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25th August 2015

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/15/08/04.

You requested the following information:

**Please could you provide me with the following information for the 2014/15 financial year under the Freedom of Information Act:**

**1. The targeted ambulance response times for different categories of incident (e.g. Category A Red 1, Category A Red 2, etc.)**

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECamb) has a national target to respond to 75% of 'Red' (life-threatening) category incidents within 8 minutes. If the first response is not a resource able to transport and a transport is required, then one able to should arrive within 19 minutes of it being requested. 'Green' (non-life threatening) category incidents comprise those conditions which need to be attended quickly, but which will not deteriorate or suffer by a slightly slower response. These also include non- life threatening conditions which are generally assistance calls in which someone needs help - perhaps to get up following a fall where no injury has been sustained - or where a minor or non- clinical issue is the prime cause for the call. There are two local response targets for Green 2 & 4 responses: G2 – with a target of 30minutes and G4 with a target of 60 minutes. G4Healthcare Professional (HCP) responses relate to calls made by doctors and other healthcare professionals requesting an ambulance to attend a patient within 60, 120,180 or 240 minutes depending on the urgency of the situation. For more information on call categories please click on the following link:

[http://www.secamb.nhs.uk/about\\_us/our\\_performance/response\\_time\\_targets.aspx](http://www.secamb.nhs.uk/about_us/our_performance/response_time_targets.aspx)

Please note that we do not have differential response time targets as such, for the various geographical areas in SECamb; our response times will be affected by the geography and frequency of Red category incidents.

Variations on response times exist throughout the year for a number of reasons and this includes time of the year and how busy we are. Bank Holiday weekends are always extremely busy for the ambulance service and our staff work very hard to ensure they reach patients as quickly as possible.

While response times are important, what is also vital is the treatment patients receive once our clinicians arrive at the scene of an emergency. We are pleased that the government now places a greater emphasis on patient outcomes as well as response times. This is something we had been calling for, for a number of years.

Along with all parts of the NHS, SECamb has been and continues to be extremely busy. We recognise that there can be variation in our performance in terms of response times throughout the year. While every effort is made to meet our performance targets at all times, variation can exist because of challenging weather conditions or unanticipated increases in demand.

SECamb staff work extremely hard to meet this increase in demand and the Trust is committed to providing an excellent service to our patients across Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

I would like to stress that we continually look at ways to ensure that we meet our performance standards even at a local level and will look into cases which have longer than average response times to establish whether more can be done to get to patients quicker.

## **2. The average ambulance response times for each of these categories**

Please see the attached spreadsheet which shows the number of R1, R2, G2, G4 and G4 HCP responses together with the average response times for R1, R2, G2 and G4 category responses. We do not have an average response time for G4HCP responses.

## **3. The longest ambulance response times recorded for each of these categories in 2014/15. For each of these, could you provide a brief time/date, location and brief description of the incident?**

Please see the attached spreadsheet which shows the longest R1, R2, G2 and G4 responses together with details. SECamb was in the top half of English Ambulance Trusts for 95<sup>th</sup> and 99<sup>th</sup> percentile response times for Red incidents in 2014/2015. 95<sup>th</sup> & 99<sup>th</sup> percentile are a way of monitoring the shape of the response tail i.e. we are commissioned to achieve 75% in 8 minutes, but that doesn't mean that we are not concerned about the other 25%.

Therefore we look at how long it took to make 95% and 99% of responses and compare that with other ambulance Trusts across England. If the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile response was, for example, 17mins and 5 seconds, we reached 95% of incidents quicker than that and 5% of incidents slower.

## **4. The number of call-outs not attended. Please provide reasons for non-attendance.**

A total of 101,409 calls were identified as Hear & Treat calls where the patient was assisted on the phone and an emergency response was not required. There are no call outs that are not attended apart from those that turn out to be hoax calls and those where the address cannot be located after extensive searching.

I hope you find this information helpful.

If, for whatever reason you are unhappy with our response, you are entitled to pursue any dissatisfaction through South East Coast Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust's (SECamb) Internal Review Procedure at:

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust  
40-42 Friars Walk  
Lewes  
East Sussex  
BN7 2XW  
Email: [complaints@secamb.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints@secamb.nhs.uk)

Should you remain unhappy with the outcome of any such internal review , you may request a decision from the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

If I can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me, quoting the above reference number.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Coordinator  
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust