

Ambulance stations

Why is there a new ambulance station being built?

Demand for ambulance services has increased year on year in South Australia. To support the provision of these services, the Premier's Operational Growth Plan for SA Ambulance Service (SAAS) sets out how the Government of South Australia will deliver a \$311.2 million investment in staffing and infrastructure. This commitment will provide a massive boost to deliver brand new, completely rebuilt and upgraded ambulance stations, more ambulances, and more ambos to provide care for all South Australians.

When will the stations be operational?

Works will begin in 2023, with many stations becoming operational in mid-2024 to late-2025.

Where are the new and rebuilt stations?

New stations will be built for Norwood, Woodville, Edwardstown, Golden Grove, and Adelaide. Stations for Victor Harbor, Mount Barker, Gawler, and Campbelltown will be rebuilt either on their existing land or in more suitable locations in the area. There are also ten stations earmarked for major upgrades.

Why were the new locations chosen?

The locations were chosen to help improve ambulance coverage and response times. For some of the new country stations, this will complement the new career paramedic recruitment program supporting the excellent work of SAAS volunteers at that location.

Staff and visitors

Who will work at the station?

There are 24/7 operational crews and Clinical Team Leaders who are rostered to start and end their shifts at ambulance stations. Additionally, during business hours, some administration and operational staff participating in training and development may also attend the station.

Will there be many visitors?

Visitors to any ambulance station are minimal and will generally be SAAS staff or volunteers.

Vehicles

How many vehicles will be attending the station?

The station is designed to accommodate the required emergency vehicles for the area. This may include a mix of ambulances and light fleet (SUVs). However, from time to time there may be a requirement for staff to attend training at the station. Visitors parking on the street will be expected to comply with local Council requirements.

Will the ambulance vehicles impact on the surrounding car parking facilities?

No, all ambulance vehicles will be parked in the garage or in designated parking areas onsite. Occasionally, staff in SAAS marked or unmarked vehicles will park offsite and will be required to comply with local Council requirements.

Will vehicles be driving at high speed in the neighbouring streets?

Even in urgent situations, SAAS clinicians are trained to approach situations with caution and in a safe manner. We will take all appropriate care while driving to keep the community safe.

Noise

Why do ambulances have to drive at speed with lights and sirens?

Every minute that goes by decreases a patient's chances of surviving a major medical emergency, such as a cardiac arrest. It also affects a patient's quality of recovery. It is essential that clinicians who are highly trained to help save lives, reach patients as quickly as possible. The lights and sirens on ambulance vehicles are used for approximately half of all cases. The sirens are generally turned on for high priority cases, only when necessary, to warn other road users once the vehicle has left the station. This is in alignment with Section 306 of the Australian Road Rules. A driver of an emergency vehicle relies on the other road users to be paying close attention to their surroundings by always using their mirrors and broad observation skills.

How often will I hear the sirens at the station?

On dispatch from the station, ambulances will often be approaching a traffic controlled major intersection and, as such, will be required to enter the intersection with caution and in a safe manner. Lights and sirens may be required; however, staff are advised to turn the siren off if they can see no safe way through traffic, so that they don't put undue pressure on drivers to carry out unsafe manoeuvres as they can be panicked by the noise and lights.

Is there a public address (PA) system which will be heard in the surrounding area?

No, ambulance stations do not have PA systems. Paramedics are contacted by hand-held radios and pagers.

What will happen at night?

Often there will be less activity at the station during the night. Paramedics at the station during the night are waiting until they get called to a new emergency tasking. Often ambulance crews are on the road for their entire shift, so they are generally not coming and going from the station.

Will the operation of the station be noisy?

SAAS are acutely aware of the concerns of residents who live in the surrounding streets of ambulance stations. Normal household noise will be generated by activities at an ambulance station (e.g. television, telephone, air conditioner) and will have a minor noise impact on the surrounding area.

Facilities

Will patients be brought to the station?

No, if a patient requires transport, they are taken to a medical facility.

How will the environment be affected?

Medical waste is mostly left at hospitals with a designated medical waste bin at the station for small amounts of waste. These bins are scheduled to be regularly emptied. Ambulance vehicles are generally washed at commercial car washes to comply with South Australian Environment Protection Authority (EPA) requirements. Great care is administered to ensure no contaminants will be washed into drains. The architecture of the station has been designed with environmental sustainability and the local landscape in mind. The station will be equipped with renewable energy solar panels and the external features and façade will incorporate materials to enhance the aesthetics of the environment. Station landscaping will be designed to complement the location and surroundings of the local area.

Can I go to the station if I have an emergency?

No. Always call Triple Zero (000) in an emergency. While stations house crews and ambulances, there may be times when the station is not attended.

Further enquiries

Who can I speak to if I have any further questions?

Website: <https://saambulance.sa.gov.au/about-us/operational-growth-plan/>

Email: Health.SAASNewBuilds@sa.gov.au.

Who can I speak to about planning and permit issues?

Please contact your local Council.