Chairperson’s Message

I met with US Senator Charles Schumer’s Director of Intergovernmental Affairs on 1/16/08 at the Senator’s NYC offices. Accompanying me was Jim Downey, District 4 delegate on the NYC Regional EMS Council. A number of issues were discussed including where enormous federal funding for disaster preparedness in NYC has gone. We talked about a lack of communications capabilities between responding emergency units from different agencies, the limited personal protective equipment (PPE) distributed to squads (including the ridiculous Weapons of Mass Destruction kits with the bandaids, TYVEK “bunny suit” suitable for painters and 15 minute escape hood) plus the five sets of Urban Search and Rescue turnout gear per squad that has to cover up to 50 members of various body sizes from small to xxx. NYC Councilman David Weprin’s legislative person also spoke to Schumer’s office after our visit and was told the Senator wants to be helpful. Weprin’s representative is hoping that we’ll be able to get movement on other issues. He mentioned there are some legal facets that have to be worked out for Council Resolution 785 which would allow for volunteers to get workers’ compensation if they get injured in the line of duty. He also spoke about some ideas for Council Introduction 519, which would allow VACs & VFDs to buy fuel directly from the NYPD and FDNY. The Councilman’s staff is still trying to get a hearing on this bill. It was strongly suggested that our members write or call Councilman Miguel Martinez’s office (this bill is in his Fire and Criminal Justice Services committee) and let his office know that this bill is extremely important to us and that we would like a public hearing to be held as soon as possible. His office number is (212) 788-7053, and his City Hall address is 250 Broadway, Room 1763, New York, NY 10007. We were also reminded that the MTA said no to giving non-revenue MetroCards to VACs & VFDs for emergency access to the subway system (Council Resolution 700) but we intend to keep this an open issue.

The 2008 Volunteer EMS Recognition Dinner is scheduled for Tuesday, May 13, 2008 at Russo’s On-The-Bay. Sponsors and Journal advertisers are needed to keep the prices low for volunteers. For reservations or information about the dinner contact Martin Grillo at (718) 474-0680 or info@emrnyc.com or go to the web site at www.emsdinner.com/vac.htm

The slogan for 2008 EMS Week - May 18 to 24, 2008 - is “EMS: Your Life is Our Mission” and Wednesday, May 21, 2008 has been identified as EMS for Children Day. Planning Guides are available online at http://www.acep.org/emsweek or by contacting Denise Fecher at dfechner@acep.org.
Dorothy Marks stepped down as Co Chair of NYC REMSCO, Inc. leaving Marvin Raidman as Chairman and also Treasurer. Ms. Marks remains as Secretary of the corporation.

NYC Office of Emergency Management has designated Joe Paz and Al Villacara, DDS as alternates for Commissioner Joseph Bruno replacing Sam Benson.

Chris Legaz was appointed as the District 18 representative on the Regional Council replacing the late Don Radenberg. Chris is with College Point VAC and served previously as alternate for Don.

Regional ID cards have been produced and distributed to 814 members of VACs & VFDs, 540 employees at hospital based services and 2,015 employees of private ambulance services. No information has been received from 17 VACs & VFDs, 10 hospital services and 3 private ambulance services.

Additional Canberra Ultra-Radiac Personal Dosimeter devices have been supplied by the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene to REMSCO which in turn is distributing them to non FDNY EMS agencies in New York City so as to equip two crew members on each ambulance. Another Train-the-Trainer session was held on 11/29/07. Agencies are reminded that the intent is for the dosimeters to be worn by crew members while on calls and not left in the ambulance. Informal surveys, however, indicate that the devices are not being carried by a number of hospital based and volunteer services. The reasons include lack of a perceived immediate threat in their service areas plus very limited battery life. This information was passed on to Dr. Lewis Soloff, Senior Medical Coordinator, Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Program (HEPP) NYC DOH&MH, who attended the 10/30/07 Ambulance & Regional Council meetings. Over the past two years there have been a number of dosimeter alerts. The NYPD has refused to give out the actual number of activations and their causes. From anecdotal reports in the news these have been triggered by improperly shielded industrial devices being transferred between offices or work sites plus a few patients with residual readings from medical procedures.

REMAC
- FDNY Rescue Paramedic protocols were approved by REMAC and REMSCO and sent out for Public Comments. After the comment period ends they will be reviewed again and then sent to the State Council for final review and approval.
- Protocol Committee was asked to develop a regional Refuse Medical Aid/Against Medical Advice (RMA/AMA) procedure. Call types and transportation procedures will also be reviewed.
- All NYS DOH certified EMT-Ps are eligible for NYC REMAC certification since NYS DOH paramedic courses meet and/or exceed NYC REMAC required course hours.
- A letter of support for the Water Jel® Research Project has/will be sent to the St. Barnabas Hospital Institutional Review Board.

