

The Blanket

ISSUE 3 - 2007



New York State Volunteer Ambulance & Rescue Association, Inc.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Michael J. Mastrianni, Jr.
President

As we begin this new year, I want to thank everyone for the time and effort that has been made to move the Association forward. At our Convention last month, your officers for 2007-2008 were elected. Your Executive Board is:

President	Michael Mastrianni
Exec. Vice President	Roy Sweet
Vice President	Henry Ehrhardt
Financial Secretary	Gwen Bray
Treasurer	Bob Franz
Secretary	Christy Hubbard

I want to thank Tim Ryan, Ralph Cefalo and Mandy Squillini for their service to the Association this past year as officers. All of us truly appreciate the time that they gave to the Association.

Pulsecheck 2007, our educational conference and trade show, was a great event. The committee did a wonderful job in providing excellent educational seminars dealing with a wide variety of topics. As always, CME credit was given for each of the classes. Our Convention afforded attendees the opportunity to meet colleagues from across the state and allowed us to share our experiences. Our trade show brings representatives of the companies whose equipment we use together with those who use it. Their continued support of the Association is greatly appreciated. The Drill Competition provides a forum for friendly competition among squads as they treat "patients" in unique situations. It is great to watch the future of EMS.

Saturday night's "Halloween Costume Contest" was a blast.



I want to thank **Good Samaritan Hospital in Suffern, NY** for their support of as a Gold Sponsor. Their commitment to the volunteer EMS community in Rockland County and to the volunteer EMS providers of New York State is to be commended. Thanks also go out to **Fire Districts Mutual Insurance Company** for their support.

I want to urge all of you to join us next year at Pulse Check 2008. It will be an experience that you will not forget. Please check out our website, www.nysvara.org for more information

This year has been a very active one for the Association. During the winter, Roy and I met with representatives of several larger combination volunteer ambulance services from across the middle of the state in Syracuse. I am pleased to report that as a result of this meeting, the group has decided to join our Association. They have formed their own district, District 15. The new District is a welcome addition to our Association. Thank you for joining us.

Our web site www.nysvara.org has been completely renovated. John Hussar and his company **Greygoose Graphics**, have done a great job in making the site extremely impressive. Just about everything you want to know about the Association can be found there. The number of visitors to our site has increased dramatically. The continued success of the site depends on our members providing information. Please, if you have any news, upcoming

Continued on Page 3

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 01/02/08 - District 1 Monthly Meeting (Rockland Co.) | 04/02/08 - District 1 Monthly Meeting (Rockland Co.) |
| 01/19/08 - NYSVARA Directors Meeting (Chiefs) | 05-07/08 - District 1 Monthly Meeting (Rockland Co.) |
| 01/23/08 - NY SEMAC/SEMSCO Sub-Committees (Albany) | 05/18-24/08 - EMS Week |
| 01/24/08 - NY SEMAC/SEMSCO (Albany) | 05-28/08 - NY SEMAC/SEMSCO Sub-Committees (Albany) |
| 01/30/08 - District 5 Meeting - Good Samaritan (Suffern) | 05-29/08 - NY SEMAC/SEMSCO (Albany) |
| 02/06/08 - District 1 Monthly Meeting (Rockland Co.) | 09/18-21/08 - Pulse Check (Kerhonkson) |
| 03/04/08 - NY SEMAC/SEMSCO Sub-Committees (Albany) | 10/2-5/08 - Vital Signs (Buffalo) |
| 03/05/08 - NY SEMAC/SEMSCO (Albany) | |
| 03/05/08 - District 1 Monthly Meeting (Rockland Co.) | |



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The Blanket

ISSUE 3 - 2007

The Quarterly Newsletter
of the NYS Volunteer Ambulance
& Rescue Association

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Roy R. Sweet, Executive Vice President

Henry Ehrhardt, Vice President

Christy Hubbard, Secretary

Robert Franz, Treasurer

Gwen Bray, Financial Secretary

SueAnn Burley, Immediate Past President

NYSVARA Membership Information

If you are not a member, please join NYSVARA today and help increase the voice of the community/volunteer/non-profit EMS/First Responder Sector in New York State. For information on NYSVARA membership go to our web site at www.nysvara.org.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Continued from Page 1

events, or any thing that you may feel would be of interest to our colleagues, please send them to me at seamast@aol.com.

Our great relationship continues with the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs. This year, in addition to providing us with a place to hold our Board of Directors' meetings and being the answering point for our toll free phone number, we partnered with them for Legislative Day. This coming year, we will be looking at others ways in which we can work together. While on the subject of legislation, Dedicated Funding for EMS, which is part of the Health Care Reform Act (HCRA), was due to expire in June. It has been extended for another year. This coming year, the Legislature and Governor will be looking closely at HCRA. We will be working very hard this year to ensure that the needs of EMS are adequately served. I know it is a ways off, but our Legislative Day will be in the early 2008 and it is critical that as many people as possible join us for this day in Albany. We will be setting up meeting with key legislators to discuss important issues that we face. There is strength in numbers. More information will follow as the plans are confirmed. PLEASE JOIN US!

Henry Ehrhardt and I continue to represent the Association on the NYS EMS Council. This year, Henry has served as its Chairman. It is a great accomplishment and a reflection of the hard work that Henry has done over the years as he has represented us on the Council.

Henry and I were invited to attend FASNY's EMS Conference in Montour. It was very well attended and extremely well done. During the weekend, we had the opportunity to meet with members of their President Michael Wutz and members of their EMS Committee. Adam Ochs from The New York State Association of Fire Districts was also at the meeting. It was extremely productive. I believe there is a renewed sense of cooperation among all the volunteer emergency service organizations. I want to thank President Wutz and FASNY for their hospitality.

Ladies and gentlemen, the face of volunteer EMS is changing. It is imperative that each of us takes an objective and critical look at our services. We must be willing to acknowledge our shortcomings and develop a plan to address them. Imagination and a willingness to cooperate with our neighbors will, in many cases, will be the only way volunteer EMS will survive.

On behalf of the Officers and Board of Directors, I want to thank everyone for their support of our Association. As always, if there is anyone who would be interested in working with us on any of the committees, please let me know.

Be Safe!



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From the Desk of the Financial Secretary

Gwen Bray, Financial Secretary
Renewal of Dues

On August 1st, 2007 the 2007-2008 Dues Renewal Notices were mailed out to all current Individual Members and Squads of the New York State Volunteer Ambulance and Rescue Association. Three Districts that have chosen to do their own mailing and billing have also mailed out the notices that were provided to them. Included in the Squad Renewal Notice is a blank Annual Report. Please complete and submit the Annual Report along with the Annual Dues. You will notice that there is a change in the form, in addition to asking for physical addresses we are also asking for email addresses for Squads, Delegates and even Individual Members. Last year notices were mailed out at the same time and there was an excellent response. If you haven't already done so, please mail in your dues renewal today! If you have a friend that is not a member or your Squad may not be a member, simply go online to the Association Web Site www.nysvara.org, download a membership application, complete it and mail it in. If you are a member of a District that billed please mail in to the District as soon as possible. In all other cases send Dues Renewals and Annual Reports to the State Association mailbox at:

NYSVA&RA
Attn: Gwen Bray, Financial Secretary
P.O. Box 570064
Whitestone, NY 11357

Thank you for your cooperation.

Recently Issued NYS DOH Policy Statement(s)

07-01 July 16, 2007 – SERVICE ANIMALS – Policy provides information to EMS personnel about the rights of patients and their service animals as well as several of the laws concerning service animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Assists ambulance agencies in understanding the rights of patients who utilize service dogs/animals, how these animals should be transported and that these individually trained animals have rights under the law that are not granted to domestic pets.

07-02 June 6, 2007 – FENTANYL FOR PREHOSPITAL EMS SERVICES – Approval for Fentanyl use has been expanded from only air medical services to all ALS services with a 3C controlled substance license. REMACs and agencies must develop protocols for use including 100% quality assurance and quarterly reports must be filed. Only EMT-P and EMT-CC personnel may administer Fentanyl and it must be authorized in each case by direct on-line Medical Control.

State & Federal Government Actions

Enforcement Activity By NYS DOH In 2006

There were a total of 885 investigations conducted in 2006 broken down as follows: 698 (137 were alcohol or drug related) criminal convictions; 114 individuals; 56 agencies; 9 course sponsors; 8 Instructors; and 2 Part 18 Public Gatherings.

Dispositions were as follows: (All legal actions were posted on the Bureau of EMS web site) 29 referred to Division of Legal

Affairs for enforcement actions; 36 signed Stipulations and Orders; 11 revocations and one annulment; 21 suspensions; 11 surrenders and 34 cases closed as not substantiated.

EMS Service Surveillance Statistics – 234 full service inspections; 365 spot vehicle inspections; 20 Part 18 Public Gatherings; 11 course sponsor audits and 147 Statements of Deficiency issued.

NYS DOH Establishes Draft Pandemic Ventilator Guidelines

A group of experts assembled by the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) developed guidelines for rationing scarce ventilators during a pandemic influenza event. The group released a 52 page draft plan that provides detailed guidance for determining who will receive ventilator treatment in the face of a pandemic-related shortage. The plan calls for allocating ventilators in acute care hospitals solely on the basis of patients' medical need and chance of survival, without regard for age, occupation, ability to pay or other factors. For more information, visit: www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/apr3007ventilator.html.

Fact Sheet on Use of Facemasks and Respirators in Public Places Issued by CDC

On May 8, 2007 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a fact sheet that provides information about the use of facemasks and respirators in public places during an influenza pandemic. The fact sheet is available at www.cdc.gov/Features/MasksRespirators.

FDA Clears First Public Respirators for Use in Health Emergencies

On May 8, 2007 the U.S. FDA cleared for marketing the first respirators that can help reduce the user's exposure to airborne germs during a public health medical emergency, such as an influenza pandemic. These two filtering facepiece respirators, manufactured by 3M Company (called the 3M Respirator 8612F and 867-F) will be available to the public without a prescription. FDA is requiring those who want to market respirators for use during public health medical emergencies to assure that they are certified by NIOSH to provide adequate filtration without hampering people's ability to breathe. In addition, companies must conduct fit assessment testing, conduct biocompatibility testing to reduce the chance for allergic skin reaction and provide instructions that will enable wearers to achieve a protective fit and use the devices properly. For more information, visit www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2007/NEW01630.html.

