



40/42 Friars Walk
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2XW

foi@secamb.nhs.uk

19th August 2016

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/16/07/04.

You requested the following information:

1 Please tell me how many patients waited more than a) 15 minutes b) half an hour c) 45 minutes d) one hour for an ambulance following a red (immediately life threatening) call in each of the following financial years a) 2011/12 b) 2012/13 c) 2013/14 d) 2014/15 e) 2015/16?

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

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.

A change in the Ambulance Quality Indicators (AQIs) in connection with response times and how the priority of calls is calculated took effect in January 2016. For full details please see the NHS England website. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/ambulance-quality-indicators/>

Please see the table below which shows the number of incidents where patients have waited for the requested time periods for each financial year for red responses. I would also advise that some Red calls may have started as lower priority calls. Unfortunately due to discrepancies within our data for the period for 2014/2015, we are unable to provide you with this information at present.

Financial Year	15 mins- 29 mins	30 mins – 44 mins	45 mins – 59 mins	60 mins or more
2011/2012	11,622	438	47	33
2012/2013	14,780	868	142	57
2013/2014	15,869	880	122	43
2014/2015	Cannot	provide	at	present
2015/2016	23,415	1,642	265	151

Please see the table below which shows the total number of calls received in each financial year to add context to the figures above. Please note that the numbers below exclude calls that were closed down as '08 – Information only' and '04 – Abandoned/hoax call'. This may therefore be slightly variant to the total number of emergency and urgent calls presented to SECamb's switchboard reported through the AQI's (KPI SQU03_1_1_2)"

Financial Year	Number of emergency calls received
2011/2012	636,772
2012/2013	681,622
2013/2014	738,528

2014/2015	Not available
2015/2016	800,129

2 Please tell me how many patients waited more than a) one hour b) two hours c) three hours d) four hours for an ambulance following a green (not immediately life threatening) call in each of the following financial years a) 2011/12 b) 2012/13 c) 2013/14 d) 2014/15 e) 2015/16?

Please see the table below which shows the number of incidents where patients have waited for the requested time periods for each financial year for green responses. This data does not include Healthcare Professional requests for ambulances to be dispatched to patients. Unfortunately due to discrepancies within our data for the period for 2014/2015, we are unable to provide you with this information at present.

Financial Year	15 mins- 29 mins	30 mins – 44 mins	45 mins – 59 mins	60 mins or more
2011/2012	44,843	6,090	1,409	586
2012/2013	71,163	13,774	3,974	2,085
2013/2014	87,772	18,341	5,536	3,276
2014/2015	Cannot	provide	at	present
2015/2016	101,231	30,303	11,971	12,287

3 For 2015/16, please provide a breakdown of patients who waited more than four hours for an ambulance following a green call. For each patient, please tell me a) the gender of the patient b) the age of the patient (or a rough age, e.g. in their 40s) c) the nature of the emergency, e.g. broken leg d) the exact response time

I can confirm that there were 108 incidents where the patient waited longer than 4 hours for a response to a green call.

I regret to advise that we cannot provide any further information as requested on the grounds of the exemption contained within s.12 of the FOIA. To retrieve the information would necessitate manually searching through each individual incident. This would exceed the appropriate limit of 18 hours as set down in the guidance on the application of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees).

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

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