Volunteer ambulance squads are again a recognized part of the NYC 911 EMS system thanks to an effort spearheaded by District 4 squads. NYC Council members at the joint Health and Fire & Criminal Justices Services committee hearing on 2/23/10 saw the benefit of having volunteer units logged into FDNY’s Resource Control Center and secured an agreement from EMS Chief John Peruggia to reestablish the necessary procedures. However, in reviewing new Command Order 10-051 vs. the old 01-006 it is noted that the purpose is now to “identify resource availability” whereas the old wording indicated “maximize system utilization of available resources”. This evidently means that FDNY is willing to identifying available resources but not utilize them. Volunteer squads must indicate their availability by logon and logoff with RCC. If available volunteer ambulance mutual aid resources are not used when appropriate we will not hesitate to advise our representatives at the NYC Council.

Volunteer utilization in the city’s 911 EMS system is being watched from a variety of perspectives. District 4 officers reached out to other EMS sector representatives about the issues involved. We have spoken with Patrick J. Bahnken, President of Local 2507, the EMT and Paramedics Union as well as members of the United NY Ambulance Network (UNYAN), the association which covers commercial ambulance companies. Volunteer EMS in the city takes a number of forms from agencies relying entirely on community donations and unpaid personnel in all positions to agencies relying on third party billing and other fundraising to supplement donations to an agency whose operations are supported by covering a large event site with volunteer personnel and District 4 can’t speak for all the city’s squads. However, those that have actively supported our efforts are seeking only to help the city’s 911 system and their community neighbors as an additional resource in time of need and not to replace the jobs or business of other sectors.

Thanks are extended to Al Rapisarda, President of Midwood Ambulance for his offer of sharing his print order of PCRs with volunteer squads in the city. When word of the NYS DOH problem with the PCR printing contract surfaced Midwood went ahead with ordering PCR sets because it could not take a chance with running out. During the period of shortage no agency had to avail of Midwood’s offer while we anxiously awaited resumption of deliveries from the NYS DOH.

Lastly, two major events are coming in May. The 9th annual NYC Volunteer EMS Recognition Dinner will be held on Tuesday evening May 11th at Russo’s On-the-Bay. For reservation information go to www.emsdinner.com/vac.htm, e-mail info@emsdinner.com or call (718) 474-0680. On Monday evening May 17th from 6:00 to 9:00 PM the NYC Regional EMS Council’s Recognition and Awards Ceremony will be held at 475 Riverside Drive in Manhattan. Call (212) 870-2310 for info.
VICE CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

We have won a small battle towards our ultimate goal of being properly utilized in the 911 system. With the help and overwhelming support of the City Council, this is the first step in a long journey.

I want to thank our chairmen, Ryan Gunning, and the Committee for all the hard work they put in to get us this far. I also want to thank the all Volunteers who came to the City Hall Council Meeting. Now the squads have to do their part. They must log in and out of service with their Division Resource Coordination Centers as per Operations Order 2010-051 issued March 9, 2010. Each squad should keep a record of their logging in and out of service and forward that information to myself, Ryan, Marie Diglio and Jim Downey. If we do not follow the logging in and out procedure, the Fire Department will have ammunition against us. When we go to the next City Hall Council Meeting we need this documentation to justify our requests and be ready for the next round.

We will also be working on Mutual Aid Agreements for the squads. This will be another step to assisting the squads in working together.

On a worrisome note, this is the first year in our nine year history of the annual Volunteer EMS Recognition Dinner that we do not have any confirmed sponsors. If we do not raise between $12,000.00 and $15,000.00 by the end of April this will be the last Dinner Dance held. If you or your squads know of anyone who can help us, please contact me as soon as possible. My hope was to at least to make it to the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, which is the reason we gather together, to honor our fallen brethren. Please speak with your local politicians and businesses to see if they will help us.

Stay Safe

Martin

REGIONAL EMS COUNCIL OF NYC

Greater NY Hospital Association (GNYHA) nominated/re-nominated as its representatives:

- Deborah Brown with Alison Burke as alternate
- Phil Equiguiuiren with John Bray as alternate
- Craig Biscuiti

AMBULANCE COMMITTEE

GNYHA nominated Craig Biscuiti as its systems member on the committee.

Chevra Hatzalas’s status was changed from systems member to organizational member with Harold Jacob added as an alternate to Aaron Katz.

REMSCO issued an e-mail advising it was instituting a fee for issuance of new regional security stickers. Stickers for ambulances would be $100 while $200 would be charged for other support vehicles. Ambulances and other vehicles brought into the city under state or regional mobilization agreements do not need security stickers.

Interoperable Radio Network - As announced at the 1/26/10 Regional EMS Council meeting, REMSCO is currently in the process of funding procurement for a channel on the citywide interoperable radio network. As part of this process, engineers from Motorola will be visiting each agency to conduct site surveys to determine the logistics for future equipment installation. This will be an ongoing process. REMSCO indicates it will issue periodic updates as things develop, as much still needs to be done before this network can become operational and operational guidelines developed.

