

Corporate Governance Attestation Statement

NSW AMBULANCE

1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022



**CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ATTESTATION STATEMENT
NEW SOUTH WALES AMBULANCE**

The following corporate governance attestation statement was endorsed by the Chief Executive of NSW Ambulance on 29 August 2022.

The Chief Executive is responsible for the corporate governance practices of NSW Ambulance. This statement sets out the main corporate governance practices in operation within NSW Ambulance for the 2021-22 financial year.

A signed copy of this statement is provided to the Ministry of Health by 31 August 2022.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "DM", written over a light blue circular stamp.

Dr Dominic Morgan ASM
Chief Executive

Date 29/8/2022

STANDARD 1: ESTABLISH ROBUST GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT FRAMEWORKS

Role and function of the Chief Executive

The Chief Executive carries out the Office's functions, responsibilities and obligations in accordance with the *Health Services Act 1997*, *Government Sector Employment Act 2013* and the determination of function for NSW Ambulance as approved by the Minister for Health.

The Chief Executive has in place practices that ensure that the primary governing responsibilities are fulfilled in relation to:

- Ensuring clinical and corporate governance responsibilities are clearly allocated and understood
- Setting the strategic direction for NSW Ambulance and its services
- Monitoring financial and service delivery performance
- Maintaining high standards of professional and ethical conduct
- Involving stakeholders in decisions that affect them
- Establishing sound audit and risk management practices.

Authority and role of senior management

All financial and administrative authorities that have been appropriately delegated by the Chief Executive are formally documented within a Delegations Manual for NSW Ambulance.

The roles and responsibilities of the Chief Executive and other senior management within NSW Ambulance are also documented in written position descriptions.

Regulatory responsibilities and compliance

The Chief Executive is responsible for and has mechanisms in place to ensure that relevant legislation and regulations are adhered to within all facilities and units of NSW Ambulance, including statutory reporting requirements.

The Chief Executive also has a mechanism in place to gain reasonable assurance that NSW Ambulance complies with the requirements of all relevant government policies and NSW Health policy directives and policy and procedure manuals as issued by the Ministry of Health.

STANDARD 2: ENSURING CLINICAL RESPONSIBILITIES ARE CLEARLY ALLOCATED AND UNDERSTOOD

The Chief Executive has in place frameworks and systems for measuring and routinely reporting on Clinical Governance and the safety and quality of care provided to the communities NSW Ambulance serves. These systems and activities reflect the principles, performance and reporting guidelines as detailed in NSW Health Policy Directive '*Patient Safety and Clinical Quality Program*' (PD2005_608).

NSW Ambulance has:

- Clear lines of accountability for clinical care which are regularly communicated to clinical staff and to staff who provide direct support to them.
- Effective forums in place to facilitate the involvement of clinicians and other health staff in decision making at all levels of NSW Ambulance.
- A systematic process for the identification and management of clinical incidents and minimisation of risks to NSW Ambulance.
- An effective complaint management system for NSW Ambulance and complaint information is used to improve patient care.
- Licensing and registration requirements which are checked and maintained.

The Chief Executive has mechanisms in place to ensure that the relevant registration authority is informed where there are reasonable grounds to suspect professional misconduct or unsatisfactory professional conduct by any registered health professional employed or contracted by NSW Ambulance.

STANDARD 3: SETTING THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR NSW AMBULANCE AND ITS SERVICES

The Chief Executive has in place strategic plans for the effective planning and delivery of its services to the communities and individuals served by NSW Ambulance. This process includes setting a strategic direction in a 3- to 5-year strategic plan for both NSW Ambulance and the services it provides within the overarching goals of the 2021/22 NSW Health Strategic Priorities.

Entity-wide planning processes and documentation is also in place, covering:

- Detailed plans linked to the Strategic Plan for the following:
 - Asset management
 - Asset management plan (AMP)
 - Strategic asset management plan (SAMP)
 - Information management and technology
 - Research and teaching
 - Workforce management
- Corporate Governance Plan
- Aboriginal Health Action Plan

STANDARD 4: MONITORING FINANCIAL AND SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE

Role of the Chief Executive in relation to financial management and service delivery

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring compliance with the NSW Health Accounts and Audit Determination and the annual Ministry of Health budget allocation advice.

The Chief Executive is also responsible for ensuring that the financial and performance reports it receives and those submitted to its Finance and Performance Committee and the Ministry of Health are accurate and that relevant internal controls for NSW Ambulance are in place.

