# Preface

## 35 Aim of Book

1. The book has two linked objectives.
2. The first is to examine, using the example of Falck, the provision by 38 a private company or key public services. These are largely in the setting 39 of Emergency and Rescue services which constitute the majority of the 40 companies’ activity. However, the book also examines the wider range of 41 the companies’ activity and aspects such as governance. Also, the book 42 examines the internationalisation of the company. Four detailed case 43 studies were developed for the book.

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44 The second objective is to examine aspects of Emergency and Rescue 45 provision and in particular, the issues around reliability and risk for 46 such organisations. Innovation and culture are also explored in the con47 text of Emergency and Rescue services.

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## 48 The Book’s Background and a Brief Comment 49 about Denmark

50 This book originally had its inspiration over 30 years ago when the 51 author had occasion to visit and work in Denmark. This work was 52 focused on aspects of the Danish Education system where he was asked 53 to undertake an analysis of reforms involving new ‘short cycle’ pro54 grammes in business vocational education where the tertiary business 55 colleges (the equivalent of community colleges in the USA or Further 56 Education colleges in the UK) had been accorded a significant role.

57 The author commented at the time that he had limited knowledge of 58 Denmark and an even more limited knowledge of Danish. The senior 59 civil servant commissioning the work responded ‘that also is an advan60 tage’. The outside perspective was what was being sought as opposed to 61 using one of the many well-qualified Danish business academics.

62 The relevance for this anecdote for this book is that even after some 63 30 years of acquaintance with Denmark which includes being mar64 ried to a Dane and having lived and worked in Denmark, the author 65 is conscious that he is still, to a significant extent, an outsider. His 66 knowledge of the language is limited though the amount he possesses 67 probably places him in a rare category of non-Scandinavian academic 68 who has some acquaintance with both the Danish language and cus69 toms. He probably has some appreciation of Hygge (a familiar word 70 translated imperfectly as ‘cosiness’) together with the tradition of the 71 ‘second thank you’ of which few foreigners seem to have any aware72 ness.1 The perspective of an outsider is useful for this book which is 73 focused on a Danish company, which in Denmark is generally very well. **AQ1** 74 However, despite its presence worldwide, Falck is less well-known out75 side Scandinavia. This book will hopefully help to address this.

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76 The image of Denmark is of an open and liberal country with a high 77 standard of living and a high level of equality and strong (and moral) 78 values. This in the opinion of the author is largely well-founded but 79 it should not be taken as representing Denmark as utopia. There are 80 always criticisms of any society and Danes would certainly accept this.

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81 An openness to dialogue is part of the culture of Denmark. This open82 ness was essential in the research for this book, and the assistance of 83 key people is duly acknowledged at the end of this preface. However, 84 any errors of fact or expression of opinion are the responsibility of the 85 author (and the contributors listed for various chapters).

## 86 Reasons for This Book

87 The area of Emergency Response and Rescue services is not well served 88 by current academic texts especially from a business perspective. Falck, 89 a Danish company, is the largest global private provider of Emergency 90 and Rescue services in the world. It is not as publicly well-known in 91 respect of its global reach as an equivalent in another sector or prod92 ucts or services (for example, Ford in cars or Microsoft in Information 93 Technology). The services which Falck provides (in Emergency 94 Response and Rescue) are perhaps of a different nature. But Falck has 95 extended its reach to 44 countries and six continents, and the company 96 has largely stayed close to the values of its founder set out in 1906.

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97 The subject is well covered in terms of other media with a range of 98 television offerings about the work of rescue services. There is also a 99 considerable amount of literature which provides accounts of the his100 tory and exploits the well-known rescue services (such as the Royal 101 National Lifeboat Institution). There is also a rich literature which cov102 ers the actual vocational and professional skills required in Emergency 103 and Rescue services (especially with regard to aspects such a paramedics

1. and fire responders).
2. The nature of such services is that they tend to be seen in the pub106 lic space (both funded and delivered by public employees) and also are

107 usually nationally or locally based in that the service is provided within 108 the boundaries of a country or political entity. There is not a tradition 109 of private provision in this sector which reaches across national bound110 aries as you may find in other industrial sectors such as Information 111 Technology or business services.

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## 112 The Focus

113 The book examines key themes in the emergence of Falck, the worlds’ 114 largest global rescue company. The themes are approached from a struc115 tured academic perspective informed through close cooperation with 116 the company. The analysis is especially relevant to all organisations 117 involved in emergency response and disaster or crisis management. This 118 sort of provision is common to all countries, and Falck is unique in 119 respect of the number of countries in which it works in this area of ser120 vice delivery. The book represents the first independent account of Falck 121 published in English. The book draws not just on documentary sources 122 but also involved interviews with members of the Falck family and also 123 senior managers and current and from CEOs of the company. The four **AQ2** 124 case studies were all prepared following country and site visits and inter125 views with key staff.

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126 As the book will engage in themes relating to areas such as interna127 tionalisation, public sector contracting, growth through merger and 128 diversification and quality and performance management, it will have 129 relevance to a wide range of organisations in both the private and public 130 domain. It will serve to span across public, private and not-for-profit 131 sectors as Falck has both taken legal forms and engaged in activity 132 which has taken it across these sectors.