GAO Releases Ambulance Cost Study

The General Accountability Office (GAO) released in May an ambulance cost study, *Ambulance Providers: Costs and Expected Medicare Margins Vary Greatly*. Among important findings, the report concludes that ambulance providers are paid by Medicare, on the average, about six percent less than their costs in providing the ambulance services. The report also found that costs are 17 percent lower for services originating in "super rural" areas, giving rise to a concern that reduced access to ambulance services for Medicare beneficiaries may arise in these areas. GAO recommends that the administrator of CMS monitor utilization of ambulance transports to ensure that Medicare payments are adequate to provide for beneficiary access to ambulance services, particularly in super-rural areas. CMS agreed with GAO's recommendation. To view the report, visit www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-383.

Hare Traction Splint Advisory Issued by Massachusetts DPH

On November 28, 2006 the Office of EMS of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health issued an Advisory indicating it has been notified of at least one instance in which a recently purchased Hare traction splint failed during application. The seam on the Velcro ischial strap is apparently heat welded, and after several months of use (repeated applications in a training scenario) the heat seams failed. During a real-world application, this would result in a complete loss of mechanical traction.

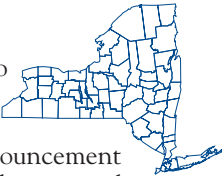
Ambulance services and EMT training institutions are advised to check the integrity of the Velcro ischial strap heat seams in newer model Hare traction leg splints on a regular basis (i.e. monthly at a minimum and/or during daily ambulance checks). The test should involve manual tension on the ischial strap to make sure the heat seal is intact before actual use on a patient, and during periodic equipment checks.

Any defective splint must be taken out of service and a medical device failure notice should be sent to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Visit the FDA website at www.fda.gov for detailed information. If the failure occurred while providing patient care during an ambulance run NYS DOH Policy Statement 98-01 also requires services to notify the NYS DOH Bureau of EMS in writing of all patient care equipment failures that could have resulted in harm to a patient.

Bits from Around the State

DISTRICT 1

Clarkstown, Rockland County, plans to create a Task Force of emergency services volunteers to explore ways to ensure that volunteers can afford to live in the town. The announcement was made as part of the "State of the Town" address given by the Town Supervisor on January 3, 2007. A second goal announced that property taxes would be reduced, helping volunteers.



Rockland County held an EMS Community Day EXPO on Sunday May 20th at the County Fire Training Center in Ramapo. The 5 hour event, part of EMS Week activities, was geared to educating the public about the work of ambulance corps members, firefighters and other emergency service providers. There were Jaws of Life demonstrations, CPR and Red Cross Emergency Preparedness classes, landing of a STAT Flight helicopter plus the "Convincer," a machine that simulates the forces a body encounters in a head-on collision and encourages people to wear seat belts. Elsewhere in the county on May 20th, Stony Point VAC invited residents to a "Meet and Greet" in a local park and offered free blood pressure screening, entertainment, games and refreshments. Attendees had an opportunity to learn what the squad offers and how to join. On Monday, May 21st the Nyack Community Ambulance Corps Youth Corps participated in the second annual Volunteer Fair at the Clarkstown South High School.

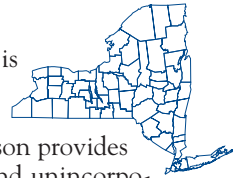
South Orangetown VAC, Rockland County, celebrates 50 years of service this year. Yearly call volume has risen from 200 to around 300 decades ago to about 1,800 now. A 50th Anniversary Reunion Dinner was held on Friday, June 22, 2007 at the Colonial Inn in Norwood NJ. On Saturday September 15, 2007 the "Pig is Back" for a "Fractured Ribfest" and community street festival with fun and entertainment to celebrate the squad's

anniversary. The squad serves the hamlets of Blauvelt, Orangeburg, Palisades, Sparkill and Tappan in the Town of Orangetown, NY and also responds to other parts of the Town, County and to New Jersey on a mutual aid basis. Three BLS ambulances and a first responder vehicle operate from headquarters at 70 Independence Avenue in Tappan.

Stony Point VAC, Rockland County, had an allocation of \$375,000 included in a US House of Representatives fiscal year 2008 Department of Labor/Department of Health & Human Services appropriations bill to help fund a new squad headquarters per an announcement from Representative John Hall. To become effective the bill needs approval from both Houses of Congress and the President. The current facility was constructed in 1947 and is in need of an upgrade. The ambulance bays do not fit today's larger ambulances. A larger facility could also serve as a disaster shelter for the community.

DISTRICT 2

Croton Village, Westchester County, is planning to set up an EMS department separate from the fire department. Currently, the Croton Fire Patrol located in Croton-on-Hudson provides BLS level ambulance service to the Village and unincorporated areas of the Town of Cortland. 2006 EMS call volume was over 600 runs. According to web postings, efforts to address ambulance staffing resources began in the 90s with establishment by the fire department of a "MEDIC" membership classification. Over the years, however, there was pressure to add non-EMS duties to these members plus firefighter-EMTs felt burnout over handling both types of calls. There was also the realization that as presently set up the VFD could not bill patients, Medicare, Medicaid or insurance companies. The CFD Fire Council approved the plan on May 29, 2007 and at the Village Board meeting on June 4th it was indicated that the necessary paperwork would be initiated.



GPS Phone Aids in Finding Westchester Accident – Mount Pleasant, Westchester County, emergency services were called to three traffic accidents on Route 9A on Monday morning May 14th. One accident involved a fatality. At 3:30 AM a speeding 1998 Subaru that went airborne just north of Route 117 and hit a tree. Despite the 22-year-old driver being buckled in, he was still ejected from the car and pronounced dead at the scene. His female passenger was injured but was able to call for help on her cell phone which enabled dispatchers to advise responders where to find the wreck in the woods by using the GPS system on the woman's phone. She was brought to the Westchester Medical Center.

Larchmont Fire Department, Westchester County, saw a number of its volunteers give 30 day notices of their intent to quit over the Village Board's 5-0 vote in mid May to appoint a paid chief at a \$115,000 yearly salary to replace the volunteer chief. A number of volunteers also filed suit on May 18th in State Supreme Court in White Plains to cancel the appointment on the grounds it violated village law contending there is no provision in law for the Village Board to appoint a chief who was not elected by the volunteers. A request for a temporary restraining order was denied. The department has 20 to 30 active volunteers plus a paid staff of 15 to provide fire, rescue and a BLS First Responder medical service to a 1.1 square mile area with a population of about 7,000. EMS ambulance service is provided by Larchmont VAC.

Westchester County Department of Public Safety has put in service Marine 4. The 27 foot Boston Whaler's tasks include patrolling sensitive areas on the Hudson River including the Indian Point nuclear power plant and the Tappan Zee Bridge and watching for pollution problems and violations of environmental laws. The boat is equipped with a state of the art navigation system, thermal imaging and infrared cameras, flood lights and remote control spotlights, dive rescue door, rescue and first aid equipment including throw ropes, throw rings, AED, floating backboards and rescue baskets.

DISTRICT 5

Cornwall VAC, Orange County, is feeling the effects of aging Baby Boomers moving into its service area. When Idelwild Creek Apartments opened in 2000 there was a jump in calls with about 10% of total in 2006 (about 100) to that particular development. Overall, 56% of the squad's patients are over 60 years of age. There are proposals for two new developments – Cornwall Commons with 490 homes for active seniors and Chestnut Woods with 215 apartments for seniors. So far the squad has been able to handle its calls without mutual aid, hiring supplemental EMTs or third party billing but changes are being considered. The town, through the Cornwall Ambulance District, provides \$200,000 for operations but has resisted expenditures for a Special Operations Unit for disaster response or for replacement/expansion of the squad's headquarters. Which was built in 1990 and was projected at the time to serve the Town's needs for 30 to 40 years. The squad operates two Type III ambulances, one Type II and an EMS first responder vehicle.

St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital (SLCH), Orange County, has announced that it would like to add a helipad to its facility in Cornwall. Zoning approval would be necessary before that could happen. A helipad was recently added at the hospital's facility in Newburgh atop a new multi-tiered parking garage with funding provided through a NYS grant secured by Senator William Larkin. SLCH was established in 2002 with the merger of St. Luke's Hospital in Newburgh and Cornwall Hospital in Cornwall.

Warwick, Orange County, took out a full page ad in the Times Herald-Record during EMS Week in May to recognize the Town's four volunteer EMS agencies: Greenwood Lake Ambulance Corps, Florida Rescue Squad, Pine Island EMS (Orange County Agency of the Year) and Warwick VAC.

DISTRICT 6

Wurtsboro VFD, Sullivan County, due to fears of lawsuits was told by its Fire Commissioners in mid July to end its 30 year plus practice of responding to medical emergencies. The department is not recognized by the NYS DOH Bureau of EMS as a non transporting EMS agency because it never filed the necessary paperwork. It has not filed with the Hudson Valley Regional EMS Council as a Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) provider. Nevertheless, CPR-AED trained members plus two who are EMTs routinely respond to medical calls in its area with the rescue truck which is equipped with oxygen and a defibrillator sometimes arriving before Mamakating First Aid Squad, the community based EMS service. Interested parties are evidently trying to sort out the easiest way for the

VFD to get the certifications, recognition and/or authorizations needed to continue its first responder service.

DISTRICT 7

Deer Park Fire District, Suffolk County, asked Suffolk REMAC if a fire department Safety Officer could monitor firefighters with carbon monoxide (CO) oximetry. Response was to consult FD attorneys as the use of such device could have malpractice implications. The County EMS Coordinator further advised that non-invasive CO oximetry is a medical procedure and is performed by a medical device. Therefore, Safety Officers that are not certified as EMS providers cannot perform the skill.

A local community ambulance in Suffolk County, saw its president arrested in March and charged with one count of grand larceny and one count of offering a false instrument for filing to which he pleaded not guilty on both charges. Earlier in the month the county District Attorney's Government Corruption Bureau issued search warrants and had squad financial records and a computer seized and also removed records from the home of the squad President. A Board spokesperson is quoted as saying "Possible financial discrepancies with regard to the ... Community Ambulance accounting practices were reported to the Board of Directors ... (which) promptly decided that an impartial third party needed to review the above stated discrepancies... The appropriate authorities were notified. Our system of checks and balances worked. We have since implemented additional checks to prevent future discrepancies." In 2005 two former members charged that they were suspended for pointing out financial improprieties.

Lifestar Ambulance, Holtsville, Suffolk County has two millionaires riding as ambulance crew after they won \$2 million in the Fabulous Fortune scratch off game in early April. Patrick O'Connell, 38, of Flushing purchased the ticket at a 7-Eleven in East Quogue while on shift and elected to split his winnings with his partner, Carol Streppel, 42, a registered nurse who works at St. Francis Hospital in Roslyn. Each will received annual \$50,000 payments for the next 20 years.

A local fire district in Suffolk County is involved in a dispute over a \$100,000 investment it made in the Long Island Cauliflower Association. Newsday reports that the Fire Commissioner who pushed the investment was found in late June with an "apparent self-inflicted stab wound to his chest" but is recovering. In 2005 the District made the investment in the 106-year-old Association that once ran farm auctions on the island, though its business now is selling farm and garden supplies. It had 20 employees and an estimated \$1.3 million in sales in 2006. The Commissioner who is a salesman for the Association and served as chairman of the Fire District at the time, and his fellow commissioners approved the deal, with an expected 6 percent rate of return, even though investments in private companies are not permitted by district policy. An independent audit targeted the investment and the lack of paperwork documenting it. The District has requested return of the \$100,000 but the Association has not complied. The remaining Fire Commissioners have requested the Commissioner to resign but he has not. Both the District and the Association have notified the Suffolk County District Attorney about the matter.

Southampton Town, Suffolk County, conducted a referendum on May 1st asking residents to approve a plan to allow EMS

volunteers with at least five years service and who have answered at least 50 calls a year to get a retirement benefit of \$20 a month for every year of service after the initial five years, once they reach the age of 65. The annual cost of the program was estimated to be \$56,000 in Flanders-Northampton, \$53,000 in Southampton, \$62,000 in Hampton Bays and \$48,000 in Westhampton. 200 volunteers in the town responded to 4,000 emergency calls in 2006. Estimates of covering the cost of a paid service to replace the ambulance volunteers would call for a 25 percent increase in local taxes. The results of the referendum were overwhelming in favor of the proposal with counts of: Southampton 117 to 1, Flanders-Northampton 103 to 1, Hampton Bays 119 to 4 and Westhampton War Memorial 63 to 6.

Suffolk County Department of Fire, Rescue & Emergency Services' new Deputy Director is Belinda Pagdaganan. Ms. Pagdaganan was formerly the county's Director of Emergency Management. She is a volunteer with Brentwood VFD and prior to that served with Brentwood Legion Ambulance.

Suffolk County DOH EMS Division took delivery of two trailers obtained with a domestic preparedness grant. The trailers will be lettered and outfitted and used to support the EMS and hospital community during complex incidents.

Suffolk County Police Department's application to convert a Municipal Certificate of Need (CON) to a permanent CON to provide non-911 system ambulance service was approved by Suffolk REMSCO on March 13, 2007 and passed on to the NYS DOH by a vote of 18 yes including NYSVA&RA's District 7 representative, 2 abstentions and 3 no votes cast by representatives listed in the minutes as being from the Fire-Rescue-EMS Commission, Ambulance Chiefs' Association and Fire District Officers Association. The motion brought forward from the Resource Committee included the following "binding contingencies" provisions:

- For police personnel and/or for documented police situations where volunteer ambulances may be exposed to grave personal risk.
- In cases of hostage situations, hazardous materials spills, barricaded subjects, violent demonstrations, confidential narcotics raids or other unusual situations for which the Police Commissioner deems it appropriate.
- In police emergency situations in which gunfire or hostile or violent crowds are present and pose a particular hazard to ambulance personnel.
- In mass casualty situations, on the request of the Incident Commander on a mutual aid basis and within the Incident Command System established for the event.
- To train police personnel as EMTs and to maintain the level of proficiency.
- To provide transportation of police personnel in accordance with the Suffolk County EMS policy for non-emergent transportation.
- To transport injured police recruits from the academy.
- In an emergency declared by the Suffolk County Executive or other extraordinary circumstances determined by the Suffolk County Executive.

While under the temporary Municipal CON from February 2005 to January 2007 SCPD ambulance(s) made 49 runs, 22 of

which were tactical runs including transporting injured recruits 17 times and being at the range for explosive demolition 15 times.

In New York City the NYPD went the route of being approved as an ALS-First Responder service in tactical situations with patient transport being turned over to 911 system providers such as FDNY EMS and voluntary hospital ambulances. Ambulances that appear to have NYPD markings, including some blue strobes, are actually owned and operated the Police Relief Fund, a union organization, for non emergency transport of union members.

Suffolk County's new Commissioner of Health Services is Humayun J. Chaudhry, DO, MS. Dr. Chaudhry's professional career has thus far involved work primarily in hospitals, ambulatory settings and academia. Dr. Chaudhry's resume includes being chair of the department of medicine and assistant dean for health policy at the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine and being a major in the US Air Force Reserve and serving in the active reserve as a flight surgeon for the 732nd Airlift Squadron.

University Hospital Stony Brook, Suffolk County, has entered into mutual aid agreements with Manorville VAC, Mattituck Fire District and Riverhead VAC to supply an ALS First Response fly car to the respective areas at no cost to agencies or patients.

West Islip VFD EMS, Suffolk County, had two members, aged 18 and 19, severely injured by a 17 year old alleged DUI hit and run driver. The incident occurred Thursday morning July 19 about 1:00 AM. The members, both college students, had ended a mandatory training session and were three hours into a 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM overnight shift staffing the ambulance when they decided to go about a block away to a 7-11 convenience store. They were struck as they crossed a street. Both were transported to Good Samaritan Medical Center in West Islip with head trauma, fractures and other injuries and underwent surgeries. By the following week both young men were off ventilators and were able to communicate with hand gestures and limited verbal responses. They remained listed in serious but stable condition and have a long road to recovery ahead of them. The driver, a high school student going into her senior year, was arrested several blocks away, arraigned, charged with driving while intoxicated and leaving the scene of an accident involving personal injury, pleaded "not guilty" and was released on \$10,000 cash bail.

DISTRICT 10 (REGION 1)

Brewerton Fire Department, Onondaga County, has proposed a Brewerton Ambulance District to provide EMS service. After Rural Metro pulled out in 2006 the VFD took over the responsibility for providing ALS level EMS service. It has responded to 750 calls including over 160 mutual aid requests, making over 400 transports. The VFD, however, cannot bill for the service but an ambulance district could bill as well as raise funds as a special tax district. A series of public information meetings is scheduled and the issue would be on the November 6 ballot as a referendum.



Corning, Steuben County, has hired a consulting firm to determine the most economical way to provide EMS ambulance service for the residents of the city. Rural-Metro has the contract through the end of 2007 and is reportedly headed by the ex

Republican mayor of the city. The current Democratic mayor is cited in a news article as proposing the study projected to cost from \$20,000 to \$25,000. Stats provided by Rural-Metro indicate it has a regional annual call volume of nearly 7,000 transporting 5,000 patients both within the city limits and to hospitals as far as Elmira and Rochester and has a billing collection rate of 63%. Also supplying EMS in the city is the Corning Fire Department, which is a Certified First Responder Unit trained and equipped to provide on-scene basic life support with all personnel certified as EMTs or CFRs.

Guilford Fire Department Emergency Squad, Chenango County, recently took delivery of a new ambulance. The vehicle is a 2006 Ford F450 and replaces a 15 year old vehicle. The 15 member squad provides AEMT-CC level service.

Onondaga County Cell Phone Locator Ability Less than Optimal – The Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) released a study in May on the ability of emergency services personnel to locate people through their cell phones when they call 911 during an emergency. Project LOCATE, begun in 2005, was funded by a grant from the Safety Foundation of America and covered seven different communities across the country – Onondaga County, NY plus Palo Alto, CA; Marion County, FL; Jasper County, MO.; Rowan County, NC; Bexar County, TX and Laramie, WY. They were selected based on topography, demographics, existing technology and other factors.

Project LOCATE did 1,421 test calls and there was a 71% failure rate at the community level in meeting FCC standards in the test areas. In Onondaga County one carrier was unable to come within 300 meters 73% of the time while another carrier did succeed 87% of the time.

There are an estimated 230,000 daily cell phone calls to 911. Another estimate is that 8.4% of households are wireless only. At some Public Safety Answering Points the number of cell calls exceeds landline calls. The good news is that the vast majority of cell calls to 911 the caller is able to provide information where they are calling from.

Tri-Community Ambulance Co., Niagara County had its former Treasurer indicted by a Niagara County grand jury on June 26 on charges of third degree grand larceny for using a company credit card to make more than \$16,000 worth of personal purchases during 2006. The District Attorney's office said the official used the credit card to buy gasoline at first before using it for other purchases. The squad was established in 1956 and operates 3 ALS ambulances and a fly car serving the towns of Cambria, Lewiston and Wheatfield plus the Tuscarora Indian Reservation from headquarters in Sanborn.

Twin City Ambulance, Erie County, signed a new five year union contract effective June 18 which increases starting pay for EMTs by 26% to \$10.00 per hour from a previous \$7.95 an hour. Employees will also receive a better uniform and footwear package, more paid holidays and retirement benefits. Starting pay for EMT-basic employees ranges from \$27,000 to \$28,900, EMT-Intermediate employees' starting pay ranges from \$29,700 to \$33,500 and paramedics' starting pay is \$38,500 to \$47,900. Twin City is a family owned company based in Tonawanda, employs 200 people and provides ambulance service to several communities in Erie and Niagara Counties.

Western Area Volunteer Emergency Services, Onondaga County, and Crouse Hospital offered a Heart Health Screening

on Wednesday afternoon June 6 at the ambulance service headquarters in Camillus. The 15-minute screening included a measure of total cholesterol and glucose levels, blood pressure reading and a personal heart health risk assessment. A very small sample of blood obtained from a sterile finger stick was used to obtain the cholesterol and glucose values and no fasting was required. There was a \$5 fee for each screening.

DISTRICT 12

Atlantic Steamer Fire Co. #1, Oyster Bay, Nassau County, has expanded its water rescue services to include ice rescue. The 25 person Dive-Water-Ice Rescue Team is the only one on the Long Island Sound shore of Nassau County. A dive rescue truck contains SCUBA gear, cold water rescue suits and a 12' inflatable boat with a 15hp motor. The department's main boat is a 1998 Stiegercraft 23' with a 250 hp outboard motor and a 23 hp pump. The department also provides an ALS level EMS First Responder service.



Farmingdale Fire Department EMS, Nassau County, was assessed a civil penalty of \$11,100.00 on May 15, 2007 by the NYS DOH Bureau of EMS. For violations of the NYS Public Health Law Article 3012(b) and 10 NYCRR Part 800.5(d), 800.23(a), 800.21(a), 800.21(p)(6), 800.21(p)(8), 800.21(p)(9), 800.21(p)(10), 800.21(p)(12)(iii), and 800.21(q)(1-5). The department operates an ALS level ambulance service.

