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Report of External Evaluation and Review

Actions for Survival Training Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 7 December 2017

Contents

Purpose of this Report.....	3
Introduction	3
1. TEO in context.....	3
2. Scope of external evaluation and review	4
3. Conduct of external evaluation and review.....	4
Summary of Results	6
Findings	8
Recommendations	16
Appendix	17

MoE Number: 8217
NZQA Reference: C25404
Date of EER visit: 21 and 22 September 2017

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:	Actions for Survival Training Limited (Actions for Survival)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	1 January 1999
Location:	34C Hobill Avenue, Manukau City, Auckland
Delivery sites:	Training is delivered from head office as well as client venues.
Courses currently delivered:	First aid training, core health, health and safety
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: approximately 7,000 in 2016
Number of staff:	Four full-time equivalents and two staff on long-term sick leave. One part-time staff member and four contractors.
Scope of active accreditation:	Training Scheme: First Aid Training (levels 1-3); standards assessed: 6400, 6401, 6402 Domain consents to assess: First Aid (to level 2), Workplace Fire and Emergency Response (to level 3), Workplace Health and Safety Management (to level 4) Many standard consents to assess in the following areas: First Aid, Pre-hospital Emergency Care, Emergency Care – First Response, Occupational Health and Safety Practice, Commercial Road Transport Skills, Powered Industrial Lift Trucks, Hazardous Substances and Materials, Forest

Foundation Skills and Forest Operations, Dairy Workplace Health and Safety, Safety Legislation for Chemical Plant, Retail and Distribution, Distribution, Driver Licence Classes.

See: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=821785001>

- Distinctive characteristics: First aid training. Delivery is to individual clients and to the public.
- Recent significant changes: Reduced enrolments since the last external evaluation and review (EER). Two tutors on long-term leave. Additional administrative staff and tutors employed. Development of a new database.
- Previous quality assurance history: At Actions for Survival's last EER in 2014, NZQA was Highly Confident in the organisation's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.

The organisation has met all NZQA national external moderation requirements every year since the last EER, and the external moderation requirements of The Skills Organisation industry training organisation in 2016.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

First aid training was the sole focus area because this reflects most of the training delivered by the organisation.

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.

Two evaluators spent one and a half days at the organisation's head office. They engaged with the two directors, project manager, administration staff member, three instructors, and a sample of past learners and repeat and new clients. Documentation reviewed included, but was not limited to the organisation's self-assessment summary, memorandum of understanding between Action for Survival's two businesses, instructor's manual, teaching materials, team meeting

minutes, and student and client booking forms and evaluation questionnaires. The evaluators viewed components of the existing database, as well as different aspects of the new database.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>. 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 fraud¹*
- 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.

¹ 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.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Actions for Survival Training Limited**.

There is clear and comprehensive evidence that the organisation is meeting the most important needs of learners and key stakeholders. This was confirmed through the organisation's self-assessment information, by interviews undertaken by the evaluators, and from sampled documents viewed.

Clients interviewed by the evaluators were highly complimentary about the training, commenting on its relevance and the ability of the instructors to actively engage staff in the training. Most indicated that Actions for Survival was their preferred training provider because of the positive response of their staff to the training. This information aligns with client feedback provided directly to Actions for Survival, as well as strong rates of repeat business.

The majority of learners successfully complete the training. A number of students do not complete the full course the first time, mainly because they cannot physically complete cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or do not stay for the full session (more commonly Youth Guarantee-funded students). Rather than turn students away, Actions for Survival allows students who do not complete all components to return to complete at a later date. According to the organisation, most do.

Highly effective processes are clearly contributing to learning. Training materials are well designed, visual, relevant and engaging, and students interviewed valued that they could take the materials away for future reference. The training is well resourced and involves realistic learning resources that students are actively encouraged to engage with. Teaching and learning methods are focused on ensuring a supportive learning environment that actively involves students in their learning.

Management is strongly valued by staff for a supportive, open and highly responsive workplace. Several processes have been established to contribute to greater collegiality and staff engagement. Management has strong connections to the first aid sector to maintain currency and to contribute to influencing sector knowledge and practice. Actions for Survival has a well-defined purpose and vision and it is clearly delivering to that vision.

No significant gaps or weaknesses in educational performance were identified.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Actions for Survival Training Limited**.

