



## Media Release

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Monday 22 March 2009

### More newborn emergency transport

A third custom built emergency ambulance has been added to Victoria's Newborn Emergency Transport Service (NETS) fleet, which is administered by the Royal Women's Hospital.

The Health Minister, Daniel Andrews unveiled the addition during a visit to the Ambulance Victoria and Victoria Police Aviation Facility at Essendon Airport on 18 March.

"This brand new NETS ambulance significantly expands the capacity of the service to transport critically ill babies and infants throughout the state," he said.

The event was also attended by the Chief Executive of the Women's, Dale Fisher, the Medical Director of NETS, Dr Michael Stewart, Ambulance Victoria, donor organisations, families and other supporters.

As the largest baby transport service in the world, NETS Victoria undertakes more than 800 emergency and 1500 non-emergency transports by road every year. The specially built and equipped vehicles allow the NETS doctor and nurse onboard to observe and treat the infants they are transporting with minimal noise and vibration.

The new ambulance was custom-made to include the new state-of-the-art Mansell Neonatal Retrieval System – a fully integrated mobile life support system that includes an incubator, monitors, ventilators and power-lifter which enables the NETS team to provide mobile intensive care to sick babies. NETS vehicles are configured to replicate the hi-tech life support environment of a hospital neonatal intensive care unit.

There are now three purpose-built emergency retrieval vehicles and two non-emergency ambulances in the NETS fleet. Patient transfers have increased by 16 per cent from 2,504 in 2006 to 2,915 in 2009, and time critical retrievals have increased by 10 per cent in the same period.

Dr Stewart said NETS depends on supporters, and donations totalling \$282,000 were received from Variety and Chain Reaction. "The purchase of the new baby transport system we see here today together with the new NETS ambulance have been made possible through their fantastic fundraising efforts, plus \$33,000 from Ambulance Victoria," he said.

The Minister's visit also marked the first birthday of Ambulance Victoria's HEMS-5 air ambulance helicopter which represents a major expansion of the Air Ambulance Victoria emergency service at Essendon Airport.

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