Nassau County's new \$46 million emergency radio network is running into opposition about efforts to install antennas on water towers that dot the Long Island landscape. Only about eight of 24 required sites have been secured for the new radio system that would enable village, town and county first responders to communicate with one another as well as with Suffolk, NYC, NYS and federal agencies. Jericho Water District officials supposedly objected because the microwave dishes would be environmentally and aesthetically objectionable. Bayville residents raised health concerns but the village has granted permits for 52 cell sites on its tower. Other areas have cited liability and maintenance concerns but others such as Farmingdale have come right out said consideration would be given if they were paid for the locations noting they get \$25,000 to \$150,000 a year from cell companies such as Nextel, Cingular and T-Mobile. The Deputy County Executive indicated the county would install and maintain the equipment and is quoted as saying if forced to do so the county would consider condemnation of property.

North Hempstead Town, Nassau County, received a \$180,000 grant from the NYS Department of State to study the feasibility of providing coordinated and shared EMS ambulance services in the areas of Albertson, Carle Place, Floral Park Centre, Glen Head, Great Neck Plaza, Manhasset-Lakeville, Port Washington and Roslyn. Currently, volunteer fire departments for the most part, provide ambulance service in the town. A working group of stakeholders will be established to draft a Request for Proposal to encompass a study of the existing EMS service delivery including the organization structure of departments, budgets, resources, quality of service, etc. Next would be a look at issues that would arise in a consolidation including a financial and legal analysis. Lastly, if changes are found to be beneficial, would be an outline of the steps needed to bring consolidation to fruition. The town occupies 58 square miles and has over 100 municipal corporations in 30 incorporated villages,

many of which provide identical services to different areas. With budgets and taxes rising constantly there has been more interest in special tax district consolidations that would reduce overhead expenses and better utilize existing resources.

Nassau & Suffolk County American Red Cross Chapters have undertaken a proactive initiative to aggressively prepare Long Island in advance of a need for evacuations be it weather related or due to other causes. Instead of focusing primarily on the response aspect, Red Cross chapters in both counties are improving preparedness efforts by pre-positioning supplies, enhancing communication systems, and educating Long Islanders. In the event that residents need to evacuate their homes such as in advance of a major hurricane, vital supplies will be in place. 30 durable shipping containers – each containing 1,000 cots, 2,000 blankets, and with ample room for food and water – are being distributed to shelters across Long Island. Also key to any response operation is the ability to communicate effectively. In June, the Nassau Red Cross completed a project to enhance its satellite communications system. The system will be vital for communicating with public officials and residents during a hurricane if telephone lines are down and cell phone networks are busy. The Red Cross is spreading the word on preparedness through an advertising campaign that was launched in July. Created by a Hauppauge-based advertising company, it is hoped that the campaign will effectively reach out to Long Islanders through print, television, radio and the internet (www.LIprepares.org).

Nassau County American Red Cross received a \$25,000 grant from the Allstate Foundation. The funds will be used to train 300 Nassau teenagers in First Aid and CPR.

DISTRICT 16

Kodak Fire Department, Monroe County, was approved to operate an ALS First Responder service. The “industrial” department is located in Kodak Park, which spans over 1,100 acres through the city of Rochester and the Town of Greece. There are over 125 manufacturing buildings, 30 miles of roads, a railroad, two power plants, pipelines and various other facilities. Approximately 11,000 are employed at the site. The NYS DOH website lists Kodak Park Emergency Medical Service as an ALS ambulance service.

Southeast Quadrant Mobile Critical Care Unit, Monroe County, sponsored its yearly Surgical Airway & Anatomy Lab on March 15, 2007, 86 people attended. A unique feature of the event was the hands-on training using pig parts. Demonstrated were blood flow and structures of the heart, trachea, epiglottis, vocal chords, kidney and eye. SEQ is an ALS provider with headquarters in Fairport and is owned by a consortium of ambulance services including East Rochester VAC, Penfield VAC, Perinton VAC and Pittsford VAC and provides paramedic service in the areas covered by the squads. Response vehicles and equipment are maintained at member agencies’ facilities.

Spencerport Volunteer Ambulance, Monroe County, was rocked in mid June by sexual misconduct charges by a 16 year old female, three year member of its Explorer Program against the squad’s 30 year old Operations Supervisor and 48 year old Director. Both men have been charged with felony third degree rape while the 48 year old also faces an additional charge of felony third degree criminal sexual act. Neither of the men were

Explorer Advisors. Explorer Post 414 is sponsored through the Otetiana Council of the Boy Scouts of America and the City of Rochester. Advisors undergo a criminal background check by the Boy Scouts but it is unclear if it would have made any difference in the current charges even if those involved were Advisors. All organizations that include minors have been encouraged, and some even required by their insurance carriers, to provide appropriate training and cautions to all members and officers regardless of official involvement with youth programs. Spencerport operates two ALS level ambulances and a fly car.

DISTRICT 19

Greater Amsterdam VAC, Montgomery County, expanded in April with the merger of St. Johnsville VAC. Both are ALS level providers. The squad is now the largest in the Adirondack-Appalachian REMSCO area responding to approximately 8,000 calls a year spread out over a response territory of over 450 square miles. GAVAC will utilize 9 modern ALS ambulances and 3 fly vehicles to provide service to the citizens of Montgomery County as well as to response areas of Fulton County and routine mutual aid response to Saratoga, Schoharie, Schenectady, and Herkimer Counties.

DISTRICT 20 (REGION 2)

Ellenburg Depot Volunteer Fire Department, Clinton County, has filed a declaration for a municipal Certificate of Need to start an ambulance service. The department currently provides a BLS level First Responder service.

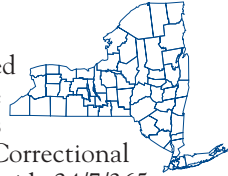
Big Moose Ambulance Company, Herkimer County, has replaced donated 1980’s and 1990’s snowmobiles used to haul its 6 foot long rescue sled. The new hauler is a 2007 Yamaha VK-Professional model, with a fuel injected four stroke three cylinder 973cc engine which runs quieter and cleaner and with more towing power. The vehicle also has a wider track and longer skis for better stability. Manufacturer’s suggested list price is \$10,199. The squad provides deep-woods winter rescue services. It’s unknown if the snowmobile/sled combo has a NYS DOH certification sticker but it may qualify for one.

Rochester, Monroe County had an ad-hoc City Council sub-committee comprised of public safety, finance and legal professionals, including the Fire Chief, 911 Director, former Finance Director and Municipal Attorney recommend a change in the municipal 911 ambulance provider. If adopted, the next three year contract would go to Monroe Ambulance replacing Rural Metro which has had a nearly two decade relationship with the city. The committee was reportedly impressed by Monroe’s technology capability to connect with 911 operators, its pledge to lower response times and Monroe’s plans to purchase a fleet of new ambulances. Monroe would have to hire 100 to 200 additional staff including EMTs to meet the required service capacity with the probability that some of the EMTs would come from Rural Metro which has 250 on staff in the area. Consensus seems to be that although both companies are comparable but a requirement in the contract requires that ambulances be less than six years old with less than 300,000 miles, meaning Monroe would be buying a number of new ones while Rural Metro would be phasing them in. Another difference in companies is that Rural Metro employees are unionized while Monroe is not.

Saranac Lake VFD, Franklin County, has received approval from the Saranac Lake Village Board to hire one full-time EMT with benefits and one per-diem EMT without benefits to fill three weekday shifts. Estimated starting pay for the positions would be \$13 to \$14 an hour, depending on experience. With benefits, it would cost the village \$51,916 per year at \$13 an hour and \$55,910 per year at \$14 an hour. The village currently pays drivers of the fire and rescue trucks, but they are not qualified EMTs and cannot provide emergency care to patients. The department covers six townships and handles an average of three calls a day. Included in its three vehicle EMS-Rescue fleet is a unique 2001 Med-Tech heavy rescue with a 12,000 lb front mounted winch, Hurst tools, 24 KVA PTO generator, Bauer cascade system plus stretcher giving it patient transport capability.

DISTRICT 30 (REGION 3)

Beekman, Dutchess County, is concerned about EMS ambulance coverage when the town's provider, Alamo Ambulance Service, is called for a patient at the Greenhaven Correctional Facility. Alamo is paid \$18,115 a month to provide 24/7/365 ALS level ambulance coverage for Beekman residents. News reports in mid July quote the fire chief complaining that the town is uncovered for hours on end when an ambulance is sent to the high security correctional facility due to the extra checks entering and leaving the prison and then transporting the patient to a hospital. An Alamo official countered that Greenhaven inmates are considered residents of the town and while there were 27 responses there this year, most of the time an ambulance from Pawling is redeployed to the town line. Average response time to the 112 other calls in Beekman was 7 minutes & 39 seconds, well below what it claims is a 12 minute national standard. The Beekman VFD operates the Beekman Volunteer Rescue Squad, which provides a BLS level ambulance service usually during the 6:00 PM to 6:00 AM time period. The parties involved will be meeting to discuss contract wording including the definition of "resident" but the Town Supervisor reportedly has said that if the issue is not resolved he will look into legally preventing the Alamo ambulance stationed in Beekman from being dispatched to Greenhaven.



Columbia County emergency service organizations are slated to receive \$170,800 in NYS legislative member item grants due to the efforts of Senator Stephen M. Saland. Chatham Rescue Squad will get \$40,000 towards an ambulance, Greenport Rescue Squad \$70,000 for a helicopter landing site, Hudson FD \$22,000 towards a new truck, Hoysratt Hose Company #8 \$18,000 for a roof and Valatie FD \$20,800 for breathing apparatus.

Kerhonkson-Accord First Aid Squad, Ulster County, is selling reflective address markers for houses to make it easier for emergency responders to locate an address. The cost is \$18 each and the squad installs them for free for senior citizens and the disabled.

Pleasant Valley, Dutchess County, town board recently agreed to increase the monthly payment to Poughkeepsie based Alamo Ambulance Service for 5:00 AM to 5:00 PM weekday coverage from \$1,054 to \$9,366 a month but only as an interim measure and not under long-term contract. A HealthQuest-Alamo official cited rising staff salaries and the cost of new ambulance vehicles as driving the fee hike and pointed to a symposium last year of Dutchess County Emergency Management officials that concluded the annual cost of operating a single

ambulance was between \$500,000 and \$600,000. Pleasant Valley VFD's Rescue Squad provides volunteer BLS level ambulance service during the evening and early morning hours and on weekends. The town supervisor indicated he plans to ask the board to form a committee including fire department commissioners, members of the rescue squad and town board members to investigate the most economical way of providing ambulance service to town residents.

Putnam County has been advised by its ALS provider, Empire State Ambulance that it wants to opt out its contract on October 1, 2007. In September 2006 the county had Empire State convert two ALS fly cars serving the eastern part of the county to full ALS ambulances for day time coverage. If VAC or VFD ambulances were available they would take over transport if ALS was not needed. The cost to the county was \$485,000 while Empire State claims it costs were \$1.8 million. It was expected that non-emergency transports would make up the difference but that was not the case as residents seem to be calling VACs and/or VFDs directly for free service. Even with 2007 county reimbursement set to rise to \$504,000 in the second year of the contract Empire State is still in a money losing position. The County Executive, an ambulance volunteer in Mahopac for 15 years, said he would not allow the paid service arrangement which has reduced response times to lapse but some county legislators have said a paid ambulance service may be a luxury Putnam cannot afford. The 2008 county budget is currently being prepared and residents have already been warned of a 20% increase in property taxes. On August 27 at a special meeting the Putnam County Legislature unanimously approved a funding increase for the ALS system for the balance of 2007. A formal Request for Proposals (RFP) process will be followed to determine if a more economical alternative can be found.

Wappingers Falls Town, Dutchess County, is reportedly drafting a town law to ensure that all ambulance calls go through the county's 911 system to the ambulance service contracted by the town. Since 2005 TransCare Hudson Valley has held the contract, which for \$395,000 yearly provides two ALS ambulances and one BLS ambulance. The town also covers any shortfall after TransCare bills patients. News reports indicate the proposed legislation came about after an incident when a restaurant employee called Mobile Life Support Services while another person called 911 and TransCare was dispatched resulting in an on-scene dispute between the crews as to who was responsible for taking care of the patient. How the new regulation, if adopted, would apply to facilities such as nursing homes that have contracts with various private providers is unclear. Another consideration would be state level DOH ambulance operating certificates, which authorize a company to provide ambulance service in an area.

Western Turnpike Rescue Squad, Albany County, personnel spent 16 hours of their June 23-24 weekend receiving advanced training in PreHospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS), an internationally known trauma course sponsored by the National Association of EMTs designed to reduce disability and death from pre-hospital trauma through concentrated training of EMTs. The course was taught by Western Turnpike Rescue Squad PHTLS instructors and members of Albany Medical Center's Emergency Medical Outreach office plus physicians, nurses and medics with Albany Med's Level 1 Trauma Center. Western Turnpike is a volunteer-based, 68-year-old ambulance service that provides BLS emergency medical service to the residents of Guelderland and North Bethlehem Fire District.

New Jersey

New Jersey VFDs Spending Under Review – Bergen County officials may have read *Newsday's* articles on the spending excesses of Long Island fire departments as a criminal investigation of spending by Fairview FD's Grandview VFC #1 has grown into a review of a sampling of 20 departments and companies in the county.

Seven of Grandview's 12 members took a trip to Cancun, Mexico in January using funds that someone evidently felt may have been raised during a door-to-door "fill the boot" drive while in uniform on September 11, 2006. In response to the questions raised, a letter was sent to residents denying using contributions for the trip and indicating the money came from community events they either sponsored or co-sponsored such as a festival or carnival. The seven involved handed over a check for \$7,616.77 to the municipality to be placed in an escrow account until the criminal investigation is completed.

Since there are no New Jersey statutes or legislation governing how funds raised by municipality linked VFDs can be spent the Bergen prosecutor subpoenaed a sample of large and small departments from around the county and will begin his own review of how VFD money is raised and spent. The County Prosecutor is planning a "presentment" wherein a grand jury will be impaneled to consider a matter of public importance, and indicated "...information will be gathered...and then certain opinions and findings are found and then we simply disclose it to the public."

More New York News

New York Rail Safety

On Monday March 12, 2007 a derailment of a CSX Corporation freight train occurred in Oneida, 20 miles east of Syracuse. 28 of the train's 80 cars derailed – about half loaded with propane. Two ignited along with two tankers filled with liquid petroleum and a fifth car loaded with the solvent toluene. A one square mile area of Oneida was evacuated closing schools, businesses and government buildings, rail passenger service was halted and a 23-mile stretch of Interstate 90 was closed from Exit 34-A in suburban Syracuse to Exit 33 in Verona. On March 20th the FRA (Federal Railway Administration) announced it was speeding up its inspection of CSX operated track and in a report issued March 27th the agency announced it found 199 serious cases of noncompliance with federal regulations in 23 states including 13 possible violations in New York. The head of the FRA is Joseph H. Boardman who is a former commissioner of the NYS Department of Transportation. In deciding to step up inspections, Boardman said he wanted to make sure local emergency service agencies were not overtaxed.

Helicopter Changes in Western New York

STAT MedEvac has closed three of its helicopter bases including one in Dansville, NY in the Buffalo/Rochester area only seven months after setting up operations there. It also ended its contract with Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre, PA that served the Binghamton, NY area. STAT is run by the Center for Emergency Medicine, a consortium of hospitals including the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, West Penn Allegheny Health System and Altoona Hospital.

News reports indicate the non-profit operation extended its services "into far-flung markets that failed to deliver anticipated profits." Media also report that in February the company placed its chief executive on paid leave while it studied unspecified con-

cerns about how he ran the company. A month later he resigned his \$262,000 a year position. The same media report indicates the company pulled out of a base in Ohio where critics claim STAT paid kickbacks or reimbursements of up to \$500 to ground medical responders including volunteer fire departments to shore up its business. The allegations were passed on to US government officials for investigation.

Air Methods, a for profit Denver, CO based air ambulance provider, took over the Robert Packer Hospital operation on June 1st. That base handles about 500 calls annually, typically within a 70 mile radius of Sayre, PA. Air Methods has 168 bases in 38 states and operates 220 helicopters. Life Net, which operates helicopter bases in New York State, is part of the Air Methods operation.

Information on air medical operations serving New York State appeared in the Summer 2006 edition of *The Blanket* newsletter. The issue is on the internet at www.nysvara.org.

Recap of Mutual Aid Response to June 2006 Flooding

Unusually heavy rains in late June 2006 caused massive flooding in large parts of south central New York as well as in other states. With roads washed away, homes and businesses flooded, utilities out, residents cut off from necessary services, the NY State Emergency Management Office and Department of Health activated mutual aid to help devastated areas. FEMA declared eight counties – Broome, Chenango, Delaware, Herkimer, Montgomery, Otsego, Sullivan and Ulster – eligible for federal disaster aid. New York State added five counties – Cortland, Oneida, Orange, Schoharie and Tioga – to the list for a total of thirteen eligible for state aid.

Deployments for many began on Wednesday June 28, 2006. Personnel were advised to expect 24 to 48 hour shifts clearing roads, pumping out homes and businesses and doing logistics work. Vehicle types requested and/or supplied included ambulances, 4X4s such as pickups and Hummers, equipment squads and rescues. Some areas had equipment caches in place and just need personnel. Other areas needed equipment and asked responders to bring along such items as shallow draft Zodiac boats, chain saws, hand saws, portable pumps and generators. Specialized skills such as swift water rescue were employed to rescue stranded residents. There were also rescues of residents trapped by mud slides. A partial list of counties and departments that supplied mutual aid includes:

- Albany: Capital District Ambulance sent three units to Montgomery County on 7/2. An ALS ambulance was stationed at the Mid County Ambulance building in Palatine Bridge and BLS ambulances went to the Red Cross Shelter and Canajoharie High School. All three units were employed at a morning structure fire and later in the day there were two house calls where patients were transported to St. Mary's Hospital in Amsterdam.
- Dutchess: About 30 firefighters from Dover, East Fishkill, Hughsonville, Pleasant Valley and Roosevelt went to the Fonda and St. Johnsville areas in Montgomery County.
- Erie: Volunteer ambulance agencies were activated by the NYS DOH to provide mutual aid to Broome County. Crews from Reserve and Vigilant Hose Companies in West Seneca along with East Amherst, Getzville, Orchard Park, and Lancaster Volunteer Ambulance Corps assembled Wednesday evening June 28 at the Erie County Fire Training Academy in Cheektowaga for the drive down towards the Binghamton area. The volunteers would help with wherever

needed including emergency 9-1-1 calls or the evacuation of patients from hospitals or nursing homes in flood stricken areas.

- Monroe: Firefighters and vehicles from Gates, Hamlin, Point Pleasant and Spencerport were utilized to pump out flooded homes and businesses in the Endwell and Ouaquaga areas of Broome County.
- Nassau: NYS DOH requested EMS personnel and at least 26 rescue volunteers from East Meadow, Glen Cove, Jericho, Levittown and Plainview traveled to Binghamton in Broome County on Tuesday, July 4 for duty.
- Oswego: Northern Oswego County Ambulance sent two crews to Binghamton and were put to work helping evacuate patients from Lourdes Hospital which closed due 18 to 24 inches of Susquehanna River water on the ground floor. 18 patients were transferred to Binghamton General, 58 to Wilson Hospital and about 20 critical care and non-ambulatory patients went to other hospitals.
- Putnam: Empire State Ambulance provided 2 ambulances and 8 to 10 EMTs for service in the Delhi and Walton areas of Delaware County.
- Rockland: Personnel from New City and Stony Point were assigned to Delaware and Orange Counties. South Orangetown VAC sent a crew to Sidney, which provided clean water and medical assistance and Spring Hill VAC also had a crew helping in Delaware County for a 24 hour tour on July 2-3. Pearl River FD and Thiells FD both sent members to Conklin, just south of Binghamton where they checked 300 to 400 houses looking for people, animals, Hazmat situations, turning off gas mains and handling any emergency calls that came in.
- Schoharie County personnel and vehicles were deployed into Delaware County for EMS coverage, Canajoharie in Montgomery County for fire and EMS assistance and Otsego County for pump outs.
- Suffolk: 10 vehicles and personnel from Central Islip, Greenlawn, Dix Hills, Holbrook, Mastic, Mastic Beach, North Babylon, Setauket, Selden, Smithtown, West Sayville went to the Delhi and Roscoe areas in Delaware County.
- Westchester: At least 52 firefighters from Armonk, Croton, Croton Falls, Fairview, Goldens Bridge, Hartsdale, Harrison, Mohegan Lake, Montrose, New Rochelle, Peekskill, Pelham, Pleasantville, Port Chester, Purchase, Rye, Somers, Verplank, Vista, White Plains, Yorktown traveled by bus to the Binghamton area and Delaware County. In a second deployment, personnel and vehicles from Banksville, Buchanan, Chappaqua, Continental Village, Harrison, Katonah, Mamaroneck, Mamaroneck Village, Millwood, Montrose, Ossining, Pelham, Pleasantville, Scarsdale, Somers, Verplank and West Harrison were sent mainly to the Conklin area in Broome County.
- New York City sent personnel and equipment from several departments. FDNY's Swift Boat Unit was sent on June 29 to Binghamton to assist evacuation efforts at Lourdes Hospital. Other FDNY help sent to Broome County included four vehicles including box trucks carrying rescue tools, two boats, two diesel powered pumps and nine smaller pumps. FDNY EMS Command sent two different deployments to Broome

County. On Sunday, 7/2/06, 3 ALS units staffed by 12 FDNY Paramedics, one Lieutenant and one Captain deployed to the county. On Monday morning July 3 additional support was requested and one ALS unit staffed by 3 FDNY Paramedics and 3 BLS units staffed by 8 EMTs deployed to meet the rest of the members in Binghamton. Some personnel returned late July 4 while the rest returned late on July 5. NYPD sent 30 officers trained in water rescues, construction accidents, Hazmat and first aid along with 10 trucks carrying fuel, generators, portable light towers, pumps, scuba equipment, decontamination equipment, medical supplies, two 15 foot boats and other tools to the Binghamton area. One of NYPD's two helicopters equipped with a hoist for air-sea rescue was also sent to the flood area. On July 2 NYC Sanitation sent 50 personnel with 10 dump trucks, five front end loaders, two large tow trucks, two fuel trucks, one street flusher, a bulldozer, back hoe, light pack truck, welding truck and a command center to Delaware County. NYC DEP sent a 1,000 gallon water tanker and leak detection crew to Walton in Delaware County and other personnel and equipment to help clear roads in Ulster, Schoharie and Delaware Counties. DEP police provided 100 officers including 10 scuba divers, a helicopter, two boats, one air boat, three ATVs, three light towers, five rescue trucks and 17 4X4 vehicles.

