



Newsletter: 502/2018
Date: 31 August 2018
Distribution: All ambulance members
Contact: Your HSU Organiser



Auto Answer Dispute Update

ADHSU representatives appeared in the Industrial Relations Commission, supported by the other union with coverage of call takers, the United Services Union, on the issue of the Auto-Answering dispute.

NSW Ambulance are giving call takers the same treatment they give to paramedics. When there aren't enough staff to keep up with increases in demand, Ambulance puts more and more pressure on staff – whether it's putting pressure on paramedics during off the stretcher phase, or wiring call takers into auto answerers.

A few call takers have indicated that they are content with using the system on a voluntary basis. We advise caution if using it for long periods of time or during stressful periods.

Your representatives are satisfied that Auto-Answering is an unsafe practice, especially if used for long periods.

NSWA, happy to remain known as the most dangerous ambulance service in the country, is introducing this potentially hazardous work practice, without even bothering to undertake a risk assessment (which is legally required every time management introduce these sorts of changes).

Despite this management are pressing ahead to implement compulsory use of the Auto Answer system as early as Monday. We must resist any attempts to make our work places less safe.

We recommend that members take the following industrial action:

- **ADHSU members shall only use auto answer on a voluntary basis at their own discretion (however we recommend against volunteering).**
- **This action shall continue until the ADHSU members are satisfied that the practice is safe.**

The USU have indicated that they support this industrial action and will be recommending their members to do the same.

Furthermore, we recommend to other members in control:

- **DOCOs, SOCOs, and any dispatcher supervising control staff, should not enforce the NSW Ambulance directive and should not report non-compliance to management.**

In unity,

Gerard Hayes
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD