



RESPONSE

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AMBULANCE SERVICE STAFF NEWSLETTER.

29796

The Three Year Fight For Funding **RADIO BID DELAY** **'VERY WORRYING'**

THE Trust board are seriously concerned about the operational capability and reliability of the 14-year-old radio system.

Problems have been steadily increasing for the past three years – a period when the board have been attempting, continuously but unsuccessfully, to get funding for a new system.

The latest rejection, just a few weeks ago, followed a highly detailed, exhaustively researched 'business case' document which included the highest level of professional input. It also had the full support of the Trust's purchasers.

Now, with staff coping with a 15 per cent increase in accident and emergency calls, a very worrying situation is developing.

Station officers are briefing staff on the situation, and chief executive Mike Handy praised them for the 'tremendous professionalism' of their response to the difficulties.

Chairman Peter Featherby pointed out that the Trust's Strategic Plan in 1993 warned that the communications systems would have to be replaced within two years because of:

- unreliability and obsolescence
- inability to cope with current activity
- the need to use modern technology with high capacity.

UPDATE

The next step in a very long and slow procurement process is a meeting of all relevant parties in Nottingham on 31 July.

Mike Handy commented: "Unfortunately, given the background, no one would guarantee that this meeting will advance our cause."

Frustrating

The frustrating procurement 'trail' dates from October 1993 when the outline business case for the replacement system was first submitted to the NHS Outpost in Leeds.

It has continued, month by month for almost three years. It has consumed huge amounts of management time – plus costly outside consultants.

The latest rejection letter, just a few weeks ago, conceded that there is "a clear need for this investment." But it added – "we cannot recommend the case for



•ABOVE: From left chief executive Mike Handy, Patrick Machin, Malcolm Dean and chairman Peter Featherby.

TWO staff have won bravery awards for treating a stabbing victim, surrounded by a hostile crowd.

Malcolm Dean and Patrick Machin were called to the incident at a club in Nottingham. Despite the threats from the large crowd around the victim, the crew – "acted with courage, professionalism and an overriding sense of duty."

They stayed with their patient, despite an atmosphere described by other emergency services who arrived later as – "hostile, threatening and tense."

approval in its present form."

Here, from the long list of significant dates in between, are just a few which mark the continuous, grinding process:

- Apr 94, Trent Regional Office identify business case "high priority"
- Nov 94, Trent Regional Office give scheme approval. Business case described as "high quality"
- Jan 95, preferred supplier

identified – offering savings over the next lowest

- Apr 96, preferred supplier of private finance option identified. Business case again prepared, submitted. Reaction – "excellent business case.... confident of passing it to NHS Executive for submission to Treasury."
- Jun 96, another rejection.



ANNE AIMS FOR QUALITY

NEW training and development manager, Anne Allen is a former police officer with the West Yorkshire force.

Her experience includes information technology and management training for both operational and non-operational personnel.

And her broad aim is – “to provide appropriate progressive and quality training to all staff of the Nottinghamshire Ambulance Service.”

Anne, 38, acknowledges the difficulties faced by both instructional and support staff in the training department, working without a manager for some time.

“I really appreciate the commitment they’ve shown. I know I have a solid base to build on.

Priority

“An urgent priority is the need to train a large number of paramedic technicians by November this year. Starting in September we’ll be pooling resources with other services in Trent, to provide paramedic and technician training on a regional basis. I’ll be evaluating both our department’s contribution to this and also how we have benefited from it.”

With her operational police service background, Anne understands the difficulties of freeing staff to go on courses – “I’ll be looking at ways of assessing staff on site to avoid this problem as much as possible.”

Anne has moved to Nottingham with husband Mick who is from this area. She added: “I’m really pleased to have found such a challenging position.”

SOCIAL life at the station is buzzing. The social club set up regular discos at the Queenswa dust.” But staff would like to share their active social life with colleagues from other stations – let’s start getting to know each other socially too.”

helped good causes – a new computer for Robin Hood Children’s Ward at Kings Mill; a large Cricket is another strong interest, and the team feel a revived inter-station tournament might be a very close-knit community. And this is reflected by the generosity of local people. In

Recently, Clipstone Colts Football Club alone raised £500. So, bridge that so



SIMON Holmes and John Magson have joined Kings Mill from Derbyshire, following the award of ‘preferred provider status’ to the Trust by Mansfield hospitals.