Replacement MSA Escape Hoods - After many months or discussions, the NYS Office of Homeland Security finally reached an agreement with MSA to provide replacements for the previously distributed MSA Response Escape Hoods. The replacement hoods are NIOSH approved with the same CBRNE canisters as the MSA Millennium Masks used by FDNY EMS. Delivery of these units has been made with a TransCare facility in Brooklyn being the distribution point.

Dosimeter service contract on the Canberra personal dosimeters expired 12/31/09. Nancy Benedetto advises she is working to get the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene to fund a contract renewal.

REMAC

List of paramedics currently approved and credentialed by REMAC of NYC to operate at the ALS level has been posted at http://www.nycremsco.org/images/articlesserver/Credentialed%20Paramedic%20List.pdf There are approximately 2,680 names on the list.
Regional protocol changes that were approved by the NYS Emergency Medical Advisory Committee (SEMAC) at its December 2009 meeting go into effect 4/1/10. Altogether there are changes to 4 General Operating Procedures, 9 BLS and 15 ALS protocols. REMAC Advisory 10-01 issued 1/1/10 covering all the changes was e-mailed to agency contacts. A PDF copy of the 55 page advisory is online at http://nycremsco.org/images/articlesserver/2010-01%20REMAC%20Advisory%20Protocol%20Revisions.pdf. Agencies are responsible for providing copies of the protocols to their personnel, and to ensure that Service Medical Directors and EMS personnel are informed of all changes/updates to the NYC REMAC Prehospital Treatment Protocols. In order to provide evidence that all EMS personnel have been updated in current protocols, EMS agencies must provide to NYC REMSCO a list of updated personnel accompanied by a letter of affirmation signed by the Service Medical Director and Chief Executive Officer no later than FOUR (4) weeks after completion of training/in-service.

An ALS pre hospital hyperthermia protocol for post cardiac arrest patients was approved at the February SEMAC meeting. Also approved at the meeting was a regional triage protocol involving addition of an orange tag classification to catch those yellow or green tagged patients who appear stable but have a medical condition which could result in a rapid deterioration. Although it was indicated during NYC REMSCO discussions that regions surrounding NYC were on board with the change this knowledge, acceptance or support seems to have been exaggerated.

Per established policy, to ease training and financial burdens on agencies, protocols approved by REMAC and SEMAC after January 1st would not go into effect till April 1st of the following year. REMAC retains the ability to implement protocol changes sooner in order to address issues of life threatening impact.

FDNY NEWS

Dodge Ram 4500 4 door Type I chassis with a Wheeled Coach box will be the next generation of FDNY ambulances. A three year contract was awarded with 56 vehicles to be delivered in the first year. Standard equipment on the 16,500 lb. GVW chassis includes 305 hp Cummins 6.7 L turbo charged diesel engine, integrated exhaust brake, 6 speed automatic transmission, anti-spin rear differential, tilt wheel/cruise control and power windows and door locks. FDNY decided on the 4-door cab to give the crews ample room to store their PPE and to afford them more seating comfort in the cab.

The NYS Department of Labor issued citations against the FDNY for failure to provide corrective lenses for use with spectacle kits for department issued MSA Millennium Model Air Purifying Respirator (APR) masks. According to information posted by Local 3621, Uniformed EMS Officers Union, the department was to provide the lenses by December 30, 2009. That date passed and the FDNY requested an extension. The DOL was to begin issuing fines to the FDNY once the extension was denied and there was continued failure to provide personnel with the lenses. On 3/11/10 Local 3621 announced that an agreement had been reached with FDNY to reimburse individual members who purchased their own prescription spectacle kits and that the department was in the process of obtaining a vendor for personnel to use in the future.

Station 40 in Sunset Park, Brooklyn opened on 1/17/10. Reassigned there from neighboring stations are ambulance units 41A, 41B, 41D, 42A, 42X plus Conditions 40. Local 3621 Uniformed EMS Officers Union indicates the NYS Department of Labor may be investigating violations that exist at the station including “no second or third floor egress, no gas detection monitor in the kitchen, the front door is the only egress and is part of a roll down gate with a trip hazard, no railing for the roof top patio and the closet they refer to as a supervisor office fails to meet ergonomic standards”.

Two new medical devices are being carried on FDNY ambulances. Aeroeclipse II Breath Actuated Nebulizers have been added to both BLS and ALS units for use on patients who are suspected of having a respiratory infectious illness. This type of nebulizer delivers a drug such as albuterol only on patient inspiration. This reduces the loss of medication and may increase the dose to the lungs. 1 will be in the oxygen bag and 3 more are stored in supply compartments. The single patient devices retail for about $12.95 each and are carried in addition to regular nebulizers. ResQPOD impedance threshold devices are being carried on ALS ambulances for use on cardiac arrest calls. Units carry 2 of the single use devices. A contract worth $1,046,250.00 for the initial purchase of the devices was awarded to Bound Tree Medical. The devices retail for about $99.25 each.

