Paramedic Chiefs of Canada
Chefs Paramédics du Canada



The Culture Challenge:

How Ambulance Tasmania is turning things around

Joe Acker
15 June 2023

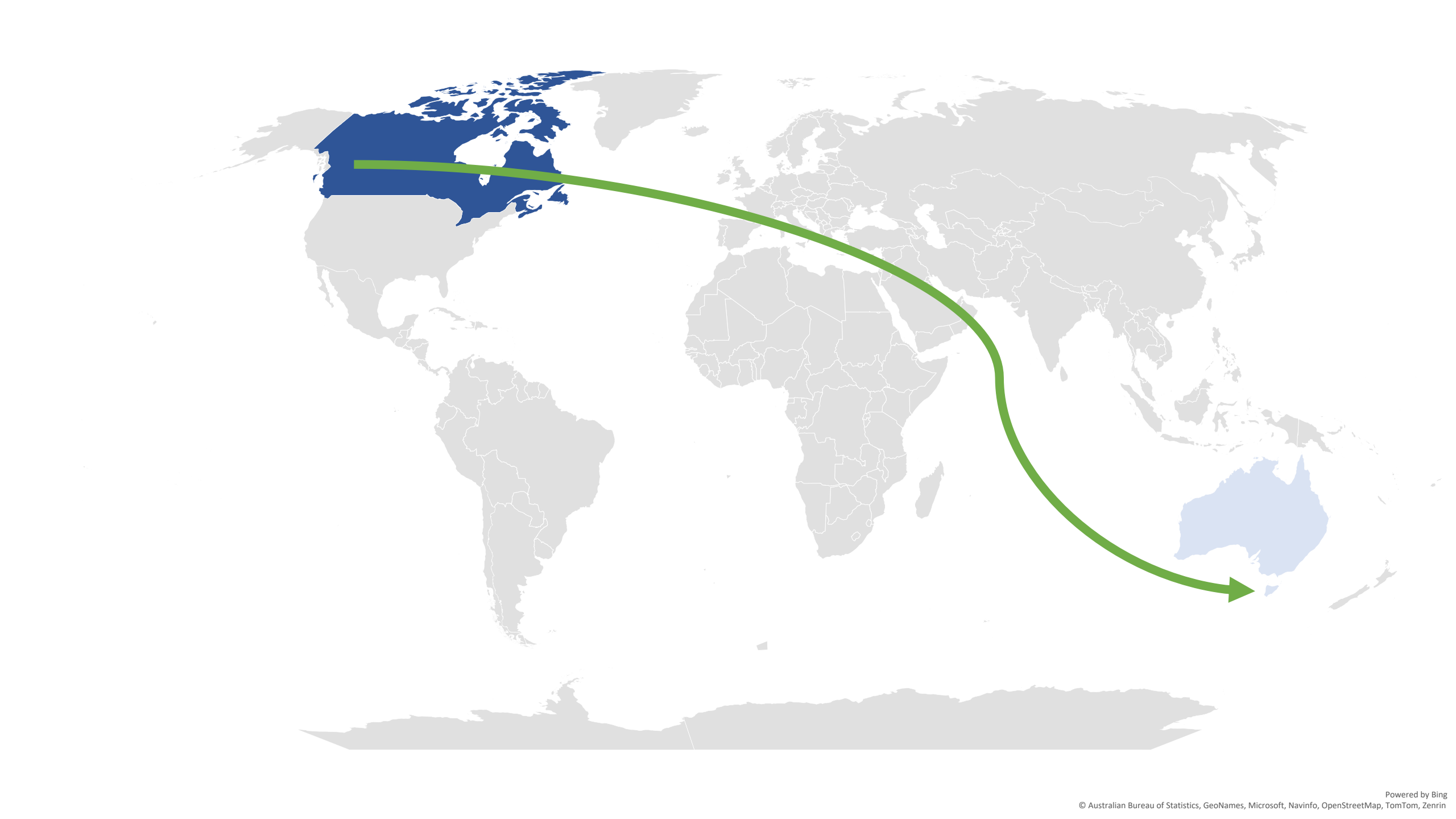
AMBULANCE TASMANIA
ambulance.tas.gov.au

Tasmanian Government





Acknowledgement of Country
Lutriwita (Tasmania)



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About Ambulance Tasmania

- 121,194 Annual Responses – 74,113 Patient Transported
- 652 FTE (47% ♀)
- 485 volunteers
- 57 Stations
- ~125 Mercedes Sprinter Ambulances
- ~50 light fleet vehicles
- 1 – King Air 200 (Launceston)
- 2 – BK117 & 1 Bell 412 (Hobart) Police Rescue & Retrieval

Evidence Base for our Culture Journey



RESILIENCE SCANS & NARRATIVES



FACE TO FACE CONSULTATION



MEDIA HEADLINES

Ambulance Tasmania failing to meet health and safety standards for paramedics, leaked report shows

By state political reporter Rhiana Whitson

Posted Wed 6 Nov 2019 at 5:42am, updated Wed 6 Nov 2019 at 7:48am

Ambulance Tasmania under fire from former paramedic over PTSD case handling

By Rhiana Whitson

Posted Fri 10 Aug 2018 at 6:04pm, updated Sat 11 Aug 2018 at 10:24pm

NEWS › HOBART NEWS › TASMANIAN AMBULANCE RESPONSE TIMES WORST IN THE COUNTRY

Tasmanian Ambulance Response Times Worst In The Country

As paramedics take action

Female Ambulance Tasmania paramedic tells of 'rape plan' during inquest into colleague Damian Crump's death

By Lucy MacDonald

Posted Wed 17 Mar 2021 at 1:32pm, updated Wed 17 Mar 2021 at 3:41pm

Tasmanian man dies waiting seven hours for ambulance

Inquest into suicide of paramedic to examine Ambulance Tasmania's mental health systems and drug security

By Lucy MacDonald

Posted Mon 15 Mar 2021 at 10:29am, updated Mon 15 Mar 2021 at 2:01pm

Patient's relative drives ambulance to hospital amid staff shortages

By Georgie Burgess and state political reporter Rhiana Whitson

Posted Tue 2 Jul 2019 at 5:25am, updated Tue 2 Jul 2019 at 8:02am

Recovering ice addict Cristy Collins drove ambulances as paramedic while high on drugs

OPINION

How Working for Ambulance Tasmania Became Like an Abusive Relationship

Ambulance Service Culture 101



Organizational culture: shared values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours & practices within an organisation



Influenced by leaders' values, beliefs & behaviours, as well as staff members' experiences with patients & colleagues.



Positive culture promotes better communication, job satisfaction & patient care, while a negative culture contributes to high stress, low morale & poor patient outcomes.

MEASURING CULTURE / RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

Toxic Culture Is Driving the Great Resignation

Research using employee data reveals the top five predictors of attrition and four actions managers can take in the short term to reduce attrition.

Donald Sull, Charles Sull, and Ben Zweig • January 11, 2022 Reading Time: 12 min

FORBES > LEADERSHIP

The Culture Shift That Covid-19 Built (And What Businesses Should Do About It)

Erin Hutchinson Forbes Councils Member
Forbes Communications Council
COUNCIL POST | Membership (Fee-Based)

Dec 6, 2021, 07:15am EST

- 40% of employees considering quitting
- Reduced team bonding
- Working from home
- Different employee experience
- Compensation (16th predicting turnover)
- Toxic culture #1 (10X compensation)

