

METRO REGION EMS SYSTEM PLAN

Regional Programs & Projects
FY 2012-2013



Metro Region EMS System

1. **Emergency Preparedness and Response**

While accounting for about one-third of the nation's emergency responders, EMS personnel are the least supported of all public safety and healthcare personnel across the nation to fulfill their roles in responding to large scale events lacking both adequate training and proper equipment for disaster response. Large multiple casualty incidents, whether man-made (accidents or intentional such as terrorism) or natural (storm, fire, pandemic diseases and the like), typically will overwhelm any local EMS provider early in the developing event, especially when emergency medical responders are victims of the catastrophe themselves. A prudent and appropriate response more than likely requires immediate mutual aid from surrounding communities and even may require expansion to a regional, state, or national response. In light of recent disasters, an overwhelming initial EMS response is mandatory in order to mitigate tragic loss of life and human suffering. In order to be successful and efficient, such a response requires planning, equipment and trained personnel. It is no surprise that emergency preparedness is the number one focus of the Metro Region EMS providers. The EMS function necessitates it to be recognized as an equal partner in disaster planning and funding. Disaster tactics need to be taught and practiced as well as continually reviewed and revised as new evidenced-based information, which would increase the effectiveness of a regional response plan, becomes available. The Metro EMS System is committed to strive for competence, commitment, cooperation, and coordination in order to provide an effective and efficient regional EMS response in the wake of any disaster through ongoing collaboration with state, county, and local emergency management, public safety, public health and healthcare provider agencies.

Goal: To coordinate and plan for regional EMS responses to comply within State and Federal guidelines, structure, and initiatives in cooperation and collaboration state, county, and local emergency

management, public safety, public health and healthcare provider agencies.

Objectives:

- Collaborate on multidisciplinary projects within the region and incorporate a regional coordinated response approach.
- Develop and coordinate regional response strategy for EMS surge capacity through continued development of regional components of MN AST which includes support equipment purchases and maintenance.
- Continue development of a Metro EMS Regional Coordination Center and provide 24/7 on-call staffing for EMS (MAC) multi-agency coordination that also could be used for state EMS coordination

Evaluation:

- Maintain provide training on regional response plans.
- Provide annual training seminars in the area of incident management and emergency preparedness for EMS provider agencies.
- Ongoing participation with county EMS councils and emergency management directors, MN EMSRB, MN DPH, MN HSEM, MMRS. RHRC and other emergency preparedness partners. The Regional EMS Coordinator position is designated to play integral and essential roles in numerous disaster preparedness and response plans.

Outcomes:

- The Metro Region EMS System is prepared to provide EMS surge capacity upon request to the metropolitan region, the State of Minnesota and other state or federal jurisdictions.

- The Metro Region EMS providers are actively involved and informed in the development and maintenance of the regional EMS incident response plan to significant events and disasters which may occur and that regional EMS is actively involved and represented in the emergency preparedness planning process at all levels within the region.

Timeline:

- Ongoing-2013:*** Maintain relationships with local, county, regional, state, and Federal emergency preparedness agencies and groups to continually assess and review regional response plans as well as to facilitate regional coordination of resources and assets.
- Ongoing-2013:*** Support MN Ambulance Strike Team development through equipment acquisition, training and exercises.
- Ongoing-2013:*** Support the ongoing operations, training and exercise of a statewide EMS MACC.
- July 2011:*** Identify appropriate venue to present 3E (explosive/active shooter) material and collaborate to host presentations.
- September 2011:*** Identify education platform and initiate regional explosion-active shooter response plan (3E) training.
- December 2011:*** Update regional Incident Response Plan.
- December 2011:*** Complete 3E presentations for conferences.
- January 2012:*** 3E presentations at Arrowhead Conference
- Ongoing-2013:*** Identify and schedule emergency preparedness training meet current responder and provider requirements such as ICS 300/400 classes.