Care assistant John Magson (above) said: “As soon as the transfer was sorted out, the Nottinghamshire personnel department were brilliant. They dealt with all our problems and worries.

The staff have been welcoming. There are two big differences – we now get our ambulances cleaned for us, and we’ve had to find our way around Nottinghamshire!”

Eight new ‘relief’ posts have also been introduced at Kings Mill following a staffing level review. The new recruits trained together – an important factor in the excellent team spirit.

ERIC’S KING THE M

KINGS Mill station ‘boss’ Eric Staley is the longest serving station officer in the county.

Eric – famous for his very large information notices – took up the post in February 1980.

The station has a total of 71 staff, including:

- ✓ 1 station officer
- ✓ 5 leading ambulance paramedics
- ✓ 12 ambulance paramedics
- ✓ 30 ambulance technicians
- ✓ 17 care assistants
- ✓ 2 vehicle cleaners
- ✓ 2 station cleaners
- ✓ 2 maintenance craftsmen

Ramp access vehicles, a new feature at Kings Mill, are increasingly appreciated by staff and patients for their safety and ease of patient-handling.

The station is a tribute to the gardener’s art – flower beds and neat lawns add a welcome splash of colour. The gardener is Paul “Green Fingers” Davenport who spends some of his free time tending to the plants.

•RIGHT: Paramedic with station

Care assistant Suzanne Slaney arrived in January to serve the new Medical Assessment Unit at Kings Mill. A first aid course inspired her change of career from marketing.

“I didn’t think I had much chance of getting a job with the Ambulance Service, but applied anyway. It’s such a good feeling to be part of a genuine team.”

Successful

The station runs a highly successful ongoing PR programme, which has built excellent relations with local hospitals. Alan Hobson, Pete Scrimshaw and Peter Young also visit fire stations, demonstrating new equipment and paramedic skills.

Pete Scrimshaw co-ordinates

THE TWO TONES

THE Two Tones, the ambulance service netball team, have had a fairly mixed season so far.

They started off with a flyer, beating Basford Health Centre 21 to 19. After that things went slightly downhill, losing to Thistle 2, the Revivals and Notts City Shockers in the South Notts Summer League. The team is made up from staff from all HQ departments, Beechdale Ambulance Station, Control, Liaison and Planning. Team captain Gaynor Hawkins said: “Let’s face it, it’d be nice to win! But we’re really only out there for the fun of it and the teamwork – honest. At least it’s helping to keep us fit.

“We also get a chance to mix with people we don’t see a lot at work. We’d love staff from other stations to join in or come along to the matches – we need all the support we can get!”

Practices are every Thursday, 5pm, at headquarters. Anyone interested in taking up the challenge and joining the team should contact either Gaynor or Gloria at headquarters.

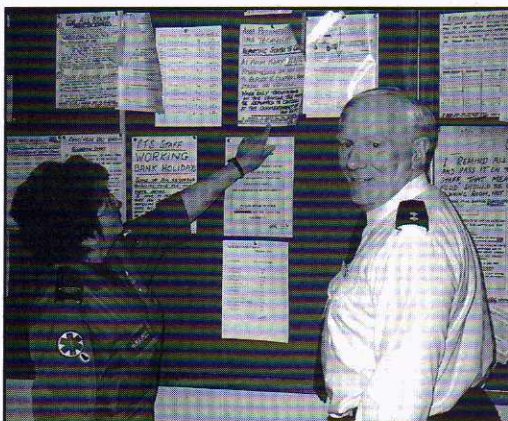


Carl pictured with 1 month old Josep

y Suite, Mansfield Leisure Centre. And tickets are "like gold
ns. One said: "There's still a bit of a north-south divide. We
Apart from being good fun, these social evenings have also
donation to the Guide Dog Fund; and £1000 for Dunblane.
ht also build relationships. The station is an important part
he last year they've donated over £10,000 to the station.
cial gap – come and join in the fun at Kings Mill.

