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\$5.1 million staffing boost for ACT Ambulance Service

The ACT Government is tackling growing demand on the ACT Ambulance Service (ACTAS) by investing \$5.113 million through the 2010-11 Budget in eleven new full time positions, nine of which will be in the Communications Centre, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Simon Corbell, announced today.

“This targeted funding will provide for the recruitment and deployment of clinical staff in the Comcen to manage demand more effectively by making clinical decisions and prioritising cases from the moment the call is made to the ACTAS,” Mr Corbell said.

“This will allow experienced Intensive Care qualified clinical staff to make the decisions on how and where to allocate resources and to dispatch ambulances to the most urgent cases first. There is no doubt that demand on our ambulance service is growing significantly every year, and this funding is an important step in addressing issues raised by both the Auditor General and in the Lennox Review.

“This investment in the ACTAS will result in better decision making, more effective triage of patients, and the management of demand from the moment a triple zero call is answered.”

The 2010-11 Budget also provides funding to strengthen training and professional development of our ambulance professionals and boosts the level of specialised operational support to our frontline staff which is so important to a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week service.

“The Government is committed to building ACTAS to ensure all Canberrans maintain access to a first class service. The ACTAS is facing emerging pressures with growing community demand and this is why the Government has decided to boost the capacity of the positions behind the scenes to support the service that is provided to the community on the frontline,” Mr Corbell added.

The new positions include six Communications Centre clinicians, three call takers, one specialised training and development position and one general management position.

In 2008-09, the ACTAS section of the ESA Communications Centre managed in excess of 118,000 telephone calls.

“The Government remains committed to looking at other recommendations made as part of these reviews,” Mr Corbell said.

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