

**Stanislaus County
Emergency Medical Services Committee
June 14, 2007
Minutes**

Location: The New Kaiser Medical Facility
4601 Dale Road
Modesto, California

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Committee Members Present: John Cremin, Gary Hinshaw, George Britton, Mary Ann Lee, Cleve Morris, Bob Wikoff, Thomas Burns, Paul Baxter

Committee Members Absent: Dr. Niamh Harrington

Guests: Cindy Woolston, Ray Leverett, Tom Brennan, Barry Hurd, Jared Bagwell, Chuck Coelho, Mike Pitassi

Staff: Steve Andriese – Executive Director, Douglass Sisk – Deputy Director; Douglas Buchanan – Disaster Coordinator, Jim Worobe – Field Liaison, Marilyn Smith – Response & Transport Coordinator, Tina Casias – Executive Secretary

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Paul Baxter, Chairperson. Everyone at the meeting introduced themselves.

2. Review and Approval of Agenda

M/S/C (Britton/Wikoff) To approve the agenda as presented

Vote: Unanimous

3. Correspondence

Douglass Sisk informed Committee members of two pieces of correspondence received by the Agency. The first was a letter from Dennis Litos of Doctor's Medical Center nominating Karen Hall to fill the current 'Hospital Administrator' vacancy on the EMS Committee. Thus far, no appointment by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors has been made.

The second was received from the Stanislaus County Clerks Office appointing Niamh Harrington, M.D. to fill the Medical Society Physician vacancy on the EMS Committee.

At this point Chairman Baxter asked that Agenda Items 4 and 5 be switched unless there were objections from the Committee. There were no objections.

4. Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

5. Public Hearing: Stanislaus County Ambulance Provider Agreement

Chairman Baxter officially declared the Public Hearing portion of the meeting open at 9:15 a.m.

Marilyn Smith began by stating that this public hearing was at the request of the EMS Committee specifically to address the proposed Stanislaus County Ambulance Provider Agreements. She also stated that a public notice of the hearing was placed in the Modesto Bee. A notice was also placed on the Mountain Valley EMS Agency website, and at the Agency office.

Ms. Smith referred the Committee to the copy of the draft documents in their packet. She began by giving a brief history, beginning with the 'Special Meeting of February 15th' in which the proposed ambulance agreements were first brought before the Committee for approval. At that meeting, the Committee decided some language changes were necessary; and, before approval, a public hearing was needed.

Ms. Smith referred the Committee to a synopsis of the proposed changes included in their packet. Most of the changes, she stated, were introduced at the 'Special Meeting', and corrections were made as they had requested. She went on to say that only one new revision was being requested as a result of recent meetings with the providers. This revision is to Section 1.44. This section explains what factors determine an urban response area.

The Chairman requested she briefly explain each proposed change as shown in her synopsis. As she proceeded, individual committee members asked questions, and she answered them.

A discussion of the hospital surge problem, and how it is effecting the ambulance providers began. Sometimes the ambulance providers are unable to offload their patient at the hospital because of a shortage of beds in the hospital. Tom Burns voiced his concern, and stated that he felt this issue was important, and needed a solution.

Steve Andriese stated that this issue is not unique to Stanislaus County, but is a problem statewide and nationwide. He also stated that studies are being done in order to produce some solutions that may be able to relieve this problem.

George Britton stated that he was troubled because the Special Fire Districts will be unable to provide BLS services in the future, in many parts of the County. This will impact the ER's, and eventually cause someone not to receive BLS care. He stated that the Board has a responsibility to say this is happening in this County.

Chairman Baxter suggested a letter be transmitted to the Mountain Valley EMS Board of Director's relating these problems and issues, and of this body's concern with these issues long term. The letter will be copied to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisor's.

Marilyn Smith explained how development over the past 5 years has effected response grids in the current contracts.

Douglass Sisk had prepared a presentation which shows the process the Agency went through to determine if grids were rural, and now suburban; suburban, and now metro/suburban, etc. He then proceeded with his presentation.

At this time Chairman Baxter opened the Public Hearing to members of the public to voice any opinions or comments on any area of the proposed revisions to the Stanislaus County Ambulance Provider Agreements.

Cindy Woolston of AMR asked if Zone B should be discussed. Marilyn Smith explained that Zone B is currently being serviced by Patterson Ambulance. With the increasing development in that area, it is very difficult for them to reach the farthest areas of this zone. Therefore, Cindy Woolston, representing AMR, and Barry Hurd, representing Patterson Ambulance, have come to an agreement to split Zone B. It is a non-exclusive operating area. This will appear as Exhibit A in their contracts.

