

# LEON COUNTY E.M.S.

## Standard Operating Guideline

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### I. PURPOSE:

To provide a guideline for LCEMS personnel in instances of civil unrest.

### II. GUIDELINE:

Upon notification that a civil disturbance exists, LCEMS personnel and vehicles will not enter civil disturbance areas unless notified by the appropriate Law Enforcement Agency that the area is secure and safe for LCEMS personnel to respond and work.

### III. PROCEDURE:

#### 1. LEVEL 1

A. Normal operations of LCEMS is such that the in-service ambulances will be stocked and staffed so as to respond to the normal EMS events of the day.

B. Should the Shift Supervisors receive information from a reliable source that events are about to unfold that would seriously exceed the abilities of normal staffing, then the Shift Supervisor will initiate LEVEL 1A

1) **LEVEL 1A** requires notification of superiors of the potential situation. LCEMS Dispatchers are to begin utilizing their "Disaster Checklists". (See "Plan A".) Notifying the following of the situation:

1. Chief
2. Deputy Chiefs

2) An immediate analysis of vehicles, equipment, and extra staff in an effort to meet the possible demand will be done. Efforts will be made to enhance fleet readiness by attempting to retrieve vehicles at repair shops and stocking and fueling extra vehicles.

3) At the discretion of the Chief or Deputy Chiefs - dispatch will contact

off-duty personnel notifying EMS staff of the potential pending recall and will advise all contacted staff to monitor their pagers for possible recall and cancellation, and to charge both batteries. All staff will be reminded to have on their person their LCEMS ID tags if recalled.

- 4) The on-duty supervisor will attempt to arrange the removal of the private autos of the EMS staff whose stations are located within the potential problem areas.
- 5) LEVEL 1A can be canceled by the on-duty supervisor upon receipt of information to that effect by a reliable source.

## **2. LEVEL 2**

LEVEL 2 is initiated when a confirmed civil disturbance exists. Such confirmation must come from a reliable source.

- A. Requires the immediate recall of all available LCEMS staff and has them respond to Headquarters with their radios, extra batteries and chargers, and uniforms with I.D. tags. Dispatch is to continue to utilize their "Disaster Checklists".
- B. The Shift Supervisor will respond to the Law Enforcement command Post on scene and assume EMS command. LCEMS Command will establish and maintain on-scene EMS operations such as triage, communications, and transportation. If a Law Enforcement EOC is activated consideration must be given to EMS being represented.
- C. LCEMS Command must evaluate the EMS needs of the situation and consider the activation of mutual aid. If mutual aid is activated, EMS Dispatch will coordinate the response routes of the mutual aid EMS vehicles. All mutual aid vehicles will be advised as to what EMS channel to utilize for the event. This decision is to be coordinated by Dispatch and EMS Command. It is the intent of this plan to utilize only LCEMS units during escort situations. (See "Escort Operations" at the end of this policy.) LCEMS requests that are not located within the troubled areas will be handled with LCEMS units and mutual aid units.
- D. EMS Dispatch will advise all surrounding counties of the local situation. Each county will be notified that radio approval of inbound vehicles prior to entry into Leon County is necessary in order to eliminate the accidental entry of an out-of-town EMS unit into a hazardous area.
- E. A command officer will represent LCEMS at the County EOC.

F. The following additional operation positions must be filled ASAP with recalled personnel.

- 1) Dispatch – Additional dispatcher.
- 2) Equipment and Supplies – Recall the Supply Tech's.

G. The remaining recalled EMS staff will be assigned duties PRN.

H. All LCEMS units that are taking calls within the troubled areas will respond to Command Post authorized requests for service utilizing Command Post authorized routes with law enforcement escorts. Under no circumstances will any LCEMS personnel respond to any requests for service within an active disturbance area. Law enforcement will coordinate the removal of victims from an active disturbance area.

