



PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

**2009-10 AND 2010-11 FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE
OUTCOMES QUESTIONNAIRE — PART TWO**

**EMERGENCY SERVICES TELECOMMUNICATIONS
AUTHORITY**

Question 1

Please provide the following OH&S data for 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11:

- (a) the number of hazards/incidents reported for the year for AV;
- (b) the number of 'lost time' standard claims for the year for AV;
- (c) the average cost per claim for the year (including payments to date plus the estimate as at 30 June of the year of outstanding claims costs advised by WorkSafe); and
- (d) the full-time equivalent workforce included in OH&S statistics as at 30 June for 2009, 2010 and 2011

1 (a) and (b) in the table below relates to ESTA staff performing calltaking and dispatch services for Ambulance Victoria. 1(c) and 1(d) relate to ESTA's total calltaking and dispatch workforce.

Year	1(a) Number of hazards/incidents for AV	1(b) Number of 'lost time' standard claims for AV	1(c) Average cost per claim ESTA average (\$'000)	1 (d) FTE workforce as at 30 June
2008-09	21	3	9	528 (91 AV)
2009-10	17	3	64	558 (83 AV)
2010-11	25	4	45 (estimate)	629 (135 AV)

Question 2

The Committee notes that an error in employee benefits for 2007-08 and 2008-09 was corrected in the financial report for 2009-10 (2009/10 Annual Report, p.49), resulting in restatements of various line items. It is further noted that in the 2009-10 financial report there was a misreporting of a number of line items which was corrected in the 2010-11 annual report (2010/11 Annual Report, p.43). Please detail any changes in the procedure for preparing annual reports that have been implemented following these errors to reduce the chance of such incidents in the future.

The procedure to minimise repeat of the causes of error previously noted are:

- To ensure a single reporting tool is used, linked to all appropriate source data. The 2010/11 statutory accounts will be loaded into the tool and checked for mathematical accuracy ahead of 2011/12 preparations;
- To prepare a half-year set of accounts for the Authority as part of its governance, but also to perform the necessary steps required for annual accounts;
- To develop clear procedural steps in the lead-up to year-end statutory account preparations and closing journal procedures.

Question 3

It is noted that for 2010-11 the Authority paid \$33.1 million under PPP service contracts (2010/11 Annual Report, p.45). Please provide information on what services were provided under these service contracts.

ESTA paid the operating expense for its key communications networks: Mobile Data Network, Metropolitan Mobile Radio and Emergency Alert System. These services are:

- **Mobile Data Network**

This is the network that provides access to emergency event information via mobile data terminals in Ambulance Victoria and Victoria Police vehicles for the Melbourne metropolitan region, for example mobile access for Victoria Police to the LEAP system.

- **Metropolitan Mobile Radio**

This is a radio voice communications network currently supporting Ambulance Victoria (metropolitan services), Metropolitan Fire Brigade and Victoria Police in metropolitan Melbourne.

- **Emergency Alerting System (EAS)**

This is a dedicated paging network that sends emergency messages and other event related information to personal message devices in support of the Country Fire Authority, Ambulance Victoria, and Victorian State Emergency Service across Victoria.

Question 4

Please outline any procedures the Authority has to capture issues brought to light during operations that have the potential to improve service provision in future operations. How are standard operating procedures updated and improvements implemented once such issues are raised?

ESTA has a procedure in place to capture issues raised by its Emergency Service Organisation customers. An issue is referred to ESTA via an "Observation Report", which is examined and a response provided to the originating customer agency. The outcome of such investigations is defined as "Valid" or "Invalid", and a response provided to the agency. Performance standards determined by the Emergency Services Commissioner include a requirement for ESTA to provide a report monthly, advising the number of "Valid" Observations Reports received and processed monthly. Where the Observation Report identifies an area of improvement required, ESTA amends Standard Operating Procedures to address the issue.

ESTA also conducts regular internal audits of operational call taking and dispatch operations. Where a failure to perform in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures is identified, a range of remedial initiatives such as retraining may be undertaken. ESTA also reports monthly against Qualitative Performance standards determined by the Emergency Services Commissioner.

In addition, ESTA's commitment to provide ongoing excellent service to its customers, involves an annual survey of stakeholders; the results of which feed into ESTA's planning considerations for the following period.

Question 5

It is noted that the number of emergency ambulance calls answered (metropolitan and regional) has increased from 436,242 for 2009-10¹ to 552,018 for 2010-11². However, emergency ambulance events dispatched has not significantly changed (growing from 328,361 for 2009-10 to 328,818 for 2010-11). Please supply reasons for this change in the ratio of calls answered to events dispatched.