In other equipment news:
Medical Equipment Committee evaluated four wheel vs. tractor style stair chairs last year. Included were a Stryker, Ferno and Monster Medic brand chairs. In November the committee unanimously selected the Ferno four wheel chair for further field testing with a final decision hoped for by March 2010.

On Saturday 1/16/10 the Department of Citywide Administrative Services held a Lieutenant's Exam for FDNY EMTs and Paramedics. Approximately 700 FDNY personnel were scheduled to take the exam. EMS Operations sent out a request to voluntary hospitals in an effort to get them to run extra units on Tour 2 and Tour 3 on that day.
77 new EMTs graduated 1/27/10 at a ceremony held at the Fire Academy. The graduates were part of the Trainee Program, which provides entry-level career positions leading to full-time employment in the EMS Command. The class was partially funded with federal stimulus money under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, through a partnership with the New York City Department of Small Business Services. Through the Trainee Program, participants become provisional Fire Department employees participating in a 14-week two-part training program. The first component of the program earns the participants New York State EMT Certification and then participants move into the FDNY EMS Academy at Fort Totten, Queens, to learn FDNY policies and procedures. Upon graduation, they are promoted to FDNY Emergency Medical Technician. Four members of the class are the first graduates of the FDNY High School for Fire and Life Safety in Brooklyn to join the ranks of the FDNY and two members are graduates of an FDNY Emergency Medical Technician program at Grace Dodge Career and Technical Educational High School in the Bronx.

LOCAL 3621 UNIFORMED EMS OFFICERS LABOR ISSUES

Options were presented to Fleet services to address the rear lighting setup for the new pickup trucks replacing surburban used by officers. Issue is the application of an LED rear light package in lieu of the highway light bar which cannot be outfitted on the new vehicles. Meeting has been set with Commissioner Basile to explore the options.

Span of Control guidelines under the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Control System (ICS). The union feels the department has violated the span of control in EMS by measuring individuals as units. The Hearing Officer delivered his decision stating that even though the department has trained personnel to utilize the ICS program the department doesn’t have to implement that training into operations. The Span of Control grievance is currently in queue for arbitration.

Haz-Mat Decon Support Unit (DSU) previously assigned to Rescue Operations on Roosevelt Island has been reassigned to Haz-Mat Operations and is now located at 104-32 43 Avenue, Corona, Queens. The unit responds to all hazardous materials incidents where decontamination is required. The DSU is responsible for the collection, tracking and decontamination as well as providing logistical support and technical expertise. It responds with one firefighter and one officer both trained to the Technician II level. The unit’s phone number is (718) 478-3150.

In the last 24 months an inordinate number of official FDNY ID cards and badges have been reported lost or stolen. The Department considers the loss of such items a serious concern. Personnel were reminded of their responsibility to safeguard ID cards and badges at all times and that in the case of loss of Department property Command Officers, as outlined in regulations, shall review the facts of such loss and, if warranted, initiate disciplinary action.

8 hour tours by NYC 911 system ambulances – includes both FDNY EMS and voluntary hospitals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ALS</td>
<td>BLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tours</td>
<td>Tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>332.1</td>
<td>595.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>334.1</td>
<td>597.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>330.0</td>
<td>594.3</td>
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<td>329.0</td>
<td>592.4</td>
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<td>339.7</td>
<td>602.6</td>
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<td>336.3</td>
<td>596.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>335.7</td>
<td>597.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>339.9</td>
<td>599.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yearly average daily tour totals: 2005 = 934.2 2006 = 919.7 2007 = 923.7 2008 = 932.9 2009 = 933.8

Citywide 911 System EMS response times:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>5:01</td>
<td>6:37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>4:56</td>
<td>6:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>5:03</td>
<td>6:40</td>
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<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>4:57</td>
<td>6:33</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>4:56</td>
<td>6:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>5:10</td>
<td>6:41</td>
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<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>5:09</td>
<td>6:38</td>
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The Uniformed Firefighters Association Local 94 has a flyer on its web site questioning FDNY’s response time statistics. The flyer purports to compare fire response times pre and post implementation of Unified Call Taker (UCT) procedures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>911 Call Time</th>
<th>FDNY Dispatch</th>
<th>FDNY Travel Time</th>
<th>Ave Response Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre UCT</td>
<td>:05</td>
<td>:45</td>
<td>4:00</td>
<td>4:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post UCT</td>
<td>:15</td>
<td>:15</td>
<td>4:00</td>
<td>5:30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yet FDNY is now reporting a response time of only 4:15 by starting the clock only when the call is sent to FDNY dispatch. The union charges that FDNY response times have actually gone up under UCT.

