

PART 1 - Number of assault incidents

Information about assaults on paramedics by members of the public that were reported to NSW Police was not definitively collected by NSW Ambulance until early 2012 and the figure for 2012 provided below may not be fully comprehensive. The table below indicates the total number of assaults reported by paramedics for each calendar year.

Year	Reports to NSW Police of physical (actual or threatened) and/or verbal assaults on NSW Ambulance Paramedics
2012	107
2013	142
2014	174
2015 (to 31 May)	60

PART 2 - Summary of reportsLocation

The majority of assaults occurred at the location of initial patient contact, with others occurring in or near the ambulance vehicle or at a hospital emergency department.

Assailant

In the majority of cases, the assailant was the patient. Other assailants include a friend, relative or other bystander.

Type of assaults

The type of assaults reported are physical assaults such as spitting, biting, pushing, slapping, kicking and punching; verbal abuse and aggression; and threatened physical assault.

Descriptions of actual assaults for 2013, 2014, and 2015 to date are provided at **pages 2 to 6** (descriptions for 2012 incidents were not collected in a central place and are not readily available). Duplicates have been removed where an identical assault has been reported.

NSW Police assistance

In most cases of reported assaults, NSW Police are either already in attendance at the scene, or are requested by NSW Ambulance prior to the attendance of paramedics (where there is a potential threat identified), or NSW Police attendance is requested post assault.

Support

NSW Ambulance has a comprehensive support program in place to assist paramedics when they experience stressful or traumatic situations in their work, including assault. In addition to immediate support provided by on-duty managers, other services are available to all staff 24 hours 7 days a week, including peer support officers, chaplains and an Employee Assistance Program.

NSW Ambulance has provided Anti-Violence Training for all paramedics. The training assists with situational awareness, de-escalating difficult situations, and understanding patterns of behaviour to help paramedics avert potentially violent situations. NSW Ambulance also produced a video to assist paramedics with decision-making in circumstances that could become volatile.

Examples of types of assault in the **2015** calendar year to date include:

threatened to stab; attempt to bite hand
violent and non-compliant; kicked in face
struck shoulder with an open hand
kicked and punched vehicle and punched paramedic's right shoulder
verbal abuse, waving arms around and spat at officer
grabbed one paramedic and dug in fingernails breaking skin; spat
verbal abuse; threats to harm; struck ambulance
kicking, punching and spitting
elbowed, attempted bite, scratch and break skin, spit in face; threw cup of tea
kneed in the head and spat on
verbal abuse, intimidation, rocks thrown
threatened to kill the paramedic
punch to torso
spat on neck
knocked against wall onto floor
grabbed and thrown across ambulance
grabbed and scratched arm
punched in jaw
spat in face/eye
struck in face/nose; patient required restraint
verbal threats including threaten with death
verbal abusive; verbally threatened
aggressive and agitated; spat in face
struck in back of head
aggressive, pushed and kicked
hit in chest with open hand
grabbed shirt; attempted punches
patient had large knife
abusive and aggressive; poked in shoulder with fingers
struck with glancing blow to side of face
aggressive, offensive language and threatening tone
slapped across face when applying mechanical restraint device
kicked in thigh while in mechanical restraint device
aggressive and spitting
aggressive; threatened to kill
kicked, punched, verbal abuse, spitting, threatened with blood filled syringe
approached ambulance with knife; threats to kill
verbal abuse; threats to paramedic and family
spat at and hit to face
verbally abusive, spat in face
punched and kicked paramedic; blocked exit of other paramedic
occupants of house holding knives and a bat; objects being thrown at house
verbally aggressive; produced large kitchen knives