There was a transcription error in ESTA's 2010/11 Annual Report, which was not picked up at the time of publication. The correct number of emergency Ambulance events dispatched in 2010-11 was 382,818, (not 328,818). This represents an increase of 54,457 or 16.5% on the 2009-10 period.

It is further anticipated that this activity will increase, particularly now the emergency calltaking and dispatch services for Ambulance Victoria in regional Victoria has completed transition to ESTA. ESTA has embarked upon a more stringent process to validate data fed into its annual reporting.

Question 6

ESTA's 2010/11 Annual Report (p.10) mentions 'Speed of answering emergency calls and the speed of dispatching the relevant emergency services form the two key indicators that measure ESTA's CTD services'.³ Please supply the following results for these indicators for the past three years.

	2008-09 (seconds)	2009-10 (seconds)	2010-11 (seconds)
Average answering speed (all Emergency)	4.6	5.4	8.9
Average answering speed (Emergency, but excluding VICSES storms)	4.4	3.6	5.9
Time of answering 90% of calls (time of the 90 th percentile)	5.0	3.0	21 ¹
Average speed of dispatch (depending on ESO) ²			
Ambulance Victoria	115.7	118.6	124.7
Victoria Police	235.7	230.8	248.9
CFA	252.7	139.3	102.6
MFB	79.7	163.7	110.4
VICSES	255.4	1323.9	242.7
Time for dispatching 50% of services (time of the 50 th percentile)			
Ambulance Victoria	95	97	101
Victoria Police	201	195	208
CFA	80	76	72
MFB	67	65	58
VICSES	191	209	190

¹ Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority, 2010/11 Annual Report, p10

² Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority, 2009/10 Annual Report, p11

³ Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority, 2010/11 Annual Report, p10

	2008-09 (seconds)	2009-10 (seconds)	2010-11 (seconds)
Time for dispatching 90% of services (time of the 90 th percentile)			
Ambulance Victoria	168	173	186
Victoria Police	441	432	459
CFA	199	182	182
MFB	157	170	165
VICSES ³	363	4,591	418

Note: "Emergency calls" include all community '000' calls and calls from agency field members for emergency assistance. "Emergency dispatches" include all priority Police, AV, VICSES and fire calls responding to Emergency call events.

1. The 18 second increase in time to answer 90% of calls from 2009/10 to 2010/11 is attributed to:
 - a. Requirement to divert calltaking resources for Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria (who represent 95% of ESTA's emergency call activity) to support an accelerated transition of Regional CTD services to ESTA, which temporarily impacted call answer time at the 90th percentile. Ambulance Victoria CTD performance returned to compliance in October 2011, as planned.
 - b. Due to agency resource issues, particularly Ambulance Victoria, an increase in public calls requesting estimated time of arrival has exaggerated the total number of calls answered.
 - c. Overall call activity increase has exceeded our resource activity over the period.
2. Figures shown for Dispatch comprise the total time from initial receipt of call to event dispatch. Longer call handling times have resulted as a direct effect of agency procedural changes and requirements.
3. State Emergency Services demand has caused significant surge activity due to excessive storm and flood periods during 2009/10 and 2010/11. ESTA is required by VICSES procedures to retain a dispatch until they are able to respond.

Question 7

The Committee notes the graphic 'Major Event – Emergency Message Delivery Delay'⁴.

- (a) Can the Authority also provide the number of messages delivered on each of the days represented on the graphic?

Date	Number of messages delivered
2 April 2008	8,373 TOTAL – 1,059 Busiest Hour
7 February 2009	13,885 TOTAL – 1,400 Busiest Hour
25 August 2009	6,967 TOTAL – 854 Busiest Hour
6 March 2010	6,070 TOTAL – 709 Busiest Hour
5 September 2010	6,692 TOTAL – 531 Busiest Hour
4 February 2011	7,253 TOTAL – 999 Busiest Hour

- (b) Can the Authority provide reasons for the conclusion that the decrease over time of message delivery delay is a result of improved network performance and is not primarily a result of the number of messages delivered⁵?

The dates identified in the table were significant days operationally, for fire, flood and storm activity, across the state of Victoria.

The decrease over time of message delivery delay can be attributed to improved network performance as a result of:

- Changes to the network to allow a single pager message to be sent to many EAS users where previously the same pager message would need to be sent separately to each EAS user.
- ESTA has worked with its agency customers to deliver changes in operational practices, which has reduced the number and size of messages sent over the network. Change in operational practices has also better aligned operational messages to the correct priority which has led to messages being processed more efficiently.

