



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



Ambulance Administration  
Guideline  
Processing Parliamentary Questions &  
Public Representations

National Ambulance Service (NAS)  
(All Divisions)

Document reference number	<i>AMBA002</i>	Document developed by	<i>Emily Mahon, Section Officer April 2007</i>
Revision number	<i>2</i>	Document approved by	<i>Martin Dunne Director NAS</i>
Approval date	<i>28<sup>th</sup> April 2010</i>	Responsibility for implementation	<i>Each Chief Ambulance Officer</i>
Revision date	<i>31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2016</i>	Responsibility for review and audit	<i>NAS Headquarters</i>

AMBA002 NAS (All Divisions) Guideline – Processing Parliamentary Questions & Public Representations Document reference no. AMBA002 Revision no. 2 Approval Date 28<sup>th</sup> April 2010

## Table of Contents:

1.0	Policy	3
2.0	Purpose	3
3.0	Scope	3
4.0	Legislation/other related policies	3
5.0	Glossary of Terms and Definitions	3
6.0	Roles and Responsibilities	4
7.0	Guideline	4
8.0	Implementation Plan	5
9.0	Revision and Audit	6
10.0	References	6
11.0	Appendices	6

AMBA002 NAS (All Divisions) Guideline – Processing Parliamentary Questions  
& Public Representations Document reference no. AMBA002 Revision no. 2  
Approval Date 28<sup>th</sup> April 2010

## 1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 This National Ambulance Service (NAS) is committed to ensuring effective guidelines are in place so as to ensure that all Parliamentary Questions and Public Representations are processed in a timely manner

## 2.0 PURPOSE

- 2.1 To provide National Ambulance Service guidance and assistance in dealing with Parliamentary Questions and Public Representations received from the Parliamentary Affairs Division

## 3.0 SCOPE

- 3.1 This procedure applies to all Parliamentary Questions and Public Representations received by the National Ambulance Service.

## 4.1 LEGISLATION/OTHER RELATED POLICIES

- A. Health Act 2004

## 5.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Parliamentary Question (PQ) - is a question asked by a member of the Oireachtas in either House of the Oireachtas.
- 5.2 Public Representation (PR) - is a question being asked by a Public Representative (Member of either House of the Oireachtas or City, Town or County Councillor) or a collective of Local Authority members.
- 5.3 Parliamentary Affairs Division - is the network through which PQs and most PRs are channelled, monitored and followed up. PAD is the responsible division for dealing with all political matters referred to the HSE by the Department of Health & Children
- 5.4 Nominee - is the person nominated by the Assistant National Director to co-ordinate a timely response.
- 5.5 Regional Health Fora - Forum for Public Consultation
- 5.6 PAD - Parliamentary Affairs Division
- 5.7 AND - Assistant National Director
- 5.8 RHO - Regional Health Office

## 6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 The Parliamentary Affairs Division is responsible for disseminating PQs/PRs to the appropriate Directorate within the HSE for preparation of a timely response.
- 6.2 Responsibility for the accuracy and quality of replies rests with the Assistant National Director for matters relating to the National Ambulance Service.
- 6.3 Responsibility for the accuracy and quality of replies in relation to Area issues/individual cases may be designated to an appropriate Officer by the AND.
- 6.4 Every staff member is responsible for co-operating with all efforts to identify, collate and provide all information required to formulate a timely response.
- 6.5 Responsibility for the return of all responses to the PAD within the specified timeframe rests with the AND or his/her designated Nominee.

## 7.1 GUIDELINE

### 7.2 PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS VIA PAD

The Assistant National Director may nominate an appropriate Officer to deal with PQs and PRs received by the National Ambulance Service from the Parliamentary Affairs Division. The nominee will:

- 7.2.1 Obtain the material required to formulate a response from the appropriate Area(s) or Manager(s) in a timely manner.
- 7.2.2 Draft a reply which will be sent for approval and sign off by the Assistant National Director
- 7.2.3 Confirm with the Office of the Assistant National Director if the response is for direct reply in the Oireachtas or for direct response in writing to the originating Oireachtas Member (or other Public Representative(s)).
- 7.2.4 Where a direct written reply is indicated, ensure the reply is issued to the originating Oireachtas Member (or other Public Representative(s)) with a signed copy issued to PAD.
- 7.2.5 It is acceptable for the Nominee to reply by e-mail to the originating Oireachtas Member (or other Public Representative(s)).
- 7.2.6 A copy of the reply must be sent to National Ambulance Headquarters for entry on the PQ/Representations Database.

### 7.3 TIMEFRAMES

- 7.3.1 In relation to PQ's, the final reply must be issued by the PAD within twenty working days of receipt.
- 7.3.2 In the case of PR's, replies must be issued within twenty working days of the date of receipt of Public Representation in the PAD.
- 7.3.3 In order to comply with these timeframes, the PAD Offices will require the information to draft final responses within fifteen working days from the date of issue to the AND.
- 7.3.4 If the correspondence cannot be dealt with within this timeframe, an interim reply, outlining when a final reply can be expected, should be issued by the Nominee.

### 7.4 PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS VIA REGIONAL HEALTH OFFICES (RHO)

- 7.4.1 Occasionally, Public Representations may originate verbally at Regional Health Fora or in writing through one of the four Regional Health Offices.
- 7.4.2 An RHO Director may forward PRs directly to the Assistant National Director for direct written response to the originating Public Representative(s).
- 7.4.3 In all such cases, the process outlined in Section 7.1 and the timeframes outlined in Section 7.2 will apply.
- 7.4.4 All such direct responses should be copied to the originating RHO Director.

### 8.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- 8.1 This Guideline will be circulated electronically to all Officers, all Supervisors and Staff
- 8.2 This Guideline will be placed in hardcopy in each Division's Administration Procedure Manual in each Ambulance Station and Ambulance Control Centre for ease of retrieval and reference
- 8.3 Each CAO will ensure that the Officer responsible for updating Procedure Manuals will return the Confirmation Form to NAS Headquarters to confirm document circulation to all staff

## 9.0 REVISION AND AUDIT

- 9.1 The Office of the Assistant National Director will monitor compliance with the PAD Guidelines and timeframes
- 9.2 This guideline will be formally reviewed whenever necessary following changes in procedures and/or legislation or a relevant event.
- 9.3 The Senior Ambulance Management Team has the responsibility for ensuring the regular review and updating of this guideline.
- 9.4 Revisions, amendments or alterations to the guideline can only be implemented after consideration and approval by the Assistant National Director, following appropriate consultation and review by the Parliamentary Affairs Division

## 10.0 REFERENCES

None applicable

## 11.0 APPENDICES

Appendix I - Guideline Acknowledgement Form