

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL
JUNE 12, 2002

Members/Alternates Present: Ms. Barbara Aras, Ms. Marlene Atkins, Mr. Jesus Cepero, Mr. Robert Clawson, Mr. Ron Czajkowski, Mr. James Davidson, Mr. Robert Hansson, Mr. Martin Hogan, Dr. Ernest Leva, Dr. Steven Marcus, Mr. Richard Matzer, Mr. Mickey McCabe, Ms. Debbie Murante, Dr. James Pruden, Mr. Craig Reiner, Mr. Robert Resetar, Mr. Fred Steinkopf, Ms. Deborah Timpson, Ms. Sue VanOrden, Dr. Jennifer Waxler, Ms. Susan Way, Mr. Phil Wien

Members/Alternates Absent: Senator Palaia, Ms. Terry Clancy, Dr. David Livingston

DHHS Staff Present: Ms. Bonnie Anderson, Mr. Chris Anicito, Mr. James Blumenstock, Mr. Steven Bors, Mr. Victor Carter, Mr. William Duffy, Ms. Karen Halupke, Ms. Nancy Kelly-Goodstein, Ms. Linda Taglairino

Dr. James Pruden called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Minutes from March 13, 2002 meeting were approved.

BASIC LIFE SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Mr. Fred Steinkopf reported that no BLS committee meeting took place. He plans to have a meeting on July 17, 2002, at 7 pm at Sayreville BLS Academy. Victor Carter, Debbie Murante and Al Lincks are interested in being on this subcommittee. Anyone interested in serving on this subcommittee should email Mr. Steinkopf at fls@njsfac.org.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor.

A representative of the American Red Cross (not on the Council) expressed interest in participating. Mr. Mickey McCabe supported their participation, stating that it would be beneficial to get input from individuals and organizations outside the Council. Dr. Pruden encouraged outside participation. Mr. Steinkopf stated that the meeting will be open to all concerned. He asked that interested participants communicate with him, in advance of the meeting, which will be held at the Sayreville Academy.

BY-LAWS

In September a slate is needed for Executive Committee and chairperson that is to be voted on in December. Nominating committee will be Marty Hogan, Debbie Murante, Barbara Aras, Jen Waxler.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in Favor.

EMS COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Robert Resetar reported that the Communications Committee met on June 5, 2002. The following was discussed:

- EMS communication system (trauma, MICU) about 95% complete. Trauma network complete except Morristown. The next step is to get all hospitals new radios.
- OETS requested a Guidecard Committee meeting to review NJ Guidecards.
- Due to an emergency in Newark, the meeting to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NY City representatives was postponed. The new date will be June 20, 2002 at University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) by invitation only. All dispatch centers with state crossing responsibilities were asked for updated plans.
- Critical/noncritical terminology now in use in all MICU dispatch centers in accordance with the plan set forth in ESF#8.
- There was discussion about adding the Communication Centers to the NJ LINCS SYSTEM.
- Discussion about the operational aspect of the proposed TRUNKED Hospital Radio network. All MICU Centers wish to be able to access the system and to use it for daily routine MCI events. This will be discussed in more detail as the project progresses.
- Trauma radio network is nearly complete. Morristown Trauma Center is finishing the installation process. Once they are operational all Trauma Centers and the Burn Center at Saint Barnabas will be tested daily by REMCS, during the 9am & 9pm hour.
- The MICU TRUNKED radio network between MICU Dispatch Centers is now operational at MEDCOM-Voorhees and LIFECOM in addition to REMCS, CENCOM, HUDCEN, MICCOM, MEDCENTRAL, MONOC, NJDOH EMS, NJSFAC-Mobilization. Somerset County should be operational soon, the equipment is in, some reconfiguring is needed.

Motion to accept. Seconded.

Discussion:

Marty Hogan stated there were two demonstrations conducted for NJ hospitals with State Police radios. There were 85 to 90 percent of the hospitals present and the consensus was that they would be interested in putting funds in their budget for next year.

A meeting was requested for the guidecard committee. Guidecards have been slow in getting out. There should be a full report by the next meeting.

Motion to accept. Second. All in favor.

EMT TRAINING FUND

Ms. Debbie Murante stated DHSS has moved to appoint three new people to the existing vacancies. It is very frustrating not having a quorum. Dr. William Felegi will represent the Medical Society of NJ, Susan Laffan will represent the NJ Nurses Association, and Adam Beder will represent the NJ Hospital Association. Everything has been stalled because of a lack of a quorum.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor.