I. If tear gas is being used by Law Enforcement, field crews will utilize the patient isolation coveralls, jumpsuits, goggles/gas masks (depending on the situation), and double gloves for protection during patient care situations. Extreme caution must be exercised not to cross contaminate the EMS responder. EMS command will consider the need to prepare one or more EMS units as contaminated patient transport units. (See the guide for contaminated transport units following LEVEL 5.)

J. It will be the discretion of the LCEMS personnel as to whether or not to stop for private citizens attempting to flag down an ambulance. The decision must be made based on current environment, location, etc.

K. No red lights or sirens will be used near civil disturbance areas.

L. If at any time LCEMS unit/crew is threatened, attacked, etc., personnel will withdraw immediately to a safe area. Communication of such an event must be relayed immediately to EMS command.

M. Ideally, LCEMS personnel will treat and transport decontaminated patients. If a patient that requires transport has not been decontaminated, LCEMS staff will wear protective clothing and will isolate the patient to prevent cross contamination. E.R. notification must be made early so that proper preparations can be made.

N. Patients that are under arrest will be accompanied of a Law Enforcement representative on board during transport. This may need to be coordinated

through EMS command.

P. A stand down of LEVEL 2 will occur after consultation between EMS command and the EMS Liaison in the EOC.

Q. LCEMS staff must do a thorough secondary survey of all patients in order to discover weapons that may be on the patient. Weapons are to be turned over to the Law Enforcement Officer on scene or Security at the hospitals.

R. During LEVEL 2 only the family members of young children will be allowed to ride with the patient in the ambulance.

### **3. LEVEL 3**

LEVEL 2 must be fully operational.

A. If the situation appears to be of long duration and the EOC is activated, then LCEMS will move to LEVEL 3.

B. Legal authority now changes to the Leon County Sheriff or Tallahassee Police Department. Senior EMS supervisory staff will be assigned to the County EOC for resource coordination, if not already implemented. EMS Command will relocate to or in some way participate in the City/County EOC and will change in designation to EOC EMS Command.

C. During LEVEL 3 a law enforcement escort staging area will be established. EOC EMS COMMAND will coordinate staffing of the escort staging area. All EMS units assigned to the staging area operations will utilize channel 2 for escort control. All other EMS units will remain on the LCEMS Channel 1.

D. Law enforcement escorts are designed to provide protection to the LCEMS or Fire units responding to "safe" areas within the troubled zone. All responses will be in the non-emergency mode.

E. Under hazardous situations, law enforcement will extricate the patient. The law enforcement vehicle will then meet EMS at a safe area for patient delivery.

### **4. LEVEL 4**

LEVEL 2 and 3 must be operational.

A. Florida National Guard now on the scene, Tallahassee has been declared an area of civil disturbance by the Governor and resources are unable to cope with

the situation. All operation centers will remain open.

B. All EMS responses inside the City limits will originate from Headquarters. Each EMS response will have police and/or National Guard protection and will respond under this protection to non- hostile areas.

## **5. LEVEL 5**

LEVEL 2, 3 and 4 must be operational.

A. Federal Law Enforcement Agencies and/or U.S. Armed Forces have now moved in to assist the National Guard with military and police actions. EOC, LCEMS communication and command posts will continue to function in the same locations. LCEMS actions and objectives remain the same.

B. LEVEL 3, 4, 5 stand downs require authorization from EMS command and the EMS Administrative Liaison.

## **6. CONTAMINATED PATIENT TRANSPORT UNITS**

A. EOC EMS Command will see to it that an adequate number of vehicles are prepared for the transportation of patients contaminated with CS or CII gas. Every effort will be made to utilize the "prepared" vehicles if possible.

- 1) If the need arises to transport patients contaminated with CS or CII, such as patients that have time urgent injuries, the following items must be completed:
- 2) The entire patient compartment of the ambulance(s) must be lined with plastic.
- 3) Utilize the minimal equipment and supplies in the exposure area.
- 4) All on-board EMS staff will utilize the gas masks and full protective clothing.

B. The units utilized to transfer the contaminated patients will be re-used for these types of patients until the event is over. No non-contaminated CS or CII patients are to be transferred in the previously contaminated vehicles.

