

## EMS System Safety Program

### GOALS

- Reduce ambulance crashes in Pennsylvania to **ZERO**.
- Reduce the number of EMS personnel killed and injured in the line of duty across Pennsylvania to **ZERO**.
- Integrate safety into every aspect of EMS system operations.
- Design a statewide safety program that will assist EMS agencies in creating an effective program tailored to their own organization.
- Reduce the number of injuries to bystanders and patients that occur yearly as a result of EMS operations to **ZERO**.
- Change the ranking of Pennsylvania from a state with one of the highest rates of crashes and fatalities to the state with the lowest rate.
- Become the national leader in EMS safety by modeling effective programs.

### BACKGROUND

Every week in the Commonwealth, needless injury and property damage occurs involving or related to EMS operations. With rare exception, **ALL** of the losses are preventable. The resulting costs, although not tabulated, are extraordinary and include damage to the reputations of some EMS organizations in addition to the fiscal losses and loss of workdays. In the worst of cases, lives are lost. The military and the aviation communities have model safety programs that are extremely effective in reducing risk and eliminating preventable crashes.

### CONCEPT

The Pennsylvania Department of Health, Emergency Medical Services Office, in collaboration with the regional EMS councils and the Pennsylvania Emergency Health Services Council, will seek the support of all EMS organizations in the Commonwealth in developing and implementing effective and comprehensive safety programs. Every leader in every EMS organization is the "safety officer" for that organization. Regulations require safety policies for ambulance service licensure. Safety program financial support is included in the funding priorities for expenditure of EMSOF. Safety reporting systems are being developed and implemented. Results of safety reporting will be analyzed regularly to identify root causes. Control measures will be developed and evaluated for effectiveness. Personnel will train in risk management and implement it into planning and operations. Rewards for performance will be created.

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**SAFETY PAYS!**

**SAFETY SAVES LIVES!**

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**SAFETY....ALL WAYS and ALWAYS!**

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

- Strong Lead from the Highest Organizational Levels
- Organization Commitment to Safety
- Risk Management Processes and Training
- Personnel Performance Evaluations
- Orientation for New Staff
- Regular Safety Briefings and On the Spot Corrections
- After Incident Review Sessions for All Staff to Learn
- Work Place Safety Training and Control Measures
- Manuals and References, including Websites and Listserves
- Funding (EMSOF and other)
- Inspection Checklists and Regular Inspections to Identify Workplace Hazards
- Control Measures to Reduce Risk
- Incident and Reports for Identifying Root Causes
- Safety Committee to Review Reports and Evaluate Control Measures
- Annual Reports
- Conference Sessions
- Every Meeting Agenda
- Public Education
- Technology Applications
- Community Partnerships to Address Problem Traffic Spots
- ***Rewards for Positive Change!!***

## **FUNDING**

The Department will provide funding from the Emergency Medical Services Operating Fund (EMSOF) for comprehensive ambulance service safety programs approved by the Department. Funding will be to support safety training and safety programs leading to reduction in ambulance crashes and patient/personnel injury. Funding is **NOT** intended to support the purchase of equipment. Rarely is equipment the answer. Human behavior and operational planning for environmental situations almost always are the targeted factors for change.

## **POLICY**

28 Pa. Code §1005.10(i) requires that an ambulance service as part of the requirements for ambulance service licensure must have a policy that deals with the management of personnel safety.

**What are you doing NOW to make PA EMS a safer system?**