



SPRING 2011

# EMSUPDATE

Emergency Medical Services

## Highlights from the Federal Interagency Committee on EMS (FICEMS) Meeting

*The Federal Interagency Committee on EMS (FICEMS) meets twice yearly. The Committee is comprised of 10 policy-level Federal representatives from the Departments of Transportation, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Defense, and the Federal Communications Commission, and one appointed State EMS Director. Congress formed FICEMS in 2005 to ensure coordination among Federal agencies involved with state, local, tribal, or regional emergency medical services and 911 systems. It usually meets in June and December, and its Technical Working Group (TWG) meets monthly to address ongoing business and carry out initiatives as directed by the Committee. The TWG has formed six committees that meet regularly and report their recommendations and progress to FICEMS.*

The Committee most recently met in December. Highlights include:

- FICEMS agreed to begin an internal strategic planning process to address past conversations on a possible grant program for State EMS Preparedness to

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## News from NHTSA

### Dear Colleague:

A critical part of NHTSA's work is collaboration with our Federal partners. While this newsletter provides a broad overview of NHTSA's activities, please feel free to communicate with me and our staff with any questions or to get more details. For each project mentioned here there is an associated staff person referenced. Refer to our updated staff list on page 4 in this issue for their email or phone number. Our website, [ems.gov](http://ems.gov), also offers additional information.

You'll also see frequent references in our newsletter to FICEMS, the Federal Interagency Committee on EMS. This group and its committees, meets regularly to ensure coordination of Federal efforts

On another note, we know many of you are preparing for EMS Week, this May 15–21. The week provides not only an opportunity to educate the public and community leaders with messages of safety and prevention, but also is a time to celebrate the critical role EMTs and paramedics play in our communities. We at NHTSA honor your hard work and sacrifice.

One of our partners, the American College of Emergency Physicians, is preparing an annual planning guide for EMS Week. To order a copy, visit [acep.org/emsweek](http://acep.org/emsweek).

Best regards,  
Drew Dawson, Director, Office of EMS

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## National EMS Advisory Council (NEMSAC) Selects 12 Issues to Address

NEMSAC was created in 2007 to formalize the US DOT's long-standing collaborative approach to working with members of the EMS community, EMS consumers, and other EMS stakeholders. The Council, under the authorization of the Secretary of Transportation, meets three to four times a year in Washington, D.C. to deliberate EMS issues of national significance. Recommendations are then provided to the NHTSA Office of EMS and its federal partners. A new Council is appointed every two years. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood appointed 23 members to NEMSAC in June 2010.

The Council met for two days in December in Washington, D.C., following a teleconference call two months earlier that provided background on NHTSA and FICEMS projects. NHTSA Administrator David Strickland was on hand to welcome the members, thank them for their service and to preside over their swearing in.

During the meeting each member was given the opportunity to speak publicly about their priorities for the group and what they perceive as the top issues facing EMS on the national level. The group deliberated on 60 of the top issues identified and voted on 12 to address as a Council. They are:

1. The concept of a lead Federal EMS agency with clear responsibilities and lines of authority
2. EMS leadership development, succession planning and the next generation of EMS leaders
3. Evidence-based treatment and transport protocols for EMS providers
4. Health Care Reform implementation and the changing landscape of EMS
5. Reimbursement based on performance standards and not just transport, and paying for readiness
6. Public education and information on EMS
7. Research into patient outcomes after EMS intervention
8. Standardized collection of EMS-related data points to allow for outcomes data and other important research
9. Integration of EMS with other health, public safety, and public health partners.
10. EMS as an 'essential function' of local and state governments
11. Interstate credentialing and licensure, including how to integrate volunteer providers at major disasters
12. Equitable access to federal grants for EMS agencies

The next in-person meeting of NEMSAC will take place April 14 – 15 in Washington, D.C. For more information, please visit [ems.gov](http://ems.gov) and click on NEMSAC or contact Noah Smith.

