## Introduction

**Purpose**  This document describes the procedures to follow when requesting, authorising or transmitting an emergency mobile alert (EMA). This is carried out utilising the EMA service provided by the telecommunications providers.

## Operational considerations

**When to use EMAs**  Incident controllers may request the transmission of an EMA when the message is needed to alert the public to an action they need to take to keep themselves safe. Examples are:

- Public needs to keep themselves safe:
  - in place
  - by keeping away from an incident ground
- Moving from their location to a safe place.

**Note:** EMAs do not reach all mobile devices on the networks. Other forms of public alerts also need to be used to expose more people to the safety message.

## Procedure

**During an emergency**  Circumstances may provide an opportunity to send an EMA to a targeted or localised geographical area, advising the public of an emergency safety message.

EMAs will only be sent when the incident controller determines an immediate action is required to advise the public where their safety is in danger or a life risk exists.

The incident controller will contact the Communications Shift Manager and provide the content of the EMA and provide details of the geographical area to receive the broadcast.

**Note:** Other forms of public alerts should be considered as a way to expose more people to the safety messages. Not all mobile devices support EMA messages.

**Message format**  The format will comply with an approved EMA template and will include the:

- originating agency (Fire and Emergency New Zealand)
- geographical area to receive the broadcast
- message content (the safety action required)
- expiration time and date of the message
- incident controllers reason for requesting the EMA.

| **EMA approval** | The shift manager will format the message into the EMA template and then send a pager message to the National Commanders group. |
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| | The on call National Commander will contact the Communications Centre and provide the approval to send the EMA. |
| | Once approval is given the shift manager will send the EMA. |
| | **Note:** If the EMA is declined then the shift manager will seek further information from the incident controller. |
| **EMA sending** | The approved EMA will be sent by the shift manager (or Relieving SM) using the agreed geographic location. The telecommunication operators and the location of their mobile cell site determines the catchment area. |
| **Additional information to EMA** | When sending an EMA for a Fire and Emergency incident it is possible to include a link or web address in the body of the message. |
| | The link will direct recipients to a page on the Fire and Emergency website. That page will provide more detail about the incident and the EMA. |
| | The link to add is firealert.nz. |
| | **Note:** This link points to fireandemergency.nz/alerts, if an incident controller wants to view the message. |

## EMA requests from partner agencies

| **Introduction** | Fire and Emergency may be asked to send a EMA on behalf of another agency. This will be carried only after the message content and formatting have been provided by the requesting agency and authorised by a suitably senior person from that agency. |
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| | A list of suitably authorised senior people from other agencies will be supplied to Fire and Emergency, and the list kept in a confidential section of Communications Centre SOPs. A link to the list is supplied on the Communication Centre SOP page. |
| | **Fire and Emergency will not create and format another agencies EMA. It must be to their format.** |
| | The same message formatting criteria is required for Fire and Emergency and other agency EMAs. |
| | The on call National Commander approval is NOT needed for partner agency alerts. Approval for those agencies is given within the agency list in the confidential documents section of the ComCen SOPs. |
| **Partner agency EMA criteria** | Where a message does not appear to meet the threshold, is poorly written, or raises concerns with the ComCen Shift Manager, the Shift Manager will challenge the requesting agency's representative for a solution. |
| | If this can't be rectified the request to send the message will be referred to the MCDEM on duty officer. |
| | An approved EMA will be sent by the Shift Manager using the: |
| | • agreed geographic location |
| | • agreed telecommunication operators. |

## Additional requirements

| EMA exceptions register | An exceptions register will be maintained in the Communications Centre for those occasions where any EMA was not sent. |
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| | An example might be where an EMA was declined or did not reach the required standard and was referred to MCDEM. |
| | A link to this register is also on the Communication Centre SOP page. |
| EMA business continuity plan | To manage the potential volume of requests, Fire and Emergency will send alerts at the request of other agencies who cannot, as long as the service is available to the Communications Centre. |
| | MCDEM will manage any requests when the service is unavailable to the Fire and Emergency Communications Centre. |
| | A business continuity process has been established with MCDEM and the telecommunication operators, this process allows alerts to be sent directly from the mobile operators. |

## Related information

Also refer to the following:

**Policy**

- M1-2 POP Emergency mobile alerts

**Guideline**

- M1-2 GD Emergency mobile alert templates

**Forms & tools**

- Declined emergency mobile alerts register (ComCen)
- Emergency mobile alert capable phones

## Document information

| Owner | National Manager Response Capability |
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| Last reviewed | 4 April 2019 |
| Review period | Every second year |

## Record of amendments

| Date | Brief description of amendment |
| --- | --- |
| 8 April 2019 | Initial version |