
8A EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ATTACHMENT

8A.1 Jurisdictions' comments

New South Wales Government comments



Fire Services

Fire services in NSW recognise the value of this chapter of the Report in contributing to effective evaluation of fire service delivery — prevention and suppression. The information in this chapter will complement other projects the fire services in NSW are currently involved in, particularly the Service Efforts and Accomplishments Report being prepared by the Council on the Cost of Government at state level, and the national Australasian Fire Authorities Council Performance Measurement and Benchmarking project.

There are however a number of limitations with measuring fire service performance. The two most important being:

- the different environments — socio-economic, demographic, political, legislative, climatic and geographic — in which each fire service operates; and
- the number of factors beyond the control of fire services influencing outcomes.

It is therefore important that explanatory and contextual information is provided by fire services for each measure. Explanatory and contextual information will assist those interpreting the measures to better understand the different environments in which fire services operate.

Ambulance Services

The Ambulance Service of NSW currently reports performance to a diverse range of stakeholders. Further to this chapter the Service reports to the Council for the Cost of Government at state level, the Australian Convention of Ambulance Authorities, the NSW Health Department and to the public via the Service's Annual Report. The Service also benchmarks nationally and internationally with public and semi-public services.

The Ambulance Service of NSW also reports to stakeholders via a set of Key Performance Indicators that are derived from the Service's Corporate Plan by a series of Critical Success Factors. That is, the performance is monitored according to those areas that are seen as vital to the ongoing requirements of our patients and stakeholders. To this point the Service is progressing to fulfil our Vision of 'Together we will be the world leaders in Ambulance Service providing a shield of protection to the community'.

The Ambulance Service of NSW is committed to continuous quality and performance improvement across the diverse service requirements of NSW.



Victoria Government comments

“ The Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFESB) provides a fast fire and emergency response service to Melbourne and about half of the greater metropolitan area, as well as contributing to the reduction of fire and other incidents by vigorous fire prevention and education programs. These have contributed to a steady reduction in the total number of emergency calls over the past five years. Over the same period, budgets have been held, and staffing has been reduced significantly, particularly in non-operational areas.

While maintaining emergency response capacity, future developments will see operational staff engaged in a range of community safety activities in order to provide greater community benefit from these skilled and expensive resources. The main initiative will be the pilot of a program of support to the Metropolitan Ambulance Service by suitably trained and equipped firefighters attending emergency ambulance calls to non-breathing/no pulse patients to provide automated defibrillator response prior to the arrival of an ambulance. The additional costs of this enhanced service to the community are far lower than would be incurred by the engagement of additional ambulance crews.

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) is an Australian leader in promoting community responsibility for fire safety as part of its risk management approach to fire. It has adopted a more balanced strategy to fire prevention and response, and has engaged and contracted such people as community fireguard facilitators and community support facilitators skilled in educating and assisting people to protect themselves from fire. Both the MFESB and the CFA have ceased non-core activities such as vehicle manufacture.

The major issue in ambulance provision in Victoria is the rapid growth in demand within the past three years for both emergency and non-emergency attendance, like similar communities in Australia and overseas. In certain places, emergency crews are busy as much as 40 per cent of available time, which can impinge on the service's capacity to respond within target times. The causes, including increased community expectations and changing patterns of hospital care as well as the demographic element are being analysed.

Victorian ambulance services are using new performance indicators for enhanced depth and accuracy of activity monitoring in the clinical, human resource and finance management areas in particular. The industry is surveying customer satisfaction and ISO 9002 certification is being sought. Ambulance officer training is also planned to be linked more closely to the mainstream education sector. ”

Queensland Government comments

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Queensland is Australia's most decentralised State and is subject to a wide range of threats. As we approach the next century, the emergency services will continue to face the challenge of providing high quality services which meet the needs of a diverse and increasing client base within a competitive funding environment. The highest population densities and growth rates are occurring along the coast and in the south east. The need for innovative and flexible service delivery models and work practices to address the accessibility and availability issues associated with such a decentralised population provides an ongoing challenge.

