



## World Association for Disaster and Emergency Medicine

### *Oceania Regional Chapter*

#### CHAPTER BYLAWS

##### **Purpose:**

The Purpose of these Bylaws is to document the governance and rules for the operation of the Chapter. The Bylaws should be read in association with the Chapter Charter, which outlines the relationship between WADEM and the Chapter.

##### **Explanatory Statement:**

The WADEM Oceania Regional Chapter is the first WADEM Chapter to evolve. As an organisation, WADEM is still learning about the establishment of Chapters. This Explanatory Statement would not normally be included in an organisation's bylaws, however, it is included here to help provide context and may be removed at a later date.

##### **WADEM**

Formed in 1976, WADEM is an international, multi-disciplinary, humanitarian association dedicated to the improvement of disaster and emergency medicine. <http://www.wadem.org>

WADEM fosters, deliberately promotes, and supports the development of globally shared actions in:

- Disaster terminology;
- Building structures in disaster, emergency, and public health science and research;
- Creating standards, benchmarks, credentialing, and accreditation in disaster and emergency health;
- Offering regional and culturally specific education and training in disaster and emergency health;
- Transferring the science of disaster health into operational realities;
- Establishing non-operational "evaluation teams" to respond to major events to evaluate the health aspects and their management "in real time";
- Providing professional support to operational organizations; and
- International representation of its members on WADEM standing committees and task forces.

Initially, WADEM intends to seek the establishment of a Regional Chapter in each WHO Region. These Regional Chapters will establish communication with the WHO Regional Offices and will facilitate the subsequent evolution of further WADEM Chapters within the Region, which may be based on more specific regional, institutional or disciplinary groupings.

There is a need for WADEM to have a regional structure, which may be different in different regions, to improve communication and efficiency within WADEM. At this stage, there must be some flexibility in developing Chapters. The first requirement in establishing a WADEM Regional Chapter is to have and sustain a minimum of 10 WADEM members in the Region who are prepared to become members of the Chapter.

## **WADEM CHAPTERS**

The concept of Chapters started in Melbourne during the WADEM World Congress in 2003 with a discussion and a desire to flatten the WADEM organisational structure. Using the model of the Cochrane Collaboration, WADEM amended its structure at its World Congress in Edinburgh (2005) and then considered the evolution of Chapters. Further input from WADEM provided the guidance on preparing the document “Creating WADEM Chapters”, which was then approved at the WADEM World Congress in Amsterdam (2007). (<http://www.wadem.org/chapters.htm> )

A Regional WADEM Chapter is a group of WADEM members who live or work in a particular region and who organise themselves to promote the goals of the WADEM co-operatively. Chapters will have an academic, research, and/or operational focus and will work to develop further the goals of WADEM and the individual Chapter membership. Chapters provide an organized way for members, who possess a region-specific knowledge base on disasters and their prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery requirements, to share their professional experiences and provide educational, training, and research opportunities in the advancement of disaster health and management.

The goals of WADEM Chapters are to promote:

- Education and training opportunities;
- Interpretation and exchange of information through a network of members and publications;
- Development and maintenance of evidence-based standards of emergency and disaster health care, and provision of leadership for integration into practice;
- Co-ordination of data collection and provision of direction in the development of standardized disaster assessment and research/evaluation methodologies;
- Encouragement of publications and presentation of evidence-based research findings in scientific publications, national, regional, and international conferences and congresses;
- Increased credibility for members of the organization on a global, national, and local level;
- Increased membership and promotion of WADEM; and
- Ongoing development and improvement of emergency and disaster health management in the community.

### **WADEM Chapters offer a number of benefits to Members:**

**A Platform for Advancing their Professional Status** – The Chapter is ideally placed to advance the professionalism and professional status of its members by lobbying government and non-government organizations to advance the professionalism of the humanitarian workforce.

**A Forum for Networking** - A great resource for professional and personal development in meeting with colleagues within the same field of interest and practice. Members can gain new information on state-of-the-art technology, access to others’ experiences and knowledge, and the opportunity to broaden professional insights.

