



5 June 2009

### **Respect the Good Work of Paramedics**

Paramedics respond to medical emergencies on a daily basis.

During 2007/08 there were over one million ambulance responses to emergency and non-emergency incidents.

The overwhelming majority of members of the public are very appreciative and respectful of our ambulance paramedics.

There are, however, some cases of unfounded aggression from patients, their families or the general community. This type of behaviour is more common when people are affected by alcohol or drugs.

There are times when individual drivers do not follow the law and give way in a safe manner to an emergency vehicle with its warning lights and siren on.

This June long weekend, with a high workload expected, we would like to give people a timely reminder to respect paramedics in the course of their work.

Ambulance paramedics are employed to provide optimum pre-hospital care. In potentially high pressure situations ambulance paramedics appreciate courtesy and respectful assistance from members of the public.

Things you can do to help include:

Drink alcohol in moderation

When driving and an approaching emergency vehicle has activated its warning devices, please move over to the left in a safe manner when and where it is legal to do so. On multiple-lane roads, drive as often as possible in the left lane so you can already be out of the way.

Make sure that ambulances can find the right address without difficulty. Have your street number prominently displayed on your letterbox and consider having someone out of the front of the property waiting to show the paramedics the best way in. Remove any obstacles that may hinder stretcher access.

If you are staying away during the long weekend, make a note of your holiday address and nearest town if staying at a camping area or rural property. Whenever you are at a different location, ensure that everyone knows the correct street address, the closest cross street and the landline phone number (if available). It is a good idea to keep this information nearby the phone or entered on your mobile phone.

Please follow any lawful instruction that paramedics ask of you if you are a bystander to an incident. Please avoid any actions or words that may inflame aggression or violence from the patient or other bystanders.

There is no excuse for abuse against paramedics who are providing life saving treatment to a member of the community.

Please remember that paramedics save lives, the next life they may save may be yours!

~ENDS~

*For further information or local media opportunities please contact Ambulance Media on (02) 9320 7796.*