



Mike McEvoy, EMS Coordinator
Saratoga County
PO Box 624 • Ballston Spa, NY 12020-0624

Memorandum

TO: All Ambulance Agencies
RE: Automatic Mutual Aid
DATE: February 23, 2010

While we continue to wait for our Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) vendor's software enhancements for implementation of a Crew Confirmation program, I would like to remind all agencies that REMO Advisory # 2006-03 required confirmation of crew availability within 3 minutes for ALS calls and 5 minutes for BLS with mutual aid dispatched when a crew is not confirmed. The requirement took effect January 1, 2008 and while Saratoga County EMS Dispatch has been stymied by CAD limitations, agencies must comply by placing themselves on Automatic Mutual Aid (AMA) when a crew is not available.

For clarification, EMS Dispatch Procedures presume that your agency has a complete crew available to roll each ambulance you have listed as in service. This means that if you have three ambulances, we presume you have three crews available to roll these ambulances if needed (within the 10 minute MA interval). If in fact, you only have one crew available, and fail to notify Communications, second or third calls will end up waiting the a full 10 minutes before being turned over to Mutual Aid. This sort of delay is unacceptable, endangers your community, and violates the REMO Advisory. To avoid delays, agency leaders must assure that Communications is promptly advised to adjust your Mutual Aid status each time there is a change in available crew staffing.

Mutual aid status should reflect crew availability, not vehicle availability. If you have three ambulances in service but only one crew, advise Communications to place your agency on AMA 2nd, meaning that 2nd calls and beyond will automatically be mutual aided, rather than waiting out the 10 minute MA interval. MA status can be changed at any time, and remains in effect until someone from your service tells Communications to change it. The current status of all agencies on any level of AMA (i.e., AMA all calls, AMA 1st, AMA 2nd, AMA 3rd, etc.) is announced 4 times daily with each set of EMS Radio Announcements. It is not necessary to contact Communications unless you wish to make a change in your MA status. Additionally, crews should remember that AMA should not cause the agency of jurisdiction to abort attempts to respond; if a crew becomes available, they should roll. Our objective is to get the closest ambulance to every patient in the shortest time.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. We will continue to work towards a Communications based solution to the Crew Confirmation requirement. In the interim, it is the responsibility of every agency to keep EMS Dispatch up to date on your available staffing by making certain that your MA status reflects your crew availability.