by the Incident Commander / Controller, Emergency Services Commissioner or relevant Chief Officer, proceed to the incident site. The ACTESA will provide transport if required.
- Report to the Incident Controller, Commander or appointee and obtain a briefing of the situation.
- Liaise where appropriate with the CISS Peer Support and Safety and Welfare Officers to provide effective support and determine the likely needs of on-site ACTESA staff and volunteers.
- Provide spiritual and emotional support to those impacted, families, and witnesses to the event as appropriate.
- Assist other Emergency Service Chaplains in providing support.
- Remain at the forward command post when not providing assistance to ensure ready access by people in need.
- Attend supportive group discussions for staff and volunteers as facilitated after the event by the ACTESA CISS and Employee Assistance Program providers, and relevant operational debriefings as required.
- Liaise with the ACTESA CISS Peer Support members or Employee Assistance Program provider regarding referral of individual staff or volunteers for further counselling or support.

NOTE:

ACTESA Chaplains are part of an integrated employee support system, along with the ACTESA employee assistance and CISS peer support programs, which aim to ensure the health and welfare of the ACTESA's salaried and volunteer workforce. Additionally, our Chaplains provide a wider service to the community and are available to give spiritual support and counselling to those impacted by trauma, their families, and witnesses. Chaplains from other Emergency Services may also be on-site.