



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Request No: AD-IG-01(2)-2016-99
Key Word: Rapid Response Vehicles
Subject: Rapid Response Vehicles

Request: **Date Received:** 17/08/2016
 Date of Monitoring: 18/08/2016
 Date of Response: 27/09/2016

Thank you for your request for information received on 17 August 2016 and which was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We would also inform you that Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) Health and Social Care Trust has now completed its search for the information you requested and which is detailed below for your attention.

Question 1

Can you please advise if any Rapid Response Vehicles (RRVs) are permitted to sit in/at their homes (or relatives homes), whilst on duty?

Answer 1

Yes. RRVs are deployed to varying locations / deployment points based on the status plan which changes every hour of each and every day. Some staff may request to have comfort breaks at locations other than those on the plan which are at the discretion of the RRV control officer. Some locations may be their home or at homes of relatives. RRV staff are always in communication with the Emergency Ambulance Control (EAC) room if and when this occurs.

Question 2

If the answer to this question is yes, can you please explain why this is permitted, and by whom, if this public paid for vehicle receives a call and the address at which it is located is further away from where a standby point would have been?.

Answer 2

This is on an ad-hoc basis and we do not routinely send staff to their homes or homes of relatives rather than to deployment points, however, this does occur on limited occasions for the reasons outlined in Question 1 above.

Question 3

If the answer is no, can you please advise as to where the standby position should have been on this date and time?

Answer 3

Not applicable.

Question 4

When response times are being recorded does it record the address from where the Rapid Response Vehicle was located, or where the standby point should have been?

Answer 4

Response times are measured from point of call and when what is wrong, location of patient and chief complaint is received to arrival of a resource at an incident.



Question 5

A Rapid Response vehicle was parked in Orchardville Crescent, Belfast, 17th August 2016, at 2.40 pm, R27, Reg ONZ...(a quite regular occurrence), received a call from there at 2.52. Can you please advise as to where this Rapid Response Vehicle was despatched to, if you do not supply the street name, the general area will suffice. As you may be aware, there is heavy disruption on the Stewartstown Road, due to extensive roadworks, and I would have imagined that the motorway may have been the quicker route, had the vehicle been at a more convenient standby position.

Question 5

The RRV Paramedic responded to an incident in the location of Glen Road, Belfast. Additional Questions received on 18/08/2016:

Question 6

What time was this call received at ambulance control?

Answer 6

The call was received at 14:49:35hours

Question 7

What category was placed on this call? and the nature of the call?

Answer 7

The category of call was Cat B with a response time of 21 minutes. This was for a patient with a head injury.

Question 8

What was the response time from call received to RRV arrival on scene?

Answer 8

The response time for the RRV was 5mins14secs

Question 9

Did the RRV paramedic call for assistance, was an A&E ambulance dispatched to the scene?

Answer 9

The RRV Paramedic called at 15:02:48hours and asked for an A&E to attend the scene. An A&E vehicle was dispatched to the scene.

Question 10

If an A&E ambulance was dispatched, please provide response time and route taken by ambulance, ie motorway, or up/down congested Stewartstown Road, and from which station.

Answer 10

The A&E vehicle was noted to be mobile at 15:05:46hours and arrived on scene at 15:30:49hours. The crew was dispatched from Derriaghy Ambulance Station and exited the station, travelled down Creighton Road, Old Golf Course Road, M1 Motorway, Kennedy Way then Glen Road, Belfast to destination.

Question 11

During times of heavy congestion/traffic due to major road works currently taking place, where is the standby point for RRVs, (in this particular area) and has due consideration been given to this important aspect and the standby position moved.?

Answer 11

The current standby point for RRVs in this area would be Ballyowen Health Centre, Belfast. Standby points are determined by status plans as stated in Answer 1. Local knowledge plays an important factor when staff are being deployed including time of day, road conditions and ongoing roadworks/congestion.

Question 12

How many occasions, and by whom, (what grade), has permission been given to standby from home address for RRVs - period requested 2015-to date. How is this recorded? If not, why not, as this is paramount in response times?

Answer 12

The Trust does not hold information in relation to when permission has been given to standby from home addresses for RRVs as this is not recorded.

Question 13

For what reasons can a RRV paramedic request to standby from home address?

Answer 13

RRV Paramedics can request comfort breaks at various locations. They may on occasion request to travel to their home to replace uniform etc.

Question 14

Please attach Northern Ireland Ambulance Service's policy on RRVs, ie standby, breaks, requests to relocate the allocated standby position.

Answer 14

The Trust does not hold a policy on RRVs with reference made to standby, breaks etc

Question 15

Please also attach Northern Ireland Ambulance Service's policy on overtime working following sick absences, on either RRVs or A&E ambulances.

Question 15

NIAS does not hold a policy on overtime working following absences on either RRV or A&E ambulances. NIAS has an Overtime Policy and an Operational Overtime Procedure in relation to the distribution of overtime. We also have an Attendance Management Policy & Procedure in relation to the effective management sickness absence. These policies and procedures are silent in relation to overtime working following sickness absences on either RRVs or A&E vehicles.

I hope the above fully assists you. 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. 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.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Finance and ICT Director, 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:

Website: ni@ico.org.uk

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 @ <http://www.niamb.co.uk>.

Personal details in respect of your request will have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Yours faithfully

Alison Vitty

Alison Vitty (Miss)
CORPORATE MANAGER