SA Ambulance Service

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23 December 2008

Timely reminder re. radio procedures

Summer is always a busy time for us. Not only are we in the midst of the annual bushfire season, but the Christmas and New Year periods traditionally see an increase in ambulance activity.

Naturally, this means we all get busy, and when we get busy, a higher demand is placed on the SA Government Radio Network (GRN).

Every form of radio communication—even listening into talk groups—contributes to the overall volume of radio users. Given busy periods mean a higher demand on the overall network, it is important that we all play our part to reduce the load on network capacity.

This busy time of year is a good time to remind ourselves that we need to look after the network that looks after us and when we communicate via GRN, it's important that we are consistent and professional.

Dos and don'ts of radio operating procedures

1. Limit the use of talk groups – if you don't need to be on a talk group, don't get on it.
2. Prioritise your messages. Do not use up air time with unimportant messages and insignificant details.
3. Keep all necessary conversations as brief as possible.
4. Radio conversations should be accurate, clear and simple.
5. Use your radio equipment properly. Don't 'shout' at the mike on the radio – pick up the handset and transmit your message correctly and clearly. This will reduce the likelihood of the message being distorted and it having to be repeated.
6. Always acknowledge receipt of all radio communications.
7. If the person you are transmitting a message to does not acknowledge receipt, repeat the message.
8. Wait until a message transaction has been completed before transmitting your reply.
9. Be professional! All radio conversations are legal voice data and can be used for evidence in court.
10. Don't use the GRN for private, personal or non-work related conversations.
11. If conversations are of a private or sensitive nature, please use mobile phones.

A more detailed 'Operations Instruction' on radio operating procedures will be issued soon.

Ray Creen
Chief Executive Officer