TRAINING & EDUCATION
- Skills training videos are being developed for 15 practical BLS skills.
- The development of standards for “Educational Centers of Excellence” continues. Suggestions are welcome.
- Arthur Cooper, MD, has updated ALS pediatric lectures and is willing to assist ALS course sponsors by conducting these lectures for Paramedic courses.
- NY Methodist Hospital EMS program is moving to 1401 Kings Highway, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11229. The center intends to start offering an EMT-Basic course in 2008.

FDNY NEWS
Ceremonies took place at the New York Technical College in Brooklyn on 12/10/07 to mark the graduation of 80 paramedics, the largest graduation of paramedics in City history, and 71 EMTs. On 3/13/08 another 12 paramedics and 66 EMTs graduated at ceremonies held at the FDNY EMS Academy at Fort Totten.

Major Emergency Response Vehicle (MERV) 5 has been placed in service on Staten Island and operates out of EMS Station 22 at Seaview Hospital. According to Fire Apparatus Journal it was built by the Medic Master division of American LaFrance on a Thomas Bus chassis, is powered by a 275 hp Caterpillar C-7 diesel engine and has an overall length of 36.5 feet. Equipment includes a 15 kw electrical generator, 4 large oxygen cylinders, full compliment of BLS and ALS equipment, wheelchair and stretcher lift and telemetry communications equipment. The MERV can accommodate 13 seated patients plus a stretcher patient or can be rapidly converted to handle three more stretchers in place of the seated patients. MERV 1 and 4 have similar Thomas Bus vehicles classed as 2004 models. MERV 3 is assigned a 1993 International/Excellence unit. Another unit similar to MERV 5 is expected in mid 2008. In the FDNY press release it was noted that funds for the purchase
of MERV 5 were allocated by Staten Island Borough President James P. Molinaro and it was also noted that when Molinaro suffered a heart attack on 8/8/07 he was driven to a hospital by the Deputy Borough President. 76-year-old Molinaro was leaving a press conference at Midland Beach when he felt tightness in his chest and tingling in his arm. Rather than call an ambulance his deputy drove him to nearby Staten Island University Hospital.

Tracked stair chairs from Stryker and Ferno are being tried out by two units in each borough during two six week trial periods. The first period started 2/1/08.

Harley Davidson motorcycles are being offered to FDNY EMS for a six month pilot study on reducing response time to life threatening emergencies. The offer of eight free cycles was secured by Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum. However, the NY Post reports FDNY after six months of study still hasn't taken up the free offer and refuses to explain any reservations other than to say, "The proposal is still under review." Another source reportedly said "The Fire Department thinks that using the motorcycles for EMS would be unsafe".

CFR-D engine companies must begin each tour with 2 certified Firefighters. If during a tour the minimum CFR-D staffing reduces to 1 certified Firefighter and 1 certified Officer, the company remains available for CFR-D response. If at the beginning of a tour the number of CFR-D certified Firefighters falls below the minimum of 2, the company shall not respond to any CFR-D calls but may still be placed on calls received directly from the public (walk ins at the firehouse or flag downs) to assist civilians. The Dept has the right to detail a member to put a unit on-line for CFR-D. A CFR-D differential is payable for hours worked in CFR-D company by CFR-D certified personnel.

Effective 3/8/08 per a Department Order, firefighters and fire officers who are EMTs or paramedics can no longer perform CFR duties or receive the extra CFR pay differential unless they also hold a valid CFR certification issued by the NYS DOH.

FDNY personnel have been instructed to treat downed electrical wires as live wires until an on-scene utility company representative confirms the wires have been de-energized. FDNY indicates there is no safe way to move energized power wires, including poles, hooks or ropes, even if it presents a condition imminently dangerous to life. No action will be taken to remove live wires from people or vehicles or remove people from a vehicle in contact with live wires until they are de-energized by the utility company.

 Rescue 3 which covers the Bronx will be relocating to a new combined station to be built on the site of EMS Station 18. NYC Planning Commission documents indicate the city plans to use 1637-1655 Washington Avenue between East 172 and East 173 Streets for a three story, 25,000 square foot facility with adjacent parking spaces for 27 cars and/or spare apparatus/ambulances. Rescue 3's current quarters are at 453 East 176 Street which is about four blocks from the new location. Additional information about the plan is on the internet at http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/cpc/070300.pdf

8 hour tours by 911 system ambulances:

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<th>Year</th>
<th>ALS Tours</th>
<th>BLS Tours</th>
<th>Total Tours</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ALS Tours</th>
<th>BLS Tours</th>
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<tr>
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<th>BLS Tours</th>
<th>Total Tours</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ALS Tours</th>
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<td>February</td>
<td>332.7</td>
<td>596.6</td>
<td>929.2</td>
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Yearly average daily tour totals: 2005 = 934.2 2006 = 919.7 2007 = 923.7

Citywide 911 System EMS response times:

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<th>Segment</th>
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<td>1-3</td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td># Runs 1-8</td>
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<td>8:34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>5:13</td>
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<td>6:34</td>
<td>7:52</td>
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Liaison Committee meetings were held on January 14 and March 3, 2008.