FDNY LIAISON COMMITTEE

Quarterly Liaison Committee meeting was held on Monday evening 3/8/10 hosted by District 18 at Flushing VAC. VAC representatives from Queens and Staten Island attended.

Comments submitted 11/11/09 by NYC REMSCO on proposed 911 contract for volunteer squads are still being reviewed by FDNY.

Command Order 10-051 covering RCC logon-logoff procedures was distributed. It is being issued pursuant to an agreement secured at the recent NYC Council joint Health and Fire & Criminal Justices Services Committee hearing on 2/23/10. In the new issuance FDNY refers to “the Community Based Emergency Medical Services (CBEMS) radio frequency (formerly known as the Mutual Aid Radio System)”. It was pointed out that this was FDNY’s description and the volunteer sector may continue using the term “MARS”. Other changes between the old 01-006 Command Order and the new one is new wording indicating the purpose is now to “identify resource availability” whereas previously it was to “maximize system utilization of available resources”. FDNY is willing to identifying available resources but not utilize them. Asked about providing supplemental address information to VAC units near 911 call locations to access patients, FDNY EMS representatives advised that this was “strongly discouraged”. These are issues to revisit with the NYC Council.

There was discussion that with a new 911 dispatch facility being built at 11 Metrotech in Brooklyn the MARS or (CBEMS) radio would not be a separate unit as it is now but incorporated into a touch screen mouse driven console whose operator is responsible for monitoring and responding to many different frequencies by touching or clicking on screen icons while at the same time responsible for functions such as fire liaison, notifications, tracking, child abuse (SCAM) reports, outside agency contacts, etc. A phone call may be the best ways to get through to the dispatcher handling MARS. The facility, however, is way over budget and over two years late. News reports indicate borough fire dispatchers from Brooklyn, Manhattan and Staten Island have moved in but NYPD has been delayed by problems with Motorola equipment and EMS delayed by problems with Verizon equipment.

Asked about FDNY EMS conducting train-the-trainer classes for volunteer sector agencies to provide instruction in proper radio communications procedures. Reply was that FDNY had no funds available for such training and if a need was felt then NYC REMSCO should be approached. It was brought up that about two years ago FDNY’s EMD prepared a PowerPoint presentation for voluntary hospital agencies but permission was withheld for duplication and dissemination to volunteer squads. FDNY would check and see if the PowerPoint presentation could now be shared.

Triage Drills are being held at FDNY EMS stations around the boroughs. VACs have been invited to send their members. The drills cover 5 triage levels including an orange classification plus pediatric procedures covering 5 rescue breaths before black tag classification. The drill schedule and instructions were e-mailed to squads. New triage tags have not been issued yet. In November 2009 FDNY EMS distributed a DVD covering the new START triage algorithm to its personnel as an in-station monthly drill. District 4 requested permission to duplicate the DVD and distribute it to volunteer squads but the request was denied.

Central Park Medical Unit submitted an agenda item asking about access to an FDNY EMS borough radio frequency because of its unique operations. It has NYPD radios on the Central Park Police Precinct frequency for response to 911 calls in the park. Another squad, Corona VAC, has a unique operation at Citifield providing ambulance service and a contract for NYS DOH Part 18 mandated large event medical coverage for which it has been issued two FDNY EMS radios on the Citywide frequency that can be switched to Queens East or West to provide directions to incoming 911 units. FDNY advice to Central Park Medical Unit is to write a letter to EMS Chief John Peruggia. The next Liaison Committee meeting will be in June.

RECOGNITION FOR 9/11 RESPONDER RICHARD PEARLMAN, FOREST HILLS VAC

Since 9/11/01 the parents of Richard Pearlman have seen mixed recognition for their son’s sacrifice. It has been established that Richard, 18 years old at the time, died in the collapse of the WTC – his body was found in the ruble. On that day, Mr. Pearlman was dropping off documents for his boss at 1 Police Plaza in Lower Manhattan when the towers were hit.
Pearlman’s family, who traced his steps on that day through information from the authorities and photographs published by the news media, said there was an announcement that anyone with medical training should report to Police Headquarters so they could be taken to ground zero. Richard had CPR and First Aid training, was a member of a volunteer ambulance corps and it was established that his attaché case was found in a police cruiser. He was enrolled in an EMT course that was to begin on Tuesday evening 9/11/01. Nevertheless, recognition as a responder has been inconsistent and his case is the only one still open.

Pearlman’s mother received a small sum from the Sept. 11 Victims’ Compensation Fund, and was also recognized at a White House ceremony as the family member of a first responder who died. However, her request for a $250,000 benefit from the Public Safety Officers’ Benefits program was one of only two denied out of 426 applications filed. The other denied claim was filed by the family members of an EMT from Virginia who happened to be in New York on 9/11 and officials ruled that he was not serving in an official capacity when he was killed.

