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Lewes  
East Sussex  
BN7 2XW

[foi@secamb.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@secamb.nhs.uk)

21st July 2016

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/16/06/37.

You requested the following information:

**1. The response times for red/priority life threatening conditions emergency calls with the Swale Borough Council area in 2015/2016**

Please see the tables below which show the response times for Red 1 and Red 2 responses for Swale Local Authority District for 2015/2016.

Swale LA District	Number of responses	Red 1 8 min performance	Average Red 1 response
<b>Red 1 responses</b>	386	74.4%	00:06:45

Swale LA District	Number of responses	Red 2 8 min performance	Average Red 2 response
<b>Red 2 responses</b>	8014	70.0%	00:07:28

**2. If this can be split down into council ward areas, then the requested information should be provided in addition to the above for the same period 2015/2016**

Please see the attached spreadsheet which shows the number of Red 1 and Red 2 responses, response times for Red 1 and Red 2 and average response times for these categories on the parliamentary wards in the Swale Local Authority district.

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.

**3. The number of times in the County of Kent a private ambulance has been activated on red/priority life threatening conditions emergency calls and the number of times a private ambulance has been activated on red/priority life threatening conditions emergency calls in Swale Borough Council area in 2015/2016.**

We are continuing to look at ways in which we can reduce our reliance on the use of private ambulance services and always prioritise using our own staff whenever possible. However, along with all ambulance services nationally, South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECamb) does use private ambulance providers when faced with high levels of demand, when experiencing high call volume or during periods of bad weather.

We have robust governance arrangements in place for the procurement of private ambulance services. While working on our behalf any private provider will be subject to a continuous monitoring and assessment process, to ensure they are providing a high level of service.

Please see the table below which shows the number of times a private ambulance provider attended incidents in Kent and in the Swale area, not necessarily the first or only resource attending.

	CAT A 8 RED 1		CAT A 8 RED 2		TOTAL RED CALLS	
	Kent	Swale	Kent	Swale	Kent	Swale
A. Incidents attended	630	32	12267	887	12897	919

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