During the six month period September 2007 through February 2008 there were a total of 59 calls where a VAC squad called in asking to be assigned to a job. However, there were many more these calls where the information was not entered into FDNY’s computer system. Call breakdown was:

- **September:** College Point - 1, Forest Hills - 1, Jamaica Estates - 1 and Lindenwood - 1
- **October:** Corona - 2, Flushing - 1, Forest Hills - 2, Glendale - 1 and Whitestone - 1
- **November:** Bensonhurst - 1, Flatlands - 1, Forest Hills - 10, Glendale - 1 and West Hamilton Beach - 1
- **December:** Bed-Stuy - 7, Flatlands - 1, Forest Hills - 3, Jamaica Estates - 2 and Rockaway Point - 1
- **January:** Bed-Stuy - 1, Forest Hills - 2, Glendale - 2, Jamaica Estates - 1 & North Shore - 1
- **February:** Bed-Stuy - 1, Corona - 2, Forest Hills - 4, Glendale - 2, North Shore – 3 & Rockaway Point - 1

Work was completed on creating an abbreviated manual for the MARS 800 MHz Motorola Astro 5000 portable radios. The manuals were distributed to squads as hardcopy and through e-mails.

Mutual Aid Radio System (MARS) Desk has been very responsive the last few months in contrast to the last two years or so. The desk is answering the radio and has been very forthcoming with giving out call locations vs. a seeming inability in the past to even locate calls known to be in the system. Listening to the transmissions one might think MARS was acting as dispatcher for a number of squads. While the 911 system has been doing a good job with response time to critical calls, the overall response time to all calls is higher in 11 of the last 12 months vs. the same month in the prior year. In February the time was just 12 seconds short of nine minutes. Could this be the reason? Nevertheless, the unwritten FDNY policy is that volunteer squads are not called for day-to-day mutual aid.

### NYC REGIONAL MOBILIZATION PLAN ACTIVATED FOR POSSIBLE NURSING HOME EVACUATION

(Information was received from NYC REMSCO, FDNY EMS and SeniorCare sources)

The NYC Regional Major Incident/Disaster Mobilization Plan was activated Wednesday morning 12/19/07 about 11:07 AM for a power outage at the Eastchester Rehabilitation and Health Center, 2700 Eastchester Road and Allerton Avenue in the Bronx. Initial information was that the patient census was 193 with 36 of those on ventilators and the emergency generator had only a 2 hour fuel supply. FDNY EMS Chief Mark Steffans serving as Incident Commander decided to implement the NYC Region Disaster Mobilization Plan. NYC REMSCO sent out automated phone notifications to all private, hospital and volunteer ambulance agencies in the city indicating a need for 30 to 40 ambulances with instructions to call FDNY’s Operations Center (FDOC) as to the availability of ambulances.

NYC REMSCO records indicate 28 agencies called with their ambulance availability. 22 agencies were able to provide 38 BLS and 10 ALS ambulances including 9 volunteer agencies who were able to provide 15 BLS ambulances. FDNY EMS records differ and indicate 7 VACs/VFDs called: Flushing VAC, Forest Hills VAC, Little Neck-Douglaston VAC, North Shore Rescue Squad, Park Slope VAC, Rockaway Point VFD and Volunteer Heart Ambulance. From the private ambulance sector SeniorCare sent 3 ALS and 2 BLS units, LifeLine sent 1 ALS and 2 BLS, Medical Express sent 1 ALS and MetroCare had 1 ambulance at the scene for a period of time. The disaster radio cache was brought to a mobilization point set up at Jacobi Hospital.

SeniorCare personnel arrived on scene at 11:25 and met with Chief Steffens and Dario Gonzalez, MD, FDNY EMS Office of Medical Affairs. They were informed that a fire had affected the power to the facility and they were running on generator power. The generator had enough fuel for 15-18 hours and refueling was not immediately possible. The main concern was the ventilator patients whose machines were now on generator power. EMS personnel with BVMs and oxygen tanks were sent to the bedside of patients on ventilators in case they were needed. The nursing home was able to make arrangements on its own with other facilities including Montefiore Hospital, Jacobi Hospital, Our Lady of Mercy Medical Center, St. Barnabas Hospital, Split Rock Nursing Home and Westchester Medical Center to take 32 of the 36 ventilator patients. After another review it was determined that of the 36 ventilator patients only three were unstable.
Eventually all 36 patients were found new placements if they had to be moved. LifeLine and SeniorCare personnel each followed up with other facilities to ensure an accurate bed count and reached out to other hospitals and nursing homes to secure additional beds.

The determination to evacuate or not evacuate was to be based upon the ability to secure more fuel for the generator and the arrival of a backup mobile generator in case the primary generator failed. The facility's engineer and electrician were on-scene working to get the power back on line. It was determined that the part needed to completely fix the unit was not available for 24-48 hours, therefore the fuel was imperative. It was also determined that the facility’s heat was tied into the generator. NYC OEM was called to the scene and Kim Fallon responded. She was able to arrange through the NYC Department of Sanitation, a drop off of 500 gallons of type two diesel fuel if a private vendor was not able to be secured.

FDNY EMS transferred direction of EMS resources at the event to SeniorCare Operations Chief Scott Orlanski and commercial ambulance resources on-scene were then placed under his command. FDNY EMS assigned a lieutenant to act as the liaison officer to the Medical Branch. SeniorCare, Lifeline, Medical Express, OEM, NYPD, and the FDNY EMS liaison all remained on the scene.

Eastchester was able to secure a fuel delivery to top off the generator. It was determined that at full capacity the generator was able to run for 72 hours. Additionally a backup mobile generator was secured and put in place in the event of a failure of the primary generator. The facility’s engineers and electricians continued working to temporarily bypass the affected lines and tap back into the external Con-Ed power supply.

EMS personnel assessed the vent unit and determined that every bed had an Ambu-Bag for manual ventilations and a full oxygen tank as well. All of the ventilators’ backup batteries were fully charged and could power the unit for up to an hour. Ten backup batteries were available.

The Medical Branch Operations Chief from SeniorCare held three meetings with the medical personnel throughout the day to keep them abreast of the situation. NYC OEM held an interagency meeting at 14:30 hrs. It was determined that the engineering staff would be able to have the facility connected to Con-Ed outside power and off the generator within a few hours. At 15:55 hrs the lights came back on in the entire facility and it was taken off generator power. There were no spikes or glitches during the power transfer. The engineer and electrician were certain that the temporary lines would hold and would be completing an overhaul of the system while it was off line. The administrator, who was on vacation and came to the facility midway through the event, was consulted and was at the 1430 hrs meeting. Once power was restored he was comfortable with all units taking up and that the facility could stand on its own. The home was encouraged to keep in touch with SeniorCare in the event of any issues and to notify them when the power will be taken off the temporary lines so that resources could be on standby in the event of a power failure upon return to regular lines. All the units were thanked for their response, the FDNY Liaison lieutenant was informed as well and all units left the scene by 16:15 hrs.

Comments made at the 1/29 NYC REMSCO meeting indicate the activation went very smoothly and all units followed mobilization instructions. Inter-agency cooperation was evident with all companies, organizations and agencies working very well together for the common good.

GPS FOR ALL STATEN ISLAND AMBULANCES & FIRE UNITS

The Staten Island Advance reported on 2/28/08 that Borough President James P. Molinaro wants to secure $47,000 in capital funds to pay for hand-held navigation systems for all of the island’s ambulances and fire rigs. There are about 78 such emergency vehicles.

DETECTOR PERMIT PROPOSAL BEFORE NYC COUNCIL

At the request of the NYC Police Department and the Mayor’s Office several Council representatives co sponsored a proposal, Intro # 650-A introduced 11/15/07, to require non-municipal agencies and individuals that want to acquire and use chemical, biological and radiation detectors to apply for and receive a no-fee NYPD issued permit valid for 5 years. The proposal indicates the city has “an interest in the reliability and effectiveness of these instruments so that their deployment will not cause excessive false alarms and unwarranted anxiety that a large-scale public emergency is occurring”. To that end, the city seeks promulgation of standards for such detectors and their use and that alarms triggered by such detectors should be immediately reported by calling 911 according to prescribed procedures.

Among the facets covered are minimum technical standards and capabilities for the devices, manner of alarm indication and transmission, thresholds, maintenance, NYPD notification, response protocols, character and fitness of applicants, etc. From the wording of the proposal it appears clip on badge type detectors would be covered as well as simple microwave oven leakage detectors. Common household detectors such as smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors would be excluded per verbal assurances from NYPD representatives. Failure to obtain a required permit would be punishable as a misdemeanor, as would a violation of the terms of the permit or a failure to notify the NYPD if a detector alerts. A public hearing was conducted on 1/8/08 by the Committee on Public Safety and the proposal is still with the Committee.

Districts 4 and 18 have requested NYC REMSCO contact the City Council to seek specific language in the legislation exempting emergency service organizations such as VACs and VFDs from permit requirements.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Former FDNY Commissioner Thomas Von Essen and former Office of Emergency Management Director Richard Sheirer were reported by the Washington Post in its 11/24/07 edition to be employed by ex Mayor Rudolph Giuliani’s
security consulting firm. The paper appeared to question both Von Essen’s and Sheirer’s qualifications for their former high NYC positions saying Von Essen was a rank-and-file firefighter who was far down the department's chain of command but headed the firefighters union local that backed Giuliani in 1993 and Sheirer, who replaced highly respected bio terrorism expert Jerome (Jerry) Hauer at OEM, was an early supporter of the mayor's and an aide to Richard Safir and spent most of his career as an FDNY dispatcher. Sheirer and Von Essen both met with tough questioning by the September 11th Commission over the failure of FDNY’s radios and the lack of coordination among public safety agencies the day of the attacks. The paper also noted that Hauer, who returned to the city at City Hall's request to help out after the 9/11/01 attacks was startled to discover that neither Von Essen nor Sheirer (nor NYPD Commissioner Bernard Kerik) had ever obtained federal security clearances, which made it hard for Hauer to discuss information he was receiving from Washington.

Jerry Hauer is now the Chief Executive Officer of the Hauer Group which provides consulting services in the areas of Homeland Security, Emergency Management and Public Health and Medical Planning, Training and Response to disasters. Most recently before that he was Director of the Response to Emergencies and Disasters Institute (READI) at The George Washington University and assistant professor in the School of Public Health & Health Services and the School of Medicine. Appointed as the institute's first director Mr. Hauer was working with the Department of Homeland Security to coordinate and deliver first responder, medical and public health training for the National Capital Region (NCR).

HOSPITAL NEWS

BROOKLYN HOSPITAL (H 95) effective 12/26/07 is on diversion to critical pediatrics until further notice. Patients requiring these services should be transported to an appropriate 911 ambulance destination.

CABRINI MEDICAL CENTER (H 63) officially closed at one minute after midnight Monday 3/17/08. As of 2/20/08 it was no longer an authorized 911 ambulance destination. 911 system found out the hospital was no longer accepting patients when an ambulance crew tried to drop off a patient at the ED and was told they were no longer accepting patients. Word was quickly put out to stop bringing patients there. ED remained open for walk-ins as word was spread through the local community.

FLUSHING HOSPITAL has plans to increase services but expansion is still on hold. In 2001 it was announced that a five story tower for use by the Emergency Department and other units would be built on the site of private housing owned by the hospital on Delaware Avenue and that would be followed by the demolition of the building constructed in 1926 and a new two story building would be erected in its place with the main entrance facing Parsons Boulevard. Qualifying for funding is now difficult and no new date for construction has been announced. David Rosen, President of Flushing which is controlled by Jamaica Hospital, reported to the local Chamber of Commerce that a key initiative of the hospital is emergency preparedness. They have a bio-terrorism plan to assist all area hospitals with chemical and radiological emergencies as well as providing training in smallpox vaccinations.

JAMAICA HOSPITAL and health care provider Oxford Health Insurance are still at odds. The latest claim appearing in local news media is that Oxford should be held accountable for elder abuse. Hospital officials say the company refused coverage for an astounding 80% of its elderly customers for acute or traumatic brain rehabilitation. The hospital pointed to a 77 year old woman who lived at home with her 83 year old sister till she suffered a spinal injury and was unable to even stand. Oxford denied rehab and even ambulance service to get her home. Oxford responded that denials are based on Medicare guidelines which do not allow rehabilitation in a hospital setting. The hospital is still involved in two racketeering lawsuits filed in 2006 against Oxford and its parent company, United Healthcare. The suits allege the company defrauds customers by denying payment for medical services the customers are entitled to and also wrongfully declaring Jamaica and Flushing Hospitals were out of its approved healthcare network. In one example, a doctor not in UnitedHealth’s network sent a patient to Flushing Hospital in Queens for a breast biopsy. Although the hospital and the doctor performing the procedure were both under contract with the insurer, the patient was billed $1,110 as if she had gone out of network. Although UnitedHealth declined to comment to the NY Times on the litigation, it said its current policy would be to consider care at an in-network hospital as covered, even if the referring doctor was out of network.

