



## Minister for Police and Community Safety

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08 JUL 2013

Mr Trevor Ruthenberg MP  
Chair  
Health and Community Services Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000



Dear Mr Ruthenberg

Thank you for your email of 7 June 2013, to Mr Russell Bowles, Commissioner, Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS), regarding feedback on the *Health Ombudsman Bill 2013* (the Bill) being reported to the Legislative Assembly by 12 August 2013.

The QAS Commissioner provides the following feedback:

1. The Bill provides a central point of focus and coordination for the management of health complaints and other matters within Queensland in a 'fair' transparent and accountable manner, in particular for the consumers of health services.
2. The appointment of the Health Ombudsman is another important element of reform in clinical governance which will increase the accountability of practitioners, providers and organisations for services delivered within the Queensland health system.
3. The QAS notes the specific example given at clause 8 of the Bill relating to the meaning of a health service provider referring to 'an ambulance service' as a health service organisation and the subsequent scope in the application of the provisions that will apply to QAS.
4. The QAS notes that clause 118 provides for the appointment of individuals to panels of assessors for a period of up to five years. The QAS recommends that for ambulance service and/or paramedic practice matters, that person/s with suitable experience in ambulance operations and contemporary paramedic practice that the Minister deems to have sufficient experience, knowledge, skills and standing in the community be included on a panel examining these matters.

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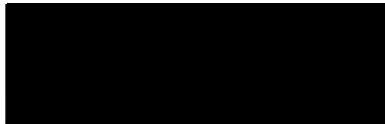
5. The QAS notes that in the absence of professional registration of paramedics currently being considered by the Australian Health Minister's Advisory Council:
- that Division 4 'Matters relating to practitioners other than registered health practitioners', will apply to QAS paramedics and staff providing health services; and
  - that practice 'prohibition orders' may be issued by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal or by the Health Ombudsman on an interim basis according to the seriousness and safety risk associated with particular matters under notice.

In closing, QAS is supportive of the changes contained in the proposed Bill to address deficiencies with the existing health complaints management arrangements.

The central point of focus on additional powers will contribute positively to transparency of matters under examination, the timeliness of the conduct of investigations and decision making in determining matters, as well as increasing overall community confidence in the system in Queensland.

Should you require further assistance, please contact Mr David Crossen, Chief of Staff, on telephone number [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely



Jack Dempsey MP  
Minister for Police and Community Safety