Congressman Anthony Weiner has been assisting Pearlman’s family and reports that FDNY Salvatore J. Cassano has agreed to send a letter to the Justice Department confirming that FDNY sent out a call for all emergency personnel — regardless of whether they were volunteers — to come to ground zero to help. Mr. Weiner said this would prove that Mr. Pearlman was acting on behalf of the city. An independent hearing officer is considering the appeal of this claim, and there is an opportunity for further appeal should the family wish to pursue it.

**BoardServeNYC**

United Way of New York City has launched a new initiative to help find and train new board members for local nonprofit organizations. BoardServeNYC will train volunteers in nonprofit governance each year and then connect those volunteers with nonprofits seeking new directors. The service is free to participating nonprofits. Board candidates are pre-screened and have received relevant training. Live recruitment events provide an opportunity for face-to-face interviews with multiple candidates, as well as networking opportunities with other nonprofits. Any registered 501(c)(3) organization located in the five boroughs of New York City is welcome to participate, if they have the capacity to make board service rewarding, the commitment of the executive director or board chair to participate in the orientation, and the ability to actively engage in, and follow through with, the matching process. For more information and to complete an application, go to [www.unitedwaynyc.org/?id=36](http://www.unitedwaynyc.org/?id=36).

**HOSPITAL NEWS**

Governor David Paterson attended a Town Hall community meeting in mid December in Saint Albans. The Queens Chronicle reported that on the topic of healthcare, Paterson addressed two important issues - the hospital closures in Queens, as well as national healthcare reform. The governor said that both Mary Immaculate and St. John’s hospitals closed because they refused to answer questions about their financial records in a bankruptcy hearing, which is “a sure way of telling you there was corruption.” No further explanation of the remark has been forthcoming from the Governor or news media. Paterson did vow to work diligently to prevent other financially distressed hospitals from closing and to address the healthcare gap in Queens.

CONEY ISLAND HOSPITAL (H42) is seeking volunteer ambulance participation in its annual full scale disaster drill on Thursday, May 27, 2010 beginning at 10:00 AM. 10 ambulances are needed with a crew of two to four persons. Also needed are victims who are willing to get wet. The incident would involve a blast injury scenario with 100 patients. Ambulance crews would be fully participating in realistic triage, treatment and transportation activities. Fred Wilkin of Flatlands VAC is coordinating recruitment and orientation of volunteer ambulance sector personnel. Food will be provided for all ambulance volunteers and victims. Victims will have an orientation on the morning of the drill at the hospital and will then be transported to the disaster site. Fred will meet with representatives of the volunteer ambulance squads either in late April or early May and will let them know where to assemble and at what time. If any squad or individual can participate please contact Fred at (718) 531-1585 or fredemt113@verizon.net as soon as possible.

CONTINUUM HEALTH PARTNERS which includes Beth Israel Medical Center (H03), St. Luke's (H20), Roosevelt Hospital (H18), Long Island College Hospital (H49) and New York Eye and Ear Infirmary (H05) failed to come to a renewal agreement with UnitedHealthcare which sent letters to subscribers advising them of the hospitals’ termination as network providers effective 1/1/10 or 3/1/10 depending on group coverage agreements. Continuum went to court and got an injunction preventing the termination till the matter could be arbitrated and it looks like there would be no financial penalty for patients through April. It’s reported that UnitedHealthcare wants to change terms including a 7% to 10% reimbursement cut for some care and a 50% penalty if it's not notified within 24 hours of a subscriber admission while Continuum is asking for increases of up to 40% for some medical care. In 2009 about 85,000 Continuum patients receive treatment covered by UnitedHealthcare which includes Oxford patients. No one would lose healthcare coverage due to a contract termination but some people may have to change hospitals or physicians or face large bills for out of network services. This may impact hospital destination choices preferred by EMS patients – a cardiac patient brought to a Continuum hospital and needing bypass surgery could be faced with a bill of over $25,000 if UnitedHealthcare was not promptly notified within the required time limit. Contract
provisions between healthcare providers and insurers are generally kept confidential and the NY Times was unable to get information from NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation, which operates the city’s public hospitals, or NY-Presbyterian.

MARY IMMACULATE HOSPITAL’s (H36) former building in Jamaica has been turned over to a company called the Chetrit Group after having been bought at auction in October 2009 by a company controlled by Brooklyn developer Joshua Guttman. According to local news reports, Queens officials who had been mediating discussions between Guttman and NY Hospital Queens about opening some type of medical facility in the building fear that the building will go for other purposes. Chetrit, a Manhattan based real estate firm, was referred to as a silent partner with Guttman.

MONTEFIORE MEDICAL CENTER (H29) is being sued in Bronx Superior Court by a man who contends EMS personnel tossed out his ear because they feared it was too risky to reattach it. The NY Daily News reports a bull terrier belonging to the man’s son bit off a large chunk of his upper ear in May, 2008. EMS personnel packed the salvaged ear in ice and transported it to Montefiore where records indicate the ear was “tossed” because of the potential risk of contamination or infection. The lawyer for the man said he should have had the option to rebuild his ear and was instead left with 22 stitches, two staples and life without a lobe. The News says the city has filed its own suit against Montefiore alleging EMS personnel were “only following hospital orders when they threw the hunk of flesh in the trash”. There is no indication whether or not the man filed suit against his son for the dog’s attack.

NORTH GENERAL HOSPITAL in Harlem and Mount Sinai Medical Center, according to Crain’s Health Pulse newsletter, are being pressured by the NYS DOH to come to some agreement. The newsletter says “Mount Sinai is happy to help run the hospital but doesn’t want to take on its debt. Yet North General’s board is loath to declare bankruptcy and is reluctant to compromise its identity as a hospital created and run mostly by Harlem leaders. According to the hospital’s 2007 990 form filed with the IRS, the most recent on file, it had a $20 million deficit on revenue of $118 million that year.” Crain’s and the NY Times say there have been talks with Coler-Goldwater, a NYC HHC rehabilitation hospital and nursing home on Roosevelt Island about moving some beds to North General as an option to an expensive modernization of its aging facility on the island. North General operates NYC 911 system ambulances 11E (BLS) and 12X (ALS).

ST. JOHN’S EPISCOPAL HOSPITAL–SOUTH SHORE DIVISION (H40) in Far Rockaway has been designated a Stroke Center.

ST. VINCENT’S-DOWNTOWN’s (H21) dropped its designation as a Stroke Center on 2/18/10. The hospital is having financial problems. A proposed acquisition by Continuum Health Partners was withdrawn in January only a week after it was revealed. Community and political opposition was severe because the plan proposed that St. Vincent’s regional trauma and emergency center would be severely scaled back and all acute care units such as inpatient beds and surgical services would be closed leaving the lower west side of Manhattan without a full service hospital. St. Vincent’s has 727 beds and is the last hospital of the Catholic Medical Center system left in the city but has about $700 million in debt. NYS DOH provided several million in loans to continue operations for a few weeks. Currently, the hospital operates 2 BLS and 2 ALS units in the NYC 911 system.

SUNY DOWNSTATE is reported by Crain’s Health Pulse newsletter to have filed a Certificate of Need application with the NYS DOH to take over Long Island College Hospital. If approved, LICH would be operated under the license of University Hospital of Brooklyn as one hospital with two campuses.

NEWS ABOUT NYC EMERGENCY SERVICE PROVIDERS

BED-STUY VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS sent members to Haiti to help with post earthquake medical care in the Port-au-Prince area. News reports indicate that the squad spent $20,000 equipping members who left JFK on a plane chartered by the Church of Scientology on Saturday 1/16/10 only four days after the quake. The 44 squad members were part of a 135 member team including doctors and nurses that worked mainly at ‘Hopital de l’Universite d’Etat d’Haiti’ (University Hospital of the State University of Haiti) while staying in makeshift tents around the facility. One nurse indicated that she contacted UNICEF and the Red Cross seeking to help but Bed-Stuy VAC was the only organization able to get people there. A phone report carried on Fox Channel 5 News on 1/26 indicated the original group members had returned 1/24 and had been replaced by a second group. The teams had treated over 2,000 patients including over 20 births but needed generators, surgical supplies, crutches, antibiotics, painkillers and other medications which were not getting out from the airport distribution point only a few miles away. The UN estimated the quake injured about 200,000 people, including thousands who required amputation of damaged limbs and must have postoperative care to prevent infection. Altogether, Bed-Stuy VAC was able to mobilize 92 people and send 4 groups with some members deployed more than once.
CENTRAL PARK MEDICAL UNIT has a number of MDs riding their ambulances. A NY Post article *Top Docs Cruise Trauma 'Central'* on 2/28/10 highlighted the work of Drs. John Arbo from NYP-Columbia, Dan Brodie, a pulmonologist, Michael Jones from Jacobi and Montefiore, Stephen Lynn plus 4 other doctors who volunteer their time to help provide EMS coverage in the vast park. A number started with the squad when they were pre-med students. A good number of calls received over NYPD Central Park Precinct radios involve trauma from falls, bike accidents or sports plus the usual medical emergencies. CPMU's 150 person roster operates 4 ambulances and a Bicycle Emergency Response Team (BERT).

EAST MIDWOOD VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS filed for a significant expansion of its operating territory. Current boundaries are McDonald Avenue on the west, Foster Avenue on the north, Nostrand Avenue/East 32 Street on the east and Avenue N on the south. The proposed area moves out boundaries to the north, north west and south including Brighten Beach. Brooklyn College, which has its own student volunteer ambulance service covering the campus is excluded. NYC REMSCO will be scheduling a public hearing on the proposed expansion.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESCUE's Segway Response Team was featured in a two page spread in the Tuesday 1/19/10 edition of the NY Daily News Queens Section. The article covered the equipment available including a light weight four wheeled folding stretcher that can be towed behind a Segway. EMR-NYC, once again participated in the ESPN Couch Potato event. The winner this year was Mr. Jorge Cruz with a total of 49 Hours. Also covered was the Sprite Dance Completion held at the Roseland Ballroom on 1/30/10 and the Spartak Sports Club Judo Competition held at Queens College on 3/6/10. Upcoming events include the 5 Boro Bike Tour on 5/2/10, Tour de Brooklyn on 6/6/10, Tour de Queens on 7/11/10 and the NYC Century Bike Tour on 9/12/10 - the country's only all-urban 100-mile bike tour. If there are any EMS personnel that can help with coverage please contact Martin Grillo at (718) 474-0680 or info@EMRNYC.com

FOREST HILLS VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS has taken delivery of a new Ford/MedTech Type III ambulance from Specialty Vehicle Sales in Plainview. On Tuesday evening 12/8/09 the squad helped the NYPD 112 Precinct Community Council by co-sponsoring a free basic first aid class at the precinct. A few years ago the squad acquired a former post office step van and converted it into a Disaster Assistance Response Truck equipping it with medical supplies, water, etc. The January issue of 1st Responder Newspaper carried a photo of the vehicle in its newest reincarnation as *El Ranchero Tacos Mexicanos* food vendor's truck.

GLENDALE VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS joined forces with the East Coast Car Association, Metropolitan Fire Association, All-American Car Club, Local 237 of the Steamfitters Union, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 32 and the Msgr. Sherman Post of the Knights of Columbus to stage their 11th annual Toy Run for the young patients of St. Mary's Children's Hospital in Bayside. Starting out from Otto Road in Glendale, the volunteers drove 110 classic cars and 25 motorcycles to the hospital via the Jackie Robinson and Grand Central Parkways and Clearview Expressway, escorted by NYPD Highway Patrol Units 3 and 5 and the Glendale/104th Precinct Civilian Observation Patrol. Funds were raised to buy toys for the 98 in-house and over 4,000 outpatient children at St. Mary's.

GLEN OAKS VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE’s officers for 2010 are President Kathy Sexton, 1st VP Ted Rabinowitz, 2nd VP Brenda Morrissey, Treasurer Nancy Ehrhardt, Recording Secretary Thomas Capruso, Corresponding Secretary Vivian Danziger and Assistant Treasurer Robert Dorries. Ted Rabinowitz is Chairman of the Board of Directors and Jerold Gelbard serves as Chief of Operations.

Squad member Henry Ehrhardt was recognized as one of 10 outstanding career civil servants with a Public Service Award by the NYC Hundred Year Association and Bank of NY Mellon. These prestigious awards recognize outstanding career civil service employees who have distinguished themselves in the performance of their daily work. Henry is Deputy Director, Community Affairs, Department of Sanitation and received the award for leading an initiative to digitally map NYC’s trash and recycling collection routes, so that residents can easily learn their neighborhood's next scheduled pickup by simply visiting nyc.gov or calling 311. Henry is also Vice President of the NYSVA&RA.

HATZALAH CROWN HEIGHTS DIVISION


ROCKAWAY-LAWRENCE DIVISION (also known as Hatzalah of the Rockaways and Nassau County)

Starting 1/1/11 the division has to operate under Nassau County REMAC protocols when it responds to calls into that county. Any deviations from Nassau protocols would have to be approved by Nassau REMAC. Neighbors are fighting the volunteer ambulance squad's proposed development of a two-story garage intended to house four ambulances at 752 West Broadway in Woodmere, Nassau
County. The Jewish Star newspaper reports critics contend that the headquarters and garage construction and operations will disrupt traffic on the narrow street, which they say is too dangerous for ambulances to come and go. An attorney who lives near the proposed site along with several neighbors joined together to hire a lawyer to oppose the project praising the work of Hatzalah, but called it "arrogance" to place an ambulance garage in the midst of a residential area. In order to demolish the current structure and build the garage, Hatzalah will require a variance as well as a permit from the Town of Hempstead Board of Zoning Appeals that would allow it to convert the site from a residential development to a commercial one. At a preliminary hearing on the variance in late January four people representing Hatzalah found themselves opposed by twenty other members of the community. The lawyer representing those opposed to the garage, offered the argument that the building would not be a philanthropic entity given that it could be used to host dinners and community functions. The hearing was adjourned without a resolution or a date for the next meeting.

The division operates under the NYC 5 borough NYS DOH Ambulance Operating Certificate #7191 issued to Chevra Hatzalah in Brooklyn but is able under Article 30 to respond into neighboring areas. The agency has its headquarters on Beach 9th Street in Far Rockaway, Queens. According to its web site the division has 68 EMTs, 11 EMT-Ps, 3 doctors and 5 ambulances responding to an annual call volume of 2,500 with a 2 minute average response time. As with all Hatzalah divisions in NYC, the ambulances are BLS level but the responding paramedics operate under a separate Hatzalah agency called ALS Services (NYS DOH Operating Certificate #7199).

NY Presbterian EMS ambulance was involved in an accident with fleeing gunmen. The incident occurred on Wednesday 2/17/10 about 3:00 AM on Audubon Avenue in Washington Heights. News reports indicate after shooting someone in the hand outside a nearby store the gunmen fled but collided with the ambulance. They got out of their vehicle and more shots were fired before they hails a livery car to get away. One EMT was transported with a knee injury.

Transcare Ambulance won a $25 million contract renewal from the NYC Department of Education (DOE) to transport special needs students to and from schools. The DOE described the contract as "Approximately 33 students with conditions requiring access to immediate health care are brought to school daily by ambulance and the transportation is only one student per trip. This service is mandated by the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). The RFB will include seven (7) aggregate classes. Five of the aggregates are for students residing within a borough and traveling to various destinations throughout New York City, Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester County. Quotes will be based on the daily round trip per student. The estimated quantity provided is based upon an actual number of students in each category. Two classes are for educational field trips and are to be bid based upon a range of mileage to each destination. This is a five year contract.

The NY Post noted in an article just before the contract award announcement that in 2004 school investigators recommended the company be barred from bidding on future DOE contracts. At the time, a probe found that of the firm's 360 drivers and paramedics who worked under DOE contract between Jan. 1 and June 18, 2004, only 13 were certified and 25 of the 360 had been convicted on charges that included manslaughter, attempted murder, multiple cases of weapon and drug possession and drunken driving. DOE officials said the firm has replaced three top executives, improved its hiring criteria and installed a rigorous vetting process for hires.

Woodhaven Richmond Hill Volunteer Ambulance Corps announced in February that it will begin billing patients' insurance carriers to offset a drop in donations, and government grants. Other fund raising activities for the squad included a pasta night on Sunday 12/13/09, hosting a crowd of over 150 at its Jamaica Avenue headquarters. Among the attendees were members from the Woodhaven Residents Block Association including its President and NYS Assemblyman Mike Miller. The evening featured an all-you-can-eat pasta dinner, karaoke and a live DJ. On 3/2/10 the NY Daily News reported that Queens Borough President Helen Marshall is brokering a plan for the squad's large meeting room and kitchen to be used for some senior services and in return, the squad would get a regular rent check to help keep its operations running. The back room holds between 75 and 100 people and a driveway can accommodate Access-A-Ride buses and other vehicles. The structure would need some renovations, including work to make it accessible for people with disabilities. Marshall indicated confidence that some government grant or other funds could be freed up to pay for the work. Marshall's aides are setting up a meeting between the city Department for the Aging, Catholic Charities and the ambulance corps.

Wood Heights Community Volunteer Ambulance Corps has been granted 501(c)(3) non-profit tax status by the IRS effective 2/5/10. The squad was incorporated on 4/15/08 and is seeking to start a volunteer ambulance service to serve the Woodside and Jackson Heights areas of Queens. In 2009 it received a $7,500 NYC Council grant from then Councilwoman Helen Sears. For more information about the squad go to www.whvac.org
PULSE CHECK 2010, the 55th Annual Educational Conference & Trade Show of the NYS Volunteer Ambulance & Rescue Association, will be held Thursday evening September 30, 2010 to Sunday morning October 3, 2010 at the Holiday Inn Albany on Wolf Road.

Event features seminars and trade show on Friday and Saturday, statewide Adult and Youth EMS team skills drill on Friday evening plus the annual memorial service and awards dinner on Saturday evening. There is a pre-conference full day Core Content presentation on Thursday for those involved in a CME based refresher program.

Information is posted on the Association’s web site at www.nysvara.org covering conference registration, room reservations, list of seminars, Drill application, trophy donations and Journal ads. There is also information on the web site about nominations for the Association’s annual awards and scholarships.

The hotel has an attractive room rate plan and, for those who wish, a meal plan as well. Meal packages are additional but there are numerous alternative eating establishments along Wolf Road. Conference registration for two days with Saturday evening banquet included is $120 while one day conference alone (Friday or Saturday) is $80 and banquet alone is $50. The pre-conference Core Content CME is $40. These rates are for registrations received before August 31st.

The association is pleased to announce that Mike McEvoy, PhD, RN, CCRN, REMT-P and Rich Beebe, MEd, RN, NREMT-P will again be serving as the conference Education Coordinators. NYSVA&RA President Mike Mastrianni, Jr. is serving as the Pulse Check 2010 Convention Committee Chair. If more information is needed call (877) NYSVARA or e-mail pulsecheck@NYSVARA.org