



**Scottish  
Ambulance  
Service**

University National NHS Board



# Freedom of Information Request

**4<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

## Question

1. By health board area, annually, from 2018 to present:
  - a. Total number of taxi journeys taken by patients who called 999 for an ambulance.
  - b. Total expense on taxi journeys taken by patients who called 999 for an ambulance.
    - i. 1(b) by taxi company hired.
  - c. A list of the taxi companies used to take patients who called 999 for an ambulance to hospital.
2. Regarding the period 2018 to present, please provide an explanation for how ambulance companies are selected to bring patients to hospital who called 999 for an ambulance.
3. Regarding the period 2018 to present, was a PVG certification required for taxi companies hired to bring 999-calling patients to hospital, and if so, what work was done to ensure that they did?
4. Regarding the period 2018 to present, what work was done to ensure there was no conflict of interest regarding healthcare officials and taxi companies hired

## Answer

The Scottish Ambulance Service will always dispatch an ambulance for patients who require an ambulance intervention and/or monitoring on route to hospital.

Taxis are only arranged after clinical assessment through our Integrated Clinical Hub or clinicians at scene, who have identified that a patient requires further assessment at hospital, it is safe and appropriate for the patient to travel by this method and not necessary for an emergency ambulance to transport them to hospital.

Since January 2024, use of taxis to convey patients to hospital accounted to 0.7% of all incidents managed by the Scottish Ambulance Service.

Please note that the first recorded usage of a taxi being used to transfer an unscheduled patient to hospital is September 2021.

Information for Q1 a & b are published on our website as a previous FOI request [foi-24-330-taxi-usage-2019-2024.pdf \(scottishambulance.com\)](https://www.scottishambulance.com/foi-24-330-taxi-usage-2019-2024.pdf)

The only taxi firms that have been utilised for the required service are those companies that have been awarded onto regional NHS Health Board framework agreements. No staff from the SAS service have been involved in those tendering & award processes.

These taxi firms were and are already providing a Health Board patient transfer service.



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The framework agreements have complied with all required procurement procedures and regulations, with the appropriate insurance, indemnity, and appropriate terms & conditions coverage in place. This includes the requirement for the provision and retention of up-to-date PVG certification.



Any further information on taxi firm contracts would need to be requested from regional health boards.