



**Ambulance Service
of New South Wales**

CORPORATE PLAN

July 2004 - June 2006



24 hours a day, seven days a week complaints hotline established
for the **community**.

To speak to a Senior Complaints Officer

Telephone: 1800 269 133

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July 2004

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Foreword

The Ambulance Service of New South Wales (the Service) Corporate Plan, July 2004 - June 2006, provides a framework for the delivery of emergency pre-hospital care and transport services across New South Wales over the next two years.

The objectives and strategies outlined in the Plan will position the Service to better respond to increasing demands within a context of continuous clinical and quality improvement, population growth, changing population demographics, greater community expectations and a rapidly changing technological environment.

The strategies, assembled under the following key objectives, will ensure that the Service:

- Delivers high quality clinical care, patient transport, rescue and retrieval services
- Works in partnership with the community, other health and emergency organisations, and our stakeholders
- Develops and supports our staff to lead, manage and deliver pre-hospital care
- Continually improves performance and value by optimising our organisational structure, business processes and systems.

The development of the objectives and strategies within this Plan have been informed through: input from staff and managers; a number of significant performance and operational reviews; an understanding of community and stakeholder expectations; and the broader priorities of the State's health system and government.

This Plan represents a new approach to planning and is the first component of a full planning, reporting and monitoring system across the entire Service. It will be supported by business plans from all operational and corporate units as well as a robust reporting and monitoring system to ensure that our strategies are implemented effectively, on time, on budget and within the context of agreed objectives.

The staff of this Service have demonstrated a long-standing commitment to delivering quality patient care and transport. The directions outlined in this Plan, along with the associated initiatives to support achievement of the directions, will deliver greater support to the men and women of the Service so they are better equipped to do their job. This in turn will lead to better service delivery to the people of New South Wales both in terms of quality clinical care and response times.



Barrie Unsworth
Chairman of the Board



Greg Rochford
Chief Executive Officer

Setting the Scene

The Service is one of the largest ambulance services in the world and provides pre-hospital emergency care and health related transport services to over 6.2 million people. Over 3,000 staff work at 266 locations and operate over 800 ambulance vehicles. In 2003/04, the Service responded to more than 928,000 incidents and travelled around 23 million kilometres servicing the community of NSW.

Our Vision

Excellence in pre-hospital care

Our Mission

As an integral part of the State's health system, we will provide responsive, quality emergency clinical care and support for patient transport, rescue and retrieval services through:

- quality of service
- meeting community needs
- valuing our people
- organisational performance.

Our Values

We put our patients first by:

- caring
- respecting people
- working together
- showing accountability and responsibility
- focusing on community satisfaction
- fostering technical and professional excellence
- ensuring equity of service provision.

Our Objectives

- To deliver high quality clinical care, patient transport and retrieval services.
- To work in partnership with the community, other health and emergency organisations and our stakeholders.
- To develop and support our staff to lead, manage and deliver high quality pre-hospital care.
- To continually improve performance and value by optimising our organisational structure, business processes and systems.

Our Stakeholders

- Patients and those close to them.
- The community, including special needs groups, interest groups and disadvantaged groups.
- Our employees and their families.
- Our employees' industrial organisations.
- The Ambulance Service Board.
- All levels of government including the Minister for Health, other members of parliament, and local government.
- Other health care providers.
- Suppliers of goods and services to the Service.
- Other emergency and community services.
- Interstate and overseas ambulance services and health authorities.

Our Guarantee of Service

- Maintaining a 24 hours a day pre-hospital emergency care, medical retrieval and health related transport system.
- Ensuring in an emergency that the Service will urgently dispatch ambulance officers to provide treatment as rapidly as possible. For non-emergencies, ambulance officers will be dispatched as soon as possible within a reasonable time, according to the patient's condition.
- Improving and maintaining the health of patients in pre-hospital care and during transport to hospital or other health facilities.
- Providing accredited rescue services to specific locations throughout New South Wales.
- Coordinating aeromedical responses and retrievals as part of overall ambulance services.
- Respecting the privacy and confidentiality of any personal information held about our patients.

