



January 29, 2013

Mr. Matt Smith, Chairman
District Board of Health
1001 East Ninth Street
P.O. Box 11130
Reno, Nevada 89520

Dear Mr. Smith:

Since 1994, there have been multiple consultant reports written on the provision of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and associated services in Washoe County. The most recent report was written in 2012 by TriData. As one of the primary providers of EMS services in Washoe County, we appreciate the opportunity to respond to this latest report, and we have elected to do so by also asking two very reputable and well-known national consultant groups to prepare responses to allow for national expert opinions on the issues raised. Attached you will find the two consultant reports that were requested by the REMSA Board of Directors in response to the TriData report.

The Washko and Associates report provides input on each recommendation made by TriData. The second report by Fitch and Associates concentrates on dispatch issues, a very important issue for our community. We believe the views expressed in each of these professional reports are valuable and deserve your attention as you consider the recommendations made by TriData.

It is also important to point out that the multiple reports that have been written on EMS services in Washoe County, including those requested by REMSA, have all resulted in some common findings, recommendations and concerns. To date, there have been very few, if any actions taken on the recommendations made in these reports that span 19 years. There have been many reasons for this including territorial and protective positions taken by both the fire services and REMSA; however, there has been a change in the top leadership at REMSA and a shift in the philosophy and approach of the REMSA Board of Directors. We will commit to a renewed spirit of openness, transparency and cooperation with an end goal of promoting new ideas toward excellence in our system of prehospital medical care. In this spirit of cooperation, we intend to be "transparent" in our interactions with our EMS system partners and hope for the same transparency and cooperation in return. We welcome the opportunity to sit at the table with the County and City Managers and Fire Chiefs to discuss and make genuine efforts to improve the system as a whole, including the fire side.

In reviewing the various consultant reports (past and present), we've identified three common themes: communications/dispatch, medical direction, and regional coordination/operations. These concerns have not been addressed even though they have been identified as priorities. To begin a dialog, we recommend looking at each of these areas.

Communications/Dispatch

- Call transfer standards and performance based on NFPA standards
- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) to CAD link
- Virtual co-location of dispatch centers
- Creation of a medical dispatch subcommittee from the dispatch steering committee that focuses on medical priority dispatch standards
- Inter-operability between 800MHz and UHF
- Efficient and appropriate utilization of resources
- Creation of a single medical triage dispatch center
- Data reporting by all entities in accordance with developed standards that complies with HIPAA requirements

Medical Direction

- Common field protocols for all fire agencies and REMSA
- Medical oversight for the entire EMS system
- Continuity of Care/Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) across the EMS system; develop standards of care and accountability on those standards

Regional Coordination / Operations

- Explore legislation for the purpose of adding a fee for moving traffic violations to support EMS providers. REMSA can provide government affairs/public policy support.
- First responder service levels
- Automatic Vehicle Locator information sharing across the system
- Include the fire departments in the national "CARES" database (early defibrillation measures)
- Medical Supply exchange policies and REMSA purchasing
- Joint Public Education initiatives
- Reporting of fractile response times system wide
- Adopt NFPA response time standards for first response

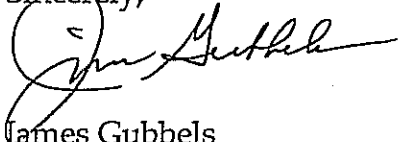
REMSA is eager to discuss any or all of these issues that have been raised by various consultants at one time or another. Some, such as the creation of common field protocols have already been initiated at the EMS Chief's Working Group facilitated by REMSA, which was identified as an area of joint cooperation by TriData. Other areas are achievable in the short term including the designation of the District Board of Health as the oversight agency for the entire EMS system, the CAD to CAD link and virtual co-location of medical dispatch centers, supply exchange policies and

REMSA purchasing, and joint public education initiatives. The other areas may require more discussion and negotiation but are also achievable.

I am hopeful you will accept this letter in the spirit of cooperation in which it is intended. There are many areas to be addressed and some will be more difficult than others to work through. We believe the best course is to work on those areas we can quickly reach consensus on first as we build a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation and then move to areas that may prove more challenging. We request to be immediately included in the committee of City and County Managers and Fire Chiefs and we request that some form of schedule be followed for such meetings. It would be helpful for all parties to put their concerns in writing and prioritize the concerns so that topics can be identified for each meeting and the appropriate information can be gathered or guests can be invited to make the meeting time as valuable as possible.

REMSA looks forward to being an active partner in the future discussion.

Sincerely,



James Gubbels
President & CEO

Encl: Fitch & Associates Report
Washko & Associates Analysis

cc: ✓ Joseph Iser, MD
Katy Simon, Washoe County Manager
Andrew Clinger, Reno City Manager
Shaun Carey, Sparks City Manager
Mike Haley, Washoe County Sheriff

