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External Evaluation and Review Report

Fire Rescue and First Response
Limited

Date of report: 22 October 2020

About Fire Rescue and First Response Limited

Fire Rescue and First Response Limited (FRFR) delivers short courses in emergency management and health and safety nationwide. It has downsized significantly since its previous EER. Course delivery was impacted by Covid-19.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	2 Kagan Avenue, Mangawhai (head office)
Code of Practice signatory:	Not a signatory
Number of students:	Approximately 2,686 domestic students (96 equivalent full-time students) in 2019 (3,383 2018); 21 per cent Māori, 17 per cent Pasifika
Number of staff:	One full-time; two part-time
TEO profile:	See: NZQA – Fire Rescue and First Response Incident Management, Civil Defence, Fire Rescue, First Aid and related courses are mainly delivered at clients' premises.
Last EER outcome:	At FRFR's previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2019, NZQA was Not Yet Confident in the PTE's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	The EER evaluated FRFR through the following focus areas representing its main programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incident Management¹ Training Scheme (Level 4)• Fire Rescue programmes. Mainly contracted to Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)
MoE number:	7882
NZQA reference:	C38516
Dates of EER by Zoom:	22 and 23 July 2020

¹ Referred to in this report as Critical Incident Management Systems (CIMS).

Summary of Results

Fire Rescue and First Response Limited specialises in highly effective training of employees and volunteers of client organisations in incident management, fire and emergency response, health and safety and first aid.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- FRFR enables client organisations and their staff to comply with their organisations' requirements and increase their emergency response capabilities.
- Highly experienced, qualified and effective trainers deliver training that meets individual clients' needs based on pre- and post-training feedback.
- Most training takes place at learners' premises using clients' equipment, which enhances its value.
- Attendees gain up-to-date, relevant and practical skills and knowledge relevant to their roles.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- FRFR training and resources effectively engage learners who become very involved in their learning. FRFR supports learners very well and almost 100 per cent of them complete their courses.
- Learners and clients are highly satisfied with how well FRFR matches training and assessment needs.
- FRFR has met its external compliance requirements including assessment and moderation.
- FRFR has strengthened its analysis of learner achievement data. Self-assessment based on closely monitored client feedback has been strengthened. FRFR is developing its systematic capture and review of stakeholder feedback.
- FRFR has maintained and improved its processes since the previous EER and is continuing to do so.
- The PTE has a clear vision, effective processes and the potential to rebuild and redevelop its capacity if current and future conditions allow.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The course completion rate for 2018-2019 was close to 100 per cent for all learners. The completion rate for 2020 is currently at 100 per cent. This high success rate includes Māori, Pasifika and under 25-year-old priority learners. FRFR monitors completion rates course by course, and the reasons for the very few non-completions are fully and well understood.</p> <p>The highly successful achievement rates arise from highly motivated employees or volunteers sent for mandatory training; dedicated and motivational trainers; learners engaging in learning using their own premises and equipment; and robustly managed assessment and reassessment policies and practices. Trainers work with learners to enable them to access additional assistance before they are reassessed. Strong moderation results by the industry training organisation (ITO) support the validity and reliability of the achievement data.</p> <p>FRFR gathers immediate comprehensive post-course feedback from course participants and their employers, analyses it, and addresses any arising issues. The lowest course satisfaction rate has been 85 per cent, with most courses in the low to mid-90s upwards. This is significant given the high response rate and the intentionally low number of learners who attend each course.³</p>
Conclusion:	FRFR has maintained a very high course completion rate since 2018. Improved data analysis provides deep understanding of achievement for all learners. Excellent external moderation results and improved internal moderation processes confirm the validity of achievement data.

