



PINELLAS COUNTY FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION

December 5, 2011

The Honorable Susan Latvala, Chair
Pinellas County
Board of County Commissioners
315 Court Street
Clearwater, FL 33756

Dear Commissioner Latvala:

In an attempt to set aside any misunderstanding regarding the Pinellas County Fire Chief's Association's position relative to Priority Dispatch, I have included in this correspondence copies of documents on this subject. As you will see, the Chiefs have been long-standing supporters of the concept. Recently, however, the County has altered the provisions of Priority Dispatch and has failed to honor their commitments to City Managers and Fire Chiefs as conveyed at a meeting on September 3, 2010.

Enclosed herein are copies of "Next Steps" as determined at the September 3, 2010, meeting and a recent email updating the progress. As indicated in the email from Craig Hare, most of the items are deferred, pending, or directly related to the IPS plan and Operationalization Study.

Given that the IPS plan implementation appears to be delayed and the operationalization plan has not been conducted, it would seem premature to move ahead with the County's plan for Priority Dispatch. In addition, the Chiefs have concerns that the County's proposed implementation plan will delay the dispatch of First Responder Units and local fire departments will be unaware of Emergency Medical Service activities in their respective districts. Insofar as one of the fundamental tenets of Priority Dispatch is the maximization of limited resources, it would seem counter intuitive to increase the number of calls on the part of the system that is most limited – that of transport ambulances.

In closing, I would reaffirm the Pinellas County Fire Chief's Association's support of the Priority Dispatch concept and our opposition to the manner in which the Pinellas County Emergency Medical Services Authority proposes to implement the next phase of the program. We urge the Authority to defer implementation of the next phase of Priority Dispatch until these issues can be resolved.

President
Robert O. Polk

Vice President

Secretary/Treasurer
Richard Graham

North County Director
Joe Accetta

Mid County Director
George Bossler

South County Director
Dayton Saltzman

Director at Large
Jim Angle

Past President
Doug Lewis

The Honorable Susan Latvala, Chair
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Should you desire additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Robert O. Polk
President

cc: Commissioner John Morroni, Vice Chairman
Commissioner Neil Brickfield, District 1
Commissioner Norm Roche, District 2
Commissioner Nancy Bostock, District 3
Commissioner Karen Williams Seel, District 5
Commissioner Kenneth T. Welch, District 7

Pinellas County Legislative Delegation
Robert LaSala, County Administrator
Don Sayre, Chair, Emergency Medical Service Advisory Committee

Enclosures: Pinellas County Fire Chief's Association Resolution
Priority Dispatch Dialogue, September 3, 2010 – Next Steps
Craig Hare email, November 14, 2011



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Vice President
Doug Lewis

Secretary/Treasurer
Scott McGuff

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Jay Stout

Mid County Director
Derryl O'Neal

South County Director
Gordon Yaudes

Director at Large
Jeff Malzone

Past President
James S. Angle

May 5, 2008

Chairman MacPherson
Pinellas County EMS Advisory Council
12490 Ulmerton Road
Largo, FL 33774

Dear Chairman MacPherson:

Attached is a Resolution of the Pinellas County Fire Chief's Association recommending the Council seriously consider priority dispatch for EMS calls in Pinellas County. Our Resolution follows the National Academy Medical Priority Dispatch System Guide partially used by Pinellas County for EMS call screening.

Please feel free to contact me at 393-8711 if you wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel H. Graves".

Daniel H. Graves,
President

c: James Dates, Assistant County Administrator
Fire Chief Doug Lewis, Council Representative for PCFCA
Fire Chief Jamie Geer, Council Secretary



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RESOLUTION 2008-1

A RESOLUTION OF THE PINELLAS COUNTY FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION (PCFCA) EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR AND ENDORSING A MEDICAL PRIORITY DISPATCH SYSTEM UTILIZING THE NATIONAL ACADEMY FIELD RESPONSE GUIDE TO DETERMINE THE PROPER LEVEL OF EMERGENCY VEHICLE RESPONSE BY FIRST RESPONDERS AND SUNSTAR'S TRANSPORT SERVICE TO 911 GENERATED EMS CALLS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the fire service agencies within Pinellas County are desirous of responding with the appropriate number of vehicles to medical emergencies and,

WHEREAS, a significant number of 911 EMS calls don't require transport to the hospital and,

WHEREAS, there are a significant number of calls to skilled nursing facilities that don't require First Responder Interventions, but do require transport to the hospital and,

WHEREAS, an over response of emergency vehicles is inefficient and possibly hazardous to the emergency responders and the public and,

WHEREAS, the EMS Advisory Council should recommend to the EMS Authority to merge the Emergency Medical Dispatch Center and the 911 Emergency Communications Center into one operation under the direction of the 911 Emergency Communications Center,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PINELLAS COUNTY FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION THAT:

SECTION 1. Utilizing the National Academy Field Responder Guide Medical Priority Dispatch System most current version approved by the Medical Control Board, the dispatching of vehicles should be assigned as follows:

- Echo coded calls shall receive:
 - First Responder – Emergency Response
 - Ambulance – Emergency Response
- Delta coded calls shall receive:
 - First Responder – Emergency Response
 - Ambulance – Emergency Response

- Charlie coded calls shall receive:
 - First Responder – Emergency Response
 - Ambulance – Emergency Response
- Bravo coded calls shall receive:
 - First Responder – Emergency Response
 - Ambulance – Non-Emergency Response
- Alpha coded calls shall receive:
 - First Responder – Non-Emergency Response
- Omega coded calls shall receive:
 - Appropriate agency referral

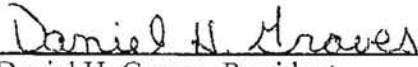
SECTION 2. The Association urges the Pinellas County Commission, acting as the EMS Authority for Pinellas County, to support the priority dispatch concept for Pinellas County.