**Professional Development** - Chapter meetings and activities allow opportunities to expand members’ knowledge, bring continuing education and training opportunities closer to home, and provide a bridge

between WADEM's regional and world congresses and kindred organizations (e.g., WHO Regional Organizations). The creation of a Mentor Program within the Chapter also provides opportunities for the members to grow within the profession.

**Exchange of Services and Contributing to WADEM** - Chapters offer the ability to exchange both professional experiences and services, such as reviewing other members' papers and conference presentations. Chapters can provide access to other professionals willing to mentor members in publishing research projects and operational experiences. Chapters also may act as a clearing house for new ideas that can be directed to the WADEM and, if deemed appropriate, implemented globally. Chapters also may identify potential WADEM leaders and nominate members to serve on the WADEM Board of Directors.

**Benefits for members of the Oceania Regional Chapter also include:**

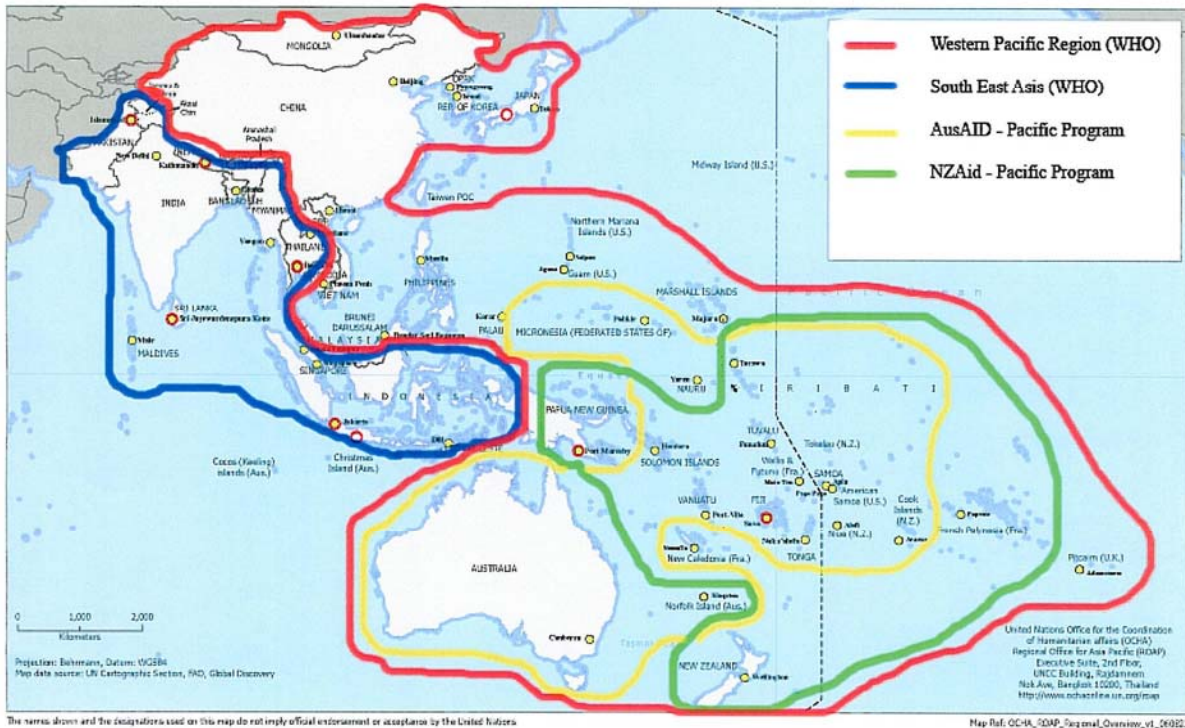
- General benefits for WADEM members, i.e. Annual subscription to the international, peer-reviewed journal, *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine (PDM)*, discounted registration fee for the WCDEM and other WADEM meetings, and the opportunity to participate in WADEM Committees and Task Forces;
- Subscription to a *Chapter Newsletter* published quarterly;
- Access to the Chapter web site;
- Involvement in disaster educational programs including Research Methodology using the Utstein Guidelines;
- A venue for formal presentation of disaster health research; and
- Providing a means to participate as an advocate for ensuring that region-specific disaster requirements are being properly understood and addressed.

