



## Black ban on travelling unsafe distances to cover gaps in rosters

ADHSU delegates have used all sorts of tactics over many years to try and make NSW adhere to its own words that 'paramedic safety is paramount'. Some tactics have been successful, some not so much.

For example, NSW still pushes single officers long commute times to team up with a single officer in a distant station to cover short term vacancies.

These commute times are often extreme in their own right, and when added to a 12 hour+ busy shift sometimes with no breaks, they add up to a deadly mix.

[\*\*A recent study shows that one paramedic is killed and 30 seriously injured on the Australian roads every two years.\*\*](#)

Some of the delegates' tactics include simply asking NSW to cease the unsafe practice – no luck. Delegates have tried having ancillary policies, such as the fatigue management policy, amended to fix this dangerous problem – still nothing. [\*\*The IRC was tried years ago\*\*](#), and even though the decision was what delegates we asking for at the time – that is, commute times for day relief to be kept below one hour – NSW simply ignores the ruling and continues to push members far and wide to save a buck.

Given the gravity of the situation, and the catastrophic consequences if the status quo is allowed to continue, the following black ban is in place for all ADHSU paramedics in both rural and metro:

**No ADHSU paramedic is to travel one hour or more to another station as a single officer.** This ban applies in the following circumstance:

1. The member is required to travel as a single officer;
2. The member does not ordinarily work single; and
3. The member is required to work operationally at the destination station and return on the same day (or night).

We will adjust this ban if NSW finds ways around it; however, we believe this gives ADHSU members the ability to refuse unsafe travel (again, that is defined as one hour or more) to and from another station/facility to cover vacancies.

This ban does not replace the normal dynamic risk assessment process before undertaking Ambulance work. That is, if the conditions are poor (e.g. rainy, kangaroos, dusk or dawn, pre-existing fatigue etc.) then on a case by case basis the maximum travel time should be reduced further, e.g. no more than 30 minutes.

Also, if a member finds themselves at a destination station and too fatigued to commute back (even under an hour) due to the fatiguing effects of things like work intensity, then they must tell the employer, who has an obligation to get you home safely or put you up for the night.

In unity,

Gerard Hayes  
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD