



Position Statement

Access of Public / Private and Hospital-Based EMS Systems to Colorado Public Safety Systems

Adopted November 4, 2004 by the

Emergency Medical Services Association of Colorado, Inc.

The Emergency Medical Services Association of Colorado represents more than 60 agencies and 3,000 individuals throughout Colorado involved in emergency medical response and transport. As an association that represents agencies in the public, private, non-profit and hospital sectors, we feel it is important to understand that emergency medical services (EMS) are an essential element of public safety infrastructure in their communities regardless of their organizational design. It is therefore imperative for policy makers at all levels of all-hazards planning to understand that EMS must receive equivalent access to planning, funding and infrastructure support regardless of whether a particular EMS agency is public or private in nature.

Local communities throughout the state have made EMS system design decisions based on the needs and economics of their communities and should not be hampered, or otherwise punished, by selecting a private, non-profit, or hospital-based model as their method to provide EMS either independently, or in conjunction with, public agencies. As a point of fact, the majority of EMS services in Colorado's largest cities, as well as most statewide ambulance "reserve capacity," is provided by the private sector. Furthermore, since regulation of EMS systems is within the purview of County Governments in Colorado, it is appropriate that all-hazard and public safety planning and policy groups give equivalent regard to all County-licensed ambulance providers. It should also be noted that in many cases, especially in rural areas of the state, private and non-profit firms are not required to hold contracts with government entities in order to provide local EMS response services.

This position is further supported by federal guidance issued on this subject by the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Domestic Preparedness, The National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Directors and the American Ambulance Association.

The Emergency Medical Services Association of Colorado is a not-for-profit society of emergency medical service professionals, founded in 1973. EMSAC is involved in many facets of EMS, with three primary missions, to:

- *Advocate,*
- *Communicate,*
- *Educate.*

Membership of 3,200 comprises paramedic-, intermediate- and basic-level EMTs, EMS first responders, physicians and nurses, emergency dispatchers, medical educators and researchers and EMS training institutions.

Members are both paid and volunteer professionals, from the urban centers of the state as well as our wide open rural and frontier regions. Our members serve with ambulance services, fire departments, search and rescue teams and ski patrols; and in hospitals, industrial plants, dispatch centers and the military.