The potential magnitude of disasters and incidents in Queensland compared to other States imposes a heavy reliance on community volunteer involvement and self help as the most effective way of minimising community disruption. The delivery of fire and ambulance services in rural and remote areas is supported by 52 112 rural fire volunteers (through their involvement in 1 611 rural fire brigades) and 343 ambulance honoraries (ambulance volunteers) respectively. A unique network of 159 community based local ambulance committees supports the delivery of ambulance services. Maintaining and enhancing that involvement and increasing the focus on public education and preventative strategies are key issues for the Fire and Ambulance Services in both current and future environments.

Recent developments

The Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) has placed an increased emphasis on illness prevention strategies and has recently developed the innovative CPR 2000 initiative which aims to have 25 per cent of the population with resuscitation skills by the year 2000.

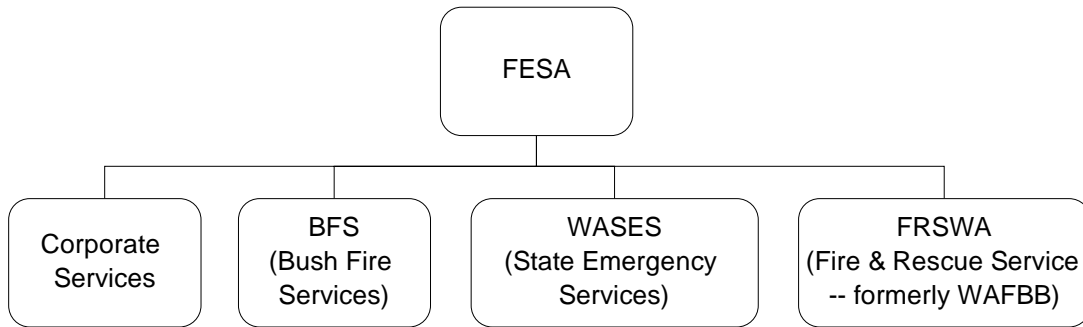
The QAS was one of the first ambulance services in Australia to launch a formal program for the maintenance of professional standards — the Clinical Quality Improvement Program — aimed at maintaining and improving the general quality of clinical performance. It awards Certificates of Clinical Practice to officers who show steady improvement in their overall ability.

Both the fire and ambulance authorities have undertaken research to understand more about their customer needs through the conduct of detailed customer/community surveys. This information has been used to inform the development of service delivery standards and appropriate service delivery strategies. Organisational improvement initiatives have been implemented linking Enterprise Partnership Agreements to Strategic Plans to provide greater staff ownership of the strategic direction and to enhance the performance culture of both organisations.

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Western Australia Government comments

The most important development to occur in Western Australia Emergency Services has been the amalgamation of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board, West Australian State Emergency Services and the Bush Fires Board under a new umbrella structure known as the Fire and Emergency Services Authority (FESA).



Following a Ministerial Review, WA is moving to a single statewide supplier of all ambulance services. A call for tender for these services is being prepared according to the 'March '97 Implementation Plan'.

The only services outside the scope of the tender are Perth Metropolitan inter-hospital transport services.

Unusual factors affecting the delivery of emergency services in WA include its relatively vast area, its dispersed population and hot dry climatic conditions. These result in higher levels of fire risk in certain areas and place practical limits on the capacity of service organisations to deliver services into remote areas.

South Australia Government comments

“ Emergency Services in SA have now been brought within the Justice Portfolio of the State Government, under the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services. The Minister for Justice has overall Cabinet responsibility for these activities.

As part of the State Government's 1998–99 overall management improvement strategy, agencies are currently using or implementing Output Accrual budgeting, including identification of performance indicators.

Work is to proceed on greater coordination of Corporate and Support Services within the individual agencies, with a view to achieving greater overall efficiency. Efforts to achieve greater coordination between agencies are proceeding in a number of areas:

- The Government programme to co-locate Ambulance and Metropolitan Fire Service resources continues under capital works planning with three achieving co-located status to date. A range of sites are currently under consideration for co-location over the next three years further enhancing emergency services delivery whilst achieving maximum economy from capital works funding.
- The Ambulance and Metropolitan Fire Communication Centres will co-locate in February 1998.
- The implementation of a multiagency Common Computer Aided Dispatch system is expected in 1998–99.
- The major users of volunteers in service delivery (Country Fire Service, St John and State Emergency Service) will co-locate Head Offices during 1998.