Leadership

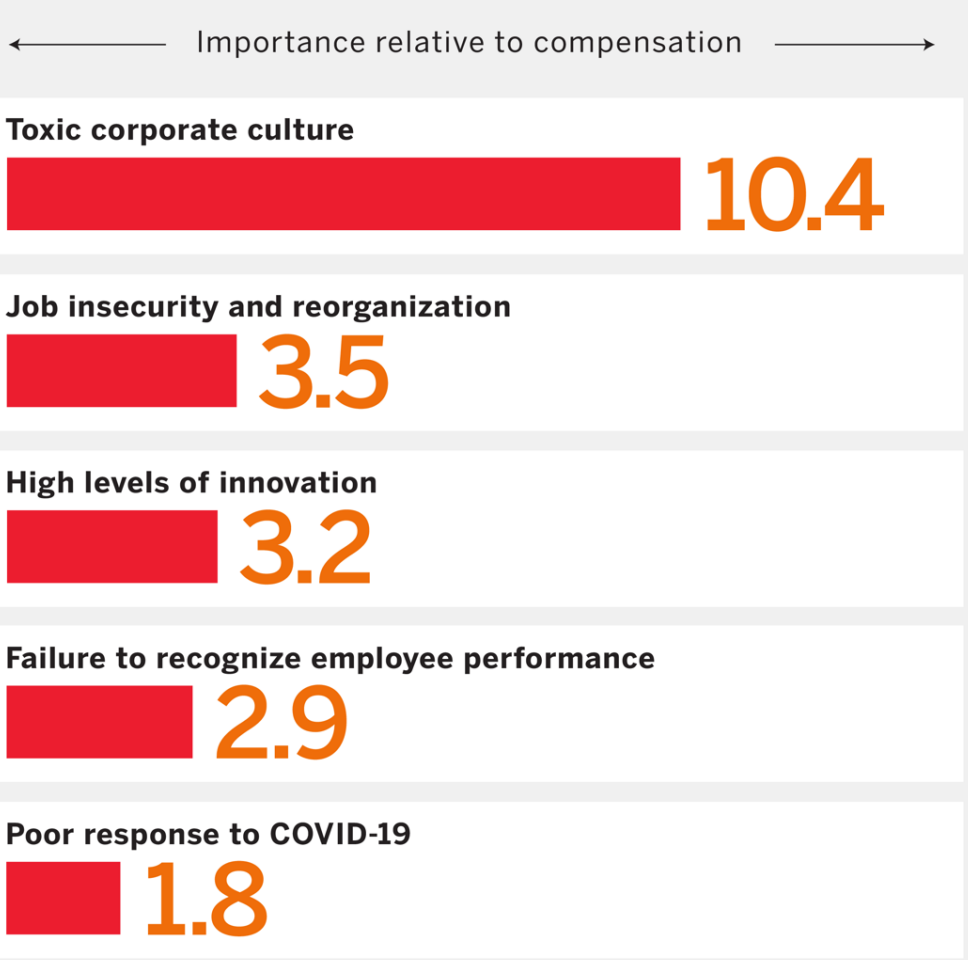
How to Protect Your Team From a Toxic Work Culture

by John Baird and Edward Sullivan

June 23, 2022

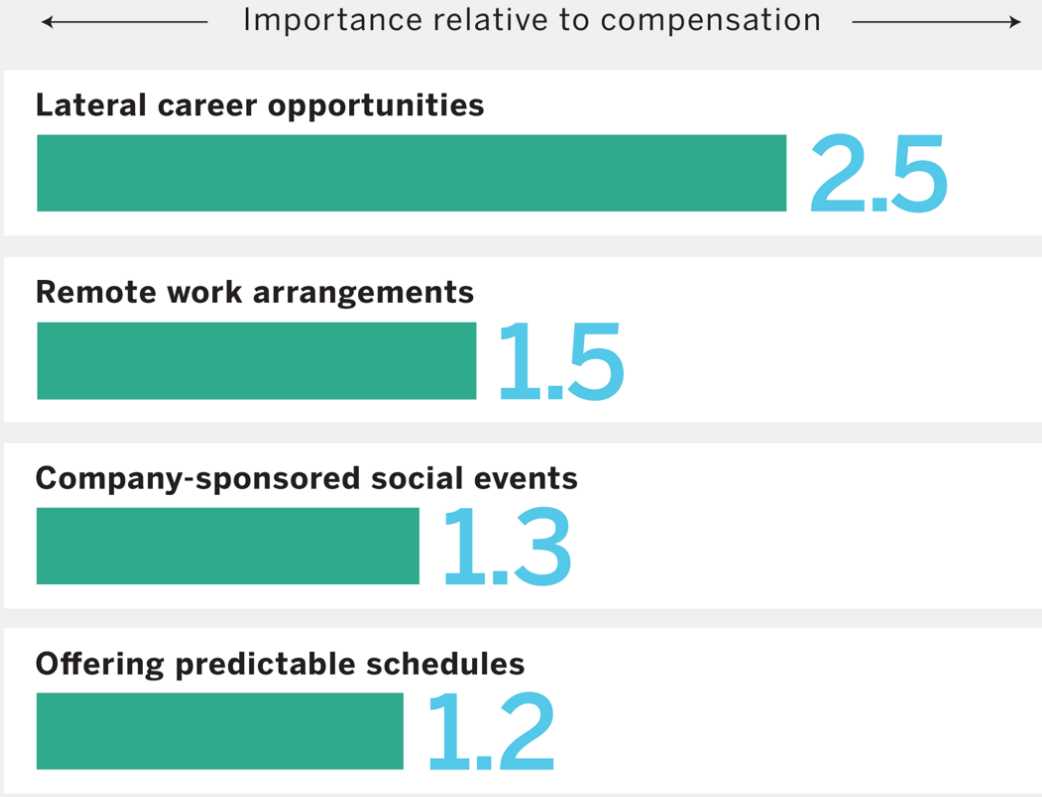
Top Predictors of Attrition During the Great Resignation

The authors analyzed the impact of more than 170 cultural topics on employee attrition in Culture 500 companies from April through September 2021. These five topics were the leading predictors of attrition. Each bar indicates the level of importance of each topic for attrition relative to employee compensation. A toxic culture is 10.4 times more likely to contribute to attrition than compensation.



Short-Term Steps for Companies to Increase Retention

These four topics were the leading predictors of employee retention for Culture 500 companies from April through September 2021. Each bar indicates the level of importance of a topic for employee retention relative to compensation. Offering lateral job opportunities for employees, for example, is 2.5 times more predictive of retention than compensation.



Paramedicine is Changing

- Higher education requirements
- Registration & regulation
- Gen X, Y (Millennials), Z (Zoomers)
- Health system challenges
- Paramedic work
- COVID-19
- Identity



Jeremy Rockliff

Premier of Tasmania

Share

26 July 2021

Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Health

Ambulance Tasmania Chief Executive appointed

I am pleased to announce that Mr Joe Acker has been appointed as Chief Executive of Ambulance Tasmania.

Joe was appointed as Interim Chief Executive in February and will now take on the role following an extensive recruitment process.

Joe has more than 30 years' experience in paramedic systems, health services and academia in both Australia and Canada. Before joining Ambulance Tasmania, his most recent position was Director of Clinical and Professional Practice for the British Columbia Emergency Health Services based in Vancouver, Canada.

He has extensive experience leading large organisations as the Chief Executive of the City of Edmonton Emergency Medical Services, Executive Director of Ambulance for the Alberta Health Services, and the General Manager of the Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society which is a helicopter medical retrieval service.

We are employing more paramedics and recruiting and supporting more volunteer ambulance officers, and Joe will be at the forefront of implementing the Government's strategic agenda to deliver better ambulance services for all Tasmanians.



OVERHAUL: New ambo boss vows to fix 'toxic' culture

The new boss of Ambulance Tasmania has vowed to stamp out bullying, racism, sexism and harassment in the service, saying improving the agency's culture is his immediate priority.

Ambulance Tasmania

Journey of Culture Improvement



Mar. 2021
Coronial inquest into 2016 death by suicide of a paramedic

26 July 2021
New CE appointed, mandate to improve organisational culture

Aug.–Sep. 2021
First resilience scan launched

Oct. 2021 – May 2022
17 face-to-face consultation sessions

June–July 2021
Executive planning sessions

Aug. 2021
Release culture improvement action plan and second resilience scan

Aug. - Sep. 2022
Second resilience scan

Dec 2022
Release results and commitment of "caring for our people"

May 2023
"Our Commitments" behaviour framework released

FrontlineMind

> **RESILIENCE IS A STATE THAT EVERYONE CAN DEVELOP – BY DESIGN**

FrontlineMind

OCTOBER 2021

RESILIENCE DASHBOARD

Ambulance Tasmania

Resilience Scan is a narrative-led engagement that combines stories shared by staff about their experience in the workplace, with objective quantitative analysis of these stories. The insights provide a snapshot at a moment in time of the sentiment, resilience, and wellbeing of the organisation.

The first scan in September 2021 provides Ambulance Tasmania with a baseline. There were 323 responses (~32% of total staff¬, with 6% identifying as volunteers and 94% permanent staff), with extremely high-quality narratives.

