

Attention to the Committee.

Inquiry into the delivery of ambulance services in Western Australia.

Members, on the 19th of May 2018, approximately 7 am on a Saturday morning, I had an Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest, in Bullsbrook, WA, 55 kilometres or approximately 1 hr from Royal Perth (RPH). The Survival statistics from such an event are not fantastic, less than 6%. Statistically that morning, I could have been one of the 94% that do not make it. I would like to think that had I died, my life to date would have been celebrated.

Bullsbrook is on the edge of the sprawling expansion that is occurring, considered rural.

Unfortunately, we do not have a fully funded Ambulance service, we have St Johns Ambulance facilities, that is staffed by volunteers. On this day, this service delivery model, worked, as the station was resourced, albeit by volunteers.

On the morning, my life was saved, the efforts of friends, the Bullsbrook Volunteer rural fire services and then St Johns volunteers prevailed. Time is everything, when you are in trouble, the St John's Volunteers had only just arrived in Bullsbrook when the call for help went out, the closest career ambulance service, is approximately 20 to 30 minutes away, located in a more densely populated region, had the Volunteers not resourced Bullsbrook that morning, that lag, could have meant everything statistically to my survival rate.

I understand that the Ambulance service is under pressure, its challenging to provide a framework, governance and management that efficiently delivers any service to the community, St Johns does this and more, they build the ambulances, they run the service, they train the people, they manage the calls, and divert the resources. St Johns provide many things, that are quantifiable, and statistically can be measured but St Johns true Strength for me, my community, family and friends, lies with St Johns ability to step outside the known commercial realm and harness and support an army of passionate and caring volunteers, who turn up on Saturday mornings, week nights and shifts that no one wants to work, in remote rural posts, too provide an Ambulance service that is basically not fully funded in all communities.

St Johns keep the service happening for everyone, St Johns keep it close in the rural community, so that help is close, help that is not justified by a statistical measurement, or a financial spreadsheet, the 8000 strong Volunteer army has a value.

St John's Bullsbrook Volunteers, turned up, kept me alive, did not give up, transported me from a rural post thru suburbs, they kept me stable long enough to do a hand over to the great team at Royal Perth. I am thankful and humble, to everyone that helped me.

I appreciate that the Ambulance service is under pressure, whilst budgets, finance, and statistics count, we should not forget that perhaps in another scenario, without the values and ethos supporting an army of Volunteer's at rural posts by St Johns, my life and many other lives would have been perhaps a statistic and celebrated under different circumstances.

Warm regards

John Macdonald.