



FLORIDA FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION

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May 21, 2014

David Fraga, Fire Chief
Key West Fire Department
1600 N. Roosevelt Blvd.
Key West, FL 33040

Dear Chief Fraga,

The Florida Fire Chiefs Association (FFCA) represents 1700 members and over 650 Fire Rescue agencies in the State of Florida. Our members make up more than half of all the licensed EMS providers in the State. And, over 80% of the people within the State of Florida receive emergency medical service care from Fire-Based EMS providers. We are sincerely grateful for your membership in the Florida Fire Chief's Association. As a member, we are fully committed to providing you and your organization with technical support and assistance as you evaluate the potential of Key West Fire Department expanding the services it provides to its community through fire-based EMS transport.

One of the primary premises for a fire-based EMS system is ultimately the best possible care being delivered to the residents and visitors of your fine city. Although private companies can and do provide good care, in the end, the company can only operate if they have the funds to do so, thus making the dollar the highest priority. With local government, while fiscal responsibility is extremely important, it is always understood that a local government agency does not get into this service to make money; rather they do it to ensure public health and safety to residents and visitors. Fire-based EMS systems offer a number of key advantages to a community. As public servants, the fire department's members "care" about their community and the people they serve. They are a part of the community and in Key West Fire Department's case, they have been since 1875. Fire-based EMS systems offer stability and continuity of service. There have been several companies who have provided EMS service over the years in Key West - but there has only been one fire department and that is because they are a part of this community and interested in what is best for this community. Key West Fire Department is not going anywhere. They will ALWAYS be there for the community. Fire-based EMS is strictly focused on providing high quality emergency care; they do not have to divide their attention on both emergency and interfacility transport services, which are two very different services and priorities. Fire-based EMS units are strategically located throughout a community based upon fire station locations. They are strictly focused on preparing for and responding rapidly to the next emergency. Fire-based EMS is provided by a team that uses a multi-disciplinary approach to emergencies. At complex auto accidents or other emergencies, you have an entire team working together all under one leader's direction. They train together, they serve together, and they are willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done – together. A fire-based EMS system provides greater strength and depth for the provision of firefighter, as resources are shared. Moreover, a fire-based EMS system helps reduce overall cost of service by

utilizing existing resources used for fire protection to help reduce the overhead costs of providing EMS services. There is a reason that the 97% of the 200 most populated communities in the United States have their EMS services provided by fire based systems and that 80% of the people within the State of Florida receive emergency medical service care from Fire-Based EMS providers.

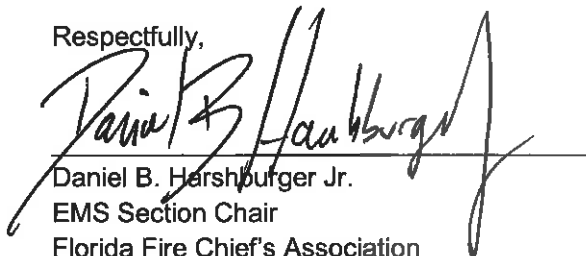
As the Chair of the FFCA EMS Section, I have been asked by the Association to serve as the lead contact for providing support and assistance on this issue. My intent is to ensure that you and your city leadership have all the information necessary to evaluate your decision to provide fire-based EMS transport.

Based upon the collective experience of several EMS experts within the FFCA, and using data provided by you, data contained within the study conducted by TriData, as well as documents provided by the private ambulance provider, I have developed a financial model that depicts the five year estimated financial impact of providing fire-based EMS transport services in the City of Key West. This financial model is based upon a number of assumptions. These assumptions are based on historical data provided, the common practices in the market area, and the experience of those who developed the model. The financial model includes a 3% average annual increase in patient transports. An adjustment of one or two percent in transports per year, in either direction, demonstrates a significant change in the budgetary forecast. The financial model also includes a 3% annual cost of living increase for personnel, and a 10% wage supplement over the base salary of a firefighter for the cost of a paramedic. However, should be understood that any cost of living and paramedic differential pay rates are determined by the policymakers through a collective bargaining process. Additionally, the financial model forecasts a significant difference in medical supply costs vs. the figures calculated by the consulting firm. These numbers were used based on my department's current budgetary calculations based on a per transport basis. The figures the consultant utilized, based on the private vendor's reports, are in my opinion is unrealistic and would demonstrate a critical budgetary shortage your first year in operation.

Although I understand that numbers can be driven in any direction you want, I want to assure you that the numbers I have presented, although only an estimate, were done so with serious cautioning on the side of error rather than attempting to portray it as something it would never live up to. I hope this financial model will prove helpful in your analysis.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at any time. I look forward to speaking with you and your City Commission on June 3rd.

Respectfully,



Daniel B. Harshburger Jr.
EMS Section Chair
Florida Fire Chief's Association
Bureau Chief of Rescue
Martin County Fire Rescue

cc: Ron Parrish, FFCA President
Kingman Schuldt, FFCA 1st Vice President
Darrel Donatto, FFCA Southeast Region Director
Dan Azzariti, FFCA EMS Section Vice Chair