C. Decontamination will be completed based on the advice of TFD command.

## **7. ESCORT OPERATIONS**

In order to respond to patients in the troubled areas, LCEMS, Fire, and Law Enforcement will respond together in order to enhance the safety of the emergency responders. The staging area for Escort Operations will be at TFD station #4 on the training field unless otherwise directed by EMS command.

A. A "staging coordinator" will be assigned by LCEMS Command, and three EMS units will be assigned to the escort staging area.

B. Each LCEMS staging unit will carry all necessary protective gear to enhance the safety of the staff. (See LEVEL 2)

C. Each EMS staging unit will communicate with staging command and EOC EMS Command on radio channel #3.

D. Calls for service within the trouble areas will be dispatched by EOC EMS Command. The request will be relayed to Staging Command. Response coordination will occur between EMS, TFD, and Law Enforcement staging command on site at the staging area. All requests will be responded to non-emergency unless an EOC EMS Command override occurs. At the time of the dispatch, Law Enforcement will send a unit to investigate the need and safety of the situation. Escort units are to standby in a safe area until cleared to enter.

E. Once enroute, the escort EMS unit will advise EOC EMS Command of all response activity, i.e., enroute, arrived, etc.

F. All communications between the escort units that are responding on the request will be on EMS Channel 3.

G. Should any of the escort vehicles receive rocks, bottles, etc., escort communications should occur and the response should be terminated. The lead law enforcement unit may also terminate the response if information becomes available via law enforcement sources that would warrant such a change.

## **8. DECONTAMINATION**

During crowd control situations, law enforcement may utilize one or all of the following lacrimating agents CS, CN, or Pepper gas. All patients contaminated with these agents require the use of protective equipment by the EMS staff. (See LEVEL 2)

A. CS and CN (tear gas)

1) CS and CN are used as a multiperson crowd deterrent designed to

disperse crowds in extreme situations. All patients transported that are contaminated with CS, CN, or pepper gas require E.D. notification of the situation prior to patient delivery.

2) Patients contaminated with CS or 014 will require total body wash down prior to transport in most cases. During critical patient situation or incident critical situations, the Paramedic may choose to disrobe the patient quickly or wrap the patient in a blanket in order to expedite transport and prevent cross contamination. Decontamination could take place later in a safe location or at the hospital if necessary. If a patient is to be transported by EMS that has not been decontaminated of CS or CII, gloves, gas masks, and tyvek suits must be utilized to protect staff and prevent cross contamination.

3) LCEMS staff must be careful not to cross contaminate themselves by touching their face or hair with contaminated gloves.

4) If the patient's medical condition is not life threatening, the Paramedic may opt to remove the patient and rescuers from danger and decontaminate in a safe area prior to completing the transport to the hospital.

#### B. Pepper Gas

1) Pepper gas is normally utilized in a one-on-one law enforcement suspect incident. It is a lacrimator that is sprayed directly into the face of someone by law enforcement in order to gain control of the situation.

2) Patients contaminated with pepper gas are safe to transport in an EMS unit without utilizing full body decontamination or patient isolation techniques.

3) The patient's eyes will be burning and should be flushed with water continuously until the discomfort diminishes (usually about 45 minutes after contamination)

4) LCEMS staff must be careful not to contaminate themselves through contact with the patient.

5) If law enforcement is not on scene when EMS is presented with a pepper gas patient, contact should be made with EMS command in order to advise law enforcement of the situation.

- 6) Notify the destination Emergency Department staff of the patient contamination and condition well ahead of delivery.

#### IV. TRANSPORT PROCEDURES

- A. During escort responses the patient is to be removed from the scene ASAP with minimal care and treatment. Further intensive care can be performed after the LCEMS unit is in a safe area.
- B. Maintain radio contact with the escort leader and LCEMS command.
- C. Provide patient status reports to the Emergency Departments as soon as is possible, particularly in contaminated patient situations. Make radio contact with both Emergency Departments in a normal manner.