



**International Association of Fire Chiefs
EMS Section Board of Directors – Conference Call
January 14, 2021**

Attendees: McEvoy, Riley, Deardorff, Croom, Shimer, Becker, Carrizzo, LaSala, Davis

Chief McEvoy called the meeting to order at 3:05pm ET

IAFC President Update

IAFC President Carrizzo was in attendance and provided the group with an update on the IAFC's financial and strategic planning efforts. The IAFC's strategic plan expired on December 31. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 health emergency, the IAFC will be unable to convene the usual gathering of elected member leadership to update the plan. As a result, the IAFC Board of Directors has developed a draft plan and is requesting the Sections and Committee provide written feedback on the plan.

Chief Norris Croom confirmed that he has distributed the draft to the EMS Section Board and thanked the EMS Section Board members for their edits and contributions. Chief Croom reported that he will be collating the responses and will then share the document with the IAFC Board of Directors1.

Fire-Rescue Med 2020 Review

Chief McEvoy thanked the Section Board members for their support and work to hold the virtual FRM in October. According to Chief McEvoy, the financial and attendance reports show that this was one of the most successful FRMs in recent years. As a result, Chief McEvoy proposed that the EMS Section consider at least holding a hybrid model conference, even if there is an in-person FRI/FRM in July. The EMS Section Board members were supportive of this concept.

Section Election

Mr. Davis reported that the EMS Section elections are approaching and that the Section will need to open the call for nominations soon. Based on estimates, Mr. Davis recommended a closing date of February 25 for all nominations. The EMS Section Board agreed and supported posting announcements on the Section website and in the upcoming EMS Section eblast. Chief McEvoy also offered to share the posting on KnowledgeNet for additional visibility.

The EMS Section Board also requested Mr. Davis to check with Chief Mark Lockhart to assess his interest in serving again as EMS Section Elections Committee Chair. Mr. Davis will check with Chief Lockhart and report back to the EMS Section Board.

Government Relations Update:

Mr. Davis provided the EMS Section Board with the following update on the following legislative and regulatory issues:

- Treatment in Place (TIP) Legislation: The IAFC is continuing to work with the IAFF and NAEMT to pursue authorization for TIP reimbursements on a permanent basis. A meeting was recently held with the House Ways and Means Committee majority staff to discuss the issue. They are somewhat supportive but are concerned about duplication of the ET3 program. The IAFC will continue collaborating with the IAFF and NAEMT on this issue.

- Ground Ambulance Add-On Payments: CMS' ambulance add-on payments will be expiring on December 31, 2022 and must be reauthorized in this session of Congress. The AAA has shared that this will be their top priority. The EMS Section Board agreed to work with the AAA on this to the extent that we have agreement on language and tactics.
- Re-Classification of Zip Codes: The AAA also plans to focus on opposing efforts to reclassify super-rural zip codes as rural and rural zip codes as urban. The EMS Section Board also agrees with this issue in concept and is supportive of reviewing the AAA's draft legislation. The EMS Section Board also agrees with collaborating with the AAA on addressing this issue if mutually agreed upon language is developed.
- Balance Billing Committee: When Congress passed its omnibus funding legislation in December, the bill also contained a prohibition on out-of-network balance billing by air ambulance agencies and hospitals for emergency department (ED) services. Ground ambulance agencies largely were exempted from these restrictions. However, the legislation did create an advisory committee to propose policies to address balance billing by ground ambulance agencies. Mr. Davis reported that the process for appointing representatives is not clear, but the IAFC nevertheless will pursue appointment of a fire chief to serve on this committee.
- COVID Relief Funding: Congress' omnibus legislation also contained supplemental COVID-related funding. Additional funding was provided to the HHS Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund. The IAFC believes this will result in additional funds being made available to assist ground ambulance service agencies respond to the pandemic. The IAFC will share information on the application process for these funds as soon as it is available. Chief Croom also clarified that these funds likely will not be available for expenses which already were reimbursed by other federal funds such as the Disaster Relief Fund.

NEMSAC Endorsement

Chief McEvoy thank the group for their unanimous support in endorsing Mr. Rob McClintock from the IAFF to serve as the fire-based EMS representative on NEMSAC. Chief Croom announced that he will brief the IAFC Board on this during the next IAFC Board meeting.

Mandatory Vaccines

Chief Chad Deardorff asked if anyone was aware of mandates for personnel to receive the COVID vaccine. Chief Deardorff and Chief McEvoy reported knowing one fire department and two home health agencies who are mandating the vaccine for their personnel. However, the group agreed that this likely was difficult for any agency to enforce since the vaccine is currently not FDA approved but rather being made available under an Emergency Use Authorization. Chief McEvoy stated that he anticipates seeing legal challenges to such a mandate.

RQI Partnership

Chief Vance Riley asked whether the IAFC was planning to continue its partnership with RQI. Mr. Davis reported that the partnership agreement expired at the end of 2020 and only provided for one webinar and one meeting. Mr. Davis stated that he was not aware of any communications from RQI to extend the agreement, but that he would check with Ms. Leslie Distler and will confirm with an answer shortly.

Fire Department Administration of COVID Vaccines

Chief David Becker asked the group what they knew about fire departments assisting in COVID vaccine administration efforts. The group was aware of many departments assisting in this manner and discussed how these operations are progressing. The group also discussed which states have authorized EMTs to administer the vaccine. Chief Becker requested the EMS Section Board members share any interesting information they see regarding this topic.

Temporary Change in Staff Liaison

Mr. LaSala reported that Mr. Davis will be going on FMLA leave soon and that he will assist the EMS Section Board on any needs while Mr. Davis is on leave.

Chief McEvoy adjourned the call at 3:45pm ET