The narratives from September tell a story of an environment where work is "like a traffic jam", where stories reflect a leadership style that is largely "authoritative" (25% of the time non-responsive), and where 84% of stories reflect a "sense of threat", mainly from managers. Whilst leadership styles in emergency services are often contextually authoritative, a balance of communication and consultation is essential.

The results of the Resilience Scan, when considering the sentiment in relation to a story, show a culture that is very poor compared to other frontline organisations. This is based on whether the story shared was one that is negative or positive, with a strong bias towards those that are negative.

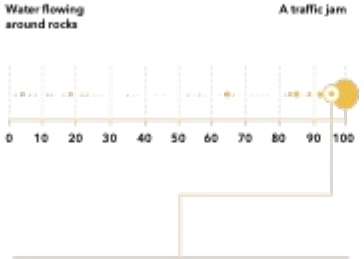
36% of respondents self-reported depression, anxiety, stress, or PTSD. 17% are medicated for those issues or poor sleep (70% reported trouble with sleep relating to their story indicating an inability to switch off from the day to recover optimally).

The insights shared were of extremely high quality and have informed the following three key themes and action items, that are intrinsically linked. The Ambulance Tasmania leadership team is committed to improving the culture of our organisation. We will conduct another scan in early 2022 to track progress.

DATA:

Please note some stories have been edited for length and privacy

My experience felt like...



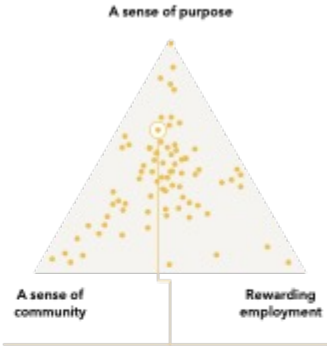
"A decision I made based on normal processes and the best operational approach I could see was questioned, stalled, and eventually the process was redirected. There was no justification for the change, no financial implication cited, and no logic from what I could determine. It's something that affects my work regularly, where I'm responsible for a body of work but not able to cut through red tape, get collaborative responses from other stakeholders, or find out why a change impacted the decision made. The example I'm referencing was actually a small decision, but the general theme is common, and work with other departments or business units is so siloed that any administrative requirement is easily doubled on what it should be."

At times like this, the greatest threat to my safety are the actions of...



"Since my short time at ambulance I have experienced a complete lack of professionalism from managers towards staff. I have had difficulty mentoring new staff members to a clinical role due to lack of direction, planning and blatant disregard for professional standards. [...] I'm extremely passionate about my career however it does not seem to be valued in this organisation. I have very specific examples of the actions taken, particularly by management but do not feel comfortable describing them here."

In this situation, my workplace provided...



"I recently was able to progress a project forward that I have been working on solidly for the past 12 months and have been thinking about since I began working for Ambulance Tasmania in 2017. Every time I see a staff member using the new [...] guidelines I feel proud and excited about the changing landscape of AT. I am particularly proud of the fact that my work has been meaningful and will contribute to the health of Tasmanians and the professional pride of AT staff."

KEY THEMES

1. **Communication** that is reactive and directive, often not timely, and infrequent in a variety of contexts. Communication also missed sharing the intent behind a decision or action.
2. **Inconsistent** decision making (across different areas of the organisation), as well as inconsistency with communication, following of processes, and post-incident follow-ups.
3. **Leadership** has been systematically missing from various levels of the organisation for a protracted period of time, and there has not been an investment in developing the leaders of our organisation.

OUR TOP PRIORITIES FOR BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT BASED ON THESE THEMES/INSIGHTS ARE:

1. **Continue a program of open forums with different members of the executive team for all staff at fortnightly intervals.** We held the first forum on 15 October 2021 via TEAMS with more than 175 people joining into the session. The next session will be held on 10 November 2021 from 10:00-11:00.
2. **Hold facilitated workshops in each region to identify ways the whole organisation can take ownership and enact positive changes in culture, process and leadership.**
   - North West (Ulverstone) - 25 October 2021 14:00-17:00
   - North (Launceston) - 26 October 2021 1400-17:00
   - South Session 1 (Hobart) - 28 October 2021 14:00-17:00
   - South Session 2 (Hobart) - 29 October 2021 14:00-17:00

   **Watch for invitations to attend, due to COVID-19, space is limited.*
3. **Stabilise the senior leadership team by the end of the year, Joe Acker to lead.**

Results of First Resilience Scan – October 2021

- Frontline Mind surveyed our people
- **323** responses were received (32%)
- Results:
  - ***"authoritative"*** leadership styles
  - greatest ***"sense of threat"*** coming from managers
  - workplace where that experience is more like ***"a traffic jam"***
- 36% reported depression, stress, anxiety or PTSD
- On a scale of 0 to 100, AT was **-81**
- Rich text narratives described a history of significant workplace bullying, abuse of power, discrimination, sexually inappropriate behaviour, and an absence of leadership

Main Themes

Communication – reactive, directive, not timely & infrequent. Missed sharing the intent behind a decision or action.

Inconsistent – decision making across different areas, communication, following of processes & post-incident follow-ups.

Leadership – systematically missing from various levels of the organisation for a protracted period of time, little investment in developing leaders.

Immediate Executive Commitments

1. Begin a program of **regular open forums for everyone** to exchange information with members of executive.
2. Hold **face-to-face workshops** in each region to identify ways the organisation can take ownership, and enact positive changes in culture, process, and leadership.
3. **Stabilize the senior leadership** team by the end of the year.

Authentic Consultation

- October 2021 to May 2022
- 17 workshops
- >300 people attended
- Managers excluded from some sessions
- TEAMS sessions for those who could not attend in person









Table 1: What we heard

Action Plan Focus Area 1 - Clinical Support and Clinical Standards
Responsibility: Director Clinical Services and Executive Medical Director

#	What we heard
1.1	Introduce a clinical skills maintenance of competency program for all paramedics, doctors, volunteer ambulance officers, patient transport officers, and paramedics not currently working in a clinical role.
1.2	Role clarity is required for advanced clinical positions that may be targeted for high acuity cases. Specifically, Clinical Support Officer (CSO), Clinical Support Manager (CSM), Critical Response Unit (CRU), Critical Care and Retrieval (CCR, Ground response), Extended Care Paramedic (ECP), and Intensive Care Paramedic (ICP).
1.3	A whole of organisation clinical governance strategy is required to align with national standards for patient safety and clinical quality.
	ease and enhance alternate care pathways to expand the capability of secondary triage and expand the ability to assess/see/treat and refer patients away from the emergency department.
	nction of clinicians in the Communications Centre (i.e., Clinical Deployment Officer (DS)) and create new procedures to better use clinicians as part of the dispatch decision making.
	raduates to ensure they are progressing in their transition
	and tap into their skills, abilities,
	esponsibilities of the

Action Plan Focus Area 2 – Workplace Values, Behaviours and Support
Responsibility: Director Operations

#	What we heard
2.1	Development of agreed upon behaviours that go with our organisational values and set clear expectations of what staff will be held accountable for and what is unacceptable. This is especially important for our leaders and supervisors to model good behaviours. Empower people to speak out – stop inappropriate behaviours and discussions, call it out and make it known that it's unacceptable at all levels.
2.2	Examine strategies for improving efficiencies in operations including demand and workload management, fatigue tracking, and operational utilisation.
2.3	Operations Supervisors need to be out in the community to have more of a supportive presence th
2.4	Make a new employee orientation and induction program compulsory and standardi including administrative support staff, ICT staff, and all new managers and lead onboarding processes for all staff.
2.5	Consider allowing staff exchanges between business units to p and support professional growth and development. This Departments.
2.6	Organise collaboration and training mee support / learn from each other. T finance and human resour can reduce duplicati
2.7	Conduct 'exit' and explore opportuniti
2.8	Consider creating a pe consistency across adm duplication, gaps, and inc
2.9	Schedule information sess paramedicine and the struc
2.10	Identify and make available alt wish to contribute to the orga
2.11	Consider having mentors for all more cross-over of staff.
2.12	Instead of re-inventing the wheel, w translate it across to others – this wo
2.13	If contracts need to be cancelled earli should take place before receiving a lett
	Provide office staff with a corporate unifo most of the staff receive a uniform. This sh
	Review supervision of EMDSOs and NEPT d much disparity between the call-taking and dis

Action Plan Focus Area 3 – Leadership Accountability
Responsibility: Director Clinical Services & Director Operations

