



# New Zealand Ambulance Major Incident and Emergency Plan (AMPLANZ)

## The Plan

September 2016



## Acknowledgements

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## Foreword

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New Zealand has for a number of years had a national ambulance major incident and emergency plan – AMPLANZ. This has ensured that there is a common understanding between ambulance services, communications and control centres and our emergency management partners as to how an ambulance will respond in a time of crisis.

This document is the reviewed plan based largely on the 2011 plan, the changes in the sector and its experience relating to major incident management. There have also been changes to the New Zealand Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) as well as a new National Health Emergency Plan (NHEP). Developments in CIMS or the NHEP are reflected here.

Thankfully, unlike before the previous extensive rewrite of AMPLANZ in 2011, New Zealand has not had significant local or regional emergencies like the Pike River tragedy and the Canterbury Earthquakes. That said, we have seen improvements to our management and an increased awareness of our plans and procedures through reviews of incident management and ongoing local and national exercises. Examples where significant development has occurred is in the formalisation of Ambulance's National Crisis Coordination Centre run by St John and improvements in the sector's business continuity management.

AMPLANZ continues to provide the sector with the appropriate guidance for each service to develop its own detailed major incident and emergency plan.

Finally there continues to be development of our national understanding of the risks we face and the need to ensure that our plans, organisations, people and communities are resilient. AMPLANZ covers all aspects of our management in a major incident and enables ambulance services to coordinate effectively with partner agencies.

David Waters  
CEO  
Ambulance New Zealand

# AMPLANZ Part 1:

## Introduction to AMPLANZ and Emergency Management for the Ambulance Sector

For all staff of New Zealand Ambulance Services

September 2016

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#### Part 1: Introduction to AMPLANZ and Emergency Management of the Ambulance Sector

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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 What is AMPLANZ?

AMPLANZ is a detailed operational framework for the New Zealand ambulance sector to provide clear guidance for all Ambulance Services in all parts of the emergency management cycle. It provides standard terminology, structures, and roles. It also provides tools to assist an Ambulance Service in its readiness and reduction, response and recovery, for example, task cards, planning templates, debriefing templates etc.

Specific Ambulance Service Major Incident and Emergency Plans must be developed Ambulance Services based on this framework.

AMPLANZ cannot be arbitrarily changed. There is a review process through the Ambulance New Zealand Standards and Accreditation Committee outlined as part of AMPLANZ.

In line with health sector and the emergency management sectors as a whole, there are a large number of specialist terms and abbreviations. To assist the reader, there is a Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations in Appendix 1.

### 1.2 The Aim of AMPLANZ

The aim of AMPLANZ is to:

- Ensure the effective and consistent management of major incidents at local, service and national levels for the benefit of patients
- Minimise the impact of a major incident or multiple major incidents on normal operations
- Adopt and encourage a whole-sector approach to major incident management
- Adopt and encourage a whole-of-organisation approach within services to major incident management.

### 1.3 Mandate of AMPLANZ

AMPLANZ applies to all Ambulance Services<sup>1</sup> in New Zealand and it is noted in Section 3.2.7 of the Ambulance Standard (NZS 8156:2008) that an Ambulance Service “shall be aware of, and where appropriate, contribute to, regional and/or national large scale contingency planning and be able to operate in accordance with such plans including.... AMPLANZ”.

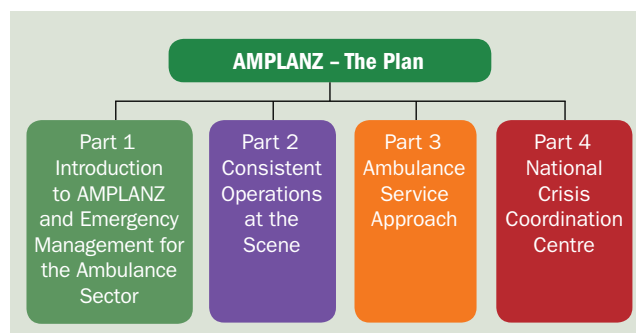
Ambulance New Zealand has approved policy to clarify: “...the mandate of AMPLANZ and to ensure that Ambulance NZ and Ambulance Services understand their roles and responsibilities with regards to the development, maintenance, and operationalisation of AMPLANZ”.

AMPLANZ is mandated to provide:

“...all Ambulance Services with the nationally standardised framework to command, control and co-ordinate ambulance resources locally, regionally and nationally, for the greatest good of the greatest number of casualties during major incidents”.

### 1.4 Format of AMPLANZ

The format of AMPLANZ is one document made up of four parts as noted below.



Part 1: Introduction to AMPLANZ and Emergency Management for the Ambulance Sector: This part summarises what AMPLANZ is, the sector, and key ambulance and emergency management concepts.

