FICEMS

Federal Interagency Committee on EMS

March 17, 2010

The Honorable Deborah A. P. Hersman
Chairman
National Transportation Safety Board
490 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20594

In reference to: H-09-4 and -5

Dear Chairman ~~Hersman~~: Debbie:

The Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services (FICEMS) appreciates the National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) recognition of the essential role of our nation's 9-1-1and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) systems in reducing motor vehicle morbidity and mortality. The Mexican Hat bus crash report aptly describes many of the challenges of accessing and delivering EMS in rural areas.

The FICEMS is pleased that NTSB Member Sumwalt provided an overview of the Mexican Hat bus crash during our June 2009 meeting. In addition to the FICEMS' review of the entire report, several of our subcommittees formulated detailed plans to address the NTSB recommendations. These subcommittee reports were deliberated and approved during the January 20, 2010 FICEMS meeting.

We are pleased to provide the enclosed FICEMS-approved strategies for addressing the two NTSB recommendations (H-09-4 and H-09-5). Both the development and implementation of these plans reflect our significant interagency commitment and collaboration. We request that both recommendations receive an "Open-Acceptable Action" status.

We will provide periodic project updates to the NTSB. If you have any questions concerning these FICEMS reports, please contact Drew Dawson at the NHTSA Office of EMS which provides administrative support to FICEMS. Drew can be reached at 202 366-9966 or by e-mail at drew.dawson@dot.gov .

Sincerely yours,

David L. Strickland
Chair, Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services
Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Department of Defense

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs

Department of Homeland Security

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs/Chief Medical Officer

U.S. Fire Administration

Department of Health & Human Services

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response

Indian Health Service

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Health Resources and Services Administration

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Federal Communications Commission

Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau

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FEDERAL INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE on EMS (FICEMS) RESPONSE TO NTSB RECOMMENDATION H-09-4

Develop a Plan that can be used by the States and public safety answering points to pursue funding for enhancements of wireless communications coverage that can facilitate prompt accident notification and emergency response along high-risk rural roads, as identified under SAFETEA-LU criteria, and along rural roads having substantial large bus traffic (as defined by the criteria established in Safety Recommendation 4). (H-09-4)

Background

Emergency notification is a long-standing issue for rural and remote areas and achieving coverage includes the involvement of stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. To develop the plan recommended by the NTSB, FICEMS will solicit advice and information from a variety of subject matter experts from both sectors.

Overview of proposed strategy

To complete this plan, FICEMS formed an ad hoc subcommittee, with representatives from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Federal Communications Commission, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Homeland Security, Intelligent Transportation System Joint Program Office, and and one FICEMS member (State EMS Director). The final deliverable of this ad hoc committee will be a plan that includes the following components:

1. Needs assessment/analysis
2. Options (with costs)
3. Funding options
4. Potential collaborations
5. Additional resources and how to acquire them (documents, publications, and materials)

Specifics of Proposed Strategy

This deliverable will be completed, using the following actions::

1. On behalf of FICEMS, support for this task will be secured through under an existing NHTSA contract with Booz Allen Hamilton
2. Subcommittee members and support staff will gather information from multiple public/private agencies and subject matter experts relative to the components of the plan
3. First draft of plan completed (June, 2010).
4. Draft plan will be vetted with subject matter experts and stakeholders, and coordinated with the activities related to H-09-05 .
5. Final plan will be delivered to FICEMS for approval. (December, 2010)

Approved by FICEMS January 20, 2010.

FEDERAL INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE on EMS (FICEMS) RESPONSE TO NTSB RECOMMENDATION H-09-5

Evaluate the system of emergency care response to large-scale transportation related rural accidents and, once that evaluation is completed, develop guidelines for emergency medical services response and provide those guidelines to the States.

Background

NTSB's Recommendation H-09-5 includes two separate but related processes: evaluation and guideline development. FICEMS addresses both in its response.

Overview of proposed strategy

As requested by the FICEMS Preparedness Committee and approved by FICEMS, NHTSA is currently developing an agreement with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) to have their Forum on Medical and Public Health Preparedness for Catastrophic Events (the Forum) host a workshop on evaluating the system of emergency care response to large-scale transportation related rural accidents. The Forum's workshop summary report will be provided to FICEMS and to the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO's) Highway Incidents and Transportation Systems (HITS) committee.

Input from the FICEMS Preparedness Committee and the Forum's workshop summary report will be used by the NASEMSO HITS Committee, in coordination with their Rural EMS Committee, to define an assessment and evaluation process for today's system of emergency medical response to highway incidents, with particular emphasis on risks related to mass casualties (e.g crashes involving large buses or motorcoaches). As requested by f the FICEMS Preparedness Committee and approved by FICEMS, NHTSA is entering into an agreement with NASEMSO to support this HITS Committee activity.

Under this agreement the HITS Guidelines will focus on EMS system developments needed at the State level to improve the EMS response to rural transportation-related mass casualty incidents. The HITS Guidelines may address both infrastructure and operational issues. Possible infrastructure issues may include development of uniform defined criteria for purpose of measuring risk, vulnerability and capabilities of EMS response on rural roadways.

Specifics of Proposed Strategy

The tools expected to be developed by NASEMSO HITS Committee are:

- Event Response Readiness Assessment tool
- Model Inventory of Emergency Care Elements
- Integration and Response Capability Guidelines

The projected timeline for IOM forum and NASEMSO deliverables are:

- IOM Forum workshop on rural mass casualty response – Spring/Summer, 2010
- IOM Proceedings from above workshop – Winter, 2010
- NASEMSO Draft Matrix of Emergency Care Inventory – Winter, 2010
- NASEMSO First Edition of Integration & Response Guidelines – Spring, 2011
- NASEMSO First Scorecard of State level guideline findings – Spring, 2011
- NASEMSO HITS Committee Final Report and presentation to FICEMS – June, 2011

Approved by FICEMS January 20, 2010.