



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

12 January 2022

Don't call Triple Zero unless it's a genuine emergency

Calls to Triple Zero should be made only in an emergency, as ambulance services nationwide report significant increases in call volumes for non-emergency related matters, such as COVID information.

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said as a consequence the Triple Zero service is experiencing difficulties transferring some calls to ambulance services as its call-takers are occupied dealing with non-emergency calls.

“A considerable volume of calls do not require life-saving emergency assistance, and could be directed to other health services for assistance. I urge people to dial Triple Zero only if there is an emergency,” Minister Fletcher said.

“Triple Zero is one of our most important services, saving countless lives every year, and it's critical we keep that service functioning as it should. The assistance and judgement of every Australian to ensure they call only when there is a genuine emergency is critical to that.”

In December 2021, Triple Zero operators answered more than 940,000 calls; 40,000 more calls than the previous year (December 2020), and over 100,000 more calls than the previous month (November 2021).

These figures show the pressure the service is under, with many of these calls being from people seeking advice or assistance from ambulance services about COVID issues that are of a non-urgent nature and could be handled elsewhere.

Those seeking advice or assistance about COVID-19 symptoms that are not serious should contact [healthdirect.gov.au](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au) or call the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080.

Telstra will be updating its Triple Zero Recorded Voice Announcement advising people seeking advice about COVID-19 to contact Health Direct and the National Coronavirus Helpline.

For other services that can provide support on a range of matters, visit <https://www.australia.gov.au/phone-contacts>.

Media contact:

Imre Salusinszky | 0432 535 737 | Imre.Salusinszky@communications.gov.au