

Submission  
No 124

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

**Name:** Suppressed

**Date received:** 1/07/2008

---

Partially Confidential

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

**SUBMISSION- Inquiry into "The Management and Operations of the NSW Ambulance Service".**

Dear Hon Robyn Parker MLC, Committee Chair,

The following is supplementary to the Submission made by me and handed to a staff member of the Inquiry on the 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2008.

1. I believe that there should be **RANDOM DRUG and ALCOHOL TESTING for AMBULANCE OFFICERS**. It is an **OFFENCE** under the Ambulance Services Act to have taken drugs or alcohol and be on duty. It is also dangerous for patients to be treated by alcohol affected Ambulance Officers or to be driven to hospital by alcohol affected Officers. I believe that the TESTING should be done so as to deter Ambulance Officers from taking alcohol, especially whilst "ON CALL". It is common in the Service for Officers rostered ON CALL to take alcohol, it is also dangerous. I recall a country college telling me that he was often backed up by a partner who was obviously affected by alcohol. The affected Officer was treating a patient, who said to the alcohol affected officer, "you have been drinking so your not going to treat me". The first Officer said," if he has been drinking then he is not going to drive us to hospital". The testing could be carried out at Hospital Emergency Departments when patients are brought to ED.
2. I believe that the Ambulance Service should have its **PRIMARY RESCUE ROLE** discontinued as soon as possible. Most of the calls given to the Rescue Units are to respond to **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**, and they are flat out keeping up with the number of calls. There are **SECONDARY RESCUE UNITS**, for example in Gosford, the NSW FIRE BRIGADE, who are staffed and waiting to get a call. They are rarely used. It should be plainly obvious that the trained Ambulance Officers would be better used for the treatment and then transport of the patients that they are attending too, rather than "Standing By" with the patient waiting for an Ambulance to turn up. **The Ambulance Service is busting at the seams with too much work and too little staff to cope with that work**. Please give the **PRIMARY RESCUE ROLE TO THE NSW FIRE BRIGADE AND PUT THE TRAINED AMBULANCE OFFICERS INTO AMBULANCES**.

The two abovementioned points are extremely important and I believe that if both were implemented they would have an immediate affect of benefit to the Public.

Yours truly,