WADEM appointed three WADEM Chapter Co-Sponsors who formed the Chapter Steering Group, representing WADEM, Australian, New Zealand and Pacific Island Nation members. The Steering Group guided the process of the constituting meetings of members in the Region, and the development of the Chapter Charter and Bylaws.

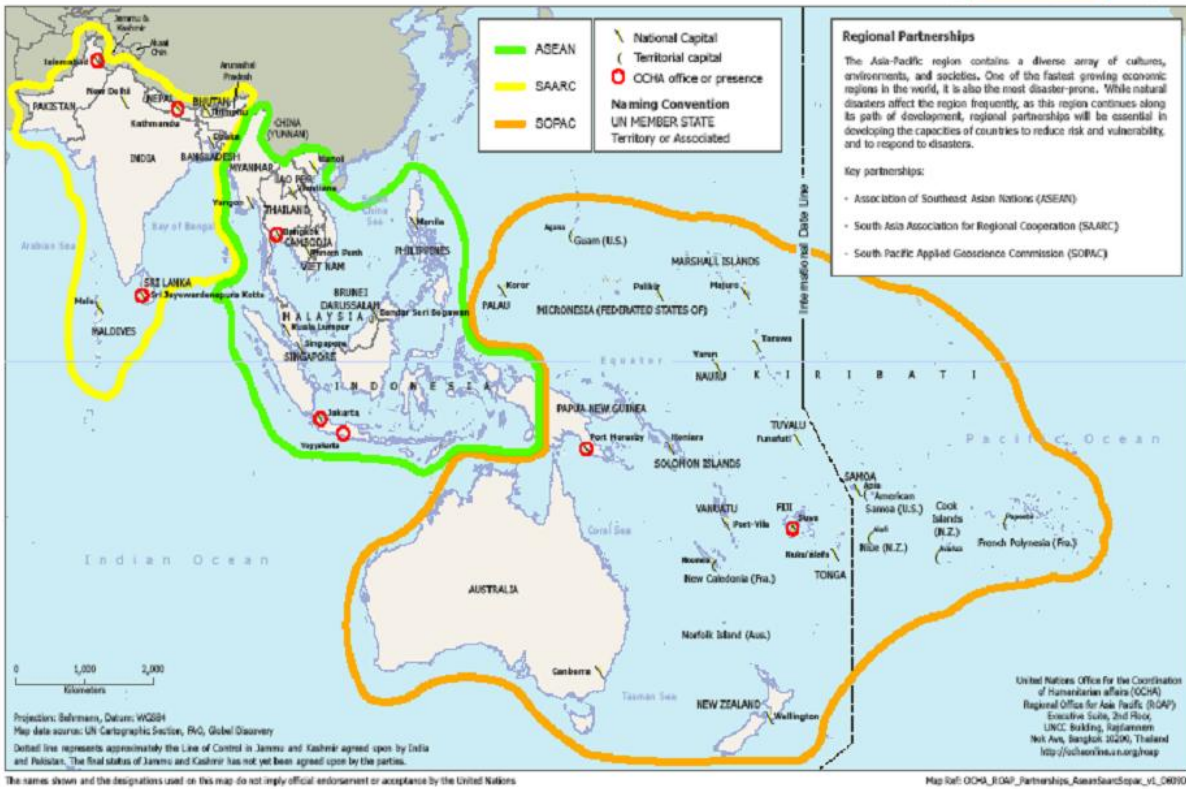
**Oceania Region:**

The term "Oceania" was originally used to indicate the intended geography of this proposed WADEM Regional Chapter. Australia and New Zealand are included in the Western Pacific Regional Office of WHO <http://www.wpro.who.int/>, which extends from China to the Pitcairn Islands.

