

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Hersey to the Minister for Health:

St John Ambulance (NT) Officer Conditions

- 1. What were the requirements under the funding provided by the Government for the additional St John Ambulance Northern Territory (SJANT) resource which started in Katherine in September 2019?**

An urgent requirement for an additional crew and vehicle was identified in Katherine and subsequently funded.

- 2. Please confirm the extended hours that paramedics in Katherine are working, with no fatigue management program or policy in place?**

St John's Ambulance Australia NT (SJAANT) has recently revised the on-call arrangements for Katherine and now only respond to emergency situations when the night shift crew is already deployed or requires additional assistance

SJAANT has established a Fatigue Management Working Group, comprised of staff from across the organisation, to reduce the risk of fatigue within the workplace. Release of the Fatigue Management Policy and Procedure is scheduled for 12 May, with implementation to follow.

- 3. What were the recommendations of the 2017 Independent Review of the NT Road Ambulance Services (by Dr Neale Fong) and have these been implemented?**

On 8 December 2017, the Road Ambulance Services Review Report was published on the Department of Health website with the NT Government response to the review.

[Road ambulance services review - Department of Health](#)

At the end of March 2021, 33 of the recommendations are implemented and their progress in improving the service is monitored on an ongoing basis. Seven recommendations are partially completed or work in progress with some disruption due to COVID 19 impacts. Four of the remaining recommendations are being considered for inclusion in the extended Service Agreement.

- 4. Please confirm that SJANT is the only ambulance service in Australasia without up-to-date clinical practice guidelines/protocols, or drug therapy protocols?**

SJAANT Medical Advisory Panel approved the new Clinical Practice Manual (CPM) on 22 April 2021. Implementation is now underway in conjunction with an education, training and auditing program.

The new CPM was developed using an evidence-based approach combining research and expert consensus on best practice and reviewed by a multi-disciplinary team of clinicians. It draws on expertise of many of the services represented by the Council of Ambulance Authorities.

- 5. What reviews and performance management has NT Government taken to satisfy that SJAANT is meeting the obligations of their contract?**

There are no concerns with SJAANT's current performance.

The 2017 Independent Review of the NT Road Ambulance Services referenced in question 3 was undertaken, and the 44 recommendations have been implemented, or are progressing.

NT Health and SJAANT have strengthened governance of the ambulance service through quarterly meetings of:

- The Road Ambulance Steering Committee: Comprised of senior executives of SJAANT, the Department of Health and the Health Services. This group provides governance and oversight; and
- The Road Ambulance Service Reference Group: Comprised of SJAANT operational and finance managers, NT Health contract managers and emergency clinicians. This group discusses contractual obligations and performance against key indicators.

6. Is there a program for Ambulance Station upgrades?

A Strategic Infrastructure Plan (SIP) developed by Department of Health in 2019, includes all NTG-owned ambulance stations (Palmerston, Gove District Hospital Nhulunbuy, Katherine and Tennant Creek).

7. Which Ambulance Stations are currently beyond or approaching the end of their economic life?

The SIP identified the Gove District Hospital ambulance station, the Tennant Creek ambulance station and the Palmerston ambulance station are approaching the end of their economic life.