

EL DORADO COUNTY EMS AGENCY

FIELD POLICIES

Effective: July 1, 2009

Reviewed: N/A

Revised: July 2012, July 1, 2016

Scope: BLS and ALS Personnel



EMS Agency Medical Director

EMS AIRCRAFT

AUTHORITY:

Division 2.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 1797.220, California Code of Regulations, Title 22., Prehospital Emergency Medical Services, Chapter 8., Prehospital EMS Aircraft Regulations, Title 21, Public Works Chapter 2.5 Division of Aeronautics (Department of Transportation), Public Utilities Code Section 21662.1., and Federal Aviation Regulations.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Air Ambulance Dispatch Policy is to quickly summon an air ambulance to the scene of an emergency or to a medical facility for an interfacility transport.

DEFINITIONS:

AAMS- Association of Air Medical Services. A non-profit trade association committed to representing and advocating for the Air Medical and the Critical Care Ground Transport Industry.

Air Ambulance- Any aircraft specially constructed, modified or equipped, and used for the primary purpose of responding to emergency calls and transporting critically ill or injured patients whose medical flight crew has a minimum of two (2) attendants certified in advanced life support.

Aircraft Type- Particular make and model of aircraft.

Authorization- The process required by Title 22, Chapter 8 of the California Code of Regulations that local EMS agencies must follow in order to allow EMS aircraft services to provide service within an EMS agency's local jurisdiction.

Authorizing EMS Agency- The local EMS Agency, which approves utilization of specific EMS Aircraft within its jurisdiction.

C.A.M.T.S. - The Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems. A national independent commission dedicated to improving the quality of patient care and safety of the transport environment for services providing rotor wing, fixed wing and ground transport systems.

Classifying EMS Agency- Shall be the local EMS Agency in the jurisdiction of origin except for aircraft operated by the California Highway Patrol, the California Department of Forestry, or the California National Guard, which shall be classified by the EMS Authority.

County- El Dorado County.

Emergency Medical Services Aircraft- Any aircraft utilized for the purpose of prehospital emergency patient response and transport. EMS aircraft includes air ambulances and all categories of rescue aircraft.

IFR- Instrument Flight Rules.

Medical Flight Crew- The individuals(s), excluding the pilot, specifically assigned to care for the patient during aircraft transport.

Rescue Aircraft- An aircraft whose usual function is not prehospital emergency patient transport but which may be utilized, in compliance with local EMS policy, for prehospital emergency patient transport when use of an air or ground ambulance is inappropriate or unavailable. Rescue aircraft includes:

ALS Rescue Aircraft (ALSRA) - has medical crew with a minimum of one attendant certified or licensed in advanced life support.

BLS Rescue Aircraft (BLSRA) - Has medical crew with a minimum of one attendant certified in basic life support as identified in Chapter 8, Title 22.

Auxiliary Rescue Aircraft (ARA) - does not meet the minimum requirements established for a BLSRA.

VFR- Visual Flight Rules.

POLICY:

1) REQUEST AND RESPONSE

- a) Upon request for medical response, the requested air ambulance agency and its designated dispatch center shall immediately notify the requester of their status:
 - If immediately available, the aircraft will lift off as soon as is safely possible and the estimated time of arrival will be relayed to the requester
 - If the aircraft is committed to another response, the EMS aircraft dispatch center will so state and give an estimate of when the aircraft will be available for another mission
 - If the aircraft is on a delay (i.e., maintenance or weather), the EMS aircraft dispatch center shall inform the requester of the nature of the delay and give an estimated time the aircraft will be available
 - If unavailable due to maintenance, weather, or for some other reason for an indeterminate time period, the EMS aircraft dispatcher will so state
- b) No air ambulance shall respond to the scene of an emergency without formal request from an El Dorado County designated dispatch center.
- c) The designated dispatch centers for the East and West Slopes of El Dorado County shall dispatch the closest air ambulance at the request of the Incident Commander. The designated dispatch centers may also dispatch an air ambulance whenever the patient condition may be ascertained and presents with one or more of the following:
 - Unresponsive
 - Spinal cord injury
 - Significant head, neck, or chest injury
 - Burns > 15% surface area
 - Any other incident where the designated dispatching agency deems it beneficial to the patient(s), or responding emergency personnel
- d) Transport via air ambulance is the preferred method of air transport for critical patients; however an ALS air rescue helicopter may be utilized for prehospital emergency patient transport, when in the opinion of the on scene medical personnel, transport via ALS air

rescue helicopter would be in the patient's best interest. Consideration must be given to the need for higher-level medical procedures (e.g., RSI, surgical cricothyrotomy, surgical chest tube, etc.) that can be performed by an air ambulance flight crew vs. speed of transport to definitive care by an air rescue helicopter.

- e) Simultaneous response of a rescue helicopter and an air ambulance is permissible with the ALS rescue helicopter being utilized as the first responder.
- f) For interfacility transfers the selection of a specific EMS aircraft is at the discretion of the transferring physician/Facility.

For patients requiring rapid sequence induction (RSI), the patient's weight in kilograms and the anticipated need for RSI should be relayed to the air ambulance crew as soon as possible in order to facilitate preparation of medications while the air ambulance is still en route to the scene.

2) ON-LINE MEDICAL CONTROL

- a) On-line medical control for the scene of a medical emergency where both ground and EMS aircraft personnel are present shall be conducted by the base station contacted by the ground unit(s).
- b) Once the transfer of patient care has been accomplished between the ALS ground unit and the EMS aircraft personnel the EMS aircraft crew will assume the responsibility for the care of the patient.
- c) The flight crew shall notify the receiving facility physician of the patient's condition and the estimated time of arrival.

LANDING ZONE SCENE SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Select accessible site
- Determine proper size 100' X 100'
- Walk perimeter looking for wires or hazards
- Observe for drones operating in the area
- Evaluate ground slope
- Determine wind direction
- Establish latitude/longitude
- Wet down dusty areas
- Mark L.Z. for identification
- Secure loose equipment and perimeter
- Remain on radio frequency –For landing/departure
- Evaluate environmental conditions for snow, dust, grass, sand
- Maintain own safety first, and at all times

