



NEWS RELEASE

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Province does not know whether its air ambulance services are meeting patient needs

VICTORIA—The BC Ambulance Service could be doing more to ensure that its air ambulance services deliver timely, quality and safe patient care, said Auditor General John Doyle.

“Air ambulance services have a direct impact on peoples’ lives.” said Doyle. “We expected to find that the BC Ambulance Service was defining, monitoring and improving standards for its air ambulance service, but that was not the case.”

Doyle’s latest report, *Striving for Timely, Quality and Safe Patient Care: An Audit of Air Ambulance Services in B.C.*, looked at whether the BC Ambulance Service has defined service standards for effective patient care. It found that while it has introduced processes to improve the timeliness and quality of air responses, the BC Ambulance Service has not defined objectives or tracked its performance.

“If the BC Ambulance Service had comprehensive performance management practices in place, it could identify issues, improve performance and report results to stakeholders for its air ambulance service,” said Doyle.

The report also revealed that the BC Ambulance Service could do more to ensure it provides aircraft and paramedics based on patient needs. While it does take known business needs into account when awarding aircraft contracts, and considers patient condition and other factors when dispatching its services, an overall assessment of service demands could help it work more effectively.

“Taking a look at whether it has paramedics and aircraft in the right locations and regularly reviewing dispatch decisions could help the BC Ambulance Service improve its air ambulance service,” said Doyle.

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2012/13 Report 13 – *Striving for Timely, Quality and Safe Patient Care: An Audit of Air Ambulance Services in B.C.*

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