



John Della Bosca MLC
Minister for Health
Minister for the Central Coast
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

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New mega lift ambulances unveiled

NSW Minister for Health, John Della Bosca, today inspected two new mega lift ambulances going into service in NSW, designed to meet the increasing numbers of obese people requiring transport to public hospitals.

Mr Della Bosca said that during the past few years, there had been a dramatic rise in the number of people requiring these ambulances – 45 in 2002 compared to 576 in 2008 – an increase of more than 1100 per cent.

“Two of the new ambulances will be located in Sydney with the remaining three operating in Western, Southern and Northern NSW. They will be rotated as required to meet areas of most need,” the Minister said.

“The ambulances - which cost \$280,000 each - are mainly used to transport people who weigh in excess of 180 kilograms or people whose girth is too large for the normal ambulance stretcher.

“They are rated to carry a patient up to 500 kilograms in weight with no exertion on paramedics when loading and unloading patients,” he said.

The new ambulances feature:

- Hydraulic access ramps that can weigh patients; and
- A specially designed stretcher fitted with a scissor-like hydraulic lifting system.

“The vehicles have also been designed to be multi-purpose; they can be used by medical retrieval teams and for counter terrorism,” the Minister said.

“The back of the vehicle is totally isolated and sealed off from the cab allowing paramedics wearing protection equipment to treat a contaminated patient or a patient who may have ingested an organophosphate, such as nerve gas.

“The new vehicles can carry up to ten paramedics in the event of a major emergency.

“The recently released Garling Report into acute care services in public hospitals advises we need to use ambulance resources and the skills of our paramedics more effectively –these new ambulances are an excellent way of meeting the changing health needs of the community and improving patient care.

“The vehicle was developed in consultation with on-road paramedics and with input from the helicopter retrieval teams including doctors from the Bankstown Helicopter Base,” Mr Della Bosca added.

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