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

³ If one learner out of 10 is not fully satisfied overall, the course satisfaction rate is 90 per cent.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>FRFR training is highly effective and supports client organisations to meet their compliance obligations. These include a range of legislative requirements, including the Health and Safety at Work Act, industry requirements and related policies and practices. First-time learner outcomes include achieving unit standards and gaining practical skills and knowledge. Training maintains and develops the capability of experienced paid and volunteer staff to respond effectively to emergency situations by increasing their confidence in their roles including leadership, teamwork and networking.⁴</p> <p>Customised courses maximise the value of the training. Client organisations that observe or participate in the training report that the value of the training is significantly enhanced by the expertise, credibility and engagement of the trainers. Continued contracting of FRFR to deliver the Māori warden courses helps build attendees' confidence and emergency response capability within iwi and communities.</p> <p>Employer, learner and stakeholder comments and emails confirm the currency, relevance and value of the training. FRFR also gains additional anecdotal feedback from clients immediately after courses which could also be captured more formally. FRFR would like to increase its understanding of learners' post-training experience and effectiveness of the use of the skills gained. The organisation uses Survey Monkey to gain additional post-course feedback but has had limited responses to date.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Continuous and ongoing, very positive feedback and repeat bookings are clear evidence of FRFR's effectiveness in delivering training with highly valued outcomes. Additional, even more systematic self-assessment will enhance the quality of the feedback and may provide FRFR with further opportunities to enhance the high value of the outcomes it already provides.</p>

⁴ FENZ's recent restructure has unified the needs of career and volunteer, urban and rural personnel for FRFR training. Military, civil defence and Māori wardens also have related needs.

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Courses match the needs of client organisations and their employees very well. Theory and practical activities are based on real-world emergency situations and are delivered at client premises using their equipment, providing real value.</p> <p>FRFR consults each client prior to the course. FRFR takes into account the ethnicities and cultures and learning styles of course participants and their range of experience and ages. The whānau delivery approach suits Māori and other learners well.</p> <p>Courses match the needs of a diverse range of participants including doctors, nurses, security, Māori wardens, district health boards, Te Puni Kokiri and civil defence organisations. The training scheme may well meet the required number of delivery hours.⁵</p> <p>Suitably qualified, experienced and current trainers use an appropriate range of assessment and reassessment methodologies and practices. FRFR uses pre-moderated ITO resources and assessments and/or its own adapted material which is also moderated by the ITO. The outcomes of NZQA and ITO external moderation confirm the effectiveness of FRFR's training delivery, resources and assessment. Effective internal moderation of assessment practices is being developed.</p> <p>FRFR reviews and revises each course as needed. It regularly updates course materials, legislative changes and related industry practices and stakeholder feedback, to maintain their currency. Training materials are useful for future reference.</p>
Conclusion:	FRFR matches clients' and learners' needs very well. The validity and reliability of assessment practices are confirmed by external moderation. Further developed internal moderation will provide additional assurance that assessment is fair, valid, consistent and appropriate.

⁵ For example, it currently includes the reading of a 300-page Blue Book prior to the course.

