



30 January 2025

Email:

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Request No: 33924-24
Subject: NIAS Ranking Structure and Independent / Voluntary Information
Date Received: 13/11/2024

Thank you for your request for information received on 13th November 2024 which was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) Health and Social Care Trust has now completed its search for the information you requested and that is detailed below.

<p>1. The most recent ranking structure for the assignment of Voluntary/Independent ambulance services used by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service. Please break down each division, such as Belfast Trust, Western Trust, Southern Trust, South Eastern trust, Northern Trust working area ranking 1,2,3 and so on up to the last ranking number. Also breaking down for "shifts" and "journeys"</p>	<p>1. See attachment – this rank order was applied from November 2024 following a price variation from a contractor. Further price variations will lead to changes to this rank order.</p>
<p>2. How does the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service assign or know in advanced how many Independent/Voluntary ambulances they need - can you provide a core level? Or level of need for the service?</p>	<p>2. NIAS utilises Independent Ambulance Services (IAS) for routine non-emergency ambulance transport, and also to undertake non-emergency suitable urgent admissions. We assess historic demand levels and our NIAS resource levels, and following this analysis, we establish standing orders for IAS support for the Non-Emergency Ambulance Operations Centre (NEAOC) and for the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). The current core levels for both control rooms are contained in the second and third attachments. These levels reflect various work streams for example the</p>



	<p>requirement to transport multiple renal patients to and from dialysis appointments, and other demand patterns. The standing orders are reviewed periodically to reduce usage, when possible, but also to enable us to reduce as far as possible the number of patients who experience cancellation of transport due to no available resources. Though we are currently recruiting and training our own workforce, we have a current vacancy level of 24% of our staffing on top of which we have absence and annual leave to accommodate. IAS crews enable us to continue providing as many journeys as possible for patients who require assistance to reach their healthcare appointments.</p>
<p>3. Please provide me with an FOI email for ranking structures in other health trusts such as Northern Health Trust, Western Health Trust and so on.</p>	<p>3. We would suggest that you contact any other Trust for which you require this information – we do not hold information on other Trusts.</p>

I hope the above fully assists you.

Please note that, under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations, if you wish to publish or otherwise use this information besides for your own means, you will need to seek our permission to do so.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible, or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Director of Planning, Performance and Corporate Services, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) HSC Trust, Site 30, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8SG.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner’s Office and ask that they investigate whether the Trust has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Email: ni@ico.org.uk
Website: [ICO Website](#)

Post: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane,
Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF
Telephone: 028 9027 8757 or 0303 123 1114 (Belfast based Office)

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that NIAS replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ <https://nias.hscni.net> Personal details in respect of your request will have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Yours sincerely

(not signed – issued by email)

Information Governance Team