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# PROTOCOL FOR HIGHWAY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

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Transit New Zealand

New Zealand Police

New Zealand Fire Service NZ

Ambulance New Zealand

The New Zealand Police (Police), Transit New Zealand (Transit), New Zealand Fire Service and Rural Fire Authorities (Fire Services) and the various ambulance services have long recognised the importance of maintaining the efficient movement of traffic on our highways. Lane or road closures on a highway system that cannot expand at a growth rate consistent with traffic growth can result in entire communities being grid locked with few, if any, alternate routes available. Long delays for motorists have serious economic implications.

Our agencies have the responsibility to do whatever is reasonable to reduce delays associated with incidents, crashes, highway maintenance, construction, and enforcement. The following guidance is based on the philosophy that our highways will not be closed or restricted for any longer than is necessary.

## OPEN ROADS PHILOSOPHY

Whenever a highway or lane is closed or partially blocked by a crash or incident, the Police, Fire Service and/or Transit will have a prime focus of opening the roadway on an urgent basis. Fire services will also give this due regard after their prime focus of the protection of life and property is dealt with. **While responder safety must clearly be maintained, and the public protected, highways will be cleared as soon as appropriate investigative needs are met and hazardous cargo is removed or neutralised.** It is understood that damage to vehicles or cargo may occur as a result of clearing the roadway on an urgent basis. While all parties will make reasonable attempts to avoid damage, the highest priority is restoring traffic to normal conditions. All incidents will be managed under the **Co-ordinated Incident Management System (CIMS)** model. In general, Police will supply an incident controller, but in instances of fire or chemical spill, the Fire Service will supply the controller. The incident controller will be empowered to take whatever decisions are necessary with respect to investigations and clearance of vehicles and debris to achieve rapid re-opening of the highway.

## POLICE RESPONSIBILITIES

### We will:

- › Provide an incident controller for most incidents (other than fire and chemical spill)
- › Ensure that other emergency service providers (ESP's), including Transit, are immediately notified of the incident
- › Carry out a thorough investigation of the scene, with a clear understanding that re-opening of the highway is a priority
- › Use the most appropriate up-to-date equipment and best practice training available to collect data at the incident scene
- › Conduct enforcement activities in a way which minimises the impact on the efficient flow of traffic, and does not put officers or the public at risk.

## TRANSIT RESPONSIBILITIES

### We will:

- › Provide CIMS - and STMS-trained response teams as rapidly as possible
- › Provide traffic management at incident sites, and establish and maintain detour routes where available
- › Provide and keep up-to-date single source contact numbers of Transit teams for each Police control room
- › Provide road clearing and cleaning equipment as necessary
- › Carry out road works and associated activities in a way which minimises the impact on the efficient flow of traffic, and does not put workers or the public at risk.

## FIRE SERVICES RESPONSIBILITIES

### We will:

- › Provide scene protection, extrication and stabilisation of the incident, while having due regard for the environment, the principles as set out in CIMS, and the expedient conclusion of the incident
- › Provide an incident controller in cases of fire or chemical spill, and until the arrival of a Police incident controller in other cases
- › Ensure that other emergency service providers (ESP's), including Transit, are immediately notified of the incident
- › Understand the need for Police to investigate incidents and consult with police on actions taken to clear the scene
- › Conduct fire-fighting or hazardous goods disposal activities in a way that minimises the impact on the efficient flow of traffic, and does not put fire-fighters or the public at risk
- › Rural Fire authorities will liaise with other ESP's in the event of a large vegetation fire to ensure that the management of highway traffic is appropriate given the hazards of the incident.

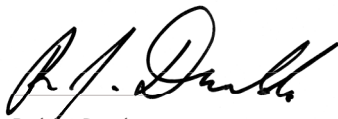
## AMBULANCE SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES

### We will:

- › Provide for the care and treatment of any injured persons, and if necessary, transport these persons by ambulance or helicopter to a recognised treatment facility
- › Conduct trauma management activities in a way which minimises the impact on the efficient flow of traffic, and does not put officers or the public at risk
- › Appoint an Incident Controller who will co-ordinate ambulance and medical resources, and fulfil the role of ambulance on-site representative.

## TOGETHER, WE WILL:

- › Provide up-to-date traffic/delay information to road users
- › Clear debris and make the incident site safe
- › Debrief after serious incidents (where roads have been closed for more than one hour) for the purpose of improving future performance
- › Regularly review our performance on incident management
- › Work together to ensure that the needs of motorists on our highways are being met in the most professional and efficient manner.



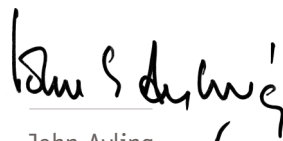
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