2. EMS Training

On-going training is a need of all EMS providers. The ability to afford specialized or advanced training is becoming more difficult for all ambulance services – rural and urban, paid and volunteer. Regional coordination of specialized training can meet this on-going need as well as offer a cost-effective solution for the EMS providers within our region. The Metro Region EMS System (the EMS TOC and its committees) plans to provide workshops, training opportunities, and classes on topics identified by the providers within the region that may not be readily available through existing training programs and conferences. Potential subject matter topics identified from EMS provider input include: Basic Animal Rescue Training- BART, mental health crisis intervention, leadership development, dispatch customer service, Strike Team Leader training, regional explosive/active shooter response plan, Metro EMS Incident Response Plan training, EMT-Paramedic-EMR continuing education.

Goal: To enhance the knowledge and/or skills of EMS providers and managers.

Objectives:

- Provide workshops on current EMS topics or issues to EMS providers in the Metro Region, based on input from the Metro Region EMS System committees (TOC and its committees).
- Build relationships and promote public safety integration.

Evaluation:

- A minimum of three (3) educational sessions or workshops were offered on topics of interest including findings from the EMS regional research projects to Metro Region EMS System providers
- Presentations (2) of the completed EMS regional projects were made.
- Offer annual training geared to response groups was offered.

Outcomes:

- To have a wide variety of EMS providers participate in training opportunities or workshops offered by the Metro Region.

Timeline:

September 2011: Multiple training topics identified by Education/Research Committee.

November 2011: Two or more training opportunities to be scheduled.

Ongoing-2013: EMS committees to continue planning regional training.

May 2012: Three or more opportunities have been completed for EMS providers and/or managers in the Metro Region and two responder sessions presented as well.

3. Regional Resource Coordination and Tracking System

Coordination of EMS resources and the flow of EMS patients within the metropolitan region is essential in ensuring quality prehospital care and as importantly, plays a significant role in addressing system wide issues related to hospital, heart and trauma center overcrowding thus meeting the overarching EMS objective that each patient is directed to the most appropriate facility based upon their condition. Regional coordination requires that the healthcare community – public and private hospital groups and healthcare systems as well as the EMS providers- work collaboratively to achieve this goal. Tracking and coordination of regional resources has been identified as a crucial need within the region in order to monitor the level of available resources and how they can be deployed in a timely manner particularly in significant community events such as mass casualty incidents. A secure system to track and access these resources is essential to support EMS systems management. The metropolitan EMS providers have access to a hosted Emergency Management software system as well as MNTrac to coordinate EMS response and resources. Additionally, the MREMSS established a regional multi-agency coordination center (MACC) for the sole purpose of EMS coordination.

Goal: To effectively coordinate emergency medical service resources to support system demands and response to significant regional events such as mass casualty incidents.

Objectives:

- Provide a real-time, reliable system for EMS resource allocation during mass casualty incidents and large scale, multi-jurisdictional events.

- Development and maintain a Metro Region EMS System resources list and identify the means to facilitate the allocation of those resources when needed.
- Develop a Metro resource EMS tracking system and promote the use of MNTrac.

Evaluation:

- Ensure patient capacity of metro hospitals as well as real-time available EMS resources during a mass casualty incident is tracked on MNTrac™ or a functional equivalent system.
- Ensure Metro Region EMS Resources and Point of Contacts are made available to all Regional Providers.
- Assess the EMS dispatch CAD systems (2^o PSAPs) for the ability to export live data in a standardized format to track resources in Knowledge Center.

Outcomes:

- Provide an efficient (operational and financial) regional tracking system for all entities involved.
- Maintain an online database of metro EMS resources and point of contacts for all Regional providers available through a secure web portal.

Timeline:

- Ongoing-2013:*** Assessment of CAD systems and data sharing interests and capabilities.
- November 2011:*** Develop specifications and data set for resource tracking.
- Ongoing-2013:*** Metro EMS regional resources updated annually and maintained online.