SECTION 3. The Association urges the merger of the Emergency Medical Dispatch Center and the 911 Emergency Communications Center into one operation under the direction of the 911 Emergency Communications Center.

SECTION 4. That this resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage and adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE PINELLAS COUNTY FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION THIS 1ST DAY OF MAY, 2008.

PINELLAS COUNTY FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION


 Daniel H. Graves, President

Attest:


 Scott McGuff, Secretary/Treasurer

Active Members:

Fire Chief James Angle, Palm Harbor Fire Rescue District
 Fire Chief Pat Competelli, Belleair Bluffs Fire Department
 Fire Chief Charles Fant, Treasure Island Fire Department
 Fire Chief Rick Graham, Lealman Fire Rescue District
 Fire Chief Daniel Graves, Seminole Fire Rescue
 Fire Chief Jamie Geer, Clearwater Fire Department
 Fire Chief Fred Goline, St. Petersburg Beach Fire Department

Fire Chief James Large, St. Petersburg Fire Rescue
Fire Chief Doug Lewis, Pinellas Park Fire Department
Fire Chief Rusty Livernois, Pinellas Suncoast Fire Rescue District
Fire Chief Jeff Malzone, East Lake Fire Rescue District
Fire Chief Bud Meyer, Dunedin Fire Department
Fire Chief Scott McGuff, Oldsmar Fire Department
Fire Chief Stephen Moreno, Tarpon Springs Fire Department
Fire Chief Derryl O'Neal, Madeira Beach Fire Department
Fire Chief Dayton Saltsman, South Pasadena Fire Department
Fire Chief William Stout, Safety Harbor Fire Department
Fire Chief Michael Wallace, Largo Fire Rescue
Fire Chief Gordon Yaudes, Gulfport Fire Department

Priority Dispatch Dialogue 09/03/10 – Next Steps

Implementation:

- 1- Implement ALS First Responder Call Reductions (Alpha Level 911 Calls with a Medical Professional on Scene) This component will go to the EMS Advisory Council on 09/23 and the Medical Control Board on 09/16,
- 2- Implement Ambulance Call Reductions (Alpha Level with high Non-Transport rates). This component has already been approved by the EMS Advisory Council and the Medical Control Board.
- 3- Anticipated Continuing Medical Education (CME) will be November and implementation in December for components #1 and #2 (contingent upon planning and approvals).
- 4- Reduce BLS Responses by updating Runcards – work with individual Fire Departments to implement at their level of comfort.

Further Study or Action:

- 1- Financial Model of Savings (Key Issue) – Both in terms of cost reduction by eliminating or realigning current units or cost avoidance by controlling growth.
- 2- Engage dialogue with the Police Standard Council and Fire Chiefs regarding EMD Determinants being gathered on all calls. Study Priority Dispatch opportunities once data is collected.
- 3- Ensure any workload or cost shifting between First Responder and Ambulance Services is clearly understood.
- 4- Analyze phased implementation approach
- 5- Ensure Fire Transport, as it relates to Priority Dispatch, is studied.
- 6- Analyze EMD Determinant compared to the Final Field Impression of the Paramedics
- 7- Ensure a Citizen/Public Education Plan is developed and utilized.
- 8- Analyze "Time to EMD Determinant" to ensure decision makers and stakeholders know the performance of the EMD process.

From: Hare, Craig A [<mailto:chare@co.pinellas.fl.us>]
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2011 5:45 PM
To: Angle, Jim
Subject: FW: Priority Dispatch Dialogue Follow-up

Hi Chief,

This is the meeting follow-up you were citing at the EMS Advisory Council Meeting last week.

In the "Next Steps Summary" Item #1 has been deferred. #2,3,and #4 have been completed.

On "Further Actions" - #1,4,5,6 are related to the IPS Study and the Operationalization Study to be performed by Fitch and Associates. #2 is pending – initial efforts have been to reduce "unknown determinant" calls within the 911 Center's span of control has been undertaken. #6 is pending time availability of staff; #7 – is being considered by the EMS Management Committee on 11/17. #8 has been addressed by 911 Computer Support. Callers reporting life threatening or potentially life threatening complaints are dispatched as soon as the "Nature" of the emergency is relayed. This has returned the Call Received to Dispatch time interval to the pre-EMD level, which is 90% < 1 Minute. The EMD "Time to Determinant" adds approximately 1 minute.

Gina – Please forward to the Chairman and Members of the EMS Advisory Council.

Thanks,
Craig

Craig Hare

Pinellas County Public Safety Services

(727) 582-2041

chare@pinellascounty.org

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