

**THE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS OF THE NSW
AMBULANCE SERVICE**

Name: Suppressed
Date received: 31/07/2008

Partially Confidential

The Director, General Purpose Standing Committee No 2,
Parliament House, Macquarie St, Sydney NSW 2000.

Re: Inquiry into the Management and Operations of NSW Ambulance Service

To members of the Committee,

Please accept my supplementary submission to your inquiry.

I was an OH&S consultative committee member for a number of years.
One issue previously mentioned was fatigue relating to the 14hr night shifts.
I suggested they be reduced to 12hrs (maximum). A couple of years ago, myself and a number of other colleagues suggested reversing the roster as a way to reduce fatigue.

Paramedics currently (most stations) do the 2x10hr days followed by 2x14hr nights.

I suggest doing the night shifts first, followed by the day shifts. After the two night shifts, the 24hr break is used for rest/recovery. The two remaining day shifts aid in gaining some normality heading into your 4 days off. As currently the case, you come off the end of your work week (post 2 night shifts) like a zombie. Additionally, you would be completing your first night shift refreshed after having had four days off.

If Ambulance Officers are reluctant to give up their 14hr nights, this scenario is one option to consider. Changing the shift commencement times is another suggestion. For example; 0700 starts instead of 0800. Or any other time mutually acceptable to the management and road staff. This may aid officers getting home quicker and avoiding peak traffic periods, which is also a stressor.

Paramedics usually drive one shift and treat for one shift. In other states they do turn about on each case which adds variety and relieves stress, by breaking up the work cycle.

I previously suggested handing over heavy rescue to NSW Fire Brigades and enriching the Special Casualty Access Team with vehicles and equipment.
Paramedics treat patients and must always be able to access patients whatever the situation.

The NSW Fire Brigades have equipment/resources but are under utilized.
Resources in the Fire Brigade are not being accessed. A number of Paramedics are also retained Fire fighters and work for NSW Fire Brigades on their days off.
A number of Paramedics also have second jobs which adds to stress and fatigue.
The Rescue fight comes down to which group has rescue. If they all belonged to the one organisation, would this issue still be a problem ???
Who does rescue in Victoria, Queensland, and South/Western Australia ?

Alternatively, consider the idea of splitting the Ambulance Service.

Put the Paramedics/Rescue in with the NSW Fire Brigades (cost savings)
A number of Paramedics have suggested being put in the Emergency Services portfolio. Area Health can run the Patient Transport Service.
Combine Fire and Ambulance Co-Ordination Centres.

As stated previously, I believe the Ambulance Service needs to effectively utilize its existing resources in a cost efficient and productive manner, before additional resources are considered.

Once again I thank the committee for considering my submission.