Our Challenge

External pressures can affect our capacity to deliver an efficient and effective ambulance service that meets the community's expectations. The Service recognises that it must continue to monitor and adjust to these pressures.

Over the past seven years, emergency ambulance transports have increased by 23 per cent within New South Wales. Emergency department attendances have increased at a similar rate. During this time the State's population has increased by just seven per cent. Demand for our services is increasing faster than we can meet it. This is our greatest challenge.

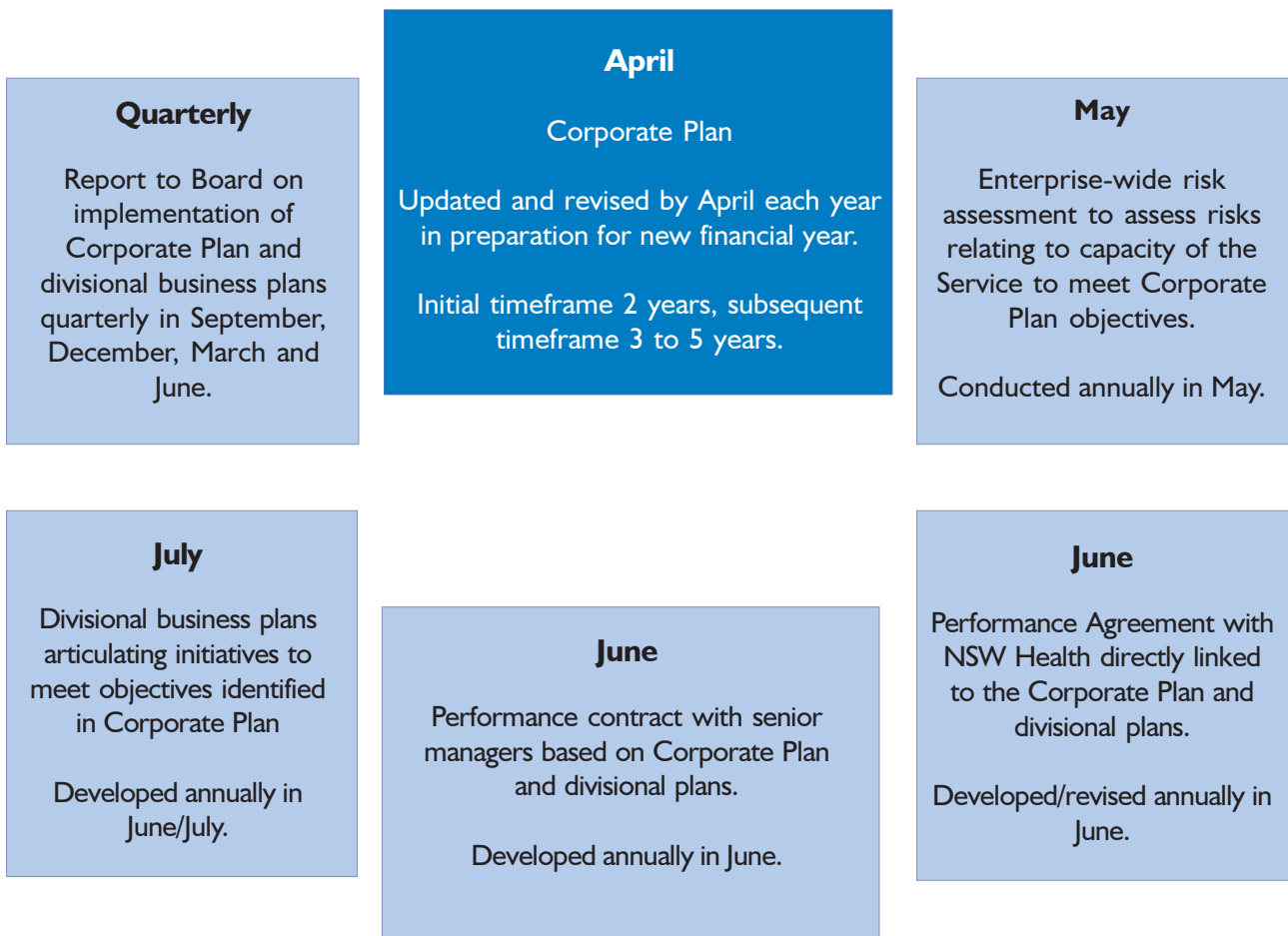
Meeting this challenge requires a two-pronged approach - more resources, and more efficient use of the resources we have. The Service is developing new funding options to ensure we have the additional resources required. To secure more funding, we must demonstrate how we are using the people, equipment and know-how we currently have to do the best job possible. Hence the introduction of this Corporate Plan.