ST. JOHN’S HOSPITAL on Queens Boulevard is receiving a $1 million grant through the efforts of NYC Councilwoman Helen Sears. The funds will be going toward the purchase of two new ambulances, new monitoring equipment and a wireless registration system for the ER. Other improvements implemented by the hospital include hiring a patient advocate for the ER, a limited English program (mandated statewide by the NYS DOH) to help patients receive information in their native tongue and purchasing a new CT scanner for the ER. St. John’s and Mary Immaculate Hospitals were bought by Wyckoff Hospital in 2007 and are operated by Caritas Health Care. All three hospitals function as a system under the umbrella of Brooklyn Queens Health Care, Inc. (BQHC).
VICTORY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL (H 94), effective 12/22/07 per FDNY EMS, is no longer an approved 911 ambulance destination for Obstetrical/Gynecological emergencies. Ambulances outside the 911 system are not affected by the FDNY directive.

BERGER COMMISSION – STATUS OF NYC HOSPITALS & NURSING HOMES AFFECTED

Chapter 63 of the Laws of 2005 created the Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21st Century, better known as the Berger Commission, to "reform New York State's aging and fragile healthcare delivery system." The Commission called for nearly 50 hospitals to be restructured, nine hospitals to close and nearly 3,000 nursing home beds to be downsized. The Commissioner of Health was directed to take all steps necessary to implement the recommendations, which became law on 1/1/07 and are now considered mandates. Below is an update on NYC facilities affected:

- Beth Israel Medical Center - Petrie Campus - Recommendation was to convert approximately 80 detox beds to 80 psych beds. It is now proposed to convert 56 beds. Office of Mental Health is reviewing need for additional beds.
- Cabrini Medical Center – Recommended to close in an orderly fashion and wound down services. Was awarded grant of $14 million. Officially closed 3/18/08. Developing alternative health care use for the facility
- Manhattan Eye Ear and Throat Hospital – Recommended to downsize all 150 beds. Facility downsized beds and merged w/ Lenox Hill Hospital. Awarded grant of $25.1 million.
- Mount Sinai Medical Center – Recommended entering into a passive parent corporate relationship with North General Hospital and the hospitals are in discussions.
- New York Downtown Hospital – Recommended to decertify approximately 70 med/surg and 4 pediatric beds reducing its licensed capacity to 180 and discontinue inpatient pediatric services. Submitted Certificate of Need that begins compliance. Awarded grant of $6.2 million.
- New York Methodist Hospital – Is to merge with New York Community Hospital of Brooklyn into a single entity with two separate campuses; downsize to 510 beds (reduced by 60). Facility submitted a 4-step plan dated 9/28 which is under DOH review.
- New York Westchester Square Medical Center – Is to close in an orderly fashion. Submitted draft closure plan proposing to cease operations of the 205 acute beds immediately; allow use of 128 beds by a division of Presbyterian. Plan is under DOH review.
- North General Hospital – Recommended entering into a passive parent corporate relationship with Mount Sinai Medical Center. Hospitals are n discussions.
- Parkway Hospital – Recommended to close in an orderly fashion. Litigation pending. Hospital may submit alternate plan.
- Peninsula Hospital Center – Recommended to downsize by approximately 99 beds to approximately 173 beds; study merger with St. John's Episcopal and building a single facility with approximately 400 inpatient beds. Financial feasibility study completed.
- Queens Hospital Center – To add approximately 40 med/surg beds. Facility submitted preliminary plan for additional beds. Received grant of $12 million.
- Sky View Rehabilitation and Health Care Center – Recommended to close, downsize or convert, contingent on the determination of the Commissioner. DOH conducted comprehensive study; Commissioner determined close/downsize/conversion no longer being considered.
- Split Rock Rehabilitation and Health Care Center – Recommended to close, downsize or convert contingent on the determination of the Commissioner. DOH conducted comprehensive study; Commissioner determined close/downsize/conversion no longer being considered.
- St. John's Episcopal Hospital - South Shore - To downsize by approximately 81 beds to approximately 251 beds; study merger with Peninsula Hospital Center and build a single facility with approximately 400 inpatient beds. Financial feasibility study completed.
- St. Vincent's Catholic Medical Center – Manhattan – To operate 12 psych beds currently operated by St. Vincent's Hospital - Midtown at St. Vincent's Manhattan. Submitted Certificate of Need for 12 psych beds from Midtown, under DOH review.
- St. Vincent's Hospital – Midtown – Recommended to close in an orderly fashion. Facility closed 9/15/07; Received grant of $17.1 million.
- Victory Memorial Hospital – Recommended to close in an orderly fashion and convert under new sponsorship to a diagnostic and treatment center and/or a long-term care continuum facility compatible with the remaining Victory Nursing Home. Final closure plan working through bankruptcy court.

