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Assaults on paramedics up more than 60 per cent

A total of 120 Ambulance Officers have been assaulted over the past 12 months while simply trying to do their job.

NSW Minister for Health, John Della Bosca, said he is appalled by the figures and will be looking at ways to further protect the safety of paramedics.

“One assault is one too many on a member of one of the most respected professions in the community,” the Minister said.

“Paramedics save thousands of lives each year and should not be in fear of their own safety and well-being as they go about their daily tasks. They deserve the community’s upmost respect and courtesy.

“Unfortunately there is a small but growing element in the community who believe they are fair game.

“In 2008-09, 120 Ambulance Officers were assaulted in NSW - up more than 60 per cent on 2006-07 figures.

“Of the 120, 59 were in the Sydney metropolitan area, 33 in the state’s north, 19 in the state’s south and nine in the state’s west.

“I remind people that under the Crimes Act, people who assault Ambulance Officers or other health workers face harsher sentencing.

“In addition, I will be writing to the Attorney General asking him to consider further protections for Ambulance Officers, and the Chief Executive of the Ambulance Service of NSW to investigate ways of further improving staff safety,” he added.

Aug 06	Sept 06	Oct 06	Nov 06	Dec 06	Jan 07	Feb 07	Mar 07	Apr 07	May 07	Jun 07	July 07	Total
13	2	3	5	9	10	4	3	7	5	8	6	75
Aug 07	Sept 07	Oct 07	Nov 07	Dec 07	Jan 08	Feb 08	Mar 08	Apr 08	May 08	Jun 08	July 08	Total
9	9	3	16	8	10	7	13	5	13	8	10	111
Aug 08	Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	Mar 09	Apr 09	May 09	Jun 09	July 09	Total
10	10	8	10	23	8	5	10	13	5	8	10	120