



Newsletter: 687/2018  
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Distribution: All ambulance members  
Contact: Your HSU Organiser



## Paramedics need to 'Take 5 To Survive'

The Ministry of Health have once again shown that they do not care about paramedics. They have introduced a new KPI for make ready time, reducing it by 10 min with no consultation. Now paramedics only have 20 minutes to:

- Complete a comprehensive electronic medical record
- Clean the ambulance and stretcher
- Clean the equipment
- Restock any consumables used in the kits
- Print and hand in the electronic medical record
- Fill up water bottles
- Go to the toilet
- Gather their thoughts before attending another potentially critically ill patient
- Have some food if they haven't been given a meal break all day

Paramedics are disgusted with how their employer is treating them and therefore, **HSU are calling on members to ignore the MRT work instruction, and to Take 5 To Survive.** Paramedics should not answer the radio at 15 minutes to advise a timeframe, and they should not automatically clear at 20 minutes. However, please remember that Control Staff are not to blame for this – MoH is.

Paramedics should always do what they have always done – clear for an urgent job if ready and available. However, clearing at 20 mins just for the sake of a KPI is a big ask for a workforce that already suffers immensely from the workload as well as traumatising events. NSW claim to be looking after workers' mental health, yet this work instruction completely contravenes this claim.

If paramedics are 'off stretcher' for more than 20 minutes and they require a toilet break, to fill up their water bottles, to have a quick snack due to no meal break, or to simply gather their thoughts after a difficult job, they should reply to management and the dispatcher over the air with:

**"I'm taking 5 to survive"**

This doesn't have to be 5 minutes, it may be 10 minutes or as long as paramedics need to **survive their shift.**

If you get the opportunity, show your solidarity with a photo holding the I'm taking 5 to survive poster and text them to 0419 693 358.

[Link to taking 5 to survive sign](#) (pls print out A4 and in colour if possible).

In unity,

Gerard Hayes  
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD