



St John Ambulance Australia (NSW)

First Aid Services

Equipment Maintenance Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) is committed to ensuring that all equipment used and operated by First Aid Services staff is serviced and in good working order. St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) and its management and officers have a duty of care to the volunteer and paid employees that they are working in a safe working environment.

1.1. Purpose

The objective is to provide a clear and understandable framework for the service and maintenance of equipment owned and operated by St John Ambulance Australia (NSW)

1.2. Within Scope

This policy shall apply to all equipment owned and operated by St John Ambulance Australia (NSW). Equipment that is used by St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) volunteers or employees that is not owned by St John Ambulance, should be thoroughly inspected before use and not used if it is not safe to operate.

1.3. Out of Scope

This policy excludes vehicles (marked or unmarked) used by volunteers or employees. Standards regarding vehicles can be found in the Vehicle Policy (4.2).

1.4. Responsibility

State Superintendent

The State Superintendent is responsible for:

- Ensuring that an equipment maintenance policy is in place ;
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy within the state ; and
- Managing any disciplinary breaches of the policy, reported by Regional Superintendents.

The State Operations Officer

The State Operations Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that State owned equipment is compliant with this policy;
- Ensuring that any equipment used at State Events is compliant with this policy; and
- Ensuring that any breaches to policy are reported and addressed.

Regional Superintendent

The Regional Superintendent is responsible for:

- Ensuring that an equipment maintenance policy is in place in the Region ;
- Ensuring that any Regionally owned equipment is compliant to policy;
- Monitoring the availability of equipment in a region;
- Monitoring Division's compliance to the policy ; and

- Managing any disciplinary breaches of the policy, reported by Divisional Superintendents

Divisional Superintendent

The Divisional Superintendent is responsible for:

- Ensuring that an equipment maintenance policy is in place in the Division;
- Monitoring Division's compliance to the policy ; and
- Managing any disciplinary breaches of the policy, reported by members

Responsibilities of the Superintendent can be delegated, at the discretion of the Superintendent.

2. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

2.1. Commitments to the membership

St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) is committed to ensuring that volunteers and employees are working in a safe environment. This commitment extends to the equipment that members use on duty and off duty.

Members have a responsibility to themselves and to their peers to ensure that all equipment is in good working condition and that the equipment is being used in accordance to its operating instructions.

Breaches of this are serious and should be reported to the relevant superintendent.

2.2. Equipment servicing providers

When ever equipment is serviced it should be serviced and maintained by a licensed maintenance provider. Members are discouraged from completing maintenance themselves unless they are suitably qualified.

Members are encouraged to conduct regular inspections of equipment and to report and document any issues. Equipment that has been damaged or has had defects reported – should be tagged as “out of service” until the equipment is fixed.

2.3. The costs of servicing

The cost of servicing equipment should be built into the initial purchase decision. The unit that is responsible for storing and administrating the equipment is responsible for ensuring that it is serviced and in working condition.

2.4. The priority of servicing

Servicing of equipment is a top priority for St John Ambulance Australia (NSW). St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) needs to maintain an operational readiness that allows near immediate deployment. To do this, equipment needs to be available and in service.

Any equipment that is expected to be out of service for an extended period of time should be reported to the Regional Superintendent so they do not rely on this equipment during a deployment.

2.5. Specific Equipment Servicing Expectations

The following section outlines specific service expectations of particular equipment currently in use in NSW. Any equipment not mentioned in this section, should be serviced in accordance with the manufacturers recommendation. If there is no recommended service level, then equipment should be visually inspected before use to ensure that it is in safe operating condition.

2.5.1. Automatic External Defibrillators

The following should apply to all Defibrillators :

- A visual inspection and check of pads, battery and self test should be completed before the equipment is deployed for duty. This test should be conducted by the member responsible for using the AED when on duty or the team leader of a first aid post
- The pads and batteries should be replaced when they have passed their expiry date
- Servicing of the AED unit itself varies by brand:
 - Laedal Models: The manufacturer recommends servicing every 12 months for all Laedal AEDs, unless there is specific damage or issues with the unit.
 - Cardiac Science: The manufacturer recommends servicing every 5 years for all Cardiac Science AEDs unless the unit indicates that it requires servicing.
 - Any other brand: Any other brand of AED should be serviced every 12 months, unless specifically instructed by the manufacturer.

If any brand of AED fails a “self test” then it should be tagged “out of service” and sent for servicing immediately.

Servicing of AED equipment can be coordinated through the Smithfield Customer Service centre. Divisions should contact the Business Centre directly to arrange servicing of Divisional Equipment.

2.5.2. Oxygen and Entonox Equipment

The following should apply to oxygen and entonox equipment (irrespective of whether it is stored in a back pack, steel box or otherwise)

- A visual inspection should be completed before the equipment is deployed for duty. This test should be conducted by the member responsible for using the oxygen or entonox equipment when on duty or the team leader of a first aid post
- The regulator should be serviced every 12 months by a licensed technician or earlier if specified by the manufacturer (AS3551).
- Any cylinders should be rotated at least every 12 months

If the oxygen or entonox equipment appears to have a leak or the regulator doesn't appear to be working correctly the equipment should be tagged “out of service” and sent for servicing immediately.

Servicing of oxygen equipment can be coordinated through the Smithfield Customer Service centre. Divisions should contact the Business Centre directly to arrange servicing of Divisional Equipment.

2.5.3. Stretchers

2.5.3.1. General/Folding hand carry stretchers

There is no specific standard for the servicing of the following stretchers:

- Pole Fruley
- Folding Furley
- M Type

To ensure safe operation, this equipment should be visually inspected (by the equipment owner) on an annual basis to ensure that the poles are in good condition, are rust free and handgrips are in good condition.

The stretcher material (plastic or canvas) should also be inspected to ensure that there are no holes, tears or other damage to surface of the stretcher.

If any damage is observed then the stretcher should not be used. The stretcher should be disposed of or tagged as out of service.

2.5.3.2. Wheelchairs & Carry Chairs

To ensure safe operation, this equipment should be inspected visually on an annual basis (by the equipment owner) to ensure that the frame and wheels are in good condition, are rust free and handgrips are in good condition. The seat material (plastic or canvas) should also be inspected to ensure that there are no holes, tears or other damage to surface of the chair.

If any damage is observed then the wheel/carry chair should not be used. The equipment should be disposed of or tagged as out of service.

2.5.3.3. Ambulance Trolley Stretchers

Based on recommendations from the stretcher manufacturers, ambulance stretchers should be serviced, once every 6 months to ensure that the equipment is in good working order.

Servicing of stretchers can be coordinated through the FAS Office. Divisions and Regions should contact the FAS Office directly to arrange servicing of equipment.

2.5.4. Communications equipment

Regular maintenance of handheld and mobile radios will help to ensure years of trouble free operation.

Radios should be stored in dry, warm and reasonably dust free environments. Regular use will not damage a radio. Faults are just as likely to occur in a radio that is stored in a cupboard, as one that is used every day. If radios are going to be stored for long periods, they should be tested regularly. They should also have their batteries removed.

Handheld radios are not waterproof. They should not be exposed to continuous rain, or submerged in water. If a radio has been submerged in salt water, urgent action must be taken if the radio is going to be repaired. For instructions, contact the State Communications Officer as a matter of urgency.

Regular testing should be conducted on all radios to ensure that they are operating correctly. All controls should be tested to ensure that they operate without noise or obstruction. A test of the transmit and receive functions should also be carried out on a regular basis.

Handheld radios should also be cleaned on a regular basis. Surface dust should be removed with a damp cloth. Do not use cleaning agents on the radio. The battery terminals should be checked for oxidation (rust).

If a radio is not functioning properly, the following checklist may help to eliminate the cause.

- Is the antenna connected properly?
- Is the radio on the correct channel?
- Is the radio turned on?
- Is the volume correctly set?
- Is the squelch adjusted properly?
- Is the radio set to closed channel?
- Is the PTT switch pressed correctly?
- Is there a battery installed, is it charged or recently changed?
- Remove accessories (earpiece, hand-mike etc). Does the problem still exist? Is the problem with the accessory?

Do not tamper with inside of the radio. There are no user serviceable items inside the radio. If the controls and battery have been checked and the problem still exists, record the details on an Equipment Service Request and return the radio to the State Operations Group for servicing. Describe the fault in as much detail as possible, including:

- Is the problem with receiving or transmitting?
- What causes the problem?
- When did the problem start?
- Is the problem with an accessory?

Handheld radios are powered by rechargeable Nickel Cadmium (NiCad) batteries. Treated properly, these batteries will provide many years of service. If not maintained, they may have a very short usable life.

Any faults should be reported, equipment removed from service and contact made with the State Operations Group to arrange repair.

2.5.5. Office equipment

Office equipment includes facsimile machines, computers, shredders, printers and photocopiers.

Some photocopiers and printers have a manufacturers recommendation of a service frequency. If a service frequency is not specified then this equipment should be serviced at least once in every 5 years.

2.5.6. Electrical leads

Any electrical leads and equipment likely to be used on duty or during a disaster should be tagged by a person that is competent in testing and tagging electrical equipment. Tags should be renewed every 12 months. This is a NSW Workcover requirement of electrical leads used in construction or hostile environments (Occupational Health & Safety Act & AS 3760)

Electrical equipment and leads that are used in an office or static environment are not required to be tested and tagged. Divisions choosing to tag and test this equipment are encouraged to complete this task as it reduces the risk of electrical hazards for members.

2.5.7. Fire Extinguishers & Smoke Alarms

Portable fire extinguishers and hose reels should be inspected every six months in accordance with AS 1851.

Smoke alarms should be tested every six months and batteries should be replaced every six months. It is preferred that all smoke alarms are dual powered (240 v and battery powered).

2.5.8. Vehicles & Trailers

Maintenance requirements for vehicles and trailers are specified in the Vehicle Policy (Policy number 4.2).

2.5.9. Medical Equipment

Other medical equipment, for example blood glucose machines, blood pressure monitoring equipment, stethoscopes, should be inspected before use.

Certain equipment may require recalibration at certain intervals. This should be completed by a certified / licensed technician. This should be clarified when the equipment is purchased.

2.5.10. Electrical Generators or equipment with motors (Petrol & Diesel)

Petrol and diesel engines in generators or other equipment (e.g. lawn mowers, other gardening equipment) should be serviced at least every 150 running hours (including cleaning or replacing spark plugs, air and fuel filters) or sooner based on manufactures advice.

Any servicing should be completed by a licensed mechanic or service technician.

Generators should be run at least every six months to ensure that they are starting and in good working condition. Generators that are expected to be used in emergency situations should be electrically tagged as well as maintained.

Generators should be kept clean and dry at all times. The generator should not be stored or operated in environments that includes excessive moisture, dust or any corrosive vapors. If these substances are on the generator, clean with a cloth or soft bristle brush. Do not use a garden hose or anything with water pressure to clean the generator. Water may enter the cooling air slots and could possibly damage the rotor, stator and the internal windings of the generator head.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information relating to the policy, you may contact the following personnel:

State Operations Officer

For further information you may wish to view the Members' Website www.one.stjohnnsw.com.au



Warren Glenny
Commissioner
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