NEWS ABOUT NYC EMERGENCY SERVICE PROVIDERS

NYC MARATHON was run on Sunday 11/4/07. VACs helping to provide coverage along the route included BRAVO VAC, Brooklyn College EMS, Central Park Medical Unit (2 units), Corona VAC (2 units), Glen Oaks VAC, North Shore Rescue Squad and Park Slope VAC (2 units).
BAYSIDE VAC sold 1/2 its property on 42 Avenue east of Bell Boulevard but will continue to operate from the original building. To address community concerns ads notices were placed in the Queens Courier advising “We Are Not Closing, We Are Rebuilding!” The notice also indicated two secure parking spots for ambulances are needed during construction.

BED-STUY VAC

Problems with NYC bureaucracy were brought to the attention of TV news media and the squad was successful in moving along the release funds from a 2006 Brooklyn Borough President $135,000 grant to buy a new trailer for use as its headquarters. On 1/9/08 Channel 7 interviewed squad president James “Rocky” Robinson for its 7 On Your Side segment and reported how the squad had been operating out of Robinson’s apartment for months because its 20 plus year old trailer had become uninhabitable with corroded power lines, leaking and falling ceiling, holes in the floor and non-functioning toilet facilities. After the reporter made inquiries about the situation the NYC Comptroller’s office freed up the money for use by the squad. The trailer must still be constructed per the squad’s specifications which will take several more months but the project is now progressing.

20th Anniversary Celebration will be held on Saturday 7/19/08 beginning at noon with a day of music, food and awards at Marcus Garvey Boulevard and Greene Avenue followed by an evening bus trip to Atlantic City. For more information contact Rocky Robinson at (917) 567-9634.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS (CERT) being set up in each of the city’s 59 Community Boards under the auspices of the NYC Office of Emergency Management were provided a set of “interim draft” Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The document covers chain of command, team deployment, team development, administrative duties, responsibilities, uniforms, equipment and roles.

GERRITSEN BEACH VFD held a Night of Rock fundraiser on 2/23/08 at the Tamaqua Marina in Gerrittsen Beach.

GLEN OAKS VACs officers for 2008 are:

- President - Frank Racaniello
- 1st VP - Robert Dorries
- 2nd VP - Henry Ehrhardt, Chair, Board of Directors
- Recording Secretary - Christopher Benson
- Treasurer - Nancy Ehrhardt
- Corresponding Secretary - Brenda Morrissey
- Assistant Treasurer - Kathy Sexton, Vice Chair, Board of Directors

JAMAICA ESTATES-HOLLISWOOD-SOUTH BAYSIDE VAC officers for 2008 are:

- Captain/President – Daryl Mazlish
- 1st Lt – Edward Pearce
- 2nd Lt – John Paul Vazquez
- Treasurer – Jennifer Konigsberg
- Personnel Officer – Celia Sporer
- Recording Secretary – Margaret Martens
- Corresponding Secretary – Margaret Pearce
- Supply Officer – Daniel Tyroler

HATZALAH

- Chevra Hatzalah Emergency Services (Hatzalah) has received $1 million over a five-year period from the UJA-Federation of New York. The NY Non-Profit Press, in its 10/3/07 update, reports Hatzalah has been able to fully upgrade its radio communications system, revamp the computer-aided dispatch system, set up an enhanced 911 type service, convert to T-1 lines, provide training for dispatchers and create a specialized disaster preparedness training program.
- A First Responder vehicle was involved in an MVA on Monday afternoon 11/12/07 at Beach 9 Street and Cornega Avenue while responding to a call in Far Rockaway.
- Borough Park Division ambulance responding to a cardiac arrest call was involved in an MVA on Saturday evening 11/29/07 at 14 Avenue and 50 Street. A news report indicated there were injuries but did not give further info.
- Mill Basin Division’s 2nd Annual Chinese Auction fundraiser was held on Saturday evening, 3/1/08 at 8:00 PM at the Flatbush Park Jewish Center, 6363 Avenue U in Brooklyn. Additional information is at http://www.millbasinhatzolah.org/4.html

JAMAICA HOSPITAL EMS EMT Wanda Smalls was honored by Queens Borough President Helen Marshall on 12/5/07 for going well beyond the call of duty to assist an 81 year old patient. In January 2007 Smalls was dispatched on a 911 call placed by a social worker about a South Jamaica patient with no heat or electricity. After convincing her to go to a hospital Small followed up and transported her home on her day off, arranged for a home health aide, Meals on Wheels and generally looked after her well being until relatives could move her to Florida.

NORTH SHORE RESCUE SQUAD has been awarded a $52,000 US Department of Homeland Security Assistance to Firefighters [and EMS] grant. The funds are to be used for the purchase of 50 sets of turn-out gear, including protective suits, helmets and goggles, as well as 10 new radios.

