Ambulance Operations Procedure

Aero-Medical Talkgroup

National Ambulance Service (NAS)

Document reference number	**NASEAS001**	Document developed by	*Colm Megan, Aero-Medical Liaison Officer*
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Approval date	*30th January 2015*	**Responsibility for implementation**	*Each Area Operations Manager*
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1.0   POLICY

1.1   It is the policy of the National Ambulance Service (NAS) to work in partnership with other agencies to provide safe and effective systems of work and communications so as to enhance staff safety and enhanced service to patients

2.0   PURPOSE

2.1   To provide Ambulance Control Managers, Ambulance Supervisors and staff with clear direction to all levels of responder, employed by the National Ambulance Service.
2.2   To maintain quality standards of service to the public.

3.0   SCOPE

3.1   This Procedure applies to all Ambulance Managers, Ambulance Supervisors and Staff in the NAS.

4.0   LEGISLATION/OTHER RELATED POLICIES

NASOP022 Safely Approaching an Aircraft.

5.0   GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

NACC - National Aero-Medical Coordination Centre

6.0   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1   It is the responsibility of each Ambulance Control Manager to ensure that each Ambulance Supervisor and Staff member is aware of and understands this Procedure.
6.2   It is the responsibility of each Ambulance Manager, Supervisor and Staff member to adhere to this Procedure.
6.3   It is the responsibility of the Education and Competency Assurance Team to ensure appropriate safety briefings are included in any related training material.

7.0 PROCEDURE

7.1 <u>INFORMATION FOR AMBULANCE CREWS</u>:
The National Ambulance service will commence the operation of a dedicated Aero-Medical Talkgroup, using the TETRA system. This will be a dedicated Talkgroup, which will be controlled by the National Aero-Medical Coordination Centre (NACC).

The dedicated Aero-Medical Talkgroup is located on button **8.** This is located on the vehicle mounted TETRA terminal only.

This Talkgroup should only be accessed upon request of the NACC via the Regional Control Centre.

<u>COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURE</u>
The following procedure will apply:

7.2 The NAS personnel involved in a task that has an aero-medical element will be requested to turn to the Aero-Medical Talkgroup by Regional Control. To move to the Aero-Medical Talkgroup, press and hold button 8 on the vehicle mounted TETRA terminal.

7.3 The NAS Personnel will conduct a radio check with the NACC on the Aero- Medical Talkgroup. The call sign for the NACC is **NOVEMBER ALPHA.**

7.4 The NAS crew will then provide an ASHICE message to the NACC, along with the five point landing zone check, if completed. ***NASOP022 NAS SOP Safely Approaching an Aircraft refers.***

7.5 Once this is completed, the Air Asset <u>may</u> call the NAS resource directly, if deemed necessary by the crew. In general, the NAS resource involved in the mission should await a call from the Air Asset involved and **should not** initiate contact.

Normally NAS ground resources should NOT contact the helicopter during the <u>landing or take-off phase</u> of the operation. This is in order to avoid distracting the aircrew at these critical phases of flight.

However, should any person on the Talkgroup have a safety concern regarding the landing site then they must immediately alert the aircrew.

The message to the aircraft for this situation is:

"PAN PAN, this is *call sign, message content*, OVER"

The aircrew will call the NAS ground resource to confirm situation.

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7.6. An example alert to a landing helicopter could be: "PAN, PAN, 5 LIMA 12, plastic sheeting loose in the landing site, over"

7.7. Once the Air Asset departs the incident site, the NACC will call the NAS resource and request that they return to the Regional Talkgroup.

7.8. To return to Regional Talkgroup, press and hold button 4 on vehicle mounted TETRA terminal.

7.9. The NAS resource should then provide a cell call to their regional control, on the Regional Talkgroup

8.0   IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

8.1   This Procedure will be circulated electronically to all Ambulance Managers, Ambulance Supervisors and Staff.

8.2   This procedure will be available in electronic format and paper format in the control room for ease of retrieval and reference.

8.3   Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of this SOP will be issued in A5 laminated format to all NAS ambulance vehicles.

9.0   REVISION AND AUDIT

9.1   This Procedure will remain under constant review and may be subject to change to facilitate any changes/developments in service requirements.

9.2   Ambulance Control managers have responsibility for ensuring the maintenance, regular review and updating of this procedure.

9.3   Revisions, amendments or alterations to the procedure can only be implemented after consultation with relevant stakeholders and approved by the relevant senior manager.

10.0 REFERENCES

None applicable

11.0 APPENDICES

Appendix I – Acknowledgement Sheet
Appendix II – Aero-Medical Service Tetra Procedures
Appendix III - Landing Area Preparation

12.0 REVISION HISTORY: (This captures any changes that are made to an SOP when it has been revised).

No	Revision No	Date	Section Amended	Approved by

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Appendix II

NATIONAL AMBULANCE SERVICE
Aero-Medical Service TETRA Procedures

1. Aero-Medical Talkgroup

- This Talkgroup should only be accessed upon request of the National Aero-Medical Coordination Centre [NACC] via the Regional Control Centre.

- NAS personnel involved in an Aero-Medical Mission will be requested to turn this Talkgroup on by their Regional Control, once patient is collected and the need for Air Transport confirmed.

- To access – Press and hold Button 8 on vehicle mounted TETRA terminal

- Local NAS resource should then give radio check to the NACC on the Aero-Medical Channel. The call-sign for the NACC is **NOVEMBER ALPHA**

- NAS crew should also provide ASHICE message to the NACC, along with the five point landing zone check, if completed. ***NASOP022 NAS SOP Safely Approaching an Aircraft***

- Should any safety issue become apparent at the Landing Area this should be communicated to the Aero-Medical Service with the following message format

   - **"PAN PAN, this is** *call sign*, *message content*, **OVER"**

- Once this is completed, the Air Asset <u>may</u> call the NAS resource directly. The NAS resource involved in the mission should await a call from the Air Asset involved and **should not** initiate contact.

- Once mission is completed the NAS resource should return to the Regional TETRA Talkgroup. This is achieved by pressing button 4 on the vehicle mounted TETRA terminal.

- The NAS resource should then provide speech request to the Regional Control NASEAS001 provides detail on Aero-Medical Communications.

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NATIONAL AMBULANCE SERVICE
Aero-Medical Service TETRA Procedures

2. Location Facility on TETRA Hand Held Terminals

- In the event of a crew moving away from NAS vehicle, the NACC may request your LAT /LONG via the TETRA hand Held Terminal.

  The procedure is as follows:

  - Press and hold the number **3** button, on hand held terminal [A menu will appear on   the TETRA Terminal screen]

  - Press **GREEN** button. After a short period of time the LAT / LONG will now be displayed

- The crew should now provide the LAT / LONG to the NACC

3. **ISSE Facility**:

- On rare occasions the Aero-Medical resource may need to call the NAS practitioner involved in the Aero-Medical Mission request

- This is a person to person call, via the hand held terminals

- Information and talk time must be kept to a minimum

- The NAS practitioner may be requested for the following information

  - ASHICE

  - Landing Site Information

  - Information relevant to the incident

- The NAS practitioner must not call the aircraft unless initiated by the Aero-Medical Service

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Appendix III

NATIONAL AMBULANCE SERVICE
Aero-Medical Service Information

The following steps should be adhered to when operating with the Aero-Medical Services:

1. Park vehicle a minimum of **30** metres from the Aircraft landing point and **<u>remain in the vehicle</u>, until called forward by the Aircraft crew**

2. Ensure that the appropriate PPE is worn, (High Visibility Garment and Helmet) Fit disposable earplugs prior to helmet application. Ensure all PPE is fully closed and secured, ensure chinstrap closed and visor is down on the helmet

3. Keep all vehicle doors closed during landing of the Aircraft

4. Do not approach the Aircraft unless signalled to do so by Aircraft crew. Follow the exact line of approach as directed by the Aircraft crew

5. If approaching a helicopter use extreme caution if rotor blades still turning. Ensure that all loose material on stretcher, e.g., blankets, stretcher covers, etc, are safely secured, when approaching helicopter or fixed wing Aircraft

6. Staff should never approach an aircraft during the take- off or landing phase of its operation

NATIONAL AMBULANCE SERVICE

Landing Area Preparation:
The following 5 point check should be carried out by a NAS crewmember, prior to the arrival of the Aero-Medical Service to an incident site or Pre-Determined Landing Zone. However, this may not always be possible due to condition of patient or a number of other factors, including the arrival of the aircraft.

<u>Five Point Check:</u>

1) Landing site is a minimum of 50 strides by 50 strides, where possible

2) No obvious wires are crossing the landing site?

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3) No obvious wires could impede the flight path to the landing-site?

4) No people or animals are on the landing site, at time of survey?

5) Crew-member has walked the landing site and it appears free of any loose objects?