



Ref: 0696

**Request:**

Received: 02/06/2010

As I'm sure you may have heard there have been weekly Wednesday morning protests against the motorcycle parking tax in Westminster as part of the NoToBikeParkingTax campaign.

In view of this I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions for me:

- 1) Have the ambulance crews operating in the Westminster area been notified about the severe levels of congestion likely every Wednesday morning in the Trafalgar square area?
- 2) Have there been any hoax calls recorded between 8-9am on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May or Wednesday 2nd June? If so, how many? Can you provide the location of these?
- 3) Would ambulance crews operating in Westminster usually be notified of high levels of congestion and adjust their route to avoid these areas where possible?



**Response:**

Responded: 04/06/2010

Dear

Thank you for your request for information, placed under the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

I have sought advice from senior operational colleagues and researched call volume data we hold.

1. No. As far as we are aware, staff have not reported any difficulties exceeding the norm.

2. We believe there was one 'hoax' call on 26 May but none that were obviously in central London on 2 June. I can however confirm that resources based at Waterloo ambulance station complex (which includes Waterloo, Westminster and Bloomsbury ambulance stations) were dispatched to 513 emergency calls (26 May) although data is not yet available in respect of 2 June. The average 999 calls received pan London per day is currently 4109. In 2009/10 we responded to over 1 million x 999 calls, which affects us as one of the busiest ambulance services in the world (see attachment). We receive relatively few 'hoax' calls and the core debate is more about the purpose for which an emergency ambulance is required. By way of illustration, since February 2009 we have referred in excess of 60,000 x 999 calls to NHS Direct where the dispatch of an emergency ambulance was not necessarily the most apposite response, and so as to achieve an appropriate care pathway for the patient.

3. No, not unless the traffic congestion was unprecedented and/or as a result of a major incident resulting in a road closure for a significant period of time.

Yours sincerely

Gary Bassett  
Head of Patient Experiences  
London Ambulance Service NHS Trust