



OUTBACK *Ambulance*

VOLUME 23 No. 1 • December 2011

• PRINT POST APPROVED -
565001/00404



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Front cover: Birthday Celebrations at the Council Chambers,
Alice Springs birthday cake by Leesa of Alice Cakes,
Kilgariff family at the unveiling.



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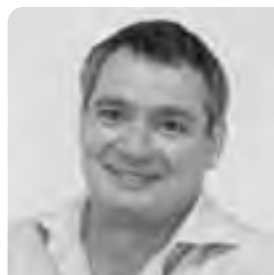
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Ward Keller
LAWYERS

Chief Executive Officer's REPORT

Well, it is hard to believe that it is already that time of year, where I take the time to reflect on what has been another milestone year for St John Ambulance in the NT.



The ongoing discussions with the NT Government regarding the Ambulance Service Contract finally came to fruition in early February this year, with the signing of a five year Contract, with the option for a further 5 years. A lot of hard work resulted in the final outcome, with much more required to meet the ongoing obligations going forward. This signing has allowed the implementation of a number of initiatives identified in our current Strategic Plan to grow the Ambulance Services provided to all Territorians. The 3 yearly Employee Agreement discussions were also finalised in October and I would like to thank all who were involved in this process.

I take this opportunity to thank all staff for their patience and dedication to their work during what was at times a difficult process. As a result of these negotiations, I would like to welcome on board Dr Malcolm Johnston-Leek, who was appointed as our Medical Director.

For a record 8th year in a row, Reader's Digest has announced, Paramedics have again, been voted the most trusted profession in Australia. I am honoured to be associated with such a high calibre of professionals and I am sure you will all join with me in congratulating them on a fantastic effort, often in some very difficult and trying circumstances. On another note, congratulations to the winner of this year's Paramedic of the Year Awards, Rhys Dowell from Katherine. To Rhys and all of the NT Paramedics, keep up the good work.

It has been very pleasing to see a number of past employees, who had moved interstate in recent times, return to work with us here at St John NT, I would like to welcome them back and hope that they continue to have a long relationship with the organisation.

In a positive move for the Territory, earlier this year saw the commencement of the Yirrkala school based program in Nhulunbuy. The initiative ensures First Aid training is communicated to students from Indigenous Communities, giving them the same opportunities as their peers, in less isolated Communities across the Territory. This initiative is in line with our desire to make "First Aid a part of every Territorians life" and to build the brand name of St John

amongst the Youth of the Community. A special thank you to Kieran Brown for his assistance (with others) in getting the program established.

Elsewhere in this edition you will read about the recently formed partnership which has been forged between St John NT and Edith Cowan University, to deliver the VET sector training to our Paramedics. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those involved in the process, particularly Brendan Quirke and look forward to a long and fruitful partnership.

Earlier this year, St John hosted a thank you dinner, for members of the local business community who have supported our Volunteers through our Endowment Trust initiative. I would like to personally thank all of those businesses who have given their support to our Volunteers in the past year and I look forward to your continued support going forward.

We have been very fortunate in the past twelve months with the development of our Emerging Talent program, which supports up and coming young members of the Territory Community, who excel in their field of expertise. We have been fortunate to have received support for this program from The Lord Taverners, and I would like to thank them for their enthusiastic support of our Territory youth.

Also, in this edition, you will see articles on the Alice Springs 50th birthday celebrations and the official naming of the Alice Springs Ambulance Station. My thanks go to Gwyn Balch, Steve Peers and all of the others behind the scenes who made this weekend of events a most enjoyable and memorable one.

In closing, I would like to thank all of our staff and volunteers throughout the Territory for their continued hard work and dedication and wish you and your families a Safe and Happy Christmas and all the best for a healthy and prosperous 2012.

Go the Cats!

Ross Coburn
CEO

Education & Training Report

I welcome this Outback Ambulance opportunity to update readers in 2 key areas which will have impacts for St John NT-Training. The 1st involves training we deliver in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector as a Registered Training Organisation and primarily relates to our First Aid training activities. The 2nd relates to the future of St John NT's Paramedic Education and Training.

First ... to First Aid

St John Ambulance NT achieved Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status in 1991 and until now all RTOs operating in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector have been registered and monitored for continuing compliance by Departments of Education and Training (DET) in individual Australian State/Territory jurisdictions. Effective 01 July 2011, these responsibilities were transferred to the new national VET regulator (NVR), the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). This change is supported by the National Vocational Education and Training Regulations Act (2011), which came into effect on 1 July, 2011.

ASQA's jurisdiction

ASQA is the national regulator for Australia's VET sector. The function of registering registered training organisations (RTOs) in the states and territories began transferring to ASQA in a phased process and in July 2011, ASQA became the regulatory body for the VET sector for the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and New South Wales. ASQA also has responsibility for regulating some RTOs in Victoria and Western Australia. The national regulatory system is being established through:

- a referral of powers to the Commonwealth from most states (except Victoria and Western Australia)
- the exercise of the Commonwealth's constitutional powers in the regulation of vocational education and training in the territories.

Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania are referring their powers in the regulation of VET to ASQA later in 2011.

Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations

An essential mechanism for the regulation of VET is the national standards against which RTOs are assessed. Prior to the establishment of the ASQA as the national regulator the standards that applied to an RTO's registration were found within the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF).

New standards

The Standards for National VET Regulator (NVR) Registered Training Organisations replace the former AQTF standards for RTOs. The Standards will be used by ASQA as an instrument in protecting the interests of all students undertaking vocational education and training in Australia and will be used to guide nationally consistent, high-quality training and assessment services in the

vocational education and training system.

As of 1 July 2011, the new National Skills Standards Council (NSSC) became responsible for providing advice to the Standing Council for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment (SCOTESE), one of a number of Standing Councils that report to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). SCOTESE is the successor of the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE).

The NSSC provides advice on national standards for quality assurance, performance monitoring, reporting, risk, audit, review and renewal of providers' accreditation status, and accreditation of VET qualifications. (The NSSC will undertake many of the functions formerly carried out by the National Quality Council, which was dissolved on 30 June 2011.) The standards put forward by the NSSC will be implemented by ASQA. These Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations are a separate legislative instrument, made by the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations.

Regulatory approach

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) exercises its responsibilities based on:

- a robust framework of legislation and standards
- a risk-assessment focus
- active engagement with industry
- a rigorous audit methodology
- fairness and transparency
- promoting informed consumer choice
- accountability
- accessibility.

Legislation and standards

ASQA was established through the enactment of three pieces of legislation passed on 24 March 2011:

- the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- the National Vocational Education and Training (Consequential Amendments) Act 2011
- the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Transitional Provisions) Act 2011.

The legislative framework established by this, and related, legislation:

- gives ASQA the power to audit an RTO at any time
- gives ASQA the power to apply sanctions (including

applying conditions to, suspending or cancelling a registration)

- allows providers to seek a review of ASQA decisions.

ASQA will regulate according to the Standards for NVR registered training organisations. The Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment, informed by advice from the National Standards Council, approves these standards. All training organisations applying to register, or RTOs applying to extend their scope, will have their applications assessed against the standards. All courses accredited must meet the standards for course accreditation.

Increased emphasis on risk

A national regulatory system promotes consistency and quality in Australia's training sector. As the national regulator, ASQA works to ensure compliance across the sector. ASQA is increasing the focus on high-risk providers and has a range of regulatory powers. ASQA's regulatory approach is based on risk assessment. ASQA particularly examines those RTOs, courses and qualifications rated as higher risk. Non-compliance can incur a range of action (including fines, suspension of registration and closure). ASQA continually assesses risks presented by RTOs, courses, qualifications and the VET system.

This analysis is informed by:

- the Risk Assessment Framework (s.190 of the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011)
- structured risk assessments of initial, renewal and scope applications
- advice from auditors on trends in non-compliance
- feedback from industry regulators and associations
- complaints data
- information provided by Australian, state and territory governments, and
- analysis of data, including data on student and employer outcomes.

Stronger regulatory powers

ASQA has a range of powers including the application of sanctions, and prosecutions involving civil and criminal penalties, to effectively regulate training providers.

In the simplest possible terms

ASQA is the new and more effective way of doing what we have been doing as an RTO since first achieving this status. There are not a large number of changes and overall the changes are not as significant as first anticipated. Whilst the national approach is new, most of the new/continuing registration requirements have not changed. ASQA's vision is that students, employers and governments have full confidence in the quality of vocational education and training outcomes delivered by Australian registered training organisations.

And now ... to Paramedic education and training

Over the past 10-12 years, paramedicine across Australia and New Zealand has been moving toward a Tertiary as opposed to a VET sector training model, this being seen as the next logical step in the development of paramedical services and the Paramedics who provide it.

Through the Paramedic Training College (PTC), St John NT have been delivering VET sector Paramedic qualifications since we first achieved RTO status in 1991.

Entry to the Tertiary (Higher Education) sector

St John NT has recently supported the transition of our VET sector training into the Tertiary sector. Following 18 months of specific research we have entered into a formal academic partnership with Edith Cowan University (ECU) in WA. ECU also partners St John WA for their paramedic training. The format of ECU's K89-Bachelor of Science (Paramedical Science) qualification will ensure minimal impact on operational rosters across the NT with PTC delivering 7 'face-to-face' clinically orientated units of the Degree with non-clinical units completed in an on-line format and managed by ECU. Driving and Rescue & Disaster Management courses, whilst not included as units in the Degree program, will continue to be delivered by PTC under the auspices of internal 'employability skills'. Transition arrangements are in place to allow those Student Paramedics who are enrolled in the VET sector Diploma program to finish that program. St John NT's first Tertiary student cohort is due to commence in January 2012.

Some of the specific research which was undertaken when considering working with/partnering a Tertiary institution included:

- a. The fees charged. These are governed by the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and as such are non-negotiable.
- b. Impact on operational rosters. Some approaches had the potential for substantive impacts on Ambulance operations (particularly but not only in the 'roster' area). The ECU approach appears to be less negatively impactful in this area due to its promotion of the ideals of on-line learning.
- c. Unit availability. Of the final two contenders eventually considered, one offered the traditional two semester approach and the other a 3rd semester option each year allowing annual study requirements to be spread out over a longer annual academic period and this was considered to be more in tune with full-time employment.



... Continued next page

Continued from previous page ...

- d. Postgraduate opportunities. ECU offers the option of postgraduate studies at Masters Degree level with exit points at Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma levels.
- e. Industry recognition. Both final contenders are accredited by the Ambulance Industry through the Council of Ambulance Authorities to the level they currently deliver at.
- f. Student Paramedic selection process. At least one addition to the Student Paramedic selection process has been required as applicants for positions must 'prove' their eligibility to be accepted into the university – actual enrolment into the university is not required at this point of the interview process.

In light of the recognition afforded by ECU to existing PTC delivered clinical and work ready programs, the specific units applicable to a Paramedic's base qualification (which have over time come to be collectively refer to as Clinical 1 and Clinical 2), will continue to be delivered by PTC with additional learning and assessment support being made available by ECU. Paramedic Education Officers (PEOs) submitted formal and detailed applications to the University applying for status as ECU adjunct lecturers and this was awarded in October of this year.

Through the Council of Ambulance Authorities (CAA) Ambulance Education Committee (AEC), a sub-committee has been formed to assess and accredit Tertiary institutions seeking industry recognition for any paramedical qualification they (the university) may be offering/ planning to offer. The Paramedic Education Programs Accreditation Committee (PEPAC) is responsible for the assessment and accreditation of established paramedic programs, major program changes and newly developed programs, and provides recommendations to the Board of the CAA through the AEC. They provide expert advice on the recommended direction for the recognition and accreditation of Higher Education and VET sector programs and make recommendations to the Board through the AEC for improvements to the procedures and processes for the assessment and accreditation of university paramedic programs.

Nationally, there are a number of approaches currently being utilised both by Ambulance Services and individuals to accommodate this move to Tertiary qualifications for Paramedics. Various, individuals seeking a paramedical position may:

- Complete a paramedical qualification as a full-time student and subsequently apply for a position.
 - o Once accepted, they will enter a 12-18 month internship during which time the skills and industry specific knowledge necessary to secure a jurisdictional Authority to Practice (by whatever name it is known) is achieved.
- Complete 18-24 months of study as a full-time student, secure a position and subsequently be supported by the employing Service as they complete their studies.
 - o The time to acquire an Authority to Practice using this approach may be reduced over that mentioned

previously due to increased clinical exposure during the 3rd year of study.

- Be (i)-interviewed and (ii)-appointed to the Service but, (iii)-for the first 12 months complete a suite of units as full-time students after which they commence employment.
 - o In this format an individual's first exposure to clinically based practical skills and specific operationally necessary knowledge, is in the induction block (year 2, semester 1.)
- Secure a paramedical position, complete an induction block as a full-time student, move in to an operational position utilising Skill Validation Logs to confirm clinical competence over a pre-determined (but flexible) period of time and continue to work through their studies whilst employed full-time.
 - o This model has been selected as the most appropriate for St John NT and for practical clinical skill acquisition purposes will operate no differently than the current Diploma program aside from the on-line delivery and assessment of non-clinical type units which have in the past been associated with Clinical 1 and Clinical 2 now being coordinated by/through Edith Cowan University.

One of the key structural changes necessary to be introduced by St John NT is the development/expansion of an 'Induction School' for new staff. This new 12 week School will include the current Clinical 1, Driving and Rescue programs in a single block. In consideration of the Bachelor of Science (Paramedical Science), Clinical 1 delivery will be recognised against the Degree units of;

- PST1101-Introduction to Paramedical Practice,
- PSP1106-Basic Clinical Skills for Paramedics,
- PST1102-Foundations of Paramedical practice,
- PST2101-Foundations of Paramedical Practice 2,
- PSP2102-Paramedic Practicum.

Clinical 2 will also be recognised against;

- PSP3101-Advanced Emergency Care 1
- PSP3103-Advanced Emergency Care 2

Additionally, ECU offers a conversion program comprising 7-8 on-line study units which will update an existing paramedical Diploma to the Bachelor of Science (Paramedical Science). It is gratifying to see that a number of currently qualified Paramedics have already availed themselves of this opportunity. For those who may be considering enrolling into the conversion program, you will also need to submit a current Authority to Practice to support your application to enroll.

There is no doubt in my mind that the changes I have referred to in this article will benefit not only St John NT in various Training related work-areas but as importantly, those who undertake training with us. I look forward to working toward the next stage of our development and would like to thank everyone who has contributed in some way to get us to the point we find ourselves at today.

Brendan Quirke

Happy 50th Birthday Alice Springs

In September the volunteer members of St John in Alice Springs celebrated fifty years of serving their community.

The special occasion was marked with three events:

- A member dinner at Madigan's at the Desert Park,
- A cocktail function hosted by the Mayor of Alice Springs, Damien Ryan
- Naming ceremony and morning tea at the Alice Springs Ambulance Centre.

We were honoured that the St John Ambulance Chancellor and former Administrator of the Northern Territory, Dr Neil Conn AO and Mrs Lesley Conn were able to attend and join members for the celebrations. It was also terrific that long serving St John Board Member, Mr Alan Bromwich was able to travel from Darwin to attend. Former Northern Territory Administrator, Mr Ted Egan AO and Ms Nerys Evans also attended the celebrations.

The member dinner was held on Thursday 15th September at Madigan's Restaurant at the Alice Springs Desert Park. The evening started at 6.00pm so the forty members and friends could enjoy a cold drink and nibbles overlooking the magnificent ranges in the cool night air. Glen Auricht was the MC for the night and entertained everyone with his stories and knowledge of Central Australia and his activities as a busy St John member.

On Friday 16th September, the Alice Springs Mayor, Mr Damien Ryan hosted a reception at the Council Chambers. A number of presentations were made recognising the outstanding contribution by members of the Alice Springs Adult Division. Congratulations to Ron Owen who was admitted as a Member of the Order of St John.



Special guests, L-R Ted Egan, Neil Conn, Gwyn Balch, Steve Peers and Paul Berry

Other presentations included:

12 year Service Medals – Kate Anning, Geoff Kain.

Unfortunately Marcel Clark was unable to be present to receive her 12 year medal.

17 year Service Bar – Glen Auricht.

Commendations:

A Bronze Commendation was presented to Joylene Kain for her work with the Alice Springs Cadet Division and a Silver Commendation presented to Samantha Cameron for her work with the Tennant Creek Cadet Division.

A birthday wouldn't be the same without a cake and we were delighted with the magnificent cake made by Leesa of Alice Cakes. It looked so good that it was a shame to have to cut it up but it was a very tasty chocolate cake. If you would like to see more of Leesa's amazing work look at www.alicecakes.com.au

A big thank you to the Mayor of Alice Springs, Mr Damien Ryan and Council staff, Catherine and Fran for all their help and support for these events.



Award recipients L-R Chancellor Neil Conn, Glen Auricht, Joylene Kain, Geoff Kain, Kate Anning, Commissioner Steve Peers, Front row, Ron Owen and Samantha Cameron

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From the First Aid Training Manager

2011 has certainly been a busy year for First Aid Training. As mentioned in the Director Education and Training's report elsewhere in this edition of Outback, our Registered Training Organisation is now operating under the new national VET regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

St John-NT are required to prove compliance under the new Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and this will be a continual work in progress.

As all of our RTO staff play a major role in ensuring compliance, it has been paramount for us to ensure they receive information relating to ASQA and all of the changes. Since transferring across to the new national VET regulator, staff have been kept up to date with information as it becomes known to us with information being posted on the internal intranet and presented at our 2011 Annual First Aid Trainer Workshop. Nearly all of our Trainers have updated their Cert IV qualification to the new requirement of Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40110) with only a handful left to complete the requirements before mid June '12. This in itself is very pleasing and all staff are to be commended on this achievement.

Earlier in the year, the Health Training Package (HLT07) was reviewed with Version 4 being released in May 2011. Since that time, St John NT have been reviewing the revised units of competence and planning for change (first aid and paramedicine). Once again at the 2011 Annual First Aid Trainer Workshop, Trainers as part of their ongoing professional development were provided with an opportunity to validate and moderate the course materials we use. Following on from this workshop, a need has been identified to further refine all documentation for accuracy prior to their release, which we have scheduled for January 2012. I would like to thank all Trainers who were able to attend the workshop and contribute to this very important session, including those from our Partnering Organisations. The evidence of review and feedback is most appreciated and contributes towards our external audits.

For those living in the Territory, we are aware and accept a transient population. Whilst at the end of last year St John NT had a large turn over of first aid training staff, we were fortunate to have the support of our wonderful team of Part-Time Trainers who assisted us during these times. It is also pleasing to acknowledge the support still offered to us by some of our previous Full Time Trainers who have departed yet still remain associated with our RTO either as a Part-Time or Associate First Aid Trainer basis. Their ongoing support is valued and genuinely appreciated. I have often observed them sharing their knowledge and skill base with those who are new in their role or alternatively, they have been utilised to monitor training and assessment delivery.

