

Question on Notice

No. 184

Asked on 10 March 2021

MS S BOLTON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON Y D'ATH) –

QUESTION

With reference to it taking nearly an hour's drive from Noosa to Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH) and under the current system, demand to attend the closest jobs keeps northern ambulances at the southern end of the coast, leading to delayed response times and increased dependence on other first responders in their absence—

Will the Minister advise what improvements will be made to ensure timely ambulance response times in Noosa?

ANSWER

The Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) continuously monitors workloads across the state to ensure the most appropriate level of service is provided to all communities. Regular reviews of several factors including, the type of community (urban, rural and isolated), the number of incidents per day (demand), age demographic of the community, ingress to and egress from road and air networks, response time profiling, ambulance utilisation rates, risk profiling of the community and available health infrastructure and access to services are undertaken.

The Noosa community is serviced by a QAS station located at Noosa, with support from surrounding stations at Tewantin, Coolumb and Cooroy. In 2018-19, Tewantin Ambulance Station was provided with an additional seven paramedics and was upgraded from a Category 4 station, providing day and afternoon shifts, to a Category 5 station, providing day, afternoon and night shift coverage, 24 hours a day.

The Queensland Ambulance Service uses resources across the Sunshine Coast as part of a dynamic deployment model of service delivery, accordingly the highest priority of response is based on the criticality of the incident. At all times resources are prioritised to attend higher acuity incidents first. As a result, response times to the most critically unwell patients are exceeding performance targets in the Sunshine Coast Local Ambulance Service Network (LASN). Since the beginning of the 2018-19 financial year, the Sunshine Coast LASN has received an additional 37.95 staffing enhancements (inclusive of Tewantin) to support service delivery in the community.

During known periods of high demand such as New Year, additional resources are staged in and around Noosa to meet the anticipated need for ambulance response.