Examples of types of assault in the **2014** calendar year include:

punched in abdomen
grabbed arm, pushed, racial abuse
yelling obscenities; intimidating gestures
aggressive, verbally abusive
flicked blood
threatened to punch and bite throat
wine bottle thrown at windscreen
rocks thrown at ambulance window
paramedic kicked in the groin
spitting, kicking and punching paramedics
striking paramedic on right side of face
three large rocks and a garbage bin thrown at vehicle
patient struck paramedic in the chest with knee
husband of patient aggressive and threatening
aggressive, death threats, threw punch
threats; aggressive; exposed genitals
verbal abuse, spitting, hit vehicle
spat in face
threatened with carving knives; threatened self-harm
tackled and kicked in head/face
punched and kicked
punched in chest
paramedics slapped in face
verbal and racial abuse; attempted punch
spat on uniform
kicked both paramedics: head/groin and chest/abdomen
bitten on hand
kicked in genital/groin area
aggressive and threatening; threw phone and equipment
punched in nose
punched in chest and pulled to ground
attempted headbutt, grabbed neck
bitten on thumb
patient's partner abusive and threatening at residence and hospital
bitten on forearm
shoved in chest several times while in rear of ambulance
lunged at throat with scissors
pointed loaded gun at paramedic's head
verbally aggressive; abused by patient's husband and mother
verbally abusive; pushed forcefully with two hands
kicked in face
punched in jaw
punched in shoulder
punched in arm; punched in cheek

Examples of types of assault in the 2014 calendar year (continued)
bit arm; punched and slapped several times; and grabbed groin
brandished large kitchen knife
closed fist punch to back of head
bit on upper right arm/bicep
threatened with knife
bitten on right forearm
threatened to stab, stomp head
verbal abuse; pushed in chest, attempted punch; kicked and caused needle stick injury
punched in face and chased paramedics
struck in throat; grabbed neck
grabbed throat
punched in chest, grabbed shirt; spat in face
spat at face and mouth
verbally abusive, aggressive; initially refused to allow paramedics to exit residence
spitting; death threats
spat in eye and face
jumped off stretcher and knocked down paramedic
striking and spitting
verbally threatened
punch to face
menacing behaviour; chased; attempted punch
brother abusive, threatened to kill
bite to finger; punch to cheek
verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, threw cup of water
slap across face
verbally aggressive; threatened to stab with 8cm blade
patient's son verbally abusive, aggressive
verbally aggressive; threatened with knife
verbally aggressive; headbutted window of ambulance
kicked; attempted punch; spitting blood

Examples of types of assault in the **2013** calendar year include:

punched in face; damaged vehicle
spat vomit
kicked in chest
attacked vehicle; abuse
threatened to stab
spat in face/eyes
verbally threatened
hit with closed fist in shoulder; threw mobile phone
attempted to strike with shovel
threatened to strike with chair; hitting vehicle; verbal abuse
chased paramedic; verbal aggression
hit in face
attempted to punch
pushed against fence
verbal abuse and threats of violence
kicked in groin and rib
spat, kicked, slapped
attempted punch, bite; restrained
coffee thrown, punch thrown
threatened physical and verbal aggression
threw objects; verbal abuse
attempted bite; slapped in face
blow to head; attempted kick
punched in nose
punched in shoulder
kicked vehicle; threw punch
punched knee
spat in face: eyes/mouth
kicked in abdomen
punched in head
attempted punch/threw object
kicked in chest and abdomen/ attempted bite
kicked in thigh
punch to thoracic back region
produced knife and lunged at paramedics
grabbed around neck and throat and attempted choke
hit with wooden fence post
bitten on arm
grabbed thigh and between legs
bitten on finger
threatened to shoot and kill paramedics
bitten on arm
verbally aggressive, swearing, agitated.
kicking, punching, attempted biting

Examples of types of assault in the 2013 calendar year (continued)
headbutt to face
threatened with knife
threatened to kill and punched in chest
struck in face
bitten on wrist
yelled abuse after parking
spat in eye
pushed in chest, grabbed shirt
threw objects, indecent exposure
punched in face
threatened with bottle, spat in face
pushed against wall
threatened with a chair
chased around ambulance
headlock, attempted strangle
grabbed and twisted wrist
swearing, attempted punches, grabbed and scratched arm
violently grabbed
attempted grab; pushed against wall; chased; urine bottle thrown.
pushed, flicked blood in ambulance
kicked in face
verbal abuse; striking body and face
verbal abuse, attempted assault, spat
intimidating comments; threatened paramedics
grabbed and squeezed testicles
attacked from behind, pushed onto side of ambulance
hit in face; kicked in groin
shoved into side door; pulled head backwards; bites to forearm.