

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Fire Rescue and First Response
Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 19 December 2014

Contents

Purpose of this Report.....	3
Introduction	3
1. TEO in context.....	3
2. Scope of external evaluation and review	6
3. Conduct of external evaluation and review.....	6
Summary of Results	8
Findings	10
Recommendations	18
Appendix	19

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Final Report

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Name of TEO:	Fire Rescue and First Response Limited
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	683B Whangaparaoa Road, Whangaparaoa, Auckland
Delivery sites:	Training is delivered on client company premises
First registered:	8 January 2009
Courses currently delivered:	Short courses of one to two days duration in: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Aid• Fire and Rescue Services (including use of fire extinguishers, urban and rural fire fighting, airport and other workplace fire and rescue services)• Coordinated Incident Management Systems (CIMS)• Chainsaw Safety• Confined Space Entry and Safety• Height Safety
Code of Practice signatory:	Not applicable
Number of students:	Domestic: approximately 1,000-1,400 (35 equivalent full-time students); 30 per cent Māori and Pasifika, 10 per cent migrants

International: none

Number of staff: Two full-time, six part-time staff

Scope of active accreditation: A training scheme, Volunteer and Recruit Fire Fighter Certificate, was approved in October 2013, but is not currently being delivered.

Consent to Assess:

Domains: Workplace Emergency Risk Management, Workplace Fire and Emergency Response, Fire and Rescue Services - Airport, Fire and Rescue Services - Generic Fire Fighting, Fire and Rescue Services - Structural and Industrial, Fire and Rescue Services - Vegetation, Specialist Services - Rope Rescue, Urban Search and Rescue - Operations, Pre-hospital Emergency Care, First Aid

15 unit standards at levels 1-5 relating to health and safety, radio communication, emergency first aid and resuscitation, chainsaw use, height safety, coordinated incident management systems, and confined space safety

Distinctive characteristics: Fire Rescue and First Response specialises in training company employees and community organisations in the skills and knowledge needed to respond quickly and safely to emergency situations. The training includes preventative and risk management skills, as well as the response and coordination skills needed in an emergency.

Most of the training is delivered in the greater Auckland region.

The training is delivered in the workplace. It includes initial and ongoing revalidation ('refresher') training in a range of skills that contribute to the in-house safety and emergency response plans of large and small companies. The individual unit standards-based courses can be selected and integrated into an overall training programme depending on the needs of companies and community organisations.

Organisations using the services of Fire Rescue

and First Response include primary schools, playcentres, childcare centres, sports organisations, supermarkets, construction companies and local authorities.

An example of ongoing training customised to the needs of a specific organisation is the programme designed for Māori Wardens, under contract to Te Puni Kōkiri.

Fire Rescue and First Response delivers training to the New Zealand Fire Service.

Recent significant changes: Formerly in joint ownership by two directors, Fire Rescue and First Response now has one of the original owners as the sole owner-director.

New courses for Chainsaw Safety, Confined Space Entry and Safety, and Height Safety have been introduced.

An administrator appointed in 2013 has developed a new student database and systems for tracking and monitoring the training.

Previous quality assurance history: Fire Rescue and First Response was last externally evaluated by NZQA in 2011. NZQA was Highly Confident in the organisation's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.

An annual validation visit in February 2013 confirmed that Fire Rescue and First Response was compliant in all NZQA requirements for registration as a PTE.

National external moderation requirements for assessments against First Aid standards managed by NZQA were not all met for 2012, 2013 and 2014. Modification to the materials was required and an action plan for improvements was accepted by NZQA in April 2014. Following the most recent moderation report of 24 October 2014 requiring further changes, the PTE is working with another provider specialising in adult education and training to revise assessment tasks for its programmes and to improve its moderation

practices.

External moderation requirements for the industry training organisation (ITO), EmQual, have been met.

