South East Coast Ambulance Service **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS
Foundation Trust
Nexus House
Gatwick Road
Crawley
RH10 9BG

Date 10th December 2018

Email:foi@secamb.nhs.uk

Email:

Dear,

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/18/11/40.

You requested the following information, please also see our response below:

1. Name of communication service provider your ambulance service use for the 'The Emergency Button' (or equivalent) service (e.g. Airwaves Solutions).
Airwave a Motorola Solutions Company

2. Data on the number of times 'The Emergency Button' (or equivalent) has been pressed, broken down by location/hub within your ambulance service between the period of January 2017 to current date (or closest available date).
Unfortunately we do not hold information on location but from January 2017 – October 2018 the emergency button was pressed a total of 10308 times

3. Incident descriptions of the above 'Emergency Button' (or equivalent) cases logged by your ambulance service.
We are unable to give a description of each as to extract this information would exceed 18hours and therefore be exempt under Section 12 – FOI (Appropriate limit and fees) Regulations 2004.

When a crew press the emergency Button from either their handset or their main radio, it will set off an alarm on all ICCS in Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) regardless of whether you are monitoring that channel or not. It also opens the airwaves for a pre-determined period of time so that all users are able to hear what is happening without the crew having to press their radio to speak. Since the introduction of our new system Cleric we also have a visible alarm at the top of our computer screens so even staff such as the Emergency Operations Centre Manager who does not have a radio will know who has pressed the button.

The Dispatch Team Leaders and EOCMs are able to monitor that crews radio and open the link that means we can hear everything that is being said without the crew having to physically call which means if they are in a dangerous situation it is not obvious to a potential aggressor that we are listening.

Your service, your call

When a crew presses their alarm it automatically logs this in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) but dispatch staff would also put notes in. Standard practice is not to make verbal communication with them as this may put them in danger but to contact the police.

Reasons we get called are primarily where a crew are at risk of harm but it quite often also gets pressed in error when crews are replacing their handsets or make ready staff are cleaning vehicles. If dispatch can see a crew are not on a call, they will make contact as it is not likely they are in danger.

We do not keep any kind of a log in EOC in relation to the number of times/incidents where the emergency button has been used.

I hope you find this information of some assistance.

If for any reason you are dissatisfied with our response, kindly in the first instance contact Caroline Smart, Information Governance Lead via the following email address:

FOI@secamb.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely

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

Your service, your call