4. EMS Research

Since EMS research continues to be identified as a critical need by EMS providers in the region, the Metro Region EMS System has been funding EMS research grants for a number of years. The Metro Region has the capacity to do research based on both academic expertise and credible scientific sample size and recognizes this is an opportunity to continue to support research that could have a greater impact and develop evidence-based EMS Best Practice models. The Metro Region EMS System solicits and awards funding (grants) for approved for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) research proposals. The intent of the grants is to support specific research projects which may: **improve the coordination of emergency medical response in the seven county metropolitan area; improve resource utilization; demonstrate enhanced cost effectiveness of services; evaluate medical equipment, treatments and pre-hospital interventions; improve pre-hospital medical care skills of emergency medical responders in the metropolitan area; evaluate trends or developments in pre-hospital care; establish basis for pre-hospital protocols or standard operating procedures; or otherwise demonstrate a positive impact on regional EMS services.**

Goal: To improve patient care and allocation of resources by determining the efficacy of evidenced based emergency care.

Objectives:

- Provide EMS research grants to Metro Region agencies which have a demonstrable impact on metro region EMS service delivery and regional impact.
- Provide a forum for sharing the results of EMS research conducted in the Metro Region.

- Offer presentations on research to other venues as appropriate upon request.

Evaluation:

- Ensure at least two EMS research grants are awarded to agencies within Metro Region for EMS research.
- Ensure presentations on completed EMS research projects are provided to the EMS Committee (EMS TOC), EMS Provider Advisory Committee and as Regional training topics. Final reports or summaries of final reports are posted on Metro Region's EMS web site.
- Ensure grant recipients demonstrate how proposed research would impact EMS.

Outcomes:

- At least two research projects, relevant to improved coordination of EMS in the Metro Region and/or the evaluation of standards or procedures to improve patient care, are completed.
- The research conducted is made available for others to utilize the information that was discovered.
- Practical application of grant research is identified.

Timeline:

Current April 2011: RFP distributed for EMS research grants.

July 2011: Evaluation of grant applications and determination of award made by the EMS Committee.

September 2012: Research grants completed and final reports submitted to Metro Region EMS System.

Ongoing-2013: Presentations of research findings are made to the EMS Committee and/or EMS Provider Sub-Committee. Final reports, or summaries of final reports, are updated and posted on the Metro Region's EMS web site.

5. **EMS Agency Support**

EMS is a unique community resource that is partly health care, public safety and emergency management while often regarded and operating as a secondary service. Despite substantial investment in EMS education and training as well as public awareness, the provision of essential emergency medical response is often fragmented. The challenge to the future of EMS and its effectiveness depends upon the actions taken in response to the public perception of the EMS industry as well as the ability of the EMS community to identify current issues and collectively find diverse and innovative solutions to improve patient care. The efforts of this regional program are focused to support EMS agencies on workforce, funding, data collection, leadership, EMS visibility, and medical direction concerns. The Metro Region EMS System is committed to enabling the EMS provider organizations to be capable of initiating a process to improve and facilitate change to enhance the service they provide to the regional community. The Metro region is committed to collaborate with the EMSRB and the Minnesota Ambulance Association (MAA) to assess and analyze current EMS issues and jointly develop action plans to address solutions. The Metro Region EMS System is committed to inform the public and elected officials regarding the extraordinary contributions the EMS community makes to preserve and protect the health of our citizens.

Goal: To serve as a multidisciplinary regional center for information, reference, training and support resources for EMS providers.

Objectives:

- Develop regional priorities and an action plan to address workforce recruitment, retention, succession planning, and leadership development based on input from the EMS providers and partners.

- Support the development of Community Paramedics in the metropolitan area.
- Assure collaboration for informing political officials and constituencies' in the areas of support for EMS and healthcare issues impacting local providers as well as regional and state EMS programs.
- Continually update web site to provide current information about available grant programs, training and other resources for EMS providers.