Moderation of standards delivered through the New Zealand Fire Service met requirements in 2013.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The focus areas selected were:

- Governance, management and strategy (this is a mandatory focus area)
- First aid and associated workplace safety short courses such as: Fire Extinguishers and Coordinated Incident Management Systems (CIMS)

These courses were the focus area at the 2011 EER and still constitute the main area of delivery. Most companies use them as part of their overall workplace safety training package. This focus area also provided an opportunity to see how the PTE has adapted its courses for a particular group: Māori Wardens.

Māori wardens are formally appointed and warranted by the Minister of Māori Affairs. There are about 800 nationally. Their role in the community has changed substantially over the past two decades and now includes a range of other community activities in addition to those on marae. A lot more social and community work is undertaken such as guidance of at-risk youth, crime prevention, counselling, coordination of safe environments, and liaison with the police. In 2007, Te Puni Kōkiri established, and now funds the Māori Warden project to provide wardens with the skills to cope with diverse situations. The CIMS and related training provided by Fire Rescue and First Response is part of this ongoing project.

3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

The external evaluation and review (EER) was conducted by two evaluators over one and a half days at the Whangaparaoa office of Fire Rescue and First Response. It included discussions with the following staff and stakeholders:

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Final Report

- The owner-director and administrator
- Trainers
- Current students
- Employers

Before the EER visit, the evaluators reviewed a range of documentation, such as student achievement data and summaries of training courses delivered, the business plan, and moderation and self-assessment reports.

Key stakeholders, such as the ITO, EmQual, were consulted.

Documentation relating to completions data and meetings of the Board, management and trainers was reviewed on site, along with course materials, assessments and moderation reports.

After the visit, a meeting was held with Te Puni Kōkiri staff in relation to the training for Māori Wardens. An updated 2014 NZQA external moderation report was reviewed.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Fire Rescue and First Response Limited**.

Fire Rescue and First Response works in partnership with client companies to ensure compliance with safety legislation. The competence and improved confidence of employees in safety and emergency care following the training adds value to companies' business and culture. Interviews with employers and their staff indicate high levels of satisfaction with the training delivery methods and outcomes. There are also valuable social and community outcomes from the transfer of the skills to other environments and emergency situations.

In relation to the training:

- Across all short courses, approximately 99 per cent of trainees are completing and achieving competence.
- Trainee satisfaction ratings used to monitor trainer effectiveness are consistently between 95 and 98 per cent.
- Trainers have extensive industry and adult training experience, including training for the New Zealand Fire Service. This contributes well to establishing and maintaining their knowledge of technical aspects of their areas of expertise as well as with the practice and theory of adult education and training.
- Trainees achieve in very well-resourced environments and trainers minimise barriers to learning for those with language and literacy issues.
- The training for Māori wardens is very successful in providing wardens with the skills and confidence to coordinate a response to emergency situations and is a good example of the PTE's ability to customise training to the specific needs of a particular group.

Fire Rescue and First Response is a small organisation where the owner-director is also one of the trainers. Good processes for planning current and future training in consultation with industry were evident.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Fire Rescue and First Response Limited**.

Fire Rescue and First Response uses mainly informal processes to monitor how well it is meeting the needs of trainees and client companies. While many of these processes are undocumented, they are appropriate, are used effectively, and are suitable for the size of the organisation.

- The new database provides the PTE with the means to record and track trainee achievement and has clearly made a difference to the PTE's planning processes. However, the analysis is currently limited to understanding trainer performance. Better use could be made of the existing data to allow the PTE to analyse and report outcomes for all trainees and their companies, including the outcomes for Māori and Pasifika trainees in order to improve the delivery of training.
- Formal trainee course evaluations used to monitor the performance of tutors provide good information about trainee satisfaction, but is only one indicator of trainer effectiveness. Other forms of evaluating the performance of trainers are needed to support the satisfaction ratings.
- As yet, internal moderation is informal, and external NZQA moderation reports highlight an urgent need for improvements in the validity and reliability of some assessments to ensure the quality of the courses. This is currently being addressed.
- The PTE continually makes improvements to the course material and delivery to better meet trainees' needs. This was noted in interviews with employers and trainees. Collation and recording of the feedback in the new database could be used to track training issues and trends that could be used for further improvements overall and to specific areas of delivery.

