

PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

MEDIA RELEASE

GUNNEDAH AMBULANCE STATION – “A SCANDAL” - DRAPER TELLS PARLIAMENT

7 May 2004

In the NSW Parliament yesterday, Member for Tamworth Peter Draper brought the inadequate condition of the Gunnedah Ambulance station to the attention of the House. Mr Draper praised the contribution of the seven ambulance officers who staff the station, but was critical of the Government's lack of vision in allowing the station to decay to such an extent.

Mr Draper also brought the issue to the attention of the House earlier this week when he pointed out that two new \$100,000 Mercedes Benz ambulances were left out in the weather as they did not fit in the building, and called on the Minister for Health Morris Iemma to commit funds to build a new ambulance station in Gunnedah.

Mr Draper recently toured the station with Gunnedah Mayor Gae Swain and Gunnedah Shire Council General Manager Max Kershaw when he was informed of Council's preferred position to build a new facility on the Gunnedah Hospital precinct.

“Staff have requested funds to improve the station on many occasions but none have been provided,”

Mr Draper said. “I have been informed that local tradesmen are now unwilling to provide written quotes as no funds have been made available in the past to proceed with work to this station.”

Mr Draper called on the Minister to recognise the adverse circumstances under which the hardworking and dedicated officers were working and asked Mr Iemma to re-examine the issue urgently with a view to either upgrading the facility, or preferably building a new station.

“I was astonished at the number of Members who approached me after I had spoken in the Parliament asking if I was exaggerating the circumstances,” Mr Draper continued. “Unfortunately for the staff at Gunnedah ambulance station, I had to inform them that I was not joking, and the appalling circumstances were exactly as I had described.”

The Minister's staff have informed Mr Draper that a detailed investigation will be undertaken into the station's condition, and Mr Draper will be advised of the outcome.

www.peterdraper.com.au

Media Contacts: Peter Draper mob. 0417 290 376 Electorate Office ph. 6766 1422
Parliament House ph. 9230 2341