<http://www.who.int/about/regions/wpro/en/>. It is felt that this is too large a geographical area for a single WADEM Chapter to be effective and efficient.



OCHA includes an Oceania Region within the OCHA Regional Office for Asia Pacific, <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/doc113?OpenForm&rc=5#show>, which also roughly corresponds to the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) region.



For the purposes of these Bylaws, the WADEM Oceania Region generally corresponds to that area covered by SOPAC, which includes the area supported by AusAID and NZAID on the above map, i.e. Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific Island Nations, and Papua New Guinea. Flexibility is required at this stage of the evolution of WADEM Chapters. Members located in adjacent nations or islands, e.g. East Timor, Indonesia, and the Hawaiian Islands, may choose to be included in the Oceania Regional Chapter.

### Transition Arrangements:

Initially, each proposed WADEM Chapter will have a Chapter Sponsor(s), a veteran WADEM member and a member of the WADEM Board of Directors. The Chapter Sponsor(s), appointed by the WADEM Board of Directors, is/are responsible for overseeing the development and activities of one or more Chapters within a specific region. The Chapter Sponsor provides essential input, and assists and oversees the creation of the Chapter. As a member of the WADEM Board of Directors, the Chapter Sponsor/s also serves as a conduit to WADEM services, opportunities, and communications.

## **BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Chapter shall abide by and promote the purposes and objectives of WADEM as set forth in the most current version of the WADEM Bylaws. These Chapter Bylaws outline the governance and rules for the operation of the Chapter, and if necessary will default to the WADEM Bylaws in specific situations.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **NAME**

The Chapter is a not-for-profit organization known as WADEM Oceania Regional Chapter (hereinafter referred to as the "Chapter").

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **OFFICES**

##### **Section 1 - Principal Office:**

The Principal Office for the transaction of the business of the Chapter will be the WADEM Australian Secretariat, currently located at Monash University Department of Community Emergency Health and Paramedic Practice, McMahons Road, Frankston, 3199, Victoria, Australia. The Chapter Council may change the principal office from one location to another, notifying WADEM of any change in location.

##### **Section 2 – Other Offices:**

The Chapter Council may at any time establish subordinate offices at any place or places where the Chapter operates.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **MISSION AND OBJECTIVES**

##### **Section 1 – Mission:**

As a multi-disciplinary organisation, to advocate and promote the development and improvement of disaster and emergency health through research, development and application of standards and guidelines to influence emergency management and health care policy, education and practice. The Chapter will foster WADEM regionally providing regional co-ordination and a regional influence. The aims of the Chapter are to implement the objectives of WADEM within the Oceania Region as applicable to the resources and needs of the Region. Members of the Chapter possess a region-specific knowledge base of disasters and their prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery requirements. The Chapter provides a means to advocate for ensuring that region-specific disaster requirements are being properly understood and addressed.

## **Section 2 – Objectives:**

To achieve this mission, the objectives of the Chapter are to promote:

- a. Education and training opportunities to advance the professionalism of the humanitarian workforce.
- b. Interpretation and exchange of information through a network of members and publications.
- c. Development and maintenance of evidence-based standards of emergency and disaster health care and provision of leadership for integration into practice.
- d. Co-ordination of data collection and provision of direction in the development of standardized disaster assessment and research/evaluation methodologies.
- e. Encouragement of publications and presentation of evidence-based research findings in scientific publications, national, regional, and international conferences and congresses.
- f. Increased credibility for the members of the organization on a global, national and local level.
- g. Increased membership and promotion of WADEM.
- h. Ongoing development and improvement of emergency and disaster health management in the community.

In pursuing these objectives, the Chapter shall function, in consultation with the WADEM Board, as a source of advice to regional government and non-governmental organisations, including professional organisations and shall promote professional issues relating to disaster and emergency health.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Section 1: - General**

All members of WADEM who reside, or work, in the Oceania Region or adjacent countries as previously defined, are eligible for membership of the Chapter.

