



Oifig Stiúrthóir na Seirbhíse Náisiúnta Otharcharranna,
An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Otharcharranna,
Áras na hAbhann,
Crosbhóthar Thamhlachta,
Tamlacht,
Baile Áth Cliath D24 XNP2
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Office of the Director of the National Ambulance Service,
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Ref: RM/SD/PQ/211209

9 December 2021

Deputy Seán Sherlock TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ58073/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of ambulance call outs in 2021 to date; and the average time these ambulances took to the Great Island of Cobh in tabular form. - Sean Sherlock

PQ58074/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of ambulances that left the county bounds of Cork in 2021; the distance travelled on those calls; the reason for the call taking the ambulance outside the county; and the number of paramedics who have to take additional leave due to such calls in tabular form - Sean Sherlock.

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) National Ambulance Service (NAS) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which you submitted for response.

Every day, NAS deploys approximately 160-180 emergency ambulances, an average of 22 rapid response vehicles and in excess of 50 officer response vehicles operating from over 100 locations around the country, i.e. everywhere in the Republic of Ireland. All emergency ambulances are on duty, there are no on call arrangements.

NAS operational areas are currently* divided into three regions, North Leinster, West and South. The South Division includes:

- Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary (South), Waterford, Wexford, Cork and Kerry.

**In 2023, NAS Operational Areas are expected to change in line with the creation of six Regional Health Authorities.*





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All NAS resources are dispatched to calls across the country from the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) on a nearest available (to the incident) basis and not on a county boundary basis. In this context, NAS reports a regional basis only.

Each year the level of demand for NAS services is growing. In 2021, demand have grown by 30% since February. A key target in the HSE's National Service Plan 2021 is that the majority of ambulance calls to life threatening incidents (ECHO and DELTA calls) are responded to in 18 minutes and 59 seconds or less.

However, the related KPIs are interconnected with the volume of 999 demand expected and the quick turnaround of ambulances at Emergency Departments. In the case of the latter, both of these parameters are significantly above expected levels and consequently, performance against the relevant KPIs while expected to show improvement in October, are lower than the same period in 2020.

Please find below the call volume for the South region – category 1 calls (Echo and Delta)* also detailed below are the average response times for these categories of call.

Call Volume by region - South **Category 1 (Echo & Delta) (2021)**

*Echo (life-threatening cardiac or respiratory arrest) Delta (life-threatening illness or injury, other than cardiac or respiratory arrest)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept
South	2868	2168	2553	2637	2775	2833	3151	3142	3118

Average Response times Jan to Sep 21 by Region – South **Category 1 (Echo & Delta) calls**

2019	00:20
2020	00:21
2021 (Jan – Sept)	00:25

In relation to the following questions, NAS operates on a highly dynamic basis and in the absence of any county boundary limitations, there is no operational reason or administrative capacity to collect this information:

- *the number of ambulances that left the county bounds of Cork in 2021*
- *the distance travelled on those calls*
- *the reason for the call taking the ambulance outside the county*





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In relation to the following question, all staff applying for any form of leave must do so in line with HSE Terms and Conditions of Employment. In this regard, NAS is not aware of any such form of leave arrangements.

- *the number of paramedics who have to take additional leave due to such calls*

I hope the information that is available is helpful.

Yours Sincerely,

Robert Morton
Director
National Ambulance Service