Discussion:

One position expired and one position is vacant (public member and doctor). Mr. Paul Wein suggested that there be alternates for the representatives. Dr. Pruden suggested that those members that serve as a designee for an organization have a primary representative and a secondary representative. Ms. Murante will send a letter to have an alternate appointed. Ms. Murante stated that a letter will be sent to notify the agency when a member does not attend. Ms. Way stated that OEMS sent out written correspondence to all members about the importance of their attendance. The next EMT Training Fund meeting is on June 26 at 4 pm at the Allentown First Aid Squad.

Chief James Davidson asked if career firefighters/EMTs are able to access into the EMT Training Fund and get reimbursed for CEUs. Mr. Steinkopf stated there is a dedicated source for fire departments. The training fund is not a general EMT benefit. It is an enhancement tool to keep volunteers.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor.

MICU ADVISORY COUNCIL

Dr. Pruden stated the MICU Advisory Council is still looking to clarify the direct financial impact of new Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

regulations. There are still some activities on the federal level that have to be investigated.

The MICU Advisory Council also discussed the use of standing orders by paramedics and the frequency with which they exceed the standing orders. The issue of a blanket approval of standing orders versus more online medical control needs more review.

The Team Excellence Awards also took place in May and were extremely successful.

Dr. Pruden advised the group that the State is going to purchase three new helicopters and two more as back up. There is also a concern regarding State Police pilots. Many of the pilots are at retirement age and replacements are difficult to recruit and train.

Dr. Pruden explained that part of the bioterrorism money will go to fund 22 specialists to work with each county on preparedness.

There will be a Mid Atlantic EMS Conference in October. NJ is allotted 40 slots. If you are interested in participating get information to Bob Dinetz.

Dr. Pruden explained that OEMS will be removing warnings and personal addresses from the violations posted on the website.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor.

Discussion:

Mr. Hogan stated that the EMS Coalition met on July 11, 2002. They are sending a letter to Federal and State legislators to remind them of the status of the CMS rule changes.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor

NJPIES

Dr. Marcus stated the call volume is up. He also explained that there is a public relations campaign continuing to push the new 800 number (800-222-1222).

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor.

Discussion:

Dr. Marcus clarified that there are no longer any information materials that go out to the public or providers with the old NJ 800 telephone number. The new number is

being distributed to local health departments, hospitals, physician's offices and emergency departments.

NJOEM

Mr. Bob Hansson stated that NJOEM is involved in emergency planning with hospitals, the MEDPREP Committee, Training, HAZMAT tech course, and the ER/HAZMAT WMD course.

Mr. Hansson stated his appreciation for the Star of Life Award to the NJ Task Force 1. Legislation was introduced for the Task Force to be a part of the FEMA system. Representative Freylingheusing is the sponsor. Senator Torricelli introduced the companion bill with Senator Corzione. Recently, 40 new members were brought into the USAR team, including two new physicians and a medic.

Motion to accept. Seconded.

Discussion:

Mr. Hansson also explained that he had recently completed a train the trainer program to teach a WMD awareness program. He trained 36 individuals to conduct training for NJSFAC squads.

Motion to accept. Seconded. Motion carries.

Dr. Pruden commented on the success of the EMS Awards Dinner and acknowledged the hard work put into making this a success. He encouraged everyone to participate.

NJSFAC

Mr. Steinkopf stated he had a meeting this morning with the Department of Health and Senior Services. A number of their concerns were expressed and he is happy with the way it is going.

Mr. Steinkopf is concerned about what is going on with National Registry. He attended a class OEMS put on for instructors. He said that this type of information needs to be relayed to all instructors.

A lot of things are pending with the EMT Training Fund and he is optimistic that there will be a meeting on June 26.

Mr. Steinkopf also stated that based on numbers from the EMS Coalition, he estimates that there are 380,000 ALS calls a year; 570,000 BLS calls a year. 152,000 of those ALS calls are cancellations. Annually the state BLS responds to about 722,000 calls. Assuming that 60% of the calls are covered by volunteers, at a \$282 cost for those calls, the systems savings annually in the State of NJ, looking at

the BLS component is \$122,162,400. The point being, that there is a quantifiable value in the system that can be put on volunteer service.

