



# **Jillian Skinner MP**

## **Minister for Health**

## **Minister for Medical Research**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Thursday 9 October 2014

#### **NEW FLEXI FLEET FOR NSW AMBULANCE**

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today launched seven new Multi-Purpose Vehicle (MPV) general ambulances to support paramedics and patients with special needs across the state.

Mrs Skinner and Smithfield MP Andrew Rohan met with paramedics at Fairfield Ambulance Station to launch the new MPV general ambulances, inspect MPV specialist ambulances and learn more about the different capabilities of the two vehicle models.

“MPV general ambulances have the capability to transport patients who weigh up to 300 kilograms and the space and equipment to ensure they can be supported by paramedics during transport,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The new vehicles, which have a fit out value of \$152,000 each, ensure paramedics have the right support in place to provide emergency care to patients. They are equipped with mechanical aids in the lifting and management of patients to reduce health and safety risks.

“The new MPV general ambulances will be stationed at Engadine, Penrith, Newcastle and regional areas including Goulburn, Albury, Wagga Wagga and Dubbo. Another MPV ambulance is currently in use at Coffs Harbour.

“An added bonus of the new MPV general ambulances is they can be used for non-bariatric transport too.

“These new vehicles complement the investment we have made in MPV specialist ambulances, which are capable of transporting patients with a weight up to 500kg.

“Fairfield Ambulance Station is one of only two stations in NSW that have this heavy specialist vehicle, which can carry the patient and a full medical crew.

“These vehicles are an important investment as they deliver benefits for both patients and paramedics.

“I have the utmost respect and admiration for the state’s paramedics and believe they should have the best resources available to carry out their life-saving work.”

Mrs Skinner said the allocation of these seven new MPV ambulances has enabled a five-fold increase in MPV coverage across regional NSW.

“Prior to the additional fleet allocation in 2014 there was only one regional MPV general ambulance located in the Coffs Harbour area. Five are now located across regional NSW, which is a win for local paramedics.”

Mrs Skinner said in the past financial year 1,261 transports were undertaken by MPV specialist ambulances – an increase of 16 per cent on the previous year.

“Clearly there is demand for these services and this is about ensuring the right resources are available for patients with extra needs,” Mrs Skinner said.

Mr Rohan said: “Paramedics provide both life-changing and life-saving care and I am pleased to see we have one of these specialist vehicles stationed locally at Fairfield to assist patients and staff.”

Senior Assistant Commissioner Michael Homden, Executive Director of Operational Logistics at NSW Ambulance, welcomed the addition of new ambulances to the growing MPV fleet.

“The rollout of these specialist ambulances is an example of how NSW Ambulance is providing infrastructure to meet an extensive range of patient needs in the community,” Mr Homden said.

Mrs Skinner said paramedic training for the new vehicles commenced this week in Fairfield and will continue throughout the state.

The NSW Government boosted the NSW Ambulance budget this year to a record \$752 million – an increase of \$30 million.