

PSAP – Communications Center Role in Air Medical Response

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Introduction

The Emergency Communications Center plays a critical role in the response of air medical services to an EMS incident. Through pre-planning and proper protocol development increased safety, efficiency, and timely use of air medical services is possible. This presentation will demonstrate the role the Communications Center should fulfill in pre-planning and requesting air medical services.

Objectives

- Define the role of the Emergency Communications Center in Air Medical Response.
- Demonstrate how to integrate Air Medical response into EMD protocols.
- Illustrate the importance of pre-planning LZ's, communications, and response policies.
- Improve safety, response, and appropriate utilization of air medical services.

Emergency Medical Dispatch

- Standard of Practice and Care
- Liability Protection Provided in Code of Va.
- EMD is the true First Responder
- Pre-Arrival Instructions improve survival
- Priority Dispatch and resource management
- Funding and Accreditation available

Air Medical and EMD

- Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD)
Protocols should include pre-alert or status check of air medical services in the response criteria.
- EMD is the standard for determining medical acuity and priority dispatch for EMS. Air medical consideration should be included as a dispatch priority.

EMD Protocols

- Include Air Medical Status Check in Dispatch Priorities
- Shortens Air Medical Response Time
- Shortens Time to Trauma Center
- Enhances appropriate utilization

28. TRAFFIC ACCIDENT INJURIES					
KEY QUESTIONS			PRE-ARRIVAL INSTRUCTIONS		
1. HOW MANY VEHICLES AND/OR PATIENTS?		N/A			
2. IS ANYONE TRAPPED IN OR UNDER THE VEHICLE OR WERE THEY THROWN OUT?		N/A			
3. IS THE VEHICLE UPRIGHT? IS IT STILL ON THE ROAD?		N/A N/A			
4. WAS THE COLLISION HEAD-ON?		N/A			
5. IS A TRUCK INVOLVED?			IF YES--> FIND OUT CONTENTS AND IF THERE IS ANY LEAKAGE.		
6. ARE THERE ANY OTHER HAZARDS? POWER LINES, POLES, ETC.			***DON'T MOVE PATIENTS UNLESS THERE IS A DANGER OF FURTHER INJURY FROM LEAVING PATIENTS WHERE THEY ARE.		
DISPATCH PRIORITIES					
DETERMINANT	LEVEL	HELICOPTER STATUS CHECK	1ST RESPONDERS		PD
			COUNTY	CITY	
			NO CREW		
1. UNKNOWN INJURIES	BLS FIRE	NO	YES	YES	YES
2. MINOR INJURIES	TRAUMA FIRE	NO	YES	YES	YES
3. VEHICLE OVERTURNED, ENTRAPMENT, EJECTION, MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENT.	MEDIC FIRE OIC	YES	YES	YES	YES

Status Checks

- Pre-Alerting or Status Check does several things.
 - Decreases response time for air medical
 - Enhances the awareness of EMS responders of the possible need for air transport.
 - Provides air medical providers with more time to conduct pre-flight checks.

Status Checks

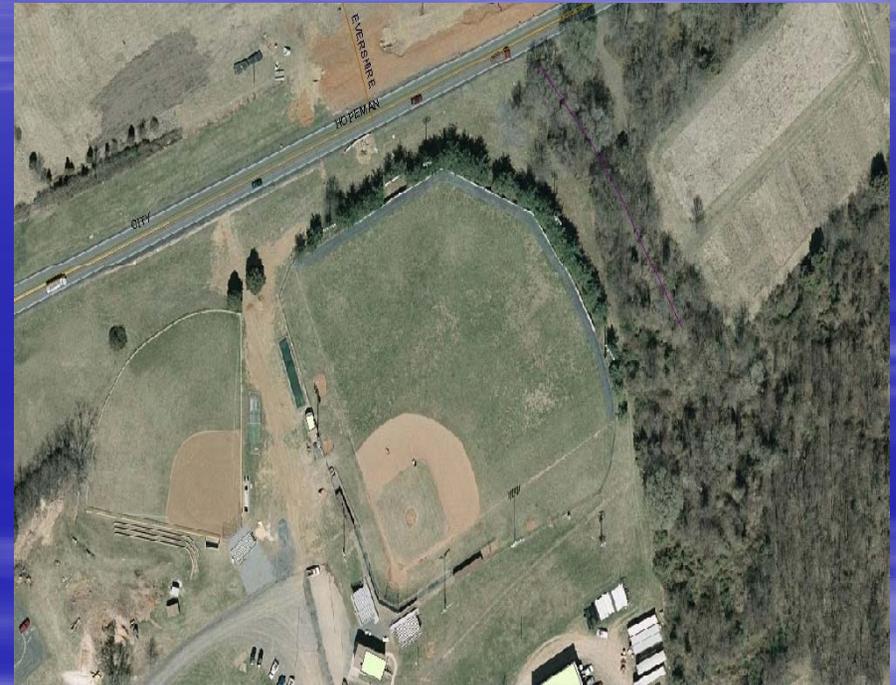
- Enhance Safety
- Allows the Comm Center time to check the status of alternative providers should the primary provider be unavailable.
- Assists in getting air medical responders into stand-by mode prepared for launch.

Status Check Policies

- Status Check protocols should be developed using a multi-disciplinary committee made up of Communications, EMS, Fire, Air Medical, and Medical Direction.
- Pre-designated – GPS Landing Zones should be selected throughout the response area and included in PSAP mapping programs.
- Pre-Determined Communications channels for air operations should be identified and provided to air medical services for inclusion in their radio systems.
- EMD Protocols for air medical response should be compliant with regional trauma triage plans.

GIS and Pre-Planned LZ's

- Pre-Selection of LZ's
 - Enhances safety
 - Strategically located
 - GPS all LZ's
 - Pre-mission inspection
 - Can be layers in mapping system



Aircraft Navigational Equipment

- Allows for insertion of pre-planned LZ designators and coordinates
- Provides exact direction to the pilot.



EMS Responders

- EMS and Fire Responders requesting air medical response must provide the following to the communications center.
 - LZ information – Pre-designated?
 - LZ Contact – Comm Channel?, With who?
 - Patient Information – age, sex, chief complaint/injury, MOI.
 - Weather at the scene
 - Hazards

Bad Things Do Happen Without Planning and Coordination

- Delayed response time = delay time to definitive care
- Unfamiliar LZ's increase the possibility of accidents
- Communications failures
- Inappropriate utilization of valuable resources

Summary

- Communications Centers play a critical role in the pre-alerting and safe response of air medical services to incident scenes.
- Communications officials should be involved in the planning process for policy development.
- Air Medical status checks should be built into response criteria of EMD protocols.