As part of Government-wide systems development most emergency service agencies have implemented common Financial Management software, and common Human Resource management information systems. It is expected that these systems will provide a basis for greater efficiency in management.

Funding of the Services remains under review. The Country Fire Service has initiated a comprehensive examination of its funding base, with a view to allocating financial responsibility more equitably across the community. Greater uniformity of funding for both Metropolitan and Country Fire Services is to be considered.

SA Ambulance Service is reviewing its cost structure in the light of the level of "user-pays" funding currently in place and the costs of its Ambulance Cover fund, which has attracted over 50 000 new members (with a predominant pensioner component) following the withdrawal of some private funds from offering coverage.

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Tasmania Government comments

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Key issues for Tasmania in emergency service provision are:

- the small size and wide dispersal of the state's population with 40 per cent living in small towns and hamlets;
- the lack of economies of scale in service provision;
- the state's topography with rugged terrain; and
- significant reliance on volunteers in rural and remote areas.

In 1979 Tasmania Fire Service became the first fire service in Australia with responsibility for all fires on private land. The Service consists of approximately 300 career firefighters staffing 4 metropolitan brigades and 6000 volunteers staffing 240 widely dispersed town and rural brigades. Career and volunteer brigade management is facilitated through regional management structures which have responsibility for managing all fires and hazardous material emergencies within the Service's jurisdiction.

In ambulance service provision Tasmania has five unique features:

- Tasmania is the only state which provides free ambulance services to the general public and as a consequence there is a far greater reliance on government funding to supplement reduced income;
- Tasmania trains a far greater proportion of its salaried operational ambulance personnel to the highest level (Advanced Life Support or Paramedic level) than most other jurisdictions;
- Tasmania does not operate separate clinic or routine patient transport services because of lack of economies of scale in the small populations served;
- the Tasmanian Ambulance Service exclusively provides the road accident rescue (patient extrication) service in all urban areas of the state; and
- the Tasmanian Ambulance Service is now integrated in a managerial sense with the state's three major hospitals to enhance planning and coordination and efficiency in support service provision.

Tasmania's Fire and Ambulance Services work cooperatively and in the past two years have co-located in three new areas maximising use of capital funding for the benefit of both Services and taxpayers.

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Australian Capital Territory Government comments

“ The ACT is unique and fundamentally different to other jurisdictions in a number of aspects relevant to Emergency Management. The relatively small geographic size of the Territory, and the fact that the ACT has city/state functions; and a high proportion of urban area all impact on the provision of emergency services. There are no other counterparts in Australia that provide both territorial (state) and municipal functions in the one government structure. In addition the revenue raising capabilities of some other jurisdictions are greater and more flexible than those of the ACT.

Under the ACT Government's Financial Management Reform process the focus in Emergency Management is on the delivery of outputs by cooperation of all emergency agencies in partnership with a prepared community. Outputs and output classes for the ACT Emergency Services Bureau are based on the national emergency management principles of Prevention/Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery and are not individually identified against the specific emergency agency. The Emergency Management arrangements in the ACT reflect both territorial (state) and municipal funding arrangements in the budget of the ACT Emergency Services Bureau.

The ACT is moving to a greater emphasis on Prevention/Mitigation whilst maintaining appropriate emergency Response Services capabilities. In keeping with this focus a cooperative venture between the ACT Council on the Ageing, the ACT Fire Brigade the ACT Ambulance Service and the Australian Federal Police has developed and implemented the Community Liaison and Advisory Safety Project (CLASP). This multi agency CLASP program is directed towards identifying the safety problems of the elderly and helping by providing personal safety advice on reducing risks in and around their homes. Another significant community safety program has been the installation of smoke alarms in ACT Housing Trust homes and private residences by the ACT Fire Brigade.

There is also a significant National Capital influence on the ACT's requirements to deliver emergency management services. Other jurisdictions do not have the high concentration of Federal Government infrastructure which dictates the placement of emergency service resources to protect unique national and buildings assets as well as the general ACT community.

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Northern Territory Government comments

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The major issues for the NT in terms of its provision of Fire and Rescue Service are:

- the vast distances between towns and the large distances emergency response crews must travel in response to motor vehicle accidents/rescues and hazardous chemical spills implies that there is no possibility of back up from other fire stations;
- the small resources in comparison to other Australian Fire Services; and
- the reliance on auxiliary and volunteer staff at rural and remote fire stations.

In 1983 the NT combined Police, Fire and Emergency Services into a single department with the Commissioner of Police as CEO. The Chief Fire Officer is also Director of Emergency Services. The amalgamation has proven to be very successful with efficiency gains from amalgamation of workshops, administration and stations.

The NT Fire and Rescue Service (NTFRS) is the smallest and youngest fire service in Australia — with 133 permanent, 51 auxiliary and 200 volunteer fire fighters based at 3 permanent, 6 part permanent and 17 volunteer fire stations through out the NT. The NTFRS covers the second largest area of any of the Australian Fire Services. A review, scheduled for completion in May 1998 is investigating the staffing and funding of the NTFRS.

As well as grass, scrub and structure fires within its Emergency Response Areas the NTFRS has responsibility for all road accident rescue throughout the NT and is the lead combat authority for all hazardous materials incidents.

The NTFRS also has the legislative responsibility for fire investigation throughout the NT. To this end, the NTFRS has arguably the most comprehensive accredited fire investigation and arson course in Australia. Course participants have come from all states and Papua New Guinea and include police officers, insurance investigators, safety officers and fire fighters.

The NT is now placing greater emphasis on Fire Prevention than it has in the past. Fire fighting staff visit pensioners, service clubs, schools, shopping centres and hardware stores to deliver fire safety messages and encourage the installation of smoke alarms. Fire fighters regularly install smoke alarms and change batteries for and on behalf of aged pensioners and other disabled groups.

Legislation to have smoke alarms installed in all new and renovated houses came into effect in January 1998. The NT was the last Australian fire service to gain this legislation.

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8A.2 All jurisdictions' data — fire

Table 8A.1: Reported fires and other primary incidents, 1996–97
(number)

	<i>Fires</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>False</i>	<i>Total</i>
NSW Fire Brigade ^a	30 415	21 462	47 715	99 592
Victoria				
—Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board	10 860	4 541	18 097	33 498
—Country Fire Authority ^a	14 000	4 000	8 000	26 000
Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority ^b	13 028	8 546	20 124	41 698
WA Fire and Emergency Services Authority	8 800	10 200	na	19 000
SA				
— Metropolitan Fire Service (Metro)	3 837	10 986	6 482	21 305
— Metropolitan Fire Service (Rural)	753	949	1 035	2 737
— Country Fire Service	4 387	2 216	1 945	8 548
Tasmania Fire Service	3 649	1 105	3 692	8 446
ACT Emergency Services Bureau	1 927	2 579	3 597	8 103
NT				
—Fire and Rescue Service	2 060	556	2 056	4 672
—Bush Fires Council ^c	na	na	na	na

na not available

a As a result of industrial action, some incidents were not reported for inclusion in these figures.

b Queensland data did not include all rural activations for response to wildfires and other incidents.

c Incident statistics were not available for the NT Bush Fires Council.

Table 8A.2: Source of funding for fire services, 1996–97^a

	<i>State Gov.</i>	<i>Local Gov.</i>	<i>Insur- ance</i>	<i>Property owners</i>	<i>User charges</i>	<i>Other</i>		<i>Total</i>
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(\$m)
NSW								
— NSW Fire Brigade	14.0	12.3	73.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	254.8
— Rural Fire Service	14.0	12.3	73.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	59.7
Victoria								
— Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board	10.0	10.0	63.2	0.0	2.2	14.6	100.0	156.6
— Country Fire Authority	19.2	0.0	68.8	0.0	2.6	9.4	100.0	103.9
Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority ^b	19.0	0.0	0.0	78.0	2.0	1.0	100.0	164.6
WA								
— Fire & Rescue Service	12.5	12.5	75.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	55.0
— Bushfire Service	65.0	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	20.0
SA								
— Metropolitan Fire Service	12.5	12.5	75.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	52.5
— Country Fire Service	48.0	0.0	45.9	0.0	0.0	6.1	100.0	13.6
Tasmanian Fire Service	6.0	0.0	24.0	47.0	12.0	11.0	100.0	na
ACT — Emergency Services Bureau ^c	73.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	26.0	1.0	100.0	28.7
NT								
— Fire & Rescue Service	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	9.5
— Bush Fires Council	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	2.5