Evaluation:

- Ensure a metropolitan RTAC application is prepared and submitted to the STAC for approval and support the efforts to bring forth a viable, unbiased regional trauma advisory group.
- Ensure implementation of an action plan with specific timeframes that addresses the priorities of workforce recruitment, retention, succession planning, and/or leadership development issues identified within the Metro Region.
- Ensure website is updated at minimum on a quarterly basis for current programs, training and resources available for EMS providers.
- Ensure EMS and healthcare issues that impact the local providers in the Metro Region are collaboratively identified annually and priorities established for dissemination of information to elected officials and the public.
- Collaborate with local community colleges and four year colleges and universities to formulate articulation agreements which would recognize prior EMS education to be transferable into a variety Bachelor degree completion programs.

Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of EMS providers by the general public.
- Metro Region EMS System's website serves as a clearinghouse of information and resources for EMS providers as well as an educational, informational resource for the general public regarding EMS news and operations as well as personal and family safety and emergency preparedness.
- Create a unified vision of EMS that can be projected through all of the regional EMS activities that would enhance the visibility and awareness of EMS.

Timeline:

- Ongoing-2013:*** Host (fund) and support the MN Metropolitan Regional Trauma Advisory Committee (MMRTAC).
- September 2011:*** Research issues of workforce recruitment, retention, succession planning, community paramedics and leadership development issues identified within the Metro Region.
- December 2011:*** Develop a prioritized action plan to address workforce recruitment, retention, succession planning, and leadership development issues identified within the Metro Region.
- Ongoing-2013:*** Ongoing maintenance of the EMS Metro Region website identifying current programs, training and resources available for EMS providers.

Ongoing-2013: Identify EMS and healthcare issues that impact the local providers in the Metro Region for dissemination to elected officials and the public.

Ongoing-2013: Continued development of academic relationships to promote articulation agreements and EMS personnel participation in degree completion programs.

6. EMS Public Education

EMS providers are expected to be a public education resource by the citizens in their communities. In order to support the public education role of EMS providers, the Metro Region EMS System is committed to sustaining its regional initiative for community public education that addresses the need to enhance the public's awareness of healthy and/or safety-conscious lifestyles as well as personal and family emergency preparedness. The Metro Region EMS System collaborates with the EMS providers and community/public health representatives as well as other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to identify appropriate public education/information topics. Furthermore, the System recognizes the benefits and synergy in multi-regional, multi-organizational and/or statewide public education initiatives and is committed to exploring the possibility of collaboration with one or more regional entities on public education campaigns.

Goal: To increase public and governmental awareness of healthy and safety-conscious lifestyles through a public education campaign that targets the reduction in the risks of illness or injury and/or promotes safer behavior as well as promotes the essential roles EMS plays in the region.

Objectives:

- Identify public education initiatives addressing needs identified by the Metro Region EMS providers or gaps/needs gleaned from community health mapping and assessments.
- Explore all options of collaborating on a public education initiative with other entities.

- Support public education campaigns by distributing general health, emergency medical care and personal-family preparedness materials to EMS providers and collaborative partners for public distribution.
- Ensure metro region EMS website is current through regular updates and additional postings of new information to site.
- Develop a strategic and collaborative relationship between local media groups and EMS providers within the region.

Evaluation:

- Ensure approved education materials, addressing an identified illness or injury or promoting safer behavior, are developed and distributed through EMS providers.
- Ensure informational resources that are developed are distributed to the community to promote public awareness, and health prevention and promotion.
- Ensure the emsmn.org web site educational pages are reviewed and if appropriate, updated on at least a monthly basis.
- Develop a media release process and a website accessible media relations tab.

Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of methods to reduce the risk of illness or injury and/or promote safer behavior through a public education campaign.
- Provide relevant information that can be utilized by the general public to promote healthy and safe lifestyles.
- Provide relevant information that can be utilized by the general public and elected officials in which to support EMS visibility and EMS initiatives.

Timeline:

December 2011: The MREMSS website secure portals are created and activated.

