

Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services

July 8, 2013

Executive Meeting Summary

Members in Attendance

Department of Transportation

David Strickland, Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Department of Health and Human Services

Edward J. Gabriel, Chair, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response

Terry Adirim, M.D., M.P.H., Health Resources and Services Administration

Scott Sasser, M.D. (representing Linda Degutis), Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention,
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Jean K. Sheil, Director, Emergency Preparedness and Response Operations,
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Susan Karol, M.D., FACS, Chief Medical Officer, Indian Health Service

Department of Homeland Security

Rick Patrick, (representing J.D. Polk), Acting Director of Workforce Health and Medical
Support

Glenn Gaines, (representing Ernest Mitchell), U.S Fire Administration

Department of Defense

David J. Smith, M.D., Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Health Protection and
Readiness, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs

Federal Communications Commission

Michael Connelly (representing David Furth), Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau

State EMS Director

Robert Bass, M.D., Executive Director, Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services
Systems

Welcome, Introductions, and Opening Remarks

The Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services (FICEMS) convened on July 8, 2013, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

After the committee members provided introductions, Ed Gabriel welcomed the members of FICEMS and the public to the meeting. Mr. Gabriel acknowledged the honor of being chair of FICEMS and reiterated the committee's dedication to EMS and all first responders.

After the public attendees provided introductions, the committee members reviewed and unanimously approved with no changes the minutes of the June 25, 2012 FICEMS meeting. The committee then reviewed and unanimously approved FICEMS's annual report to Congress.

National EMS Advisory Council (NEMSAC) Report

Aarron Reinert, chair of the NEMSAC, presented to FICEMS on the work of the council and its recommendations from the past year. Mr. Reinert explained that NEMSAC is the sole body providing advice regarding EMS to the federal government and the council has been effective in beginning and fostering national conversations on EMS.

Mr. Reinert informed the committee about changes that NEMSAC underwent in the past year. Congress had officially recognized the council as a permanent statutory advisory committee. As a statutory advisory committee, the council must annually elect a chair and vice-chair. This year, Mr. Reinert was elected chair, and Kyle Gorman, the administrator for a fire-based EMS system in Oregon, was elected vice-chair. The council created a position meant solely for practitioners, which is currently filled by Manuel Chavez, an EMS supervisor from the Houston Fire Department.

The new statutory status of NEMSAC allows the council to directly address FICEMS in addition to DOT. In the past, recommendations were made through DOT to FICEMS. Mr. Reinert felt that the new status of the council allows NEMSAC to better formalize its relationship with FICEMS. Since 2008, the council has offered 50 recommendations, 17 specifically to FICEMS. Among NEMSAC's successes were guiding the discussion of safety in EMS and providing recommendations for implementation of the Model Uniform Core Criteria for MCI Triage (MUCC).

Mr. Reinert discussed recommendations from the most recent NEMSAC meeting. The council recommended that FICEMS take a leading role in helping state and local providers overcome the many common obstacles they face in collecting and using data from the National EMS Information System (NEMSIS). Examples include public surveillance, research into what interventions are currently being used and are working, and performance measures that could be tied to reimbursement. The council sought to encourage FICEMS to continue to push NEMSIS as the standard for all EMS data collection.

The council passed an advisory on leadership development in EMS. It recommended that DOT and FICEMS host a summit on leadership and management in EMS to collect and disseminate best practices in the field.

Regarding the *EMS Education Agenda for the Future*, the NEMSAC determined that small changes needed to be made to bring the agenda in line with the changing roles of today's EMS practitioners. The council agreed on a reassessment of the *EMS Agenda for the Future*, but not a full-scale revision – they will continue to discuss before making formal recommendations.

Mr. Reinert discussed ways in which FICEMS and NEMSAC could collaborate in the future, including work on EMS and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, possible revisions to the Agenda for the Future, increasing safety and improving safety culture in EMS, engaging the EMS and stakeholder community, and collaborative efforts such as those relating to MUCC.

The White House Forum on Military Credentialing and Licensure – EMS

Mr. Gabriel explained that during the past year the federal government has been discussing how to help returning veterans find stable and well-paying jobs. The White House is exploring opportunities of civilian employment in EMS for military medics. An interagency group co-chaired by DoD and DOT has been working on the issue. Frank DiGiovanni, Director of Training, Readiness, and Strategy, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness presented the work of the group.

Mr. DiGiovanni stated that the group has noted that military medics and corpsmen who have significant experience on the battle field are unable to receive recognition for their experience and training. The veteran unemployment rate is higher than the average national unemployment rate, and it will be worsened by the upcoming downsizing of the Army and Marine Corps. The interagency group is working with national certification agencies and the states to achieve recognition for these military medics and corpsmen.

