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| Inspection Process – information for licence holders |
| Non emergency patient transport |
| OFFICIAL |

# Introduction

An important component of holding a Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPT) licence is making your organisation available for inspection by Department of Health (the department) Authorised Officers (AO) who have been empowered under the *Non-Emergency Patient Transport and First Aid Services Act (2003*) (the Act) to request information and review processes relevant to the operation of a NEPT licence. Inspections of your organisation are designed to ensure compliance with the Non-Emergency Patient Transport Regulations 2016 (the regulations) and hold patient safety as the primary objective.

# Approach to inspection

Amendments to the Act and regulations have triggered a change in the way the inspection processes are undertaken. Inspections will now be categorised into three main types:

* **Vehicles and equipment:** These may be conducted in a group setting or by provider. An inspection may be organised by the department at a pre-arranged time, or it may be at an area which NEPT vehicles are likely to frequent such as a hospital emergency department. Efforts will be made to avoid significant commercial inconvenience whilst inspections are being undertaken.
* **Patient journey:** Will involve an AO undertaking a transport with a NEPT crew for one or more cases. Effort will be made to ensure this captures inter-facility transports as well as 000 generated cases, where applicable.
* **Back of house/process inspection:** Will be undertaken after the vehicle and equipment and patient journey experience, except in the case of new licence applicants. This approach is favoured as it allows any concerns noted during the patient journey and vehicles and equipment inspection to be more thoroughly reviewed. This final inspection is also the final check to ensure that any concerns raised during the other inspections are one-off occurrences and allow a licence holder to demonstrate robust processes as they apply to relevant regulatory requirements.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

#### Will I receive any correspondence after an inspection is conducted?

If the inspection is related to a licence application or licence renewal you will receive a letter with recommendations and requirements for your organisation to comply with. This letter will provide a time frame for rectification and clearly identify the expected standard. From time to time AOs may conduct ad hoc inspections usually related to vehicles and equipment to capture a broad understanding of the sector and you may not be required to take action unless a significant issue arises from this inspection.

#### What action is taken if my NEPT service does not meet the regulatory standard?

You will have the opportunity to provide evidence of rectification to the department if required. For serious breaches of the Act and regulations, there are penalty units, along with other tools that include suspension of service, cancellation of licence and conditions on licences, depending on the severity of the breach, and whether there is an immediate impact to patient/crew safety.

#### Who are the Authorised Officers conducting the inspections?

All AOs are experienced Registered Paramedics with significant experience in pre-hospital care interested in helping your organisation develop and improve patient safety. AOs are to be considered Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in this field and can provide sound advice for your organisation. AOs will always present their identification card and advise their activity during an inspection.

#### What exactly is the department looking for during inspections?

Compliance with the regulations is assessed during inspection. The department uses standardised process to assist AOs with inspection however AOs have discretion in their approach to inspection, to fulfil the core objective of promoting good practice.

#### Do I have to provide information requested during inspections?

Yes. It is a broad requirement under the act to provide any information requested by an AO in relation to the operation of your licence.

#### Who can I contact for further information?

If you have any questions relating to inspections or other regulatory matters please contact the NEPT regulations team at NEPTFirstAidRegulation@health.vic.gov.au

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