There were personnel and equipment from many other counties and departments not listed including some from near the Canadian border. NYSVA&RA District 19 Director Kathleen Hanford reported through the summer and into the fall the flood of June 2006 in the Mohawk Valley continued to have its long term effects. The disaster caused not only the deaths of several people, but the loss of homes, businesses and agricultural crops. Many Mohawk Valley families were left without hot water heaters and furnaces. As late as October, the villages of Fort Plain and Canajoharie alone listed 35 homes without a source of heat for the coming winter. Several benefits were held to collect money for new or used furnaces and hot water heaters. Nearly a dozen homes were condemned and will be torn down and several businesses decided not to reopen. A number of roads including I-88 were closed due to water damage for a significant time period. Farmers in the valley were looking for sources of feed for their animals as many lost their crops to the flood. Residents affected had to rely on help from volunteers and their own abilities as any other aid was slow and for some families virtually non existent. With the passage of time things are returning to normal.

Long Island Road Fatalities

NYS Department of Motor Vehicles data cited by Senator Charles Schumer in May indicate Suffolk and Nassau Counties on Long Island have the first and second highest number of fatal crashes in the state. For 2005, the year for which full data is available, there were 1,308 fatal accidents statewide. Suffolk County had 149 fatal crashes, accounting for 11.4% of the total and Nassau County had 99 fatal crashes for 7.6% of the state total. Schumer called on the NYS Department of Transportation to request a Road Safety Audit from the Federal Highway Administration and asked that auditors review Long Island's most dangerous roadways including Sunrise Highway, Hempstead Turnpike and the Southern State Parkway.

Suffolk County Pre Hospital Recognition & Treatment Studies

A pain control study retrospectively reviewed 38 PCRs from January 6 to July 6, 2006 based on a population of 664 medical

control contacts that presented with "pain." Most common conditions included chest pain (366 instances), extremity trauma, back pain, flank pain and burns. 5.7% of patients with a pain complaint received analgesia administration. It is recognized that many agencies have elected not to carry controlled substances for a number of reasons. Suffolk REMAC plans to discuss with NYS Bureau of EMS and other regions some means to implement system wide use of controlled substances. For those patients that did have analgesia administered the mean dose was 4.3 mg ranging from 2-10 mg, with a median dose of 4 mg. Concern has been repeatedly communicated that Medical Control Physicians are not using the weight-based protocol, potentially under treating pain. Alternative, dose range option with minimum and maximum may not be appropriate in all situations. The intent is to improve education of Medical Control physicians on prehospital management of pain.

Other REMACS have also reported on pain management studies. Monroe-Livingston REMAC completed a study that revealed only 0.3% of EMS patients with pain greater than 6/10 got pain control prior to arriving at the hospital indicating to them that there is room for improvement in their region. REMO REMAC (Albany area) instituted the first State standing orders for Morphine as pain control over a year ago and reports great success of this program and better pain treatment of their patients with zero adverse events.

Results of a REMAC QA Stroke Care Project for 2006 were submitted to NYS DOH EMS Division. ALS care was provided to 59% of patients with a presumptive diagnosis of stroke. Implementation of the county's new Crew Confirmation, Dispatch and Mutual Aid Protocol is expected to improve access to ALS care. 71% patients did not have on-set of stroke symptoms documented. 51% had Cincinnati Stroke Scale documented. There are plans to increase education and provide agencies with reminder decals for placement in vehicles. 88% of patients with Stroke had an Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) correlation. New EMD protocols to be released in July 2007 will likely improve this. Compliance with transport to a Stroke Center was 75%. REMAC protocol limited transport to no more than 20 minutes past the closest hospital to arrive at a Stroke Center. Additional Stroke Centers have come on line and several more applications pending should improve this.

Tompkins County 800 Megahertz System Nearing Implementation

Tompkins County has been working for the past 7 years to upgrade the communication system that emergency responders use to talk to each other and as that point nears a big question is who will actually pay for the radios that each agency will need for its personnel, in their vehicles and at the stations. Volunteer agencies run on tight budgets and would be hard pressed to purchase the necessary equipment.

The new system will rely on 10 transmission towers that use 800 megahertz radio frequencies and will be interoperable, meaning that the different agencies using the system will be able to share information and coordinate their response in an emergency. When in operation, the system is guaranteed to cover 94 percent of the county's geographic area and have a 95 percent success rate in completing radio calls. It will replace the current system that was amassed in the mid-1970s but includes some equipment that dates back to the 1950s.

The Cornell Daily Sun in Ithaca reported at the end of April that the county's Director of Emergency Response recommended to the Public Safety Committee using the \$2 million project bal-

ance in the Communications Capital Project Account to purchase a basic level of equipment for the local fire, police and EMS. This money will be supplemented by \$1 million in federal earmarks secured by Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-24th) and former Representative Sherwood Boehlert and another \$80,000 obtained by State Senator James Seward. Agencies will be responsible for personnel pagers and other equipment with an expected cost exceeding \$800,000. There are some remaining issues such as how private agencies such as Bangs Ambulance Service will fund interoperability equipment. The paper indicated the Public Safety Committee hopes make its final recommendation next month.

Zoll Data Systems Chosen for Suffolk County E-PCR

Suffolk County DOH EMS Division announced in August that it selected Zoll Data System's RescueNet TabletPCR as the base of the county's Electronic Pre-Hospital Care Report (ePCR) system. As part of the County's efforts to support the volunteer EMS system, the Suffolk County Department of Health Services will purchase the system license, system fixed-end hardware (servers), remote terminal/printer at each hospital and user licenses for each ambulance of any EMS agency that wishes to participate in the system. EMS agencies wishing to participate in the system will be required to purchase the PC Tablet/laptop in order to access the system and enter/retrieve data. A list of four vendors (Brite Computers, Itronix, Panasonic and Xplore Technologies) and their specific equipment tested, certified and approved by Zoll for operational compatibility was sent to agencies along with general technical and operational requirements for PC tablets and laptops to be used in the project.

Once the infrastructure is built and operational, the EMS Division will beta test the system with one or two ambulance services to ensure widespread data collection opportunities and interface with existing cardiac monitor/defibrillators. After the system is deemed operational, additional agencies will be phased in throughout calendar year 2008 and early 2009 based on agency level funding for and acquisition of required hardware and internet interconnectivity.

Scott Shields, Bear Search & Rescue Foundation Founder, Arrested

On March 13, 2007, Scott Shields and his sister were arrested by Special Agents of the US Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, US Secret Service and Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General and charged with "Theft of Government Funds" and "Mail Fraud." Shields, who uses the title of Captain, published a book *Bear, Heart of a Hero*, and has been featured in media reports based on his claims of rescues he made with his late rescue dog "Bear" on September 11, 2001. He has also been featured in news articles about the declining health of many of the rescue dogs who worked at the World Trade Center site.

The case against Shields is predicated upon a request for investigative assistance from the DHS/OIG who indicated that Shields and his sister falsified applications for assistance for aid following the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center. In addition to other false information provided by the defendants, Shields is alleged to have falsified his Social Security Number in order to receive \$49,439.08 in aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Red Cross. Both defendants also falsely claimed that they resided in lower Manhattan and suffered financial losses to a fictional business that they claimed to have owned.

An arrest or even an indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

You Can't Make This Up

Westchester County Department of Public Safety staged a rescue drill involving its Marine and Aviation Units on Wednesday June 26, 2007 in a harbor off Long Island Sound to debut Marine 4, the department's new \$200,000, 27-foot Boston Whaler patrol boat. County Executive Andrew Spano was aboard Marine 4 and reporters observed from a second boat. The idea was to put a dummy into a life jacket, drop the dummy into the harbor, have a chopper pilot spot the dummy and transmit its location using global positioning technology to the boat crew to perform a rescue. However, the wash from the helicopter's rotor pushed the dummy out of its life jacket, the flesh-colored mannequin quickly sank and only the life jacket was recovered.

A CPR mannequin in the front passenger seat was one Middle Island man's way of using the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane on the Long Island Expressway to speed his way to and from work. The man admitted to using the ruse since October 2006 until he was pulled over and ticketed by a highway patrol officer on Friday morning February 23, 2007. The officer felt the mannequin's head appeared tilted in an unnatural picture. The mannequin had black hair, a mustache and brown jacket that was supplemented at times with sunglasses and a baseball cap.

A civilian police officer fired by the Navy from his job at the Naval District of Washington lost his bid to convince a federal appeals court to overturn his removal. One of the three incidents involved in the termination of the officer was his use of a police car to pursue a car that had failed to stop at a base checkpoint, following it off the base and forcing it to stop using a maneuver known as a "tactical vehicle takedown" wherein the police car pulls in front of the pursued vehicle and brakes and stops, forcing the pursued vehicle to stop. The car that the officer pursued was following an ambulance with flashing lights, which also had not stopped at the checkpoint. The pursued car contained the family of the child in the ambulance. The officer performed the "tactical vehicle takedown" at 40 miles per hour on a busy metropolitan street. Witnesses for the Navy testified that this conduct violated agency policies and that the procedure was extremely dangerous. As a defense, the officer stated that he was not aware of the policies that he was charged with violating, or in the alternative that he had the authority to disregard them in performing his duties as a police officer. It was noted that at one point in the appeals process, the Merit Systems Protection Board dismissed the appeal without prejudice because the ex-officer could not attend the scheduled hearing due to his incarceration for a felony conviction in Michigan. (*Gaddy v. Department of the Navy*, C.A.F.C. No. 2007-3001 (nonprecedential), March 19, 2007)

The notice below was in a May 8 2007 FDNY Department Order: "FDNY Buildings Maintenance Division is in the process of installing smoke/carbon monoxide detectors in all FDNY facilities. It is imperative that the detectors are maintained in proper working condition at all times. Company Commanders/Bureau Heads shall insure that all detectors are tested and batteries are checked each year when the clocks are changed for daylight savings. A record of such test shall be made in the Office record Journal. If the detectors are not functioning properly, call the

HELP desk..." Could it be that this is the first time FDNY is installing smoke detectors in its facilities?

