

'Zero-tolerance' only way to stem ambulance assaults



The introduction of body cameras is a welcome step, but without prosecutions members are still at risk

GMB, the union for ambulance service workers, has called on the government to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to violence and abuse against our emergency service workers.

The call comes as the [news broke today](#) (Wednesday 2 June) that Ambulance crews across England will be provided with body cameras as part of an NHS plan to reduce attacks on staff.

A report from [5 News](#) released yesterday (1 June 2021) revealed that during the pandemic year (March 2020 to April 2021) there were over 10,000 incidents of violence and aggression, including physical and



verbal assaults on ambulance staff.

This is up 12% from the previous 12 months in 19/20, where there were 9,253 incidents recorded.

In 2018 GMB released its '[In Harms Way Report](#)' which revealed attacks on ambulance workers averaged more than eight (8.2) every single day.

GMB were also [successful in campaigning](#) to secure the inclusion of sexual assault in the offences against emergency service workers legislation.

The union has praised the move to introduce body cameras as a 'step forward', but have underlined their belief that without repercussions for perpetrators, ambulance workers are still at risk of being attacked.

In [January](#) GMB called for stronger action after the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) revealed that there had been over 1,600 people charged with assaulting an emergency worker in ways that were linked to Covid-19 in the last 6 months of last year.



Rachel Harrison, GMB national officer said:

"The introduction of body cameras is a welcome step to protect our Ambulance members from violence and abuse.

"However, body cameras alone will not be sufficient to keep our members out of harms way.

"Without prosecutions and sentencing for those who attack our emergency service workers, the assaults will continue.

"GMB calls for a zero tolerance approach to assaults. Without repercussions and prosecutions, certain individuals will continue to attack our members.

"No one should go to work and expect to be assaulted and yet that is the sad reality for many of our members."

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Member requiring help?

Click to contact your local GMB Region

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