	What we heard
	elop a leadership matrix and professional development guidelines for all levels in the organisation that rly articulates the knowledge, education, skills, capabilities, and behaviour required for each level to enable er planning.
	taff should model positive behaviours and address poor behaviours. Ensure any bullying, discriminatory viours, code of conduct breaches and unprofessional behaviours are not tolerated and addressed opriately.
	w the role and f ease work tasks ght, and optim
	visors, manag to emerge a
	all staff ca developm porary t k. Consi
	ons Su lue to Ope tatic
	re work Regular medic and

Action Plan Focus Area 4 – Building Capability
Responsibility: Director Clinical Services

#	What we heard
4.1	Training for preceptors, mentors, and coaches so that students, new graduates, TASOs a appropriately and consistently supported.
4.2	Implement a supervisor and manager mentoring or coaching program. Consider men
4.3	Rethink the practice of requesting Expressions of Interest in roles and create a more process.
4.4	Ensure selection panels are comprised of impartial people with relevant qualificati external parties.
4.5	Ensure job descriptions are accurate, and the selection process relates to the
4.6	Ensure selection panels balance subject matter expertise, impartiality, gender
4.7	Review the non-clinical training pathways to identify opportunities for staff at Ambulance Tasmania.
4.8	Consider ways in which educators can be more supported or have more training programs effectively.
	Review the driver training program so that all staff who drive an emer for non-emergency conditions.
	to leadership program for all prospective leader on supporting 'our' team and a 'leade
	al development at an ind professional develop
	or frontline supervisor plete Manager Es

Action Plan Focus Area 6 – Communication
Responsibility: Chief Executive

#	What we heard
6.1	Create a feedback avenue for staff that isn't Safety Reporting and Learning System (SRLS) to provide ideas for new things. An anonymous suggestion box is needed. Have a dedicated time to address them consistently to close the loop. Could be integrated as part of the intranet.
6.2	Continue fortnightly TEAMS forums, they are well received. Also consider other innovative ways for communications.
6.3	Hold regular workplace forums for staff to raise issues.
6.4	Implement a regular, cross region management focus group.
6.5	Create systems for proactive consultation, engagement, and change management. We do not do change management well at Ambulance Tasmania. The staff who will be affected by the changes need to be consulted before decisions are made where possible.
6.6	Enhance communication and information sharing with volunteers. Email is not the best way to communi with VAOs, other technology and more importantly, more face-to-face communication meth
6.7	Publish our vision and strategic plan so everyone knows where w
6.8	Consult staff to understand ways they would like t messages/content they want to receiv
6.9	Ambulance Tasmania expectati through account.
6.10	Continue and not ju
6.11	Create syst
6.12	Ensure expe
6.13	Ambulance T information in
6.14	Have a staff me
6.15	Standardised em
6.16	Create an easy w
6.17	Consider regular
6.18	Provide more infor meetings, equipmen
6.19	Leaders to cross bou messaging.
6.20	Generic email for role who is on shift.
6.21	Broader community me regarding best use of res
6.22	All managers and supervis
6.23	Ensure inclusive language i Tasmania attaches to all co
6.24	All Ambulance Tasmania pe

Action Plan Focus Area 7 – Operations
Responsibility: Director Operations

#	What we heard
7.1	Fix ramping. Investigation into a consistent ambulance offload policy Implement an effective escalation process to reduce ramping.
7.2	Review Communications Centre practices, policies, structure and clinically focused, efficient and effective. We need to embrace mo colleagues across Australia and from around the world. KPIs mak and aren't always the best indicator of performance.
7.3	A solution is required to manage the end of shift period to get creates fatigue, negatively impacts morale, and it can be manage
7.4	Eliminate paper rostering and musters and move to an electron
7.5	Large stations need a "make-ready" model that ensures ambul the start of every shift. Create roles for Ambulance Fleet and Supplies Technician would reduce logistics burden on Operati improve actioning of vehicle servicing and repair requests.
7.6	Ensure that every ambulance is stocked with a Zoll monitor, so the vehicle is ready to go at the start of shift. There are s ics must source radios, monitors, syringe drivers, and Tough Create a system in each vehicle to charge the devices in ve
7.7	Change SOC-DM to Deployment Supervisor for more ap Deployment Supervisors being required t

Action Plan Focus Area 5 – Systems and Processes
Responsibility: Senior Manager Strategy and Performance

What we heard
Develop a three-year Strategic Direction for Ambulance Tasmania, supported by a three-year Business Plan, Key Performance Indicators and a reporting schedule.
evelop a document framework to guide the development and review of policy, procedure and work struction documents, finalise a plan to contemporise existing documents and ensure accessibility.
elop a business case for the creation of a Workforce Planning Unit.
elop a 10-year Ambulance Tasmania Station Masterplan to accommodate community demand and optimise e delivery.
p and implement a system to monitor and report against the completion of Performance Development ent (PDA).
te a review of all Ambulance Tasmania Statements of Duty (SoD) to reflect the current organisational n requirements.
rtment of Health to improve payroll processes (pay amendments, holiday period process-
n with the Department of Health to implement the Human Resources Information System ovide contemporary Human Resource systems and supporting processes and procedures.
rtment of Health and Ambulance Tasmania management to ensure new priately set-up prior to commencement.
ulance Tasmania Organisational Chart.
e Tasmania specific internet page which provides a 'one stop shop' for employees to dates, forms, policies, procedures and also be accessed from non-THS sites. Each ve a page for updates which formation easier to find than searching
dure or policy means and how it is ider training people in how the
ocedures as they are the ones who have

Action Plan Focus Area 8 – Health, Safety and Wellbeing
Responsibility: Chief Executive

#	What we heard
8.1	Implement a Safety Newsletter to update all staff on safety related issues, communicate outcomes from S and provide safety tips.
8.2	AT should have a "return to work coordinator" to provide better support for people off work due to inj or other reasons to ensure a more seamless return to work. People on Workers Compensation, matern leave, or other leaves feel like they never hear from anyone from Ambulance Tasmania.
8.3	Peer Support Officers require a dedicated leadership structure, an updated strategy with the associated support, branding and clearer scope of operations. Continued support of psychologist coaches is critical.
8.4	Prepare staff for the publication of the coronial findings.
8.5	Ensure administrative staff have acceptable workplace conditions – not freezing cold.
8.6	Support the creation of a Retired Staff Association to retain ties with the organisation including access to support and maintain social connections.
8.7	Implement drug and alcohol testing and policy for employees.
8.8	Consider Mental Health First Aid training being compulsory for managers and BSOs.
8.9	Improve SRLS processes and accountabilities of supervisors to action SRLS quicker and report outcomes close the loop.
8.10	Appoint a Safety Advisor position at Ambulance Tasmania like they have in Victoria.



Ambulance Tasmania

Culture Improvement Action Plan

July 2022

ambulance.tas.gov.au

Tasmanian Government

Focus area	Executive Sponsor
1. Clinical Support and Clinical Standards	Director Clinical Services & Executive Medical Director
2. Workplace Values, Behaviours and Support	Director Operations
3. Leadership Accountability	Director Clinical Services & Director Operations
4. Building Capability	Director Clinical Services
5. Systems and Processes	Senior Manager, Strategy & Performance
6. Communication	Chief Executive
7. Operations	Director Operations
8. Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Chief Executive

Focus Areas

Eight focus areas, each one sponsored by a an Executive

Action plans set for the end of December 2022 and then re-evaluated for 2023.

1. Clinical Support and Clinical Standards

Concerns were raised regarding the perception that Ambulance Tasmania was falling behind other Australasian ambulance services with regards to clinical practice, clinical governance, clinical support, and the application of clinical policy and procedures across the organisation. Our people shared concerns that the education and training being provided to new graduates was not up to the expected standard of past induction and orientation programs and created risk to patients and undue stress to the new employee. It was recommended that many clinical roles required clarification to ensure optimum clinical response capability and the appropriate application of clinical leadership in operations.

1.1. Immediate Action

1.1.1 Action: Discontinue the recruitment and hiring of casual graduates until a full review of the induction and orientation program can be completed.

1.1.2 Action: Present the recommendations from the KP Health report into Clinical Governance at Ambulance Tasmania to the Executive Committee for endorsement.

1.1.3 Action: Implement clear and specific scopes of clinical practice for all those who provide care for patients including Volunteer Ambulance Officers, Patient Transport Officers, paramedic students, new paramedic graduates, paramedics, managers who hold paramedic registration, and each level of specialised practice.

