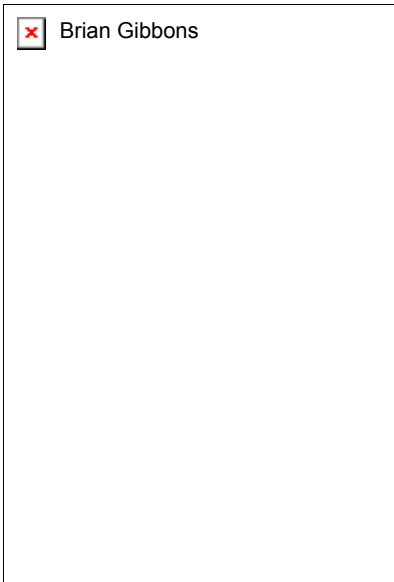




Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

## Health Minister praises work of St John Ambulance

Health Minister Dr Brian Gibbons praised the hard work and dedication of St John Ambulance volunteers when he visited their headquarters in Cardiff Bay yesterday [Wednesday, 2 August



The Minister saw some of the eight new state-of-the-art St John Ambulances that were bought last year with £300,000 from the Welsh Assembly Government. This investment was in support of St John's appeal to raise £1million to replace and upgrade its vehicles.

Dr Gibbons said: "St John has provided a valuable service to the community for many years, with ambulances and highly trained volunteers attending major events across Wales, whether that be a football match, concert or the summer agricultural shows. As well as this medical support, they also provide first-aid training for young people and businesses.

"The ambulances, which form part of a 100-strong fleet, have the latest life-saving equipment to help the organisation continue its important work and support the Ambulance Service during busy periods. They also allow them to continue their efforts in transporting patients being treated through the Assembly Government's second offer scheme, to and from hospital for their operations.

"Their work and the ambulances have already proved to be an important asset particularly at this year's Royal Welsh Show where they helped many people who were suffering from the extreme heat."

During the Minister's visit he also saw members of the public being trained in essential first-aid skills.

Keith Dunn, Chief Executive of St John, added: "We are delighted that the Health Minister and the Welsh Assembly Government continues to recognise the importance of our work both as life-savers and as providers of first-aid support to our communities. It is vital that we continue raising money to upgrade our fleet of Ambulances and support the life-saving efforts of our members.

"At this year's Royal Welsh our volunteers helped to treat more than 800 people, 300 more than last year. A total of eight of those patients had to be airlifted to hospital because of the seriousness of their condition. Our highly -trained volunteers give up their time for free but providing support at events such as the Royal Welsh Show costs us as a Charity. We need to ensure that we have the resources so that our members can continue to provide essential services and improve the lives of people across Wales."

**Notes:**

Picture: During a visit to St John Ambulance headquarters in Cardiff, Health Minister Dr Brian Gibbons is shown the essential first-aid training they offer.

**Thursday, 3 August, 2006**