



## Rural Issues Committee

Committee  
Co-chairs  
Jim DeTienne  
Montana

Dean Cole  
Nebraska

NASEMSO Staff:  
Kevin McGinnis

### Members:

Arkansas  
Norajean Miles

Colorado  
Randy Kuykendall  
Michelle Reese

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Dia Gainor  
John Cramer

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NOSORH  
Chris Tilden  
Chip Cooper

NRHA  
Gary Wingrove

REMSTTAC:  
Nels Sanddal

ORHP – HRSA  
Eileen Holloran

## Rural Issues Committee

### Annual Report / 2009 Workplan / Budget Request

#### The purpose of the Rural Issues Committee is to:

- Engage NASEMSO on topics relevant to rural and frontier emergency care
- Provide rural input and expertise to the NASEMSO organization and executive committee
- Promote interaction and collaboration with other rural issues partners

### Annual Report – 2008 Committee Activities

#### Wildfire EMS Resource Utilization

Rural states, in particular, are affected annually with catastrophic wildfires that require the deployment of vast resources to battle and mitigate loss of lives and property from these events. While there are standardized processes for the typing and deployment of most resources utilized for such fires, guidelines for medical response are incomplete and inconsistent. As such, the health and safety of personnel at wildfire locations is at risk. As such, the committee will continue to engage federal agencies, rural states and others in dialogue and development of process to standardize medical response at future wildfires.

#### Project Goals:

- Engage the Association on this issue and initiate a resolution calling for all federal agencies and others engaged with wildfires to come together and resolve policy issues surrounding medical response such events. (done)
- Facilitate and participate in discussions as necessary (ongoing).
- Facilitate the development of standardized wildfire medical response policy (ongoing).
- Inform and educate Association members of all such discussions and policies (ongoing).

#### 2008 Progress:

Almost solely through the efforts and expertise of Dia Gainor, good progress was made on this past year. Through numerous meetings with several federal partners and other persons, skeleton plans to use as guides for deployment and utilization of EMS resources in response to wildfires (and other similar disasters) was accomplished before the 2008 fire season prevented any further progress.

#### EMSS/SORH Learning Session for State EMS Directors and Offices of Rural Health Policy

As part of the committee's partnership with NOSORH, several state directors participated in an EMS Learning Session workshop in Kansas City in 2007. The primary goal of this workshop was to bring members of both parties together to learn about each other's programs and missions and to find ways to partner with each other on common goals. While a very successful program, there currently is not a firm strategy for the continued implementation of this program.

#### Project Goals:

- Seek funding and logistical support for implementation of additional workshops in 2008 (done).
- Seek Executive Committee support for 2009 funding in the Association's 2009 strategic plan (ongoing).

#### 2008 Progress:

A follow-up to the 2007 pilot of this session was conducted in May 2008 (session summary attached). Again, this was a successful session which provided information to EMS and SORH on projects and goals. As a result of the commonality of many of each organization's interests in rural emergency care, a resolution was initiated to develop a joint EMS committee between the both organizations.



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### **NASEMSO / NOSORH Joint Agreement for a Joint Committee on Emergency Care**

Subsequent to the May Learning Session, EMS committees from both organizations began development and approval a joint agreement. This was approved by the executive committees of both and was ready for signature in December 2008 (attached).

### **Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium (RDPC) Liaison**

Norajeane Miles, Arkansas serves as the NASEMSO liaison to the RDPC, a consortium of universities developing preparedness education for rural states. Norajeane's liaison report and conference slides are attached.

### **Resolution support funding for REMSTTAC**

The committee supported Resolution 2008-2 at the annual meeting supporting federal partners to remember REMSTTAC if any funding becomes available in the next year. This was passed by the Association at the annual meeting and forwarded to HRSA and UDSA.

### **World EMS Tours – 2008 the Many Faces of EMS in America**

The committee supported Association in-kind support for "World EMS Tours – 2008 The Many Faces of EMS in America". The 2007 tour was about rural and frontier sites in Australia and 2009. This tour included a bus tour started in Las Vegas and culminated at the Expo in Las Vegas. This tour represented stops in sites which were examples of provision of public, private and tribal EMS.

## **2009 Committee Strategic Plan**

For 2009, much of the Rural Issues Committee work will be done as the NASEMSO/NOSORH Joint Committee on Emergency Care. The JCEC will begin meeting as soon as committee members are appointed by both organizations and a joint work plan will be finalized. Because both organizations are meeting in January for strategic planning and budget discussions, the following joint work plan includes a draft budget. The figures presented represent NASEMSO's half of funds needed for these projects. (The NOSORH board met second week in January and has tentatively approved the NOSORH half this budget.)