NYPD will be experimenting with Vectrix electric powered two wheel scooters. The vehicles are assembled in Poland and normally retail for $11,000. Top speed is about 60 mph and travel range is 40 to 60 miles on a two hour charge which can be
done from any standard electrical outlet. In addition to bypassing fuel pumps the scooters have zero emissions and are almost silent. The department currently has 329 Piaggio scooters and 104 smaller Yamaha scooters plus a number of environmentally friendly hybrid cars and so-called flex-fuel vehicles, which can run on both gasoline and ethanol. Vectrix also markets another scooter model with two front wheels and one rear wheel that retails for $15,900. Additional information on the scooter is at www.vectrix.com

NYPD TRANSIT DIVISION has a new Mack MR chassis heavy rescue in production at Ferrara Fire Apparatus. The box is a walk in type rear entrance with interior storage and command area. Equipment includes a Harrison 10 kW generator. Production photos show the front with an old type spinning roto ray with clear, red and blue bulbs. In New York State only volunteer firefighters’ personal vehicles and US Government vehicles can have front facing blue lights. Photos are on the web site at http://www.ferrarafire.com/apparatus/in_production/index.html

NY PRESBYTERTIAN ambulance was involved in a serious collision on Friday afternoon 11/2/07. The incident occurred at Lexington Avenue & 57 Street when a van clipped the back of the ambulance causing it to flip over. Both EMTs were injured. Three patients with serious injuries were taken to NYP-Cornell Medical Center and one with minor injuries was taken to Bellevue Hospital.

NEW YORK RACING ASSOCIATION (NYRA) is hiring per diem EMTs to work at Aqueduct and Belmont Race Tracks. Pay is about $12.00 an hour. First shift is 5:30 AM to 10:30 AM for morning training. Second shift is from noon to 4:30 or later. Call volume is about 300 during the racing season which runs May through October. EMTs are at a first aid station, in the stands, at points around the track and in NYRA ambulances that follow the race. To apply or for more information contact Joan Romagnoli at (516) 280-0860.

PORT AUTHORITY POLICE DEPARTMENT has deployed Zoll Auto-Pulse CPR devices throughout their facilities. The Zoll Auto-Pulse CPR device is a cardiac support pump that generates unique and consistent chest compressions, leading to normal blood flow to the heart and brain. The Auto-Pulse system consists of a backboard and a disposable “Lifeband” that fastens across the patient’s chest.

ROSEDALE VAC’s former headquarters and garage at 139-33 245 Street, just off Sunrise Highway, has been sold for $247,000. Official records list the buyer as Panagiotis Katsigiann. Reports are that the Board of Trustees approved the sale in a mail-in vote last summer and plans to turn over the remaining assets of the corporation to Franklin General Hospital in Valley Stream, Nassau County. Some community residents oppose the planned disposition citing a provision in the bylaws that funds remain in the community.

RICHMOND UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER EMS is to receive a capital funds grant of $175,000 from the Staten Island Borough President to purchase a new ambulance. RUMC currently has a fleet of eight ambulances and plans to replace two of them later this year. The grant will give them nine.

WEST HAMILTON BEACH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

- The Economic Development Corporation has awarded the squad a capital grant of $50,000 to purchase a new ambulance. The grant was secured through the efforts of NYS Senator Serphin Maltese but is not considered as a “member item” expenditure since funds are coming from an independent agency. The funds will be used to replace a 16 year old vehicle with a new ambulance which is expected to cost about $140,000. In the last year the squad has also received grant funds from NYS Assembly member Audrey Pheffer and NYC Council member Joseph Addabbo.
- 80th Anniversary Installation Dinner was held on Thursday evening 2/21/08 at Russo’s on the Bay in Howard Beach. Honorees included Marg Centrone, Mario Faulisi, NYS Assemblywoman Audrey Pheffer, NYS Senator Serf Maltese and NYC Councilman Joseph Addabbo.

WHITESTONE VAC was one of several community organizations that received grants from Sovereign Bank at the opening of the company’s new branch in Whitestone.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

PULSE CHECK 2008, the 53rd Annual Educational Conference & Trade Show of the NYS Volunteer Ambulance & Rescue Association will be held Thursday evening September 18, 2008 to Sunday morning September 21, 2008 at the Hudson Valley Resort, Kerhonkson, Ulster County, NY - only 90 minutes from NYC. Event features seminars, exhibits, statewide EMT/CFR team skills drill and ambulance drill competitions, memorial service and awards dinner. Information will posted on the Association’s web site at www.nysvara.org covering conference registration, room reservations, list of seminars, Drill application, trophy donations, golf outing and Journal ads. There is also information on the web site about nominations for the Association’s annual awards and scholarships. If more information is needed call (877) NYSVARA or e-mail pulsecheck@NYSVARA.org
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