

Health Minister visits ahead of 2012 Games



Minister of State for Health, Simon Burns, visited this month to hear about our planning for the 2012 Games. Mr Burns had a tour of our event control room in Bow which will be used to manage our day-to-day response to the Games.

Our focus during the Games will be to maintain our service to Londoners while providing medical care to Olympic-related patients. We expect demand to increase by up to nine per cent at peak times – an increase of around 360 calls a day. We will have over 400 staff – some from other ambulance services – working in the venues, and have been allocated £7.6m to cover costs during the Games. [Find out more about our planning.](#)

Service in Stonewall Top 100 Employers list



We have been named amongst the country's most gay-friendly workplaces. We took 94th place in Stonewall's Top 100 Employers list this year, and are the only ambulance service recognised.

Stonewall's workplace equality index recognises organisations that have inclusive policies, engage with staff on sexual orientation issues, demonstrate visible leadership for lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) equality, and have well-supported LGB network groups that play a constructive role in the organisation. [Read about Stonewall's recognition.](#)

999 call answering amongst best in country



In 95 per cent of cases, people phoning 999 for an ambulance in London have their call answered within one second, and over half of all incoming emergency calls are answered immediately. These are amongst the fastest call answering rates in the country.

Latest figures – for November last year – also show that, of the total 118,237 calls received, the caller hung up before their call was answered in less than 0.1 per cent of cases. We do not expect a zero rate for abandoned calls as multiple calls are sometimes made about a single incident, and callers hang up when they realise help has already been requested. [Look at the national quality measures on our website](#) where our figures can be seen alongside those of other ambulance services.

Fire and ambulance station mergers: our response



The Fire Authority's recent suggestion that savings of £500m could be made by merging ambulance and fire stations in London is completely unrealistic. We respond to around 1.1 million incidents a year with a budget of just £283m; it costs Londoners just £30 per head for our service – half the cost of the London Fire Brigade.

We are keen to discuss opportunities for greater collaboration with the emergency services, as suggested by the London Assembly in its recent review of our service, but it is vital we remain part of the NHS. [Read our full response to the Fire Authority's proposals.](#)

Alcohol-related calls make for busy New Year's Eve

We took an average of 10 emergency calls a minute between midnight and 4 am on New Year's



Day, with alcohol-related calls driving up demand. Additional staff worked in vehicles and on foot, and our 'booze buses' and treatment centres were operating to help us manage the busy period.

Over 270 patients were cared for at our 13 treatment centres, with less than a fifth having to be taken to hospital for further treatment. Funding is currently being sought for two treatment centres – in Romford and the West End – to continue to operate on weekends through February and March. [Find out more about our alcohol related calls.](#)



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