



MEDIA RELEASE

23 January 2010

St John volunteers busy at Big Day Out

42 degrees in Sydney's West this weekend was not enough to keep 100,000 Big Day Out party goers indoors. Crowds of over 50,000 enjoyed the Friday and Saturday event in Sydney Showground.

But they were not alone.

More than 175 St John Ambulance volunteers were present on both days to provide first aid care to party-goers.

Starting on Friday morning, as of 4pm on Saturday St John volunteers had already treated over 1250 people, with 24 more serious cases being transported to hospital by the Ambulance Service, including a 27-year-old man taken to hospital in a critical condition with suspected drug overdose.

Penelope Little, Event Commander for St John (NSW) said the most common injuries were heat related.

"It's a dangerous formula. Combine alcohol consumption and soaring temperatures and people will lose fluids very quickly", Ms Little said.

St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) had seven first aid posts and four bicycle emergency response team (BERTs) on site, providing front line volunteer support and working in conjunction with the NSW Ambulance Service to care and treat anyone who was sick or injured at the event.

Daniel Willis, who provided first aid on Friday, said the high temperatures are easily forgotten you are busy treating others.

"You only notice the temperature when you are coming in and leaving. Once you are busy taking care of others you forget how hot it actually is."

Warren Glenny, State Commissioner of St John (NSW) said first aid volunteers play a vital role in summer festivals such as the Big Day Out.

"Along with Australia Day and New Years Eve, the Big Day Out is one of the biggest events in our calendar and a big task for our volunteers who selflessly give up their time to ensure the safety of others.

"We are really proud and grateful for the work they do", Mr Glenny said.

To know more about St John or to become a volunteer visit www.stjohnnsw.com.au or call 1300 360 455.

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