

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201302648, Scottish Ambulance Service  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** appliances, equipment & premises  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

When Mrs C's husband (Mr C) was taken to hospital by ambulance, the crew could not get the ambulance doors open, and there was a delay getting him to the hospital. Mr C passed away the following month and Mrs C then complained that the Scottish Ambulance Service (the service) had never apologised for the incident. When looking into the complaint, the service were unable to trace any details of the ambulance journey or crew involved. However, they formally apologised to Mrs C for the incident and assured her that steps had been taken to avoid a similar future problem.

Mrs C complained to us that the service had been unable to trace details of having transported her husband to hospital. The service told us what they had done to try and trace the journey. They said that no incident report was completed on the day in question and they received no reports of a vehicle with faulty doors. We were satisfied that they had fully investigated Mrs C's complaint and gone to considerable effort in trying to trace the ambulance and crew involved. We also recognised that, despite not having traced the incident, they had apologised. However, we did not consider that they had taken appropriate action to try to avoid this happening again. We, therefore, made a recommendation.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the service:

- issue an appropriate written reminder to staff of their obligations to formally report any incidents and also any related vehicle maintenance issues.