Ray Leverett of Oak Valley Hospital District Ambulance asked to discuss Section 5.2-All communications equipment purchased shall be in compliance with Stanislaus County Communications Interoperability Plan, once it is developed. Ray Leverett objected to signing off on a contract where there is no such plan in existence.

Marilyn Smith stated that this section was added at the request of the County. Once the County developed their plan, they would meet with providers to discuss.

M/S/C (Britton/Burns) to close the Public Hearing

Vote: Unanimous

Chairman Baxter solicited any comments or recommendations from the committee members regarding the transmittal letter to the Mountain Valley EMS Agency Board of Directors. There were no further comments.

M/S/C (Britton/Burns) to approve and transmit the revised agreement as noted in the staff submittal with renumbering in form as identified by Mr. Burns in Section I, and including Amendment # 1, which is identified as the Patterson Diablo-Grande Amendment

Vote: Unanimous

M/S/C(Britton/Burns)MVEMSA staff is to prepare a letter for review and approval by the EMSC Chair and member Gary Hinshaw, in consultation with the ambulance providers, to identify the critical problem being created by E.R. capacity, and the effect that has on ambulance response

Steve Andriese asked the chair for clarification. He asked if a copy of this letter should be sent to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors. The response was yes.

6. Approval of Minutes of the Special Meeting of February 15, 2007, and the Regular Meeting of March 8, 2007

Robert Wikoff requested the spelling of his last name be corrected in the March 8, 2007 minutes.

M/S/C (Lee/Cremin) to approve the minutes of February 15, 2007 and March 8, 2007 with appropriate corrections

Vote: Unanimous

7. Nominations and Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2007

M/S/C (Wikoff/Morris) to keep the current chair (Paul Baxter) and vice chair (Gary Hinshaw) for another year

Vote: Unanimous

8. Committee Reports

a. System Status

Cindy Woolston reported AMR's hiring of an IT person. The primary function of this individual will be to do the map upgrades with the LifeCom Dispatch Center and Stanislaus County on a quarterly basis.

At this point Chairman Baxter interjected to request a presentation be made to the committee on the Dispatch Center mapping system at some future date.

She also reported that LifeCom is in the process of making some changes in the CAD. These changes involve dual named streets, such as, Yosemite Blvd. and Highway 132, and will enable the call taker to select the correct street.

Ms. Woolston also reported that Dispatch Center personnel identified some problem issues that involved identical addresses in more than one city. The solution decided upon was to have the dispatcher say or confirm the actual city response at the time the call is being dispatched out to the crew. This will ensure response to the correct location.

Here's some additional issues Ms. Woolston reported on:

- 1) Review of the System Status Plan, and the recent changes made
- 2) Review of the Ambulance Provider contracts, and clarification of their questions in the language of the agreements
- 3) Discussion of ambulance turn-around times, and any problems they may be experiencing
- 4) Discussion of Weapons of Mass Destruction training, and the language being placed in the new contracts. Train-the trainer classes will be established in the future for field personnel.

Another big issue raised, she reported, was scene safety calls or crime scene calls. This issue seemed to be localized between AMR and Modesto Fire. Some incidents took place in which Fire cleared crews to enter the scene, but the crews were not comfortable entering the scene without law enforcement. An agreement was reached to include law enforcement. Classes will be established for both Fire and field personnel where they will learn when it's safe to enter a crime scene.

b. EPC

Douglas Buchanan reported to the committee that the State Department of Health Services has spent \$5 million on a contract with Price Waterhouse Coopers to create surge capacity standards for the entire state within a six month time frame. The draft documents were posted in May 2007, and the final documents are expected to be posted by the end of June 2007.

From the final documents, manuals will be created for hospitals, clinics, long term care facilities, doctors' offices, individual care providers, and an alternate care site. The intention of this process is for each community or county to carry forth a local planning project based upon these guidelines.

9. EMS Dispatch Center Update

Jared Bagwell of LifeCom informed the committee that once SR911 receives their new CAD, they are still looking at 18 to 24 months before the CAD-to-CAD link will be implemented.