### ***Wildfire EMS Resource Utilization (this is a Rural Issues Committee project)***

Rural states, in particular, are affected annually with catastrophic wildfires that require the deployment of vast resources to battle and mitigate loss of lives and property from these events. While there are standardized processes for the typing and deployment of most resources utilized for such fires, guidelines for medical response are incomplete and inconsistent. As such, the health and safety of personnel at wildfire locations is at risk. As such, the committee will continue to engage federal agencies, rural states and others in dialogue and development of process to standardize medical response at future wildfires.

#### **Project Goals:**

- Facilitate and participate in discussions as necessary.
- Facilitate the development of standardized wildfire medical response policy.
- Distribute and education Association members of all such discussions and policies.

**Budget:** Some travel (meetings are typically in Boise ID) for may be helpful, especially if Fergus Laughridge can become engaged with this project again.

### ***Finalize organization of the NASEMSO/NOSORH Joint Committee on Emergency Care (JCEC) (JCEC project)***

In general, the MOU represents an interest in both organizations collaborating in rural emergency care issues by:

- Each organization appointing 6 members to voting membership on the JCEC

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- Conducting JCEC conference calls for committee business
- Creating a JCEC strategic plan
- Budgeting or seeking funds in support of plan objectives
- Continuing to report to and obtain approval from the parent organizations as appropriate on JCEC activities, funding and policy statements

### **Support collaboration through co-sponsorship of an annual SORH/EMS Learning Session (JCEC project)**

With the new Memorandum of Understanding in place JCEC proposes to sponsor a fourth SORH/EMS Learning Session. Last year the Session was held a day in advance of the National Rural EMS Summit and complimentary space was provided by the Summit organizers to hold the day-long meeting. Additionally, limited NOSORH funding was provided to NASEMSO members for some room and per diem.

In 2009, we proposed co-sponsoring another Learning Session in conjunction with the Rural EMS summit being held in Utah in August 2009. Up to \$4,800 is requested to support the travel of the six NASEMSO representatives that serve on the JCEC to this meeting. It's estimated that \$750 is needed for meeting materials and \$500 is needed to provide for breaks for conference participants. Travel would be supported for the committee members, but other SORH and state EMS offices would be invited to attend. While a planning committee has not been developed, anticipated agenda items would include a presentation on the new leadership development report (see below) and a facilitated discussion to support development of a Rural EMS Policy Agenda (also see below).

#### **Project Goals:**

- Planning calls and agenda for August session – preliminary discussions on leadership development, rural EMS policy and other appropriate agenda items
- Organize and hold meeting
- Create a learning session report of discussions

#### **Budget:**

\$625 – NASEMSO share of meeting materials; printing, audiovisual, breaks etc.

\$4,800 – travel support for NASEMSO JCEC members to learning session in Utah

### **State-Level Expertise in EMS leadership development (JCEC project)**

In 2006 and 2007 the NOSORH EMS committee completed a survey of both State Offices of Rural Health (SORH) and State Offices of EMS (SOEMS) to determine what specific programs they were undertaking through the use of FLEX or SORH funds. The two responses far outpacing all others were leadership training of ambulance service managers and leadership training of EMS medical directors. Several states offered presentations on their activities in support of these issues at the SORH/EMS Learning Session in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho on May 13, 2008. However, the only resource available today describing activity on these issues is the survey result which is a simple catalogue of state activity without any descriptive detail. The JCEC proposes to contract with an evaluator who will survey respondents of the 2006/2007 NOSORH EMS Survey and write detailed descriptions of ambulance manager and EMS medical director leadership training offered in their states. Narratives on each state program would be compiled in a written report disseminated widely among SORH, EMS, and other interested parties. Up to \$1,500 is requested to hire the evaluator to conduct a survey and produce the written report.

#### **Project Goals:**

- Secure the services of an evaluator for this survey and report
- Develop the survey
- Develop a report of survey findings
- Distribute the report (written?/ web?) to NASEMSO, SORH and other interested parties

#### **Budget**

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\$750 – NASEMSO share for evaluator services to develop a report on state level activities on EMS medical director and service manager strategies.

### **Create a rural emergency care policy agenda (JCEC project)**

Historically there has been limited national “voice” on rural EMS issues. The IOM reports and Rural and Frontier Agenda for the Future are good background documents and both NASEMSO and NOSORH are focusing efforts in rural issues. With the formation of the JCEC, it is a good time to explore creating a document specifically focused on rural emergency care policy issues that should be pursued on the national stage. This document would provide direction to the many groups conceptually supportive of rural EMS but lacking a “road map” to advocate specifically for rural emergency care issues. Up to \$2,000 is requested to hire a facilitator (and pay facilitator travel, if necessary) to lead a series of discussions between the JCEC and other stakeholders. These discussions would occur via conference calls and would potentially culminate in a “face to face” discussion at the 2009 EMS Learning Session (see above). A draft policy agenda would be developed based on these discussions and this agenda would be presented to both NASEMSO and NOSORH for approval and advice on further development of a rural emergency care agenda.