News

Aluminum Oxygen Cylinder Fire Failure Warning Issued by NTSB

On June 27, 2007 the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued Safety Recommendation I-07-3 concerning overpressure failure of partially pressured aluminum oxygen cylinders. The Board studied a fire that occurred on September 23, 2005 destroying a bus evacuating 44 assisted living facility residents and staff in anticipation of Hurricane Rita. 23 passengers died.

Normally, a full D oxygen tank shows 2,000 pounds per square inch (psi) on the gage and has an internal burst disk that releases the contents at 3,025 to 3,360 psi. A full tank heated to 260 to 315 degrees Fahrenheit will cause the burst disk to actuate and a controlled release of contents will follow before the tank can rupture. Aluminum will melt at 1,020 to 1,206 F but will structurally weaken below that temperature. A fully pressurized tank without a burst disk will maintain integrity for only minutes at temperatures above 600 F.

The NTSB investigation disclosed industry data indicating an aluminum cylinder at less than 78% full charge (1,579 psi at room temperature) heated to 400 F will structurally fail before its internal pressure actuates the burst disk for a controlled release. The ensuing rapid release of oxygen into a fire, often resulting in descriptions of a "fire ball" or "explosion," as well as fragmentation of the cylinder into hazardous projectiles can result in injury or death to those nearby. If an ambulance or fly car is on fire get away from the vehicle without delay. The full NTSB Safety Recommendation is on the internet at: www.nts.gov/recs/letters/2007/i07_3.pdf

Metropolitan Medical Response System Funding To 4 NY Cities

Governor Elliot Spitzer announced on July 18, 2007 the allocation of \$1,290,726 under the federal Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) to be split equally, as determined by federal guidance, among New York City, Yonkers, Buffalo, Syracuse and Rochester. Consistent with the need to ensure effective and appropriate consequence management for nuclear, biological and chemical related events – which are overwhelmingly medical in nature – the MMRS seeks to resolve the present inability of civilian pre-hospital EMS agencies to minimize the effects of such attacks. MMRS jurisdictions must plan to mitigate the medical consequences of a weapons of mass destruction (WMD) event by creating a highly trained, readily deployable, fully equipped response system of medical, law enforcement, fire service and other professionals to support local resources.

New York Authorizes State USAR, Rescue & Incident Support Teams

Governor Eliot Spitzer signed into law Assembly Bill A00050/Senate Bill S3650 on July 18, 2007 authorizing the State Fire Administrator to establish Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), Specialty Rescue and Incident Support Teams.

- Urban Search & Rescue teams are envisioned to have capabilities equivalent to federal teams under the jurisdiction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). New York presently has FEMA NY-TF1 composed of FDNY (Fire & EMS) and NYPD members. There are 62 positions but to be sure a full team can respond to an emergency the roster has

at the ready more than 130 highly-trained members. The team serves as a national resource for disaster response and is totally self-sufficient for the first 72 hours of a deployment.

- Specialty Rescue Teams would provide technical rescue assistance including but not limited to: canine search and rescue, disaster response, cave search and rescue, collapse search and rescue, mine and tunnel search and rescue, swift water/flood search and rescue.
- Incident Support Teams would provide coordination with governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations as well as technical and logistical support to USAR and specialty rescue teams.

The State Fire Administrator was given authorization to accredit teams, appoint members to the teams as well as the responsibility for training and equipping the teams "to the extent appropriations are provided." Team members are covered by their respective municipalities or organization's indemnification and workers compensation coverage. For members who do not have coverage, they will be deemed volunteer state employees for purposes of the Public Officers Law and Workers Compensation law.

On the Assembly side the original sponsor of the bill as well as the four cosponsors all are from Nassau County. The Senate sponsor serves Putnam and parts of Westchester and Dutchess Counties. A good guess is that "downstate" areas will be first in line for any teams to be established. The full text of the new law is at <http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=A00050>.

Combined Federal Campaign Eases Participation Burden for Small Organizations

The Combined Federal Campaign is the US Government's on-the-job donation program for civilian, postal and military personnel. Late last year the US Office of Personnel Management issued new regulations which basically reopened the US Government's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) program to many small agencies that had dropped out or never applied for participation because of the costs of meeting regulations. Gone now is the requirement for organizations with less than \$100,000 in annual revenue that there be an annual audit of fiscal operations by an independent certified public accountant that can cost several thousand dollars and offset the benefit of several hundred dollars in contributions. Instead an organization official must certify that there are controls in place to ensure funds are properly accounted for and that accurate, timely financial information can be provided to interested parties. These small organizations can also use cash basis, modified cash basis, modified accrual or accrual accounting while larger organizations must use accrual basis accounting.

To be eligible to participate in the CFC each charity must be designated as a tax-exempt non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. An application to participate in the CFC must provide specific information about auditing, governance and program functions, as specified in the CFC regulations at 5 CFR Part 950. Applicants must also provide a completed and signed copy of their IRS Form 990 for their most recent fiscal year.

VACs & VFDs would be applying for participation in one of the 300 plus "local" campaigns either individually as an "unaffiliated organization" or represented by a "federation." A federation is a coalition of individual charities with similar missions or community basis that align to minimize administrative costs and coordinate activities. If a federation to which a charity belongs is approved for CFC participation the member charity need not

apply individually. All CFC application and participation requirements that apply to individual charities also apply to federations. In addition, federations must demonstrate that they have at least 15 CFC-eligible members listed, have administrative and fundraising expenses of not more than 25% of their total support, and that their fundraising, administrative and governance practices meet CFC standards.

In New York State there are 13 local CFC campaigns: Capital Region CFC; CFC of Central New York; CFC of New York City; Chemung-Steuben Counties CFC; Greater Rochester CFC; Greater Rome Area CFC; Greater Utica Herkimer County CFC; Long Island CFC; Niagara Frontier CFC; North Country CFC; Southern Tier CFC; Taconic Valley CFC and West Point-Orange-Rockland- Sullivan CFC.

Most local campaigns accept applications from March 15 to April 15 for the campaign season that runs from September 15 to December 15. Refer to the CFC Calendar of Events found on the website at www.opm.gov/cfc for local contact information, key dates, deadlines and to request an application for the 2008 campaign. If you take advantage of the CFC don't forget to publicize in the local news media this method of donating to your organization.

Official Plates Investigation

In mid June the NY Daily News reported on apparently improper issuance by the NYS DMV of OFFICIAL license plates to non-profit organizations. There are about 154,000 OFFICIAL plates in use statewide intended only for vehicles owned by local government entities such as a city, county, town, village or special district such as school, fire, ambulance, etc. Benefits include no original registration fees, no yearly renewal fees because the plates are issued on a one time permanent basis and parking enforcement agents rarely issue summons to vehicles with the plates. After the 9/11 attacks NYC banned one passenger vehicles from entering Manhattan by bridge or tunnel south of 63 Street but vehicles with official places were exempt. "Congestion Pricing" proposed for sections of Manhattan Island in NYC would also exempt vehicles with OFFICIAL plates.

As a result of the Daily News article, the NYS DMV announced it has instituted a supervisory review of new all approvals for OFFICIAL plates and established an internal team to review all active plate registrations. Separately, the News learned that the NYS Commission of Investigations has been working on the issue of improper OFFICIAL plates for several months but the Commission would not give details of any ongoing criminal investigation.

Ambulance News

Ambulance Standards Being Revised by Feds

The Ambulance Manufacturers Division (AMD), an industry division of the National Truck Equipment Association (NTEA), is revising AMD Standards 001-015 and adding Standards 016-025 to accommodate proposed changes under draft revision F to the Federal Specification for the Star-of-Life Ambulance (KKK-A-1822). Public comments or corrections were solicited through July 13, 2007 to enhance the quality of the standards. To view the draft standards visit www.ntea.com/mr/divisions/amd/default.asp

Ford E-Series 6.0l Diesel Announcement

Ford Motor Company issued a statement on May 25, 2007 indicating it had reached an agreement with Navistar to allow

Ford to offer the 6.0L Power Stroke diesel engine in the 2008 E-Series. The diesel option will be available on E-350 regular length wagons, E-350 vans plus E-350 and E-450 cutaways. However, the diesel engine will not be available for production at Job #1 of the 2008 model year, August 6, 2007, as production timing is still in the planning stages. Additional ordering, scheduling and pricing information will be communicated to the public as soon as it is available.

Earlier this year, Ford filed a lawsuit in Michigan state court against Navistar, arguing that Navistar unjustifiably raised engine prices and had not been paying its share of repair costs for Power Stroke diesel warranty claims. Ford says it has spent \$1 billion on repairs and recalls to fix problems with legacy 6.0-liter Power Stroke diesel engines. Ford further contended that the purchase contract allowed it to debit Navistar's invoices to recover these costs, which it had done up to \$160 million after filing suit. The trouble plagued 6.0L engine was discontinued by Navistar and replaced by a new 6.4L Power Stroke diesel engine for Ford that meets 2007 emissions standards while increasing performance, durability and fuel economy. Ford has agreed to pay \$7,673 per engine instead of the \$6,167 it believes to be the fair price until the dispute is finally settled.

The problem facing ambulance buyers was that the new 6.4L Power Stroke did not fit under the E-350 series hood. Manufacturers were planning to go to Chevy or Sprinter type chassis to meet demand for Type II and III ambulances. With the return of the 6.0L Power Stroke things look like they are getting back to normal which may or may not include the problems with the engine which caused the initial dispute between Ford and Navistar.

Dodge RAM 3500/4500 Type I Cab/Chassis Offered by Wheeled Coach

While Ford, and to a lesser extent GMC & Chevy, has most of the market share for chassis used in the USA ambulance market, Wheeled Coach is advertising an alternative chassis from Dodge. The new offering in the FireMedic series features: Cummins 6.7 L turbo charged diesel engine with 305 hp and 610 ft./lb. of torque; 167" Wheelbase; 12,500 lb. GVW on 3500 series, 16,500 lb. GVW on 4500 series (available on 2008 models); Integrated exhaust brake; 6 speed automatic transmission; Meets new federal emissions standards; Anti-spin rear differential; Tilt wheel/cruise control and Power windows and door locks.