10. Ambulance Access to Gated Communities Update

Marilyn Smith began by reminding the committee of a previous meeting in which the ambulance providers expressed their concerns because of delays in reaching their patients due to these gated communities. Ms. Smith reported, after doing some research, that about 40% of new developments in California are gated communities.

After meeting with the chief building officials in Stanislaus County, Ms. Smith was asked to meet with the Planning Department in order to work with them as their rules are developed.

11. Ambulance Response Time Compliance Report

Marilyn Smith referred to the report, known as attachment #5, and explained that previously the committee had asked for the 'exemption requests' of each ambulance provider. These 'exemption requests' are included in this report, and are located in the first few pages. She proceeded to explain them.

At this point, Thomas Burns expressed his concern that the majority of the exemptions were granted with the cause being 'system saturation'. He then asked the meaning of 'system saturation' with regard to this report.

Ms. Smith proceeded to explain how sometimes the hospital system becomes overwhelmed with patients. This results in the ambulance providers experiencing delays at the hospitals, and they are unable to offload their patients for long periods of time. This means the ambulance providers cannot put their ambulance back in service in a reasonable amount of time.

Mr. Burns expressed his opinion that the 'system saturation' problem needed to be dealt with, and a solution needed to be found.

At this point, Mr. Andriese interjected and stated how 'system saturation is very problematic to the entire EMS system. Unfortunately, they cannot predict when the hospital systems will become saturated, but this problem should be taken care of at the facility level. If 'system saturation' was predictable, something would be written into the System Status Plan.

Douglass Sisk stated how the hospitals are making every effort to solve this problem, and have made many improvements toward that end.

12. Oak Valley Hospital District Ambulance Update

Marilyn Smith began by thanking Ray Leverett of Oak Valley Hospital District Ambulance for all his cooperation over the past few months. She reported that Oak Valley Ambulance has added a 12 hour car, looked over an abundant amount of statistical data, and have revised their own system status plan. Their response time compliance for the month of April 2007 was 7.12 seconds. She stated that this
Minutes – Stanislaus County EMSC

is a big improvement.

Ms. Smith reported that at the last meeting, the committee had requested an explanation on 'how the fines were calculated'. She reported that the ambulance contract stated that for each call in excess of 10 minutes, the fine would be \$100 per call, plus an additional 100 minutes for each minute greater thereafter. If 90% compliance is not achieved, it's \$1000 per reporting period, and \$250 for each tenth of one percent below the 90th percentile requirement. Also, she stated, within a suburban response area, the fine is \$100 per call plus \$100 per minute for each minute greater thereafter. She proceeded to explain to the committee how the fined amount of \$175,900 had been reached.

Steve Andriese asked the committee for clarification on this issue. He said that at the last meeting, because there was a lot of discussion, he wished to clarify the intent of George Britton's motion. His understanding, Mr. Andriese stated, was that Committee members wished to know the numbers before a final decision was made on when and how the fines would be imposed; or, is the formula, as stated in the motion, in effect? Committee member George Britton stated that the intent was that the fines as defined in the formula apply. He also stated that the concern was for the long period of time of non-compliance.

Marilyn Smith pointed out that part of the motion was that if compliance was met for the period of April 2007 through December 2007, all penalties would be waived.

13. Approval of Amendment to Oak Valley District Ambulance Provider Agreement

Marilyn Smith stated that the Agency is requesting committee approval of an amendment to Oak Valley District Hospital Ambulance provider agreement. She explained that there is a partnership agreement between Escalon Community Ambulance and Oak Valley District Ambulance that allows Escalon Community Ambulance to service the same area in Stanislaus County on a mutual aid basis. The amendment will allow both divisions to provide service in Zone 4.

M/S/C (Britton/Burns) to approve amendment

Vote: Unanimous

14. Approval of Ambulance Service Provider Contracts

This agenda item was moved to agenda item # 4.

15. Approval of Stanislaus County Chempack Request and Deployment Policy

Minutes – Stanislaus County EMSC

Douglass Buchanan began by stating how a few years ago the Federal Government put the antidotes to nerve agent exposure into the hands of Local and State government. They received pressure about the National Stockpile, and how good things will work in the event of a nerve agent exposure. Therefore, they created caches of these antidote medications. Stanislaus County has been the recipient of several of the caches. The attached policies were developed for the requesting and deployment of those caches.

M/S/C(Wikoff/Morris)To approve policy

Vote: Unanimous

16. Date and Location of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on September 13, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., at the LifeCom Dispatch Facility.

17. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.