Part 2: Consistent Operations at the Scene: This Part focuses on the activities to be undertaken by responding crews, the duty management and those operational officers directly involved at the scene in coordination with other responding agencies.

Part 3: Ambulance Service Approach: This Part focuses on the activities to be undertaken by Ambulance Service Management in all parts of the emergency management cycle. It is designed to guide ambulance managers who are required to support the response at the scene, as well as play a role in preparing for or recovering from a major incident.

Part 4: National Crisis Coordination Centre: This Part provides a framework for the development and management of National Crisis Coordination Centre to ensure that the ambulance sector is able to respond to a significant regional or national emergency.

This is Part 1.

<sup>1</sup>An Ambulance Service is defined in NZS8156:2008 Section 1.5 page 12.

## 1.5 The Ambulance Sector

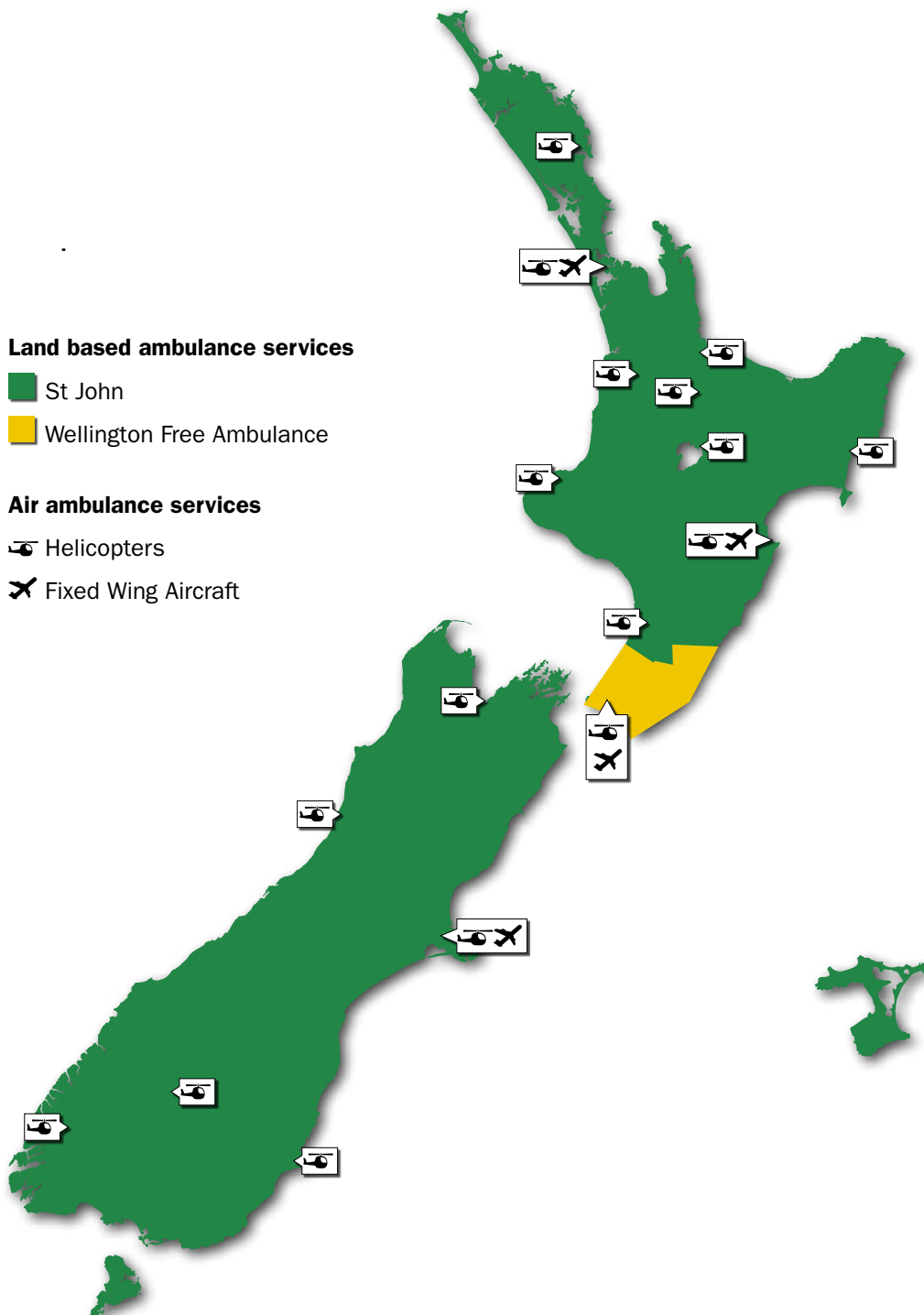
The primary role for the ambulance sector is to deliver pre-hospital health care. This includes triage, treatment and transport and pre-hospital emergency and non-acute care. Response to major emergencies is also considered part of the sector's primary role. Beyond the emergency functions, Ambulance Services are continuing to develop their role in the primary health care sector.

