



*United States Department of*  
**Health & Human Services**

Office of the Secretary  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for  
Preparedness and Response (ASPR)

# **National Ambulance Contract: Concept of Operations for Regional Implementation**

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- The Concept of Operations (CONOP) provides baseline guidance for Federal support of state Emergency Medical Services operations when demand exceeds the availability of EMS resources
- Builds on well established relationships between Local, State, and Federal colleagues, as well as the private sector.

- Mass evacuation of patients in anticipation of an adverse event, such as a hurricane or nor'easter
- Mass evacuation of patients after an incident which denies normal operations in an area, such as a hazardous materials release, natural disaster, or terrorist event
- Care and movement of patients after a mass casualty event
- Widespread loss of existing EMS system resources

# Planning Assumptions

- This concept of operations is intended to articulate a shared understanding between the New England States and Federal response agencies. States reserve the right to manage and coordinate their resources. It does not change or modify any existing agreements or diminish the capacity of the State to direct its operations.
- Each State maintains responsibility for the licensure, certification, organization, delivery and oversight of EMS and patient movement within its jurisdiction. HHS and FEMA are committed to support the States efforts.

# Planning Assumptions

- When possible, it is generally preferable to bring care to the patient, rather than conducting mass evacuation of patients. Federal resources are available to augment state medical resources in the provision of health and medical care without mass movement of patients.
- The escalation of EMS and paratransit services will be progressive, starting with local surge, mutual aid, state surge, state EMAC requests, and Federal assistance.

# Planning Assumptions

- Federally contracted EMS and paratransit services will not be drawn from the impacted area or EMAC resources.
- Will be managed through the established State and Federal emergency management process.
- Emergency declaration with funding source identified (FEMA surge account or Stafford Act declaration).

- Advisory
- Alert
- Activation
- Check-In
- Deployment
- Command and Control
- Communications
- Logistics
- Demobilization

- The goal is to ensure that Federal public health and emergency medical response assets are postured to respond to State requirements in a timely manner.
- The State will advise the HHS Regional Emergency Coordinator of the potential mission and requirements.
- EC will coordinate with HHS and FEMA elements to advise the contractor of a potential mission and determine the availability and time to deploy assets.
- EC will assist the State in framing the mission
- EC will work with FEMA and State to identify potential check-in sites

- The goal is to put the FEMA contractor in a deployment mode.
- At the recommendation of the HHS EC and the concurrence of the ASPR Emergency Management Group (EMG), the HHS Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) will alert the FEMA Contracting Officer that ambulance and para-transit vehicles may be necessary.
- The HHS EC and FEMA Logistics will confer with the State and/or local government to designate one or more check-in sites for the contracted assets.

- The goal is to initiate the mission.
- At the direction of the State, HHS consults with FEMA and requests activation of the national contract for the desired services.
- This request will detail the number and type of ground and air ambulances and para-transit vehicles and will include an estimate of cost.
- FEMA activates contract, alerts vendor, and provides estimated response time for the requested assets.

- Once the vehicles arrive at the designated check-in site, they will be met by an HHS Technical Representative. The patient evacuation assets will also be checked-in by a FEMA logistics Technical Representative who will issue FEMA placards for official vehicle identification.
- The contracted vehicles and personnel may also be met by representatives of the State EMS agency, who will provide a familiarization briefing and an information package. As required by State law, the State EMS agency may license, certify, and/or credential the contracted vehicles and/or - personnel to work within the State for the duration of the emergency.
- The check-in site may be co-located with the staging area.

- Once assets leave the check-in site, they are assigned by the State to local missions. The resources will be directed to missions or to State or local staging areas to receive their assignments.
- The State EMS agency will make these assignments through the contractor's tactical management team.

# Command and Control

- Once contracted assets are checked-in, their overall direction is provided by the State. The contractor provides field supervisors for tactical command and control, and will interface with local EMS command and control.
- At the request of the State, HHS personnel are available to augment the State's command and control structure for the contract assets.

# Communications

- The contractor has responsibility for establishing and maintaining means of communication among deployed assets forward command team, and headquarters command.
- The contractor will participate in necessary communications with the State and HHS EC.

- The contractor is expected to be able to provide its own support for at least 72 hours.
- After this time, if FEMA has established a base camp in the disaster area, FEMA Logistics will provide shelter and food.
- Medical re-supply will remain the responsibility of the FEMA contractor.

# Demobilization

- Contracted response assets will be demobilized when its task or assignment is completed and when it is determined jointly by the State and HHS EC that the asset is no longer needed.
- The contractor, the State, and Federal agencies will conduct a “hotwash” to identify immediate after-action process and outcome issues.

# To – Do List

- Identify any barriers in State law or regulation to use of Federally contracted assets.
- Identify potential check-in sites and staffing.
- Extend command and control concepts to the local level.
- Write communications plan (frequencies, etc.)



**Thanks to  
The New England Council on  
Emergency Medical Services**

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