While there are no significant gaps in Fire Rescue and First Response's self-assessment processes, some improvements to its use of existing data, and formalised systems for moderation and evaluating trainer effectiveness, would improve its capability in self-assessment.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Adequate**.

The short courses offered by Fire Rescue and First Response are all delivered to the employees of client companies and community organisations. The majority, over 50 per cent, are for workplace safety and first aid. The successful completion rate for all courses is close to 100 per cent, and the very few trainees who do not succeed are followed up by their company and by the PTE's trainers. Although not specified in any reports, the success rates of Māori and Pasifika, and trainees from migrant communities (30 per cent, and 10 per cent respectively, of all trainees) are included in the overall high completion rates.

The numbers of trainees on all courses has increased from 798 in 2013 to 1,400 as at October 2014. In 2013, 83 Māori wardens attended the CIMS and related training, and 185 in 2014 to date. The increase in demand for the training is attributed by the PTE to its ability to meet stakeholder needs. This was supported by interviews with employers.

Evidence from trainee course evaluations and interviews with client company managers and Te Puni Kōkiri staff shows that the highly targeted training contributes well to both the trainees' and company satisfaction with the training. Successful outcomes of the training are seen not only in terms of achieving competence in the unit standards but also in trainees' improved confidence to deal with emergencies and respond to incidents.

Since the 2011 EER, the PTE has significantly improved its capability to collate and monitor trainee achievement and course evaluation data. However, the PTE's current monitoring focus on trainer activity and trainee satisfaction provides the PTE with limited information about trainee performance across all unit standards and courses that could be matched to the satisfaction ratings. Completions of unit standards are not, for example, currently collated across all courses and client companies or analysed to enable the PTE to track trends over time, such as the growth in demand for specific courses within and across companies. The PTE has the capability to monitor achievement of Māori and Pasifika trainees, but currently does not do so.

¹ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

The director and administrator agreed with the evaluators that further analysis of existing data would enable the PTE to better understand the outcomes of the training for all learner groups, and to plan for future growth.

1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Fire Rescue and First Response offers training to workplaces where employees are working in high-risk situations, to office staff, volunteer community organisations and groups such as Māori wardens. All need to be ready to respond to emergency situations.

Employers value the training highly, in part because of legislative requirements but also in relation to how the training is delivered. The director and trainers are knowledgeable and very experienced in occupational safety and emergency care. The training is therefore credible and of high value to all participants. The PTE contributes to the safety culture of many organisations. One manager considered the realistic training to be a factor in the company's low number of workplace incidents. The partnerships with small and large companies and Te Puni Kōkiri have led to repeat contracts based on the value added to the companies' businesses and to the Māori community.

The value to trainees includes the credits gained for unit standards, and recognised qualifications such as specific certificates in first aid, or specific training such as with fire extinguishers needed for their current jobs. Māori wardens in particular valued the opportunity to achieve unit standard credits, as for many this was the first opportunity for them to gain formal recognition of skill achievement. Comments from teachers at a local primary school, and childcare centre staff, described the first aid courses as very appropriate to their workplace, giving them the confidence to use what they had learnt. These achievements not only meet workplace requirements but provide skills and knowledge transferable to home and community environments. Examples were provided of trainees responding to fire and first aid emergencies in the community using the knowledge and skills learnt.

The PTE offers specific training to the New Zealand Fire Service. This has been considerably extended and widened in scope in recognition of the value added to internal training by the PTE.

The PTE has a comprehensive understanding of the value of the training to client companies based mainly on informal feedback and trainee satisfaction surveys. This is evidenced by the growth in repeat business and employer satisfaction. Self-

assessment practice would be improved by the collation and recording of client company feedback linked to better analysis of trainee completion data, and enable the PTE to identify the value added to different sectors and learner groups by the various courses.

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Fire Rescue and First Response training programmes are specifically tailored to an individual company's requirements and meet individual trainees' needs for competence in safety procedures. Success is measured through unit standard completion and certificates that meet employer needs. Trainees' course evaluations and the client company training managers interviewed by the EER team confirmed that courses have been designed and delivered very well and trainee and company needs have been well matched.