As mentioned previously, 2011 has been a busy year partly due to the need to invest time in rebuilding our Full

Time staff base again. This has been a time consuming but necessary exercise. When I look at the feedback from our customers I have to say that our attention to the development of our new Trainers has without doubt, been worthwhile.

As a snap shot for this report and based purely on our feedback received for 'public' course delivery for the period of 01 January - 30 June '11 statistics are provided and relate to 3258 feedback forms being returned and covers a total of 292 various first aid courses. Feedback indicated that 2765 participants enrolled into a total of 247 HLTFA301B Apply First Aid and Refresher courses. It is however important to note that there are times some participants overlooked the completion of the reverse side of the feedback form. This feedback assists our RTO on highlighting improvement opportunities.

Key: A = Agree U = Undecided D = Disagree N = Not Applicable

Customer Service	A	U	D	N
My phone calls were answered promptly	2112	81	34	919
The information provided was clear, concise and correct	2525	86	19	285
My booking was confirmed by letter/phone call/email	2415	54	85	567
Training Delivery	A	U	D	N
The course commenced punctually	3083	53	45	3
The course was well organised	3142	49	11	1
The content was clearly presented	3166	55	6	1
Most of the content seemed relevant to me	3126	72	9	1
The trainer used appropriate terminology	3177	40	4	2
The trainer demonstrated high levels of knowledge & skill	3191	53	14	
The trainer responded well to the needs of the group	3220	38	6	
There was ample opportunity/equipment to practice with	3188	45	7	
The assessment was clearly explained	3146	23	1	12



I would feel confident to provide first aid in an emergency 3108 147 2 1

Training Venue A U D N

The venue was of an appropriate standard 3137 65 21 2

Overall A U D N

I would recommend this course to others 3207 21 1 1

What was your main reason for enrolling in this course? (please select 1 only)

To gain employment 104	Job requirement 1795
Renew current certificate 456	To update knowledge 255
Personal interest 237	Part of another course 95
Other 56	

Were practical skills clearly demonstrated to you before you practiced them?

1. Yes: 2946 2. No: 17

Have you trained with St John Ambulance before?

1. Yes: 1853
2. Yes, but not in the Northern Territory: 289
3. No: 887

Did your Trainer present the course in a way that was;

	Always	Mostly	Never
1. Easy to understand	2769	195	2
2. Helpful	2896	97	
3. Interesting	2780	221	1
4. Supportive	2896	95	

Average class size (all courses): 11.16

Average class size: 11.19

While on the topic of feedback and improvement opportunities, St John NT have recently within the last few months developed an area on our website for testimonials relating to the training services provided by St John NT. We recognise that while all of our Training staff take pride in providing the highest possible quality customer and training delivery services, it would be wonderful to offer our customers the opportunity to provide

constructive feedback on our website at www.stjohnnt.org.au/training, through the email address set up for this purpose, trainingfeedback@stjohnnt.asn.au. For those of you reading this report and who have previously

trained with St John NT, we welcome your feedback as we do with all new or revisiting learners. This approach to providing us with your testimonial provides an avenue for you to share your experiences with those who may be considering training with us in the future and also assists us in improving our services.

Thank you to all of our Outback Ambulance readers, sponsors and customers of St John NT for your continued support throughout 2011, we look forward to seeing you again in 2012. Special thanks to my Director, Brendan Quirke and our CEO, Ross Coburn for all of their guidance and support when needed and lastly to all of my Trainers (Part Time; Full Time and Associates) and Training Administration and support staff who help to make our training environment positive, encouraging and fun for all. Your supportive nature and caring attitudes towards each other and our customers/learners is just terrific. You really are a great team to work with.

Annetta Albanese



Alice Springs Alderman Fred Marone, with First Aid Instructor Vanessa Ekins

Paramedic Training College Report

The Paramedic Training College (PTC) has had a hectic 2011 so far, with the domino effect from large student "intakes" over the past few years now having some impact. The 2012 training calendar is already filling rapidly.

In April '11 PTC welcomed Samantha King as an additional member of the Paramedic Education Team. Sam had assisted PTC on a few occasions in the past and is a welcome addition to the world of Ambulance Paramedic Education.

Commencing July 2011, PTC conducted a 'pilot' course for Patient Transport Officers (PTO's), the Non Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS) course. The group consisted of two existing staff members, Benny and Pat, and a further six students giving us an initial student cohort of 8. As the Patient Transport Service is a new operational arm established by the Ambulance Service, this was the first time PTC had delivered this program. PTC's facilitation of this course relied on the support from a number of areas and members of St John NT including First Aid Trainers, Mark O'Shaughnessy from the Workshop, Martin Scaife who presented the communications units, Gary Pendlebury from S.M.A.R.T. NT who was involved in the driving units; and HR for conducting the induction for the new students. I would like to thank everyone for their input, it was much appreciated. I was able to observe first hand how well the program was presented and subsequently how well it was received by the student group. All students completed the 'in class' course work and have moved on to their operational positions in both Darwin and Alice Springs.

PTC has also completed a large amount of planning and preparatory work for the transition for Paramedic Training from the VET sector, Diploma of Paramedical Science (Ambulance) training, to the Higher Education sector through our partnership with Edith Cowan University and subsequent entry into an undergraduate Paramedical Bachelor Degree qualification. This has been a long envisioned move for Paramedic Training in the Northern Territory and I am very proud to have been involved in the process.

Moving forward for the next few years, PTC will be operating two streams, both the Diploma/VET and Degree/ Higher Education. This will increase PTC's workload which will be challenging, to say the least. In light of the much appreciated and welcome support offered to PTC by various departments I am confident our VET to Tertiary transition will be successful and most importantly, beneficial for our paramedical staff. I will be happy to discuss the options available for assistance with anyone who would like to give "educating" a go.

July brought with it the last group of students that will commence in the VET Diploma stream. Ten full time students and a volunteer enrolled on the course. The program went well but it felt quite strange to know



Paramedics in Training

that this would be the final group of Diploma students to be educated in Training Hall 2! I wish all the students well, and hope that at least some of them may consider converting to the Degree at a later date.

From June 30 2010 to June 30 2011 PTC has taught:

- Two Clinical 1 courses with class room clinical components for each program delivered over six weeks. Combined, these courses comprised of 27 students for a total of 6,430 Actual Student Contact Hours (ASCH). The six weeks included intensive clinical training, three clinical examinations, numerous Drug Protocol quizzes, a Clinical logbook which requires 160 hours of assessment and further logbooks and assignments to ensure that students meet the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) requirements.
- Three Driving and Vehicle Maintenance programs were delivered with each running over two weeks. Combined these programs comprised 38 students for a total of 3,040 ASCH. These two weeks include all facets of driving and vehicle maintenance and includes Code 1 driving requirements. The students are required to complete a road rules test, numerous practical assessments and must complete an 80 hour driving logbook to meet all unit requirements.
- Four Specialist Scene Management and Patient Extrication courses with each delivered over two weeks were offered. These programs comprised a total of 27 students for a total of 2,160 ASCH. Each two week program consists of extensive 'hands on' practical experience in Rescue and Disaster Management and includes a written assessment and various assignments.



New Patient Transport Officers – August 2011

- One Clinical 2 program was delivered over four weeks. This program comprised of four students for a total of 480 ASCH. This four week program is preceded by students nominating for the course having met all prerequisite standards and also successfully completing a pre course Drug Protocol examination and research assignment. The course is an intensive, clinically challenging course which requires students to conduct a research project and present their findings to the cohort; sit three clinical examinations, numerous Drug Protocol quizzes and complete a Clinical logbook, assignment and Paramedic Portfolio. As mentioned previously, one NEPTS program was conducted over three weeks. This program consisted of eight students for a total of 960 ASCH. The students are required to complete a series of workbooks, logbooks and minor research projects to meet the requirements of the Certificate III in non-emergency patient transport, qualification.

Overall it has been a busy, successful and rewarding time for the Paramedic Training College. I sincerely acknowledge the support given to me by Paramedical Education Officers Brad Sanderson and Sam King, as well as the numerous others who variously contribute their time, skills and knowledge to Paramedic development during the 'academic' year. Thanks also to Christine McLeod-Curran, the Paramedic Training College's

Administration Officer. We sometimes forget that as busy as it may get from a front of class training delivery perspective, each program presented brings with it a myriad of pre and post-administrative tasks Christine contributes her significant skills in these areas both effectively and efficiently.

**Lynda McMeekin,
Paramedic Education
Manager**



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Ambulance Centre named

The Ambulance Centre on Telegraph Terrace in Alice Springs, has been the home of St John Ambulance since the early 1980's.

At a special ceremony held on 16 September, as part of the Alice Springs 50th Birthday celebration, the 'Centre', was officially named. The choosing of the name was very easy, the honour given to long term Board member and well respected Alice Springs identity Mr Bernie Kilgariff AM, or Bern to his friends. The Centre will now be known as the Bernie Kilgariff Complex in honour of our friend. Bernie was a St John Board member for over twenty years and was always happy to attend cadet presentation nights, help with cadet proficiency badges and be present at volunteer functions.

He was a strong supporter of anything to do with the St John Volunteers and it is very fitting that he be remembered in this way. Mrs Aileen Kilgariff and members of the Kilgariff family attended the ceremony to witness the unveiling of the newly named building. Current St John Board Member, Fran Kilgariff spoke on behalf of the Kilgariff family and presented CEO, Ross Coburn with a signed copy of Bernie's book *"They Started Something" A Biography of Bern and Aileen Kilgariff*.



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Australia Day Honours for St John NT

St John Ambulance Australia (NT) Inc congratulates all St John recipients for their achievement of 2011 Australia Day Honours Awards.

St John Ambulance Australia (NT) Inc congratulates all St John recipients for their achievement of 2011 Australia Day Honours Awards.

