



## Emergency Services Chaplaincy Southern Africa

### ESC (SA) Operational Policy

#### 1. Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to define the overall Operational Policy that applies to and govern the activities and efforts of the Management, Staff and Volunteers of the Emergency Services Chaplaincy of South Africa ESC (SA) in ensuring that a consistent, sustainable and universally acceptable service is provided by ESC(SA) members to the various Emergency Services Staff, their immediate family and as a secondary function, traumatised victims.

#### 2. Vision of the ESC (SA)

To be a Ministry of believers who know and worship God through faith in Jesus Christ, committed in seeking to Minister to the Emergency Services, Individuals and Communities with the Gospel, reaching people everywhere. (Based on Matt 28: 16-20)

#### 3. Mission of the ESC (SA)

- 3.1. The ESC (SA) endeavours to deliver on its vision by engaging volunteers that undergo an ongoing training and development program to equip them to effectively support the emergency services personnel, their families and traumatised victims.
- 3.2. The ESC (SA) will place these trained individuals (Chaplains) to work in association with specific Fire Stations, Hospitals and other Emergency Services organisations that form part of the Emergency Services Value Chain.
- 3.3. These Chaplains will minister during their free time and using their own resources, within reason, be it within the Stations, at traumatic incident scenes or in the homes of affected individuals.

#### 4. The Environment that an ESC (SA) Chaplain Operates within.

##### 4.1. Emergency Services

It is the policy of the Emergency Services Chaplaincy (SA) that an Emergency Services Chaplain primarily operates within what is known as the Emergency Services, dealing with the Emergency Services Staff and their immediate family. Emergency Services is defined as any organisation or service, governmental, private or civil, that responds to or deals with the individuals that have been traumatically affected by some traumatic or disastrous incident.

This includes but is not limited to the following organisation and or Services.

- The Fire and Rescue Services
- Various Ambulance Services
- The Emergency Towing Service Providers



- Hospitals and Clinics – both private and government owned
- Various Aviation Entities
- South African Police Services
- Metro Police Services
- Security Companies
- Emergency Call Centres
- Undertakers
- Forensic Services

It is important to note that the staff that work in these organisations normally work shifts and find it difficult to get to a Church for Spiritual Support. Many are completely unchurched and adhere to differing beliefs and faiths. They also have various beliefs and Faiths and therefore it is the Policy of the ESC(SA) to function with sensitivity, taking these factors into consideration.

Furthermore, these staff members deal with one traumatic scene after another and this by itself has far reaching implications on their general wellbeing and mental state. As a result, there is a high dropout rate and suicide is not uncommon. This loss of highly skilled personnel has a significant, negative impact on the various services. Depression and Post Traumatic Stress in its different forms are also part of their lives. The combination of Shift work, High Stress levels and layered Trauma also plays havoc with their personal lives. Divorce rates are high as are other social issues including the ever-present impact of low income.

This Policy is aimed at bringing Christ to these individuals and to provide them with spiritual guidance and support, in an effort to reduce the impact of these high levels of stress.

#### **4.2. Various Victims of Traumatic Incidents**

In addition to the primary focus as defined in 4.1 above the Emergency Services Chaplain can also be called on to support the Emergency Services Staff by dealing with the traumatised victims on scene, at a traumatic incident where the Emergency Services are involved. Chaplains may be requested to extend their involvement to immediate family of the victims on scene or at their homes with the objective of bringing the victims own support structure into play as soon as possible.

The need in this area is as enormous and victims have the same ethnic, political, social and faith characteristics as the populous of South Africa. Dealing with such a varied range of individuals is even more difficult and challenging when these individuals have suffered significant trauma.

It is therefore the policy of the Emergency Services Chaplaincy (SA) to strive to develop an organisation that mirrors the populous of the country.

### **5. Functions of an Emergency Services Chaplain**

In line with our Vision the primary function of an Emergency Services Chaplain is to provide pastoral care to the staff and immediate family of the various Emergency



Services. The following high-level description may be superseded by detailed requirements of individual Stations. E.g. a specific Fire Station, Police Station, Hospital or Emergency Services Organisation etc.

