

# Scottish Ambulance staff assaulted 460 times in under 4 years

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Scottish Ambulance Services staff have been subjected to 460 verbal and physical assaults since the beginning of 2015, according to figures from the Scottish Conservatives.

The figures, published in response to a Freedom of Information request, show that in 2015 Scottish Ambulance Service staff endured 102 physical assaults in 2015, increasing to a high of 135 in 2016.

Indeed, out of the 460 assaults in total, 372 of them were physical and 88 verbal, which includes spitting.

These figures follow the revelation in summer that ambulance crews are prevented from entering more than 2500 addresses in Scotland amid fears for their safety.

Added to which a recent survey from Unison Scotland reported Health Boards reported a total of 18,225 assaults on NHS workers in their latest annual returns.

Liam Kerr, Scottish Conservative shadow justice secretary said that these figures demonstrate the difficulties faced by all emergency workers and ambulance staff during already stressful situations.

Mr Kerr has said that this shows a failure to keep ambulance staff safe and that the courts should deal more severely those who assault them.

**Liam Kerr, Scottish Conservative shadow justice secretary said:**

“Our emergency services constantly help people and save lives in difficult circumstances, often risking their own safety for others.

“It is disgraceful that anyone would assault them, physically or verbally, as they try to help others.

“While this year does seem to be on course to have fewer attacks, one attack on ambulance staff is one too many.

“More must be done to keep them safe, including tough action from the courts in response to anyone who has assaulted, or threatened, ambulance staff.

“At this time of year, before Bonfire nights and Christmas parties, we are more aware than ever of the important work all our emergency workers do.

“The Scottish Conservatives are committed to keeping emergency workers safe, and severely punishing those who cause them harm.”