FICEMS continued from front page

focus the goals of this idea and help to measure progress.

- Alice Hill, Senior Counselor to the Secretary of Homeland Security, spoke on *The Blue Campaign*, a DHS effort to stop human trafficking. The campaign is reaching out to the EMS community as a first line of defense against human trafficking. For more information, visit [dhs.gov/humantrafficking](http://dhs.gov/humantrafficking).
- In response to a request from the office of Senator Daniel Inouye, FICEMS agreed to prepare a summary report of Federal pediatric EMS activities.
- An update was provided on the FICEMS National EMS Assessment. A final report is expected shortly to NHTSA, and will be provided to FICEMS for its review and approval.
- FICEMS endorsed two webinars being hosted by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and NHTSA that will provide researchers an overview of "exception to informed consent" regulations for emergency care. The webinars will also focus on special considerations for emergency care research on pediatric populations.
- The Federal Communications Commission presented on their Notice of Inquiry (NOI) for Next Generation 911. The NOI is part of the National Broadband Plan and will explore potential capabilities of NG911 and implementation methods.
- Following a review of the Mexican Hat, Utah, Motorcoach Accident, the National Traffic Safety Board issued formal recommendations to FICEMS to develop plans that could be used by States to enhance wireless communications coverage in rural areas and overall EMS response in high-risk rural roadways. FICEMS's Technical Working Group presented their final draft response to the recommendations, which included a needs assessment and gap analysis, funding options, and potential collaborations to achieve wanted results. The report was accepted and will be submitted to the NTSB.

For more information please visit [ems.gov](http://ems.gov) and click on FICEMS or contact Noah Smith.

## FICEMS Addressing NTSB Helicopter EMS Recommendation

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In 2009 the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued two recommendations for the FICEMS to develop national guidelines for the use of helicopter EMS by regional, state and local EMS authorities. In response to these recommendations, FICEMS initiated efforts to develop national guidelines for transporting traumatically injured patients by helicopter from the scene. This first step in establishing broader national guidelines may eventually include recommendations for transporting patients with medical emergencies and for inter-facility transports.

A multidisciplinary advisory panel (funded by a NHTSA cooperative agreement with Children's National Medical Center) is developing evidence-based clinical guidelines for the helicopter transport of injured patients. Additionally, through an interagency agreement between NHTSA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), CDC will develop national mode of transport guidelines. This builds upon the CDC's successful efforts to revise and implement the Field Triage Decision Scheme: The National Trauma Triage Protocol. It will be followed by a CDC-led effort to develop national planning guidelines for the use and availability of helicopter transport of injured patients by regional, state, and local EMS agencies. For more information contact Cathy Gotschall.

## Evidence-Based Guidelines Now Undergoing Pilot Tests

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The national evidence-based guideline process for prehospital care, approved by both NEMSAC and FICEMS, is being pilot-tested in Maryland as part of a cooperative agreement that was competitively awarded to Children's National Medical Center (CNMC). This effort, funded by NHTSA, will develop draft evidenced-based guidelines for prehospital pain management and helicopter transport of injured patients. An expert panel of adult and pediatric emergency physicians and trauma surgeons, field providers, academic researchers, guideline development methodologists, and a medical librarian conducted a comprehensive and systematic review of the medical literature as part of the guideline development process. After the Mary-

land pilot test is completed, an evaluation of the implementation process will be conducted. For more information contact Cathy Gotschall.

## NHTSA-NIOSH: Improving Our Understanding of EMS Worker Injuries

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The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and NHTSA have formed a partnership to improve national EMS workforce injury and illness surveillance. Through this partnership, NIOSH uses data collected from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS), a nationally representative data sampling system. NEISS-Work collects data on all EMS worker injuries treated in 67 emergency departments throughout the US. NIOSH-contracted interviewers contact injured EMS workers and administer a voluntary survey to learn more about the nature of the worker's injury, including what might have caused the injury. NIOSH officially began collecting this nationally representative data on EMS worker injuries in July 2010. Annual findings from this ongoing study will be used to help inform stakeholders interested in reducing injuries to EMS workers.

