

TOPIC B

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES STATISTICS (JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2014)

INCREASE OF 3.7% IN TOTAL EMS CALLS

SCDF's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) responded to a total of 155,781 ambulance calls between Jan and Dec 2014, an increase of 5,626 calls (3.7%) over the 150,155 calls in 2013. The total number of EMS calls since 2000 is shown in the Chart below.

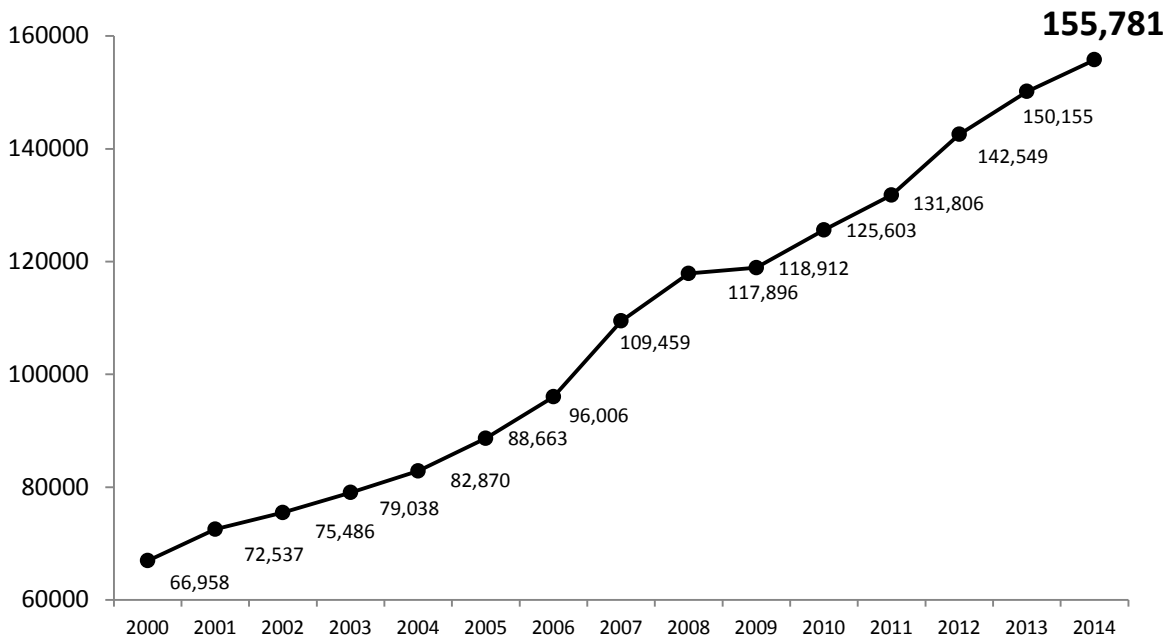


Chart B1: Total Number of Ambulance Calls: 2000 - 2014

EMERGENCY CALLS CONSTITUTE 95.4% OF TOTAL EMS CALLS

2. Emergency calls made up 148,546 (95.4%) of the total calls responded. The remaining 4,406 (2.8%) were non-emergency calls and another 2,829 (1.8%) were false alarms. Please see **Chart B2** for the breakdown of Total EMS calls.

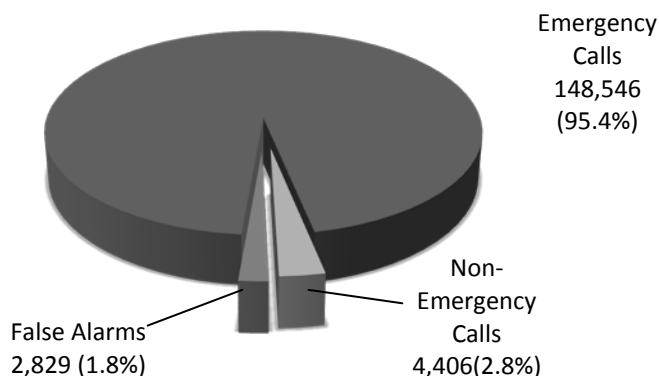


Chart B2: Breakdown of Total EMS Calls

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF CASES INVOLVING CHEST PAIN, BREATHLESSNESS, UNCONSCIOUSNESS AND CARDIAC ARREST