To this end, the Chief Executive certifies that:

- The financial reports submitted to the Finance & Performance Committee and the Ministry of Health represent a true and fair view, in all material respects, of NSW Ambulance's financial condition and the operational results are in accordance with the relevant accounting standards
- The recurrent budget allocations in the Ministry of Health's financial year advice reconcile to those allocations distributed to units and cost centres.
- Overall financial performance is monitored and reported to the Finance and Performance Committee of NSW Ambulance.
- Information reported in the Ministry of Health monthly reports reconciles to and is consistent with reports to the Finance and Performance Committee.
- All relevant financial controls are in place.
- Write-offs of debtors have been approved by duly authorised delegated officers.

Service and Performance

A written Service Agreement was in place during the financial year between NSW Ambulance and the Secretary, NSW Health, and performance agreements between the Secretary and the Chief Executive, and the Chief Executive and all Health Executive Service Members employed within NSW Ambulance.

The Chief Executive has mechanisms in place to monitor the progress of matters contained within the Service Agreement.

The Finance and Performance Committee

The Chief Executive has established a Finance and Performance Committee to assist the Chief Executive in ensuring that the operating funds, capital works funds, resource utilisation and service outputs required of NSW Ambulance are being managed in an appropriate and efficient manner.

The Finance and Performance Committee receives monthly reports that include:

- Financial performance of each major cost centre
- Subsidy availability
- The position of Restricted Financial Asset and Trust Funds
- Activity performance against indicators and targets in the performance agreement for NSW Ambulance
- Advice on the achievement of strategic priorities identified in the performance agreement for NSW Ambulance
- Year to date and end of year projections on capital works and private sector initiatives.

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Letters to management from the Auditor-General, Minister for Health, and the NSW Ministry of Health relating to significant financial and performance matters, are also tabled at the Finance and Performance Committee.

During the 2021-22 financial year, the Finance and Performance Committee was chaired the Dr Dominic Morgan ASM, Chief Executive and comprised of:

- Brian Jackson, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services
- Amanda Soliman, Executive Director, People and Culture
- David Dutton, Executive Director, Clinical Operations
- Dr Sarah Coombes, Executive Director, Aeromedical Operations

The Chief Executive and Director of Finance attended all meetings of the Finance and Performance Committee except where on approved leave.

STANDARD 5: MAINTAINING HIGH STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CONDUCT

The Chief Executive has adopted the NSW Health Code of Conduct to guide all staff and contractors in professional conduct and ethical behaviour.

The Code of Conduct is distributed to, and signed by, all new staff and is included on the agenda of all staff induction programs. The Chief Executive has systems and processes in place to ensure the Code is periodically reinforced for all existing staff. Ethics education is also part of NSW Ambulance's learning and development strategy.

The Chief Executive has implemented models of good practice that provide culturally safe work environments and health services through a continuous quality improvement model.

There are systems and processes in place and staff are aware of their obligations to protect vulnerable patients and clients – for example, children and those with a mental illness.

The Chief Executive, as the Principal Officer, has reported all instances of corruption to the Independent Commission Against Corruption where there was a reasonable suspicion that corrupt conduct had, or may have, occurred, and provided a copy of those reports to the Ministry of Health.

During the 2021-22 financial year, the Chief Executive reported seven cases to the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). One additional anonymous report was made to ICAC, who referred the matter to NSW Ambulance resulting in an investigation.

Policies and procedures are in place to facilitate the reporting and management of public interest disclosures within NSW Ambulance in accordance with state policy and legislation, including establishing reporting channels and evaluating the management of disclosures.

During the 2021-22 financial year, NSW Ambulance reported one public interest disclosure.

The Chief Executive attests that NSW Ambulance has a fraud and corruption prevention program in place.

STANDARD 6: INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEM

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the rights and interests of NSW Ambulance's key stakeholders are incorporated into the plans of NSW Ambulance, and that they are provided access to balanced and understandable information about NSW Ambulance and its proposals.

During the development of its policies, programs and strategies, NSW Ambulance considered the potential impacts on the health of Aboriginal people and, where appropriate, engaged with Aboriginal stakeholders to identify both positive and negative impacts and to address or mitigate any negative impacts for Aboriginal people.

NSW Ambulance has a Reconciliation Action Plan that aims to build a culturally safe and responsive workforce in consideration and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The NSW Ambulance Reconciliation Action Plan can be found online at:

https://www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/731974/NSW-Ambulance-Reconciliation-Action-Plan.pdf.

Information on the key policies, plans and initiatives of NSW Ambulance and information on how to participate in their development are available to staff and to the public at:

<https://www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au/>

NSW Ambulance has the following in place:

- A consumer and community engagement plan to facilitate broad input into the strategic policies and plans.
- Mechanisms to ensure privacy of personal and health information.
- An effective complaint management system.

STANDARD 7: ESTABLISHING SOUND AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Role of the Chief Executive in relation to audit and risk management

The Chief Executive is responsible for supervising and monitoring risk management by NSW Ambulance and its facilities and units, including the system of internal control. The Chief Executive receives and considers all reports of the External and Internal Auditors for NSW Ambulance, and through the Audit and Risk Management Committee ensures that audit recommendations and recommendations from related external review bodies are implemented.

NSW Ambulance has a current Risk Management Plan that identifies how risks are managed, recorded, monitored and addressed. It includes processes to escalate and report on risk to the Chief Executive and Audit and Risk Committee.

The Plan covers all known risk areas including:

- Leadership and management
- Clinical care and patient safety
- Health of population
- Finance (including fraud prevention)
- Communication and information
- Workforce
- Legal
- Work health and safety
- Environmental
- Security
- Facilities and assets
- Emergency management
- Community expectations

Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Chief Executive has established an Audit and Risk Management Committee, with the following core responsibilities:

- to assess and enhance NSW Ambulance's corporate governance, including its systems of internal control, ethical conduct and probity, risk management, management information and internal audit
- to ensure that appropriate procedures and controls are in place to provide reliability in NSW Ambulance's financial reporting, safeguarding of assets, and compliance with NSW Ambulance's responsibilities, regulatory requirements, policies and procedures
- to oversee and enhance the quality and effectiveness of NSW Ambulance's internal audit function, providing a structured reporting line for the Internal Auditor and facilitating the maintenance of their independence
- through the internal audit function, to assist the Chief Executive to deliver NSW Ambulance's outputs efficiently, effectively and economically, so as to obtain best value for money and to optimise organisational performance in terms of quality, quantity and timeliness; and
- to maintain a strong and candid relationship with external auditors, facilitating to the extent practicable, an integrated internal/external audit process that optimises benefits to NSW Ambulance.

NSW Ambulance completed and submitted an Internal Audit and Risk Management Attestation Statement for the 12-month period ending 30 June 2022 to the Ministry without exception.

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The Audit and Risk Management Committee comprises three members of which all three are independent and appointed from the NSW Government's Prequalification Scheme for Audit and Risk Committee Independent Chairs and Members.

QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GOVERNANCE ATTESTATION STATEMENT

ITEM: STANDARD 3 (SETTING THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR THE ORGANISATION AND ITS SERVICES)

Qualification

NSW Ambulance does not have an Aboriginal Health Action Plan.

Progress

The Clinical Practice Committee (CPC) was established in 2022. It includes two identified positions for Aboriginal people. The CPC considers impacts of clinical changes on Aboriginal people through its evidence to decision framework.

Some of the initiatives which NSW Ambulance has in place to improve service delivery to Aboriginal people include:

- All staff receive 'Respecting the Difference' Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training to facilitate and promote a supportive workplace for Aboriginal employees, and culturally safe and responsive care for Aboriginal patients;
- The organisation's Aboriginal Workforce Development Plan supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to fulfil their career aspirations, including through targeted recruitment which enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paramedics to progress into specialist paramedic and managerial roles, leading to better access to advanced clinical care, and greater awareness and informed decisions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care;
- Utilisation of health impact statements in models of care development; and
- Communication of and encouragement to utilise appropriate Welcome to Country protocols.

Remedial Action

Plans to develop an Aboriginal Health Action Plan are in place. NSW Ambulance is assessing the allocation of resources towards engaging a consultancy to advance this. It is expected that the Aboriginal Health Action Plan will be in place from March 2023.

ITEM: STANDARD 6 (INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEM)

Qualifications

Plans to develop a consumer and community engagement strategy and framework to facilitate broad input into strategic policies and plans are ongoing.

Progress

A consumer representative has been included in the Frequent User Governance Committee.

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An effective complaint management system is in place, and a review is underway to implement further identified opportunities to strengthen the system.

The Clinical Practice Committee (CPC) was established in 2022. It includes two identified positions for Aboriginal people. The CPC considers impacts of clinical changes on Aboriginal people through its evidence to decision framework.

Remedial Action

NSW Ambulance is assessing the allocation of resources towards engaging a consultancy to advance the Consumer Engagement Strategy.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "DM", written over a light blue circular stamp.

Dr Dominic Morgan ASM

Chief Executive

Date 29/8/2022

Mr Ryan Gilchrist

Chief Audit Executive

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R Gilchrist".

Date 26 August 2022