

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

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Partially Confidential

I would like to say -

Our vehicles and equipment have improved greatly (we now have kits that are well put together, equipment that is safer, vehicles that are more convenient to work out of, with reasonably good air conditioning and heating), even our communication system is greatly improved - we now suffer less black spots or maybe not so much as less, but we now ALL carry mobile phones just in case, and whether that just in case maybe the need to contact family or friends to inform them of our impending circumstances (eg late home) or for our peace of mind for when all to regularly our radio system lets us down, we can contact our coordination centre. These mobile phones are not supplied by the Ambulance Service, these mobile phones are our personal phones, these phones enable us when we are on call to be more active in our personal lives, they enable us to try and fulfill commitments in our personal lives that if we were to rely on the land line as our only form of communication we would be limited to the inside of our homes. I have felt the pressure on several occasions when my phone has failed due to telstra problems through the night and it has been inconsistent as to whether the landline as a secondary phone was tried and even if it was, it is not located next to mine and my husbands bed. And when i am on call 14 nights out of 28 i feel my self obligated to maintaining a free mobile service line for the sake of the service, so family and friends are cut short on my mobile phone.

Slowly our stations are improving, and it is a manouver of great magnitude on the behalf of those dealing with the relevent and not so relevent areas of management when trying to improve our conditions on station. We would dearly love a study room and a room in which to rest / sleep. Our on call and shift work can often leave us with nights that are broken and short of sleep.

Slowly the issue of fatigue has been partially uncovered, thank god, that in the area I work we now accept the practice of a sleep in or late start. They now accept that if you say you are fatigued that it is not a sick day, it is that you just can not physically or emotionally continue. A situation created by the service.

Our change of roster to a four on four off system has enabled me to recover so much more than before, I feel I can come to work and maintain a high level of enthusiasm, I have not felt the sheer exhaustion any where near as much as I had in the past. I have a grinding hate for being so tired that my head aches (I call it a tired head - I don't ever get headaches as such).

The equality has improved and the old attitudes are dying out with those old poorly equipped employees that are finially coming to the end of their service, and i certainly do not mean all of them.

Please something needs to be done regarding the relief in many rural areas, relief is often not distributed evenly. Every officer in the state should be rotating through relief duties in order to take the pressure off a small number of officers. Relief duties cause officers to be away from family, friends and other lifestyle committments. The amount of work the officer is exposed to is reduced, their capacity to earn similiar to other officers at their home station is reduced. The officer is put under pressure regularly whilst they are away as they are in an unfamiliar environment with often reduced support from the Ambulance service, police, fire brigade, SES or honaries.

The roster for the relief officers isn't consistent and they are away on relief alot. Relief duties even so have improved since i began with the service, the service now provides much more adequate accomadation on relief, the officers apou their request are away for 3 days at a time and not 5 to 9 days at a time. And when the officers are back in their home town they are able to work the same roster as other station members including on call duties, something that wasn't done when I first joined the job, back then we only filled in the short fall.

And lastly our recruiting system needs to be more switched on, out west we lose so many officers because they are dragged away from their family and homes. Please, recruiting needs to come from the area that requires it, and even more so out west.