1.2. Action by September 2022

1.2.1 Action: Identify which education, supervisory, management, and leadership positions are required to remain clinically current and develop a procedure to guide the maintenance of clinical competency for these positions.

1.2.2 Action: Create deployment and dispatching procedures to identify when advanced clinicians are required to respond to specific clinical indications and the order in which each clinical level should be activated (ie. ICPs, CRU, CCR, CSO, etc)

1.3. Action by December 2022

1.3.1 Action: Review the statement of duties (SoD) for all clinical roles in operations, clinical services, and the communications centre to ensure the positions remain contemporary and fit for purpose.

1.3.2 Action: Conduct a review of the clinical response model and compare the Ambulance Tasmania 'dispatch grid' with other organisations like Ambulance Victoria, who are using updated clinical response models. Implement changes to improve the accuracy of dispatch priorities to reduce over triaging.

8. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Health, safety and wellbeing are important to the people of Ambulance Tasmania and there is a desire for an investment in more positions to support our people, more training and education to prepare our people, and more communication to inform our people. We heard that we need to improve some systems and processes, specifically in the Communications Centre, to ensure those working in dangerous environments across the state are tracked and monitored.

8.1 Immediate Action

8.1.1 Action: Appoint the Wellbeing Program Officer position to provide the Peer Support team with a dedicated leader who can build on the Peer Support framework, develop the strategy with the associated support, consider branding of the team, and a clearer scope of operations.

8.1.2 Action: Improve SRLS processes and accountabilities of supervisors to action SRLS reports quicker and report outcomes to close the loop.

8.1.3 Action: Prepare staff for the publication of the Coronial findings and ensure wellbeing support is provided to those who need it.

8.2 Action by September 2022

8.2.1 Action: Investigate the creation of a retired staff association to enable our people to retain ties to the organisation when they retire.

8.2.2 Action: Include safety topics in the monthly update to include safety related issues, safety tips, and communicate important outcomes from SRLS.

8.3 Action by December 2022

8.3.1 Action: Work with the Department of Health to ensure that our people who are away from the workplace on Workers Compensation are supported, engaged, communicated with, and prepared to return to the workplace as seamlessly as possible.

8.3.2 Action: Update the single person response procedure to optimise safety of those who work alone.

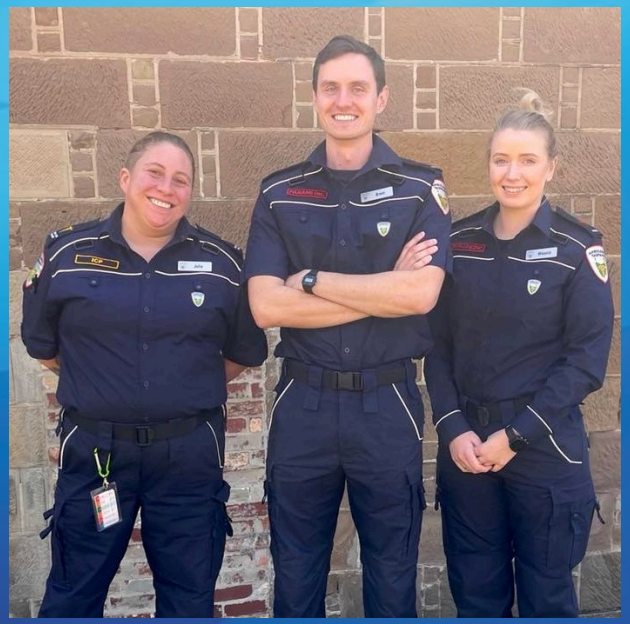
Culture Improvement Action Plan

> *"By improving staff engagement and satisfaction, we will attract and retain our workforce, improve diversity, produce invaluable leaders, and drive cultural change."*

Implementation

- Culture Improvement Action Plan launched on 11 August 2022.
- Second Resilience Scan launched 18 August.
- Quarterly reporting of our progress.
- Establish 2023 action plan and commitments.
- Third staff survey planned for 2023.







Cultural Improvement Action Plan - Progress update June 2023

LinkedIn

Articles People Learning



Ruby Commane

Media and Communications Advisor

Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

279 followers · 278 connections

Join to view profile

Ambulance Tasmania

University of Tasmania

Ambulance Tasmania
May 10 at 9:19 AM ·

Growing up on Tasmania's North West Coast, Hayden began volunteering at Ambulance Tasmania in 2015 at Sheffield Station.

Hayden has since relocated to Hobart where he works as a Patient Transport Officer (PTO), while continuing to volunteer at Ouse Station.

"Patient Transport is a vital part of the health service. We provide a means of transport, and link healthcare services to patients that otherwise wouldn't have access to these services. ... See more



Ange Green, Lee Beaver Pickering and 436 others 48 comments 12 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
April 6 ·

Four-week-old Luke's arrival into the world didn't quite to plan after he was delivered by an Ambulance Tasmania crew on the side of the Midland Highway near Dysart.

Oatlands local Mandy was very surprised when she went into labour and her young daughter Casey called triple-0 and provided care while on the phone to a call taker.

Intensive Care Paramedic Simon and Volunteer Ambulance Officer (VAO) Ann arrived, and baby Luke was then born at 8:55pm in the back of the ambula... See more



You, Ange Green, Jarrod Bell and 764 others 41 comments 12 shares

Like Comment Share

Ambulance Tasmania
April 20 ·

After a casual visit with her owner, Ambulance Tasmania Communication Centre staff have claimed 13-week-old Penny as their newest recruit!

While the little French Bulldog may not be able to take Triple-0 calls or dispatch ambulances, she can certainly provide plenty of puppy cuddles.

Penny is a popular regular at State Headquarters where on her visits, unsurprisingly, she receives plenty of attention!



Toby West, Simone Haigh and 467 others 22 comments 10 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
1d ·

Paramedic Brendan wasted no time on day 1 of the Emergency Service Blood Drive, jumping into the chair nice and early!

From today until 31 August, Ambulance Tasmania is up against other local emergency services to see who can donate the most blood to help save lives.

In last year's drive, Ambulance Tasmania finished in third place, so this year we are going for gold and encouraging all our people to donate. ... See more



Kylie Kapeller, Andrew Herweynen and 175 others 5 comments 4 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
May 27 at 10:00 AM ·

Hobart Station became a mini skate park for 13-year-old skaters Charlotte and Zailee who performed tricks to some paramedics for a cause close to girls' hearts.

The powerhouse pair are shredding and landing tricks at 65 locations, and Ambulance Tasmania was on their bucket list along with the Royal Hobart Hospital and Hobart Airport.

Their goal? Raising $20,000 and awareness for Cystic Fibrosis – a condition Charlotte lives with. ... See more



Mat Johnston, Ange Green and 323 others 5 comments 6 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
May 16 at 8:21 AM ·

After years of sharing a site with the Tasmania Fire Service, Bridgewater ambulance crews now have their own space to call home.

The new and completed four-bay station will be fully operational in the coming days, and contains training room facilities and capacity for future growth to accommodate the growing area.

"We thank the TFS for sharing the space, however the capacity of the current station has been overtaken by increases in both ambulance and fire resources and th... See more



Cassandra McKenzie, Ange Green and 393 others 6 comments 3 shares

Like Comment Share

Ambulance Tasmania
March 31 ·

From undertaking rescues in the New Zealand wilderness to working in stations across Tasmania, today Gerald's 38-year ambulance career has come to an end.

Gerald began volunteering at St John Ambulance in New Zealand in 1985 and throughout the years became a fully qualified paramedic, was involved in the Search and Rescue Alpine Team, and was Incident Commander and a paramedic during the devastating earthquake in Christchurch in 2011.

"There are so many good memories, the... See more



You, Brent Cashion, Kerryn Wratt and 388 others 59 comments 5 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
April 5 ·

Ambulance Tasmania paramedics Nikki and Rob took a break from on-road duties yesterday to visit some potential future paramedics at Claremont College.

The pair set up an interactive stall with manikins and equipment bags for students to explore – a few were tested on the cardiac monitor which proved a hit.

Nikki was impressed by the amount of students who had some emergency health knowledge which could one day help save a life.... See more



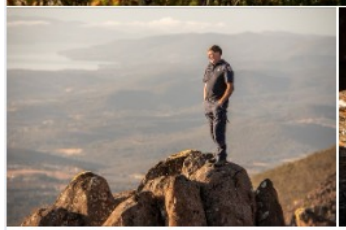
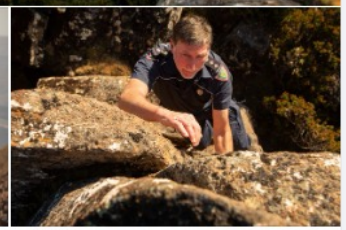
You, Toby West, Anna Ekdahl and 249 others 1 comment 4 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
February 10 ·

Neale has always had a passion for rock climbing, kayaking and bushwalking in remote Tasmania.

In 1982, while running courses to prepare emergency service workers for these environments, someone suggested that he apply for Ambulance Tasmania in Devonport.

"By good luck really, somehow I got employed!" Neale said. ... See more

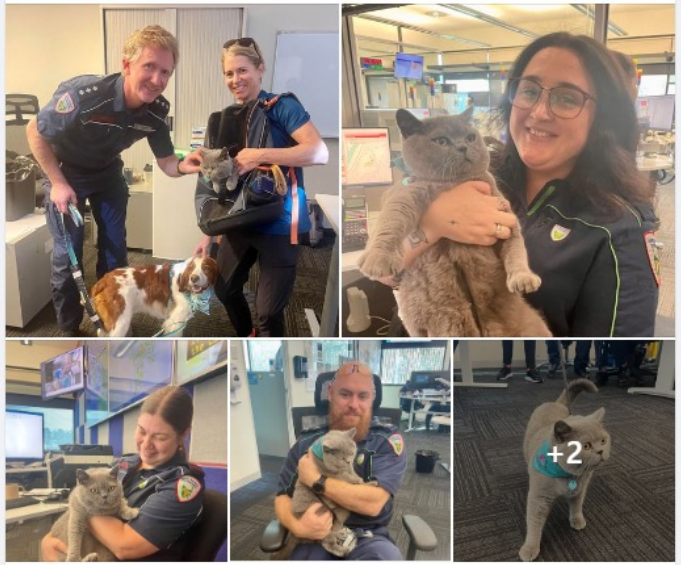
Tes Sa, Ange Green and 640 others 132 comments 13 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
March 15 ·

Therapy dog Teddy was very excited to have his fluffy friend join him on his weekly visit in Hobart yesterday, although Brian didn't look too impressed!

The pair brought plenty of laughter to our hard-working people as part of Ambulance Tasmania's wellbeing program, and the British Shorthair purred his way through many cuddles despite the grumpy face.

It was also Teddy's 7th birthday, and Brian's occasional appearance with Therapy Paws Tasmania made his day even more special.



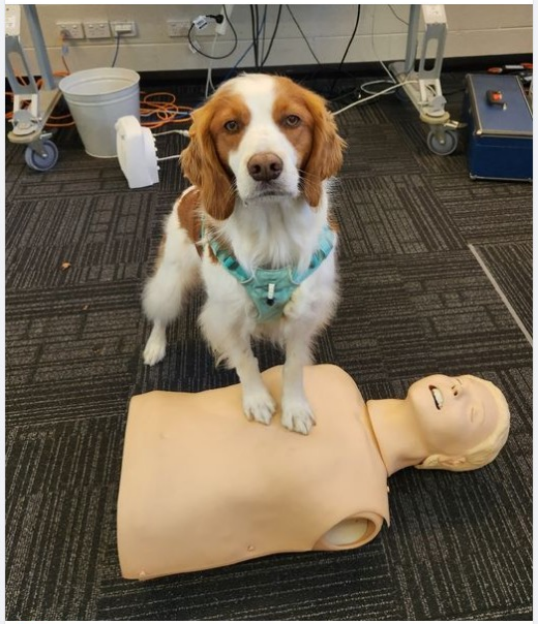
You, Ange Green, Simone Haigh and 410 others 55 comments 17 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
February 6 ·

Everyone can learn CPR!

For every minute a person suffering a cardiac arrest in goes without receiving CPR or an AED shock their chances of survival drop by 10%.

Knowing this essential skill can save a life and it is simple and easy to learn.... See more



Ange Green, Pam Heiermann and 274 others 13 comments 39 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
December 28, 2022 ·

Go Kat!



Department of Health, Tasmania
December 28, 2022 ·

For Ambulance Tasmania paramedics like Katrina working over the Christmas period can be fun 🚑

"I find that the type of work is different because the community i... See more

You, Toby West, Jarath Cobcroft and 329 others 12 comments 3 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
December 19, 2022 ·

Therapy dog Nova had a little friend join her on her rounds last week.

Sonny offered up many puppy cuddles to staff in Devonport, Latrobe, Ulverstone, Burnie as well as the Mersey and North West Regional Hospitals – it would have been very hard to resist his cuteness!

Therapy dogs regularly visit stations across the state to put smiles on the faces of our people as part of Ambulance Tasmania's Wellbeing Program.



You, Ange Green, Siobhan Graham and 306 others 16 comments 4 shares

Like Comment Share

Ambulance Tasmania
November 24, 2022 ·

Ambulance Tasmania is proud of the outstanding leaders we have recruited to the Communications Centre, and we are excited to share that from this month, 75% of these leaders are women.

50% of staff who share the Operations Manager position are women and 100% of the Communications Centre support roles are performed by women.

Our service supports all of our people to achieve their leadership goals to strengthen and add value to our already brilliant team!



Patrick Boyle, Cassandra McKenzie and 300 others 7 comments 5 shares

Like Comment Share

Ambulance Tasmania
October 25, 2022 ·

It's International Control Room Week, and we'd like to highlight some of Ambulance Tasmania's incredible Communications Centre staff.

Maria was an Ambulance Tasmania paramedic for around 12 years before making the move to the State Communications Centre early last year.

As a Deployment Supervisor, Maria oversees all activity happening, including patient flow and tactical command. She ensures everything is running smoothly, that each region is appropriately resourced, and p... See more



Mat Johnston, Patrick Boyle and 509 others 29 comments 22 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
May 19 at 4:16 PM ·

It's been a busy week for our volunteers – attending events all across the state to celebrate their contribution and service to Ambulance Tasmania.

Volunteers from the North West all gathered in Elizabeth Town, and others in Dodges Ferry, Strahan, Beaconsfield, Bruny Island, Huonville, Triabunna, St Helens and Smithton (plus events in other locations).

Thank you all for what you do! #NVW2023



Ange Green, Pam Helermann and 296 others 14 comments 8 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
May 14 at 9:22 AM ·

Operational Support Officer, Southern Region, Jo started at Ambulance Tasmania in 2010 and seven years later, her own daughter Madie became a paramedic at the same service.

"I know how well respected my mum is by our colleagues and it makes me really proud to be able to work within the same service as her.

"It's comforting knowing I always have someone at work I can talk to. Being that it is my mum is extra special," Madie said.... See more



Ange Green, Brent Cashion and 486 others 30 comments 10 shares

Ambulance Tasmania
May 12, 2022 ·

Today on International Nurses Day, we recognise and celebrate the 20 incredible nurses employed at Ambulance Tasmania and the valuable work that they do.

Nurses bring clinical expertise and a hospital skillset to their roles, invaluable for paramedics who care for patients prehospital.

Ambulance Tasmania nurses don't have physical contact with their patients, instead, they provide assessment over the phone and discuss conditions and treatment options with the patient's cl... See more



You, Patrick Boyle, Ange Green and 807 others 39 comments 36 shares

Like Comment Share

Ambulance Tasmania resilience scan drives change for the health service.

By Andrew Chounding
Updated October 20 2021 - 8:02pm, first published 8:00pm



‘We’re not perfect’: Ambulance chief admits to mistakes

The head of Ambulance Tasmania has defended his embattled staff but concedes the service “has not been meeting the expectations of the community”. WHAT HE HAD TO SAY >>

STATEMENTS

Ambulance Tasmania Launches ‘Action Plan’

By Tasmanian Times

Posted on August 12, 2022

Ambulance Tasmania chief executive says organisation needs to better support staff

By state political reporter Alexandra Humphries

Posted Wed 20 Oct 2021 at 3:47pm, updated Wed 20 Oct 2021 at 4:33pm

FrontlineMind

SEPTEMBER 2022

RESILIENCE DASHBOARD

AMBULANCE TASMANIA

The September 2022 Resilience Scan at Ambulance Tasmania saw a significant increase in the participation rate compared with September 2021. We received 449 in-depth responses compared to 325 when we first completed the Resilience Scan. We are cautiously optimistic that the higher participation rates indicate that more people who had given up or were cynical that their opinions mattered, are now prepared to share stories and insights into their experiences.

