



NSWA addresses fatigue by re-announcing a failed crib break policy

In one of the most heroic attempts to mislead thousands of staff in Australia's most unsafe Ambulance Service, the ED Clinical Operations sent out [an all-staff email titled 'Addressing the challenge of fatigue – cribs'](#) on Tuesday evening.

Towards the end of the email, staff are treated to this boast: 'This is another way we are keeping our staff healthy and protected at work and are confident this change will further reduce fatigue across our workforce'. Make a note of the word 'change'.

We know that the real reason paramedics in Sydney and other centres don't get crib breaks is because there is too much demand for paramedics and not enough to go around. The Control Centre has the difficult job of juggling the risk of not giving a paramedic a full crib compared to being scapegoated by the Service if there is an adverse outcome.

Back to the ED CO's email. New starters couldn't be blamed for thinking that as of Tuesday, all their crib break Christmases have come at once and wonder why they haven't, indeed, received more cribs. The answer is below.

Here's what the 'new' policy says on interrupted cribs:

Crib Call Outs – To increase the likelihood that you can complete your full crib break, we're restricting allocations during crib breaks to Priority 1 (2I and above) incidents only. If a Priority 2 incident occurs while you are on crib break you will not be considered for allocation/assignment to the incident unless authorised by the Control Centre Supervisor. This would be due (but not limited) to change/update in the patient's condition, operational status, or the length of time the patient has waited for paramedic assistance, care or treatment.

It says you can be interrupted for any 1A, B, C and 2I job. You may still be interrupted for a lower priority job if the Control Centre Supervisor authorises it.

[This is the pre-existing \(unsuccessful\) Crib policy:](#)

'Control centre officers must gain permission from the Senior Control Centre Officer (SCCO) or Duty Control Centre Officer (DCCO) prior to dispatching a paramedic on an incident where a missed crib or crib disruption will occur. The only exception to this rule is for Priority 1 and 2I (immediate) incidents'.

It says your crib can be interrupted either by a 1A, B, C or 2I, or when the supervisor authorises it for a lower priority job. **The only 'change' to the policy is that it's now cunningly written in [passive voice](#).**

Serving up a slightly rewritten but failed crib policy with the exact same parameters is not going to magically produce more cribs. Dishonestly getting the hopes up of a workforce doing it tough with work intensity is simply unkind. Time the CORE values were applied to Executives as well.