



ACT Ambulance Service

Enhancing Professionalism

A Blueprint for Change

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ACT Ambulance Service (ACTAS) has undergone significant change over the past five years, which has led to major improvements in capability during a period of increased demand. The reforms have occurred in front line resourcing, communications, design of service delivery strategies and clinical governance. These have led to ACTAS meeting the challenges of increased demand whilst improving the standards of service delivery. The effectiveness of ACTAS in delivering the highest quality and timely pre hospital care has been achieved by challenging traditional methods of service delivery through a sometimes difficult and confronting environment. ACTAS has continually improved over this period to a point where it rates amongst the best in the nation.

Government investment has contributed greatly to this outcome through significant increases in recurrent and capital funding to the ACTAS over successive budgets since 2011-12. This has enabled the successful implementation of major reforms in capability and organisational growth over the last four years, which has seen a total growth of 79 additional frontline and support staff in ACTAS.

ACTAS has also achieved a number of internal reforms such as the introduction Communications Centre (Comcen) Clinicians, nationally recognised qualifications in the Comcen, better rostering models, the Paramedic Tier and Demand Modelling to maximise available resources during periods of peak demand.

The demands on ACTAS have been growing year on year since 2010. This has placed added pressure on the ACTAS workforce and its leadership team to meet community expectation in which the organisation is expected to continue to deliver and improve on its current standards of response times and patient satisfaction.

This report brings together two reviews, extensive feedback from staff, and a literature review of ambulance culture worldwide, into a single document that will inform broader reforms necessary for ACTAS to realise its full potential and it will also help the whole of the ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) become a more integrated and professional agency.

In order to prepare for the future, two reviews were commissioned by the ACT Government to report on options for a management structure for ACTAS and related strategy improvements to meet the current and future challenges. These are the Evaluation of the Progress Made in Implementing the Recommendations of the 2010 Lennox review (Lennox 2014), and a review of current organisational behaviours (O2C Solutions).

O2C Solutions (O2C) was tasked to evaluate current organisational behaviour in ACTAS and to define the actions that will need to be embedded within ACTAS based on the ACT Public Service's behaviours and principles of professionalism and flowing on from the workvalue of the Intensive Care Paramedics (ICP).

This blueprint for change takes on board the feedback from staff, which includes an observation that the ACT could become "a world leader in ambulance services", and it also identifies clearly that for ACTAS, and the ESA as a whole, to continue to progress towards professionalism, it needs to address, as a matter of priority, a range of challenges to building an adaptive and resilient workforce, improve cultural standards and address workforce concerns around trust, conflict resolution and leadership.

The recommendations that flow from this report are based around developing a leadership framework and leadership training programs, implementing 360 degree feedback systems,

conducting an ongoing series of staff workshops, developing an implementation charter, and an evaluation process to measure progress against the report's recommendations.

The ESA, as a unified service, is wholly committed to professionalism as a cultural standard. Responding to and addressing these adaptive challenges in ACTAS will be achieved by fully implementing this blueprint for change through the ESA's Strategic Change Management Process.

By implementing this blueprint and enhancing professionalisation, ACTAS will more fully realise the full potential of its people and ensure that it continues to deliver a high quality ambulance service to the community.

This report and its recommendations provide the blueprint and drivers for organisational change.

Dominic Lane AFSM
Commissioner
ACT Emergency Services Agency

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

The ACT Auditor-General tabled a Performance Audit on *Delivery of Ambulance Services to the ACT Community* in the Legislative Assembly on 18 June 2009. The Auditor-General acknowledged in the report that the ACTAS had delivered a complex range of services against growing demand and limited capacity.

Following this, Mr Grant Lennox, former Chief Executive Officer of the Tasmanian Ambulance Service was engaged via the Department of Justice and Community Safety and commenced a review of ACTAS in November 2009 (Lennox 2010). This review made a number of recommendations addressing areas of ACTAS operation including:

- managing demand;
- funding model;
- interface between ACTAS and ACT Health;
- ambulance service delivery models;
- ambulance education and training;
- clinical governance;
- non emergency patient transport;
- ambulance workforce issues; and
- management team capacity.

In response to growing demand for ambulance services the Government took a number of steps to enhance the capability of the ACTAS based on the recommendations of both the ACT Auditor-General (2009) and the Lennox Review (2010). During this period a professional rates pay claim by ACT Intensive Care Paramedics (Workvalue 2011) was also progressed and completed by the Department of Justice and Community Safety.

The outcomes of the Workvalue 2011 exercise recognised both the professionalism and high skill base of ACT Intensive Care Paramedics (ICPs). The decision resulted in a 21% increase in base pay for ICPs from 2011, a new classification arrangement and work level descriptors. At that time, discussions around the paramedic profession was emerging, including the recognition by the Government of ICPs as professionals in health care. This was analogous to the early progress of the nursing profession, which now has well established national industry regulation and supporting practice. The latter arrangements are an evolving area for the ambulance industry.

At that time, the commitments of both the employer and the Transport Workers' Union (TWU) recognised that:

“The workvalue decision represents a significant development in the recognition of ICPs as professionals. The second phase of the implementation of work value is to implement this significant cultural change within ACTAS over the long term.

Consideration will need to be made of what recognising the professionalism of the ICP role means for day to day operational and duties to ensure that our actions, commitment to our

*roles, and the working framework are reflected. These will be the object of discussion through existing consultative forums”.*¹

The growth in capacity which occurred following 2010 was a swift organisational response. This response included recruitment of 79 additional staff, assimilation and readiness of the new operational personnel, revised management and supervisory structures, and enhanced clinical governance arrangements and practices. The numbers of staff recruited to front line operations, communications, clinical services, non-urgent patient transport, specialist flight operations and general management increased the workforce by around 46% between 2009 and 2014.

Indicators of performance of ambulance services, measured through accountability measures and internal benchmarking of issues such as labour turnover, employee engagement, absence and complaints indicated:

- engagement of ACTAS employees, measured in 2010 and 2012 through a workforce survey conducted by an external provider, indicated a number of attributes for both emergency and non-emergency and communication centre operations had improved;
- labour turnover reduced by 50% between 2010 and 2014;
- emergency operations staff perceptions associated with employee’s satisfaction with their manager had improved²;
- engagement culture of ACTAS was identified as “blame”;
- executives demonstrating the ACTPS values in action was an area requiring improvement; and
- staff considered they received a fair days pay for a fair days work.

As programs and activities implemented during the period of growth related to resourcing, governance and service delivery, the willingness of employees to respond to change was central to achieving these positive outcomes.

The growth in demand for ambulance services continued at around 6% per annum for each financial year between 2010 and 2014. Noting the significant expansion of the Service and reviews in progress in other jurisdictions, evaluating the effectiveness of progress of the Government’s investment was timely. Evaluations were proposed to inform future decision making.

A dual focussed evaluation approach was determined. The first involved the assessment of progress against the Lennox 2010 report, with a focus on evaluations of programs implemented to manage growth in line with the increased service demand and improving response times. The second area of focus was on organisational behavioural aspects of the ambulance service, the characteristic necessary to continue to ensure commitment to change, service growth and progressing professionalism.

¹ TWU comments in 2011 on the Work Value exercise for ICPs.

² Best Practice Australia

The evaluations were intended to inform the strategic direction for ambulance services. In 2013-14 the Government also announced an Expenditure Review of the ESA, which includes consideration of ambulance operations.

The first evaluation was conducted by Mr Grant Lennox in 2010. The terms reference for the Lennox 2014 evaluation covered progress against the range of issues commented upon by him in his 2010 review. His evaluation identified a number of further areas of work for ACTAS including:

- consideration of the arrangements to “*maximise opportunities for cooperation and coordination between emergency services by enhanced interoperability by all ESA Communications Centre (Comcen) staff*”;
- consideration of changing reporting arrangements for Comcen Management directly to the ACTAS Chief Officer;
- work associated with the introduction of the Ambulance Paramedic (AP) classification into the ambulance service including addressing issues associated with credentialing; scope of practice and progression of that group;
- further strengthening of data analysis and reporting related to injury prevention and management for high risk workers such as paramedics;
- addressing cultural issues in progressing improvements in clinical governance and clarifying the clinical audit function and disciplinary processes which exist as a result of ambulance services fulfilling the role which is normal the purview of health registration bodies for other health professions.

2.2 Terms of Reference

In determining how to plan, progress and assess towards professionalisation for the future, consideration of organisational capability is important. An assessment of ACTAS progress can be gauged using the Australian Public Service Commission’s (the APS Commission) *Capability Framework*, which importantly identifies that organisational capability extends beyond the capability of employees, and that it combines people skills with the organisation’s processes, systems, culture and structures to deliver business outcomes. Crucial areas of capability and key enablers of successful performance include:

- Leadership: the link between government policy and strategy execution and delivery
- Strategy: how the government policy directions are planned for implementation; and
- Delivery: the quality of programs and services.

Figure 1 (shown in page 10) provides the basis to consider the enablers of successful performance to support these capabilities. ACTAS was independently assessed by Mr Grant Lennox in 2014 who reported that there was substantial improvement and that the service was coping admirably with ever increasing ambulance demand. This provides insight in to the areas where ACTAS requires further focus in order to meet its future challenges.

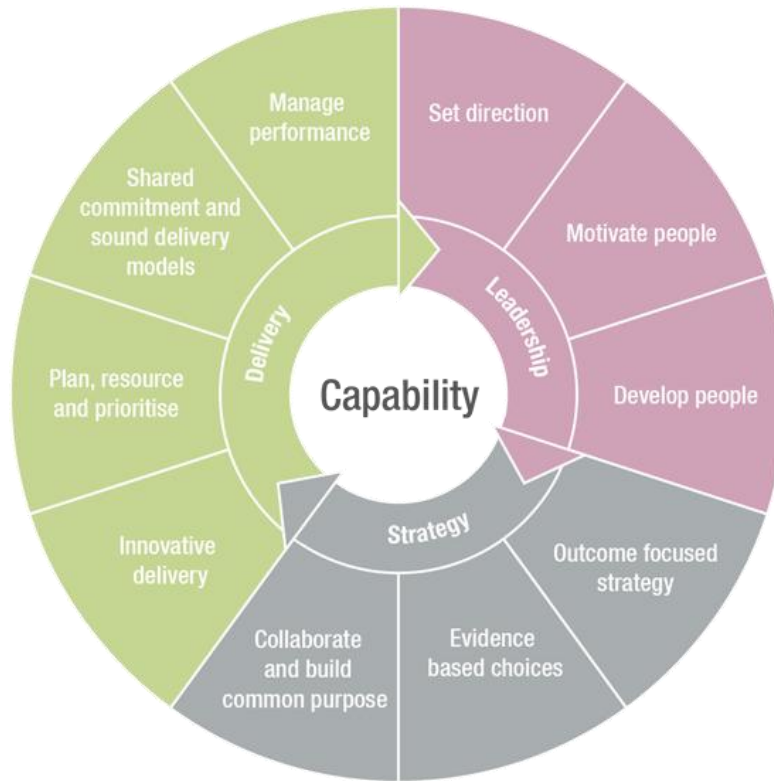


Figure 1: APS model of capability

Noting the Government’s investment and the key areas of leadership capability identified previously, O2C Solutions (O2C) undertook a review of current organisational behaviours and the development of actions to progress and support the embedding of ACT Public Service signature behaviours and principles of professionalism flowing from the workvalue of Intensive Care Paramedics within ACTAS.

As part of this review process, the following components were undertaken by O2C to inform this report and its findings:

- A literature review of ambulance industry culture from both Australia and overseas identifying cultural attributes of progressive ambulance organisations;
- Observations on how the current organisational culture of ACTAS benchmarks against the cultural features of the ambulance industry;
- Consideration of the influence of current organisational arrangements such as:
 - supervision and management;
 - employee accountabilities and responsibilities;
 - recruitment, training and retention; and
 - work safety systems and clinical oversight.

- How current arrangements work towards shaping and promoting a progressive, resilient and professional culture.

The work conducted by O2C included the extensive literature review and associated report, consideration of existing available data, and information gathered through interviews with key stakeholders, workshops and confidential submissions.

The O2C evaluation identified areas of focus and developed supporting recommendations to achieve future characteristics of a professional organisation by addressing ACTAS’s “adaptive challenges”, which will in turn also meet community and service delivery expectations into the future.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

3.1 ACTAS snapshot

ACTAS has a broad range of responsibilities in accordance with the *Emergencies Act 2004*.

ACTAS is responsible for providing emergency, non-emergency, communication and aero-medical ambulance services to the ACT community in addition to supporting other response agencies in the delivery of their responsibilities under the *Emergencies Act 2004*.

Under nationally agreed indicators, the ACTAS measures Priority 1 (E000) response times against 8 minutes or less (50th percentile) and 15 minutes or less (90th percentile). In 2013-14, the ACTAS achieved a response time of 8.2 minutes against the 50th percentile and 12.9 minutes in the 90th percentile.

The ACTAS maintain a record of each call received into the Emergency Triple Zero (E000) Comcen, each call being recorded as a separate incident. Some incidents may be managed over the phone, with no ACTAS site response, and some incidents will have multiple vehicles respond on site. In 2013-14, the ACTAS managed 43,445 incidents involving 43,198 responses by operational crews. This represents an increase of 5.08% compared to 41,346 incidents in 2012-13. A breakdown of incidents in priority order is provided in the tables below.

ACT Ambulance Service Incidents

Table 1: Total Incidents

Priority Incident Type	Number		Percentage %	
	2012–13	2013–14	2012–13	2013–14
1 Emergency incident (lights and sirens), using emergency paramedic response	14,464	15,055	35.0	34.7
2 Emergency incident (road speed), using emergency paramedic response	18,869	20,147	45.6	46.4
3 Non-emergency ambulance incident, using emergency paramedic response	940	1,105	2.3	2.5
4 Non-emergency ambulance incident, using patient transport service resource	7,073	7,138	17.1	16.4
Total	41,346	43,445	100	100

3.2 Patient satisfaction

Each year the ACTAS participates in a national survey with all other Australian ambulance services seeking feedback from patients or the carers of patients to whom the ACTAS has provided clinical

care. Key objectives of the survey are to benchmark perceived service quality and customer satisfaction levels across all state and territory ambulance services. 1,300 surveys were issued during 2013-14. The survey results are collated nationally and the outcomes are published after the end of the financial year. In the 2013-14 survey the ACTAS achieved an overall patient satisfaction of 98%, up from 97% in 2012-13.

3.3 Snowy Hydro SouthCare

The Snowy Hydro SouthCare (SHS) helicopter aero-medical service is a joint venture funded by the ACT and NSW Governments, which provides aero-medical retrieval and rescue services to the ACT and surrounding region of south-east NSW.

Medical staffing for the service is drawn from Intensive Care Flight Paramedics employed by the ACTAS and Flight Physicians from the Capital Region Retrieval Service at The Canberra Hospital. Pilots, aircrew and engineering support is provided by CHC Helicopters (Aust).

During 2013–14, the life saving aero-medical retrieval service flew 466 missions, which included inter-hospital retrieval, search and rescue, and pre-hospital primary tasking. Operational activity has decreased by 32 missions (6.4%) compared to the same period in 2012–13. In addition, 74 road retrievals were undertaken by the rostered flight team. A summary of operational activity is provided below.

Table 2: SouthCare Responses

Mission Type	Number		Percentage (%)	
	2012–13	2013–14	2012–13	2013–14
Primary (accident scenes)	171	180	34.3	38.6
Secondary (inter-facility retrieval)	308	273	61.8	58.6
Search and rescue	19	13	3.8	2.8
Total	498	466	100	100

3.4 Rapid organisational growth

ACTAS has experienced a rapid growth in size since 2009-10. The enhancements to capacity funded by successive budgets have seen growth in staffing of approximately 79 additional full time equivalent employees (FTE). This represents a growth of approximately 36% in staffing since 2009-10.

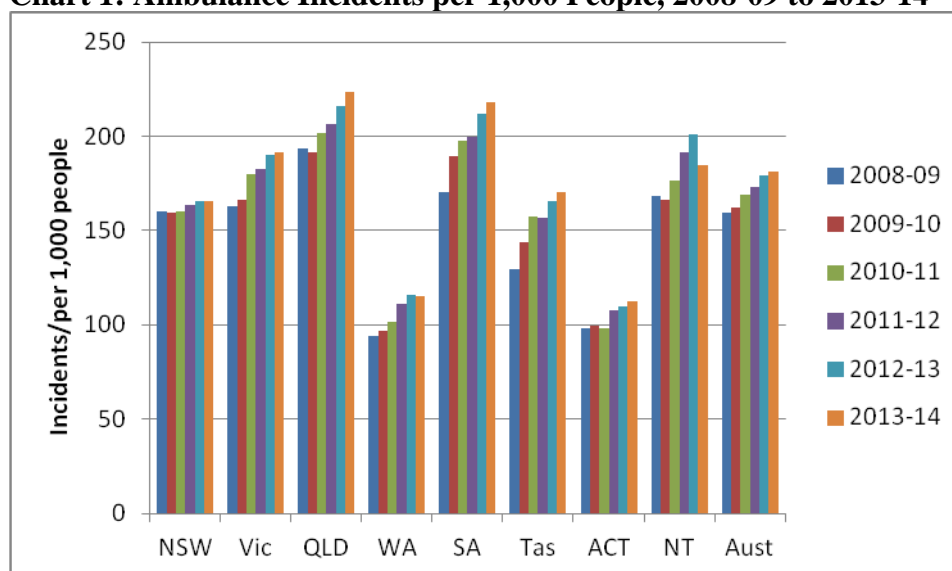
O2C observed that “*until relatively recently ACTAS was a small organisation: everyone knew everyone. Personal ties were important and the organisation operated like a family business. With roots in military structures ACTAS, as an ambulance service, developed a masculine culture based upon command. Staff were largely male and vocational education and training (VET) provided the basis for qualifications and competence.*”

Lennox 2014 notes that “the service has not only benefitted from the investment in new positions – it has grown in stature and wider perspective through an infusion of talented people from other backgrounds (including police and nursing/health) who have added wider perspectives based on their experience in other large organisations combined with their academic studies in various fields.”³

3.5 Service delivery

A snapshot of workload and performance of ACTAS indicates in 2013-14, the total number of incidents attended by ambulance services in the ACT was 43,445, which was 33.4% higher than the 2008-09 figures at 32,549, with an average annual growth of 5.9%. Over the same period, NSW experienced a decline of 5% annually and national growth rate was 1.2%⁴. This graph shows the significant growth in ACTAS.

Chart 1: Ambulance Incidents per 1,000 People, 2008-09 to 2013-14



Source: 2015 Report on Government Services Table 9A.33

The ACT had the third lowest number of incidents per 1,000 people of all jurisdictions in 2013-14 at 113.1 responses. An incident is an emergency event attended to by ACTAS officers in response to a Comcen call-out. This compared with NSW at 97.4 and nationally at 134.5, which is equivalent to around 16% above NSW and 15.9% below the national average⁵.

ACTAS performance standards are among the highest in the country. In 2013-14, 50% of Canberra’s ambulance Priority 1 responses were within 8.2 minutes⁶. This was the fastest response

³ Lennox 2014 page 27.

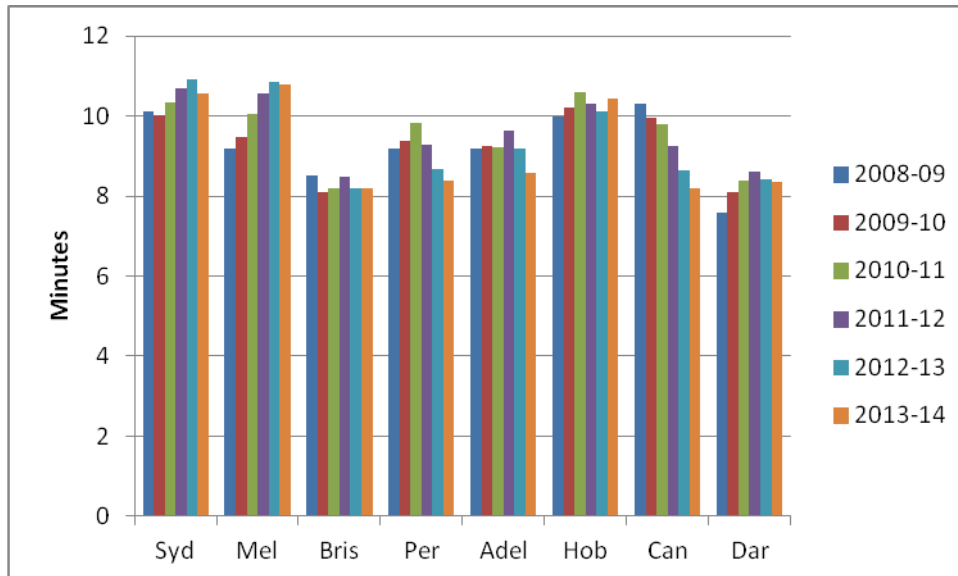
⁴ 2015 Report on Government Services Table 9A.33

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Priority 1 (also known as Code 1) responses to potentially life threatening situations that necessitate the use of ambulance warning devices (lights and sirens)

time along with Brisbane. Melbourne and Sydney had the slowest response times at 10.8 and 10.6 minutes, respectively. ACTAS response times have been consistently improving over the past five years.

Chart 2: Capital City 50th Percentile Response Times, 2008-09 to 2013-14

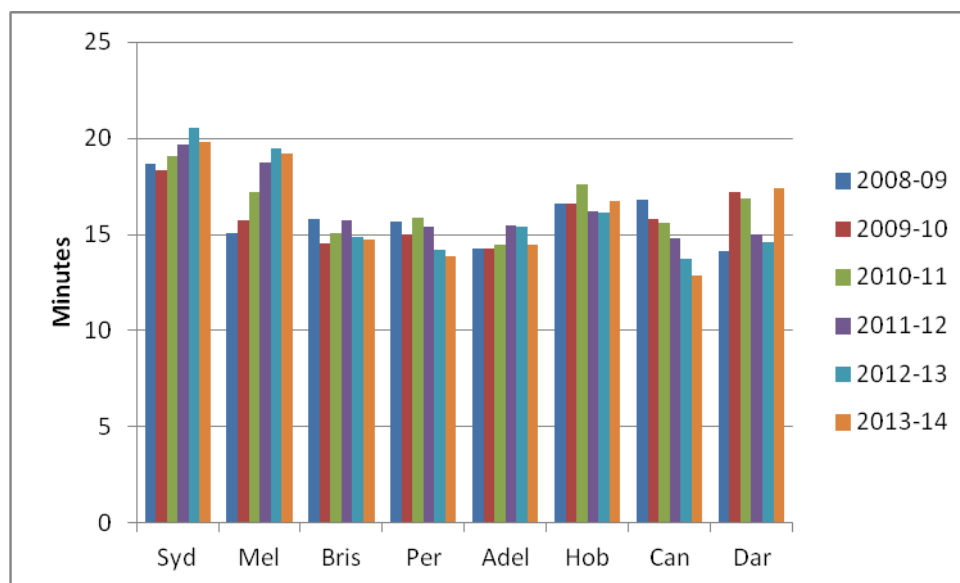


Source: 2015 Report on Government Services Table 9A.44

For response times at the 90th percentile, the ACT recorded the fastest response at 12.9 minutes, with Sydney recording the slowest response at 19.8 minutes. ACT’s response time at the 90th percentile has also been falling over the last five years⁷ (see Chart 3), i.e. the ACT is consistently improving in responding to incidents.

⁷ 2015 Report on Government Services Table 9A.44

Chart 3: Capital City 90th Percentile Response Times, 2008-09 to 2013-14



Source: 2015 Report on Government Services Table 9A.44

3.6 Emergency and Non-Emergency Services

Noting the nature of the service provided by the ACTAS, generally emergency response to potentially traumatic or life threatening circumstances, the work it does is mostly reactive by nature. ACTAS has both emergency and non emergency functions, the latter being Non-Emergency Patient Transport. This group have similarly had changes between the period 2013-2014 with targeted investment being provided by ACT Health to deal with growth in Priority 4 transport functions and improve bed management strategies in ACT hospitals.

3.7 Stakeholders

O2C, through its review process, identified that ACTAS has a number of influential stakeholders including the workforce, management, the ACT Government and the community. O2C observed that the most active and closest of these stakeholders are the workforce, management (includes management and executive), the broader ACT public service, and the union (TWU).

Through its engagement with key stakeholder groups, O2C observed that while there are areas of strength across ACTAS stakeholder attributes, there were also areas of potential conflict, which helps explain the need for change and the strong requirement for cultural standards across ACTAS to be addressed. The following table summarises a broad assessment of the potential areas for conflict within ACTAS at present and possibilities to achieve successful change.

Table 3: Key Stakeholders Attributes

<p style="text-align: center;">Union</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legacy issues • Realignment between work value and professional outcomes • Close relationship with workforce can disempower management <p>+ keen to work for positive change</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ACTPS/JACS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service operational focus conflicts with role as ACTPS <p>+ committed to ensuring “professionalism”, provide administrative support</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally well paid, increasingly university trained, younger, operationally focused • Office and operational elements • Unwedded to professional accountability but want to be a profession <p>+ independent and autonomous, well-spring of ideas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-collegiate approach • Inconsistent vertical/horizontal communication • Functional or business unit focused • Reactive and require alignment as a team <p>+ passionate and committed to doing an individually good job</p>

3.8 Literature Review

The extensive Literature Review conducted by O2C (at [Appendix 1](#)) provides a baseline of the ambulance industry and a foundation for the effective assessment of the ACTAS culture. This makes it clear that the ambulance industry as a whole is still in a period of transition to professional recognition and ACTAS has similar characteristics to many other ambulance services both nationally and internationally. Under the literature review, O2C describe the features of ambulance services nationally and internationally as follows:

- Leadership style – command and appointment driven;
- Risk – at the heart of every decision;
- Capability reviews – many reviews for little action;
- Blame – ‘us’ versus ‘them’ creates stagnation;
- Unionisation – high levels of union membership; and
- Engagement with staff – tendency to focus on capability at expense of staff.

O2C also draws on the work of Wankhade (2010), which identifies four occupational communities with organisations such as ACTAS, of ‘operators’, ‘engineers’, ‘managers’ and ‘executives’ that provides a framework for organisational and cultural analysis.⁸

3.9 Workforce observations

ACTAS employees are employed under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* and bound by public sector values, and clinical governance arrangements relating to paramedic scope of practice, defined by ACTAS.

Following extensive engagement with the ACTAS workforce, O2C observed that a rapid growth in size, a transformation to the nature of work (such as more elderly care, less road accidents), university training as a prerequisite for entry, and an increase in women present both changes and challenges. The observations derive from extensive consultation including 124 respondents to a confidential cultural survey, stakeholder interviews, workshops, 30 worksite visits and 43 individual submissions via email, phone or personal meetings.

Of the changes made in the organisation, Lennox 2014 notes that “*resources have been used well by an energised management team to strengthen every facet of the organisation giving ACTAS a much better platform to face the continual challenges ahead due to further expected growth in ambulance demand. Staff at all levels of the organisation and their union also deserve credit for enabling such a wide ranging raft of reform to be successfully introduced to benefit community safety.*”⁹

Lennox 2014 also acknowledges the improvements and notes the remaining challenges for ACTAS that exist both in terms of attitudes associated with acceptance of deficiency or error; clarity around clinical review processes and disciplinary review processes and the progress of the paramedic profession to achieve registration nationally. His work also highlights the further work on Comcen, clarifying ambulance paramedic and patient transport expectations, focussing on injury prevention and management (employee wellbeing), and registration of the profession is required.

O2C concludes that a transition away from the old model started in 2010, with a review of capability (Lennox, 2010). Subsequently, the past and potential future of ACTAS “*has collided in this transition process*”. It is this conflict that forms the basis for these report findings and establishes a clear imperative for ACTAS to develop a blueprint to help it progress towards professionalism as a cultural standard.

3.10 Industry Direction

The ambulance industry as a whole is in transition towards improved regulation and professionalism. This is currently being progressed through a draft regulatory impact statement, which considers various options towards a national system of registration¹⁰. This requires a more outward looking perspective for ambulance professionals.

⁸ Wankhade, P., (2010), “Cultural characteristics in the ambulance service and its relationship with organisational performance: evidence from the UK.”

⁹ Lennox 2014 page 4

¹⁰ Draft Decision Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) ‘Options for regulation of paramedics’ from September 2014 was considered at COAG Health Council (CHC) and Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (AWMC) meeting on 10 October 2014.

The Literature Review has highlighted that the ambulance industry is currently progressing recognition of paramedics as a profession. This includes consideration of accountability mechanisms and standards.

Various jurisdictions nationally are in the process of recognising the term “*paramedic*” in legislation and applying regulation of its use, which will be dependent on the COAG Health Council’s endorsement of the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) ‘*Options for regulation of paramedics*’. ACTAS is in the same position as the other jurisdictions i.e. the service will undertake a similar process of recognition and inclusion of paramedics in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS) for health professionals once COAG endorsement is finalised.

Lennox 2010 noted of ACTAS: “*The increasing professionalism of paramedic care is now progressively being recognised through transition of paramedics into health professional pay scales alongside nurses and a range of other health professionals*”. Lennox 2014 describes a professional as an “*individual who:*

- *Takes responsibility for their own actions;*
- *Adheres to good governance that direct behaviour;*
- *Meets entry and ongoing competence standards;*
- *Abides by ethical and moral principles; and*
- *Whose practices contribute to the leadership in their profession.”*

Progressing professionalism also requires adaptation of organisational processes, practices, leadership and greater visibility of ambulance activity in the broader governance of the ESA.

The focus, since 2010, has primarily been on acquiring the resource base and reforming operations and procedures to respond to service demands. The evaluation work undertaken by Lennox in 2014, demand analysis by Operational Resource and Health (ORH) on service demand, and advice from O2C, confirms that ACTAS has successfully acquired the necessary resource capability and reformed its practices to meet its current growing demand. However, to ensure that the organisation continues to achieve performance expectation, a number of actions are required to remain adaptive and progress towards professionalism. Referring to Figure 1 at page 10 of this report, this investment is in leadership and strategic capabilities. The associated key areas of focus include improved internal communication, talent management and development of people.

The analysis undertaken by O2C recommends the development of a strategic vision for the ACTAS and associated action plans, developed collaboratively with key stakeholders (staff, ACT Government, ESA and relevant stakeholders).

O2C suggest that the strategic vision should address the following key questions:

- Is the ambulance service the emergency arm of the health system or the health arm of the emergency system?
- How can the changes in scale and nature of the work within ambulance services be accommodated within existing structures and modes of operating?

- What level of risk is acceptable for the conduct of any cultural change?

The evaluation work conducted has made a range of observations, which provide the basis for developing future work programs. This work is complemented by the areas of priority highlighted in Lennox 2014 and the current integration project being progressed in the ESA. These priorities include:

- Implementing common and consistent approaches to planning, performance evaluation and people management;
- Taking an ESA wide approach to risk management;
- Integrating similar activities to ensure redundancy, consistency of approach and efficient use of resources;
- Investing in leadership.

O2C identified “*that the ideal cultural state is collegiate, coherent, and professional and uses best practice procedures. ACTAS is currently in the midst of a transition from what was, to what might be.*” The O2C Literature Review suggests features of high reliability organisations (HROs) as something that ACTAS should strive toward. The features of a HRO are:

1. They accept imperfection and failures as inevitable, but see them as opportunities to learn – and they *treat near-misses as near-hits*.
2. They don’t oversimplify system behaviour modelling, they use sophisticated systems to manage complexity, and they encourage more than one view and approach to operations.
3. Within the HRO someone’s express business is to maintain overall situational awareness.
4. They adopt and retain redundancy and; therefore, the flexibility and resilience to adapt to the unforeseen.
5. They rely on experience and knowledge more so than hierarchical command or management structures to manage the inevitable unforeseen behaviour of imperfect designs and processes.
6. They maintain optimum human stress (not too much, not too little).
7. They maintain an enthusiastic but nervous outlook on positive feedback (good trends) – they appreciate that modern system and processes will exhibit, by and large, non-linear, probabilistic behaviour, and the longer a good trend continues, the closer the next surprise is.

A possible organisational vision identified for ACTAS was “*a world leader in ambulance services*”. Similar phrases and concepts as those associated with peak performing organisations: shared vision, agile, resilient, accountable, leads by example, consistent and positive behaviours were expressed in commentary provided.

4. FINDINGS

Following extensive consultations and engagement with the ACTAS workforce it has been identified that ACTAS needs to implement a number of priority actions in order to quickly address leadership and cultural standards that are currently creating conflict and tethering it from further progression towards professionalisation.

In essence, for ACTAS to progress toward professionalism as a cultural standard, it needs to respond, as a matter of priority, to a range of challenges to address workforce concerns around trust, conflict and leadership. These adaptive challenges are summarised by Figure 2 at page 32.

O2C observed an assumption tacit within the literature that *good* performance may link with *good* culture. Conversely, *poor* culture may contribute to *poor* performance. A poor culture may still produce good performance, although, this may emerge in a less efficient way and the effects of the poor culture will still be apparent within the organisation. This raises the following questions:

Are organisations willing to accept poor culture as long as good performance is delivered in highly visible areas?

Where are the effects of poor culture occurring within the organisation?

The APS Commission indicates from its adaptive capability model that capability includes people and systems whether they be ambulances, communication systems, technical skills, financial or workforce planning “*to be consciously aligned to corporate outcomes and priorities, and lines of accountability for the performance of systems must be clear. Governance systems need to ensure that activities are managed with a strong emphasis on effective risk management*”.¹¹

Progress since 2010 has focussed in technical capacity and resourcing at the expense of investment in leadership, communication and strategy. The rapid change in ACTAS through growth, employee diversification and expanded workforces, such as the paramedic tier, introduction of new layer of management (Duty Officers) and new clinical governance arrangements requires consolidation and clear articulation of strategy going forward. Acknowledging completion of the acquisition stage (or plan, resource and prioritise) ACTAS requires a clearly articulated strategic vision, which needs to consolidate on progress to date and to focus on development of leadership and people management capability including improved processes around feedback, evaluation and workforce communication.

Feedback from the ACTAS workforce, Lennox 2014 and interaction between O2C and employees indicate that there is an immediate requirement to build trust and satisfaction of employees with both the organisation and its leadership.

ACTAS workforce concerns have identified that access to training, career opportunities and general communication within the organisation shows that unresolved conflict and distrust have the

¹¹ Australian Public Service Commission, *Agency Health: Monitoring Agency Health and Improving Performance*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2007, p. 10.

potential to affect organisational health and effectiveness. These go to organisational performance about consistency in decision making which has, in some cases, led to suggestions of favouritism or nepotism and perceptions of inappropriate cultural standards being applied.

Improving levels of trust and reducing blame amongst ACTAS staff are critical factors in enabling the organisation to change and progress towards professionalism into the future. Indeed, this report provides an excellent vehicle and opportunity for ACTAS to draw a line in the sand, to reform under a united blueprint for change, to embrace the adaptive challenges identified for future success and to ensure professionalism as a cultural standard.

A number of major issues confront the organisation including introduction of tertiary qualifications as the primary mechanism for entry and recruitment, changing nature of workforce expectations, changing nature of the work and potential for acceptance as a profession.

Improvements in ACTAS performance measures including response times, patient care and satisfaction and call handling have been acknowledged in Lennox 2014.

The lack of personal development (as compared to technical training) was identified as an area of concern. It supports the observation that during the period of rapid organisational change and growth within ACTAS the focus was more on technical skill acquisition and resource capability with insufficient investment being given to corresponding capabilities associated with leadership development and cultural standards. While on one hand, ACTAS has developed and sustained strong technical skills, this capability was not sufficiently balanced in terms of people management capabilities, such as leadership, teamwork and communication.

O2C identify that growing cultural capability is a particular challenge when the internal and external perspectives of ACTAS expect perfection. As Lennox 2014 explains *“community expectation are that people who hold your life in their hands should be well paid according to their knowledge and skills. But equally the community has a right to expect professional and safe care; an appropriate level of accountability by clinical staff and that the organisation responds effectively to all issues which impact on safe patient care.”*¹²

Dealing with life threatening circumstances leaves little margin for error and requires skills, competence and expertise in treating patients. The level of skill and acumen associated with treating patients appears to encourage ACTAS employees to expect equal commitment in other dealings within the organisation including in activities such administration, training and employee relationships. These are seen as rarely likely to match their expectations. O2C recommend adopting the features of high reliability organisations detailed earlier, as a guide to addressing workforce concerns.

As a sub-agency of the ESA, key business objectives of the ACTAS aligned with the Government’s policy direction and priorities are identified within the Strategic and Corporate Planning Framework of the ESA. If this framework is to be retained, the strategic vision of the ACTAS needs to be much

¹² Lennox 2014

more visible and communicated to enable senior leaders to engage and lead all staff and the organisation towards a shared future where professionalism is adopted as a cultural standard.

Important themes emerged from the literature review and from consultation with ACTAS staff. These include progressing a vision that ACTAS is positioned due to its size and agility to be a leader in the ambulance profession, and that organisational infrastructure such as remuneration and employee conditions are considered as good. The observations detailed by O2C provide the foundation for the actions required going forward.

The associated findings and recommendations are summarised as follows.

4.1 Finding 1 – Nature of the workforce

Conflict and distrust seem to be widespread across the ambulance industry (*see Literature Review*) and in the case of ACTAS there are high levels of conflict as borne out in the range of observations, feedback and workshops conducted by O2C. Similarly the comments made by Lennox about cultural issues in progressing improvements in clinical governance, support observations by staff that they do not receive a lot of positive feedback, that they generally hear negative feedback and are only sought out when something is wrong.

One of the main issues raised was the sharing of confidential or personal information, especially from management.

There appears to be a lack of communication associated with the strategic direction and reasons for some decisions. Staff feedback indicates that they are being told that something is in the “*big picture*” but are unclear of what the “*big picture*” actually is, or what it relates to.

Shift work, workload (service demand) and the costs associated with staff being off-shift and unavailable to the roster, present a range of challenges from balancing family responsibilities, encouraging collaboration, and delivering training over and above technical and professional development requirements. Each of these is identified as concerns of ACTAS staff.

On the issue of divisions among workforces, comments such as “*if not in green you are not seen*” summarise perceptions about the primacy of different workforces within ACTAS and their likeliness to have more favourable treatment and organisational opportunity.

O2C note that “*few real explanations are offered by those interviewed for the conflict beyond the existence of work pressure (both in terms of the amount of work and its challenging nature) and the lack of fully adaptive organisational structures*”.

O2C also observe that little was said by those consulted about the needs for and delivery of leadership and management training. They note that in organisations where the leaders are typically promoted from the operator level, this can lead to a major gap in capability and without future investment in this key enabler (leadership), individual and hence organisational performance may be compromised.

The O2C evaluations have not explored the effectiveness of workplace wellbeing strategies or the nature of the work (ambulance response) and its impact. Lennox 2014 also identified this as an area for further focus.

Summary: Dispelling fear and promoting trust within ACTAS is essential to developing a professional future for the service. The acceptance of individual accountability for performance, actions and behaviour is also crucial.

4.2 Finding 2 – Blame and bullying

Linked to Findings 1 and 3, issues of blaming and bullying (alleged or actual) are widespread features of the ambulance world according to the literature. The review finds ACTAS is no exception¹³.

It was generally found that ACTAS staff were often too focused on themselves (a “me first” focus) rather than as a collective or service and this, in part, contributed to the blaming effects. O2C advised that “*individuals at all levels of ACTAS were quick to blame the ubiquitous and amorphous ‘they’ for their individual troubles. When pressed, ‘they’ quickly transformed into anyone and everyone above ‘me’ in the organisation.*”

This individual focus limits self reflection or an organisation focus and significantly constrains ACTAS (and potentially the ambulance industry) from progressing towards professionalism as a cultural standard, or embracing a culture of continuous improvement. The APS Commission’s capability model notes that “*an evidence-based approach (to determine strategy) can be strengthened by a culture that is outward facing and willing to evaluate and measure outcomes through feedback*”. An integrated performance management system and associated staff feedback is lacking in ACTAS.

A focus on evaluation, self reflection, taking responsibility for actions and strong performance feedback are key to both being professional and effective organisational capability.

Summary: Understanding, identifying unacceptable behaviour is crucial to creating an acceptable culture. Establishing and enforcing appropriate procedures for unacceptable behaviour is necessary.

4.3 Finding 3 – Implementation of Respect Equity Diversity Framework

Linked to finding 2, recent consultations by O2C suggest that there has been a decline in confidence of cultural standards by its employees.

It was found that ACTAS does not sufficiently adhere to, or support, the ACTPS Respect, Equity and Diversity (RED) framework. O2C advised that “*the RED framework is not seen to be lived in ACTAS.*” While ACTAS staff feedback indicates that the ACTPS values enshrined by the RED framework were not seen in action by executive leaders, those results did indicate that there had been an improvement at that time in “*the training provided in the last 12 months to address harassment and bullying.*” Similarly there was a perception that managers were prepared to eliminate harassment and bullying. These results followed the delivery of the RED Framework Training to ACTAS employees.

¹³ Investigation of specific claims was beyond the O2C remit.

The principles of respect, equity and diversity are not only true, but they are fundamental and critical to the success of the any high performing organisation. The benefits of valuing diversity, creating respectful and fair workplaces and promoting opportunity include increased levels of employee engagement, heightened levels of workplace participation and innovation, and significantly enhance the productivity and sustainability of an organisation to adapt and meet the needs of the future. Fundamentally, a positive workplace culture rests on the principles of respect, equity and diversity and enables people to be more involved, contribute and achieve their full potential; and for organisations to also achieve their full potential.

Adopting the ACTPS RED framework and ensuring that all ACTAS staff fully understand, embrace and ‘live’ its values is an essential element of the required change process for ACTAS to improve cultural standards and progress towards professionalism.

Summary: Implementing the RED framework in a coordinated and effective fashion including regular auditing of progress is necessary to address this and the first two findings.

4.4 Finding 4 – The role of the ACTAS Chief Officer and leadership

The role of the ACTAS Chief Officer and leadership is critical in helping to build an adaptive and resilient workforce that has a strategic vision, a unified sense of purpose and direction, high behavioural standards, open lines of communication and feedback, high levels of trust and workforce harmony.

The APS Commission’s work on organisational capability suggests that “*leaders have a significant impact on levels of staff motivation and engagement. When these levels are high, they provide a basis for unifying staff around a common set of values and behaviours that promote enthusiasm to achieve, and challenge the organisation to improve. Effective leaders inspire and earn respect and, in return, are provided with loyalty and the confidence of staff and stakeholders*”.¹⁴

ACTAS has undergone considerable change in the last few years and the role of the Chief Officer to lead and clearly communicate a strategic vision for the organisation has not been sufficiently visible according to O2C consultations. Concerns about transparency in decision making and managing performance across senior leadership roles has resulted in levels of conflict and mistrust developing across ACTAS affecting overall cultural standards.

There is a strong and definite need for the ESA Commissioner and ACTAS Chief Officer to clearly articulate an understanding of themes and issues raised by employees, to clearly outline a personal plan of action and commitment towards change, and to provide a supportive environment for ACTAS to embrace the necessary ‘adaptive challenge’ required to progress towards professionalism as a cultural standard.

¹⁴ Australian Public Service Commission State of the Service 2010-11 <http://www.apsc.gov.au/about-the-apsc/parliamentary/state-of-the-service/state-of-the-service-2010/chapter-10-organisational-capability>

The ACTPS Executive Capabilities emphasise setting direction, motivating people and developing employees as key characteristics of leadership capability. The Chief Officer is an executive role and is required to achieve these capabilities.

O2C note that Lennox 2010 recommended a significant shift for the organisation and that Lennox 2014 evaluated the progress of the implementation of many technical and clinical changes. These changes have altered the way things are done within the organisation with O2C commented that many “*personnel within ACTAS felt challenged or threatened by these changes*”.

Leading change successfully is fundamental to the role of the ACTAS Chief Officer and work is required to ensure that that any future direction is developed collaboratively with the workforce and provides a compelling and coherent vision for ACTAS to embrace as a whole. The ACTAS Chief Officer is responsible for leading and managing change and galvanising the action necessary for improved cultural standards. The perceptions expressed by staff during the various evaluations and consultations warrant a clear acknowledgement by the ACTAS Chief Officer that fully embraces and acknowledges the key themes identified, as well as a clear statement of intent, supported by the ESA Commissioner, describing the actions to be taken to implement and drive the necessary change process.

A key accountability of the ACTAS Chief Officer is to ensure that the range of systems and processes are in place so that:

- ACTAS has the people with the right skills to deliver strategic outcomes, including identifying and addressing capability gaps;
- alignment of staff performance with strategic priorities and that performance is managed transparently and consistently—rewarding good performance and tackling poor performance; and
- ACTAS effectively identifies and nurtures leadership and manages talent in individuals and across teams.

Noting the organisational governance arrangements within which all ACT emergency response services operate, the employees of ACTAS are employees of the ACTPS. The employment relationship includes the Director-General of the Justice and Community Safety Directorate and the ESA Commissioner, should have a clear and active role in supporting and monitoring the progress of the ACTAS Chief Officer to implement the Change Implementation Program, which responds to issues raised through these reviews.

Summary: Determining the requisite skills and behaviours for leading ACTAS now is essential to steering ACTAS through the transition process.

4.5 Finding 5 – Links to military systems

The *Literature Review* demonstrated ambulance services have a long history as ‘*uniformed*’ hierarchies with a ‘command and control’ logic. O2C suggest that this seems largely unquestioned, which is problematic since the application of this methodology, neither strongly conforms to military best practice on the one hand nor, on the other, does this fit with the changing nature of ambulance work. The collegial nature of a profession, for example, is likely to further impact on this leadership model. Indeed, given the small team nature of the work of ambulance services

(including ACTAS), the most appropriate military model to identify with, if any, would be special forces units. These units often operate in small teams require a high degree of autonomy, have a considerable degree of operational flexibility and skill level. O2C suggests that ACTAS, like many other ambulance services, has yet to resolve the issue.

O2C identify that being a uniformed service brings clear advantages in emergency situations, principally centred on recognition by the public and by other emergency services. At the same time, a rank based hierarchy with expectations that ‘*orders will be obeyed*’ cannot function effectively without a strong system of leadership training and development as well a clear resolution of the boundaries between rank based authority and professional expertise and judgement. This is identified as major weakness in the way ACTAS currently operates and is something that needs to be addressed as part of its progression to professionalism.

Summary: Investigation and adoption of an appropriate leadership style and framework is necessary.

4.6 Finding 6 – Talent management and succession planning

The review found common concerns were expressed about level of access within the organisation to training and career development opportunities.

O2C observed that “*all organisations have underlying assumptions (often unconscious) driving talent management, succession planning and career development. Organisations typically promote like for like, which some sociologists label ‘homo-social reproduction’. That is, the leaders of an organisation promote subordinates that match and align with their own views and behaviours. So, unconsciously people behave in ways that align with the promotion authorities within their organisation – typically the senior leaders. Often these assumptions manifest in perceptions concerning explanations for promotions.*”

Both O2C and Lennox 2014 refer to a driving perception in some parts of: “*if you’re not in green you’re not seen.*” O2C suggest this implies that you need to be a paramedic to make any career progress and that progress relies on access and acceptance by the senior leaders. Lennox 2014 notes that through tiering of ambulance activity the “*widespread desire of many PTS (patient transport staff) staff in every jurisdiction to progress to paramedic roles. However the difference in clinical knowledge and skills and selection criteria for the two roles (i.e. paramedics and patient transport officers) are significantly different and tertiary study options are available and open to those who meet entrance requirements.*”¹⁵

The introduction of different service tiers and operational personnel and the perceptions of each group’s contribution to the organisations strategic direction and outcomes require acknowledgement and communication to employees.