⁴ Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority, 2010/11 Annual Report, p15

⁵ Emergency Service Telecommunications Authority, 2010/11 Annual Report, p.15

Question 8

It is noted that, in the 2009/10 Business Plan (pp.29-33), the Authority has a range of targets set for service standards for call taking and dispatch for each Emergency Service Organisation for the year. Can the Authority provide results for these performance measures?

Please note that monthly performance figures have been aggregated into annual results for 2009/10 as shown in the tables below:

Call Answer Performance

		Activity	Compliant	Benchmark	Performance
Victoria Police		962240	876659	80%	91.1%
Ambulance Victoria	ERTCOMM ¹	436563	396723	90%	90.9%
Ambulance Victoria	NETCOMM ²	165888	155503	90%	93.7%
Victoria SES		28976	19629	80%	67.7%
Fire Services Victoria ³		138966	130888	90%	94.2%

Note: VICSES CTD has not met compliance due to the profile of demand, caused significant surge activity during excessive storm and flood periods during 2009/10.

1. Emergency communications only
2. Non emergency communications includes patient transport
3. FSV includes both CFA Statewide and MFB

Call Dispatch Performance

		Service Type	Activity	Compliant	Performance
CFA ¹		Priority All	36213	32940	91.0%
MFB		Priority 1	34603	31643	91.4%
Ambulance Victoria ²	ERTCOMM	Code 1	190516	171587	90.1%
Ambulance Victoria	ERTCOMM	Code 2	96785	93177	96.3%
Victoria Police		Priority 1	70931	65826	92.8%
Victoria Police		Priority 2	441223	399652	90.6%
Victoria Police		Priority 3	283793	279477	98.5%
Victoria SES ³		Other Agency	9058	7373	81.4%
Victoria SES		VICSES Events	20924	16800	80.3%

Note:

1. The Commissioner revised the standards for the Fire Services in December 2009. The new determination removed the combined standards for the CFA and MFB and set new standards for each organisation
2. Emergency communications only
3. ESTA is required by VICSES procedures to retain a dispatch until they are able to respond.

For all dispatch measures ESTA has applied the current 2011 standards for each agency, to provide an equitable comparison of our performance over the entire assessment period.

Question 9

It is noted that ESTA's 2010/11 Business Plan does not detail service standards in an appendix as the 2009/10 Business Plan did.

This is not correct. Both Business Plans detail service standards in Appendix A of these documents. ESTA's Business Plan for 2011/12, however, does not contain these details as ESTA moves towards a higher level of performance measurement beyond compliance standards.

(a) Have the service standards changed for 2010-11?

Yes. The Emergency Services Commissioner revised the standards for VICSES effective 1 November 2010. Further revision was implemented 1 April 2011 for those standards.

The Commissioner revised the standards for Fire Services in December 2010.

(b) If service standards have changed, can the Authority supply performance measures, targets and actual results for 2010-11?

Please note that the current standard measurement methodology has been used for aggregation of monthly performance into annual results for 2010/11 as shown in the tables below:

Call Answer Performance

		Activity	Compliant	Benchmark	Performance
Victoria Police		999311	864105	80%	86.5%
Ambulance Victoria	Emergency Communications ¹	552038	468790	90%	84.9%
Ambulance Victoria	Non Emergency Communications ²	175880	160473	90%	91.2%
CFA		57743	55926	90%	96.9%
MFB		32594	30656	90%	94.1%
Victoria SES ³		52253	31439	80%	60.2%

Notes:

- Emergency communications only
- Non emergency communications includes patient transport
- VICSES CTD has not met compliance due to the profile of demand, caused significant surge activity during excessive storm and flood periods during 2010/11.

Call Dispatch Performance

		Service Type	Activity	Compliant	Performance
CFA		Priority All	34606	311733	90.1%
Ambulance Victoria	ERTCOMM ¹	Code 1	203056	179967	88.6%
Ambulance Victoria	ERTCOMM	Code 2	103019	98631	95.7%
MFB		Priority 1	35311	32682	92.6%
Victoria Police		Priority 1	75583	69881	92.5%
Victoria Police		Priority 2	451568	403458	89.3%
Victoria Police		Priority 3	280154	275691	98.4%
Victoria SES ²		Other Agency	13800	11965	86.7%
Victoria SES		VICSES Events	26836	2500	93.2%

Notes:

- Emergency communications only
- ESTA is required by VICSES procedures to retain a dispatch until they are able to respond.

For all dispatch measures ESTA has applied the current 2011 standards for each agency, to provide an equitable comparison of our performance over the entire assessment period.

- (c) *If service standards have not changed, can the Authority supply actual results on these measures for 2010-11?*

Please see tables above (9b).

CONTACT DETAILS

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The completed questionnaire must be returned by no later than COB, 29 November 2011.

Please return the response (including an electronic version) of the questionnaire to:

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