Training material, course delivery scenarios, and timing and training strategies are updated in response to written comments in trainee surveys and the more informally collected feedback from client companies. The written materials in the form of booklets are updated in line with legislation. Repeat courses for revalidation mean that trainees are able to consolidate their skills and be updated with any changes to legislation or practice. This meets company and trainee needs for currency in safe work practices.

New courses have been developed to meet the additional safety requirements of companies and to meet new legislative requirements, for example chainsaw and height safety.

The PTE manages training partnerships well with many organisations, including local authorities, large construction companies and the New Zealand Fire Service. The contracts are not always formal but are planned, usually on an annual basis, to meet new and ongoing needs. The contract with Te Puni Kōkiri for the training of Māori wardens is in its third year and continues to meet their needs. This was confirmed in an interview with Te Puni Kōkiri staff. Training is also delivered to meet the needs of volunteer organisations such as volunteer fire brigades. This was confirmed by local volunteer fire brigade staff.

The PTE manages training flexibly and is able to respond to training requests at short notice, within timeframes, and at locations that suit the company. This was evident from an interview with the training manager of a major client company.

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Final Report

The training for Māori wardens is not conducted on marae, but all participants and the trainers stay on marae for the duration of training where possible. This provides an opportunity for the PTE to assess the particular needs of wardens in their leadership role for marae-based activities. The director is also learning te reo in order to be able to better understand marae protocol.

The PTE reviews how well it is matching trainees' and client companies' needs, through a mixture of informal discussion and trainee surveys. As noted in Findings 1.1, the PTE could better use the information it already has to provide a more in-depth understanding of how well needs are met, and lead to meaningful improvements to course structures and delivery.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

There was evidence from documented and informal sources to show that Fire Rescue and First Response's trainers are highly effective. This is based on a number of related factors.

The director is contracted to the New Zealand Fire Service to supply training, and through this has access to ongoing professional development. All trainers have, or are enrolled to complete, qualifications in adult education and training. This adds training skills to their professional expertise. In addition, the trainers and the administrator maintain the currency of their skills and knowledge through active engagement in weekend volunteer activities such as fire fighting, or as first responder for St. John.

Training is delivered at sites that best suit the client company's needs using their tools and equipment, ensuring the trainees are familiar with and trained in equipment they will be using in everyday employment. Training is also targeted to match specific work environments, for example the need for construction crews to understand the treatment of bitumen burns. The realism of the practical training is enhanced by the use of training resources at Auckland airport, the Wiri oil terminal and, for Māori wardens, the New Zealand Fire Service training facilities in Rotorua. This provides trainees with the opportunity to practise skills and be assessed in actual, if simulated, conditions.

The PTE and client companies share information about the learning needs and progress of trainees, especially of those who may have language difficulties. The PTE adjusts the training and, for example, incorporates the theory into the practical components of the course and verbally assesses the trainees. Information about learning difficulties is fed back to the company. A training manager described the

feedback as 'excellent' and very useful for internal training and managing workplace performance.

Assessments are based on realistic scenarios and use is made of the ITO or NZQA materials. This adds credibility to the assessment practice and assures the quality of materials used.

Internal moderation is based on observation by another trainer. Although external moderation requirements have mostly been met, some changes are needed to materials and assessment practice for the first aid standards. The recent moderation report points to a gap in the moderation practices of the PTE that has extended over three years. However the PTE is working with another provider specialising in adult education and training to revise assessment tasks for the first aid and other standards, and to improve its moderation practices.

The primary tool for evaluating training effectiveness is the satisfaction rating given to trainers by the trainees course by course. Training practice is immediately reviewed where an evaluation response falls below 85 per cent. Data provided shows that the satisfaction ratings were well above 90 per cent.