Our Corporate and Business Planning System

In 2001, several independent reviews helped the Service to identify the changes needed to be made to improve our organisational capabilities. Most of these changes have begun and will continue to be rolled-out over the next few years. The blueprint for change, Best Again, set out key strategies to be implemented from 2002-2007, and is the foundation of this Corporate Plan.

The new Corporate Plan is our major road map for going forward. It will help us coordinate our functions, strategies and new initiatives. The divisional business plans will tell us how we are going to get there, and will be developed by the people who know - our staff.

Together, the Corporate Plan, divisional business plans and other documents outlined below will give us the tools and measures to ensure we meet the many challenges ahead.



Objective I

To deliver high quality clinical care, patient transport, rescue and retrieval services

Key outcomes:

- A focus on best practice and continued development of best practice through audit and research.
- A structure, which supports, promotes and reinforces a strong emphasis on clinical performance and patient safety.
- Improved clinical skills among all ambulance officers.
- Effective early identification and management of clinical risks.
- Robust data which supports effective monitoring of clinical practices and performance.
- Case triaging by dispatching of ambulances according to new priority codes.
- Increased staff in rural NSW to enhance service delivery in rural and regional NSW.

Sub-objective	Strategy	Measure of Achievement
1.1 To enhance clinical performance by the Service and deliver improved clinical practice	<p>A focus on best practice and continued development of best practice through audit and research</p> <p>Pilot strategies to improve the early notification of trauma to emergency departments to facilitate ambulance transport of trauma patients directly to appropriately equipped hospitals</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive cardiac care and defibrillation strategy</p> <p>Identify, reduce and manage clinical risks by developing a clinical risk management system, including root cause analyses of sentinel events, and reporting of variations to clinical practice, clinical incidents and 'near misses'</p>	<p>Statewide and Divisional meetings held quarterly; Clinical Action Plan developed, implemented and reported on quarterly</p> <p>Pilot completed in Hunter and Sydney by July 2005; Assess clinical performance of pilot by September 2005 with a view to roll-out across NSW</p> <p>Strategy developed by March 2005</p> <p>New reporting systems established by March 2005; Effectiveness of existing systems reviewed by December 2004; Identified risks addressed through annual Clinical Action Plan developed by June each year; Clinical Action Plan implemented by July each year</p>
1.2 To improve clinical performance through effective monitoring and early intervention	<p>Audit ambulance officer compliance with clinical protocols and develop analyses of deviations from protocols to identify required educational intervention</p> <p>Consolidate reporting on three clinical performance indicators: number and percentage of patients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - who have a return of spontaneous circulation following ventricular fibrillation where cardiac arrest was witnessed; - with ischaemic chest pain who are eligible to be given aspirin; and - with non-traumatic chest pain and time at scene is less than 20 minutes <p>Expand reporting to an additional three indicators</p> <p>Introduce systematic reporting and monitoring of response performance on life threatening cases (data supplied through MPDS)</p> <p>Improve clinical data quality and the robustness of Patient Health Care Records data</p>	<p>Compliance audits conducted quarterly by Divisional Clinical Governance Committees commencing 2004/05</p> <p>Systematic monitoring commencing 2004/05</p> <p>Reporting established by June 2005 on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - management of suspected spinal injuries; - management of asthma; - pain management of traumatic limb injury <p>Systematic monitoring of responses to calls relating to life threatening cases established by December 2004</p> <p>Assurance of data quality by March 2005 to measure and monitor clinical outcomes</p>