Rescuer Safety

Slim Jim Warning

For those unfamiliar with the term, a "slim jim" is a long, flat metal device used to unlock car doors from the outside. The device is slid between the rubber and glass at the bottom of the side window in an attempt to jimmy the locking mechanism from inside the door cavity. It is commonly used when a driver locks his/her keys in the car or the vehicle is being repossessed.

Be very careful with newer model cars as many of them have side air bags. The bags may deploy if the firing mechanism is hit. They have the pressure of a small explosion and serious injury could result. There are other devices that are much more effective on newer model cars. These are long rods that are slid in between the door and door frame to hit the lock switch on the opposite side of the car. Whatever is used, consider having the vehicle owner sign some type of "hold harmless" statement before you go about anything that may damage a vehicle.

Hurst Address Challenges of High Voltage Hybrid Vehicles

Responding to the need to protect rescue workers from electrical dangers when extricating victims from hybrid electric vehicles, Hurst has introduced a new specialized rescue tool. Similar in power and construction to other popular Jaws of Life hydraulic spreaders and cutters, the new Cen SC14 Fi Combination tool and the Cen C9 Fi Cutter boast unique electrical current insulation providing extra safety for rescuers when cutting charged parts of all kinds. The tools are being sold under the Hurst Centaur brand.

As sales of hybrid vehicles rise rapidly, rescue crews are increasingly exposed to accidents involving the fuel-efficient vehicles. With up to 500 volts running through some wires in the vehicles, as opposed to 12 volts in traditional cars, there is a growing concern that rescue workers are at risk when extricating victims at an accident scene and need to take extra precautions when dealing with hybrid vehicles. The Cen SC14 Fi Combination tool and the Cen C9 Fi Cutter tool are safer for an object voltage of 1500 V DC or 1000 AC. All tool components coming in contact with the operator, such as handles, valves and actuators are covered with non-conductive insulated materials. In addition, the insulation reacts to electrical exposure visually. Both tools are lightweight and compact and possess the easy operation features popularized by the Hurst Centaur Rescue Tool brand. For additional information contact your local authorized Hurst dealer or go to the web site at www.hurstjaws.com.

Hard Info Sought by NHTSA on Inadvertent Auto Safety Device Deployments

Recently, there has been increased media attention about the potential dangers of extrication-related deployments of automotive safety equipment (i.e., air bags, seat belt pretensioners, etc.) to emergency personnel during rescue and EMS operations. While there have been anecdotal reports of injuries to rescuers, the prevalence of these types of incidents is not known.

For several years the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Special Crash Investigation Program (SCI) has investigated reports of injuries from safety devices, including malfunctions and/or inadvertent activations of air bags during rescue operations. In the few reported cases of deployments occurring during rescue operations, it was found that the vehicle electrical system was either not properly deactivated or the responders had inadvertently damaged the vehicle air bag control module.

NHTSA's Crash Investigation Program and Emergency Medical Services Division will continue to monitor and analyze the problem. However, in order to determine the extent and nature of any hazard and design appropriate countermeasures, it is crucial that NHTSA receive information on as many of these incidents as possible. Emergency services providers are reminded to report all unintentional deployments of automotive safety equipment, whether or not the rescuer is injured, by one of the following methods:

- John Brophy, Special Crash Investigator, (202) 366-0328 or John.Brophy@nhtsa.dot.gov
- David Bryson, Highway Safety Specialist, (202) 366-4302 or Dave.Bryson@nhtsa.dot.gov
- By fax: (202) 366-5374, Attention: SCI Program
- By mail: U.S. DOT/NHTSA, Special Crash Investigation Program (NPO-122), Attention: John Brophy, 400 Seventh St., SW, Room 6213, Washington, DC 20590

The safety of emergency services personnel is of paramount importance to NHTSA. The agency will carefully review all

reported hazards involving vehicle safety equipment and, in concert with its national partners, take action to ensure emergency responders' safety. You are encouraged to share this reporting mechanism with all emergency services and law enforcement agencies.

State Adopts New Laws Relating to Oversight and Operation of Fire Districts

As a direct result of Newsday's series of articles on what it considered the excess spending habits of Long Island fire departments, a series of laws amending the state's General Municipal Law (GML) and Town Law (TL) were developed by the New York Assembly and Senate and signed into law by the Governor on July 26, 2006. Ambulance and rescue squads that are part of a Fire District are covered by these new requirements.

- A10473/S7700 amends the GML to authorize the Comptroller's Office to audit independent fire companies.
- A10474/S779 amends the GML to require Fire Districts to require that any resolution of the Board of Fire Commissioners authorizing the establishment of a reserve fund not take effect until a proposition has been submitted to the qualified electors residing within the district.
- A10475/S7546 amends the TL so that all special elections in Fire Districts would be conducted on a Tuesday and scheduled in a manner that maximizes voter participation.
- A10477/S7699 amends the GML to require that if training is given outside the state that approval be given by the Chief, that the Board of Fire Commissioners find that the training is in the public interest, not available within a reasonable distance or time period in the state and that after completion, notification and proof of attendance be provided to the Office of Fire Prevention and Control.
- A10478/S7548 amends the GML and TL to require Fire Districts with budgets in excess of \$200,000 to have annual audits by a CPA on independent public accountant.
- A10479/S7624 amends the GML to require Boards of Fire District Commissioners to adopt a Code of Ethics.
- A10485/S7698 amends the GML to require fire companies to adopt a Code of Ethics for those responsible for governance including Line Officers, Treasurers, President, Vice President and Secretary of the fire company.
- A10480/S7697 amends the GML and TL to require conference travel for official business shall be made utilizing the most cost effective and reasonable method of travel.
- A10481/S7625A amends the TL to require Fire Districts to hold public hearings before submitting their budgets to the Town.
- A10482/S7738 amends the TL to require notices of public hearings and elections be posted on the Fire Districts web site if one exists and on any sign board that the Fire District might maintain.
- A10484/S7547 amends the TL to require Fire District Commissioners undergo mandatory training.
- A10982/S7876 amends the GML to require administrators of Service Award Programs to provide the State Comptroller information to be placed on the Comptroller's web site rela-

tive to their various programs, management, investment structure & philosophy and a list of all representatives and relationships to any program sponsor.

- A10985/S7878 amends the GML in relation to establishment of a Service Award Program to be administered by the State Comptroller's office as another option for Fire Districts.

Red Cross Logo Pits Johnson & Johnson vs. American Red Cross

Johnson & Johnson (J&J), the health-products company known for its band-aids and other first aid products, filed suit on August 8, 2007 in the US District Court in New York against American Red Cross (ARC) demanding that the charity halt the use of the red cross symbol on products it sells to the public. J&J said it has had exclusive rights to use the red cross trademark on certain commercial products including bandages and first-aid cream for more than 100 years and contends the ARC is supposed to use the symbol only in connection with nonprofit relief services.

The company began using the red cross design as a trademark in 1887 – six years after the creation of the ARC but before it received its congressional charter in 1900. The lawsuit contends that the ARC charter did not empower the organization to engage in commercial activities competing with a private business. What prompted the dispute was the ARC campaign to license the trademark to at least four licensing partners who make items such as baby mitts, nail clippers, combs, toothbrushes, hand sanitizers and humidifiers which went into health and safety kits sold for commercial gain in stores such as Target and Wal-Mart. A hand crank radio with a red cross logo is being sold by Radio Shack.

Traffic Signal Preemption Study Released

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have released "Traffic Signal Preemption for Emergency Vehicles – A Cross Cutting Study" identifying issues associated with emergency vehicle operations and emergency vehicle preemption. The purpose of this study is to twofold; first, enable jurisdictions to benefit from the composite experience of others in an effort to reduce the time required to move from a good idea to real improvements in the delivery of emergency services and second, increase awareness among stakeholders – including police, fire, rescue and emergency medical services (EMS) – about the benefits and costs of emergency vehicle preemption. This study reports information gathered during a review of publications and site visits to three jurisdictions (Fairfax, Virginia; Plano, Texas; and St. Paul, Minnesota) operating emergency vehicle preemption systems. The full 52 page report is on the internet at www.itsdocs.fhwa.dot.gov//JPODOCS/REPTS_TE//14097_files/14097.pdf



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NYSVA&RA PULSE CHECK 2007 Elections, Awards, & Drills

NYSVA&RA Officers for 2007-2008

President: Michael J. Mastrianni, Jr., District 1
Executive Vice President: Roy Sweet, District 19
Vice President: Henry A. Ehrhardt, District 4
Treasurer: Robert Franz, District 7
Financial Secretary: Gwen Bray, District 1
Secretary: Christy Hubbard, District 14

By-Law Amendment Proposals

Article III: Uniform individual dues throughout state with 60% going to the Association and 40% to District – Passed

Article V: Establish Membership Secretary as a new Association Officer position – Not passed

Article X: Create a Budget Committee – Passed

NYSVA&RA 2007 AWARDS

EMS Person of the Year: Jeffrey Ferrara,
Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corps, District 2

Leadership: Roger Winter, Huntington Community First
Aid Squad, District 7

Educator of the Year: Gwen Bray, Spring Hill Community
Ambulance Corps, District 1

Unit Citation: Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corps,
District 2

New York State 2007 Championship CFR & EMT Challenge Drill Results

Youth

Problem #1

1st place: Exchange of the Islips Immobilizers
2nd place: Exchange of the Islips RH Negatives
3rd place: Bayshore-Brightwaters Raging Hormones

Problem #2

1st place: Exchange of the Islips Immobilizers
2nd place: Central Islip-Hauppauge Code Blue
3rd place: Bayshore-Brightwaters Raging Hormones

Overall

1st place: Exchange of the Islips Immobilizers
2nd place: Bayshore-Brightwaters Raging Hormones
3rd place: Exchange of the Islips RH Negatives

Adult

Problem #1

1st place: Bayshore-Brightwaters Fallen Angels
2nd place: Wantagh-Levittown Buddha Blue
3rd place: Wantagh-Levittown Apollo Hooligans

Problem #2

1st place: Wantagh-Levittown Buddha Blue
2nd place: Bayshore-Brightwaters Fallen Angels
3rd place: Wantagh-Levittown Apollo Hooligans

Overall

1st place: Wantagh-Levittown Buddha Blue
2nd place: Bayshore-Brightwaters Fallen Angels
3rd place: Wantagh-Levittown Apollo Hooligans

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