OF MILL

edic Lynn Rutland
officer Eric Staley.



attendance at schools,
fairs, and similar events.
It's a sign of their
commitment, that crews
usually make these
visits in their own time.

Leading ambulance
paramedic Kevin
Charles said: "A lot of
our PR work is directed
at children. Our main
aim is to rid them of
their fear of
ambulances. We show
them how to do basic
tasks such as phoning
for an ambulance and clearing
airways. We use teachers as
'dummies' – needless to say
this goes down very well!

"It's great to know we're
building important links for the
future. By the end of school
visits, kids who were
apprehensive are often playing
happily inside an ambulance."



•From left, Colin Whitby, Eric Staley, Lynn Rutland, Ian Marshall and Bill Lansdown.

ONE of Kings Mill's best known features is its collection of vintage vehicles. The three – dating from 1949, 1950 and 1954 – were lovingly restored by dedicated station staff volunteers. Retired ambulanceman Jack Cheetham spends more time with them than when he was at work. The ambulances are shown at fairs and exhibitions in a 'new and old' display, alongside modern vehicles and equipment. They visit around twenty events a year, and are kept in tip-top condition by Jack, Bill Lansdown and the other enthusiasts. The furthest they've travelled so far is Exeter, but requests have come from as far afield as Holland.

'WHEELY' GOOD!

KINGS Mill has its own self-contained, dedicated vehicle maintenance facilities.

It maintains its own vehicles, ones from Retford and Worksop as well as operating a contract to cover the Bassetlaw Hospital fleet.

Maintenance craftsman Ian Marshall (below) who works with colleague Jim Smith, said: "On average, we service and repair up to ten vehicles a week. We arrange our own schedules and ensure no vehicles are off the road for any longer than necessary."



Jim and Ian have been at Kings Mill for 10 years. And, like the rest of the Service, they are continuously training to meet new challenges – recently they did a course on servicing the new tail lift ramps.



OUR ALAN IS EXCEPTIONAL

PARAMEDIC Alan Marwood has won a major award for his professional skills.

He received the prestigious International Medical Services Regional Award for using his paramedic skills "in exceptional circumstances" to resuscitate a 10-year-old child with serious multiple injuries. And now he's also been nominated for the national award.

Alan and his paramedic-trained colleagues are, of course, specialists in paediatric resuscitation, trained to revive even new-born babies.

Alan said: "I'm very proud, but the award is really a symbol of the very high quality of expertise and care our Service offers to the public."

MANX MAN

THE Isle of Man has recently seen the best in coordination skills and professionalism from Retford leading paramedic Neil Cuthbertson. He went along for the Jurby Sprint for Drag Motorbike racing, rubbing shoulders with the likes of Sean Connery and Burt Reynolds.

And Neil showed how to do the perfect somersault – over a mini! The unplanned stunt – or some may call it 'accident' – happened as Neil arrived on his road bike.

No ambulance was called as Neil walked away unharmed, but it did affect his performance in the main events. But there was more success for others, with the world wheelie record being set at 147 miles per hour.

And a professional footnote – the only injury paramedics from Nobles Hospital, Douglas had to deal with was the scraped knee of a stunt rider.

IT'S GOOD TO TALK

COOL-thinking controller Carl Denton saved a choking baby's life – by talking down a phone to a frantic young mum.

Seven month old Joseph Westwood bit off more than he could chew – and got a large chunk of apple stuck in his throat.

As he gasped for breath, mum Melanie, 24, of Kirkby in Ashfield, slapped him on the back in a vain attempt to shift it. She dialled 999 – and got through to controller Carl, a trained paramedic.

He dispatched an A&E vehicle from Kings Mill station. Then he soothed Melanie and began to talk her through the steps to save her baby's life. Melanie relayed them to husband Ray.

Carl instructed them on a technique known as the Heimlich Manoeuvre which involves pushing the chest inwards. It worked – the apple chunk flew straight out, and young Joseph bawled with relief.

