

# Queensland Ambulance Service



## Our Services

To enhance community and individual safety by providing services that promote and strengthen the health and wellbeing of the community and individuals.

Number of emergency and non-emergency responses provided to communities in Queensland and their visitors for 2005/2006 financial year:

- Emergency – 536,227
- Non-emergency – 210,048

*(Statistics from Department of Emergency Services 2005 – 06 Annual Report)*



## QAS Road Safety Initiatives

- Community programs
  - Baby Capsule Hire Service
  - Child Restraint Fitting Service
- Vehicles and Equipment
- The Australian Centre for Prehospital Research
  - Queensland Trauma Plan
  - Prehospital injuries & fatalities from motorcycle crashes
  - Alcohol related injury
  - Prevalence of alcohol and drugs in the ED
- Paramedic Training
- CARRS-Q Rural and Remote Road Safety study



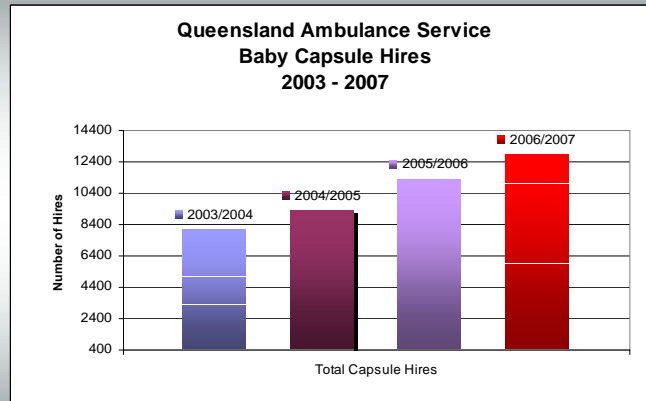
## Community Programs

Queensland Ambulance Service contributes to the reduction of preventable injuries to Queensland infants and children by providing:

- baby capsule hire service
- safety checks of privately owned restraint installations



## Growing trend in capsule fittings



## Indigenous involvement

### *Indigenous Child Restraints Project*

- Indigenous-specific communications campaign designed to increase awareness of the use of baby capsules and child restraints within the Indigenous community in SE Queensland.
- Established a redesigned community-based Baby Capsule Hire Service at Inala.
- 3 baby capsule fitters trained.
- Baby Capsule Hire Service continues to operate at Indigenous community based centres throughout Brisbane.



## QAS Actively promotes...

- Obtaining a baby capsule/child restraint
- Encouraging correct fitting
- Use of child restraint guide based on the child's age and weight



## Vehicles & Equipment

- The State Equipment & Vehicle Committee:
  - The appropriateness of vehicle types for ambulance requirements
  - Patient safety in ambulances: stretcher, seat restraints and equipment inside the vehicle.
  - Visibility and lighting of vehicles and uniforms
  - Continual evaluation of the appropriateness of Code 1 emergency driving and the implications of this on vehicle design and fit-out.



## The Australian Centre for Prehospital Research

- Queensland Trauma Plan 2006
- A State-Wide Analysis of Pre-Hospital Injuries and Fatalities Resulting From Motorcycle Crashes in Queensland 2005
- Alcohol related injury 2005/06
- Prevalence of Alcohol and Drugs in the ED 2005/06



## The Queensland Trauma Plan

- Prompted by state & national comparisons in injury rates 1994-98. Qld significantly higher population mortality rates, particularly in:
  - Road traffic accidents
  - Paediatric injury
  - Suicide
  - Falls in 65+
- Transport accidents comprise 28% of injuries in Qld
- Motor vehicle accidents consistently result in the most severe injuries



## The Queensland Trauma Plan

- National Health Priority Targets:
  - Injury mortality target = 33.6 deaths per 100,000
  - At commencement of project (1998), Qld injury mortality = 44.9 deaths per 100,000
- Study findings will contribute to transport, road safety and health policy to:
  - Inform road safety and injury prevention strategies
  - Reduce injury mortality in Queensland



## Pre-Hospital injuries & fatalities from Motorcycle RTC's

- Population based retrospective analysis of all crashes involving a motorcycle 1999 – 2003, attended by QAS
- Direct comparison with QAS data and official statistics (QPS and hospital data)
- Key finding:
  - Official statistics underestimate by HALF the true proportion of motorcycle related crashes that occur in Qld and therefore the burden of injury
- The study identified risk factors to inform road safety initiatives and effective pre-hospital treatment practices





## Alcohol related injury

- Examined the impact of alcohol / drug use and risk taking behaviour on injury
- 593 patients presenting with injuries at Gold Coast ED in one year 2000-2001 (quarterly data collection; weekends only; interview and medical records)
- RTC third most common injury (16.6%)



## Prevalence of Alcohol and Drugs in the ED

- In conjunction with Crime & Misconduct Commission (CMC) and Qld Alcohol & Drug Research and Education Centre (QADREC), University of Qld
- Cross sectional study of patients presenting at Gold Coast ED over 14 day period October 2005
- Of all injured patients, 13% injured through RTC
- Analyses of associations between alcohol/drug use, mental health and RTC are underway



## CARRS-Q Rural & Remote Road Safety Collaborative Study

*Research & intervention to reduce economic, medical and social costs of road crashes in North Queensland*

- Major collaborators:
  - Centre for Accident Research & Road Safety
  - James Cook University
  - QAS - Northern Region
  - Major regional hospitals
- Study design:
  - 3 year study
  - Investigating all rural & remote road crashes (fatality or serious injury)
- QAS paramedics: part of the research team interviewing drivers about their trip, driving, and ideas about road safety.



## Paramedic Training

- Rigorous training and assessment on driving ability under a variety of driving conditions before being placed in the on-road operational environment.
- Regular exercises with other emergency agencies (including police) to train for real-life incidents.
- Comprehensive protocols for Code 1 driving & on-scene safety procedures at RTC's.





Jim Higgins  
Commissioner  
Queensland Ambulance Service  
[jhiggins@emergency.qld.gov.au](mailto:jhiggins@emergency.qld.gov.au)