Given the high regard in which trainers are held and the unlikelihood of satisfaction ratings falling below 85 per cent on a sustained basis, more structured and documented processes are needed to evaluate trainer effectiveness. Information from improved moderation processes and about the post-course workplace performance of trainees reviewed alongside completions data, would provide a basis for a more comprehensive analysis of training effectiveness in relation to the outcomes and lead to improved training practice where necessary.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Fire Rescue and First Response supports trainees as much as possible within the context of the one to two-day courses. The guidance and support provided is largely on a one-to-one basis and as needs arise. Care is taken to ensure the safety of trainees on the course, for example lifting, and trainers modify group work and practical simulations to suit the needs of trainees, responding to emerging training issues for individual trainees, such as fear of blood and the use of incident-related photographs. The PTE ensures that information about trainees' learning or any negative reactions to the content of the training is shared with the client company for follow-up and continued personal support.

The PTE provides a freephone service and email for trainees needing guidance post-course.

Final Report

Examples were given of specific situations where trainees were very well supported during courses that meet diverse needs. Group work, verbal assessment and the incorporation of theory into practice supports trainees with reading and language limitations, including those with English as a second language. The inclusion of marae supports Māori wardens by linking the training to their cultural and learning needs.

Self-assessment is based on a number of informal sources and trainee satisfaction surveys, and shows that the PTE is effective in developing appropriate responses to trainee needs for guidance and support, and monitoring how well needs are met. This includes informal discussions between the trainers, and feedback from client companies and from the course evaluations. The high completion rate is an indicator of the support and guidance that trainees receive in order to achieve.

1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The leadership and management of Fire Rescue and First Response by the owner and administrator has set a clear direction and purpose for the organisation. The PTE aims to make a positive difference to people's lives, and to train problem-solvers responding to emergencies and help them reduce the multi-layered impact of accidents and emergencies on people in the workplace or community. The PTE recognises that industrially focused training is not just about compliance but has a social and community function, leading to individual personal development and contributing to the growth of a safety culture. The PTE works to ensure that the courses are as realistic as possible, so that trainees are ready to respond to emergencies. Their philosophy is implicit in the delivery of training and has led to high levels of satisfaction.

The PTE has two major areas of strength. One is the extensive professional expertise of the trainers, including the director, and the other is the ongoing partnerships with client companies.

The PTE has formal contracts, memorandums of understanding, or informal agreements for the provision of training. These are well managed, and due to the high levels of completion and satisfaction lead to repeat business based on the value added to businesses.

The trainers are all skilled and are able to continue their professional development in their areas of expertise and in adult education and training theory and practice. Strong and active professional networks are maintained within the fire service

sector and trainers are also engaged in volunteer emergency response activities that maintain the currency of their knowledge. The result is a multi-skilled group of trainers and training that is relevant, credible and highly valued by employers.

The PTE employs a business mentor/coach who provides valuable external input to the PTE's strategic business plan and operations. Weekly meetings with the mentor are held to review progress with contracts, and the growth in demand is monitored through income streams. This helps to set priorities and future direction. The PTE is future focused. The director and staff are aware of legislative changes, for example to the Health and Safety in Employment Act, and fully understand the implications of the changes to client company training needs and the opportunities this provides for the PTE.

The administrator has designed and manages an electronic database and student management system, which is also a live remote-access system that regional trainers can use. It has greatly improved the PTE's ability to record and monitor trainee achievements and details of company training. As noted in Findings 1.1, the database has the capacity to provide the PTE and companies with more information about trainee numbers and completion of different types of training that would lead to a better understanding of the outcomes for all learner groups as well as indicating areas of growth (or otherwise). As noted in this report, the PTE has effective and informal self-assessment appropriate to the size of the organisation. Improvements to the collation and analysis of information about trainee achievements and company needs, and to the overall quality assurance of its first aid courses, the largest area of delivery, would contribute well to the organisation's capability in self-assessment.

Focus Areas

This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management and strategy

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

2.2 Focus area: First Aid and associated workplace safety short courses

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Fire Rescue and First Response:

- Implement strategies for self-assessment of trainee achievement as outlined in this report, including internal and external benchmarking of all learner groups and Māori and Pasifika trainees.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes and/or registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013.

The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz).

The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.

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Final Report