Carl said: "I was absolutely delighted to get the problem sorted over the phone. But the real heroes of this situation were Melanie and Ray. When you consider the stress they were under, they coped magnificently."

The ambulance arrived only nine minutes after the call, but the problem had been resolved. The crew gave Joseph a thorough examination and declared him fit and well.



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STAFF NEWS

APPOINTMENTS

AMBULANCE CARE ASSISTANTS

Simon Glenn (West Bridgford)
Claudine Woolley (Stapleford)
Sarah Webb (Retford)

TRAINING DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Anne Allen (HQ)

CONTROL ASSISTANT

Deborah Swales (Control)

TERMINATIONS (Retiring or Leaving)

Don Haynes – Control

Superintendent (Control)

Peter Wilson – Ambulance

Technician (Kings Mill)

Lynda Haynes – Liaison

Assistant (QMC Liaison)

Martin Truman – Ambulance

Care Assistant (Arnold)

TO AMBULANCE PARAMEDIC STATUS

Graham Needham (Worksop)

Duncan Booth (West Bridgford)

Ann Booth (Arnold)

Tracy Smithson (Arnold)

David Brown (Kings Mill)

TO AMBULANCE CARE ASSISTANT STATUS

Ian Smith (Retford)

Charlotte Smith (Wilford)



Congratulations to Yvonne Berry (Planning) on the birth of her daughter Megan



Congratulations to Lisa Jamison (QMC Liaison) who married on 8 June 1996 and is now Lisa Derrick

NEWS IN BRIEF

THE Trust wishes both Don and Linda Haynes a long and happy retirement. Don joined the Ambulance Service in 1961, moving to Beechdale in 1974 and working his way up to control superintendent.

His wife Linda, liaison assistant at the QMC also retired at the end of June. Don says, "I've enjoyed my career. It's been very satisfying helping the public. I'm looking forward to a long and healthy retirement with Linda, but I will miss my colleagues."

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IT'S Goodbye – to Bridget Conneally. She's off to travel Australia before settling in London. Bridget was like a breath of fresh air for the Service when she joined in February 1992, and will be greatly missed by everyone.

And Good Luck – to personnel director Amanda Playle, who is taking a 'Baby Break' at the end of July, and should be back early next year.

Denise Langley will be filling Amanda's shoes as well as her own in the meantime.

THEY THINK IT'S ALL OVER



•Some of the Trust's Euro 96 squad getting ready for the final match at the City Ground with Nottingham Forest ground safety consultant Mike Holford.

Well it is now!

EURO 96 is over and our team can hold their heads high, look people in the eye and say with pride – "We put on a good show."

No – not the England team, the Trust's Euro 96 squad!

Our planning for the third largest sporting event in the world (eclipsed only by the Olympics and World Cup) started a year ago. And, despite an outbreak of heat exhaustion at the close, there were no major injuries reported throughout the period.

The large rush of foreign fans never materialised, so crowds at the City Ground matches were smaller than expected.

Close Liaison

But ambulance cover still had to be organised for all matches and events linked to the tournament. The Trust's planning involved close liaison with many other organisations – police, city and county councils and voluntary ambulance organisations.

The only real problem was a Radio 1 concert when over 12,000 packed the Market Square in hot weather.

Two hundred and fifty cases of heat exhaustion were treated at the scene and 12 minor injury cases were taken to the QMC.

Assistant director of operations Malcolm Hinchley said: "Despite the problems at the end, Euro 96 was a huge success on and off the field. It was very satisfying to see how well our planning paid off."

If it had not been for the speed that the ambulance arrived at my home and the calmness and skill of the ambulance crew, I would not be alive today.

Crew: Kay Gallimore and John Loakes, Beechdale

I am indebted to them for their care and kindness, at a time which left me feeling very frightened and vulnerable - we are indeed fortunate to have such services available to us.

Crew: Gary Simons and John Stokes, West Bridgford

It is very reassuring to know that such a high standard of care, and in particular staff, are employed in such an important service.

Crew: David Darker and Robert Layne, Worksop