



**Scottish
Ambulance
Service**

University National NHS Board



Freedom of Information Request

17th December 2024

Question

1. Broken down by each NHS board area:
 - a. How many community first responders are currently being used as a resource by the Scottish Ambulance service;
 - b. How many training places are currently available in the Scottish Ambulance Service system for community first responders;
 - c. How many community first responders have been taken on in the last 3 years
2. What training system is used by the Scottish Ambulance Service; and why the FPOS Intermediate system is no longer used as a training tool
3. What the criteria is for the Scottish Ambulance Service is to call upon community first responders to be utilised; and the criteria for the Scottish Ambulance Service to call in for military assistance

Answer

1. Broken down by each NHS board area

The Scottish Ambulance Service does not hold the requested information by NHS Board Area, it is for this reason we have applied section 17 of the Freedom of Information Scotland Act 2002 as information not held. The figures provided below are on a national basis.

a. How many community first responders are currently being used as a resource by the Scottish Ambulance service:

The Scottish Ambulance service currently has 750 Community First Responders responding to calls across Scotland.

b. How many training places are currently available in the Scottish Ambulance Service system for community first responders;

The Scottish Ambulance Service will be offering circa. 200 CFR training places across Scotland in 2025.

c. How many community first responders have been taken on in the last 3 years

The Scottish Ambulance Service has recruited 358 Community First Responders nationally over the last 3 years.



2. What training system is used by the Scottish Ambulance Service; and why the FPOS Intermediate system is no longer used as a training tool

From 2014 the Scottish Ambulance Service has delivered a comprehensive 4 day training course, developed in-house, to provide the required training for Community First Responders.

Community First Responders are required to undertake the intensive course and assessment to equip them with the required knowledge and skills to respond to calls in their community. Training encompasses a wide range of emergency skills including the use of specialised equipment such as an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and oxygen therapy.

Prior to 2014, the majority of Community First Responders were trained on the FPOS (Basic) 2 day course, accredited by the Institute for Health and Care Development (IHCD). A very small number of CFR schemes were trained on the FPOS (Intermediate) 2 day course. These IHCD courses are no longer used by SAS to train Community First Responders.

3. What the criteria is for the Scottish Ambulance Service is to call upon community first responders to be utilised; and the criteria for the Scottish Ambulance Service to call in for military assistance

The Scottish Ambulance Service operates a priority-based system of dispatch to ensure that emergency resources are available to respond to the most serious and life-threatening cases in the first instance. Our Call Handlers utilise a system called Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) to prioritise all requests for our emergency response assets. This is a computerised system in which, in response to information provided by the caller, a coded response level is determined and an appropriate resource dispatched to the incident, this may include Community First Responders (CFRs), where a call falls within their clinically assured Scope of Practice and they are available to attend. CFR dispatch is co-ordinated via the Alternative Resource Desk (ARD) within the Ambulance Control Centre. The Dispatcher on the ARD communicates with the CFR using an Airwave radio, which has been provided to the volunteer by SAS.

The Criteria followed by the Scottish Ambulance Service to request military assistance is set out by the UK Government. [2015 to 2020 government policy: Military Aid to the Civil Authorities for activities in the UK - GOV.UK](#)

Further information can be requested here: [How to make a freedom of information \(FOI\) request: Overview - GOV.UK](#)