#### **Section 2 - Classes of Members:**

The Chapter shall have two classes of membership, namely:

- a. **Regular Members** – all regular members, including Nursing and Student members of WADEM, in or adjacent to the Oceania Region.
- b. **Honorary Members** – other persons designated as an Honorary Member by WADEM under the WADEM Bylaws.

#### **Section 3 – Membership Fees:**

Annual Membership Fees shall be set by the Chapter Council and be approved by WADEM before implementation. WADEM shall be responsible for billing all Chapter regular members for Chapter

membership fees and, upon receipt of payment, shall forward such membership fees to the Chapter Office.

**Section 4 - Voting and Office Holding Rights:**

Only Regular and Honorary Members of the Chapter in good standing shall be eligible to vote, hold office and serve on committees of the Chapter, with the proviso that the Chapter Council may co-opt other persons to Chapter Committees.

**Section 5 - Termination of Membership:**

Membership in the Chapter shall terminate when the member ceases to hold membership of WADEM, or fails to pay Chapter membership fees, or membership is rescinded by the Chapter Council in accordance with the WADEM Bylaws.

**Section 6 – Ethics and Responsibilities:** - Members of the Chapter are expected to demonstrate high ethical and moral standards and reflect the humanitarian principles of WADEM in their professional behaviour. Members have the responsibility of complying with the Bylaws of WADEM and of the Chapter.

**ARTICLE VI**

**MEETINGS**

**Section 1 - Annual Business Meeting:**

The Chapter shall hold an annual business meeting open to all Regular and Honorary Members and invited guests, at a time and place designated by the Chapter Council. The purpose of this meeting shall be to transact any business that is determined by the Chapter Council.

The Annual Business Meeting of the Chapter shall be held in November of each year as a face-to-face meeting with electronic or teleconferencing capacity. The timing of this meeting is to facilitate completion of the Annual Report and prepare the Chapter’s representation at the WADEM World Congresses in the following May of alternate years.

**Section 2 - Special Meetings:**

Special meetings of the Chapter may be called at any time by the Chapter President, after consultation with the Chapter Council, or in response to a written request of at least twenty per cent (20%) or more of the members. The purpose(s) of the special meeting shall be stated in the notice of meeting and no other business shall be transacted.

**Section 3 - Notice of Meetings:**

A notice of annual business and special meetings respectively, stating the place, day and hour of the meeting, and agenda, shall be mailed and/or electronically communicated to each Regular and Honorary Member of the Chapter not less than thirty (30) days before the date of the meeting.

## ARTICLE VII

### CHAPTER COUNCIL

#### **Section 1 - General Powers:**

The activities of the Chapter shall be managed by the Chapter Council.

#### **Section 2 – Composition:**

The Council shall consist of:

- a. **The Officers of the Chapter.**
- b. **Councillors** – Five (5) members of the Chapter, elected by the Chapter Members.
- c. **Specialty Councillors** – Three (3) members as follows:
  - One (1) member with a current appointment in a National/State Department with the responsibility for disaster and emergency health.
  - One (1) member with a current academic appointment in a university with an active research/education program in the field of disaster and emergency health.
  - One (1) member, a resident of a Pacific Island Nation, with an active involvement in research/education/operations in disaster and emergency health in the Pacific, nominated by the Fiji School of Medicine, through its Regional mandate.
- d. **Committee Chairs** - The Chair of any Committee appointed by the Chapter Council.
- e. **Co-opted Councillors** – The Chapter Council may co-opt members to the Chapter Council for specific functions and duration of appointments. Specifically, the Chapter President, after consultation with the Chapter Council, shall invite co-opted members to ensure geographical representation of at least one member of Council from each of Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Island Nations respectively.

#### **Section 3 - Election and Term of Office:**

- a. **Councillors** - shall be elected by all members of the Chapter by mail and/or electronic ballot, but may only serve a maximum of two consecutive two-year terms in the same position.
- b. **Specialty Councillors** - shall be appointed by the President, after consultation with the Council, and shall be eligible for re-appointment for one further 2 year term as a Specialty Councillor, but may be elected by the membership to a General Councillor position. If a Specialty Councillor is unable to attend a Council meeting, they will be requested to send an alternate.
- c. **Committee Chairs** - shall be appointed by the Chapter Council, and shall be eligible for re-appointment for one further two-year term as Chair of the same Committee, but may be elected by the membership to a General Council position or appointed as Chair of another Committee.

