

**AMBULANCE TECHNICIAN
BAND 5 APPLICATION
Dec 03**

1. FACTORS

1.1 Knowledge Training and Experience

- Current level 3
- Claim 4

1.2 Physical Skills

- Current level 3(a)
- Claim 4

1.3 Freedom to Act

- Current level 2
- Claim level 3

1.4 Responsibility for Human Resources

- Current level 1
- Claim for level 2

2. SCORE

- KTE 27 up to 42 increase of 15
- PS 27 up to 42 increase of 15
- FA 12 up to 21 increase of 9
- RHR 5 up to 12 increase of 7

Increase in score of 46 up to 359 and Band 5

3. ARGUMENT

- 3.1 Technicians have been increasing their skills and extending their roles and range of duties in many trusts and until this year with the registration of Paramedics there was very little difference between the competencies of the two posts. Many experienced Technicians are

Paramedics in waiting. Under AfC they should be redesignated in recognition of their higher role.

- 3.2 In practice and with the current level of Paramedic training the number of incidents a crew will attend in a normal working day where the skills of a paramedic rather than those of a Technician with extended skills are needed are important to the patient but few in number.
- 3.3 The current knowledge base is common between technicians and Paramedics although with registration and the increasing drug regime we accept that this will change in the future.

Drug Regimes

- 3.4 Whilst the role of Technicians varies trust by trust there are some constants in the majority now expect Technicians to deliver aspirin for heart attack patients; glucose for diabetics; adrenalin by inter-muscular injection; non-invasive use of nebulisers for asthmatics.
- 3.5 Eighteen new Patient Group Directives issued in October. Currently drugs used by Paramedics and Technicians and same protocols in use.
- 3.6 These PGD need an assessment of the patient's need before administration of the drugs. This done by Technicians so justifies the higher level on Freedom to Act.
- 3.7 The Medicines Control Agency Certificate (MCA) used up to this year as confirmation of Technician and Paramedic right to give medication. Same certificate issued in both cases. Many trusts argued that there was no difference between the two posts in giving of medication when Paramedic registration was introduced earlier this year.
- 3.8 Full paramedic skill was defined by the holding of the NHSTA paramedic certificate which is held by Technicians but who were not in a Paramedic post.
- 3.9 Skills in intubation, infusion and defibrillation held in part or full by more senior and practiced Technicians.

Interventions and Procedures

- 3.10 Apart from the nebulisers mentioned above Technicians also use the new 12 lead ECGs which are now being fitted to all vehicles in a national programme of upgrading emergency vehicles. They have also extended their skills through course on and the use of defibrillation, cannulation and interlation. Other changes are probable as the training modules for the new Emergency Care post (Band 6) are devised and further paramedic training is given to Technicians so more rolls are devolved to them.

Equipment and Procedures

- 3.11 Every single front line NHS ambulance in England is to be kitted out with more of the latest technology aimed at treating heart attack victims as quickly as possible.

£14 million of new money has been made available to:

- Equip all front line ambulances with 12-lead ECG machines, which help diagnose heart problems;

- Provide communications equipment so the ECG diagnosis data can be transmitted quickly from the ambulance while on route to hospital;
- Provide paramedics with life-saving thrombolytic drugs; and Train England's 8,500 paramedics in diagnosis and in the use of thrombolysis equipment & drugs. Many Technicians are also undertaking this training or part of it and this should be recognised in their being graded as band 5 in the manner proposed below.

Supervision of other staff

3.13 There are increasing use of PTS other other similarly graded staff on a wider range of duties on front line ambulances. In several Trusts there are already agreements on the use of suitably trained PTS level staff and Technicians responding to category B calls. These schemes exist in GMAS, Scotland and the South West and they are expanding because of the shortage of qualified Paramedic staff in trusts at the moment.

Paramedic Nomenclature

3.14 With the move towards Paramedic registration and the introduction of a registration body it would seem advisable to think of paramedic grade as with nursing grades. Therefore the difference in titles between a paramedic and a Technician may not be helpful. A solution if this is possible given the registration requirements would be to have a structure based upon:

Paramedic Trainee (As with current Trainee for one year)	Band 4
Paramedic One (First level entry)	Band 4/5
Paramedic Two (Extended Training as above up to first gateway and full Band 5 for qualified Paramedics)	Band 5
Emergency Care Practitioner	Band 6