Sub-objective	Strategy	Measure of Achievement
1.3 To improve service delivery and response times	<p>Introduce triaging of calls and dispatching of ambulances according to new priority codes</p> <p>Complete implementation of skills mixing in ambulance crews</p> <p>Increase staffing levels in regional NSW to address roster relief needs, enhance services and improve performance</p>	<p>Triaging of all calls and prioritised dispatching of ambulances by December 2004</p> <p>195 additional paramedics in place by June 2005 to support skill mixing on ambulances. Percentage increase in ambulance crews which include a paramedic.</p> <p>Additional ambulance officers and educators allocated to rural stations as follows: June 2004 - 32 July 2005 - 66 July 2006 - 68</p>
1.4 To ensure clinical performance is enhanced through research and identification of best practice	<p>Inform clinical practice and education by reviewing contemporary research</p> <p>Complete current clinical trials for the use of: Fentanyl, Midazolam and Narcan</p> <p>Work with Northern Sydney and Western Sydney Area Health Services to research the early triage of acute myocardial infarction</p> <p>Systematically review all clinical protocols to ensure compliance with clinical best practice and research findings</p>	<p>Research findings reflected in updated protocols, the annual Clinical Action Plans and the Advancing Skills project</p> <p>Trials completed for Fentanyl and Midazolam by December 2004; trial for Narcan completed by June 2005</p> <p>Pilot on the use of 12 lead ECG and early triage of acute myocardial infarction completed by June 2006</p> <p>All clinical protocols reviewed by June 2006 and thereafter on a three-yearly cycle</p>

Objective 2

To work in partnership with the community, other health and emergency organisations and our stakeholders

Key outcomes:

- Improved management of access block in emergency departments across Sydney.
- Collaborative practices with Area Health Services piloted as a vehicle to achieve best use of resources.
- Savings achieved through sharing resources between the Service and rural Area Health Services.
- Capacity for a seamless, statewide and national response to a wide range of emergencies and disasters.
- Improved services for people residing in rural and remote communities.

Sub-objective	Strategy	Measure of Achievement
2.1 To work in partnership with Area Health Services to enhance service delivery, achieve efficiencies and reduce duplication	<p>Develop annual strategies in collaboration with Area Health Services to reduce off-stretcher time in hospital emergency departments</p> <p>Continue to implement new strategies as part of the Ambulance Hospital Liaison Program</p> <p>Develop and implement strategies for collaboration between rural-based ambulance officers and rural Area Health Services in NSW, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared continuing professional development opportunities for Area Health Service nursing staff and ambulance officers; - Joint Area Health Service and ambulance officer primary health care initiatives 	<p>Access Block Improvement Strategies developed, implemented and progress evident toward off-stretcher time target of 95% within 20 minutes</p> <p>Strategic and early intervention responses developed and implemented annually</p> <p>Shared continuing professional development opportunities incorporated in the Certificate to Practice by July 2005</p> <p>Proposal submitted to the NSW Department of Health by January 2005</p>

Sub-objective	Strategy	Measure of Achievement
<p>2.2 To work in collaboration with Area Health Services, emergency service organisations and other agencies to deliver a coordinated counter disaster response</p>	<p>Complete implementation of the integrated emergency management strategy</p> <p>Complete an integrated mass casualty response plan including the management of burns casualties, nationally and within NSW</p> <p>Collaborate with NSW Health to ensure protection of the State against infectious disease emergencies</p> <p>Review the State's Health Disaster Plan</p> <p>Develop the health support services component of an emergency evacuation plan for the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation site</p> <p>Complete the whole-of-government strategy on natural disaster mitigation</p> <p>Complete training for ambulance officers and other health personnel in chemical, biological and radiological disasters and incident control systems</p>	<p>Personal protective equipment distributed by December 2004 and Standard Operating Procedures for deployment completed by December 2004; Hospital contamination units upgraded by June 2005</p> <p>Plan completed by June 2005</p> <p>Infectious Diseases Emergency Plan completed by December 2004</p> <p>HealthPlan reviewed and updated by June 2005</p> <p>AmbPlan for Lucas Heights completed and tested by December 2005</p> <p>Strategy completed by June 2005</p> <p>Training completed for target numbers of staff in chemical, biological and radiological disasters and for staff in incident control systems by June 2005</p>
<p>2.3 To work in partnership with remote communities to enhance service delivery</p>	<p>Improve honorary ambulance officer and community first responder schemes in rural and remote communities in one region with a view to further roll-out schemes</p> <p>Support honorary ambulance officers and community first responders with locally based training</p> <p>Establish a coordinated approach across rural NSW to the establishment of honorary and community first responder schemes</p>	<p>Identification of appropriate use of and support to voluntary ambulance officer schemes with a view to roll-out schemes across appropriate parts of NSW</p> <p>Support provided to honorary ambulance officers and community first responders by December 2005 through clinical training officers, clinical support officers and local ambulance stations</p> <p>Clearly identified structures for support and coordination of honorary developments at Divisional and Statewide levels in place by February 2005.</p>

Objective 3

To develop and support our staff to lead, manage and deliver pre-hospital care

Key outcomes:

- Upgrading the skills levels of all ambulance officers.
- Replacement of the current recertification program for ambulance officers with more flexible learning programs under the Certificate to Practice.
- Enhanced management skills among all managers and supervisory staff.
- Effective succession planning.
- Support for ambulance officers deployed in rural and remote NSW.
- Enhanced safety and health protection for ambulance officers.
- Increased staff retention.

Sub-objective	Strategy	Measure of Achievement
3.1 To enhance the clinical skills of all ambulance officers across NSW	<p>Implement the Advancing Skills project, involving replacing the current three tier clinical grading with two tiers and associated upgrading of all ambulance officer skills</p> <p>Implement a modernised certification program which includes continuing education and professional development programs supported by in-field training officers</p> <p>Develop a Clinical Training Officer framework to provide accessible, on-the-job clinical and training support for ambulance officers</p>	<p>Project commenced by August 2004 with progressive implementation to take place over the next decade</p> <p>Comprehensive review of the first two years of Certificate to Practice by June 2006. Five in-field support positions established by January 2005, and a further five by January 2006. Learning management system established by October 2004.</p> <p>Clinical Training Officers in place across all divisions by January 2005</p>
3.2 Enable the continued development and performance of staff	<p>Implement a performance management and development program for all senior and middle managers</p> <p>Continue the management and administration skills training program for frontline supervisors</p> <p>Establish a succession planning scheme</p>	<p>Program for operational and corporate managers implemented and first review completed by April 2005</p> <p>Short courses available to all frontline supervisors by July 2004</p> <p>Succession planning scheme developed by May 2005</p>
3.3 Provide improved support to staff in rural NSW	<p>Provide time-limited placements for ambulance officers deployed in ambulance stations in remote areas of NSW</p> <p>Establish an incentive scheme to support ambulance officers who work in rural NSW</p>	<p>Time limited placements established by September 2004 and then to be provided on an ongoing basis</p> <p>Incentive scheme to be established by September 2005 and then to be provided on an ongoing basis</p>
3.4 Support the establishment and retention of a diverse workforce	<p>Implement practices which support Equal Employment Opportunity and recognise the benefits of diversity in the workforce</p> <p>Establish a staff retention and transfer program</p>	<p>Additional operational employees from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds employed each year</p> <p>Staff transfer scheme with priority for remote/rural experience consistent with the direction for clinical skill priority placement established by September 2005</p>

Sub-objective	Strategy	Measure of Achievement
3.5 Enhance staff health and safety	<p>Implementation of a Statewide infection control policy</p> <p>Develop and implement manual handling policy and procedures across the operational areas of the Service</p> <p>Establish a risk and hazard identification and assessment program for managers and supervisors</p>	<p>Thirty percent of staff screened for infectious diseases by June 2005; Ninety-five percent of all new recruits and 50 percent of existing staff vaccinated by June 2006</p> <p>Reduction in number of manual handling injuries against previous financial year</p> <p>All managers and supervisors trained in risk and hazard identification and assessment by June 2005 and then ongoing training provided</p>

Objective 4

To continually improve performance and value through optimising organisational structure, business processes and systems

Key deliverables:

- Greater efficiency and better use of resources.
- An improved industrial environment.
- A more appropriate fee structure for the Service.
- Improved assets, information technology and telecommunications.
- An upgraded computer aided dispatch system, which will contribute to and support delivery of better response times.
- Enhanced accountability and linked performance management systems.

Sub-objective	Strategy	Measure of Achievement
4.1 Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service's operational divisions	<p>Finalise the restructure of Operations Centres through introduction of new call-taking and dispatch models</p> <p>Implement workforce modelling for rural NSW</p>	<p>New call taking and dispatch models in place across all Operations Centres by June 2005</p> <p>Sites for allocation of new staff determined by July 2004 and revised annually</p>
4.2 Improve and strengthen industrial relations within the Service	<p>Complete negotiations with relevant unions for the establishment of new industrial awards</p> <p>Develop an industrial relations framework for managing industrial relations in a consistent manner across NSW</p>	<p>Negotiations completed by December 2004</p> <p>Framework developed by December 2004 and promulgated across the Service by April 2005</p>
4.3 Address issues impacting adversely on financial resources	<p>Review and improve the current fee structure</p> <p>Implement strategies to reduce workers' compensation specifically to prepare business case to fund five positions to promote and implement occupational health and safety across the Service</p>	<p>Review completed by June 2005</p> <p>If funding approved, positions to be recruited in September 2004</p>

Sub-objective	Strategy	Measure of Achievement
4.4 Effective management of Service assets	<p>Develop a telecommunications strategic plan</p> <p>Collaborate with the Department of Commerce to develop a feasibility study to pilot the roll-out of new mobile data network across NSW. Prepare business case to enable roll-out of the regional mobile data network if pilot evaluated as successful</p>	<p>Telecommunications strategic plan completed by December 2004</p> <p>Mobile data network for Sydney feasibility study completed by December 2004, and, if business case for funding is successful, roll-out to be completed by January 2006</p>
4.6 Improve information technology to support a more efficient and effective Service	<p>In collaboration with other State Government agencies and the private sector, develop a roll-out plan for information technology infrastructure to all ambulance stations</p> <p>Upgrade the Computer Aided Dispatch system to improve functionality and to better support a routable database</p> <p>Rationalise information technology infrastructure in the Operations Centres</p> <p>Implement the Business Objects solution to support better data management and access to aggregated data</p> <p>Review and update the information technology strategic plan</p>	<p>Continued negotiations with State Government agencies and private sector organisations to identify the preferred and most cost-effective solution</p> <p>System upgraded by December 2004.</p> <p>Rationalisation of Operations Centres' IT infrastructure completed by July 2005</p> <p>Business Objects solution implemented by December 2004</p> <p>Revised plan completed by December 2004</p>
4.7 Establish appropriate planning, reporting and monitoring systems across the Service	<p>Develop a cyclical corporate and business planning and reporting system across the Service</p> <p>Establish a planning process across the Service linked to asset and telecommunications planning</p>	<p>Planning and reporting system established by September 2004</p> <p>Service planning process established by January 2005</p>

