

Within their respective operating mandates, there is a need for cooperation between EMS personnel and fire fighters when responding to emergency situations.

Background

Existing legislation (*The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Act* and Regulations under the Act) provides the basis for the standards for operation of land ambulances.

Pursuant to subsection 16(2) of the Act, the Minister of Health is empowered to exempt any person from the operation of any provision under Part I where it is considered to be in the public interest to do so and substitute another provision therefore.

Discussion

It is recognized that there may be extenuating circumstances where both of the emergency medical response personnel licensed under *The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Act* staffing an ambulance are required to actively provide emergency medical response services in response to an urgent and serious threat to the life and limb of a patient or patients. In these rare circumstances, EMS personnel may need the assistance of fire fighters to drive the ambulance to properly carry out their functions in the best interests of their patients.

Requirement

- A. This Emergency Treatment Guideline is in effect only when a related Ministerial Order pursuant to subsection 16(2) of the Act is in effect.
- B. Any license holder that permits licensed EMS personnel to request the assistance of a fire fighter to operate an ambulance will have a policy and procedure that limits the permission to the following:
 1. Both of the emergency medical response personnel licensed under *The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Act* staffing an ambulance are required to actively provide emergency medical response services in response to an urgent and serious threat to the life and / or limb of a patient or patients, and
 2. Additional emergency medical response personnel licensed under the Act to act as an ambulance operator
 - a. are not available at the scene, and,
 - b. in the opinion of the emergency medical response personnel staffing the ambulance, cannot be dispatched to arrive at the scene in the time necessary to appropriately address the threat to the life and / or limb of the patient(s), and
- C. Where access to supervision is available, the senior EMS person or the EMS person who is currently attending and has responsibility for the patient will obtain the permission of an on-line supervisor or manager who is delegated the authority to provide permission to the EMS personnel.
- D. EMS personnel will ensure that the individual that is enlisted to drive the ambulance is properly licensed under *The Highway Traffic Act*.
- E. The license holder will submit a critical occurrence report in accordance with the Manitoba Health and Healthy Living critical occurrence policy.

GENERAL: Operation of Ambulance by Fire Fighter

Related Discussion

1. EMS personnel may request individuals, who are not licensed as EMS personnel, to assist them at the scene, in the back of the ambulance, or drive the ambulance in a manner consistent with the capabilities and competence of that person. The purpose of this assistance is to enable the EMS personnel to carry out their responsibility to provide required emergency medical treatment. At all times, the EMS personnel maintain responsibility for the assessment, treatment and outcome of the patient and are responsible for directing and supervising the assistance that is provided by that person and for adjusting care when required. The EMS personnel will have responsibility to ensure that a person providing such assistance is following their direction. EMS personnel will respect the position of the individual who may refuse to assist EMS personnel. The EMS personnel will ensure that documentation reflects the assistance provided by the unlicensed person. There are no reporting requirements if the fire fighter does not drive the ambulance.
2. Official response personnel such as fire fighters may be requested by EMS personnel to move the ambulance at the scene. On this basis, the individual moving an ambulance at the scene for purposes of scene management is practical and reasonable. It is assumed that the individual is duly qualified under the *Highway Traffic Act* to operate an ambulance. There are no reporting requirements in this instance.