For more information on NEISS-Work and other EMS workforce publications, projects, and issues please contact Gamunu Wijetunge.

## Developing a National EMS Culture of Safety

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NHTSA has entered into a 36-month cooperative agreement with the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) to develop a National EMS Culture of Safety strategy. Development of this agenda-like strategy is the highest priority recommendation of the National EMS Advisory Council (NEMSAC) to NHTSA. ACEP is establishing a Steering Committee of key, national EMS organizations. This group will meet in early April in the Washington, D.C. area to help ACEP plan for a national conference (May 25–26, 2011) and to get early national EMS community input into the document and the development process. For additional information, please contact Marshall Gardner at [mgardner@acep.org](mailto:mgardner@acep.org) or Dave Bryson at [Dave.Bryson@dot.gov](mailto:Dave.Bryson@dot.gov).

The National 911 Program is funded, housed and staffed by NHTSA's Office of EMS. Here are some of our activities:

## The 911 Resource Center is Building Content—We Need Your Help!

The National 911 Resource Center is seeking articles of interest to include in its online information. The Center was established as a clearinghouse for all issues related to 911 technology, operations, and governance. Contributing content is easy. Just visit [911.gov](http://911.gov) and click on “National Resource Center.” Then follow the simple directions to submit your document. Whether it’s a job description, new legislation, a plan or a report, it could be useful to other PSAP Managers and 911 authorities. Please take a few minutes to visit the site – and submit! The National 911 Resource Center was established via a cooperative agreement with a team led by L. Robert Kimball & Associates. Kimball’s partner in this effort is the National Emergency Number Association. To access the site, please visit [911.gov](http://911.gov) and click on “National Resource Center.”

## Statewide 911 System Consensus Guidelines Available Soon for Public Comment

The National 911 Resource Center is currently working with a group of 911 stakeholders to develop guidelines for the assessment of a statewide 911 system. These guidelines will serve as a basis for self-assessment or to facilitate the assessment of a statewide 911 system by an outside team. The guidelines discuss optimal technical, operational, and governance programs and processes that will eventually enable a nationwide 911 network.

The Consensus Guidelines will be available for public comment in June 2011. Watch for more news at [911.gov](http://911.gov)—or click on “National Resource Center.”

## 911 Grantees Pass First Year Mark

The National 911 Program continues to administer a grant program for the benefit of 911 Public Safety Answering Points. The 29 grantees have until September of 2012 to finish their projects and expend their funds. For an abstract of each grant project and a point of contact, visit [911.gov](http://911.gov) and click on “Grants.”

## Next Generation 911 Initiative Enters the “What’s Next?” Stage

The U.S. DOT’s Next Generation 911 (NG911) Initiative project defined a system architecture and produced a transition plan that considers the responsibilities, costs, schedule, and benefits of deploying an NG911 system nationwide. The final project of the Initiative is the “What’s Next?” forum, which was conducted in Washington, DC, on September 23 and 24 by the Transporta-

tion Safety Advancement Group (TSAG). Participants from law enforcement, fire services, emergency medical services, and transportation operations learned about the forms of digital data (photos, video, telematics data, and text messages) that can be shared with all first responders as the NG911 network is built. Using the NG911 model as a basis, each of the four disciplines are producing white papers, outlining the process they would undertake to decide which data will make their jobs safer, more efficient, and more effective. These white papers will be available by summer 2011.

The NG911 Initiative and the “What’s Next?” project were funded by the Intelligent Transportation System Joint Program Office. For more information on the “What’s Next?” project or the TSAG, visit [tsag-its.org/](http://tsag-its.org/).

For more information about these initiatives, contact Laurie Flaherty.

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