Motion to accept. Seconded.

Discussion:

Dr. Pruden asked that the numbers Mr. Steinkopf provided be given to the EMS Coalition, to go with the letters to the legislatures.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor.

EMSC

Dr. Leva reported that the third annual EMS for Children conference on May 5 and 6, 2002, was well attended. The first year there were 46 attendees and this year there were 170 attendees. EMSC staff should be commended. It was a nice educational event, with good speakers.

New regulations regarding children's hospitals were proposed by the Department of Health and Senior Services. The EMS for Children Council sent in comments on the proposal.

Radio failure standing orders were revised, finalized and forwarded to the MICU Advisory Council.

Governor McGreevey proclaimed May 22, 2002 as EMS for Children day.

A letter was written to the Department of Education on behalf of the EMSC Council regarding the curriculum changes for injury prevention and safety.

Motion to accept. Seconded.

Discussion:

Dr. Pruden commented that DHSS did an excellent job on the EMS for Children conference.

Motion to accept report approved.

LEGISLATIVE

Mr. Martin Hogan referred to Mr. Howard Meyer for the report.

Mr. Meyer stated the NJSFAC is tracking more than 200 bills this session. The bills to be heard in committee this week include ones on requiring health clubs to have defibrillators, oxygen, and first aid equipment on hand and for corporations to take a tax credit for one half of the cost of defibrillators.

Other bills being tracked are:

A282 – requires all EMTs be trained in defibrillation.

A821/S442 – Establishes a subcommittee of local emergency councils to develop school crises response action plans – EMS not included in that group.

A885 - \$1.7 million to L&PS for state police defibrillators.

A1717-/S1058 – requires school districts to establish plan to respond to emergencies and crises. It does not include local EMS, as part of the committee.

A2330 – Low interest mortgage program for volunteer rescue squad members.

S1227 – Fire Service Resources Emergency Deployment Act – nonfire EMS not included in the bill. Companion bill A1775 passed.

S865 – MICU transportation bill has been tabled.

All of these bills can be viewed by going to the website. www.njleg.state.nj.us.

Motion to accept. Seconded

Discussion:

First Aid members spoke to Senator Singer with concerns about S865. In reference to S1227, Mr. Goodstein stated this bill is to help everyone with response problems. Chief James Davidson stated that the career chiefs are in support of the concept and agreed to make some changes in language to relieve the problems the EMS community has with the bill. Chief Davidson stated that this bill came about because there wasn't a strong base plan for fire districts. One of the goals is to work with NJ EMS. Dr. Pruden stated it looks like they are trying to work together and suggested a meeting with fire chiefs and OEMS to discuss language.

Mr. Steinkopf stated the concept is good but the implementation is bad.

Chief Davidson stated the language for fire service is that they cannot refuse service once Directive 33 is in place. Dr. Pruden stated the intent is to enhance coordination of fire service, not to undo what is already done. A meeting with the Mr. Steinkopf, Mr. Goodstein, Chief Davidson and staff from OEMS should be scheduled before June 20 to have something ready for the legislature explaining the effects of this bill.

Motion to accept is approved.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Mr. Clawson discussed the scores on the NREMT exam. There is a need to reach out to instructors who teach the curriculum. OEMS has conducted two sessions, to date, with good feedback on both. He reported that students are succeeding with retesting.

Mr. Clawson reported that there will be a two-day symposium at the end of October by the Mid-Atlantic EMS Council. He encouraged people to attend.

OEMS received the completed proposed pilot program from Hunterdon Medical Center for the use of the laryngeal mask airway (LMA). The proposal will be sent to the Commissioner's Office.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor.

OPERATIONS

This portion will be incorporated into the agenda item "Lessons Learned."

SYSTEM FINANCE

This portion will be incorporated into the agenda item "Lessons Learned."

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Dr. Waxler stated that Ms. Kelly-Goodstein and Dr. Marcus did a nice job on the pamphlet "What is Emergency Medical Services in NJ." The second draft is being finalized.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor.

TRAUMA CENTER

No one present.

OEMS

Ms. Way thanked all that participated and organized the EMSC Conference that was a big success. Over 170 attendees and the comments were favorable. Ms. Way congratulated all the recipients and nominees of the EMS Awards. Ms. Way encouraged more nominations to be made for next year.

