

Australian Capital Territory

Emergencies (Chaplaincy and Wellbeing Support Program) Commissioner's Guidelines 2018

Notifiable instrument NI2018-478

made under the

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

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Emergencies (Chaplaincy and Wellbeing Support Program) Commissioner's Guidelines 2018*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after it is notified.

3 Commissioner's Guidelines

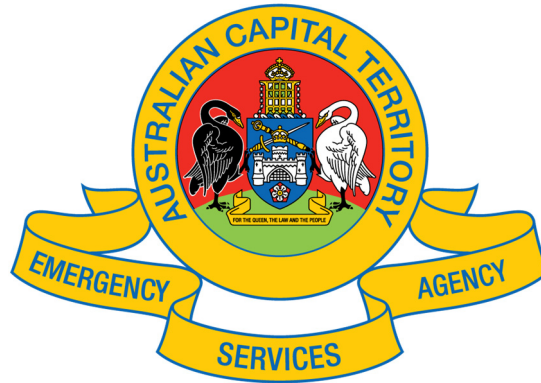
I make the *Commissioner's Guidelines relating to the Chaplaincy and Wellbeing Support Program* at Schedule 1 to this instrument.

4 Revocation

This instrument revokes the *Emergencies (Chaplaincy and Family Support Program) Commissioner's Guidelines 2015* (NI 2015-95).

Dominic Lane
ACT Emergency Services Commissioner
22 August 2018

SCHEDULE 1



ACT Emergency Services Agency

Chaplaincy and Wellbeing Support Program

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1. OVERVIEW

The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) Chaplaincy and Wellbeing Program is committed to providing critical incident support, pastoral care services and strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of ESA staff and volunteers and to give whatever assistance possible to ancillary units associated in support of the Service, irrespective of religion or denominational affiliation.

The Program continually provides a proactive, reactive and pastoral care response service on a 24 hour / 7 day week basis. The points below describe some of the key response services provided by the ESA Chaplains:

Proactive Response Service:

- provide advice to Senior Officers on spiritual and pastoral support of ESA staff and volunteers.
- advise on religious or cultural factors that may affect ESA Operations.
- participate in delivery of specific aspects of training programs within ESA.
- coordinate or participate in commemorative events.

Reactive Response Service:

- provide support to sick or injured staff and volunteers and their families through hospital or home visits upon request.
- act with the Manager Welfare Programs, ESA Peer Support Teams, Service Coordinators and Psychologists at critical incidents and provide ongoing support to members of ESA.
- provide 24/7 Crisis Response for ESA staff and volunteers.
- provide 24/7 Crisis Intervention for ESA staff and volunteers in respect of mediation, intervention or trauma management.
- be available for notifications of line of duty accidents and deaths.

Pastoral Care Service:

- provide pastoral support to ESA staff and staff before, during and after operations.
- minister, when requested, in the preparation and celebration of marriages, baptisms/child dedications and other religious services.
- conduct or attend funerals, and provide pastoral support to ESA staff and volunteers in bereavement, where requested.
- conduct memorial services and dedications for ESA as requested.
- serve as liaison with other local Clergy and network resources available to ESA staff and volunteers.

2. INTRODUCTION

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 will be exposed multiple times over their career in service to traumatic incidents that may adversely affect their work performance, personal and emotional wellbeing.

Chaplaincy and Wellbeing Support Program sits beside the Manager Welfare Programs, Peer Support Officers (PSO's), and Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which combined 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 impacts.

The ESA Chaplaincy and Wellbeing Support Program is intended to represent the whole religious community, and Chaplains can be drawn from all Denominations and Faith Groups which have official status according to the Selection Criteria.

The Chaplaincy and Wellbeing Support Program is coordinated ESA wide under the direction of the ESA Commissioner. Chaplains are engaged on the basis that they provide support across the ESA. Therefore, all Chaplains are considered to be ESA Chaplains and they wear the badges and accoutrements the ESA rather than those of a single Service.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHAPLAINS

The nature of emergency response work means that Chaplains may be called upon to support staff and volunteers in crisis situations (reactive response). In addition to this function is the opportunity for Chaplains to build relationships with emergency services staff and volunteers through engaging a proactive or pastoral care response.

Chaplains should remain objective in relation to ESA staff and volunteer human resource practices and issues such as disciplinary proceedings, complaints, promotions, 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 ESA Commissioner.
- 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 ESA Chaplain to adhere to the ESA guidelines and policies, and which continues after appropriate counseling by the ESA, may result in withdrawal of appointment as an ESA Chaplain. This decision to withdraw the appointment will be made by the ESA Commissioner and may be made in conjunction with the relevant religious governing authority.

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In the event of an incident involving a fatality or fatalities

The Chaplain may be notified of an incident involving a fatality or fatalities. Under the specific direction of the ESA Incident Controller, the Chaplain can proceed to the incident site. The Chaplain will notify the Incident Controller when they are en-route. The Chaplain's presence is to give support to members of the ESA as needed.

In the event of a Major Incident or Disaster

When the Chaplain is notified by the ESA Incident Controller of a major incident or disaster, they should proceed to the directed location and follow the instructions provided in the ESA Chaplaincy Reactive Response (People and Culture Standard Operating Procedure 1.2).

4. RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF ESA CHAPLAINS (GENERAL INFORMATION)

Selection Criteria

Consistent with best practice in other Australian emergency services, ESA will seek to appointment Chaplains who:

- have met all the educational requirements of their church or faith group prior to ordination or equivalent.
- are accredited for ministry from within denominations having official status with the National Council of Churches and/or the NSW / ACT Ecumenical Council.
- are currently in parish ministry or who have at least five years parish or specified ministry experience in addition to other specialist training.
- are able to complement the existing composition and range of denominations in the ESA.
- are 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 staff and volunteers with representatives of other faiths.
- completion of a Chaplaincy Training Course to the level of Introductory Clinical Pastoral Education.
- experience with a health service, another emergency service, or the Defence Force
- qualifications in counselling or critical incident support.

The ESA Commissioner may choose to appoint one of the ESA Chaplains to be the Senior Chaplain. This person will be responsible for the oversight of the ESA Chaplaincy and Wellbeing Support Program, and the work of any other appointed ESA Chaplain.

Leave and Off-Call

Chaplains will also notify the Manager Welfare Programs that they will not be available to be on-call whenever they are on leave, or during attendance at conferences, study programs or to other pastoral responsibilities.

Recruitment and Appointment Procedures

Chaplains are appointed by the joint approval of the head of Denomination and the ESA 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 (Working with Vulnerable People checks). The Director People and Culture will facilitate this process. New Chaplains are responsible for informing their Head of Denomination of their appointment with the ESA. Agency induction training will be provided.

Following initial appointment as an ESA Chaplain, there will be a six-month trial period for both parties to confirm their suitability, before an offer of full appointment is issued by the Commissioner following the recommendation of the ESA Executive Leadership Group.

In making a full appointment, the ESA 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 ESA 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 ESA in the undertaking of their duties and is prepared to function as a team member within these guidelines.
- The Chaplain acts as a liaison between the ESA and the Heads of Churches.

Corporate Support for Chaplains

ESA Chaplains will be coordinated by the Manager Welfare Programs, where Chaplains will meet on a quarterly basis to peer review their service and identify gaps or highlight goals they wish to achieve across ESA. ESA Chaplains are responsible for promoting their role and availability to staff and volunteers as appropriate. Officers and Managers of the ESA and its Services and Business Units should also assist in promoting Chaplaincy services, especially when they are aware of staff and volunteers who would benefit from access to a Chaplain.

Ancillary costs will be covered for ESA Chaplains, who whilst undertaking duties in providing proactive and responsive chaplaincy services to ESA staff and volunteers, incur costs such as private vehicle usage, phone costs and any authorised consumables.

5. AVAILABILITY AND ACCESS TO CHAPLAINS IN TIMES OF NEED

ESA Chaplains form part of our critical incident support services for staff and volunteers that also includes Employee Assistance Programs and Peer Support Programs. ESA staff and volunteers are able to refer themselves to a Chaplain if they wish, 24 hours a day; 7 days a week.

Volunteers or staff who have been involved in a critical incident may wish to see a Chaplain. Critical incidents may include situations such as: fires, motor vehicle accidents, child death, multiple deaths 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 Commander/Duty Officer or Incident Controller in attendance may consider arranging for a Chaplain to attend to the wellbeing of ESA staff or volunteers.