### **5.1. Chaplaincy Functions to be provided to the Emergency Services**

The ESC (SA) Chaplaincy understands that Chaplains come from all walks of life and are working within the auspices and covering of their own Church. Most Chaplains also provide Pastoral and other Church related Spiritual Services like Preaching, Teaching, Pastoral Support etc. within and for their own Church. Furthermore, most Chaplains also mostly work full time and they serve as ESC (SA) Chaplains in their spare time.

Taking this into consideration, the ESC (SA) expects Chaplains to provide a Pastoral Service to the Emergency Services during the periods that they are available to operate as ESC(SA) Chaplains.

This pastoral service could include but is not limited to the following:

- Regular calling on the station at set times as arranged with the relevant management.
- Making themselves available to minister to the personnel. Prayer, Scripture readings and discussions as needed.
- Opening and closing shifts as requested by the management.
- Debriefing personnel as required.
- Pastoral support with immediate family as may be required.
- Bringing a short scriptural message at appropriate times
- Doing or assisting in funeral arrangements
- Doing or assisting in arranging Marriage Ceremonies
- Doing or assisting in arranging Child Dedications and or Baptisms
- Other Spiritual Support or Teaching.
- Supporting the Emergency Services Staff at a Traumatic Incident as required. This is difficult to define as it would depend on the circumstances at the Scene. The most important factor to remember is that we are there to assist the Emergency Services and our activities with the victims and their families are to support them in such a way as to enable the Emergency Service to do their work without unnecessary interruption.

### **5.2. Functions to be provided to Victims (Based on Luke 10:25-37)**

It is our policy that a Chaplain may provide on scene pastoral support and practical assistance to victims and their families on scene and after the incident at their homes if so required. In this time of High Stress and Trauma practical assistance will also need to be provided to victims and this could be of paramount importance as secondary victims of deceased family or friends often have no idea what to expect in terms of the Fire, Ambulance, Police, Forensic, Mortuary, Undertaking, Cremation, etc activities as well as other processes like autopsies and an inquest.



It is important to note that our stated purpose is to primarily assist the Emergency Services as mentioned in 5.1, above. The Chaplain therefore has no obligation to provide ongoing support to victims and it is advisable to get the victims linked with their family support structure and own spiritual providers as soon as possible to ensure no untoward dependencies are formed.

Where victims are not churched it is our policy to attempt to get them linked with a Bible Preaching Church for ongoing support if possible.

It is the policy of the ESC (SA) Chaplaincy that Chaplains may not without the appropriate training from a registered institution provide counselling or any service that they are not legally permitted to provide.

### **5.3. Payment for Chaplaincy Services provided to Emergency Services Personnel and their Immediately Family**

(Please also read the Financial Policy - Sections 8 & 9 for further clarity on this matter)

As the Emergency Services Chaplaincy (SA) is a Voluntary Service to the Emergency Services it is our policy to provide free Chaplaincy Services to the Staff and Immediate Families of the organisations that we serve. (Based on 1 Tim 6:10 and Matt 6:19-24)

- A Chaplain may therefore not require or request payment for Chaplaincy Services (as listed in 5.1) from the staff or immediate family of the personnel that serve at the specific station where that Chaplain is stationed.
- If payment is voluntarily made by the family of an Emergency Services Staff Member in the way of a love gift the Chaplain may accept such a payment and either use this to defray expenses or at the Chaplain's discretion pay all or part of the love gift into the ESC (SA)'s account.
- Where Emergency Services Staff or immediate family require Chaplaincy Services at a Station where no Chaplain is serving at that point, the request for service must be forwarded to the relevant Manager of the Region who will work together with the Chaplains in the Region to provide the required Services free of charge.
- If the Chaplaincy Service is required in a remote area or under circumstances that would require significant costs the situation needs to be discussed with the Board and appropriate arrangements made.
- The Chaplaincy does however hold the right to reimburse Chaplains for certain expenses or activities and to employ and remunerate full or part time Chaplains as may be approved by the Board from time to time.