The DHSS has, over the last three months, provided information to the legislature regarding the State budget. Commissioner Lacy testified before the Senate and Assembly on May 16 and 20. There were no legislative follow up questions, regarding EMS.

OEMS continues to have vacancies that we are not allowed to fill. Ms Way stated that they are pursuing all avenues to get permission to man these jobs.

Motion to accept. Seconded.

Discussion:

Mr. McCabe commended those that put together a successful EMS Awards dinner.

Mr. Matzer stated that we learned the Department is the recipient of about \$27-million in bioterrorism funding. It is a result of two cooperative agreements from the federal government, one from the Center of Disease Control (CDC) and one from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). These grants will build additional capacity at the state and local health department levels. There are six priority focus areas for funding, including planning and response readiness, risk

communication, and education and training. The executive summary is on DHSS website.

Motion to accept approved by all.

Ms. Way stated she had a meeting with the NJSFAC and DHSS regarding the National Registry Testing. NJSFAC is concerned about low testing scores. The group that met will be looking at the May/June statistics on testing and retesting results. The NJSFAC wants to look at the possibility of lowering the test score pass rate. OEMS thinks this is premature now but agreed to look at statistics and keep the suggestion under consideration.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Timpson mentioned that the March meeting minutes state that five members were already nominated for the Council Executive Committee. Dr. Waxler explained that it makes more sense to select the Executive Committee after the Chair is selected.

Ms. Aras distributed copies of a letter from UMDNJ, which was sent in December 2001 but no one received until February 2002. The hospital is requesting the first aid squad to select hospital destinations by using the first letter of the patient's surname. Wanted to bring this to the Council's attention of how patients are being transported to St. Peter's and Robert Wood Johnson. Mr. Steinkopf suggested a letter from Dr. Pruden be sent. Dr. Leva disagreed. This is an issue which should be addressed on the local level.

LESSONS LEARNED

Dr. Pruden asked that Mr. McCabe lead a discussion on the Disaster Operations' Review, from the notes of the October 2001 session. (Notes from the October 2001 session are listed in bullet form. Discussion from today's meeting is in italics.)

REMCS

Mr. Resetar made several recommendations for improving NJ EMS resources for future response:

- A standard, statewide EMS photo-identification for all prehospital workers that contains a certification number. Similar IDs for physicians and nurses. This could be part of drivers' licenses.
- All EMS providers should have a copy of the JEMS Plan. It spells out what radio frequencies every ambulance must have, and is vitally important in mobilizing an MCI. JEMS 4, the NJ State Police emergency network is the authorized state police channel for MCI mobilization.

- Portable and mobile radios require alphanumeric displays, or a mounted list of radio frequencies and their channel positions.
- A statewide-MICU trunked radio to county OEMs and dispatch centers is needed to facilitate communications and coordination.
- Resources need to be more carefully tracked. Documentation during the incident was poor, e.g., triage tag and communications' data is missing, particularly on the first day of the incident.

Mr. McCabe stated that the photo ID is the #1 concern. He also expressed concern regarding, the radio frequencies allocation and lettering for frequencies. Mr. Resetar stated that all of these have been addressed by the Communications Subcommittee and, with the exception of the IDs, are in place. We have a Communications Plan that is being updated.

It was suggested that paid and volunteer providers have the same frequencies and that they have a hard mounted list in each vehicle saying which radio channel is in which position. Mr. Steinkopf said the volunteers have been asked to have the hardmounted card displayed in the vehicle, but it has not been made a critical item and therefore has not been required. Dr. Pruden asked how that could be made critical? Mr. Resetar stated the NJSFAC signed off on this JEMS radio agreement in the early 1980s, stating that they would comply. It should be a mandatory item. Dr. Pruden suggested Mr. Steinkopf go to his group, in a positive way, and make it a higher priority level now. The JEMS Communication Plan can be download at the mobilization website. It was suggested that the Plan be put on the DHSS website.

Mr. Goodstein stated the standards committee reviews the methods of inspection of an ambulance of the NJSFAC. There is no control over the ambulances that are neither a member of the NJSFAC nor licensed by the DHSS. He stated that cards listing radio frequencies have been made and after they are voted on, it will be made a critical item.