3. Of the total 148,546 emergency calls, 110,692 cases (74.5%) were medical cases, 10,896 cases (7.3%) were road traffic accidents and the remaining 26,958 cases (18.1%) were trauma cases such as industrial accidents, falls and assaults. There was a dip of 126 cases (1.1%) in the number of road traffic accident-related injuries but an increase of 3,787 cases (3.5%) in the number of medical emergency cases (e.g. cases involving chest pain, breathlessness, unconsciousness and cardiac arrest). The breakdown for emergency cases is shown in **Chart B3** below.

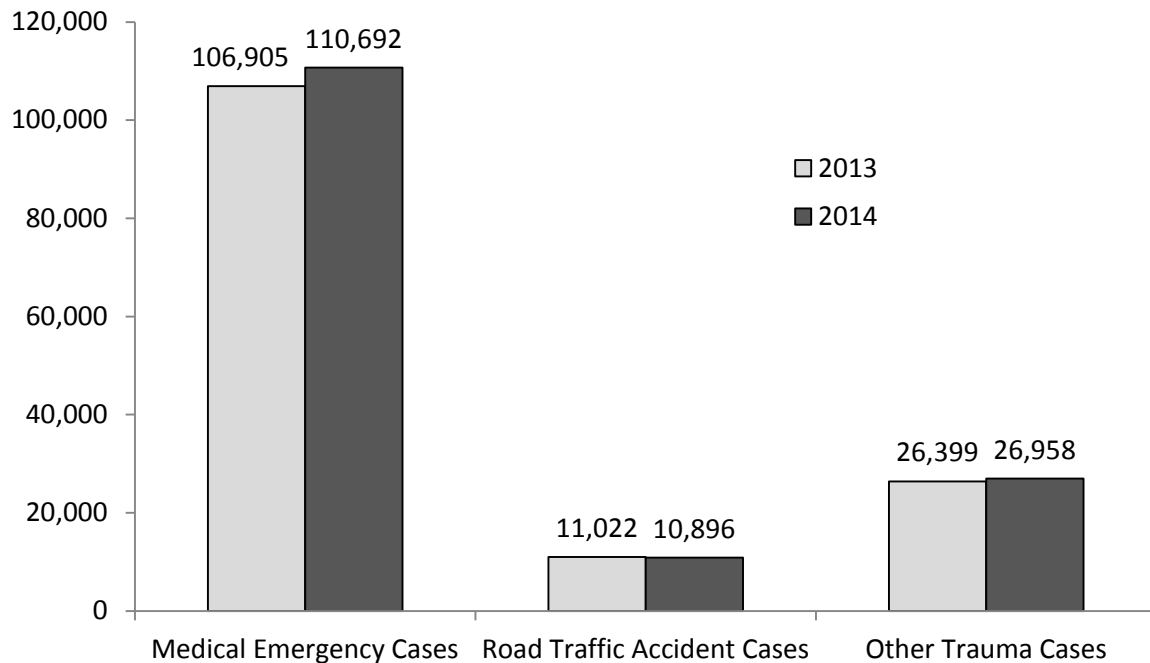


Chart B3: Breakdown of Emergency Ambulance Calls

DEMAND FROM THE ELDERLY GREW BY 6.7%

4. The increase in the total number of EMS calls for 2014 is largely attributed to the growing demand for ambulance service from an ageing population. Although the overall EMS calls increased by 3.7%, the calls made for cases involving the elderly (aged 65 and above) increased by 6.7%. Elderly persons made up of 11.2%¹ of the population but 37.2% of the total EMS calls that SCDF responded to in 2014 were for the elderly. See **Chart B4**.