Actions for Survival has a number of well-established self-assessment processes, and some newly implemented processes, that are effective in capturing relevant information that is used to make improvements. For example:

- Every student evaluation form is reviewed. Action is taken if less than positive feedback is given.
- Clients are engaged about their training needs and training satisfaction.
- Effective moderation is in place.
- Peer and management observations are undertaken of teaching, and are development focused.
- Internal workshops bring all staff together to focus on best practice.

The organisation's current (but soon to be replaced) database has limited the comprehensiveness of Actions for Survival's self-assessment capability. For example, while the organisation captures and records all reasons for non-completion, and identifies common reasons for non-completion, the database does not enable data to be automatically filtered for analysis purposes, and to inform a comprehensive evidentiary base. While a course completion percentage was identified, there was no documentary evidence of analysis of completions or trends over time. Further, while the organisation engages with clients after the training about whether it has met their needs, feedback gathered from these conversations is not well recorded.

Over the last year, Actions for Survival has developed a new database to address such limitations. It is anticipated that the new database will much improve the comprehensiveness of data available to the organisation.

Findings²

1.1 How well do students 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 **Good**.

Actions for Survival identifies that the majority of learners complete their first aid training course, including those who may not complete all components the first time, but subsequently return to do so.

Achievement is validated by strong national external moderation results attained each year for the last few years. The organisation has also recently formalised its established process of manager observations of teaching and assessment, and has also introduced a formal peer observation process, including of assessment.

The organisation records reasons for learners' non-completion of their training. Through that process the PTE anecdotally identifies that the main reasons for non-completion are learners' physical inability to complete the CPR aspect (e.g. knee problems, physical size) and not attending for the full time (seen more in the case of Youth Guarantee-funded students).

With regard to learners' physical ability to fully complete the course, Actions for Survival provides written pre-course information to students enrolling in public courses to ensure they are aware of this requirement. The PTE provides this information verbally and by email to client organisations, but at the time of the EER, had not included this information in the client booking form. It identifies that it has since amended the booking form to now include this information. Doing so may or may not have a positive impact on full completions. Nevertheless, it will demonstrate that clients are enrolling with full knowledge of entry requirements, and especially for new clients who may not be familiar with the requirements of training.

While the organisation can record reasons for non-completion in its current database, the database's reporting limitations mean that it cannot automatically produce reports to show a comparative picture over time of the different reasons for non-completion and their extent, or the number of learners who subsequently come back to complete the full course. No documentary evidence was available to demonstrate such analysis or information. This limits a full understanding of the extent of learner achievement. Actions for Survival identifies that information needs to be manually extracted for analysis purposes, which is very time consuming. It has responded to this limitation by developing a database that will be fit for purpose and address these challenges.

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

Actions for Survival does not have data available to understand Māori and Pasifika achievement. Correctly, the organisation notes that this has not previously been a government requirement. However, the collection of this information, particularly Māori learner completions, could contribute to the organisation's understanding in this area, particularly given its identification of strong Māori enrolments. At the time of the EER, Actions for Survival had already established processes in place to collect information about learner ethnicity.

Student survey evaluations ask learners about whether the training has met their objectives. The sample of evaluation results seen by the evaluators was very positive, although data collated year-to-year was not available.

As mentioned, a new database has been in development for the past year and at the time of the EER was likely to be soon launched. It is anticipated that the new database will make a significant improvement to the way the organisation analyses, reports and reviews performance information. Until then, Actions for Survival has ensured that data is systematically recorded and captured in its existing database.

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

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**.

Actions for Survival tracks repeat business and provided evidence of a sample of over 50 repeat clients who have mostly maintained or increased their business over the last three years.

The organisation engages with clients who do not return. The reasons for this do not reflect on the quality of the training. However, this information is not documented.

Actions for Survival has captured numerous anecdotes from clients that demonstrate strong satisfaction with the training and often confirm the intention of the client to continue to use Actions for Survival as their first aid provider. The evaluators' conversations with a sample of both repeat and new clients confirmed such feedback and demonstrated strong stakeholder value. Most of those stakeholders have previously used other providers, and preferred the way that the training provided by Actions for Survival engaged their staff.

Actions for Survival identified that it regularly contacts clients about their experiences of the training. Clients interviewed for this EER said they are contacted about their training experiences and confirmed that they value the training provided. However, the organisation does not document feedback from those conversations. Therefore, it was not possible to review the nature and frequency of engagement and the resulting feedback collected from different clients over time. Actions for Survival also surveys a sample of clients, although questions relate to the processes of learning rather than the value of the training.

