



## Responsibilities of a Volunteer Ambulance Officer

The following information may help you determine your level of interest and suitability for a position as a Volunteer Ambulance Officer.

## What do I need to become an Ambulance Volunteer?

Prospective volunteers must be at least 18 years of age, hold a current Driver's Licence and pass a Driving Competency test. You must have the physical capacity to perform the required duties, which include lifting and carrying.

You will be asked to complete an application form with your personal details and general health. You will also be asked to authorise a check by Tasmania Police.

You will then be invited to attend an interview. All candidates will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application.

Approval to undertake Ambulance Volunteer responsibilities is at the discretion of Ambulance Tasmania.

## Do I need to know first aid?

Knowledge of first aid is not essential. As an Ambulance Volunteer you will undertake on-going first aid training.

During the first few months you will act as an observer, providing assistance as directed by another ambulance crew member. You will also learn to drive an emergency vehicle.

## What other support is available?

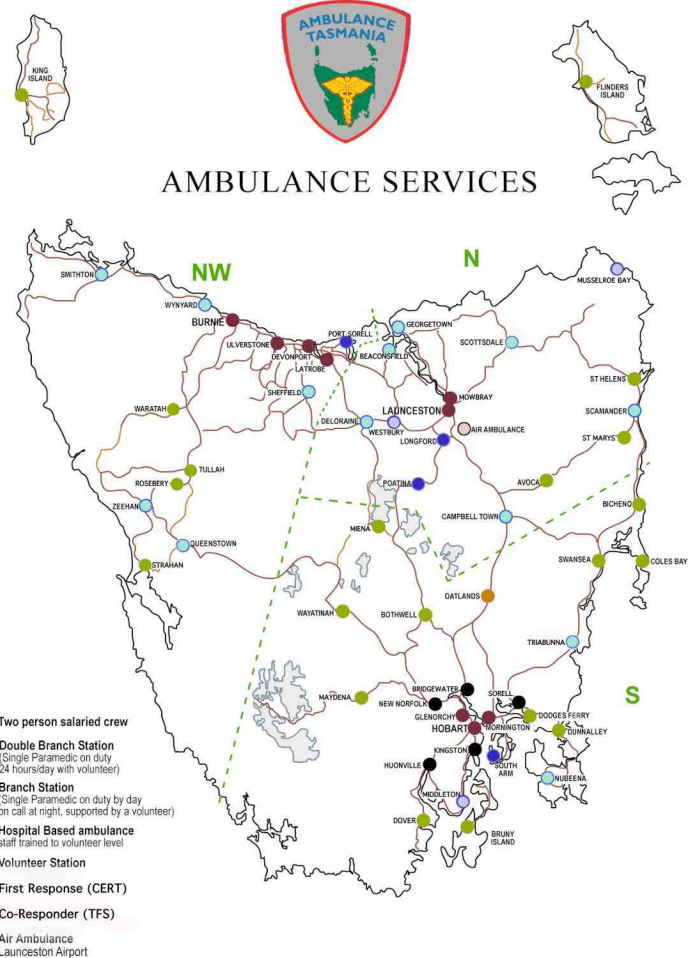
The Volunteer Ambulance Officers Association of Tasmania (VAOAT) actively supports volunteers and holds quarterly meetings as well as an Annual Gathering. The Association also publishes a quarterly newsletter "First Response".

## How much time is involved?

This is determined by your employment and family commitments. You will be required to undertake rostered duty for a minimum of 40 hours each two month period, and attend at least 12 'structured' training sessions each year.

## What are the roster requirements?

It depends to which group you belong. In rural stations, when "on call" you are free to remain at work (with your employer's permission) or enjoy your leisure time, but if your pager is activated you must be able to respond immediately. In stations where volunteers work with paramedics, usually you must attend the station when "on shift".



NORTH WEST Regional HQ Burnie	NORTH Regional HQ Launceston	SOUTH Regional & State HQ Hobart
King Island Port Sorell Queenstown*	Avoca Beaconsfield*	Bicheno Bothwell Bridgewater*
Rosebery Sheffield*	Campbell Town*	Bruny Island Coles Bay Dodges Ferry
Smithton*	Deloraine*	Dover Dunalley Huonville*
Strahan Tullah Waratah Wynyard*	Flinders Island Georgetown*	Kingston*
Zeehan*	Longford Miena Poatina Scottsdale*	Maydena New Norfolk*
	St Helens St Marys	Nubeena* Oatlands Sorell* South Arm Swansea Triabunna* Wayatinah

\* Locations where volunteers support paramedics





## What is involved in the training sessions?

Most groups train once a fortnight, training sessions are usually conducted by a volunteer educator or paramedic.

Informal training sessions are conducted by consensus with fellow volunteers.

Training is a combination of practical, tutorial and e-learning.

Volunteers are also given the opportunity to improve their knowledge by reading recommended publications. Volunteers are encouraged to attain at least Level 1 competency, and can then elect to work towards achieving higher levels.

## What is a typical call out?

There is no typical scenario. Call outs range from attending trauma incidents, for example:

- motor vehicle or industrial accidents,
- transporting a patient to one of the major hospitals for further diagnosis, treatment, or x-rays.

## What limitations are placed on volunteers when attending a patient?

There are protocols which must be observed. If a patient requires support beyond volunteer care limitations, Paramedic back up must be requested.

## What happens if a volunteer is injured on duty?

All volunteers are covered under the Ambulance Tasmania workers compensation policy. Workers compensation benefits may also apply even if you are not employed or are self employed.

## What support do volunteers receive?

As an Ambulance Volunteer you receive:

- nationally recognised training course
- uniforms
- pager for contact when on duty
- appropriate vaccinations
- workers compensation & legal indemnity cover
- back-up support from Paramedics when required
- critical incident stress management when required.

## Do volunteers get paid?

No, Ambulance Volunteers are not paid for their services. However, they are reimbursed for approved out-of-pocket expenses.

## Who is suitable to be a volunteer?

There is no specific profile to determine your suitability, but certain characteristics, personal skills and physical capabilities are valuable attributes. These include keeping a level head, empathy, ability to communicate, common sense, enthusiasm and a desire to want to help other people.

## Do other states use volunteers?

Most other states in Australia, as well as New Zealand, use volunteers in various front line roles to deliver ambulance services, especially in rural and remote areas.

## What are the benefits of becoming a volunteer?

As a volunteer you will gain:

- pre-hospital emergency care skills which are nationally recognised
- provision of a vital service to your community
- a sense of achievement at meeting new challenges
- opportunity to meet new people and work as part of a close-knit team
- improved employment prospects in some vocations.

