

AMBULANCE SERVICE, NORTHERN SUBURBS

2169. Mrs C.L. Edwardes to the Minister for Health

I refer the Minister to the number of Ambulances servicing the northern suburbs and ask -

- (a) how many ambulances are based in Joondalup;
- (b) how many ambulances are based in Warwick;
- (c) how many ambulances are based in Landsdale;
- (d) how many of these ambulances were in service on Saturday 11 October;
- (e) of the ambulances that were available on Saturday 11 October, how many were 'ramped', or otherwise unavailable, from 6pm;
- (f) when did these ambulances become available;
- (g) is it acceptable that a lady in Wanneroo, who fell and broke her hip, was made to wait more than 20 minutes for the volunteer ambulance from Yanchep to take her to hospital; and
- (h) what ambulance coverage was available in the northern suburbs from 6pm till 8pm on Saturday 11 October 2003?

Mr J.A. McGINTY replied:

- (a) Two 24 hour ambulances every day. One day shift ambulance predominantly Monday to Friday.
- (b) One 24 hour ambulance and one day shift ambulance.
- (c) One 24 hour ambulance.
- (d) Four ambulances were in service during Saturday 11 October 2003, including after 6pm.
- (e) No hospitals were on by-pass on 11 October and the Department of Health received no advice that there was 'ramping'.
- (f) see (e)
- (g) The Ambulance service is organised around its life threatening emergency service responsibilities.

It is regrettable that it took 20 minutes to respond to this call. The Department of Health has been advised by the St John Ambulance Australia, that the circumstances were unusually complex.

· At the time of the call to attend to this lady, the Joondalup, Landsdale and Osborne Park ambulances were attending priority one calls. The helicopter was backing up the Landsdale ambulance at Burns Beach.

· The Warwick ambulance was transporting a patient to Joondalup. The call was allocated to the second Joondalup ambulance 4 minutes after the call was received. That Joondalup ambulance was diverted to a priority one call in Beldon 2 minutes later. The call then was allocated to Osborne Park. That ambulance was diverted to a priority one call at Marangaroo a minute later. The call was then allocated to Yanchep.

This event is clearly an exception to the thousands of ambulance attendances that occur each year within the established benchmarks.

- (h) Four ambulances were available and responding to calls, 2 based at Joondalup, 1 based at Warwick and 1 based at Landsdale, complemented by the Yanchep Ambulance.