Dear States Members,

We the crew members of Alderney Ambulance Service Ltd, would be grateful if you would consider the following proposition.

You will all be acutely aware of at least the basic events that led to our dispute with, and withdrawal of labour from, AAS Ltd. It was never our wish for this to be a long-term withdrawal but, despite our best efforts to initiate mediation, sadly it has turned out that way through events beyond our control. As dedicated and well-trained providers of emergency pre-hospital care, it has been always been our wish to return to serving the Alderney community.

On December 11, 2019, following a Board meeting of AAS Ltd, at which 2 of the 4 directors voted against, a resolution was passed by the casting vote of the chairman, Les Stewart, that the resources of AAS would be made available to the States to allow the States to provide an ambulance service. Since that time, a combination of fire service personnel and hastily recruited volunteers have operated a single-vehicle, skeleton ambulance service to the best of their limited abilities.

As the service is no longer under the control of the two remaining directors of the AAS company, we feel that the continuation of our dispute with them is no longer best served by continuing to withhold our skills from the emergency service we love.

Between our Chief Officer and crew, we have a combined total of over 120 years of frontline ambulance experience. Our Chief Officer alone has attended around 4000 ambulance calls in her 27+ years of service. It would be a tragic waste if those skills and experience were not harnessed for the benefit of the Alderney community.

We are offering to return to duty, under the leadership of our Chief Officer, Mrs Mel Walden, for a period of not less than 6 months. This would be on precisely the same basis as our service with AAS Ltd, but working for and reporting to the States via a P&F appointee.

Dr Aaron Pennell, former Medical Director of AAS Ltd, has offered his services, on an expenses-only basis as Acting Medical Advisor, effective from the date of our return to duty. A summary of Dr Pennell’s professional CV is attached below. Dr Pennell has also offered 2 of the senior paramedic staff of his company, Emergency Doctors Medical Service Ltd (EDMS) to assist with training, policies and practice.

Any of the new volunteers who wish to stay on call would be welcomed by us, mentored and receive training towards ACA and EMT qualifications.

The Fire Officer and his crew members would be released from a task that they have been obliged to undertake, but which they didn’t sign up for as firefighters. The safety benefit of this is obvious in cases where both emergency services are called to an incident involving a serious fire risk AND the treatment and transport of casualties.

Whilst providing an immediate return to a fully trained, two vehicle operation, this 6 month period would also allow time for the States to fully investigate the circumstances leading up to the collapse of AAS. It would give time for the States to properly consider all options for future ambulance service provision, including, but not limited to, the recovery plan put forward to States Members by Mrs Walden.

The “Ambulance Dispute” has created deep rifts in our small community and caused harm to the reputations of people who have only ever tried to provide the best ambulance service for Alderney. It has resulted in a reduced ambulance cover and tied up human resources of the Fire Service, reducing their resilience. This is an opportunity for you, as States Members, to help repair and rebuild what has been destroyed over the past 7 weeks.

For further information, or to express acceptance in principle of our offer, please contact our Chief Officer, Mrs Mel Walden. Her contact details are:

Tel: 822152

Mobile: 07781 119891

Email: melwalden@cwgsy.net

We thank you for your attention and await your response.

Yours faithfully,

Alderney Ambulance Crew.