Ongoing-2013: Maintain and support MREMSS website to keep current educational opportunities, employment and information of public interest.

Ongoing-2013: Maintain supplies of current, approved informational pamphlets and brochures as well as "Procedures for Emergency Care".

7. **EMS Communications**

Public safety and EMS providers repeatedly identify dependable communications as the single most important element required for an **efficient, effective, appropriate** and **coordinated** timely response to everyday emergencies. In the face of regional man-made or natural disasters, an overwhelming initial EMS response is mandatory in order to mitigate tragic loss of life and human suffering. Capacity, multifunctionality, reliability and interoperability are the critical cornerstones for an effective communications and information management system. Any proficient response requires transmission of real-time information to assess needs and resources, which can change suddenly and unexpectedly. Communication failures hinder all levels of response management and often lead to chaos and confusion not only in disaster response but in daily operations as well. The Metro Region EMS System continues to remain steadfast in its efforts to upgrade and maintain the ARMER system in the region. It has committed itself to strive for interoperable communication not only in the region but also throughout the state through relationships with the other regions and regional radio boards. The Metro Region EMS System is dedicated to enhancing interoperability through the unrestricted transfer of 911 data and information between primary and secondary PSAP centers. The MREMSS uses its EMS Communications Committee and the MESB's committees to fervently maintain, enhance and expand the regional EMS communication system through the integration of new technologies.

Goal: Maintain, expand, and enhance regional EMS communications system and ensure the regional communication plan is aligned with the MN ARMER system.

Objective:

- Utilize the EMS Communications Committee to address EMS communications issues within the Metro region.
- Ensure EMS participation, compliance, and exercise within the scope of the regional tactical interoperability communications plan (TICP).
- Continue EMS participation in the development of Next Generation 911 systems that will allow the unfettered transfer of ANI/ALI data and the flexibility to transfer 911 calls to other PSAPs and 2^o PSAPs even across regional and state boundaries.
- Support regional COMLs and field deployed incident dispatch teams (IDT).

Evaluation:

- Ensure the EMS Communications Committee meets regularly to address EMS communications issues affecting the Metro Region.
- Facilitate the development and implementation of an approach to transfer 911 data and information between primary and secondary PSAP units in the region through the collaborative efforts of co-sponsors from within the Metro Region, State of Minnesota and other vested/interested partners to test the concept within in the parameters of Next Gen(eration) 911.
- Collaborated in the development and implementation of an all-hazards, multi-discipline approach to enhance radio interoperability with all EMS providers within the State during daily and disaster responses.

Outcomes:

- Improved interoperability of EMS communications systems within the Metro Region and adjacent jurisdictions.

- Ensure EMS communications are consistent with regional radio plan.
- Improved accuracy of the 911 data that is exchanged between PSAPs and minimized time to dispatch when calls are transferred between agencies.

Timeline:

- Ongoing-2013:*** The EMS Communications Committee maintains monthly meeting schedule.
- Ongoing-2013:*** MREMSS facilitates EMS representation in Next Gen 911 planning activities.
- Ongoing-2013:*** Investigate costs, feasibility and interest in 2^o PSAP CAD interface capability into regional emergency management common operating picture platform-Knowledge Center.
- Ongoing-2013:*** Continued support of the development and integration of EMS COMLs and IDT into local, regional and state response plans.
- September 2011:*** Collaborate with regional Education Committee to identify EMS communication training topics and schedule dispatch/communication training sessions at least once per calendar year.

8. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

Emergency medical service personnel – dispatch, ambulance, fire/rescue, law enforcement, and hospital staff are at high risk of developing stress-related illness and injuries from the effects of critical incident stress. They share many common stresses inherent to their work including higher risk of injury, the need to make immediate decisions without error, unfamiliar or uncontrollable work environments and frequent exposure to the sights, smells and sounds of human trauma and continual responsibility for human life. Critical incident stress management (CISM) is a comprehensive, organized approach for the reduction and management of harmful aspects of stress in emergency services. CISM has been identified as a priority program not only for EMS providers within the Metro Region, but also for providers throughout Minnesota and across the United States.