The patterns remained broadly stable compared with last year's scan. Significantly, many of the responses reflected; a continuing "negative sentiment" (78%), a sense of "overwhelm" (70%), and experiences like "a traffic jam" (84%), these sorts of situations occur "frequently" (81%), and the management response in this situation was "authoritative" (73%).

Stories shared also reflect ongoing challenges with management and co-workers at all levels of the organisation. A sense of threat from a client/patient, co-worker or manager declined slightly from 85% to 80%. Managers still represented a significant source of that "threat" and it is important that we continue to change our leadership approach and behaviours so that our people feel nurtured and supported.

Encouragingly there are early signs of small positive changes reflected in some responses. Respondents reporting a sense of purpose in the workplace increased from 52% to 56%. The Net Promoter Score (overall sentiment) of -69 (negative 69) increased from -81 the previous year – a 15% positive improvement.

Overall, the resilience scan results reflect ongoing challenges in the workplace and provide clear direction and priorities.

Our Response – Ambulance Tasmania Executive Team

The Ambulance Tasmania Executive Team (ATEC) are appreciative of the insights shared and acknowledges the organisation has a deep desire to see action following the scan.

The second Resilience Scan highlighted that many of our people are not feeling cared for by the organisation, our supervisors, managers, and leaders, and in some cases by their colleagues.

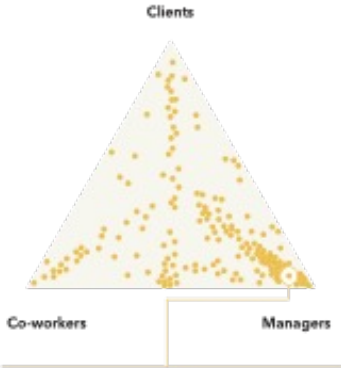
The ATEC members reviewed the anonymised results of the second Resilience Scan including the rich stories provided by 449 of our people. The ATEC has identified one overarching priority theme of "Caring for our people" and three sub-themes from the data received.

The ATEC is committed to three immediate actions flowing from the resilience scan, in addition to our continued commitment to the Culture Improvement Action Plan.

SENSEMAKER

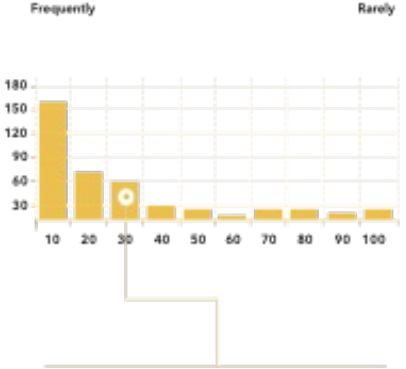
DATA: *Note: Some stories may be edited for length & anonimity*

At times like this, the greatest threat to my safety are the actions of...



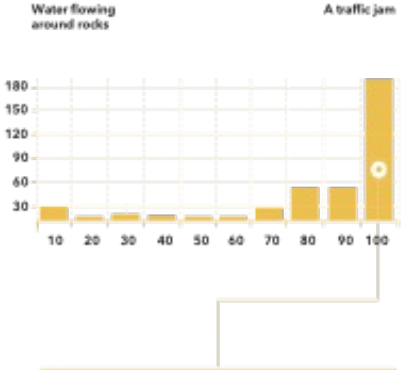
"I was recently told " I wouldn't bring that up until you have permanency" by a direct manager. Basically, a threat not to make trouble or voice an opinion for change, because I don't have job security. Absolutely gut-wrenching that this is the narrative in the organisation I work for."

This sort of situation occurs...



"This is an observation, not a story - but it happens all the time. I'm a Vollie. Example: We're at the RHH, paramedics walk in, walk right past, no acknowledgement, no hello, then say hello to the Paramedic standing 1m away. Same (but to a lesser extent) at HQ. It would be nice to feel part of the team by receiving just a short "G'day" or "how you going?". It shouldn't make a difference - Vollie or Paramedic - we're in it together, it is just common courtesy and would make me feel more appreciated."

My experience felt like...



"I am a volunteer and work at Branch Stations. Working with paramedics provides insights into many of the issues that they report seriously under-mine the culture, leads to cynical views about the CEO's cultural revolution and simply poor management. So, I am taking up one of their key issues. Something that I hear often because they often find themselves in this position. It's the application, selection and notification when applying for AT positions. And, because many are applying for new roles this issue influences so many options about AT and in particular the AT leadership team. The key elements that need to fixed are: > email advice that their application has been received; > email advice about the process - set out the steps and timing; > email advice if they have been short-listed and if so, next steps; > information for an interview including the matters to be raised and the weighting for this issues and how the successful applicant will be selected; > everyone informed of the successful applicant BEFORE everyone is advised; and > an opportunity with sensible and constructive feedback an explanation why a person was unsuccessful. Not particularly difficult to implement the above but it is at AT. You would be surprised how often this issue is raised and how much it effects morale. It IS a BIG issue. The current practices seem out of alignment with the AT Values and they are often spoken about as 'words on paper'. It would seem to me that much of the cultural work is not aligned with good practice much less the 'cultural waffle' that goes on. Might seem a bit strange for a Vollie to be speaking on behalf of paramedics but it is surprising what is said."

KEY THEMES

Caring for our people:

1. Create a culture of kindness
2. Build respectful relationships
3. Implement people-centric processes

OUR TOP PRIORITIES FOR BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT BASED ON THESE THEMES/ INSIGHTS ARE:

1. Train and support our frontline leaders on how to collaborate and create an environment of psychological safety.
2. Workshop with our people a Values and Behaviors Framework that will be implemented across the organisation.
3. Tackle the problems of our recruitment processes by improving transparency, timeliness of communications and providing constructive feedback to candidates.

Results of 2nd Resilience Scan – September 2022

- **449 vs 323** responses were received (45%).
- **Results:**
  - Sense of purpose improved 4% (52%-56%)
  - Threat from managers decreased 5% (85%-80%)
- On a scale of 0 to 100, AT was **-69**
- Very rich text narratives about current issues vs historical



Themes

Caring for our people:

1. Create a culture of **kindness**
2. Build **respectful** relationships
3. Implement **people-centric processes**





Commitments

- Train & support our frontline leaders on how to create an environment of psychological safety.
- Create a Values and Behaviors Framework.
- Tackle the problems of our recruitment processes by improving transparency, timeliness of communication & providing feedback to candidates.

Our Commitment

Our everyday actions that make a difference

We are caring

- We show positive regard for all our team members and colleagues
- We find opportunities to be inclusive in our workplace
- We look out for each other because we genuinely care about our team
- We share our mistakes so that other people can learn from them

We are kind

- We respond positively to our teammates' requests for assistance or advice
- We use language and words that build each other up
- We seek out opportunities to celebrate each other's achievements and successes

We are curious

- We ask questions instead of casting judgement
- When something doesn't meet our expectations, our first reaction is seeking to understand
- We reflect on our part in making the organisation a better place to work and then we live it.
- We take on board the feedback of others as an opportunity to grow
- We offer solutions to challenging issues

Our Leadership Commitment

Our everyday actions as leaders that make a difference

We are caring

- We are present when our people need us for support
- If we can't fix an issue for our team, we connect them to the people that can
- We do what we say we will do – our actions speak louder than our words
- We have meaningful performance development agreement (PDA) discussions to support our teams' development

We are kind

- We focus on positive feedback much more than corrective feedback (>5:1)
- We take our leadership role as an opportunity to coach, serve and develop our people
- We follow up on correspondence from our people in a timely fashion
- We seek out opportunities to celebrate each other

We are curious

- We seek feedback from our people and consider it when making decisions
- We recognise that things are not black and white, and are creative in our solutions
- We work across teams and business units to deliver results for our people
- We take onboard the feedback of others as an opportunity to grow

We are courageous (for leaders)

- We are willing to make difficult decisions and have difficult conversations in ways that align with our values and our people
- We ask for help when we need it – and offer it when asked
- We live our values

Jeremy Rockliff

Premier of Tasmania

Share

1 February 2022

Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Health

Supporting Ambulance Tasmania to deliver quality care

Improving ambulance services and investing in our health system is a key priority for the Tasmanian Liberal Government, and the latest annual Report on Government Services (RoGS) confirms that we are delivering on our commitments.

Ambulance Tasmania continues to receive positive feedback from the community on ambulance services, with 97 per cent reporting overall patient satisfaction. This is a testament to our committed, hardworking paramedics who continue to care for Tasmanians in their time in need.

Pleasingly, Tasmania has also recorded the best call answering times in Australia with 95.9 per cent of triple-zero calls being answered by ambulance services within 10 seconds – 5.1 per cent higher than the national average.

The Report shows that Tasmania employs 67.7 FTE qualified Ambulance Officers per 100,000 across all three regions of the State - significantly higher than the national average.

When it comes to improving emergency response times there is always more to do, which is why we have committed to recruiting 48 new

Jeremy Rockliff

Premier of Tasmania

Share

5 April 2023

Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Health

Paramedics to receive well deserved pay rise

Tasmania's paramedics are set to receive the pay rise they deserve with the new Ambulance Tasmania Agreement now registered in the Tasmanian Industrial Commission.

Premier and Minister for Health, Jeremy Rockliff, welcomed the registration saying that it was a great outcome for the State's paramedics and AT staff.

"This is the positive result of months of productive, good faith negotiations between Government bargaining representatives and our Ambulance Tasmania (AT) staff to deliver increases that are fair, affordable and reasonable," Premier Rockliff said.

"In addition to wage increases, the updated Award will include enhanced meal break provisions, an increased professional development allowance, the creation of the Clinical Coach Specialist allowances and rural and remote allowances.

Key parts of the registered Ambulance Tasmania Agreement and updated Award, include:

Jeremy Rockliff

Premier of Tasmania

Share

8 September 2021

Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Health

Innovations improve ambulance services

Ambulance Tasmania is transforming its service delivery to provide more health services directly to Tasmanians, reducing pressure on our hospitals.

While responding quickly to emergency situations and transporting patients to an emergency department will always be a core focus, Ambulance Tasmania is also playing bigger role in providing healthcare.

Not all patients who call Triple Zero require ED care, and some callers do not need an ambulance. Rather than simply transporting those who call an ambulance to hospital, we are implementing a number of innovative programs to provide improved patient-centred care.

An Emergency Mental Health Co-Response Team will be introduced by the end of this year in southern Tasmania for a pilot program, which will see mental health clinicians travel with police and paramedics to attend mental health-specific Triple Zero calls. This will mean patients will receive faster access to mental health services, while reducing avoidable hospital admissions, with the program based on successful models interstate and overseas.

Jeremy Rockliff

Premier of Tasmania

Share

28 February 2023

Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Health

97 Ambulance Tasmania staff to be made permanent

Premier Jeremy Rockliff will today announce that the 97 Ambulance Tasmania temporary positions deployed during COVID-19 will be made permanent as part of his State of the State address.

During the pandemic, the Tasmanian Liberal Government responded to increased demand by employing additional Ambulance Tasmania staff in a range of roles.

Premier and Minister for Health, Jeremy Rockliff, acknowledged the important roles these 97 employees have undertaken in providing critical care to Tasmanians.

"Ongoing increased demand has shown the need for these positions to continue, which is why we're making them permanent," Premier Rockliff said.

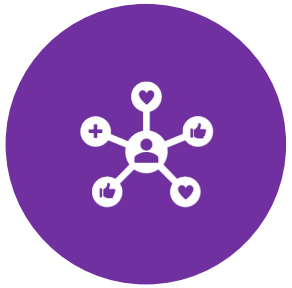
Leadership lessons learned so far….
Transforming the Culture of Ambulance Tasmania



Embrace Change:
Recognize the evolving workplace dynamics & adapt to the presence of a feminized workforce, Gen X, Y & Gen Z. Embrace the shifts and changes in paramedic work.



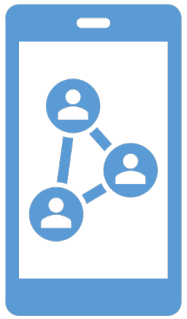
Lead by Example:
Cultivating a positive culture requires leaders to be actively engaged & visible. Step out from behind the keyboard, engage with our staff, listen to them & inspire them through our actions.



Engage Your People and Embrace Transparency: Acknowledge & openly communicate the existing problems within the organization. As leaders, take responsibility & be transparent in sharing the challenges & opportunities for improvement.



Address Behaviors: Don't ignore or tolerate problematic behaviors. Take immediate action, especially when they occur within the leadership team. Addressing issues promptly fosters a healthier & more inclusive work environment.



Hire a Ruby: Empower the communications team to shamelessly promote the stories & accomplishments of our people. Celebrating their work boosts morale & creates a positive image for the organization. Change the narrative.



Hire and promote based on future-focused behaviours: Embrace diversity, inclusion & equity when building our team. Invest in developing our people & encourage a diverse range of perspectives to foster an inclusive culture.



Communicate Frequently and Transparently: Utilize multiple modes of communication to ensure effective & regular information flow. Provide a clear understanding of the "why" behind decisions and initiatives to foster employee engagement and buy-in.



Loss of top Tassie ambo ‘a blow’: union

The departure of the state’s ambulance service chief couldn’t come at a worse time, the health union says as pressure is put on the department to secure a replacement as soon as possible.

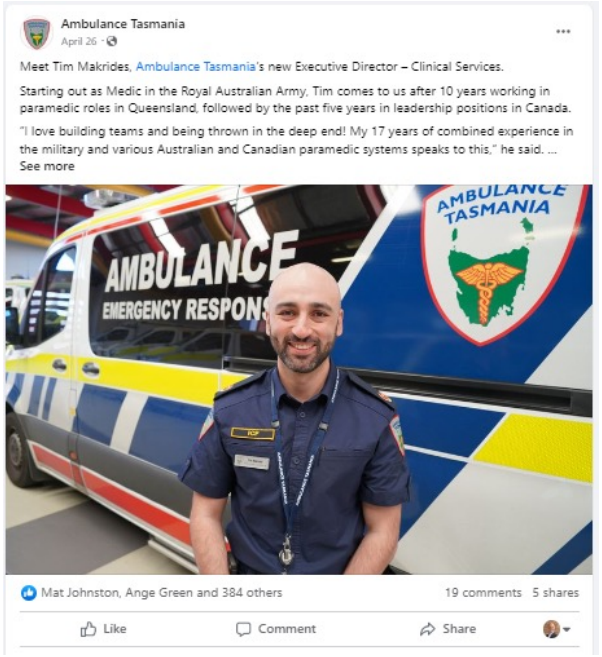
'Instability' at Ambulance Tasmania following departure of CEO Joe Acker

IB

By Isabel Bird
Updated March 9 2023 - 2:40pm, first published 1:43pm

0 Comments

The culture transformation journey continues









'Hurdles to jump' but right man to handle an emergency

The new head of Ambulance Tasmania says he understands people are worried about ramping at hospitals, but new figures show there's improvements. HIS PLANS >>

CULTURE EATS STRATEGY FOR BREAKFAST

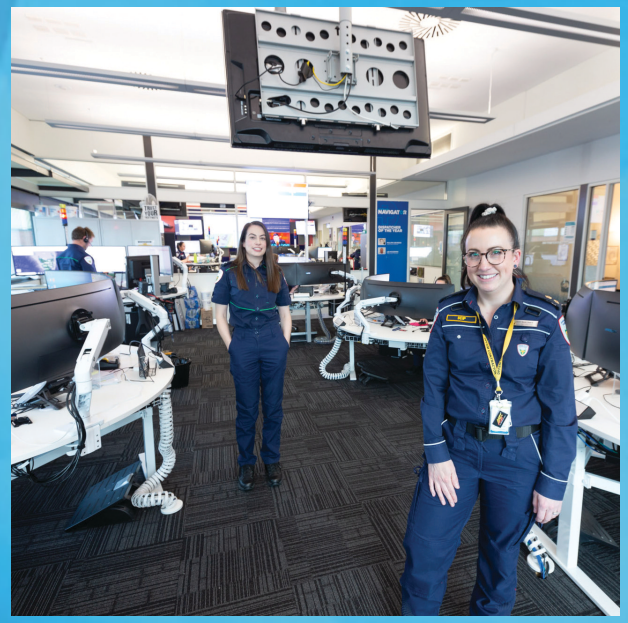
Peter **DRUCKER**











Thank you! Questions please?