



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Oibríochtaí
An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta
Bloc 4, Lárionad Gnó,
Tulach Mhór,
Co. Uíbh Fhailí, R35 FH59

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JJMcG/PQ35561/25

15 July 2025

Deputy Claire Kerrane TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ35561/25

To ask the Minister for Health the reason a policy (details supplied) has been in place for Ennis and Nenagh since 17 August 2023 to protect the rapid response vehicle (RRV) and ensure where a ambulance personnel is not at work, that the advanced paramedic is not taken off the RRV and this policy is not in place in Roscommon, which is also without an emergency unit, as Ennis and Nenagh are; the reason Roscommon is being treated differently; and if this policy will be implemented to ensure protection of the same vital RRV in Roscommon, just as important as Ennis and Nenagh. -Claire Kerrane

Details: Action Card which states that the Rostered RRV in Ennis & Nenagh can only be stood down where all efforts are made to fill a shift where short notice sick leave and where operational resources hit 70% and there is a shortfall on an Emergency Ambulance

Dear Deputy Kerrane

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

NAS is one of the State's Principal Emergency Services (PES) serving the population of Ireland, i.e., over five million people. An independent demand and capacity analysis conducted in 2022, projected 999 activity to increase by up to 107% over the 10-year period from 2017 to 2027.

Demand via the 999 service has increased by 25% since 2019, with growth in 2024 up by 9% on 2023. The need for additional capacity is a matter of public record https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/committee_of_public_accounts/2021-09-23/3/, whereby it was confirmed by the HSE (CEO and COO) in September 2021, that NAS had a then capacity deficit of 90 emergency ambulance crews daily (1,080 WTE).





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The matter was the subject of further public record in February 2023 https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint_committee_on_health/submissions/2023/2023-02-22_opening-statement-robert-morton-director-national-ambulance-service-nas_en.pdf following the finalisation of a NAS Workforce Plan 2022-2028 in June 2022, underpinned by an independent demand and capacity analysis, which identified the need for considerable growth in the workforce across the country, both now and into the future (2,579 additional WTE by 2028).

The HSE Pay and Numbers Strategy for 2024 set the WTE Ceiling for NAS at 2,321 WTE which represents a growth of almost 300 WTE since 2019. The WTE Ceiling will increase further in 2025 to 2,655.

In comparison to NAS, the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust has 4,079 WTE <https://senedd.wales/media/kradakae/gen-ld16576-e.pdf> to serve 3.1m people (2021 Census), while the Scottish Ambulance Service has 5,837 WTE <https://www.scottishambulance.com/publications/annual-report-and-accounts/> to serve 5.4m people (2022 Census).

As advised in PQ 22384, where the HSE National Service Plan 2026 makes provision for an MSc. in Specialist Paramedic Practice (Advanced) programme, advertisement would only occur in 2026 with any start date expected to commence in September 2026.

Although rapid response vehicle (RRV) procedures are generally similar, they can differ slightly between regions. The Roscommon RRV procedures are based on an agreement established by the WRC at the time the RRV was set up. All aspects of this agreement are fully adhered to in Roscommon.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

John J McGowan
General Manager
National Ambulance Service

