



## **Emergency Medical Training and State Level Operation Position Statement**

It is the position of the South Carolina State Firefighters' Association that the Labor Licensing and Regulation, Division of Fire and Life Safety should research and subsequently create a Fire Based Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Section of the Division. The needs of the fire based EMS community are diverse and transcend the many current pillars of the Division of Fire and Life Safety.

### **Background:**

According to the DHEC Division of EMS and Trauma 40% of certified EMS 9-1-1 providers are primarily affiliated with fire based systems. Forty-one percent of providers are affiliated with "third service" systems. The remaining 19% of providers are affiliated with rescue squads. These numbers do not account for those who are affiliated elsewhere but may volunteer or work part time for fire based systems.

The cost of EMS education continues to rise. As costs increase, there has been some concern about the quality of education and evaluation systems. These two factors are making it increasingly difficult for fire-based services to find high quality and cost appropriate training in the private sector.

While many regional and technical training centers are struggling to keep up, there are emerging fields of pre-hospital care and training such as Community Paramedicine, Critical Care Paramedicine and accreditation of Paramedic training centers that currently may not be adequately addressed in South Carolina. As private sector training centers struggle to achieve accreditation, the number of Paramedic classes is expected to fall, creating a burden on the entire system. The current private sector training systems are not meeting the needs of the fire service or our citizens. Many training centers are failing to adjust to dynamic changes presented by managed healthcare, growing commercialization of the industry and the needs of an ever-broadening population that we care for.

We recognize that the Division of Fire and Life Safety has been making efforts to support fire based EMS issues. We believe that the needs of the Fire Service and our customers now warrant a dedicated, full time section to include adequate permanent staffing. We propose that this newly created section be responsible for statewide and regional delivery of training. It is our desire that this section also stay up to date and involved with various EMS committees, legislation and stakeholders.

Some tangible duties of this section might include the development and maintenance of:

- regional training programs at the EMR level
- regional training programs at the FA/CPR level
- EMS specialized training programs such as ACLS, PALS, AMLS, PHTLS, etc.
- Community Paramedicine training programs
- Critical Care Paramedicine programs
- approvals and appropriate accreditations for all levels of EMT training up to the Paramedic level
- formal relationships with the DHEC Division of EMS and Trauma and various committees and associations (to include an acute awareness of legislative and regulatory issues)