#### **Project Goals:**

- Ongoing conference calls and virtual meetings to define the agenda
- Plan for a face-to-face meeting and discussion at the August 2009 Learning Session
- Secure a facilitator to lead discussions and create the structure for rural emergency agenda
- Develop and distribute an skeleton rural emergency care agenda

#### **Budget**

\$1,000 – NASEMSO share for facilitator to begin development of a Rural EMS Issues agenda document

### **Support development of Community Paramedicine (JCEC project)**

As an example of a rural emergency care agenda item, NOSORH has been a founding member of the International Roundtable on Community Paramedicine (IRCP), which began in 2005. Remarkably, the partner organizations have been able to sponsor an annual conference that has been held in the United States, Canada (2 times) and Australia. In 2008, as a result of these dialogues, two state FLEX programs (Minnesota and Nebraska) partnered with a broad stakeholder group to develop a unique “community paramedicine” curriculum that will be offered in Minnesota in Spring 2009. Up to \$2,500 dollars is sought for travel for one representative of the NOSORH EMS committee to participate in the annual IRCP meeting.

#### **Project Goals:**

- Participate in IRCP discussions and activities
- Attend 2009 IRCP meeting in New Zealand

#### **Budget: (2 options)**

NOSORH has budgeted \$2,500 to partially support travel for one NOSORH/JCEC member to attend the next international meeting in New Zealand. In order to assure the JCEC stays abreast of meeting discussions, NASEMSO could fund \$1,500 for remaining travel costs.

Or

Fund a comparable \$2,500 amount for a NASEMSO/JCEC to attend the meeting. Remaining travel funds would be incurred through personal and/or alternate sources.

### **Education for Rural EMS Providers (JCEC project)**

One of the most significant challenges to the recruitment and retention of rural EMS providers is overcoming barriers to their initial and ongoing education. Utilization of distance learning and other technological strategies to effectively meet the needs of rural EMS providers may be key to the workforce needs of rural states which will continue to rely on volunteers in their most rural and frontier communities. However, many communities which are implementing such programs and learning by trial and error how such programs can effectively provide quality education.

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### Project Goals:

- Engage and partner with others on strategies for implementing technology EMS education 'best practices'.
- Consider addition of survey questions related distance learning and other strategies for rural EMS education

### Budget:

None anticipated at this time

### *Participate in NOSORH national meeting (JCEC project)*

Through the new Memorandum of Understanding with NOSORH, NASEMSO is offered free registration and display space at the NOSORH Annual Meeting. Funding is requested to support travel of one NASEMSO representative to the NASEMSO annual meeting to participate in meetings with the NOSORH EMS committee.

### Project Goals:

- Attend NOSORH Annual meeting, fall 2009

### Budget

\$1,500 – NASEMSO representative travel to NOSORH's annual meeting

## Committee Partnerships

### *Partnership with the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH) - EMS Committee*

Continue partnership with the NOSORH EMS committee through the JCEC.

### *Partnership with the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) – EMS Issue Group*

The rural/frontier EMS issue group explores relevant policy and regulatory positions for NRHA; seek to foster new membership and participation from the EMS community; and provides input to NRHA in the development of the Rural/Frontier EMS Agenda for the Future. This is issue group actively tracks regulatory and legislative issues relative to rural EMS and has also been actively studying implementation of paramedicine strategies.

### *Partnership with the Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP) – HRSA*

The Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP) promotes better health care service in rural America. Located in the Health Resources and Services Administration, Congress has charged ORHP with informing and advising the Department of Health and Human Services on matters affecting rural hospitals and health care, coordinating activities within the department that relate to rural health care, and maintaining a national information clearinghouse.

### *Partnership with the Rural Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Technical Assistance Center (REMSTTAC)*

REMSTTAC serves as a national focal point for the dissemination of information on rural and frontier emergency medical services (EMS) and trauma care. The website and other resources of the REMSTTAC can be accessed by a broad range of rural and frontier EMS providers including federal grant recipients, state EMS and rural health offices, and their constituencies including rural hospitals and communities.

### *Partnership with the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium*

<http://www.ruraltraining.org/>

The nation's rural emergency responders face unique challenges when compared to their urban counterparts. In recognizing the need for consistent, quality training which addresses those challenges, Congress and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) established the Rural

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Domestic Preparedness Consortium (RDPC or the Consortium) to develop and deliver relevant all-hazards training in support of rural homeland security requirements. Continue with Norajeane Miles' liaison with this consortium.