¹ Based on 2014 figure from Singapore Department of Statistics

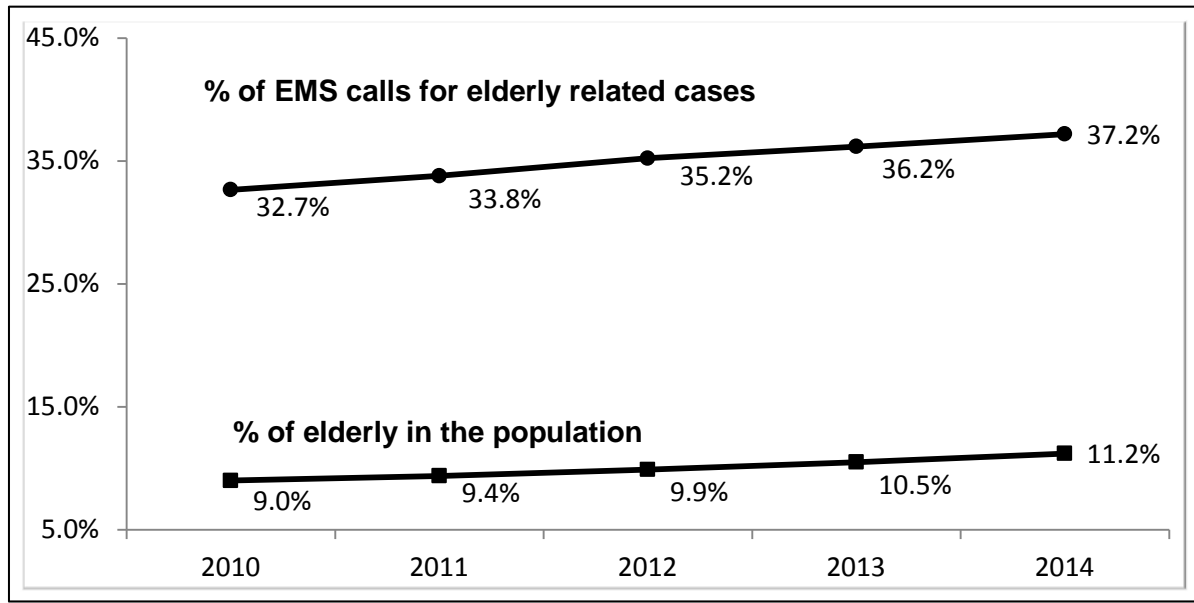


Chart B4: Calls made by elderly over the last five years

IMPROVED EMS RESPONSE TIME

5. Since Jun 2009, SCDF has engaged the services of Private Ambulance Operators (PAOs) to augment its fleet of emergency ambulances. The PAOs are contracted to deliver the same standard of emergency medical care as SCDF's own ambulances. They have to comply with all operational requirements, Standard Operating Procedures, clinical protocols and are subject to stringent performance audits and regular certification tests. For example, paramedics have to pass a Paramedic Specialist Certification Test conducted at SCDF's Civil Defence Academy once every six months. The PAOs have proven to be reliable and effective in delivering a high standard of emergency care to EMS patients.

6. Since Oct 2013, SCDF has added 10 more private emergency ambulances to the EMS fleet, increasing the total EMS fleet size to 50 ambulances. With the larger fleet, SCDF was able to respond to 83.1% ambulance calls within the standard response time of 11 minutes, an improvement from 78.2% in 2013.

EFFORTS TO REDUCE NON-EMERGENCY CALLS

7. Although the percentage of non-emergency ambulance calls is small when compared to the percentage of emergency calls, such calls drain our ambulance resources and can deprive those who are in genuine need of emergency medical assistance.

8. To reduce the number of non-emergency ambulance calls, SCDF has intensified its public education efforts on the proper use of its EMS through exhibitions, distribution of posters and leaflets. Since Aug 2014, panel exhibits on when to call '995' for emergency medical cases have been set up at Emergency Preparedness Day events in the community. In addition, posters and leaflets on the proper use of SCDF EMS, including advice on what constitutes an emergency medical case, have been distributed to polyclinics and A&E Departments of hospitals from December 2014.

9. Members of the public are also encouraged to visit the SCDF website for more information on what constitutes an emergency medical case. (http://www.scdf.gov.sg/content/scdf_internet/en/general/information/information_on_scdand1777medicalservices.html).

10. For medical cases that are non-life threatening, members of the public are urged to call 1777 where the service of private non-emergency ambulance operators can be engaged, or proceed to their family doctors and private general practitioners on their own as their first stop for medical consultation. This will allow emergency resources to be better utilised and channelled towards life threatening cases.