Goal: To enhance the well-being of EMS providers and increase retention through critical incident stress management.

Objectives:

- Contribute via a performance based grant to the support of a system for critical incident stress management.
- Collaborate with other regional EMS programs to support the development and sustainability of CISM teams.
- Require Metro CISM to identify new funding mechanisms to complement funding from the Metro Region EMS Program.

Evaluation:

- Ensure critical incident stress management services are available twenty-four hours/day, seven days/week all year long (24/7/365) through the Metro CISM Team.

- Ensure Metro Region EMS System representative participates in at least one Minnesota Association of Regional CISM Programs meeting each year and/or Minnesota CISM Consortium meeting.
- Confirm regional CISM will provide a contemporary and appropriate approach to CISM through training annually within the metropolitan region for EMS providers and CISM team members.
- Receive written funding and activity reports from Metro CISM.

Outcomes:

- Short and longer-term adverse physical and mental consequences of critical incident stress are mitigated through access to the Metro CISM Team for assistance in managing critical incident stress.
- Access to CISM services in Minnesota is strengthened through development of partnerships between CISM teams for training, support and/or mutual aid.
- The Metro CISM team has an effective and appropriate approach to CISM and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) situations that provide for initial and longer term support of Emergency Service Personnel.
- Metro Region CISM Team continues to identify and secure new funding mechanisms, other than from the Metro Region EMS System.

Timeline:

July 2011: Metro Region EMS System revises and renews contract effective through June, 2013 with the Metro CISM Team to provide service support from July 2011 through June 2013.

November 2011: Metro CISM Team presents a report and a two (2) year plan, including a strategic plan for obtaining other funding

sources to sustain their program, to Metro Region EMS Committee and Metro Region Providers Advisory Committee (EMS TOC).

June 2013:

Metro Region EMS System representatives have participated in at least two Minnesota Association of Regional CISM Programs and/or Minnesota CISM Consortium meetings – participation in a minimum of one meeting each fiscal year.

Ongoing-2013

CISM support to Metro first responder community.

9. Metro Region Data Quality Improvement

EMS pre-hospital data is being collected on a statewide basis. The Metro Region EMS System funds EMS research, sponsors training activities and concentrates on other projects in response to identified regional health indicators and EMS needs. Its goal is to continue to utilize this pre-hospital data as programmatic decisions are made especially in the areas of education and research. The EMS Providers and EMS Committees (EMS TOC) will determine what data would be beneficial to gather on a regional basis and determine how to appropriately use and disseminate that data.

Goal: To use EMS data as the basis of recommending policy and quality improvement decisions intended to improve patient outcomes and develop best practice models through evidence-based care standards and training.

Objectives:

- Identify EMS data elements in MNSTAR that are relevant to EMS system planning in the Metro Region.
- Develop regional EMS data reports to identify potential gaps or needs in the Metro Region EMS System.
- Provide the EMS providers with usable data from MNSTAR.

Evaluation:

- Support state-wide initiatives to improve EMS data collection and use.
- Generate a list of EMS data elements for review by EMS Committee (EMS TOC and its committees).
- EMS Committee reviews regional EMS data reports biannually.

Outcomes:

- Ambulance service data is used to identify EMS system gaps and needs that may be addressed by regional EMS programs and projects and

utilized by county EMS/ health/emergency preparedness councils and committees.

Timeline:

October 2011: Identify data elements that to be evaluated.

December 2011: Prepare documents to ensure HIPAA compliance and contracts to permit data sharing among EMS providers.

July 2012: Evaluate six months of identified data, determine outcome/action. Identify further data elements to be evaluated.

January 2013: Evaluate six months of identified data, determine outcome/action. Identify further data elements to be evaluated.

July 2013: Evaluate six months of identified data, determine outcome/action. Identify further data elements to be evaluated.