1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Trainers support the learners very effectively by working with them individually and in small classes or groups. This provides optimal conditions for those learners who need more support than others. FRFR identifies cultural and learning needs before and/or during the course, effectively supporting learners to succeed. A whānau approach to training resonates well with all attendees. The positive and inclusive culture encourages participation and success. Additional assistance is provided for class work or assessments, for students with low literacy or language levels.</p> <p>Trainers provide multiple opportunities for learners to apply the knowledge, experience and practical skills required prior to assessment. Trainers do all they can to reduce any assessment anxiety. A range of valid assessment practices and appropriate reassessment opportunities are undertaken only when the learner is ready and likely to succeed.</p> <p>The effectiveness of course pre-reading is hampered by the size of the handbook and company clients not providing it in a timely manner prior to the training. However, the resource and assessment handbook, which can be taken away, is a rich and valuable post-training reference.</p> <p>Learner evaluations at the end of each course show consistently high satisfaction ratings. Any suggestions regarding trainer effectiveness and learning activities are used to make improvements. Informal discussions with client companies help ensure that FRFR is continuously developing and delivering appropriate and effective training. FRFR's self-assessment and actioning of findings by reviewing, revising and actioning its pre-course and training resources will benefit learners.</p>
Conclusion:	FRFR provides excellent learner short course support. Learners are very engaged and involved and enjoy their learning. FRFR values learner and client feedback and acts on it effectively, but the quality of its formal capture and actioning of changes could be further improved. FRFR intends to do this.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>FRFR has continued to design and deliver high quality short courses with outstanding achievement and high satisfaction levels. Its two current trainers are also its governance and management team. Governance and management directly and clearly supports educational achievement very effectively.</p> <p>FRFR has downsized significantly since the previous EER but has maintained its policies, processes and practices, and professional business and financial management advice. It could expand its business again if economic conditions allow.⁶ Future favourable conditions could enable it to use new but on-hold delivery sites and facilities again and provide some emergency management training in fully realistic environments in addition to client premises.</p> <p>Aware of future growth possibilities, FRFR is considering new courses as well as new trainers and administration staff. It has to date rejected online delivery as not suited to the standard of practical knowledge and skills required. FRFR has identified criteria to recruit, refresh and develop staff in the future.</p> <p>Formal and informal ad hoc self-assessment processes are generally effective for identifying improvements to course design and delivery, assessment, reassessment and moderation. More formal capture of client feedback, analysis and reflection on achievement, stakeholder value, pedagogy and assessment may further support FRFR's effective understanding and actioning of strengths and areas for improvement.</p>
Conclusion:	FRFR is very effective in supporting learners to develop their knowledge and practical skills required in emergencies. It has improved its self-assessment with the potential to develop further. It has the capability to grow its business again, Covid-19 conditions permitting.

⁶ The volume of training increased noticeably following the Covid-19 lockdown, but the recent Covid-19 community transmission level 3 constraints stopped training again.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>FRFR manages its ongoing compliance responsibilities highly effectively. Evidence for this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular web update searches of key agencies and clients, such as WorkSafe, NZQA, FENZ. Legislative and regulatory changes are acted on promptly. • Robust processes ensuring FRFR is meeting requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act. This ensures FRFR policies, processes and practices support use of all training sites and activities. • FRFR reviews its comprehensive quality management system regularly, most recently during the Covid-19 level 4 lockdown. • Adherence to FENZ, CIMS, civil defence and first aid policies and procedures, supported by templates. • Schedules for delivery of courses align with standard-setting body requirements and availability of clients. • Effective systems and checks to ensure trainers maintain required licences and certification to deliver training. • Compliance with external assessment and moderation requirements of standard-setting bodies; e.g. NZQA and ITOs. • Timely reporting of unit standard results. • Maintaining a calendar to ensure FRFR meets financial and other compliance requirements. <p>FRFR needs to formally record and evidence how it meets the hours for delivery of the training scheme as approved and accredited by NZQA.</p>
Conclusion:	FRFR has improved how well it manages its compliance accountabilities since the previous EER, including external assessment and moderation. It can readily further develop this.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Incident Management Training Scheme (Level 4)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Change of focus area	Critical Incident Management Systems (CIMS) replaced the civil defence programmes as a focus area for this EER. It became a main programme delivered since the previous EER and Covid-19 level 4 lockdown, when all training was suspended. Civil defence was still included in this EER, just not as a focus area. First aid training is also part of FRFR's training, and/or as a standalone.

2.2 Focus area: Fire Rescue programmes

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that Fire Rescue and First Response Limited continue to:

- Develop the analysis data, which includes Māori and Pasifika priority learners, as part of self-assessment to identify the reasons for the current impressive and equitable outcomes.
- Explore and develop additional methods for gathering and recording already meaningful feedback from learners, graduates and client organisations.
- Implement periodic reviews of key activities and resources, such as assessment and moderation and other relevant policies and practices, to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Further develop internal moderation capability including the positive external moderation feedback.
- Formally record and evidence how FRFR meets the hours of delivery of the training scheme as approved and accredited by NZQA.
- Consider benchmarking achievement or using data to understand completions at first attempt and at reassessment of unit standards or courses, across clients or over time.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

There are no requirements arising from the external evaluation and review.

Appendix

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. 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.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- Identify organisational fraud⁷
- Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources
- Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.

⁷ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 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, training schemes and consents to assess and 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 Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016. 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). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

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