



**Scottish
Ambulance
Service**

Working in Partnership with Universities



Michael Conway

Our ref FOI 26-014

23rd January 2026

Dear Michael,

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your email requesting information under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, which has now been processed.

Detail

1. Please reveal the longest period an ambulance with a patient inside waited outside a hospital in 2025 in each health board.

In other words, how long SAS staff in charge of a patient's care had to wait outside the hospital building before being able to hand over care to the hospital.

Please provide the longest period on record in each health board in 2025.

2. If it's possible to provide all of this information then please do the same for 2024, 2023, 2022 and 2021.

3. Please confirm if the SAS has a target time for hospital handover completion and if so it is.

4. The longest hospital handover in 2025 that occurred between the Scottish Ambulance and Service and the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley.

5. Is there anyway SAS workers could report an instance where they felt they had to wait with a patient for a concerning or worrying amount of time outside the hospital?

Response

The Scottish Ambulance Service does not hold a recorded measure of time spent outside hospitals with a patient awaiting handover. What is recorded is ambulance turnaround time, defined as the total time from when an ambulance arrives at hospital until the crew departs/marks clear. This total includes several components (for example, clinical handover, returning equipment, and vehicle cleaning). Because of those components, turnaround time is not directly comparable to "handover" measures published by some other UK ambulance trusts, which may report only the time from arrival to handover acceptance.

These turnaround times **ARE NOT** comparable to the handover times of other UK Ambulance Trusts.

Q1-4

Please see the attached excel spreadsheet detailing the Turnaround times for each key hospital for 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025. For each hospital and each year, we have detailed the total number of conveyances, the median¹ turnaround time, the 90th percentile¹ turnaround time and the maximum turnaround time.

The Scottish Ambulance Service works to nationally agreed 'Safe Transfer to Hospital' principles. The target is that all patients are handed over within 60 minutes, and the longer-term aim is a 15-minute handover (from arrival to triage).

Our local management teams are working closely with Health Boards to ensure that ambulances are released as quickly as possible.

5. Is there anyway SAS workers could report an instance where they felt they had to wait with a patient for a concerning or worrying amount of time outside the hospital?

The Scottish Ambulance Service crews can report Delays in Hospital Handover on an internal system where they feel they have waited outside A&E departments for a concerning amount of time. In 2025, there were a total of 43 reported instances from staff regarding delayed handover times throughout Scotland.

More information about Turnaround or a list of which hospitals have been included can be found on our website - [Unscheduled Care Operational Statistics](#)

Yours sincerely,
Siobhan Anderson
Information Governance

¹ The time in which 50% of SAS Crews spend at hospital as a result of conveying a patient. This time runs from when the crew arrive at the hospital to when they are clear from the incident

Review Procedure

If you are not satisfied with our response to your request for information, you may apply for a review of our decision in writing within 40 working days of the date of this notice and include:

- An address for further correspondence;
- A description of the original request; and
- The reason(s) why you are dissatisfied with our decision.

You should address your request for a review of decision to:

Katy Barclay
Head of Business Intelligence
Scottish Ambulance Service
National Headquarters,
Gyle Square,
1 South Gyle Crescent,
Edinburgh, EH12 9EB
0131 314 0000
E-mail: Katy.Barclay2@nhs.scot

The requests for a review would be passed to another manager who was not involved in the original decision to assess the application.

Following the review, you would receive notice of the result as soon as possible but in any case within 20 working days of us receiving it. Our response would explain the decision of the reviewer as well as details of how to appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner if you remain dissatisfied with the review decision reached by us.

If you wish to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner, you may do so at the details below:

Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner
Kinburn Castle
Doubledykes Road
St Andrews
KY16 9DS

Telephone: 01334 464610
e-mail: enquiries@foi.scot

You can also make your appeal online via the Commissioner's website at [Appeal to the Commissioner | Scottish Information Commissioner \(foi.scot\)](#). This link gives you help in real time explaining exactly what is needed so the Commissioner can investigate your case quickly.

ⁱ The time in which 90% of SAS Crews spend at hospital as a result of conveying a patient. This time runs from when the crew arrive at the hospital to when they are clear from the incident