A key desired outcome of the learning is to reduce or remove any fears learners may hold that would prevent them from using first aid, and for learners to gain the confidence to apply their first aid training and knowledge. The instructor's manual confirms the expectation that instructors focus on identifying any fears learners may have at the outset of the learning. Presumably, this knowledge is used to work with learners to alleviate any such fears in line with one of the key outcomes of the training desired by the organisation. However, no information is captured on the extent to which learners' fears have been alleviated by the conclusion of the training.

Actions for Survival identifies that central to its training is the development of competence and confidence in the use of first aid. A student evaluation form asks if learners found the training worthwhile and their ability to apply what has been learnt. These are useful questions focused on understanding the value of the training.

A sample of completed student evaluation questionnaires showed very positive results. Limitations with Actions for Survival's current database means it is not possible to review collated feedback over time. Nevertheless, as mentioned, the organisation has been working for some time to achieve an improved database. Every student evaluation form is also reviewed, with action taken if less than positive feedback is identified.

The organisation is aware of a small number of situations where past students have successfully used their first aid training and which has led to saved lives. When aware of these situations, Actions for Survival provides recognition to those students.

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

Anecdotes from an array of different clients show strong satisfaction with the training and the quality of programme delivery, as do samples (though undated) of questionnaire feedback provided by different clients. The evaluators' engagement with stakeholders confirmed that the training is considered highly engaging, fun, relevant and useful.

Actions for Survival engages with clients to understand their training needs and responds within the boundaries of core training requirements to match those needs. Examples were also provided of how Actions for Survival has adapted training to better match clients' needs. Although there was limited documentary evidence available to understand the extent and nature of this engagement, follow-up engagement was confirmed by clients interviewed by the evaluators. Documenting

this feedback would enable any trends to be observed over time. This should be more feasible for the organisation once its new database is in operation.

Learning activities and resources are effective in engaging students. Learning resources are visual and easy to follow. Instructors are focused on minimising barriers to learning, with examples shared of stories and strategies used to put learners at ease and to facilitate their active engagement. The evaluators heard that instructors use explanations to dispel myths to remove fears around using first aid.

Assessment activities are scenario-based and actively engage students to apply what they have learnt in different situations. Strong external moderation validates assessment, as well as Actions for Survival's own internal moderation and assessment observation processes. Tutors have the required teaching and first aid qualifications or equivalent experience in accordance with first aid sector requirements.

The organisation designs and develops its own learning and assessment materials, meaning it can make changes to these as needed, promptly, to ensure they are up-to-date, and in response to learner feedback.

Sampled student course evaluation forms show that the quality of course delivery and training resources are highly rated. Because feedback has not been collated year-to-year, it was not possible to review the strength of evaluation results over time. Notwithstanding, evaluation feedback is closely reviewed. Examples were provided of Actions for Survival's responsiveness to negative feedback provided in student evaluations. This involves engagement with the instructor, a review of all student feedback, and engagement with the client.

The minimum hours of training for unit standards delivered to obtain first aid certificates, and to refresh training, meet sector training requirements. For some clients, Actions for Survival is delivering training beyond minimum training hours in response to specific clients' needs.

Actions for Survival monitors when past learners are due for refresher training and provides a reminder to encourage them to remain current in their first aid knowledge.

Two directors are board members of the Professional Emergency Care Association New Zealand, and the managing director is an Association of Emergency Care Training Provider. Such positions reciprocally contribute to knowledge creation and knowledge of sector developments, and to currency and strengthening of practice.

A core aspect of Action of Survival's vision is that first aid training will be widely accessible. The PTE is contributing to that vision and matching community needs by offering free or reduced courses to community organisations.

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

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**.

Actions for Survival's public booking form provided to learners contains detailed information about course expectations and entry requirements.

Students are supported in their learning through engaging and useful training manuals, which are theirs to take away for ongoing and future reference. An array of relevant learning props are used to involve students in the learning (e.g. different sized manikins, asthma inhalers, face-shields, defibrillators) to contextualise the learning and ensure that learners physically use and experience these resources. Realistic teaching and learning scenarios are structured to actively engage students in their learning.

Instructors interviewed described being mindful of the different backgrounds of learners. They structure learning in different ways to respond to different needs, as well as ensuring technical terms are explained and understood, and that learners' questions are always responded to. For learners who require extra time, this is provided one-to-one and during breaks. The facilitation of group learning also enables peer learning and support, as well as team identification of areas requiring further explanation or demonstration.

The evaluators consistently heard that class sizes are kept to a maximum of 20. With one exception, all evidence sampled confirmed this to be the case. Actions for Survival gave examples of where students had to be turned away if the class exceeded 20, and if an additional instructor and/or assessor could not be found immediately.

Tutors are provided with teaching, learning and assessment materials for each course. A comprehensive instructor's guide supports instructors to be consistent in their teaching and to ensure learners are taught in conjunction with the organisation's expectations. New instructors observe, and are observed by, experienced instructors before teaching on their own. This ensures that tutors understand the organisation's expectations and that they receive appropriate guidance and support. It also provides management assurance of their readiness and capability to teach.

Instructors and management work closely together to ensure effective teaching and learning, and management understands this through instructor observations and student and client feedback. The organisation has also introduced a process to gain systematic tutor feedback, which is facilitated through a newly introduced formal process of instructor self-reflection and peer observation. Client feedback strongly recognises the strengths of Actions for Survival's different tutors.

While the client evaluation form asks about student support, that question is not included in the student evaluation form. Gaining such feedback directly from the

students would provide the organisation with objective evidence across the training, specifically about students' perspectives on how effectively they consider that they have been supported in their learning.

1.5 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**.

A core vision of the organisation is for first aid to be accessible. It is well evident that Actions for Survival engages in many activities contributing to that vision.

The organisation delivers first aid training to diverse societal groups (e.g. education providers, businesses, transport organisations, students with intellectual disabilities) and provides free first aid training, or training at reduced cost for different organisations. For example, through one organisation, Actions for Survival offers free CPR training for parents of children who have spent time in Starship hospital.

The organisation is finalising an innovative mode of learning which has at its centre a focus on the accessibility of first aid training and the encouragement of greater engagement in training. This initiative is in response to stakeholder needs analysis.

Actions for Survival's training seems well resourced and the organisation has invested in the development of a new database aimed at improving self-assessment information available to the organisation through more advanced functionality and sophisticated reporting on achievement. It is anticipated that the database will soon be launched after around one year of development. This is an important development for the organisation given limitations with data reporting through the current database, as identified earlier in this report, and the limiting impact this has had on the extent to which the organisation can analyse performance and enrolment data and explore trends.

Staff are valued and their development is well supported by the organisation, including through internal and external professional development, conference attendance, educational and first aid training and refreshing. Staff interviewed for the EER described a very open, supportive and responsive organisation led by highly experienced directors.

In 2017 some new initiatives have been implemented focusing on more systematic and formalised processes relating to instructor support and development and ensuring quality. A more formalised process of instructor observation has been implemented, alongside peer observation and self-reflection on teaching. Student evaluation feedback is being linked to key performance indicators for individual instructors. Tutor feedback is being proactively sought through a tutor questionnaire. The organisation has implemented internal best practice workshops with topics including instructor facilitation and scenario-based training.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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 **Excellent**.

From documents viewed, together with organisation, student and stakeholder interviews, it was evident that Actions for Survival is compliant with The Skills Organisation's consent and moderation requirements and NZQA's First Aid as a Life Skill requirements. Instructors hold required experience and up-to-date qualifications, and delivery is to required training hours.

Actions for Survival demonstrates effective management of compliance activities through a number of established processes:

- The organisation ensures that required training hours are adhered to through information provided to clients and students specifying the hours of training and recording these on training booking sheets which are provided to the instructors.
- Evidence of certification is required at the booking stage to ensure that refresher training is only provided to those with requisite first aid certification.
- A record of each instructor's educational qualifications and first aid certification is kept at head office. Ensuring ongoing currency is the responsibility of a director who confirms that instructors have the required training and qualifications, that these are refreshed, and that they undertake regular professional development (including attendance at sector conferences).
- Given that most delivery occurs at other organisations' premises, course booking sheets require clients to have current building warrants of fitness.
- All paperwork completed by instructors is reviewed at head office to ensure all information is completed, e.g. attendance, completions and non-completions. Every completed learner assessment is checked to ensure all requirements have been met.
- The organisation has its own established internal moderation process and has met external moderation requirements each year.
- The manager's membership of relevant sector bodies contributes to Actions for Survival's knowledge of compliance matters.

The organisation's new mode of delivery has been developed with careful consideration to ensure compliance requirements will be met.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: First Aid Training

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

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

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that Actions for Survival Training Limited:

- Document key findings from verbal post-training engagement with clients about their experiences of the training to build a body of self-assessment evidence that can be used to systematically identify and reflect on key themes and trends over time.
- Seeks feedback from students to understand how effectively they have been supported in their learning.
- Consider the findings of this report in utilising the new database to strengthen the comprehensiveness of self-assessment.

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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