



**Scottish  
Ambulance  
Service**  
*Taking Care to the Patient*



# Air Ambulance Re-procurement

## 2022





# Background

The Scottish Ambulance Service is on the frontline of the NHS, despatching immediate medical assistance or clinical advice to over 5 million people across Scotland. Our aim is to offer the highest level of care to our patients as we preserve life and promote recovery, with our skilled workforce bringing care and compassion to those who need it most.

The Service operates out of three regions and covers the largest geographic area of any ambulance service in the UK. Each year, the Service responds to around 750,000 incidents across Scotland, and there are over 3,600 air ambulance Service missions.

## Air Ambulance

The Scottish Ambulance Service's air ambulance operation is wholly funded by the Scottish Government. The Service operates two helicopters: one based in Glasgow and one in Inverness, as well as two fixed wing aircraft: one based at Aberdeen Airport and the other at Glasgow Airport. All aircraft are operated on a 24/7 basis and are fitted out to a clinical specification developed by the Scottish Ambulance Service. In addition to the four government funded aircraft the service is supplemented by two helicopters provided by Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance. These aircraft are based in Perth and Aberdeen and are available 12 hours per day.

The Air Ambulance Service mainly transfers patients to and from hospital from remote, rural and island communities, this includes providing air ambulance services to support ScotSTAR retrieval teams.

The service is delivered in line with the Civil Aviation Authority regulations governing air ambulance operations and in some instances, such as bad weather, this means that operations can be restricted. In these situations the Service can access support from Her Majesty's Coastguard helicopters to ensure we continue to deliver care where required.

The aircraft used by the Air Ambulance Service are provided as part of a managed contract and the contract is currently due to expire on 31st May 2024.



A project team has been established to support the award of a new Air Ambulance contract, and an important task for the team is to consult with all stakeholders.

The Service anticipates a wide range of opinions and aspirations for how the Air Ambulance Service might be developed. By the same token, it is necessary to continue to operate an affordable service which provides value for money.

Following the consultation exercise, the formal process of selecting a provider for the new air ambulance contract will begin.



## Get involved

The Scottish Ambulance Service wants to make sure it gathers opinions from everyone with a view on this important element of the Service before air ambulance arrangements are renewed.

If you wish to express your views on any aspect of the service, please get in touch by emailing us at [sas.airamb@nhs.scot](mailto:sas.airamb@nhs.scot).