There are two land-based emergency Ambulance Services and 11 Accident Compensation Corporation

(ACC)-contracted fixed wing and rotary air ambulance Trust. The area of coverage of the land-based services and the bases of the air ambulances are noted in Figure 1.

Ambulance communications and clinical control services are managed by the two land based ambulance services. The services are provided by St John Clinical Control Services (CCS) and WFA Central Communications. The St John CCS is currently run from two Clinical Control Centres in Auckland and Christchurch. The WFA Central Communications is based in Wellington.

Figure 1



Ambulance Services are required to comply with the Ambulance Standard (NZS 8156: 2008).

In addition, there are multiple services that provide patient transfer services, private hire services, support to public events and specialist operational support to other emergency services.

## 2.0 Frameworks and Concepts of Emergency Management

### 2.1 Legislation and National Emergency Management Plans

The ambulance sector in New Zealand, unlike many services internationally, does not have its own legislation that guides and regulates the provision of ambulance services.

That said, Ambulance Services are health sector organisations and therefore have responsibilities within, for example, the Health Act 1956 and New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000.

In the context of emergency management, the ambulance sector must comply with, for example, the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 and Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006.

Ambulance services shall be aware of their responsibilities under these legislations as well as other health, safety and workplace legislation.

There are two key national plans that relate to emergency management. These are the:

- National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan 2015
- National Health Emergency Plan 2015 (NHEP).

The NHEP in particular, refers to the requirement of Ambulance Services to:

*“...provide triage, initial treatment and transportation as outlined in the Ambulance Major Incident and Emergency Plan...”* (AMPLANZ) <sup>2</sup>

And:

*“...if regional ambulance resources are overwhelmed, ambulance services will open the National Crisis Coordination Centre (NCCC). The NCCC will coordinate with the National Health Coordination Centre and other national emergency management structures ... as required. The NCCC will also coordinate the (national) ambulance response.”* <sup>3</sup>

The Ministry of Health (MoH) is the lead agency for national health and disability sector emergency planning and response coordination.

Appendix 2 lists the key legislation and plans that guide Ambulance Service emergency planning.

### 2.2 The 5 ‘Rs’

The New Zealand integrated approach to emergency management can be described by the four areas of activity, known as the ‘4Rs’ <sup>4</sup>.

These are

- **Reduction:** identifying and analysing long-term risks to human life and property from natural or non-natural hazards; taking steps to eliminate these risks if practicable, and, if not, reducing the magnitude of their impact and the likelihood of their occurring
- **Readiness:** developing operational systems and capabilities before an emergency occurs
- **Response:** actions taken immediately before, during or directly after an incident or emergency to save lives and property, and to help communities recover
- **Recovery:** the coordinated efforts and processes used to bring about the immediate, medium-term and long-term holistic regeneration of an organisation and community following an emergency.

For the purposes of AMPLANZ, a ‘5th R’ is identified as critical:

- **Relationships:** the development and maintenance of communications, coordination and understanding of capacity and capability between ambulance service managers and key personnel in health service agencies, civil defence and welfare agencies, lifeline organisations and private sector agencies, as well as traditional emergency service partners.

### 2.3 CIMS (New Zealand Coordinated Incident Management System<sup>5</sup>)

The purpose of CIMS is to provide structure and coordination in the management of incidents with the aim of improving efficiency and effectiveness in management response. CIMS is New Zealand’s approach to incident management and it provides a framework to manage a range of diverse incidents from routine incidents to major emergencies.

CIMS is a seamless approach based on the following principles across all responding organisations:

- Common structures, roles, and responsibilities
- Common terminology
- Modular and scalable

<sup>2</sup>National Health Emergency Plan 2015. Page 23.

<sup>3</sup>National Health Emergency Plan 2015. Page 23.

<sup>4</sup><http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/cdem-sector/cdem-framework/the-4rs/>



- Responsive to community needs
- Integrated response coordination
- Consolidated action planning
- Integrated information management and communications
- Resource coordination
- Designated response facilities
- Manageable span of control

To coordinate the effective use of all of the available resources, agencies need a formalised management structure that lends consistency, fosters efficiency and provides direction across the 4Rs. The CIMS structure is built on the functions:

- **CONTROL:** Coordinates and controls the response
- **INTELLIGENCE:** Collects and analyses information and intelligence related to context, impact and consequences; also distributes intelligence outputs
- **PLANNING:** Leads planning for response activities and resource needs
- **OPERATIONS:** Provides detailed direction, coordination, and supervision of response elements on behalf of the Control function
- **LOGISTICS:** Provides personnel, equipment, supplies, facilities, and services to support response activities
- **PUBLIC INFORMATION MANAGEMENT:** Develops and delivers messages to the public, directly and through the media, and liaises with the community if required
- **WELFARE:** Coordinates the delivery of emergency welfare services and resources to affected individuals, families/whānau, and communities

All Ambulance Services are required to be familiar with CIMS and have personnel trained to the appropriate level to manage incidents in line with CIMS. CIMS manuals shall be available to all Ambulance Service personnel.

## 2.4 Concept of Ambulance Emergency Management

### 2.4.1 The Responsibilities of Ambulance Services in a Major Incident

The role of the ambulance sector in response to a major incident is to deliver and maintain appropriate pre-hospital clinical care. In a mass casualty incident, ambulance will lead the operational health response to the incident at the scene/s and manage the triage, treatment and transport of patients to appropriate receiving hospitals or health facilities. In all emergencies impacting the health of the communities, Ambulance Services will manage and coordinate their response with the DHBs and other emergency services to manage demands on the healthcare system.

Below are key responsibilities of Ambulance Services in a major incident.

#### Responsibilities of an Ambulance Service in all emergencies:

- To save life in conjunction with other Emergency Services
- To notify and liaise with the other Emergency Services
- To initiate and maintain an Ambulance Service Command and Control structure lead by an Ambulance Service Controller

<sup>5</sup>The New Zealand Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS), 2nd edition. 2014. Safer communities through integrated emergency management. Pages 4–6.

- To protect the health, safety and welfare of all ambulance staff generally, and all health workers on the scene. Also ensure that the actions of Ambulance and health staff do not put others at risk.
- To supply sufficient ambulances and staff for the incident
- To provide a communications system between ambulance and DHBs (including hospitals)
- To provide Ambulance Liaison Officer/s to the partner agencies as appropriate for the incident
- To reduce to a minimum, the disruption of the normal work of the Service by implementing Business Continuity Plans, as appropriate, ensuring the restoration of normality at the earliest opportunity.

#### **Responsibilities of an Ambulance Service for Mass Casualty Incidents in particular:**

- To provide a structure to support the triage, treatment and transport of casualties from the scene by establishing an Ambulance Control Point, Casualty Clearing Point and Ambulance Loading Point
- To provide a Senior Ambulance Officer at the scene to act as Ambulance Commander (AC)
- To be part of the Scene Incident Management Team (IMT) to ensure a coordinated response to the incident
- To identify, notify and communicate with appropriate receiving hospital(s), health facilities and DHBs of the prevailing situation and the categories and estimated times of arrival of casualties
- To triage all patients prior to evacuation from the scene
- To manage all medical resources deployed to the scene for the treatment and care of casualties
- To determine the priorities for the evacuation of casualties, ensuring even and simultaneous dispatch to the receiving hospital(s) and health facilities
- To organise transportation for casualties to the receiving hospital(s) and health facilities, and any necessary secondary transfers between hospital
- To acquire additional ambulance resources, as necessary through the use of the Ambulance Service's national coordination mechanisms
- To forward to the receiving hospital(s) and health facilities, Medical Officer(s) of Health and DHB(s), any information acquired at the scene relating to chemical, biological or radiation (CBR) hazards and possible contamination of casualties or rescuers and advise of the potential for self-presenting patients

- To assume responsibility for casualty decontamination, in conjunction with the Fire Service
- To provide the Fire Service with clinical advice and assistance to support on-site decontamination
- To maintain adequate emergency ambulance cover throughout the Ambulance Service's operational area for the duration of the major incident
- To progressively release activated hospital(s) and health facilities and ultimately issue a message indicating the completion of casualty evacuation.

### **2.4.2 A structured and consistent approach**

AMPLANZ is aligned with CIMS, important New Zealand emergency management concepts and with key national emergency plans.

AMPLANZ also notes that to effectively manage large and complex incidents, the processes and procedures used by ambulance services need to be established and understood within the services and also by partner agencies.

Major incidents, such as mass casualty events, are infrequent and consequently any procedures required to manage such incidents shall follow the same basic processes as for smaller and less complex incidents. Therefore essential processes, such as assigning initial response roles and responsibilities, incident escalation, notifications, situation reports, triage etc are the same no matter what the size or complexity of the incident.

### **2.4.3 Whole of Organisation and Sector**

AMPLANZ is designed to ensure that all parts of the ambulance sector and the individual services are involved in the response, recovery and development of readiness of the sector. This will then contribute to the resilience of the health sector.

Within an Ambulance Service there are roles and responsibilities of first-responding crews, for ambulance service management and also for key support staff in non- operational or core support positions.

Across the sector, guidance is given to further integrate the individual service's response and planning at the tactical and operational levels and also in the coordination of all ambulance services with national agencies, such as MoH.