### **5.4. Functions that fall outside of the Emergency Services Chaplain's Scope of Office**

It is important to note that only the areas mentioned in sections 5.1 and 5.2 fall within the scope of the ESC(SA) Chaplaincy and all other activities like personal Church related functions and ministries, all personal work related functions, any professional services



that the individual Chaplain is trained, educated in and legally permitted to undertake all fall outside of the normal Chaplaincy Scope of Service and therefore the ESC(SA) Chaplaincy legally has no control of how the Chaplain undertakes these services or functions other than when their activities bring the ESC(SA) Chaplaincy into ill repute. (See the Disciplinary Policy/Code)

The Emergency Services Chaplaincy (SA) acknowledges that any services that a Chaplain may provide to other individuals including Emergency Services Personnel and their immediate families, other than those mentioned in 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 above also all fall outside of the Chaplain's Scope of Office and will be dealt with as such. E.g. Professional Counselling, Psychiatric or other Personal or Professional Intervention or any other work-related products or services that the Chaplain undertakes as part of their income generation activities outside of the Chaplaincy Scope of Office. (Based on 1 Tim 5: 17-18 and 1 Cor 9:9)

It is however requested that a Chaplain always takes the relationship between the Chaplaincy and the Emergency Services personnel into account and to also try to accommodate them favourably in all their dealings that fall outside the Chaplain's Scope of Office.

## 6. Emergency Services Chaplains that work for other Organisations

Due to a growing need in both the private and public sector, it is the Policy of the Emergency Services Chaplaincy (SA) that the Chaplaincy Board may be approached to provide ESC(SA) Chaplains to Emergency Services Organisations on a full-time or part-time basis and on careful evaluation such permissions may be granted with such constraints as the ESC (SA) Board may deem necessary.

### Possible options are listed below:

- Full or Part Time employment by the relevant organisation with appropriate remuneration and the Chaplain would either wear the organisation's uniform or the ESC(SA) Uniform as agreed to. The Chaplain may still function as a volunteer Chaplain after hours.
- Providing the specific organisation's customers/clients with specialised services for a payment when required. E.g. Trauma Support, Pastoral Support, funerals, weddings etc.
- N/B Where the organisation that a Chaplain works for, provides services to victims of traumatic incidents and ESC Chaplain that is acting as an ESC(SA) Chaplain and was dispatched by Emergency Services. I.E. Fire or Disaster Management Control Rooms – The Chaplain **may not** recommend the organisation they work for to the victims.

## 7. Management and Controls

### 7.1. The Board

The ESC (SA) shall function with a Main Board and an Advisory Board to enhance the reach and effectivity of the ESC (SA) Chaplaincy in delivering on its objectives, Vision and Mission.

#### 7.1.1. The Main Board



The Main Board is the over-all accountable, controlling and directing body of the ESC (SA) and operates within the set mandates as per the Laws of the Land, the ESC (SA) Constitution and relevant Articles of Association.

### **7.1.2. The Advisory Board**

The Advisory Board is made up of individuals who through their involvement within the Chaplaincy Value Chain and relevant experience may add immense value by advising the Main Board on related matters. The Advisory Board operates within the dictates of the Advisory Board Mandate.

## **7.2. Management Structure**

The Main Board is to ensure that the appropriate management and controls are in place to ensure an efficient and effective organisation that delivers on its set Objectives, Vision and Mission.

### **7.2.1. Managers**

The Main Board may appoint such Management Structures as is appropriate to manage the Chaplains functioning in any specific Station or Stations.

Such Managers will receive an Appointment Letter and Job Description that details their specific function. Managers will be held accountable for the effective delivery of ESC (SA) Services within their areas of responsibility and be subject to Reporting, Review other reasonable and legal controls.

### **7.2.2. The Accounting Officer**

The ESC (SA) shall appoint an accounting officer who shall in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice keep, accounting records of the ESC(SA) income, expenditure, assets and liabilities including all cash and credit transactions according to the Specific Job Description.

### **7.2.3. Other Special Appointments**

Any other required appointments like secretaries, administrators etc may be made with the approval of the ESC (SA) Board to ensure effective delivery of the ESC (SA) Vision, Mission and Objectives.

**End**