St John NT Chairman, Mr Michael Mooney AM KStJ and Chairman of the St John NT Endowment Trust, Mr Andrew Bruyn AM were both appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia, marking the personal and professional achievement of their significant contribution of service and commitment to the Territory community.

Recipients of the 2011 Student Citizen Awards included St John NT Cadets, Leanne Eltagonde, Christine Gardiner, Luke McLaughlin, Paige Wilson and Lauren Coghil. Their dedication to their Cadet roles is highly commended, not only by the staff and volunteers of St John NT, but also by the community of the Northern Territory.

Keeping it in the family, three of our Cadets from Nhulunbuy were also acknowledged for their committed service to St John NT and their community and were awarded 2011 Young Citizen of the Year. Congratulations to Ky Baker, Kasey Baker and Ashleigh Baker on this very important acknowledgement of their service to the Territory community.



Chairman of the St John NT Endowment Trust, Mr Andrew Bruyn AM, appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia by Administrator for the Northern Territory, Mr Tom Pauling AO QC

Congratulations!

St John Ambulance NT congratulates the following named members acknowledged for their commitment to the Territory community in last year's Australia Day Awards and Honours.

Members of the Order of Australia

Mr Michael Mooney AM KStJ
Chairman St John Ambulance Australia (NT) Inc

Mr Andrew Bruyn AM
Chairman St John Ambulance Australia NT Endowment Trust

Student Citizen Awards

Leanne Eltagonde - Palmerston Cadets and Youth Division
Christine Gardiner - Palmerston Cadet Division
Luke McLaughlin - South Coast Division
Paige Wilson - Palmerston Cadet Division
Lauren Coghil - Rind Cadet Division

Young Citizen of the Year

Ky Baker - Nhulunbuy Cadets
Kasey Baker - Nhulunbuy Cadets
Ashleigh Baker - Nhulunbuy Cadets

Thank you for your vital and ongoing commitment for safety and wellbeing of the Territory community.

St John

Leading in the Northern Territory for Ambulance and First Aid Services

www.stjohnnt.org.au



St John NT Chairman, Mr Michael Mooney AM KStJ, Appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia by Administrator for the Northern Territory, Mr Tom Pauling AO QC

Community Care Launch & Opening of the Refurbished Darwin Volunteer Office

On Wednesday the 16th March 2011, St John NT was proud to launch the St John Community Care Services, a new and important service provided by our dedicated Volunteers across the Territory.

St John Community Care has been established in partnership with Home and Community Care (HACC) and Carers NT Community Care as the newest arm of St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory. Community Care services were established in response to needs identified in the community to provide much needed help to a wide range of vulnerable people in many different, less visible ways. Today there are over 2,400 St John Community Care volunteers around Australia.

Through the Volunteer Social Support Service, our Community Care members help provide a range of services for frail aged people, younger people with disabilities and their carers who are socially isolated, which support independence at home and in the community to prevent premature or inappropriate admission to residential care.

The program aims to:

- Build social inclusion by providing companionship and support to members of the community in times of need; and
- Improve the quality of life for vulnerable people living independently at home.

St John Community Care enlists the help of caring volunteers who give freely of their time, skills and experience. They know that even a little regular help can often make a great deal of difference to the life of someone else. The value of this support is immeasurable, for both recipients and volunteers.

Community Care is about bringing happiness into people's lives.

St John Community Care Volunteers benefit from

making a rewarding and valuable contribution to their community, whilst having fun and developing lasting friendships. Volunteers are provided with training, support and assistance and have the opportunity to utilise valuable knowledge/abilities to help others.

The Community Care launch was also a timely opportunity to officially open the newly refurbished Darwin Volunteer Office at Casuarina and to present the 2011 Richard Morris Award.



The Richard Morris Community Spirit Award

The Award was named in honour of Mr Richard Morris AM KStJ who was Chairman of the Board of St John for over a quarter of a century.

Richard made an enormous contribution to St John and as the first Chairman was the driving force behind numerous successful ventures and ideas including the establishment of the Ambulance Service.

As St John Chairman from 1977-2000 he was instrumental in ensuring that St John became the leaders in first aid services and pre-hospital care.

Richard came to Darwin initially in 1966, briefly moved to Tasmania and then returned in 1970 where he and wife Gael remained until Richard's retirement in 1997, which saw their relocation to Bairnsdale in Victoria. Unfortunately, early 2009 marked the sad passing of Richard after a long battle with cancer. However, he left us with a wonderful legacy and many fond memories. Richard's wife, Gael, contacted St John and offered an Endowment Trust to support the volunteers.

The Richard Morris Community Spirit Award is given to members of St John NT Volunteers, who openly display a great Community Spirit. Due to the high level of commitment of volunteers across the Territory, there are two annual awards – one for Greater Darwin, which includes Darwin, Palmerston & Humpty Doo and one to include all other regions – Batchelor, Nhulunbuy, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. The winners are given the opportunity of attending the National St John Member Convention.

Congratulations to the two winners of the inaugural Richard Morris Community Spirit Award – Christine Turner for the Greater Darwin area and Darrin Whately from Tennant Creek who was the Regional Winner.



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St John Ambulance NT Endowment Trust

Securing the future safety of our community through our Volunteers.



The St John Ambulance (NT) Endowment Trust was formed in 1987 to support and assist the St John Ambulance Australia (NT) Inc. charitable and ambulance arms of the organisation. It is chaired by Mr Andrew Bruyn AM, General Manager of Channel Nine Darwin and its Patron Chief Justice Trevor Riley, QC, KStJ.

As an initiative to reinvigorate the St John Ambulance NT Endowment Trust and invite future and ongoing contributions to the fund, St John NT has invited respected members of the Territory business community to be our guests at a number of "Dine beneath the Stars" dinner functions across various locations, with the most recent being held in Alice Springs in June 2011. Guests were presented with information about the work of St John in the Territory and an invitation to share in the future vision for St John Ambulance Australia (NT) Inc.

We are always inspired by businesses who share our passion for the Territory community and the valuable contribution our Volunteers make to the vibrant lifestyle and wonderful events we enjoy as Territorians every year.

Guests at the Alice Springs Dinner were treated to the warm and generous hospitality of St John Ambulance NT Endowment Trust Chairman, Mr Andrew Bruyn with a delicious meal prepared on site at the Alice Springs St John centre. Serving our guests with style were our dedicated team of Volunteers in Black and White and Alice Springs staff who were responsible for making these evenings so successful.

A well attended "Supporter Thank you" dinner was also held in Darwin in April 2011, where current supporters of St John NT were treated to a sumptuous meal at

Darwin's famous Char restaurant. Guest were presented with information on how their support has already made a significant difference to the Volunteer capability of St John Ambulance across the NT, with the renovations completed at the Casuarina Volunteer office and completion of the Volunteer Disaster Response Storage facilities at Parap, Palmerston and Alice Springs.

The Endowment Trust plays a pivotal role in the provision of funds to allow St John Ambulance Volunteer members, to provide safe, skilled and professional First Aid assistance. There are currently over 500 members who provide thousands of hours annually for community events throughout the Territory. Endowment Trust 'Dine beneath the Stars' dinners have focused specifically on raising much needed support for Volunteer divisional buildings and infrastructure which require redevelopment and refitting, to ensure our growing numbers of Volunteers and Ambulance Officers are provided with safe and secure premises to attend professional development training and store valuable First Aid equipment.

The "Dine Beneath the Stars" dinner functions have helped in raise much needed funds, in addition to achieving an increased profile and knowledge about the operations of St John in the Territory (including Volunteer services, Contract Paramedical Services, First Aid Kits and Sales and First Aid Training).

On behalf of all St John Ambulance Volunteers across the Territory, we extend our gratitude to all businesses who have contributed to securing the future safety of our community through our Volunteers.

St John Ambulance Australia (NT) Inc. - Leaders in the Northern Territory for Ambulance and First Aid Services

St John Volunteers are ordinary people with everyday lives who give up their spare time to provide first aid services to the Northern Territory community. On behalf of the Territory community St John NT would like to say **thankyou** to the following supporters.

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2011 Investiture and Graduation Ceremony

Once again, it was a fabulous occasion at our annual Investiture and Graduation Ceremony, hosted at Government House by His Honour the Administrator Mr Tom Pauling AO QC KStJ, overlooking the harbour.

It is always such a special occasion and a favourite on the St John calendar.

The evening is our chance to recognise and reward our dedicated staff and volunteers for their contribution to St John and the Community. This year was a very special occasion as Angie Butler was invested as a Dame of Grace of the Order of St John and Chief Justice Trevor Riley was invested as Knight of Grace. Dawn Bat was promoted to Officer. Ron Owen was admitted as a Member of the Order and received his medal at the ceremony in Alice Springs in September.

Congratulations to all the members who received Service Medals and Bars and Commendations.

Admissions & Promotions

Promotions

Chief Justice Trevor Riley QC – Promoted to Knight of Grace

Mrs Angelina Butler – Promoted to Dame of Grace

Mrs Dawn Bat – Promoted to Officer

Admissions

Mr Ronald Owen – Admitted as Member of the Order of St John

Volunteer Medals and Bars

37 years – Mr Alan Bromwich

32 Years – Dr Lionel Crompton

32 Years – Mr Peter Poole, Mrs Lesley King

27 Years – Chief Justice Trevor Riley

27 Years – Mrs Lenaire Keatch

22 Years – Mr Michael Mooney

17 Years – Mr Wayne Bevan, Mr Stephen Baddeley, Mr Glen Auricht

12 Year Medals – Mr Geoff Kain, Ms Kate Anning, Mr Stuart Anderson

Priory Vote of Thanks

Mr Andrew Bruyn AM

Colemans Printing

Nicole Dunn – Ward Keller

Commendations:

Mr Brett Butler – Silver

Ms Samantha Cameron – Silver

Ms Belinda Graham – Silver

Mrs Narelle McLaughlin – Silver

In addition to the Investiture ceremony, this year we are proud to have been able to present ten Paramedics, with their Diploma of Paramedical Science (Ambulance) at the ceremony, with a further two receiving their Advanced Diploma.

Staff who have achieved lengthy service, were awarded a service bar. Recipients this year were:

5 Years – Rosie Ballinger, Kay Blakeman, Angie Butler, Phil Blyth, Matthew Cowie, Ben Farkus, Beverley Hellyer, Robyn Timney.

10 years – Simon Cooper, Steve Reubenson.

15 Years – Shaun Daniel, Michelle Gough.

20 Years – Kevin Blake, Craig Garraway, Michael McKay.

25 Years – Wendy Jackson, Mark O'Shaughnessy, Brendan Quirke.

Congratulations to all those who were part of the ceremony and for your continued loyalty and dedication to St John in the Territory.



From the Volunteer Office

What a busy year the volunteers have had. In addition to supporting our community and providing a valuable first aid service we also introduced a new Reward and Recognition system for our members, the Volunteer Office moved into their new premises, the Community Care Program was launched, the Working with Children Card "Ochre Card" was introduced, the Litchfield Rural Response Division was established and Kathy Allen joined the Volunteer Office staff.

Eighteen members from the NT attended the 2011 National Cadet Camp which was held at the Sunshine Coast in Queensland in January. Unfortunately due to heavy rain the roads and recreational facilities were effected which significantly reduced the cadet activities and forced the early closure of the camp.

In March the Nhulunbuy Division held their annual inspection and was very privileged to have His Honour the Administrator, Mr Tom Pauling AO QC KStJ and Mrs Tessa Pauling attend and make the presentations to the members. Dawn Bat, one of the original members of the division, also attended and talked about some of the early history of the division.

St John commendations

St John has introduced a single system of 'One St John' Commendations. These replace the Commissioner and Chief Commissioner letters of commendation and meritorious service certificate. The Commendations are a wonderful way of recognising the contribution by our members and the awards approved this year are for a wide variety of voluntary service.

This year we recognised seven members of St John for their outstanding contribution.

Belinda Graham – For her work with the CEO and Members of the Board and her voluntary contribution assisting the volunteers with fundraising.

Samantha Cameron – Sam was recognised for her work with the Tennant Creek cadets.

Brett Butler – For arranging driving courses and other events for volunteers and also for his contribution to recording the history of St John and regular features in the newsletter.

Narelle McLaughlin – A member of the public contacted us advising us that Narelle often used her first aid skills in a local shopping centre assisting members of the general public.

Geoff Lohmeyer – Recognised for his contribution to training, both volunteer and providing training industrial first aid courses for the general public.

Bianca Stubbs – Bianca was recognised after she assisted a young girl who was injured at the Katherine Show.

Axl Dethmore – Recognised for assisting a women who collapsed at the Darwin Airport.

Cyclone Carlos

In February, after days of very heavy rain Darwin was faced with the prospect of severe damage when Cyclone Carlos hovered over the Northern Territory coastline. However, in spite of record rainfall, the cyclone did little damage



to the Top End apart from some minor flooding and trees destroyed. Some volunteers were rostered in one cyclone shelter for two days while others were kept busy restocking first aid kits and making cyclone provision preparations. Once again, Darwin was spared from cyclone damage but perhaps makes a little more prepared for the next time.

Lesley King recognised for her contribution to the community

Lesley King was one of eleven Northern Territory women recognised in the 2011 Tribute to Women celebrations. The Tribute to Northern Territory Women is an award bestowed by the Minister for Women's Policy honouring women who have made, or are making, a significant contribution to the Northern Territory. The award began in 2003 and, to date, more than fifty women have been honoured. Lesley was recognised for her 33 years of voluntary service to St John Ambulance and the NT community.

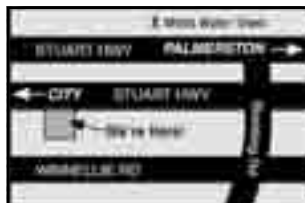
2011 NT Cadet Competitions

The 2011 Northern Territory Cadet Competitions were held on Sunday 2nd October at the Free Spirit Resort in Palmerston with both the team and individual scenes situated under the shade of the trees. Although at times there was a breeze for most of the day it was very hot and humid. Teams from Nhulunbuy, Alice Springs and Katherine made the journey to Darwin to compete against teams from the Darwin area. Competition Manager, Hailee Skinner did a great job of organising the event.

Congratulations to the winning team, Band – Luke McLaughlin, Alex Chin and Gemma Gray, the Individual competitor, Sarah McLaughlin and Team Manager Amy McKay. The team will be representing the Northern Territory at the National First Aid Competition which will be held in Perth in January 2012.



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Reflecting on 20 Years of the Finke Desert Race

With Paramedic and Operations Manager – Northern, Craig Garraway.

The role of a Paramedic is sometimes challenging enough, without adding to it the difficulties associated with an extreme sport; a remote and rugged working environment; and large numbers of injuries all happening at the same time, along a 300km dusty track. But Craig Garraway, Paramedic and Operations Manager for the Northern region of the Territory, keeps returning, year after year, for more of the action.

The Tattersall's Finke Desert Race is an off-road motorsport event held in Central Australia during the Queen's Birthday long weekend, in June every year. The race is one of the most unique off road events in Australia, attracting competitors from all around the world and is one of the official rounds of the Australian Off-Road Championship.

St John Ambulance NT has provided emergency and first aid support to the event for as long as many of us can remember. Paramedics and Volunteers get the opportunity to be involved in an event that has in excess of 550 motorbikes and 100 cars, competing. The remoteness makes it a unique environment to practice Paramedicine, with injuries including serious fractures, broken collarbones and limbs, internal injuries and serious spinal injuries.

For the last 20 years, Craig has been part of the St John NT contingent and now seems to have the red dirt of the Finke Desert track running through his veins.

Craig started with St John NT as a Volunteer in 1988 and like many, was inspired to progress into a career as a Paramedic in 1990. After only one year of Paramedic experience, Craig eagerly joined his colleagues for what would be his first Finke Desert Race.

"My first impression of Finke was pure excitement. I was awestruck and so overwhelmed by the vast distances between emergency help, the dust and the sheer madness of the bike riders. It was my first year as a Paramedic, so I was also very hesitant in my abilities to cope with such a big event" said Craig when reflecting on his first Finke Desert Race in 1991.

Providing emergency and first aid response services to the race each year involves the coordination of large numbers of Paramedic personnel, Volunteers, vehicles, aircraft and medical supplies and equipment. The demands of the Finke Desert Race sees the St John centre in Alice Springs jump into a hive of activity for more than two weeks leading up to the event. Staff are busy preparing vehicles, briefing staff and volunteers, stocking emergency response packs and organising food and supplies for an over night camp in the desert for everyone involved.



A team of approximately 35 Paramedics and Volunteers are positioned at designated locations along the Finke Desert track, in addition to providing helicopter retrieval and chase vehicle response capabilities. Emergency medical aid is also supported by an onsite health clinic at the community of Finke, staffed by a Doctor and a number of registered nurses.

The remote location of the race poses the main challenge to Paramedics responding to calls for emergency assistance from race participants. "The remote location of the race does create problems with locating patients" said Craig. "Patients can be laying on the ground for long periods of time, sometimes up to 1-2hrs, waiting for help to arrive. Communicating via radio is often difficult, making evacuation problematic when trying to mobilise the right resources. The large number of injuries that occur simultaneously can sometimes create a logistical nightmare".

Upon reflecting on 20 years of the Finke Desert Race, the most recent 2011 Finke Desert Race has stood out as especially memorable for Craig. "The 2011 race will always be very special for me in a number of ways. I got to meet the World Champion Solo Rider, Australian Leigh Adams, who unfortunately had sustained serious internal and spinal injuries in a pre-running accident. Adding to the excitement of meeting one of my racing idols, my son Anthony competed for the first time in the race, at the age of 16 years, making 2011 the most stressful Finke Desert Race of my 20 years at the event" said Craig.

"You get to work with amazing individuals, both Paramedic staff and Volunteers, some coming from interstate just to experience this unique event. The atmosphere inspires me to continue returning year after year. I will definitely be back again in 2012 and for many years to follow".



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Katherine Division Disaster Response Trailer

On Thursday 28th July 2011, the Rotary Club of Katherine and Katherine Regional Community Bank® – Bendigo Bank presented the new Disaster Response Trailer to the Katherine Division of St John Ambulance NT.

The new Disaster Response Trailer will ensure that First Aid supplies and equipment are ready to quickly mobilise in the event of natural disaster and enhance the 'readiness' of the Katherine community in times of emergency and public need.

Made possible with the support of the Rotary Club of Katherine, the Katherine Regional Community Bank® – Bendigo Bank and the Northern Territory Government, the new Disaster Response Trailer will also assist Volunteers in providing First Aid Services at all public and community events; in addition to allowing Ambulance Paramedic Crews to transport much needed First Aid and Medical Response equipment to rural and regional areas for events and First Aid training needs.

This worthwhile project will benefit both Katherine based St John Volunteers and the entire Katherine region, well into the future. The Katherine community knows first hand of the importance of being "Disaster Ready" and are delighted to be receiving this important resource to St John and the people of Katherine".

St John Ambulance Australia (NT) Inc is grateful to the Board of the Katherine Branch of Bendigo Bank, the Rotary Club of Katherine and the NT Government for their support towards the purchase of the new Disaster Response Trailer for the Katherine Region.

The St John Disaster Trailer has a primary role of ensuring that First Aid supplies and equipment are ready to quickly mobilise in the event of natural disaster. As a secondary

role, the disaster trailer assists Volunteers in providing First Aid Services at all public and community events; in addition to allowing Ambulance Paramedic Crews to transport much needed First Aid and Medical Response equipment to rural and regional areas for events and First Aid training needs. The Trailer is fitted with its own generator, enabling generation of power to sustain operation of life saving equipment; and is stocked with disaster specific First Aid and Medical Equipment.

The Katherine Branch of the Bendigo Bank, the Rotary Club of Katherine and the Northern Territory Government, donated funds to jointly support the purchase the Disaster Response Trailer and we thank them for their valued support of St John Ambulance Volunteers.



Coleman Cup Day 2011

As a valued supporter of St John Ambulance NT Volunteers, Colemans Printing has for the second year in a row, invited St John to be involved as their Charity Partner at the Coleman Cup Day, as part of the 2011 Darwin Cup Festival.



A highlight in the social calendar for the business community of Darwin and the Top End, Coleman Cup Day this year saw approximately 500 guests flock to the race track to enjoy the hospitality of the Colemans Printing team.

St John were delighted to have the opportunity to promote the many services and products on offer at the event, in addition to the sale of more than 1700 tickets sold in the 2011 St John NT Major Raffle, raising over \$8,000 for St John Volunteers across the Territory.

Raffle winners were drawn on the day by Owner/Director of Colemans Printing, Mr Tony Coleman. All raffle prizes were generously donated by St John supporters Sandra Lewfatt Travel, Paspaley Pearls and JR Communications and included a Melbourne Entertainment Holiday Package, a gorgeous Paspaley Pearl Pendant and a 16GB iPhone4. We are sincerely grateful for the support of the businesses who supported our raffle, including all of those who bought tickets in the weeks leading up to Coleman Cup Day. Funds raised as a result of the raffle will go towards purchasing the First Aid equipment used by our Volunteers when providing First Aid Services at the many public and community events that Territorians come to enjoy each year.

St John is proud to partner with a Territory owned and operated business like Colemans Printing, who has demonstrated their community spirit and commitment to the growth of our Volunteers across the Territory through this valued partnership.



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My Thoughts (the censored version)

While housekeeping my work locker recently, I came across a letter postmarked Interstate.. The opening passage began "Dear Bev, I don't know if you remember me ... Oh yes Sue, I remember you and this job very well!!!*



I had graduated to paramedic status a month earlier, when my partner and I were dispatched to the Nitmiluk Gorge helipad, to transport a patient to Katherine Hospital. While my partner was attending her, I noted the Park Ranger taking a phone call. He came running over, and informed me a call had come through – "a female hiker has fallen on the Jatbula Trail approximately five hours ago, she can't move and is in a lot of pain. No other details are available. We need to leave in five minutes if we're going to get her out before dark!"

I phoned the OIC and Comms for clearance and was grabbing equipment, when the chopper pilot joined me and advised that due to space restrictions, I could only take a response kit. I threw in a variety of drugs, bag of fluids, giving set, sheet and cervical collar. Oxygen was definitely out, as was the satellite phone which "wont work where we're going anyway" – "OK let's go"

Sitting in the back of the chopper, my knees nearly touching my chest, I eyeballed the remaining small space taken up with the response kit – *OMG what am I in for!!!*

The pilots voice came through the headset "sit back and enjoy the view, ETA approximately thirty minutes. *This guys a comedian, surely* – as I watched the ambulance with all my lovely equipment, ECG monitor, oxygen, rescue gear, getting smaller and smaller. The umbilical cord snapped as we banked to the right and headed north.

The Park Ranger began a running commentary – "over there is....." *spinal, how am I going to retrieve a spinal* – "and over there is....." *NOF, how the heck am I going to sit her in this thing* – "and those hills in the distance ... *fractured femur, yeah I'll secure the legs together with triangular bandages* – "and see that water hole there....." *what was the precipitating event, she could have a cardiac condition and I can't monitor her* – "and those trees down there....." *protocols, morphine contra-indications and side effects are...* - "and through that gap there is....." *internal injuries, vomiting blood, can't use Maxalon.*

"Nearly there, beautiful country isn't it?" "Umm yeah", *didn't see a thing, bit distracted* "Right – we're going to have to circle the area a few times and find a landing spot amongst all these trees" *ERGH reckon I could do with some Maxalon myself right now!*

"THERE – OK, we'll try over there and we'll have to hike down"

OMG !! those trees are bending awfully close to the rotor blades, wonder if Brett knows where the life insurance

policies are.....AAAAARRRRGGGGG. Down, wooohooo made it. Ok, act cool and in control.

"Right, we're going to have to hike down the escarpment here, step where I step, we don't want you falling and breaking something now, do we? Hahahahahahahaha." *Sigh,!!!!*

"We'll cross the river here, it's the narrowest point." *If you mention crocs, I'm going to be really unhappy!*

As we approached the camp site, I noticed my patient lying supine on the ground with five males and females – all around the ages of late fifties to sixties in attendance – one with a camera taking photos of our arrival.

My patient was conscious, approximately 55 kgs, and in a lot of pain. Her first words to me were "Thank God you're here, I thought I was going to die....." *Ummm yep – I had similar thoughts when we were landing.*

A history of the event and head to toe examination, revealed pain to the pelvic region only. Post observations and vitals, I explained to Sue I was going to cannulate, give pain relief and hook up some fluids. While setting up, the others introduced themselves and their professions – nurses, anaesthetist, pharmacist etc – *Yikes, I'm surrounded by health professionals, eight sets of eyes in a circle watching every move I make, and that blasted camera keeps clicking away. Nothing like a bit of pressure. OK old girl, deep breath, steady the hand and get this cannula in first go, WHEW thank goodness.*

The chopper pilot interrupted my euphoria, "we've got five minutes before we have to leave here, otherwise we'll be camping the night, and its going to be a cold one!"

How the heck am I going to package her for the return trip. If we have to stay the night I am commandeering somebody's sleeping bag – that's it – a sleeping bag!!

While a bag was being sorted, I splinted Sue's legs and feet together with triangular bandages, did another set of obs. log rolled her onto the bag with the others assistance, and slung the sheet under her pelvic region for support. The Ranger and the pilot grabbed the head end corners of the sleeping bag, the pharmacist and myself – the middle, holding the ends of the sheet, and two others at the feet. The others came along to relieve as required, plus carry the primary kit, while the person with the camera continued to

click away. *Gosh I'd like to relocate that camera* – and the hard slog back to the chopper commenced.

I swear Sue gained 50 kgs en route.

Another set of obs taken, a morphine top up given, and Sue was manoeuvred into the front of the chopper, the primary kit placed under her legs for elevated support.

As the chopper took off in the twilight, I looked down – the trees whipping around the rotor blades, the camera clicking away, I felt a huge sense of relief, as my own obs

began stabilising for the first time in the past hour and a half.

Sue's injuries consisted of green stick fractures to the pubic symphysis and sacral region.

Her letter concluded – "a really big thank you for all your care and expertise in my retrieval" – *Thank goodness you couldn't read my thoughts Sue!!!!*

* Not her real name

Beverley Hellyer, Paramedic, Katherine NT



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Volunteer Recognition Weekend

Each year a weekend is dedicated to say thank you to our volunteers. This year's format was slightly different and incorporated a cadet function, member presentations and a member dinner.

The event was held on Saturday 29th October, 2011 at the Reflections Room at the Holiday Inn Esplanade. It was wonderful to see the large number of cadets and their parents who attended and who were able to witness and participate in the member presentations.

This first award was presented to Lesley King who has contributed thirty two years of service to St John and the community. Earlier this year Lesley was recognised in the NT Tribute to Women Awards for making a significant contribution to the Northern Territory.

Unfortunately, Wayne Bevan wasn't able to attend the ceremony but was recognised for his seventeen years of voluntary service and he will be presented with his service bar at his division.

The winners of the 2011 NT Cadet Competitions were also presented with their trophies. Congratulations to Luke McLaughlin, Alex Chin, Gemma Gray and Sarah McLaughlin.

Recognition was also given to two special cadets, Axl Dethmore and Bianca Stubbs, who provided first aid to members of the public in difficult circumstances.

The winners of the Commissioners Awards were:

Adult Volunteer of the Year Award – Paul Berry

Cadet Volunteer of the Year Award – Bianca Stubbs

Operational Support Member of the Year – Rosie Ballinger.

Adult Division Award – Palmerston Division

Cadet Division of the Year – Darwin Cadet Division

2012 Peter Falkland Youth Leader Award – Hailee Skinner

The member dinner after the presentations was a great success with great food, company and fun. Lots of mystery door prizes were on offer but before anyone could collect their gift they had to answer a question. Thanks to Steve and Fiona van Gerwen for preparing lots of tricky questions.

Earlier in the day Superintendents, Territory Officers and representatives from divisions gathered at Palmerston for the Annual Meeting Day. Thank you to National CEO, Peter LeCornu and Kieran Brown for the presentations – Taking Initiative, Personal Development Pathways and Coaching.

The weekend finished with the annual Church Service at Christ Church Cathedral and morning tea. Thank you to all the volunteers for all their hard work and dedication throughout the year.



Commendations Awarded to Cadets Axl Dethmore and Bianca Stubbs

In July this year Palmerston Cadet, Axl Dethmore was at the airport going to Perth when he noticed a lady was in need of medical attention. She was unsteady on her feet and started to collapse. Her distressed husband helped her to the ground and looked around for help. Axl went to her aid, assisted the lady then handed over to Fire and Rescue and the Federal Police. The lady and her husband were very grateful of Axl's assistance.

At the Katherine Show in July this year a 9 year old girl was hurled from "The Crazy Dancer" Ride. Katherine Cadet member, Bianca Stubbs was enjoying some time at the show and was the first person on the scene. Bianca was close to the ride when she heard people calling for St John Ambulance.

Bianca thought that it may be for someone with something mild like vomiting after a ride. She made herself known as a St John Cadet, and was quickly rushed over to "The Crazy Dancer" ride and was confronted with a young female who had some horrific injuries. Bianca started to assess the scene and started treating the patient until the paramedics arrived. The paramedic said that Bianca did a fantastic job, she kept a level head and her knowledge and assistance at the scene was superb.

We are very proud of these two young cadets who have demonstrated such wonderful skills in very difficult circumstances.

Paramedic of the Year Awards 2011

In September this year the annual Paramedic of the Year Awards were held at Parliament House and hosted by the Health Minister the Honourable Kon Vatskalis MLA.

The Rotary Club of Darwin Sunrise initiated the Paramedic of the Year awards to acknowledge the chosen vocation of paramedics through the dedication and service they provide in communities through-out the Northern Territory. Rotary Club of Darwin Sunrise president Di Borella said: "As President of the Rotary Club of Darwin Sunrise it is an honour and privilege to be associated with the Paramedic of the Year Award now in its twelfth year. The Paramedic of the Year Award was formed by the Rotary Club of Darwin Sunrise to acknowledge the chosen vocation of paramedics through the dedication and service they provide in communities throughout the Northern Territory".

"The aim of this award is to recognise NT Paramedics who provide a vital and pivotal role and whose work in most cases goes unrecognised. This award is a way of saying thank you for the amazing efforts they put in and a recognition from their fellow colleagues for their devotion and commitment to duty which in some cases, is often challenging, difficult and dangerous. I would like to thank our ongoing supporters: Northern Territory Government, United Voice, JR Telecommunications, Fire Protection Professionals, Rydges - Darwin Airport Resort, Territory Surgical Supplies, Country Classics and Zip Print".

This year we had a fantastic 19 staff members nominated, and the choice for the winner was a difficult one. The nominees were:

Janna Auricht (Alice Springs) Aaron Brooks (Darwin)
Marcel Clark (Tennant Creek) Rhian Davies (Darwin)
Rhys Dowell (Katherine) Mark Ferguson (Darwin)
Karl Godden (Darwin) Markus Hackenberg (Darwin)
Natalie McKeen (Darwin) Andrew Naden (Alice Springs)
Carlo Novak (Darwin) Bridget Oudeman (Darwin)
Matthew Pullin (Darwin) Warren Purse (Darwin)
Haley Stratton (Darwin) Fiona Sylva (Darwin)
Robert Webster (Tennant Creek) Kim Western (Darwin)
Julie Wickham (Darwin)

The nominations were received from members of the public, who had either been treated by one of the paramedics listed or who had witnessed their work. Nominations were also received from staff regarding the work of their peers and it is pleasing to see such support.

The winner for 2011, Rhys Dowell from Katherine.

Rhys was born and raised in Katherine NT. Rhys joined St John Ambulance as a trainee paramedic in January 2010, where he was appointed to the Katherine Region. Rhys is no stranger to the work that St John Ambulance undertakes, as he initially joined the ranks as a St John

Ambulance Cadet in 2001 for a period of two years, and then rejoined as an adult volunteer in 2008, prior to his commencement as a full time paramedic.

He is respected and well liked by his co-workers. Rhys requires very little supervision, gets on with the task at hand and you can always be rest assured that the task will be completed with the upmost efficiency; he doesn't always give 100% to what he does, more like 150%. He has a calm disposition, is polite, respectful and professional and is an all round likeable person.

Rhys is currently the Superintendent of the Katherine Cadet Division. He willingly stepped up to the roll, without a second thought, when his predecessor vacated the position. He is also an active member of the Katherine Adult Division.

Rhys was nominated for this year's award by two members of the Katherine Community, who recognised that he performed an outstanding role.

Congratulations to Rhys and to all of the nominees, you all do a fantastic job, keep up the good work.

Previous winners

Past winners of the Paramedic of the Year award:

2010: Samantha King (Darwin)
2009: Sue Gibson (Alice Springs)
2008: Beverley Hellyer (Katherine)
2007: Chris Wilson (Tennant Creek)
2006: Annette Ingham (Darwin)
2005: Anthony Wood (Darwin)
2004: Trevor Keatch (Katherine)
2003: Sue Murphy and Karen Joyner (Darwin)
communications officers
2002: Peter Poole (Darwin)
2001: Anne-Marie Muscat (Darwin)
2000: Jim Leigh (Darwin)



On writing a book

I've never written a book before. Well, not a proper one. Twenty or so years ago I did write a little book about the invention of gravity by Sir Zac Neutron. It was a silly thing and never published, with a readership of maybe a dozen people.

Writing a proper book is a lot different, especially a history. I did a bit of historical research about the life of Sir Isaac Newton for my little satirical opus, but historical accuracy wasn't required, just a rather warped imagination.

How did I get started on researching and writing a book about the History of St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory then, you ask? Even if you don't ask I'm going to tell you, anyway. Those not interested should turn the page now and go on to something else.

It all began when Humpty Doo Cadet Hayley Cockman sent me a photo of what appeared at first glance to be a medal of the Order of St John. It had a white Maltese Cross and plain black riband, but with lions between the arms of the cross, rather than lions with unicorns. A clue by Priory historian Dr Ian Howie-Willis led to a bit of internet research that determined it to be a Masonic medal and the story with photos was published in *Vollie News*.

The next spur was to receive a sarcastic email, masquerading as humour, complaining about the Darwin Centre on Ross Smith Avenue being called the Parap Centre in *Vollie News*. This led to more research with another "historical" story published in the newsletter. I use quotation marks because later research has shown a few inaccuracies in a story about the Darwin Centre that was largely derived from other peoples' works. This was a good lesson to a novice historian not to trust previous histories unless their "facts" can be verified from other sources.

After that I was asked to join the St John Ambulance Historical Society and was given a book written by the late Pat McQuillen OSTJ, titled *"Saved any lives today?"* a history of St John Ambulance in the Alice Springs area. I was so impressed by that wonderful work that I suggested we write something similar, but about the whole Northern Territory, not just a single area. An emailed reply from Gwyn Balch, "I like the way you think" started the ball rolling, and here I am today.

Little did I know what I was getting myself in for. This project is a lot bigger than I imagined, although a professional historian may laugh and call it quite small compared with some of their work.

Allowing for the fact that most St John Ambulance Brigade records held in Darwin were lost during Cyclone Tracy, there is still quite a lot of information out there about the early Brigade, Association and Auxiliary.

The starting point was to get onto the internet to see what I could find, and I found heaps. The National Library of Australia's Trove website has a lot of early newspapers and a few different search parameters came up with quite a bit of information about St John Ambulance in the Territory. Next was to search websites of the Northern Territory Archive

Service (NTAS) and the National Archives of Australia (NAA) and they both produced

gold. With the NTAS you need to go into town to view and get copies of records, but NAA is a lot easier in that records can be ordered and paid for over the internet.

After they were both exhausted it was time to go to the Northern Territory Library in Parliament House, Darwin. They have a huge collection of newspapers on microfilm that proved to be an absolute treasure trove of information about the St John Ambulance Brigade. I went there with a list of key dates to search around, but when I started to find such a wealth of information and that some of the key dates were wrong anyway, the list got thrown away and I just started searching everything. The *Northern Territory News* began in 1952, so that seemed like a good place to start. The collection is incomplete with a lot of the early editions missing and it makes me wonder just how much more I'd discover about the Brigade if they were available.

It's very hard on an ageing pair of eyes scanning microfilm for long hours day after day, so a halt was called to spend a few days at the Richard Morris Centre, Casuarina to search the Operations Branch archives. Thanks to Debbie Garraway for providing a lot of her archives, too.

I then found so much information accumulating that it was time to pause the research and start collating and writing a draft. This then became a routine that will continue until the project is finished – research, write it up, research, write and so on until it's time to polish the draft into a finished work, proofread, rewrite, add the photos, indices and other necessary bits and pieces and then submit the whole thing for publication.

The annual Priory Conference will be held in Darwin in 2013 and I'd like to have it all finished by then. However, I'm getting very little assistance with this project and that makes it so much harder. If I can't get it finished by then I'll split the project and bring out a second volume later on. One area I'm particularly lacking in information is the cadet divisions and I really need help there. If it isn't forthcoming that will be one section left out until Volume 2. I've got more information about the long defunct northern suburbs cadet divisions of Casuarina, Sanderson and Leanyer than about our modern day cadets, apart from Humpty Doo – thanks to Hayley Cockman.

My grey hair could mean somebody else having to do Volume 2, if at all, so I'd really appreciate any help I can get. Anybody interested in helping can contact me on email feralfirie@bigpond.com or through the Volunteer Office.

Frank Dunstan



First@Scene – First Aid for Learner Drivers

In our efforts towards Making First Aid a Part of Every Australian's life, St John Ambulance NT is working towards ensuring that future applicants for driving licences in the Northern Territory know how to behave in the event of an accident, and the measures that they can take to assist road accident victims; including emergency action and basic knowledge of first aid.

It is our long term vision to see all learner drivers in the Northern Territory trained in First Aid as part of getting their driver's licence.

First@Scene is a St John Ambulance NT project initiative to reduce road accident deaths and serious injury. It follows increasing concern by ambulance service professionals regarding the unnecessary loss of life at the scene of many road accidents where first aid has not been administered.

First@Scene is an online first aid course where Territorians will be able to access quality first aid awareness training and practical advice about attending to the scene of an accident.

Course material will be presented online, in an interactive manner, where the student learns from both text and pictorial demonstrations of technique and approaches to first aid skills, in addition to providing opportunities to revise principles learnt throughout the course. Online presentation and all content is designed to relate directly with participants aged between 16-18 years of age and considers the needs of indigenous participants. Following the presentation of course content, the student will then be prompted to answer a series of revision questions, testing their comprehension of first aid training taught.

It is estimated that the training course and testing will take the student approximately 30 minutes to complete. Upon successful completion of the training course, the student will be sent a certificate of completion by St John Ambulance NT.

St John Ambulance NT has a diverse and geographically broad reach throughout the Northern Territory in the delivery of training, with networks already established in remote and indigenous communities, secondary education and training providers and youth and volunteer movements. We aim to promote and deliver the First@Scene, focusing on participants between the ages of 16 and 18 years of age, in both urban and remote regions of the Territory. Through the secondary education system of the Northern Territory, we aim to train approximately 2000 Year 10 students each year, Territory wide.

St John Ambulance NT believe strongly in ensuring that all future road users are equipped with First Aid skills and will continue to pursue community, government and corporate support of our vision to ensure that all future Territory road users are equipped with First Aid training.

We are proud to have secured 'seed' funding support this year, towards the First@Scene program, from the Northern Territory Government's Disaster Resilience Fund and the St John Ambulance (NT) Endowment Trust, to ensure our success in initiating this important project.

St John Ambulance Australia (NT) Inc, is also delighted to have had the opportunity to meet with Prime Minister Gillard this year as part of the Palmerston Community Cabinet on 29 June 2011, to discuss our efforts towards Making First Aid a Part of Every Australian's life. St John Ambulance Australia (NT) Inc is passionate about creating a national conversation about Making First Aid a Part of Every Australian's life through initiatives such as First@Scene and will continue to update the Commonwealth Government on our progress towards our goal and pursue opportunities to initiate a nationally focused discussion about the value of Making First Aid a Part of Every Australian's life.



First Aid for Young Indigenous Learners

With the support of the Board, CEO Ross Coburn and Territory Commissioner Steve Peers I was able to work in the Territory for ten weeks (January to April 2011). The project targeted the need to develop first aid learning resources for indigenous learners.



St John officers Mark Ferguson, Mandy Paradise and Kelly Raven had been advocates for better meeting the learning needs of indigenous youth for some time.

While many indigenous students can doubtless handle St John's primary resource book (Australian First Aid Manual), it was recognised that for most young indigenous students, a more "friendly" set of resources could be developed. In the Yirrkala area, English is the third language (coming after the indigenous tongues of "macro" and "micro" forms of Yolgnu Matha).

The initial target group was the student group at Yirrkala School out on the Gove Peninsula. Discussions had been held with the principal late in 2010. Further consultation occurred soon after my arrival in mid January. Importantly, every opportunity to consult with members of the indigenous community (Yirrkala in particular) has been welcomed and utilised. Respect and sensitivity have been crucial in the development of an understanding and effective service. (Ongoing consultation and clear communication will be essential ingredients into the future as well).

As a result, a series of 64 learning sheets covering all the topics of Apply First Aid has been produced. They are highly illustrative with many of the photographic subjects being indigenous people. Throughout the development process, a wide circle of St John staff was consulted and another group was established to provide critical comment on the emerging work.

St John Youth Trainers Kelly Raven and Kathy Allen have been involved in the training delivery. Their feedback has been invaluable as there has been much to learn about the learning environment, preferred learning styles and the effectiveness of the resources themselves.

Producing the learning sheets was not the only focus. In addition, the package includes a Trainer Guide, Suggested Learning Activities and a Voice-Over Powerpoint summary of all topics. Time also allowed for a small number of learning sheets and power point slides to feature the local Yolgnu Matha language. This required the generous support of local indigenous identities.

Currently we are endeavouring to collect evaluative data from this year's students. This will greatly assist in determining the suitability of the resources and will identify any areas that may need some more attention.

Mark Ferguson (previous Officer In Charge) hopes that the program may result in the eventual emergence of a Yirrkala youth being trained and accredited as a St John Paramedic. The more general objective is to raise the capacity of the community to deal with emergency first aid situations before medical assistance arrives. Another long term spin-off might be the eventual formation of a St John cadet unit attached to the Yirrkala School.

The resources have the potential to be used in other indigenous settings throughout the Territory and in low-literacy groups such as recently arrived immigrants and refugees.

Many thanks to the Territory Board (under the chairmanship of Michael Mooney) for supporting and resourcing this important project. Particular thanks to Ross Coburn, Steve Peers, Gwyn Balch and Kelly Raven. Throughout Australia, a select group of St John members have been generous in providing timely feedback.

Kieran Brown

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Staff Rewards Scheme

St John Ambulance currently employ in excess of 200 staff members, who are based across the Territory and cover all arms of the organisation including Administration, Paramedic services, First Aid Kits and Sales, Contract Paramedical Services, Volunteers, First Aid Training Instructors for public education, Paramedic Training College staff for in house training, Workshop, as well as Management who are based in all major Centres.

St John Ambulance Australia (NT) Inc is proud to benefit from the long term commitment of team members, who provide the organisation with a strong corporate and historical knowledge base for our newer team members to learn from and a solid foundation on which to base our planning for future projects.

In February of this year, the Board initiated the implementation of a staff reward scheme to thank those staff members who have contributed significant years of service and these inaugural awards were presented at this year's Investiture and Graduation Ceremony held on 1 June at Government House.

Previously we have recognised lengthy service with the presentation of a service bar, for 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service. In addition to this service bar, staff who have achieved the following years of service will be awarded the following recognition:

5 years of service = \$50 Coles/Myer voucher	30 staff
10 years of service = \$250 Red Balloon voucher	17 staff
15 years of service = \$500 voucher of choice	4 staff
20 years of service = \$1000 voucher of choice	4 staff
25 years of service = \$2000 voucher of choice	5 staff
30 years of service = \$3000 voucher of choice	1 staff

In the first round of presentations made on 1 June, St John are extremely proud to announce that there were a total of 61 members of staff who have achieved one of the above milestones and even more impressive that 5 of these staff have been loyal for over 25 years.

As CEO, I am proud to be able to recognise these achievements and congratulate all of our staff on these milestones and look forward to many more dedicated years of service.

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Coming to the service

When I first thought about the idea of becoming a Paramedic, the iconic images of saving lives with flashing lights and fast cars sprang to mind, and the idea of getting paid to do so made it even more enticing, hey who doesn't want to be a hero right?

But a few wise words from people in the know kept my feet on the ground and gave me an insight into the many roles of a paramedic.

I made the move up to the Territory at the start of the year and along with my other classmates we set off on a journey through the undulating rocky mental minefield of Paramedic Training College (PTC). Like many of my fellow "willing participants" we offered ourselves up for 9 weeks of intense brain boot camp, as one new thing learnt was crammed in it felt as if two fell out. But we all survived in varying levels of sanity and formed to become the latest batch of the little green army of St John.

So after PTC armed with all my new found knowledge I made the move south down to Katherine. After being welcomed with open arms it was soon very evident that it had begun. To stay afloat one must swim, and with a set of floaties (kindly donated by all the Katherine crew) attached I waded out into the expanse of Holy Cow! what do I do now.

After several months on-road, learning new skills every day and consolidating as much knowledge as possible as well as making countless mistakes and enough embarrassing moments to keep you entertained for hours, my number came up and it was time to complete the next phase of training. Rescue course, sorry Scene management and patient extrication course, which to be honest is more accurate to what the course involves. There was a bit of theory to wade through and a 1 metre length of rope that became my best friend through learning countless new knots, the mantra "this is my rope, there are many ropes like this but this rope is mine" kept coming to mind every night as I went to sleep. The course involved getting up close and personal with a tazer gun and other assortments of people immobilizing equipment, abseiling, climbing/crawling through tunnels submersed in water, traversing rubble piles, cutting up cars, putting out fires and getting to use some very big and expensive equipment. All in all it was a great experience and at the end of two very fun and intense weeks I feel just that little bit closer to reaching my goal of becoming a paramedic. There is however still a very long way to go.

I have ticked over just 10 months with St John and I have loved every moment of it, even the endless hours of study, and I'm well aware that I have many more of these endless hours ahead, but the sense of achievement and satisfaction from that one job when you actually help someone definitely makes it worthwhile.

Sure there are some long hours and sides to humanity that most of us prefer not to witness and everyone has their breaking point. I have however been lucky enough to work with some amazing people and from this insight and knowledge I have gained I think there are two words



that sum up the values of what it takes to become a good paramedic, Passion and Respect. From the still wet behind the ears trainees like myself with their heads still spinning from Paramedic Training College working out how to put on my gloves without looking like a Muppet to seasoned veterans of the game who may hide this passion and respect beneath a tough exterior, however when the time arises it is these people with passion and respect that I would want to be treating me, and I look forward to many more years of working with people like this.

It has taken me almost 3 months to complete this article, it may not be long but it is hard to put into words accurately the variations of emotions and high and lows this job brings, the personal questions it asks and also answers. I have tried to write this after jobs of varying natures and different times of shifts and levels of alertness to try and keep it as accurate as possible. Even as I read back over it again and edit it once more, I still smile as I know that I have made the right choice.

Justin Blomeley,
Student Paramedic



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