a May exclude funds provided for capital expenditure.

b The Fire levy was a tax collected through rates notices.

c Included the ACT Fire Brigade, ACT Bushfire Service, ACT Emergency Service and ACT Ambulance Services.

8A.3 All jurisdictions' data — ambulance

Table 8A.3: Reported ambulance incidents, 1995–96 ('000)

	NSW	Vic	Qld ^a	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
<i>1. Patients transport</i>								
Emergency stretcher ambulance	304.2	136.3	na	61.7	71.2	29.3	10.5	8.3
Non-emergency stretcher ambulance	68.5	79.1	na	33.4	37.3	0.0	2.1	4.8
Clinic/non stretcher patients	137.4	47.6	na	0.0	4.4	0.0	0.7	3.1
Air ambulance	0.0	4.7	na	0.0	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total patients	510.1	267.7	na	95.1	115.7	29.3	13.3	16.2
<i>2. Patients treated, not transported</i>								
Emergency stretcher ambulance	77.6	3.2	na	0.0	5.6	3.2	0.9	5.1
Non-emergency stretcher ambulance	6.1	1.8	na	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.0
Clinic/non stretcher patients	4.8	0.7	na	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Air ambulance	0.0	0.0	na	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public events	0.0	2.0	na	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total treated	88.5	7.7	na	0.3	6.4	3.2	1.3	5.1
<i>3. Ambulance not required</i>								
	83.5	131.1	na	1.2	12.0	2.1	0.3	0.0
Total cases	682.2	406.4	na	96.5	134.1	34.6	15.0	21.3

a See Table 8A.11 for Queensland data.

Table 8A.4: Source of funds for ambulance services, 1996–97

	Transport fees	Subscribers	Government	Other	Total	Total
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(\$m)
NSW	27.2	0.0	71.3	1.5	100.0	192.4
Victoria	17.2	30.5	50.1	2.2	100.0	134.3
Queensland	16.0	44.0	34.0	6.0	100.0	143.0
WA ^a	na	na	na	na	na	na
SA	47.0	22.0	27.0	4.0	100.0	47.5
Tasmania	10.3	0.0	89.1	0.6	100.0	12.3
ACT ^b	na	na	na	na	na	na
NT ^a	na	na	na	na	na	na

na not available

a Ambulance services provided by St John Ambulance Australia.

b Data for ACT Ambulance Service were included in the budget of the ACT Emergency Services Bureau and reported in Table 8A.2.

8A.4 Single jurisdiction data — fire

8A.4.1 New South Wales

Table 8A.5: Reported fires and other primary incidents, NSW Fire Brigades, 1992–93 to 1996–97 (number)

<i>Type of incident</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>	<i>1995–96^a</i>	<i>1996–97</i>
Fire in a structure	7 002	6 367	6 816	6 518	6 954
Fire not in a structure	1 259	1 371	1 520	1 379	1 609
Mobile property fire	3 601	3 397	3 730	3 911	4 611
Trees, bush, grass fire	11 167	11 806	12 040	8 930	10 671
Rubbish fire	5 387	5 552	5 882	5 525	6 409
Explosion, with resulting fire	58	42	27	13	38
Outside spill, leak with ensuing fire	80	51	76	38	32
Other fire	8	44	49	54	91
Total fires, explosions	28 562	28 630	30 140	26 368	30 415
Over pressure rupture	149	337	334	367	460
Rescue call	2 773	3 137	3 676	3 673	3 339
Hazardous condition or standby	6 666	7 296	8 976	8 872	11 303
Service/salvage call	2 902	4 162	5 021	4 689	5 924
Good intent call, false call non-malicious	8 779	11 294	13 111	13 663	16 028
False call — malicious	8 584	7 236	6 252	5 878	6 288
System initiated false alarm	17 992	16 763	19 732	21 182	25 399
Other call not classified above	61	366	436	330	436
Total primary incidents	76 468	79 221	87 678	85 022	99 592

a As a result of industrial action, incidents throughout January 1996 were not reported for inclusion in these figures.

