



Oifig Stiúrthóir na Seirbhíse Náisiúnta Otharcharranna,
An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Otharcharranna,
Áras na hAbhann,
Crosbhóthar Thamhlachta,
Tamlacht,
Baile Áth Cliath D24 XNP2
Fón 01 4631624/6.
Riomhphost: director.nas@hse.ie

Office of the Director of the National Ambulance Service,
National Ambulance Service,
Rivers Building,
Tallaght Cross,
Tallaght,
Dublin D24 XNP2
Telephone: 01 4631624/6.
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Ref: SD/PQ/211109

9 November 2021

Deputy Rose Conway - Walsh TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ51238/21

To ask the Minister for Health the status of plans to reform the current centralised ambulance system; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Rose Conway-Walsh

PQ51240/21

To ask the Minister for Health the average waiting time for an ambulance in each county since 2011; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Rose Conway-Walsh

PQ51241/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of ambulances in the public system since 2006; the number of ambulances deployed in each county since 2006; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Rose Conway-Walsh

Dear Deputy Conway - Walsh,

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

PQ51238/21

The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) operates across two sites in Tallaght and Ballyshannon and has been in operation since 2014. NEOC is the culmination of a 6 year project to address a series of patient safety recommendations by HIQA to address legacy arrangements arising from former health board arrangements. NEOC is a state of the art centre which is internationally accredited and the subject of regular interest from other ambulance services internationally. The current deployment model is designed around international best practice and the HSE is not aware of any plans to reform the current centralised ambulance system.





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PQ51240/21

The National Ambulance Service (NAS) publish data on a monthly basis, a month in arrears, NAS is divided into three operational areas, North Leinster, South and West. All NAS resources are dispatched to calls across the country on a nearest available (to the incident) basis and not on a county boundary basis.

Due to the voluminous amount of data that would be contained in your request we cannot provide you with the waiting times per county for the past ten years, we can however provide you with the last three years as per our operational areas – see below.

Average Response times 2019, 2020 & Jan to Sep 21 by Region

Please note due to a change on the Managed Information System (MIS) we are only able to report from 2019 onwards

Category 1 Calls - Average Response Times (hh:mm)	
2019	
NORTH LEINSTER	00:17
SOUTHERN	00:20
WESTERN	00:18
2020	
NORTH LEINSTER	00:18
SOUTHERN	00:21
WESTERN	00:18
2021 Jan - Sep	
NORTH LEINSTER	00:21
SOUTHERN	00:25
WESTERN	00:22

PQ51241/21

Due to the voluminous amount of data that would be contained in your request we cannot provide you with the vehicle per county for the past fifteen years, we can however provide you with the last five years as per our operational areas – see below.





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Vehicle Profile

Emergency Ambulance and Intermediate Care Vehicles only

	Leinster	West	South
2016	94	112	93
2017	102	119	97
2018	116	121	99
2019	115	122	101
2020	105	119	99

Number of emergency calls

A 2015 Baseline Capacity Review of the National Ambulance Service (NAS) found that a significant number of additional staff would be required over the coming years to support the service.

Since 2015 the NAS has increased its staff numbers each year. However, each year the level of demand for NAS services is also growing. This year recruitment to the NAS is being outpaced by demand for our services which has grown by almost 30%.

There is no ready supply of Paramedics in Ireland and NAS for the most part must educate their own workforce in their own college. The Paramedic programme is degree level and takes three years. There are currently over 200 Student Paramedics at different stages of the programme right now.

The surge in demand has come at a time when staff are also working hard to support COVID related swabbing and vaccinations. At this time, the level of demand now exceeds the levels experienced in 2019, i.e. pre pandemic.

As of 1 October 2021, NAS have commenced redeployment of up to 45 Paramedics from COVID related work to emergency ambulance duty and a further 80 Paramedics are due to graduate from the college at year end. NAS are also working with trade union partners to develop temporary alterations to the current deployment model to minimise the impact of the capacity challenges on staff. There is no intention to return to a geographically limited model which would re-introduce inherent patient safety risk.

In 2021, a further capacity analysis is now underway to inform future workforce planning.

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total calls	313,735	321,379	337,754	348,053	362,954



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I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Robert Morton
Director
National Ambulance Service