

## Washington Update May 31, 2004

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### **1. NASEMSD Comments Sent to DHS on the National Response Plan**

On May 11, 2004, NASEMSD provided comments to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on the Draft Two of the National Response Plan (NRP). NASEMSD noted that the plan does not take into account the preponderance of private ambulance assets. Fire-based ambulance services are in the minority in the United States. NASEMSD stated that issues of authority to command these resources and requirements to reimburse for use of private assets must be addressed by the plan. Additionally, NASEMSD said, "This plan is overly complex, and predominately addresses structure over functionality." NASEMSD questioned the value added by some of the many layers described in the plan. To learn more about NASEMSD's comments, contact NASEMSD Program Advisor Stephen Hise at [hise@nasemsd.org](mailto:hise@nasemsd.org).

### **2. Rural EMS and Trauma Technical Assistance Center Established**

The HRSA Office of Rural Health Policy has established a Rural EMS and Trauma Technical Assistance Center (REMSTTAC). REMSTTAC is dedicated to assisting ORHP in their support of EMS and rural health policymakers, EMS agencies, EMS professionals and the communities they serve, to help ensure that EMS can continue to survive and thrive in rural and frontier communities. REMSTTAC will serve as a national focal point for the dissemination of information on rural emergency medical services and trauma care. REMSTTAC will assist rural communities and organizations in improving the quality and effectiveness of their trauma health care by offering up-to-date, timely, accessible, and effective information and assistance to help them overcome obstacles such as limited financial capital, human resources, training, and technical knowledge.

The REMSTTAC infrastructure has been developed and set in place and they have begun to build the capacity and resources. REMSTTAC already has begun the process of taking telephone and email referrals. The REMSTTAC Web site is undergoing Federal review and approval and is expected to come on-line in the next 30 days at <http://www.ruralhealth.hrsa.gov/ruralems>. The REMSTTAC had its first advisory committee meeting and NASEMSD was represented by Fergus Laughridge. A town hall meeting to solicit input from the rural constituency is being planned in conjunction with the NASEMSD Annual Meeting. The town hall meeting will be held in Park City, Utah.

### **3. Committee Named for IOM Study on the Future of Emergency Care in the U.S. Health System**

The expanded main committee and subcommittee membership have been appointed for the IOM study on the Future of Emergency Care in the U.S. Health System. The rosters for the main committee and

each of the three subcommittees have been posted at <http://www.iom.edu/emergencycare>. Two NASEMSD members are represented among the committee and subcommittee members: Robert Bass, M.D., F.A.C.E.P., and W. Daniel Manz, B.S. All committees and subcommittees will be holding meetings with open sessions in June. Draft agendas and more information about the project is available at the same IOM Web site.

#### **4. Senate Passes “Bioshield” Plan**

The U.S. Senate on May 19, 2004, voted 99-0 to establish a program that would use \$5.6 billion over 10 years to stimulate private-sector development of vaccines and treatments against agents such as smallpox, anthrax, botulinum toxin, Ebola and plague. The House of voted 421-2 last July to approve its own Bioshield bill, but sources say the Senate bill (S. 15) is likely to be submitted to Bush without a formal conference to reconcile the two versions. For a copy of this bill, visit <http://thomas.loc.gov> a query by bill number.

#### **5. Communications Interoperability Bill Introduced in the House**

On May 19, 2004, Representatives Lowey and Turner, along with 36 other cosponsors, introduced a communications interoperability bill in the House of Representatives. The bill, “Connecting the Operations of National Networks of Emergency Communications Technologies for First Responders Act of 2004,” establishes the Office of Wireless Public Safety Interoperable Communications and provides grants and other support to achieve communications interoperability in the United States. To see a copy of the bill, visit <http://thomas.loc.gov> and query for bill number H.R. 4400.

#### **6. CDC Provides Interim Guidance on Air Medical Transport for SARS**

The Center for Disease Control has posted updated guidance intended to assist air medical transport (AMT) service providers in using specialized and/or specially equipped aircraft to transport Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) patients while ensuring the safety of patients and transport personnel. The guidance should not be generalized to commercial passenger aircraft. The recommendations are based on standard infection control practices, AMT standards, and epidemiologic information from investigations of SARS, including experience from air transport of patients during the 2003 outbreak. To view the guidance, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/airtransport-sarspatients.htm>.

#### **7. CAAS Accredits Twenty Agencies**

At their March 29, 2004, meeting, the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS) Panel of Commissioners granted accreditation to twenty agencies. There are currently 89 CAAS-accredited agencies in 29 states across the country with more than 130 agencies now working on new applications in the United States and Canada. To learn more about CAAS accreditation, visit <http://www.caas.org>.

#### **8. Best Practices in Loss Control Panel to be Presented by CAAS Agencies at AAA’s Summer Meeting**

Four agencies accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS) will share their best practices for loss control and risk management on July 23, 2004, at the American Ambulance Association’s Summer Healthcare Reimbursement and Professional Education Conference in Boston, Mass. Representatives from Huron Valley Ambulance, Inc. (Ann Arbor, Mich.), Doctor’s Ambulance Service (Laguna Hills, Calif.), Rockingham Regional Ambulance Service, Inc. (Nashua, N.H.), and Loveland Symmes Fire Department (Loveland, Ohio), will present a brief overview of their Loss Control programs and participate in a group panel discussion. To learn more about the conference, visit <http://www.the-aaa.org/>.

#### **9. Testimony about 9-11 is Available on Commission’s Web Site**

The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9-11 Commission) held its eleventh public hearing May 18-19, 2004, in New York City. The two-day hearing examined the response of local and federal emergency response departments on September 11, 2001, and considered how to improve these critical functions in the event of future terrorist attacks. The prepared testimony for this hearing is now available at <http://www.9-11commission.gov/hearings/hearing11.htm>.

#### **10. Nominations for AAMS 2004 Community Awards Due June 7**

The Association of Air Medical Services (AAMS) is accepting nominations through June 7, 2004, for their 2004 Community Awards. There are nine awards. The winners of the awards receive complimentary airfare, accommodations and registration to the Air Medical Transport Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio, Oct. 25-27, 2004. To see a list of the awards and make a nomination, visit <http://www.aams.org/awards.html>.

#### **11. CDC Releases Study on Primary Seat Belt Use**

The Center for Disease Control has released a new study on primary seat belt use. For a copy of the study, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5312a2.htm>.

#### **12. Upcoming Events (\*\* denotes event is newly added)**

2004 Defense Medical R & D and Procurement Conference, June 21-23, 2004, Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, Md. Information is available at <http://www.marketaccess.org/MEDCONF.asp>.

**NASEMSD Mid-Year Meeting, June 26-27, 2004, Washington, DC.** Program and registration details are available at <http://www.nasemsd.org/>.

**\*\*American Ambulance Associations Summer Healthcare Reimbursement and Risk Management Conference**, July 21-24, 2004, Marriott Boston Copley Place Hotel, Boston, Mass. Information is available at <http://www.the-aaa.org/>.

Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services Summer 2004 Accreditation Seminar, July 24, 2004, Marriott Boston Copley Place Hotel, Boston, Mass. Information is available at <http://www.caas.org/>.

Ready! The Emergency Preparedness and Response Conference & Exposition, July 28-29, 2004, Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C. Information is available at <http://www.readyusainfo.com>.

National Association of EMS Educators 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Educational Symposium and Trade Show, Sept. 7-12, 2004, Hollywood Renaissance, Los Angeles, Calif. Information is available at <http://www.naemse.org/symposium>.

The 2004 Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) Annual Meeting: "Highway Safety – Priority 1.0", Sept. 25-29, 2004, Hilton Hawaiian Village, Honolulu, Hawaii. Information is available at <http://www.ghsa.org>.

ASTHO 2004 Annual Meeting: "Communication, Cooperation, Coordination – Building Bridges in Public Health", Sept. 28-Oct. 1, 2004, St. Paul, Minn. Information is available at <http://www.astho.org/>.

Drive for Live, 2004 MADD National Conference, Sept. 29-Oct. 3, 2004, Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center, Grapevine, Texas. Information is available at <http://www.madd.org/>.

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## **NASEMSD Staff Contacts**

Elizabeth B. Armstrong, CAE, MAM / Executive Director  
(703) 538-1799 ext. 5 - [armstrong@nasemsd.org](mailto:armstrong@nasemsd.org)

Peter Casals / Program Manager  
(703) 538-1799 ext. 3 - [casals@nasemsd.org](mailto:casals@nasemsd.org)

Sharon Kelly / Executive Assistant  
(703) 538-1799 ext. 2 - [kelly@nasemsd.org](mailto:kelly@nasemsd.org)

Dawn M. Shiley / Washington Update Editor  
(703) 533-0251 ext. 3 - [dshiley@asmii.net](mailto:dshiley@asmii.net)

201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church VA 22046  
Phone: (703) 538-1799  
Fax: (703) 241-5603  
Website: [www.nasemsd.org](http://www.nasemsd.org)

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Cordially,

Dawn M. Shiley  
Marketing & Communications Director  
NASEMSD  
201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church, VA 22046  
Phone: 703-538-1799  
Fax: 703-241-5603  
Email: [dshiley@asmii.net](mailto:dshiley@asmii.net)  
Website: [www.nasemsd.org](http://www.nasemsd.org)