

TOPIC 3

EMERGENCY AMBULANCE SERVICE STATISTICS (JAN – DEC 2010)

EMERGENCY AMBULANCE SERVICE (EAS) CALLS CONTINUE TO RISE

SCDF's Emergency Ambulance Service (EAS) responded to 125,603 calls in 2010. This is an increase of 6% from the 118,912 calls in 2009. Emergency calls made up 95.9% of the total calls responded. The remaining 1.7% were non-emergency situations and another 2.4% were false alarms. Both the non-emergency calls and false alarms saw a significant drop from last year. See **Table 1** for the breakdown on type of calls:

Description	Jan - Dec 2009	Jan – Dec 2010	Absolute Change	% Change
Emergency Calls	113,284	120,474	7,190	6%
Non-Emergency Calls	2,316	2,131	-185	-8%
False Alarms	3,312	2,998	-314	-9%
Total	118,912	125,603	6,691	6%

Table 1: Number and Type of Ambulance Calls

2. Emergency calls rose by 6% from 113,284 cases in 2009 to 120,474 cases in 2010. The breakdown for emergency cases is shown in **Table 2** below. Medical cases (e.g. cases involving chest pain, breathlessness, unconsciousness and cardiac arrest) constituted 72% of the total emergency calls.

Description	2009	2010	Absolute Change	% Change
Trauma - Road Traffic Accidents	11,551	12,432	881	8%
Other Trauma	20,821	21,720	899	4%
Medical (Emergency)	80,912	86,322	5,410	7%
Total	113,284	120,474	7,190	6%

Table 2: Breakdown on Emergency Ambulance Calls

PERCENTAGE OF NON-EMERGENCY CALLS HIT ALL-TIME LOW

3. The number of non-emergency calls registered a heartening drop of 8% from 2,316 in 2009 to 2,131 in 2010. The percentage of non-emergency calls in 2010 hit an all-time low, constituting only 1.7% of the total ambulance calls that SCDF responded to.

4. The SCDF has constantly been working with its community partners in educating the public on the use of its EAS through various means such as exhibitions, distribution of posters/leaflets, media briefings, etc. We are glad that the public has been cooperative in this respect and we hope that the public will continue to call 1777 for non-emergency cases, where the service of non-emergency ambulance operators can be engaged. This will allow more emergency resources to be channeled to handle life threatening cases.

Non-Emergency Calls	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of Calls	8260	7485	5841	6233	6046	5462	4281	2482	2316	2131
% of Calls	11.4%	11.5%	7.8%	8.4%	7.6%	6.2%	3.9%	2.1%	1.9%	1.7%

Table 3: Number of Non-Emergency Ambulance Calls (2001 to 2010)

UPDATE ON PRIVATE AMBULANCE OPERATORS

5. To meet the increasing demand for the emergency ambulance service, SCDF engaged two private ambulance operators (Lentor Ambulance Pte Ltd and Unistrong Technology (S) Pte Ltd) to augment our pool of emergency ambulances in June 2009. Each PAO has 5 operational ambulances. The 10 PAO ambulances are stationed at 10 different Fire Stations from 8 am to 8 pm from Monday to Saturday, inclusive of Public Holidays. Since the PAOs came on board, there has been an improvement in our 11-minute response time from 80.9% in 2008 to 85.1% in 2010.

UPDATE ON MEDICAL PROCOTOL SYSTEM

6. The Medical Protocol System (MPS) was introduced in March 2009 to further improve SCDF's call-taking framework for its EAS. With the MPS, the call-taker is supported by a template of pre-approved medical questions pertaining to the chief complaints of the caller. This allows the call-taker to systematically diagnose the patients' conditions and provide useful pre-arrival instructions to aid the caller prior to the arrival of the ambulance. The patient information captured is also given to the paramedic enroute to the incident site, thus better preparing him to manage the patient.

7. SCDF has been gathering feedback on the MPS through the conduct of a random survey of 20 cases per day. Feedback is sought from the callers on the quality of the instructions provided by the operators over the phone. Based on the findings, about 90% of the respondents gave positive feedback and have no difficulties carrying out the instructions provided by the call-taker.