



# Fire Service-Based EMS Electronic Tool Kit

## Resources for Leaders

This electronic Tool Kit is intended to provide fire service managers and fire fighter union officials with the latest information on fire service-based emergency medical services.

This resource is provided as a cooperative effort between the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Fire Fighters, and the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association.

*If your department's EMS first response system or your ambulance transport operation is currently threatened or under open attack, the IAFF and the IAFC have specific strategic and tactical resources available to assist you.*

*These resources are customizable for your situation and are not included in this electronic Tool Kit. To access these resources, contact the IAFF Department of Fire/EMS Operations at 202-824-1594 or the IAFC EMS Section through the contact information at their web site, [www.iafcems.org](http://www.iafcems.org).*

The electronic Tool Kit information is provided through various electronic links to documents described below, as well as links to other resources, including web sites and videos. You may access these links and download resources at any time.

### RESOURCES AVAILABLE

#### Resource: Talking Points

- The fire department is geographically deployed throughout the community to minimize response times. The most expensive parts of the EMS system – personnel, apparatus, and facilities – are already being paid for.
- Response time is the absolute priority for medical emergencies. Firefighters are in the best position to respond quickly and provide vital services.
- EMS has been a part of the fire service for more than 50 years – and even longer in many metro jurisdictions. EMS is not a distraction from our mission - it is one of our core services provided by firefighters and paramedics within the mission.
- Prehospital, 9-1-1 emergency response is one of the essential public safety functions provided by the United States fire service. Fire service-based EMS systems are strategically positioned to deliver time critical response, effective patient care and scene safety.
- Of the 200 most populated communities, 97 percent have the fire service delivering pre-hospital emergency medical service response. Additionally, the fire service provides critical advanced life support (ALS) response and care in 90 percent of the 30 most populated United States cities and counties.
- EMS training is part of the basic training for all firefighters. Different levels of EMS certification exist in each state.
- Personnel are the most expensive part of any emergency response system. Fire departments are essentially “standing armies” in their communities poised to respond to an emergency. Utilizing firefighters to provide EMS gets more bang for the buck.
- Firefighters can work more hours in a week before being paid overtime than private sector EMS workers, according to Federal FLSA regulations.
- The ride for the sick or injured person in the ambulance is only part of the system. A comprehensive EMS system includes rapid response, intervention, stabilization, and then transportation to a definitive care facility, if needed.
- Fire service-based EMS brings the treatment to the patient – wherever they are. Treatment by firefighters begins immediately, even if the patient is trapped in a building that's on fire, pinned in a car crash, or in a collapsed structure.
- The provision of EMS response, treatment, and transportation by firefighters is seamless. One agency is responsible for the continuity of patient care and provides EMS within an “all-hazards” response model.
- Firefighters are long-term workers in their communities. Most fire departments have very low turnover rates. Firefighters know about the needs in their communities...and firefighters are highly experienced emergency medical care providers.
- The fire service EMS deployment model is more robust than any private for-profit ambulance-based EMS model. Firefighters are deployed and ready to respond to any type of emergency. Firefighters don't leave town when the going gets tough.

### **Resource: What Enhanced Revenue Really Means**

This article provides information on the true meaning of “enhanced revenue” – it’s really cost and risk shifting by a private ambulance service provider to the fire department or some other entity.

[http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK\\_WhatEnhRevenueReallyMeans.pdf](http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK_WhatEnhRevenueReallyMeans.pdf)

### **Resource: Pathway Management**

This article discusses pathway management concepts, including private ambulance company plans to expand their business under managed care.

[http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK\\_PathwayManagement.pdf](http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK_PathwayManagement.pdf)

### **Resource: Prehospital 9-1-1 Emergency Medical Response — The Role of the United States Fire Service in Delivery and Coordination**

This white paper discusses the origins and history of emergency medicine in the United States and the evolution of the fire service role in these services. It further explains several of the models used by fire service organizations to provide EMS, explains the differences between emergency and non-emergency EMS, and the capabilities of multi-role firefighters in EMS. The paper explains that EMS is not just the ambulance ride; it’s a system that includes a number of components that leverage the strengths of the fire service.

[http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK\\_Preh911EmerMedResp.pdf](http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK_Preh911EmerMedResp.pdf)

### **Resource: Emergency Medical Services: A Guidebook for Fire-Based Systems**

This comprehensive guide provides fire service managers and fire fighter union officials with up-to-date information on fire-based EMS. The goals of the guide are to provide background on EMS systems; to guide managers and union officials in analyzing their EMS systems; to provide direction for system evaluation; and to guide fire department leaders confronted with competitive procurement through developing and responding to requests for proposals.

The guide contains nine chapters and appendix materials. The chapters cover the principles and origins of fire service-based EMS, its impact on the community, quality and effectiveness measurement, response time, system costing and revenue, competitive procurement, EMS in Canada, the role of the medical director, and the future of EMS.

[http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK\\_EMSSGuideBook.pdf](http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK_EMSSGuideBook.pdf)

### **Resource: AMR Notice — August 5, 2010**

This document was developed jointly by the IAFC, the IAFF, and the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association to alert fire service managers and fire fighter union officials of recent developments related to efforts by a private ambulance service provider to replace fire service-based ambulance service in several cities.

[http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK\\_AMRNoticeAugust5\\_2010.pdf](http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK_AMRNoticeAugust5_2010.pdf)

### **Resource: Benefits of Multi-Role Firefighters**

This brief summary provides information on the benefits and capabilities of multi-role firefighters over single role EMS workers.

[http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK\\_BenefitsofMultifirefighters.pdf](http://www.iaff.org/Tech/PDF/FBEMSTools/TK_BenefitsofMultifirefighters.pdf)

### **Resource: Fire Service EMS Web Site**

The Fire Service EMS web site is a collaboration of the Congressional Fire Service Institute, IAFC, IAFF, National Fire Protection Association, and National Volunteer Fire Council.

This organization exists to inform members of Congress and others of the vital role and importance of fire service-based EMS.

<http://www.fireserviceems.com>

### **Resource: Video – National Medical Report**

Explains the role of the fire service in EMS. Suitable for viewing by the public to explain the basic concepts of fire service-based EMS. Links below (both to the same video).

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nks-XJU\\_Kg0&feature=channel\\_page](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nks-XJU_Kg0&feature=channel_page)

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=7149608837666225500>

This electronic Tool Kit is intended to inform leaders, provide background information and resources to assist them in dealing with a variety of issues regarding fire service-based EMS. Users should determine what information best suits their specific situation.