Source: NSW Fire Brigades 1997

Table 8A.6: Households, Fire Safety Equipment, October 1994

<i>Fire Safety Equipment</i>	<i>Number</i>			<i>Proportion</i>		
	<i>Has</i>	<i>Does not have</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Has</i>	<i>Does not have</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>'000</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Smoke detector	453.9	1 711.0	2 164.9	21.0	79.0	100.0
Fire extinguisher	373.2	1 791.7	2 164.9	17.2	82.8	100.0
Fire blanket	123.6	2 041.3	2 164.9	5.7	94.3	100.0
Fire sprinkler system	9.2	2 155.6	2 164.9	0.4	99.6	100.0
Electrical safety switch	747.1	1 417.7	2 164.9	34.5	65.5	100.0

Source: ABS Cat. No. 8715.1

8A.4.2 Queensland

Table 8A.7: Households, Fire Safety Equipment, 1996–97 (per cent)

	<i>Has</i>	<i>Does not have</i>	<i>Total</i>
Smoke alarm or smoke detector	57	43	100
Fire extinguisher	36	64	100
Fire blanket	12	88	100
Home fire sprinkler system	1	99	100
Electrical safety switch	67	33	100

Source: Roy Morgan Research 1997

8A.4.3 Tasmania

Table 8A.8: Type of incident, Tasmanian Fire Service, 1994–95 to 1996–97 (number)

	<i>1994–95</i>	<i>1995–96</i>	<i>1996–97</i>
Fires and explosions	4 183	2 374	3 649
Structure	1 047	758	921
Vehicle	251	208	288
Wildfire	2 147	861	1 708
Rubbish	438	315	381
Other	300	232	351
Rescue	148	95	132
False Alarm — non malicious	3 659	3 358	3 485
False Alarm — malicious	620	359	207
Hazmat	12	15	23
Other	988	932	950
Total	9 610	7 133	8 446

Table 8A.9: Dollar loss by property type, Tasmanian Fire Service, 1994–95 to 1996–97 (\$'000)

	<i>1994–95</i>	<i>1995–96</i>	<i>1996–97</i>
Residential	10 579	6 754	7 949
Commercial	4 017	1 780	1 494
Recreational, parks	1 548	311	318
Schools	122	483	62
Rural	420	638	1 384
Industrial	2 528	3 963	211
Medical care	106	13	42
Other	3 755	3 741	1 502
Total	23 075	17 683	12 962

Table 8A.10: Number of fires by extent of fire damage, Tasmanian Fire Service, 1994–95 to 1996–97 (number)

	1994–95	1995–96	1996–97
Room of origin	784	750	513
Beyond room of origin	443	328	178
Total	1 227	1 078	691
Per cent of fires confined to room of origin	64	70	74

8A.5 Single jurisdiction data — ambulance

8A.5.1 Queensland

Table 8A.11: Number of ambulance responses, 1995–96 to 1996–97 (number)

	1995–96	1996–97
<i>1. Patients transport</i>		
Emergency stretcher ambulance	79 382	84 642
Non-emergency stretcher ambul	89 788	90 327
Clinic/non stretcher patients	0	0
Air ambulance	1 904	1 107
Total patients	171 074	176 076
<i>2. Patients treated, not transported</i>		
Emergency stretcher ambulance	6 104	6 998
Non-emergency stretcher ambul	13 878	19 776
Clinic/non stretcher patients	19 774	10 715
Air ambulance	0	0
Public events	3 592	3 592
Total treated	43 348	41 081
<i>3. Ambulance not required</i>		
	69 444	74 703
Total cases	283 866	291 860