FICEMS Strategic Planning – An Update

Drew Dawson discussed the development of the FICEMS Strategic Plan. Planning began when several FICEMS members questioned how to better align the goals of the member agencies. The Homeland Security Studies & Analysis Institute (HSSAI) has been contracted for the project and John Alford, from HSSAI, gave a presentation on the process of developing the strategic plan. HSSAI and the Technical Working Group intend to deliver a draft strategic plan to FICEMS for their review in October.

Following the presentation, the participants discussed the goals and vision of the strategic plan document. A motion to hold a FICEMS Executive session to discuss the matter was made and approved.

Technical Working Group (TWG) Reports

Mr. Dawson explained that the TWG is comprised of staff-level subject matter experts from the FICEMS member agencies. He informed the committee that the TWG had been very successful over the past year, completing the implementation plan on MUCC, drafting the interagency report to Congress (which was adopted), assisting colleagues at the NIH Office of Emergency Care Research, and addressing recommendations made by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

Dr. Beth Edgerton, from HRSA's EMS for Children program, provided an update for the Medical Oversight Committee and the Data & Research Committee. The Medical Oversight Committee had been working closely with NHTSA and FICEMS looking at evidence-based guidelines in response to NEMSAC's recommendations. Activities of the committee included developing the model approach to evidence-based guidelines, developing a national compendium of evidence-based guidelines, and looking at implementation challenges.

The overarching goal of the committee is to promote data-driven, evidence-based activities in the field of EMS, which aligns with the Data & Research Committee, led by Susan McHenry. In a joint effort, the committees have been working on a briefing paper for Dr. Jeremy Brown, the new Director of the Office of Emergency Care Research at NIH. Dr. Edgerton introduced Dr. Valerie Mahone from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Dr. Mahone is the head of a new branch addressing pediatric trauma and critical illness.

Robert Bass provided an update on activities of the Preparedness Committee. The committee's current work plan focuses on four areas: pandemic influenza preparedness, MCI triage, MCI preparedness, and the integration of disaster preparedness with regionalized emergency care systems. A pandemic influenza preparedness report was previously approved by FICEMS, and the committee was preparing a memo that discusses the status of action items in the report. The committee also has been working closely with FEMA on its EMS assessment efforts and with the CDC on its upcoming meeting regarding the role of EMS in increasing surge capacity.

NTSB Recommendations

Mr. Gabriel asked Mr. Dawson to provide an update on the work responding to NTSB's recommendations. Mr. Dawson said that the Medical Oversight Committee is overseeing the responses to recommendations on helicopter EMS. Recommendation A-09-102 is the development of guidelines for the use and availability of helicopter EMS. The draft guidelines have been drafted through an interagency agreement between CDC and NHTSA. The guidelines are currently undergoing DOT-wide review.

The last FICEMS meeting featured an update on recommendation A-09-103—an evidence-based guideline that describes the clinical conditions in which air medical transport is recommended. A draft manuscript was presented and has been submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. When the manuscript has been accepted for publication, NTSB will review it and decide on a disposition for the recommendation.

Another recommendation regarded the funding of public safety answering points (PSAP). The TWG set up a special committee on 9-1-1 telecommunications that has been working closely with NTSB staff to ensure that their products meet the recommendations. Laurie Flaherty of NHTSA explained that after the January 2008 Mexican Hat bus crash, the NTSB conducted an investigation of the incident and created a report. The NTSB asked FICEMS to develop a plan that could be used by states and PSAPs to pursue funding for enhancement of wireless communication coverage and facilitate prompt accident notification and emergency response along high risk rural roads with substantial bus traffic. FICEMS submitted a report to the NTSB in 2011 and now the NTSB is requesting additional information.

The committee drafted a document containing clarification of the distinct components of the emergency communication system and who is responsible for those components at the federal and state levels. The committee provided a report on the Enhanced 9-1-1 Grant Program and a white paper on the current status of 9-1-1 funding, produced by the National 9-1-1 Resource Center. These items have been presented to the NTSB staff for feedback.

A motion was made to approve the letter to the NTSB on 9-1-1 funding and corresponding attachments. The motion was approved.

Emerging Issues in EMS from Federal Agencies and Agency Updates

Carol Linden, the Principal Deputy Director of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) at ASPR, provided the federal agency update. She explained the role of BARDA in addressing man-made and natural threats, including CBRN threats (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear), pandemic influenza, and emerging infectious diseases. She emphasized the importance of the public health emergency medical countermeasures enterprise in protecting the public.

Public Comment

Dia Gainor, of the National Association of State EMS Officials, asked about the executive session mentioned during the discussion of the strategic plan. She wondered whether it was closed to the public. Mr. Dawson explained that FICEMS, as a federal committee, meets in closed sessions when discussing certain issues, such as budgets.

The committee adjourned at 3:56 p.m.