

Question on Notice
No. 1113
Asked on 29 September 2004

DR FLEGG asked the Minister for Health (Mr NUTTALL)—

QUESTION:

For each of Queensland's public hospitals, will he provide a breakdown (by hospital) of the number of occasions and duration each respective emergency department (a) went into bypass, (b) reached/issued a capacity alert, and/or (c) activated "a contingency plan" for each of 2002- 03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 (year to date) (reported separately)?

ANSWER:

(a) Bypass in the context of this question is understood to refer to a closure of the emergency department such that no ambulance patients are accepted into the department.

Two episodes of bypass have occurred in Queensland Health emergency departments during the period referred to in the question. One incident occurred during 2003/2004, the other in 2004/2005. Both incidents occurred at the RBWH – one as a result of a burst water pipe (duration 5 hours), the other as a result of a bomb hoax (duration 2 hours).

(b) Capacity alert processes are internal hospital procedures that assist hospital staff in managing temporary increases in demand. Data on activation and duration of capacity alerts is not collected for each Queensland public hospital and the variation in processes between hospitals makes comparison of any data irrelevant.

(c) Contingency plans may refer to internal hospital procedures that assist hospital staff in managing unexpected events. Data on activation of contingency plans is not centrally collected for each Queensland public hospital.