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133 Thus, the book will operate well to support a range of programmes in 134 Business and Management. In particular, it is intended for programmes

1. which may encompass
2. • International and strategic management
3. • Analysis of organisational culture
4. • The interaction between the public and private/not-for-profit sectors 139 especially around provision of core services and contracting

140 • The evolution of companies through different governance structures 141 and both through growth and diversification

1. • Analysis of decision-making especially in terms of risk, collaboration
2. and merger

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1. The book has brought in the expertise of contributors to the vari145 ous chapters and in particular researchers who have been involved in 146 Emergency and Rescue services and organisational culture and public 147 policy. This is described in more detail in brief accounts of the different 148 chapters.

## 149 Brief Outline of Book

150 Chapter [1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_1) of the book examines the emergence of Falck. This chapter 151 draws on corporate history and direct accounts from key company and 152 family sources. It covers the development and evolution of the company

153 during its family ownership, and this chapter also draws on the litera154 ture relating to family firms. This chapter was written with the invalu155 able assistance of Frederik Madsen of Falck.

156 Chapter [2,](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_2) by Dr. Anton Bradburn, explores the nature of reliability 157 and risk and its applicability to Emergency and Rescue organisations. 158 This chapter utilises academic literature on highly reliable organisations 159 and takes a general approach using sources from the UK but with some 160 reference to Falck. There is also an initial examination of the extent to 161 which there is a universal culture which is applicable to all rescue organ-

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1. isations.
2. Chapter [3](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_3) draws on the doctoral work of Christiane Stelling who is 164 the chapter author. It examines in particular the concept of trust and in 165 this regard is based on the extension of the work of Falck into ‘return to 166 work’ of people who have been on long-term sick absence contracts in 167 Denmark. This chapter gives an account of issues which emerged with 168 these contracts, which illustrate attitudes towards private delivery in the 169 public domain.

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170 Chapter [4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_4), jointly with Prof. Stephen Barber, examines innovation 171 in the rescue and emergency context. It draws on innovation literature 172 and suggests that such literature has been significantly product based. 173 Innovation in rescue and emergency services is seen as having a social 174 aspect, and an approach to assess social innovation is utilised with 175 examples to identify and describe innovation in Falck.

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176 Chapter [5](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_5) focuses on the changes of ownership and governance in 177 Falck over its 120-year history. The company has gone through con178 siderable governance and ownership changes, and these are examined 179 with reference to the literature on corporate governance. This chapter 180 particularly utilises what has been described as the Nordic Model of

181 Corporate Governance. The company has a continued aspect of famili182 ness and a stated social purpose whilst being a clearly ‘for profit’ enter-

1. prise.
2. Chapter [6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_6) analyses the development of the company up to 2004, 185 which is a significant date as that was when the company was purchased 186 by Nordic Capital (a private equity company). The development of the 187 company up to 2004 is explored through diversification, and the early 188 internationalisation is seen primarily through explanation using the 189 Uppsala model.
3. Chapter [7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_7) extends the development of the company to the current
4. day (2016) and in particular its status as a global company with a pres192 ence on six continents. The current four business streams are described 193 and analysed. The internationalisation is approached through vari194 ous theories. In particular, where public service contracts and license 195 arrangements are concerned, it is suggested that institutional theory has 196 a potential relevance.

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197 Chapter [8](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_8) identifies and explains key cultural concepts derived from 198 academic literature, and then makes specific use of a widely used man199 agement tool, the Cultural Web, to evaluate the culture of Falck in 200 terms of the history of the company and linking it to the current situ201 ation and in respect of how the culture may both be maintained and 202 adapted in the future.

203 Then follow four chapters which represent individual case studies 204 that were undertaken in different continents.

205 Chapter [9](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_9) examines the development in Latin America, specifically 206 Colombia, where Falck entered through a substantial investment in 207 Grupo EMI. Colombia and Latin America represented a very different 208 cultural and language setting to Scandinavia, and the business model 209 was not specifically that of Falck but rather derived from a different 210 approach.

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211 Chapter [10](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_10) examines the case of Responce in the Danish context and 212 how Falck related to a strong local competitor. It also examines aspects 213 of innovation and explores how private provision through public con214 tract operates and whether emergency ambulance provision could be 215 regarded as a natural monopoly or a contested market.

216 Chapter [11](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_11) examines Falck’s experience in the Indian market. This 217 market proved to be challenging and, in effect, Falck was unable to 218 access the public ambulance market through tender bids or through 219 partnership with existing providers. Rather, Falck developed work with 220 industry partners and developed its insurance-based expertise.

221 Chapter [12](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_12) examines the complex nature of the US market for 222 ambulance provision and the various ways in which Falck has accessed 223 this market through acquisition and also through local branded provid224 ers and through development of its own brand. This chapter identifies 225 both aspects of innovation and the importance of key stakeholders such

1. as the public fire services.
2. Chapter [13](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_13) summarises the concept of private provision for pub228 lic purpose with particular reference to the work of Falck and exam229 ines the factors associated with its growth to become the largest global 230 Emergency and Rescue company. This draws upon the implications 231 of the preceding book chapters and case studies. This chapter also 232 identifies some key global trends which appear to have relevance for 233 Emergency and Rescue services and briefly outlines some possible future 234 scenarios.

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235 The book is accompanied by and supported by four detailed case 236 studies (Chaps. [9](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_9)[–12](http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95214-4_12)), which were carried out to represent the range of 237 work or Falck in different contexts and different continents. We hope 238 that these case studies may be useful for a range of teaching and training 239 purposes.

## 240 Thanks and Appreciation

241 A book of this nature merits a large number of acknowledgements, and 242 the author wish to particularly acknowledge the support of Falck in 243 terms of both furnishing corporate access and also in covering travel and

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3. • Members of the Falck family
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