

Safety and Health Working Team

September 17, 2009

To: National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO)
201 Park Washington Court
Falls Church, VA 22046-4527

From: Jan Peterson, Chair
National Wildfire Coordinating Group/Incident Emergency Medical Task Group

Re: ACTION REQUIRED - "Recommended Standards for the Delivery of Medical Services on Incidents Managed by NWCG Member Agencies"

In 2002, the National Association of State EMS Directors drafted a resolution recognizing the need for high quality EMS on wildland fire incidents and a standardized system of BLS and ALS care within the context of state EMS licensure/certification.

Resolution # 2002-01 supported an organized and consistent national approach to enable states to grant legal recognition to appropriately credentialed out-of-state EMS personnel that would operate under appropriate medical direction.

The resolution pledged cooperation with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and the National Interagency Fire Center that dispatches fire management teams and resources. Current members of the NWCG include;

- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- National Park Service
- U.S. Forest Service, Fire & Aviation Management
- U.S. Forest Service, Fire Systems Research,
- Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Fire Administration
- National Association of State Foresters
- Intertribal Timber Council

NWCG wildland fire incident personnel include firefighters, EMS, administrative and command staff members which often come from states other than the one where the incident occurs. The Incident Emergency Medical Task Group (IEMTG) of the NWCG was formed to address the complex issue of the delivery of EMS on incidents managed by the NWCG.

In 2007, NASEMSO drafted a second resolution. It called upon the NWCG and all federal and state agencies responding to or deploying EMS resources for wildland fires to partner with NASEMSO to create contemporary and comprehensive standards to be followed when identifying and using resources from the incident state as well as other states. NASEMSO again committed to work with the NWCG to find a workable resolution.

In June 2009 the IEMTG presented a draft document to NASEMSO for comment. The document is titled "Recommended Standards for the Delivery of Medical Services on Incidents Managed by NWCG Member Agencies". The comments which were received were generally supportive and appreciative of the document.

Additional input addressed the fact there are many areas yet to be addressed. Some of these are yet to be decided on with the potential for solutions to come at the state, multi-state or national level. Some of these topics include how states might use the "NWCG Limited Request for Recognition Form" to enable out-of-state EMS personnel to function in their state, how to collaborate with existing national EMS credentialing efforts and how to assure NWCG incidents have access to local medical direction.

Suggestions made directly to the IEMTG included obtaining a physician member on the IEMTG working group and assuring development of a standardized content and training for the over the counter medications and expanded scope skills. We are pleased to share that Dr. Jim Upchurch, state EMS medical director for Montana, has committed to join us.

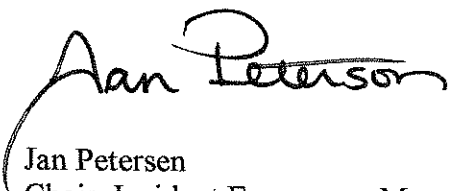
IEMTG acknowledges this is very much a work in progress and hopes the "Recommended Standards for the Delivery of Medical Services on Incidents Managed by NWCG Member Agencies" document accomplishes the following goals:

- Assures all states recognize the "NWCG Limited Request for Recognition Form" and use it to track incoming out-of-state EMS personnel
- Creates a standardized EMS scope of practice for all NWCG member agencies that aligns with the National Scope of Practice Model
- Alerts states to the structure and function of wildland fire incident medical units
- Educates states to assist them in the development of reasonable and enabling regulations of EMS at wildland fire incidents
- Serves as a model for other hazard specific incidents such as hurricanes

The IEMTG Tactical Plan identifies ongoing tasks and goals for the workgroup. The next major project will be the development of an accompanying "Standard of Care for the Delivery of Medical Services on Incidents Managed by NWCG Member Agencies". Please review the IEMTG Tactical Plan online at <http://www.nwcg.gov/teams/shwt/iemtg>.

Suggestions for additional products, resources or information that might further assist states in understanding or integrating NWCG managed incidents into their state EMS system are welcome.

Sincerely,



Jan Petersen
Chair, Incident Emergency Management Task Group

cc: Michelle Ryerson
Chair, Safety and Health Working Team