Chief Davidson asked how many squads are non-aligned. Mr. Goodstein said 10% are non-aligned and agreed that the mobilization people would reach out and try to bring them in under the umbrella. Mr. Goodstein suggested that one way to do so would be to say that, if you did not have an inspection by DHSS or NJSFAC, you would not be called as a primary responder in any of the mass casualty incidents.

Paid fire departments, volunteer fire departments, and non-aligned volunteer EMS needs to be addressed for communication capabilities.

There needs to be a symbol or decal displayed confirming that the vehicle has all the necessary equipment to be able to participate. Ms. Aras suggested that the three area VPs identify squads that are non-aligned and make a list. Dr. Pruden stated that now is the time to combine capabilities and people to provide resources and lists. There is a need for the people who show up on the scene to have the appropriate equipment and qualifications so that they may legitimately participate.

Dr. Pruden received a letter from the US Army stating that various ambulance services on the east coast have been receiving email from someone claiming to be an assistant professor of civil engineering in Pakistan and wanting information on how the ambulance service is organized, trained and equipped and what the routes of response are. If anyone has received any of these inquiries, they are to notify the local FBI Terrorism Task Force.

Dr. Pruden set up a subcommittee to address the EMS component of verification and credentialing issue. Mr. McCabe is to chair an AD HOC committee for credentialing vehicles and equipment. Mr. Hansson and Ms. VanOrden volunteered to participate.

NJSFAC & BLS Mobilization

Mr. Goodstein made several recommendations for future incidents:

- Don't strip your own areas of EMS coverage. "The people who stayed at home to answer 9-1-1 calls were just as important as those who responded to the disaster."
- Know what to do in an MCI. Bring the proper equipment and supplies.
- Don't freelance. Don't respond unless you're called by the proper agency. Know who is supposed to call your squad to respond. If any other agency calls or faxes you, call your designated agency responsible to dispatch you, and ask them what to do. For instance, during this incident, NJSFAC volunteer squads should have been dispatched either by their area communication center, their NJSFAC district mobilization officer, or their county OEM.
- Most important, designate responsible mobilization officers in your squad and districts. Don't just appoint someone who wants the job; make sure he/she is qualified to do it.

Dr. Pruden asked if there are training programs for MCI, are they being implemented and are there needs for more training programs? The answer is yes to all.

After the ESF#8 is completed, we will be able to have rollouts for it. Dr. Pruden asked if this plan is standardized around the state. ESF#8 is standard around the state. Chief Davidson made a suggestion that NJ Forestry Service, NJ State Police, and Division of Fire Safety all adopted the same incident command management system and that EMS tag along with it.

NJ MICUs

Mr. Sasso recommended:

- That the NJSFAC consider realigning its mobilization district boundaries to coincide with the 21 NJ county boundaries. This would avoid any duplication of effort and potential confusion between District Mobilization Chairmen and County OEM EMS Coordinators.
- Revising the NYC MOU to incorporate patients brought to NJ via ferry or train.
- Establish regional EMS Incident Support Teams that would be available to assist in large EMS operations.

- Emphasize MCI and Incident Command training for all EMS providers so that anyone with the necessary training can fill a post anywhere.
- Immediately complete the MICU Statewide radio network.
- Develop a set of MCI related exceptions to the MICU regulations that can be implemented when necessary to allow for disaster care.

Mr. McCabe asked if the NJSFAC is considering changing the boundaries to coincide with the 21 NJ county boundaries. Mr. Steinkopf said that this would not happen. Mr. Goodstein stated the districts and the counties need to work together.

The meeting to revise the MOU between UMDNJ and New York City has been rescheduled for June. The meeting was canceled last month because of the HAZMAT incident in Newark.

It was suggested that regional EMS support teams be included in the ESF#8 annex. It has been put in the Annex but there is a question of funding, because it is a new training system.

MCI related exceptions to the MICU regulations were discussed. Mr. Hogan stated that it has been addressed at the NJ Association of Paramedic Programs. They are working on a document to present to the DHSS.

Mr. McCabe stated there is a lot of interaction with local health departments and local hospitals but there is a lack of communication to EMS providers. There is also an obvious lack of funding for the EMS provider to get training. There is a great need for EMS funding for both volunteer and private providers.

Mr. Goodstein stated they are looking to put together a statewide EMS email list.

Motion to accept. Seconded. All in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Frank Goodstein stated that on June 23, 2002, at 11 a.m., in Somerset County, the US Postal Service is presenting the Honor of Heroes stamp.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm