



National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians
Post Office Box 1400 * Clinton, Mississippi 39060-1400
Phone: 800-34-NAEMT or 601-924-7744 * Fax: 601-924-7325
Website: www.NAEMT.org

April 17, 2018

Mike Sprayberry
President
National Emergency Management Association
1776 Avenue of the States
Lexington, KY 4051

Dear Mr. Sprayberry –

On behalf of the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT), we kindly request the National Emergency Management Association to promote opportunities of medical preparedness training and courses to EMS agencies within all states. We also welcome the opportunity to work with your organization to uncover funding resources for training to enhance EMS as a more resilient key component in fortifying disaster response.

Formed in 1975, NAEMT is the nation's only organization dedicated to representing the professional interests of all EMS practitioners, including first responders, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and other professionals working in emergency and mobile healthcare, including government service agencies, fire departments, hospital-based ambulance services, private services, industrial and special operations, and military.

EMS is a critical and vital entity dedicated to providing out-of-hospital emergent, urgent and preventive medical care, including transport to hospitals and other medical facilities. EMS serves as the healthcare "safety net" for our communities, serving millions of Americans who utilize 9-1-1 systems for emergencies and to obtain needed care.

The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (formerly the Institutes of Medicine) released a report in 2012, *Crisis Standards of Care: A Systems Framework for Catastrophic Disaster Response*. This report stated, "each key actor—emergency management, public safety, public health, EMS, healthcare organizations, and community-based health practitioners—greatly influences the success or failure of the system as a whole to provide care during catastrophes." The report illustrates EMS as one of the five pillars that fortifies disaster response.

EMS is severely underfunded in disaster preparedness and training. In 2009, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report stating that EMS received less than 4% of federal preparedness grant dollars. In 2013, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate released a report, *Emergency Medical Services: Fiscal Year 2010 Report to Congress*, stating that the results of the 2010 and 2011 State Preparedness Reports (SPR) indicate that EMS providers can satisfy many to most of the SPRs' preparedness measures; however, the 2011 National EMS Assessment identified significant shortfalls in EMS disaster preparedness. The shortfalls exist in EMS provider participation in the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP), state and local EMS provider participation in exercises, and the establishment of triage protocols in the EMS community. Administrator Fugate recognized that if the shortfalls were not addressed, the resource needs of large or simultaneous disasters could prove very difficult to meet. For HSGP projects, continued integration of EMS providers into planning and preparedness initiatives must remain an area of national focus in preparedness assistance programs.

In 2016, the National Association of State EMS Officials released the *EMS Domestic Preparedness Improvement Strategy*. This strategy outlined ten (10) goals for improving EMS preparedness and training. The most important and immediate goal is to establish an EMS Preparedness Agenda. Currently, no nationally-applicable stakeholder consensus document has been developed.

In 2017, NAEMT released The National Survey on EMS Preparedness in Disaster and Mass Casualty Incidents Response. The survey found that most EMS practitioners had minimal training in preparing to respond to major incidents, yet most considered themselves proficient on response protocols. While some survey respondents indicated that they received training for some type of incidents, such as responding to active shooters, there were other areas in which few EMS practitioners had received any training including chemical, biological or radiological events, and pandemics. The survey also revealed significant gaps in EMS preparedness for response to natural and man-made disasters and mass casualty incidents. It noted that education and training – key components of preparedness – are often sporadic, making it difficult to keep skills and knowledge fresh.

For over a decade the Federal government and non-governmental organizations have outlined the importance of EMS as a stakeholder in disaster preparedness, and the need for resourcing. NAEMT and our membership, which are vital to every community across the country, stand ready and willing to be a resource and partner to your organization.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. Please do not hesitate to contact me for questions or additional information.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis W. Rowe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and "R".

Dennis Rowe, EMT-P
President, NAEMT