

**Submission
No 185**

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

Name: Mr Jeffrey Andrew

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing with reference to the recent Ambulance review. In the review paper there was a recommendation to surrender our well established Ambulance rescue service to the NSW Fire Brigade.

I have worked in the health sector for the past fifteen years as a Registered Nurse and then as a Paramedic. I am currently part of the Extended Care Paramedic project team coordinating the current course at Nepean Clinical School. I have graduated with three Tertiary qualifications at both undergraduate and postgraduate level of study. To this day my proudest and most satisfying moment in my career was graduating from the challenging Ambulance Rescue operator's course.

When working as a general duties paramedic, I was on the boundary of fire and ambulance rescue agencies. I observed and appreciated the significant benefit to patient care when the ambulance rescue unit was assigned. There was a team approach to the requirements of managing critical patients, as both rescue and operational paramedics were working together within the context of best patient management.

Furthermore and of high significance is the benefit to staff retention and satisfaction. Having an ambulance rescue career pathway has no doubt improved satisfaction in the workforce. I feel part of an innovative and cohesive team. We are proud of the commitment that our Rescue/Scat manager and trainers have put in to develop a rescue service with excellent equipment and training. I have had extensive experience in treating patients requiring rescue, in both NSW and Northern Territory. I have not experienced a better quality rescue response than what we have to offer and feel that changing to fall into line with other states is a poor excuse to offer the NSW public a lesser service.

Beyond our regular shift duties, we are a ready response for potential major incidents, including Urban Search and Rescue and CBR capabilities. Our officers are currently trained up to participate in World Youth Day as a Special Operations resource. We were successfully deployed throughout the APEC conference in our special operations role.

In reading the report I found little evidence to substantiate the change in rescue operations for the NSW ambulance. I did however note the recurrent theme of poor staff morale and high attrition rates. I find it difficult to comprehend how this can be managed by stripping myself and hundreds of other rescue officers of their current role. It is easily foreseen that this process would further damage staff morale, increase attrition rate and lessen our ability to respond as an organisation to major events and incidents.

I hope that the recommendations will be reviewed in the wider context of best approach to patient care and implications to Paramedics. I am regularly approached by junior staff enquiring about the rescue role and training program. It is a pathway

that many paramedics enjoy or look forward to applying for. The loss of rescue I consider to be of great consequence to both staff and the public and personally I will feel a sense of betrayal from the health department for whom I have been a loyal employee for the past 15 years if I was to lose a function that I enjoy and am passionate about. While I am currently undertaking temporary duties as a paramedic educator, I am looking forward to my upcoming rescue recertification and next shift on one of our modern, highly equipped rescue trucks

Yours truly,

Jeffrey Andrew.