As per findings 1-4, O2C concludes that the “*system of leadership, the type of behaviours and the culture all highlight the lack of appropriate talent management and succession planning.*” They

¹⁵ Lennox 2014 page 35

indicate that what “was noticeable during workshops and interviews with the different levels of leadership was how often they complained/blamed the other levels” without sufficient awareness that “their behaviours were aligned with those they complained about.”

O2C identify that the lack of investment in leadership training and professional development has created organisational blind spots. The review process noted that the type of behaviours observed and workforce feedback received highlight the weaknesses of appropriate talent management and of succession planning being adopted.

Summary: Talent management, succession planning and leadership development are hallmarks of peak performing organisations and assist with future proofing the organisation.

4.7 Finding 7 – Lack of strategic vision

A number of ambulance services in other jurisdictions have developed and, in some cases, implemented a strategic vision (including Tasmania, NSW, Victoria and South Australia).

Both leaders and management of ACTAS appear to reflect the nature of the business - reactive and operationally focused. This hampers the establishment of a strategic vision and planning. Leadership is required to demonstrate its capability to set direction by developing and providing a compelling and coherent vision for the organisation. The absence of an articulated and understood vision developed through engagement with staff limits the ability to plan for the challenges of the future, and ultimately any plan’s success.

ACTAS requires a strategic vision to meet the government’s policy direction and priorities and enable senior leaders to engage and lead all staff and the organisation towards a shared future state. To achieve this, ACTAS needs to invest time to support and develop an organisational vision that unites the workforce and helps support it to progress towards professionalism as a cultural standard.

Summary: Develop a strategic vision to set the foundation for the ACTAS of the future and assist senior leadership to develop the necessary skills to achieve this vision.

4.8 Finding 8 – Scalability

Ambulance services are experiencing rapid changes, increasing demand and growth worldwide. Most reviews reference this, but fail to ask whether the changes in scale and nature can be accommodated within existing organisational models.

In the case of ACTAS the growth in recent years has not been matched with a concomitant increase in managerial (and leadership) skills and (non-clinical) professional standards. This rapid growth has created significant management challenges for ACTAS and its cultural standards.

As a result, cultural standards for things like workplace communications and behaviours that have survived from an earlier period have failed to transform to the current operating environment. This has resulted in a methodology overly reliant upon personalised relationships being retained in changed conditions that no longer make that approach effective, rather than a focus on achievement or universal access.

Summary: ACTAS and ambulance services in general require adopting a new model of thinking and operating to meet the needs of the society in which they operate.

4.9 Finding 9 – Professionalisation

There is considerable discussion of the growing professionalisation of the ambulance workforce. This discussion not only neglects questions about professional development, but also neither fully resolves issues about professional status and union membership, nor the closely related question of status culture (white collar vs. blue collar). In other words, what type of workforce are ambulance services and how to reconcile a series of competing identities such as VET versus tertiary trained etc?

In the case of ACTAS, while some important initiatives have been taken in the clinical areas, insufficient focus has been placed on developing professionalism as a cultural standard. This is linked to a number of features. Prominent among them is insufficient investment in professional development in human relations, management and leadership along with a failure to develop guidelines that help link together organisational structure and role responsibilities, professional healthcare standards and the deployment of staff in an optimal manner.

Summary: Establishing paramedics as a profession may address some of these issues. Professionalisation of ACTAS and staff through understanding and delivering on the requirements of that terms in ALL situations rather than just clinical will underpin the future ACTAS.

4.10 Finding 10 – Adaptive organisations

More broadly than the ambulance service literature, excellent work exists on the attributes of peak performing and high reliability organisations with strong adaptive cultures that transcend blaming.

While well known in the general world of organisation theory, discussion of these issues hardly appears in the relevant ambulance review work, suggesting that this takes place largely inside a ‘bubble’ of localised expertise that is unconnected with more general expertise. The size of ACTAS and indeed the ACT and its location within ESA provide opportunity for driving the type of change seen with adaptive organisations.

These include:

- Improving collaboration (and in turn interoperability) on issues both within and across multi disciplined emergency service teams – the current integration projects in ESA provide opportunity for this.
- Removing segmentation and improving communication between groups – the proposed approach to development of a strategic vision and action plan (or common purpose) for change should ensure engagement with a cross cut of the organisation. Similarly the work currently underway on projects such as the Women in Emergency Services Strategy and various working groups should encourage the building of trust, collaboration and sharing of ideas across ACTAS and the broader ESA.

Interactions with employees including observations in Lennox 2014 highlight the achievements of the ACTAS. Successes such as the performance of ambulance response identified in the Report on Government Services and recent awards for the implementation of the Extended Care Paramedic Program to the ACT Community provides validation for the achievements of the organisation and should be shared and celebrated as a collective.

Summary: Creating a sense of belonging and opportunity in staff are essential aspects of peak performing organisations.

4.11 Finding 11 – Retention

Lennox (2014) states that: “ACTAS has gone from having the worst ambulance attrition level of all Australian ambulance services (of 10% per annum) to a 2.6% attrition rate, which is far below the national average rate” (Lennox 2014, p.3). Changes in ambulance utilisation due to Lennox (2010) have ensured the more appropriate and effective use of ambulance resources.

Whether ACTAS has the worst rate or one far below average is immaterial, what is relevant is establishing the right rate of retention for an organisation of small size delivering a specialist outcome with relatively few levels for advancement.

The key question for ACTAS is what is the ideal level of retention for the service?

Summary: Identifying the right level of retention and the right people to retain is fundamental to promoting the right culture.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

O2C have summarised the challenges facing ACTAS and possible framework to achieving the necessary reforms in Figure 2 (at page 32).

This framework is referred to as the “*adaptive challenge*” and requires the transformation of the existing ACTAS cultural standards to one more aligned with a future vision of professionalism.

Attributes of adaptive organisation structures include:

- The ability for all employees and groups within an organisation to collaborate effectively
- The ability for all employees at all levels to network with others outside the organisation, gaining new sources of useful information and helpful perspectives in the process. This includes networking with customers and other stakeholders, external industry experts, even with competitors or rivals
- The ability for all employees at all levels to innovate and experiment without fear of “*reprisal*” or marginalisation. Instead, where the culture of the organisation is to reward those who think innovatively, participants saw the greatest success in adapting to solve the pressing issues the organisation faces¹⁶

The diagram was developed in conjunction with key stakeholders at the Executive Futures Workshop. The pathway to moving forward is detailed in the draft Change Implementation Action Plan.

¹⁶ Creating Adaptive Organizations: <http://www.amanet.org/training/articles/Creating-Adaptive-Organizations.aspx>

