

Monday 28 June 2010

COALITION'S HUGE BOOST TO AMBULANCE SERVICE WITH 340 NEW OFFICERS

13 per cent increase in operational ambulance officers across Victoria.

210 new ambulance paramedics for regional Victoria.

100 new ambulance paramedics for metropolitan Melbourne.

30 new patient transport officers.

A Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Government will recruit an additional 310 new ambulance paramedics plus 30 new patient transport officers – a total of 340 ambulance staff – as part of a plan to properly fund and fix the ambulance crisis created by Labor in Victoria.

All Victorians will benefit from the \$151 million statewide plan, which will provide hundreds of new ambulance officers across regional and metropolitan Victoria, and an urgent boost to Ambulance Victoria which has been drastically mismanaged and under funded by John Brumby.

A Victorian Coalition Government will overhaul our ailing ambulance service, which has struggled under John Brumby, leaving residents experiencing lengthy waits for this basic service across the state, particularly in regional Victoria.

We will fund an additional 340 new ambulance staff statewide, with 100 in metropolitan Melbourne and 240 in regional Victoria.

AREA	TOTAL	
Melbourne	100	100 new paramedics
Barwon South West	50	44 paramedics 6 patient transport officers
Grampians	49	43 paramedics 6 patient transport officers

Policy

Loddon Mallee	49	43 paramedics 6 patient transport officers
Hume	46	40 paramedics 6 patient transport officers
Gippsland	46	40 paramedics 6 patient transport officers
STATEWIDE	340	

Under the plan, the Coalition will work with Ambulance Victoria, local communities, and paramedics to allocate the new officers to areas of the state with the greatest clinical need.

The additional ambulance officers will be deployed across the state in a rapid effort to reverse the ambulance crisis created and neglected by John Brumby over the past 11 years.

This will be the biggest single increase in additional staffing for the Ambulance service in the states history. We are going to rebuild the Ambulance service in Victoria.

The Ambulance service is in crisis under John Brumby and we are going to rebuild it with hundreds of new paramedics.

Victorians deserve the highest quality ambulance services and have the right to expect timely responses to ambulance services during emergencies.

Victoria's ambulance service crisis has hit both regional and metropolitan Victoria. Lives are at risk because of John Brumby and Labor's failure to properly manage Victoria's ambulance services.

A series of distressing and disastrous incidents have occurred throughout Victoria which have directly impacted on the safety of the community and the ability of over-stretched Ambulance Victoria officers to respond.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL VICTORIA

The package will also provide for the recruitment of an additional 30 patient transport officers across regional Victoria, aimed at relieving the pressure on existing regional ambulance staff unavailable for emergency call outs whilst transporting patients over long distances.

Patient transport officers provide care and transport for patients. The primary objective of this role is to provide service in the transport of non-emergency, pre and post hospital patients, which will free ambulance officers and paramedics to respond to urgent call-outs.

RECRUITMENT AND RELOCATION INCENTIVE

The Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition will undertake an urgent paramedic recruitment drive. The recruitment drive will seek additional graduate paramedics including from interstate and New Zealand and will encourage previously employed ambulance officers to return to the service.

As part of the package, the Coalition will provide \$3 million for recruitment and relocation expenses to attract new paramedics to regional Victoria.

FURTHER COALITION INITIATIVES

The Coalition will make further announcements on ambulance services prior to the November election.

The Coalition has already made a series of health announcements including a \$1 billion health infrastructure fund, greater transparency on ambulance hospital bypass, Hospital Early Warning System and ramping data. The creation of an emergency department website to reveal key information on hospital waiting times, elective surgery and outpatient lists which the Brumby Government has kept secret and covered up from the Victorian community.

JOHN BRUMBY'S MISMANAGEMENT AND INCOMPETENCE LEADS TO CRISIS IN AMBULANCE SERVICES

In Opposition, Labor promised response times of ten minutes for code 1 emergencies statewide. Instead in government, Labor increased the response time to 15 minutes and has failed every year to meet even this reduced target.

May 2010 – A man who lived less than one block from the Maryborough ambulance station died after waiting more than 38 minutes for an ambulance. A second ambulance was at the station but there were no paramedics to staff it.

May 2010 – A five year old Gippsland boy died after waiting more than an hour for a specialist MICA response unit.

May 2010 – A secondary school student died in Maffra waiting 27 minutes for a MICA unit to arrive when she passed out at a party.

Policy

May 2010 – A 20 year old local football player died later in hospital after waiting 20 minutes for an ambulance to arrive in Sunbury.

May 2010 – A 24 year old footballer in Simpson waited almost an hour to be taken to hospital after suffering a severely broken leg in an on-field collision.

May 2010 – A 10 year old Doncaster schoolboy with a broken arm and a dislocated wrist waited more than an hour for an ambulance to arrive at his school.

April 2010 – A Korumburra man collapsed in his home from complications related to pneumonia and pleurisy after waiting more than two hours for an ambulance to arrive.

April 2010 – A Hamilton man endured a 30 minute wait for an ambulance before his wife was forced to drive him to hospital because the only ambulance crew in the area was on another call.

March 2010 – Two teenagers who were bashed and bleeding had to be rushed to Geelong Hospital in the back of a police vehicle because there was no ambulance available.

March 2010 – A man died after ploughing his car into a house in Bairnsdale after it took nearly half an hour for an ambulance to arrive.

February 2010 – An elderly woman was forced to wait nearly two hours for an ambulance after suffering a heart attack because 'it was a busy night'.

Dec 2009 – A Corio man waited for an hour for an ambulance on a Sunday night with intense abdominal pain.

Dec 2009 – A Yarrawonga woman impaled on a fence had to wait 47 minutes for an ambulance to arrive from Wangaratta (55 kilometres away). The ambulance was not cleared to exceed the speed limit or use lights and sirens. A graduate ambulance officer in Yarrawonga was refused permission to attend the scene.

Oct 2009 – Former St Kilda football player Laurie Stephenson died from a heart attack in Maffra while waiting 38 minutes for a paramedic crew.