



# Annual Review 2017

A review of the work and achievements of the  
National Emergency Communications Working Group – Australia / New Zealand

Published by National Emergency Communications Working Group – Aus/NZ



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

About NECWG-A/NZ.....	3
Charter .....	4
Membership.....	5
Industry Engagement.....	7
Areas of Focus / Achievements .....	8
ECS Expressions of Interest .....	8
ECCF – the Roadmap.....	8
Emergency+ App.....	8
Alarm Activation Response Guidelines .....	8
NECWG-A/NZ Turns 21.....	10
Forward Plan.....	11
ECS Tender .....	11
ECCF – Delivering the Roadmap.....	11
2018 Industry Engagement Forum .....	11



## About NECWG-A/NZ

In Australia and New Zealand the national emergency numbers, (000, 112 or 106) or (111) respectively, are the first point of contact members of the community have with Police, Fire, and Ambulance often in times of crisis.

Since 1996, the National Emergency Communications Working Group – Australia/New Zealand (NECWG- A/NZ) has acted as representative of and an influential public safety body focussed on:

- Identifying strategic and aligned solutions to common problems to improve outcomes for community and optimise emergency communications services in Australia and New Zealand.
- A sharing and collaborative approach capitalising on the expertise and strength of the collective group.
- Being recognised as informed and respected professionals of the Emergency Call Service (ECS) and leaders in the sector of emergency communications.
- Continuing education and communication of the ECS across the sector and the community.
- Driving outcomes that:
  - meet community expectations;
  - establish standards;
  - influence a broad cross section of the sector including industry;
  - leverage jurisdictional sector and international development; and
  - align against national perspectives.



## Charter

The purpose(s) of the NECWG-A/NZ is to:

- Identify and develop a better way for public safety communications that improves public and operational safety through finding solutions to common problems.
- Be proactive in meeting community expectations and lead the public safety communications sector by influencing change across a wide area related to the Emergency Call Service (ECS) of Australia and New Zealand.
- Maintain our passion to make a difference in connecting help urgently by using our collective power as a group in educating, knowledge sharing and coordination.
- Advocating for change whilst maintaining impartiality and influencing the public safety communications sector and governments underpinned by a shared vision which promotes members to provide feedback into their own organisations.
- Building partnerships and maintaining effective relationships through collaboration across and consultation with government, community and the public safety communications sector.
- Fostering innovation and creativity across the public safety communication sector.
- Develop national positions on matters relating to the Emergency Call Person/s (ECP), ECS and/or Emergency Service Organisation's (ESO) operational communications response to those emergency contacts and affiliated Public Safety Organisation's (PSO) response to emergency events.
- Deliver on initiatives that support building national resilience and outcomes that encourage international best practise including the development of standards in a multi-party and agency environment.



## Membership

The NECWG-A/NZ membership consists of Australia and New Zealand representatives from all Emergency Service Organisations in Australia and New Zealand, as well as representatives from Public Safety Organisations including the Victorian Emergency Service Telecommunications Authority (ESTA), the State Emergency Service (SES) and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). Representatives from the Australian Emergency Call Persons (ECP) and the New Zealand Initial Call Answer Point (ICAP), telecommunications carrier representatives and NBN Co also make up the membership

NECWG-A/NZ has established a solid reputation as an effective working group that is able to provide independent analysis of critical matters impacting on the Emergency Call Service.

NECWG-A/NZ works within a framework of informal relationships which enables it to contribute to policy, regulatory, and operational determinations with regard to the ECS.

NECWG-A/NZ has key relationships with the following bodies and groups:

- **Attorney-General's Department** – through the Triple Zero Working Group (TZWG) established by the Department in response to the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission, members of the NECWG-A/NZ sat on the TZWG and led the review which has led to the development of the NG000 strategy.
- **Department of Communications** – NECWG-A/NZ is acknowledged by the Department and has presented the NG000 Strategy to the Minister. NECWG-A/NZ submits responses and briefs to the Department on legislative matters related to the ECS. Members of the Department of Communications attend NECWG-A/NZ meetings and contribute to NG000 project teams.
- **Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)** – NECWG-A/NZ contribute to, and submit briefs to the ACMA on regulatory issues in regard to the ECS. NECWG-A/NZ advises on ECS matters through its membership of the ACMA led Emergency Communications Service



Advisory Committee (ECSAC). Members of ACMA attend NECWG-A/NZ meetings and contribute to NG000 project teams.

- **Emergency Communications Service Advisory Committee (ECSAC)** – NECWG-A/NZ is represented on the ECSAC by the Chair. NECWG-A/NZ provides advice on the operation, performance, and conduct of the ECS.
- **NZ Emergency Services Telecommunications Steering Group (ESTSG)** – ESTSG is a multi-agency group, set up by Cabinet to provide a whole of Government approach to the strategic development of emergency telecommunications services for public safety purpose including policy, regulatory, organisational, governance and operational aspects of emergency telecommunications services.

## Industry Engagement

Since 2015 the NECWG-A/NZ has formally engaged with the broader public safety community through its Industry Engagement Forums.

The Industry Engagement Forums are conducted annually in conjunction with a NECWG-A/NZ meeting and provide the opportunity for industry and providers of the ECS to collaborate on current and emerging capability development.

The Forums are focussed on specific topics from which further development of the Next Generation Triple Zero (NG000) strategy can occur.

In 2015, the topic was an introduction to the NG000 strategy in which participants heard from national and international guests in the development and opportunities the strategy provided for the ECS and community at large.

In 2016, the topic was focussed on specific development opportunities for key elements of the NG000 strategy being SMS, advanced mobile location identification, public safety in an IP world, and smart alerting.

In 2017, the topic was the Emergency Communication Centre of the Future (ECCF).

Almost 100 members of the public safety community including ESOs, government, carriers, and industry meet in Sydney to participate in a full day workshop facilitated by Dr Ivano Bongiovanni from Queensland University of Technology (QUT).

Dr Bongiovanni challenged the audience with some disruptive thinking which was then used in breakout sessions in which industry members presented their considerations for the ECCF to ESOs, government, and other industry members.

This collaboration between all members of the emergency communications community resulted in the publication of the thought leadership paper on the Emergency Communication Centre of the Future which is available at the following link: <http://necwg-anz.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/The-Emergency-Communication-Centre-of-the-Future-report-FINAL.pdf>



## Areas of Focus / Achievements

### ECS Expressions of Interest

In late 2016, the Department of Communications and the Arts (DoCA) released two Requests for Expressions of Interest (REOI) for the provision of the Emergency Call Person, and Advanced Mobile Location (AML) that directly relate to Emergency Service Organisations in responding to critical and emergency incidents.

Following the finalisation of the REOIs, DoCA indicated they intend to release a tender for the delivery of the 'Emergency Call Person'.

In the determination to release the tender, the DoCA will also require the successful applicant to provide of a solution to resolve the issue of the lack of accurate location information from callers using mobile phones when contacting Triple Zero (000).

This tender is also of significant interest for ESOs as it impacts on our capability to support the response to critical or life threatening incidents.

### ECCF – the Roadmap

Following the development of the thought leadership paper – Emergency Communication Centre of the Future – the NECWG-A/NZ focussed on the development of a roadmap supporting the five strategic priorities identified in the ECCF paper.

Work is continuing on this roadmap and will continue to be a focus in the coming year.

### Emergency+ App

NECWG-A/NZ members have been involved in the enhanced development and promotion of the Australian Emergency+ Smart Phone Application. The App has been downloaded an additional 330,000 times to the end of October 2017, with a total download of over 885,000. The App continues its value in assisting people identify their location to guide emergency services to them in times of need.

### Alarm Activation Response Guidelines

NECWG-A/NZ has worked closely with the Australian Security Industry Association Limited (ASIAL) to improve the reporting of alarms to Emergency Service





Organisations due to the high number of false activations reported, particularly to police (up to 95%), wasting valuable resources. The NECWG-A/NZ police sub-working group developed the 'National Police Alarm Activation Response Guidelines' which has now been provided to Commissioners of Police and then referred to ANZPAA for final endorsement. Once final endorsement is received, these guidelines will be adopted nationally.

## NECWG-A/NZ Turns 21

In 2017, the NECWG-A/NZ celebrated its 21st year of working for stronger emergency communications.

At its meeting in Sydney in May, the original founders and key contributors over the years joined with current members to recognise and celebrate the achievements of the NECWG-A/NZ.

It is a credit to the founders and the people who have contributed over the past 21 years that this informal collaborative has been able to not only survive but expand and enhance its profile in the emergency communications sector.

The success of NECWG-A/NZ over the past 21 years has ensured that the Emergency Call Service has proven to be an effective mechanism to maintaining public safety. There are many challenges still facing the Emergency Call Services in both Australia and New Zealand and NECWG-A/NZ will continue to work with its members, governments, and industry to prepare for and address these.



## Forward Plan

### ECS Tender

The NECWG-A/NZ is anticipating the release of the tender for the Emergency Call Person including the provision of the Advanced Mobile Location service.

In particular, Advanced Mobile Location will be a great benefit to ESOs in being able to locate more accurately the location of people in need.

### ECCF – Delivering the Roadmap

The NECWG-A/NZ will continue to develop the roadmap of the ECCF supporting the five strategic priorities:

- Community Expectations
- Communication Centre Model Attributes
- Government Policy, Legislation, and Regulation
- Management Responsibilities and Processes, and
- Technology.

### 2018 Industry Engagement Forum

The May 2018 meeting in Christchurch will be focussed on disruption and innovation.

It is planned to conduct a collaborative session with start-ups and innovators on how emergency communications could be enhanced.

Keep up with the development and activities of the NECWG-A/NZ at its website:

[www.necwg-anz.org](http://www.necwg-anz.org)