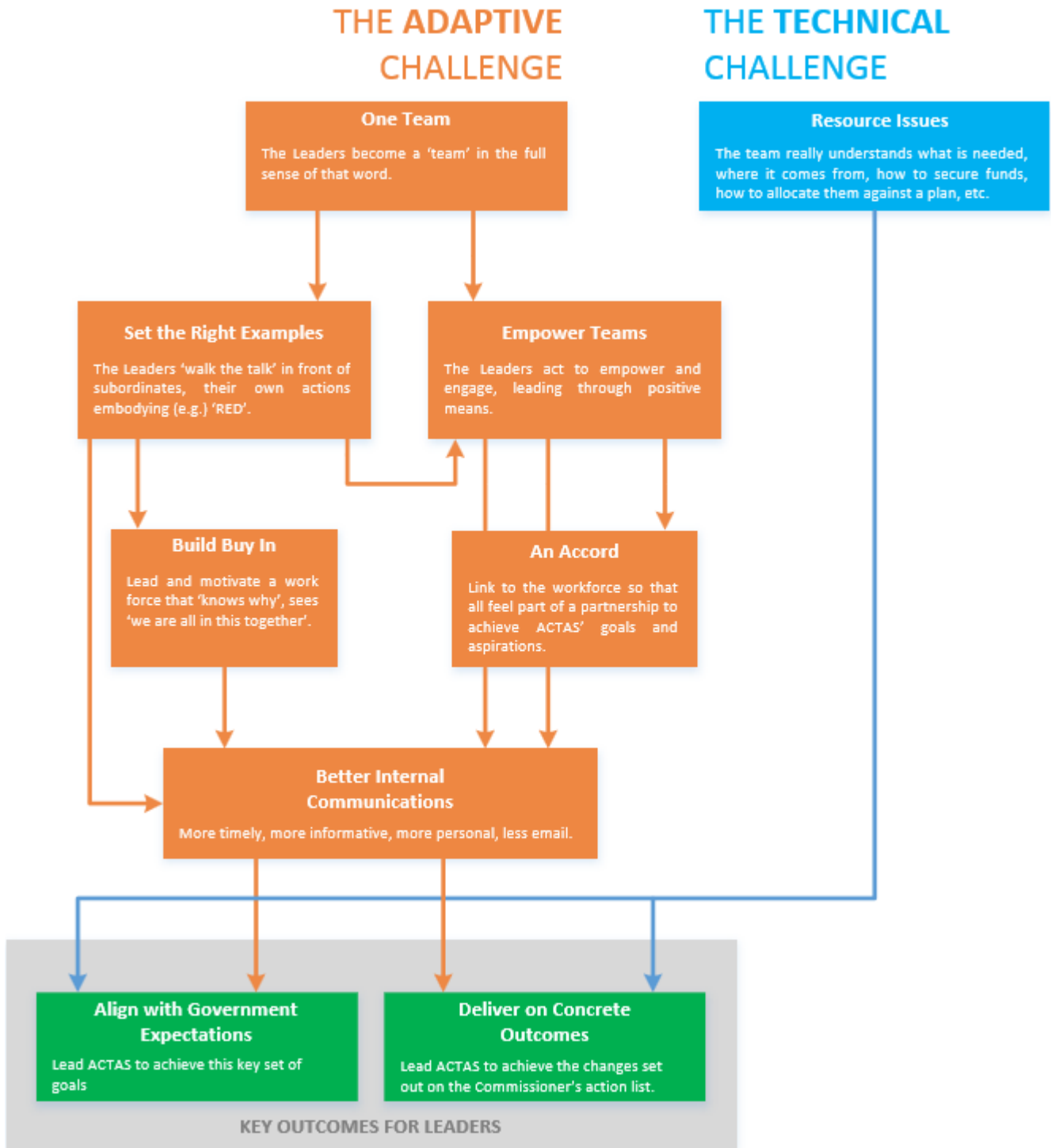


Figure 2: The Adaptive Challenge – Basis for Recommendations

5.1 Recommendation # 1 – Implementation Charter

An implementation charter should be developed by ACTAS, in consultation with key stakeholders, which sets a clear commitment and process for implementing an effective transition process from to progress towards professionalism as the cultural standard.

Leading change requires a unified team to present a united and compelling vision. An implementation charter provides the foundation upon which to address the adaptive challenge and would include an outline of key activities, responsibility for actions, timeframes for change and measures of success.

What does this look like? A facilitated workshop series with the ESA Commissioner and ACTAS Chief Officer, JACS Directorate representatives and TWU representatives to establish an endorsed action plan.

Outcome – The key stakeholders leading change with a consistent message and agreed benchmarks and timelines.

5.2 Recommendation # 2 – Professionalism as a Cultural Standard

The ACTAS Chief Officer, supported by ESA Commissioner and other key stakeholders, delivers a clear commitment statement that affirms the need to transform the organisation, address existing challenges and best positions it to progress towards professionalism as a cultural standard.

Accepting accountability and setting the tone and expectation from the highest levels of ACTAS and ESA at the outset will help create the necessary buy-in and trust required by the overall workforce to support this change program and will be critical to its successful implementation.

This clear statement of intent, coupled with aligned support from the ESA Commissioner, will assist the ACTAS Chief Officer and senior leadership staff to clearly communicate and demonstrate the necessary commitment, drive and cultural standards necessary to support this change process.

What does this look like? Consistent public and internal messaging acknowledging the need for change and outlining key stakeholder unity and expectation of participation in the process.

Outcome – Conditions set for ACTAS Chief Officer and senior staff to communicate same commitment and for development and delivery of Adaptive Challenge program.

5.3 Recommendation # 3 – ACTAS/Emergency Services Leadership Framework

The organisation Leadership Framework (LF) outlines the expectations, requirements, accountabilities and consequences at relevant levels within ACTAS.

ACTAS requires a consistent and integrated LF within the context of the Emergency Services. This report highlights ACTAS are in a position to lead within Emergency Services to design and implement the LF. An effective LF would cover operational, administrative and behaviour aspects to ensure alignment between individual actions and organisational direction. Collaboration between management, staff and TWU delegates in developing the LF would ensure an agreed and unified outcome.

The LF provides the mechanism for the development of the supporting initial and on-going leadership programs for ACTAS staff.

What does this look like? A collaborative process to emphasis engagement and set accountability through an open facilitated workshop series.

Outcome – LF includes clear expectations and measurements relating to how leadership is demonstrated within ACTAS.

5.4 Recommendation # 4 – 360 degree feedback of leaders (managers & supervisors)

The LF provides an opportunity to identify and conduct an evaluation of ACTAS leaders – in the first instance. The evaluation should align to the measures and requirements within the LF. A multi-rater evaluation can be used at all leadership levels.

360 degree feedback assists with providing individuals a range of perspectives on their behaviours and performance. Such evaluations also assist in encouraging individual accountability horizontally and vertically within organisations. This forms part of the communication strategy (see Recommendation # 7) and also contributes to measurement (see Recommendation # 8)

What does this look like? The engagement of relevant ACTAS personnel in contributing to the development of leadership within the organisation.

Outcome – Balanced evaluation of performance to inform development and action

5.5 Recommendation # 5 – Leadership Development

ACTAS need to develop a unified Leadership Team to implement the agreed future vision with staff. The Leadership Program uses information from the LF (recommendation # 3) and the feedback (recommendation # 4) to create the necessary accepted norms and behaviours required of the senior leaders within ACTAS.

What does this look like? A series of workshops for leaders designed to establish a One Team approach.

Outcome – ACTAS leaders function as One Team equipped to lead ACTAS towards the future vision.

5.6 Recommendation # 6 – Staff Workshop Series

The proposed workshop series operates on two levels. The first level reinforces the intent of the ACTPS Respect Equity and Diversity (RED) Framework. All employees should attend this compulsory workshop addressing acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, process for dealing with issues, and accountability and responsibility at various levels. This should be complemented by implementation of performance management plans which set out expectations, responsibilities, and behaviours to help enhance cultural standards across ACTAS (and also ESA).

What does this look like? A series of workshops designed to reinforce the LF accountabilities and behaviours.

Outcome – Alignment of staff with future vision, their role and requirements.

5.7 Recommendation # 7 – Communication Strategy

A coordinated communication strategy addressing all external and internal stakeholders supports the implementation and roll-out of the recommendations. The strategy cascades through ACTAS enabling all personnel to operate as both deliverers and receivers of messages.

What does this look like? A multi-channel communication strategy accessing stakeholders through preferred channels with clear, consistent messages. This involves significant collaboration with stakeholders, especially the staff.

Outcome – All stakeholders are communicators. Consequently, they understand the purpose of the Adaptive Challenge Program and can convey this message to others in their network.

5.8 Recommendation # 8 – Governance and Measurement

Program measurement is conducted through incorporating effective evaluation most likely leveraging the ACTAS Staff Survey results. This would ensure a like for like measurement before, during and after the conduct of any program. There is also the availability of pulse check surveys, which allow instantaneous, confidential and selective workplace sampling. This type of measurement may be useful on an ongoing basis.

Governance requires the institution of a process to maintain effective oversight of the implementation of the recommendations. Governance starts with clear reporting by the ESA Commissioner and ACTAS Chief Officer to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services on implementation progress, and cascades from this point of accountability.

What does this look like?

- *the ESA Commissioner and the ACTAS Chief Officer to report to the Minister (at least quarterly) on the progress of implementing this blueprint's recommendations.*
- *establish a Change Implementation Review Group (IRG) drawing on senior stakeholders such as the ESA Commissioner, ACTAS Chief Officer, JACS representatives and TWU delegates. The IRG agrees Terms of Reference signed off by the Minister to establish a process to monitor, supervise and implement the recommendations.*

Outcome – Effective implementation of change which transitions towards the endorsed future vision.

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