



Brad Hazzard
Minister for Health
Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 31 January, 2018

PARAMEDICS GET “RUGGEDIZED” SMARTPHONES

Paramedics will get high-tech, “ruggedized” smartphones under a \$314,000 trial to tackle mobile blackspots in rural and regional areas.

Minister for Health Brad Hazzard today joined NSW Ambulance’s Acting Executive Director Operational Logistics, Peter Elliott, and paramedics at Bateau Bay Ambulance Station to announce the trial is underway at Bateau Bay, Batemans Bay and Dubbo.

The trial – which will see 200 vehicles fitted with the high-tech devices – is part of a \$35 million ongoing investment in radio and critical telecommunications.

“Every second counts in an emergency and a reliable communication channel could mean the difference between life and death for a patient,” Mr Hazzard said.

“These smartphones are a smart investment and will ensure paramedics have uninterrupted phone connection at all times and can respond faster and with confidence in any weather condition from any corner of the state.”

The devices are shock-proof, waterproof and dust-resistant and function more efficiently than satellite phones in many environments.

Mr Elliott said the smartphones will complement existing radio communications to provide paramedics with multiple communications tools, under the revolutionary Vehicle Area Network program.

“The Vehicle Area Network program brings four radio and satellite networks into one communication hub to overcome communications challenges presented by the varying terrains and topographies across NSW,” Mr Elliott said.

“This hub streamlines communications by providing one access point for calls or communications made or accessed by paramedics in the field.”

The NSW Government’s \$35 million ongoing investment includes new in-vehicle and portable radios, upgrades to regional ultra-high frequency infrastructure, new mobile data terminals for vehicles and a new, long range digital radio network for isolated regions.

MEDIA: Natasha Wallace | Minister Hazzard | 0439 484 015