#### **Section 4 – Vacancies:**

A vacancy on the Chapter Council for members other than the President may be filled by invitation from the President, after consultation with the Chapter Council. The individual so appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve for the unexpired term of his/her predecessor.

**Section 5 – Meetings:**

Meetings of the Chapter Council may be called by the Chapter President, who also serves as Chairman of the Chapter Council, or at the request of a majority of Chapter Council members. The Council shall meet at least twice per year with teleconference capacity.

**Section 6 – Notice:**

A notice stating the place, date and time of the meeting and agenda, shall be mailed and/or electronically communicated to each Chapter Council member not less than thirty (30) days before the date of the meeting.

**Section 7 – Quorum:**

A majority of the members of the Council, when duly called and assembled, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Council.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**CHAPTER OFFICERS**

**Section 1 – Officers:**

The Officers of the Chapter shall include the President, Vice President, and the Secretary/Treasurer.

**Section 2 - Election and Term of Office:**

The Officers shall be elected by all members of the Chapter by mail and/or electronic ballot, but may serve only a maximum of two (2) consecutive two-year terms in the same position.

**Section 3 – Vacancies:**

If a vacancy for the office of President occurs for any cause, it shall be filled by the Vice President, for the remainder of the unexpired term. Should the Vice President then be elected as President, he/she would then be eligible to serve the normal two-year terms subsequently.

**Section 4 – Administrative/Executive Officer:**

The Council may appoint a salaried Administrative/Executive Officer who shall report to the Chapter President, or as delegated by the Chapter President, but will be non-voting.

**ARTICLE IX**

**DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

**Section 1 – President:**

The President of the Chapter shall, in general, supervise and direct the business and affairs of the Chapter in consultation with the Chapter Council. The President shall serve as Chairman at all meetings of the membership and of the Chapter Council. The Chapter Council shall appoint all members of Chapter Committees.

**Section 2 – Vice President:**

The Vice President shall serve as an Officer of the Chapter Council and would be expected to manage a specific leadership portfolio as assigned by the President after consultation with the Chapter Council. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President.

**Section 3 - Secretary-Treasurer:**

The Secretary-Treasurer shall:

- Ensure that a record of proceedings of all meetings of the Chapter is kept;
- Serve as the principal financial officer of the Chapter and with the President, share in the oversight and responsibility for maintenance of adequate books and accounts for the Chapter;
- Oversee the disbursement of all funds and securities of the Chapter;
- Oversee and advise the deposits of all funds and securities of the Chapter in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected by the Council; and
- In general, perform all duties customarily incident to the offices of Secretary and Treasurer and such other duties from time-to-time may be assigned by the Chapter President or Council.

**Section 4 – Administrative/Executive Officer:**

The Administrative/Executive Officer shall undertake such functions as delegated by the Chapter President on behalf of the Chapter Council, to assist with the day-to-day running of the Chapter.

**ARTICLE X**

**COMMITTEES**

**Section 1 - Establishment and Composition:**

Committees may be established by resolution of the Chapter Council adopted at any duly called and constituted meeting of the Chapter. The size, terms of reference, and powers of any such committee shall be as provided in such resolution. The Chapter Council shall appoint the members of each such committee. The term of service of any committee member may be terminated by the President whenever, in the judgment of the President and the Chapter Council, the best interests of the Chapter shall be served by such termination.

**Section 2 - Term of Office:**

The term of office for the members of all committees, with the exception of the Executive Committee, shall be determined by the Chapter Council.

**Section 3 – Chairman:**

A chairman for each committee, with the exception of the Executive Committee, shall be appointed by the Chapter Council.

**Section 4 – Vacancies:**

Vacancies in the membership of any committee shall be filled by appointments made by the Chapter Council. The individual so appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve for the unexpired term of his/her predecessor.

**Section 5 – Reporting:**

All Chapter committees shall report to the Chapter Council with a frequency as determined by the Chapter Council and stated in the Committee’s terms of reference.

**Section 6 - Executive Committee:**

- a. Composition of the Executive Committee:** The Executive Committee shall comprise the Officers of the Chapter, and the Specialty Councillors with the proviso that at least one member of the

Executive Committee will be from each of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Island Nations respectively.

- b. General powers:** The Executive Committee shall have the authority to exercise all powers vested in the Chapter Council between all meetings of the Chapter Council.
- c. Meetings:** Meetings of the Chapter Executive Committee may be called by the Chapter President, or at the request of two members of the Chapter Executive Committee.
- d. Quorum:** A majority of the members of the Executive Committee shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **CHAPTER REGIONAL RELATIONS**

#### **Section 1 – Relationship with WADEM:**

The relationship between the Chapter and WADEM is defined in the Chapter Charter. Neither the Chapter nor any of its Officers or Members are authorized to represent or in any way bind WADEM unless authorized to do so by the WADEM President in writing. WADEM shall inform the Chapter of all policy and position statements in order for Chapter statements to be consistent with those of WADEM. Major new policy statements by the Chapter shall be developed in consultation with the WADEM Board. WADEM will provide the best service and support possible to empower the Chapter to impact on disaster and emergency health within their region.

#### **Section 2 - Sharing Experience between Chapters:**

The Chapter will establish effective communication with other Chapters to share experiences and support other Chapters and their Officers.

#### **Section 3 – Liaison:**

The Chapter will identify existing structures and organizations active in this discipline in the Region, and will develop relationships with other organizations that share in the mission of WADEM. Such organizations may include governmental and non-governmental agencies, e.g. WHO Regional Offices, Asia Disaster Preparedness Center. Formal agreements between the Chapter and such agencies must be approved by the WADEM Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

To the full extent permitted by law, the Chapter Council may indemnify any and all of its Officers, Council Members, Committee Members, and Members, for certain expenses and other amounts paid in connection with legal proceedings in which any such person becomes involved by reason of serving in any such capacity with or for the Chapter. The Chapter may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any or all Officers, and Council Members, Committee Members, Members against any liability asserted against any such person and incurred in any such capacity whether or not the Chapter would have the power to indemnify them against such liability under the provisions of the Article.

(Note: When the Bylaws are nearing completion, a legal opinion to be obtained on this Article including liability, and the Bylaws in general)

### **ARTICLE XIII**

#### **ANNUAL REPORT**

The Chapter is required to submit an Annual Report to the WADEM Board no later than the last day in February of each year, reporting on the previous calendar year's activities. Annual Reports should include:

- A list of Chapter Officers, Council Members, and Committee Chairs, including outgoing and newly elected Members during the preceding year;
- A summary of the past year's activities, including the number of regular meetings, topics, and any special events such as seminars or education and training participation;
- A roster of current members, the Chapter mailing list, and attendance lists for meetings and events; and
- A balance sheet as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the previous year, showing the current assets and liabilities of the Chapter and fund balance.

### **ARTICLE XIV**

#### **AMENDMENTS**

Chapter Bylaws may be amended or repealed and new Bylaws may be adopted by mail and/or electronic ballot with a majority of Chapter Members, provided that written notice of the proposed change(s) had been mailed and/or electronically distributed to each voting Chapter Member at least thirty (30) days before the final vote count. However, before becoming effective, such amendments must be ratified the WADEM Board.

### **ARTICLE XV**

#### **DISSOLUTION**

The Chapter may be dissolved: On the recommendation of the Chapter Council; if the Chapter becomes inactive or insolvent; on the request/direction of WADEM; or, on a two-thirds (2/3rds) majority vote of Chapter members.

Upon dissolution of the Chapter, the Chapter President will arrange for all its assets, after payment of all debts and liabilities, to be paid and distributed to WADEM.

