

22 July 2021

James McManus
Director Operations
Ambulance Tasmania

Dear James

Volunteer Ambulance Officers - Training

Australian Paramedics Association Tasmania (APA TAS) has been approached by some of our new volunteer members requesting us to raise the issue of inconsistent training practices across the State. The volunteers have previously tried to raise this issue through the correct chain of command channels to no avail.

We know that:

- Ambulance Tasmania (AT) ask all volunteer ambulance officers (VAO) to commit to and attend a minimum of 10 training sessions per year.
- There are a total of 37 stations across the State that currently incorporate the use of VAO's in the service delivery model.
- Training is provided to all volunteers at Branch, Double Branch, Volunteer and CERT stations; however, the frequency of this training differs by station.
- At some 96-hour Branch stations in the State, the training is conducted by the on-shift Paramedic.

The training delivery model needs to be consistent across the state. It would not be fair that a volunteer in one region has all training delivered by off shift Educators or Paramedics, and those in another region rely on luck that their Branch Station Officer on shift does not get dispatched to a job.

Volunteers are giving up their personal time to try and meet the minimum training requirements that form part of their volunteer agreement. We are advised that some are rearranging their personal lives and travelling a fair distance to attend the training only to find that upon arrival, their BSO has been dispatched to a job and no replacement has been organised to fulfil the training schedule. With workload increasing, there is an obvious risk of failure using the on-shift Paramedics to conduct VAO training sessions.

The APA TAS executive and its volunteer membership group believe it is reasonable that AT should provide every station that uses the volunteer model, 10 uninterrupted training sessions per year. It is unfair to expect our hard-working volunteers to commit to 10 sessions as a requirement, when the organisation is failing to provide those sessions. Uninterrupted training needs to be provided by Educators, Paramedics on overtime or certified Volunteer Trainers. We also note that this issue is having a direct impact on the retention of volunteers, particularly the volunteers in training.

We look forward to your response with a commitment from AT to provide all our volunteers across the state a minimum of 10 uninterrupted training sessions per year as a matter of urgency.

Regards



Kim Fazackerley
President