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Dear *Victoria*

## **The future of the London Ambulance Service**

Thank you for your letter of 20 December, regarding the Health and Public Services Committee's review *The future of the London Ambulance Service*.

I am responding to the recommendations you asked for TfL to comment on:

### **Recommendation 3**

TfL's Dial-a-Ride service continues to perform well delivering 1,345,152 trips in 2010/11, the highest number ever recorded. The service continues to build on this performance with 969,415 trips completed at the end of quarter 3 which is 22,000 more trips than last year and ahead of this year's higher target. Demand for this service is up 4.2% on last year but despite this increase the service successfully delivers 9 out of 10 of all requests that it receives.

Your report refers to the ongoing review on Door-to-Door services across London to determine how the various services could be brought together. The project board was instigated by London Councils in 2008 and TfL participates in the board's activities along with other door to door commissioning bodies (including the NHS) and stakeholder representatives. I am not aware of participation by any of the service contractors, which I believe is the role of LAS in respect of non emergency patient transport services. I would, however, recommend that LAS contact London Councils should they wish to become involved in the review.

The NHS has a statutory duty to provide non-emergency transport for those of its hospital patients who do not have their own transport and are unable to use mainstream public transport. TfL would not be in a position to remove or relax this requirement; and without corresponding increases in funding for provision of Door-to-Door services we would have concerns if this were to be proposed. The reality is that the funding pressures you describe as facing the LAS are also being faced by many public authorities, including TfL and the boroughs. TfL's Dial a Ride service does, however, on a daily basis already provide transport to many NHS clinics and doctors' surgeries where statutory provision doesn't apply.

#### **Recommendation 5**

TfL is actively engaged in a number of shared services programmes and projects. We have been in dialogue with the LAS on both fuel and facilities management for example. We are aware that the LAS has already confirmed it would like to be actively engaged in this process and there was a working group on facilities earlier this year where the next steps on involving LAS were discussed. In respect of fuel, LAS has been an active participant in discussions on joining up fuel procurement across a number of public bodies in London. Work is ongoing to produce a combined contract.

TfL's Dial a Ride service has been having on-going dialogue with LAS's Patient Transport Services to explore opportunities for closer working, staff development and best practice.

#### **Recommendation 6**

Should the LAS become a Foundation Trust and invite TfL to sit on its Council of Governors, we would certainly consider this.

I hope this is useful.

Yours sincerely



**Peter Hendy**