



**6 July 2009**

## **Pedestrians.... Watch out - Ambulance Motorcycles about....**

*7:45am Monday morning: Ambulance receives a Triple Zero call to a 63 yr old male patient with chest pain and shortness of breath in the middle of Martin Place on Elizabeth St. He is clutching his chest and his condition is deteriorating. Sydney streets are congested with commuter traffic and an Ambulance is on its way through the George St traffic.*

A Motorcycle Paramedic at Wynyard is also sent to the patient at the same time as the stretcher ambulance. The bike paramedic arrives within minutes cutting through Martin Place to get to the patient.

Footpaths and pedestrian zones including Darling Harbour, Pitt St Mall, Chinatown and the Opera House Forecourt are often utilised by bike paramedics to beat Sydney CBD traffic particularly during peak commuter times.

The bikes crewed by Intensive Care Paramedics with motorbike experience have been in the CBD for the last ten years responding to medical emergencies and accidents in the Sydney metropolitan city streets.

"The bike paramedics are another resource that ambulance can send to attend our emergency patients in the city CBD," Said Mike Willis, General Manager Operations for the Ambulance Service of NSW.

Average response times can be as little as 3.5 minutes given the ability of bike paramedic to cut through Malls when compared with an average of 8 minutes for emergency stretcher ambulances.

"The bike paramedics are constantly mobile and stay within designated zones to commence emergency patient treatment. The paramedics carry the same lifesaving drugs and much of the equipment as the emergency stretcher ambulances," Mr Willis said.

Sydney is a busy city. More than 350,000 people work in the City of Sydney as well as 150,000 residents and more 2.5 million tourists a year. It is estimated that on a daily basis a further 400,000 people travel to the City on any day to shop, be educated, conduct business or to be entertained.

"Ambulance constantly reviews demand and implements response options to allow us to get to our emergency patients fast. Using the bikes in the city gives us an opportunity to save potentially vital seconds in starting treatment." Mr Willis said.

The bike paramedics deal with an array of conditions including pedestrians hit by cars, falls, motor vehicle accidents and people affected by drugs and alcohol.

Ambulance reminds the Sydney pedestrian community to be aware of bike paramedics in their zones and move out of the way. The next life they save could be someone they know.