

WILLIAM B. WALKER, M.D.  
HEALTH SERVICES DIRECTOR

PAT FROST  
EMS DIRECTOR

JOSEPH BARGER, M.D.  
MEDICAL DIRECTOR



CONTRA COSTA  
EMERGENCY  
MEDICAL SERVICES

1340 Arnold Drive, Suite 126  
Martinez, California  
94553-1631  
Ph (925) 646-4690  
Fax (925) 646-4379

Date: June 28, 2012

To: Mary Piepho, Supervisor District 3

From: Pat Frost, EMS Director

Contra Costa EMS has been working closely with American Medical Response (AMR) and East Contra Costa Fire to resolve the Quick Response Vehicles (QRVs) relocation and deployment issues resulting from closures of three East County Fire Stations. As a result of these changes AMR's Bethel Island QRV must be moved by July 15<sup>th</sup> due to the closure of the station. Suitable housing and location for effective operations have not been found for the displaced unit.

As you are aware, QRVs are non-transporting, single-paramedic-staffed units designed to respond as part of a fire first response team to bring paramedic-level services to areas without fire paramedic staffing. These units were not designed to shorten first response times, but to provide a higher level of medical capability to existing fire first response. ***QRVs as currently staffed, are not capable of functioning as an independent first-line medical response.***

After a careful review of available options within the short time frame, it was determined that, at least on a temporary basis, AMR will replace the Bethel Island QRV with a 24-hour paramedic-staffed ambulance. This can be done under the existing ambulance contract terms, which allow for the elimination of one or more QRVs in exchange for provision by AMR of "an equivalent dollar amount of substitute services." This 24-hour ambulance unit will be *in addition* to ambulance unit hours currently deployed in East County. AMR will absorb the additional costs stationing and staffing this unit, so there will be no additional cost to the County. This option will preserve the level of paramedic response currently provided and eliminate staff safety concerns that would arise should a QRV respond without the benefit of other responders arriving on the scene more or less simultaneously. We will continue to assess EMS response in East County as these changes go into effect, and will be prepared to make further changes as may be necessary to make optimal use of available resources. EMS, East Contra Costa County Fire and AMR are prepared to address any community concerns that may arise from this change with the community, and have determined that this is an optimal use of available resources.

The EMS Agency would like to acknowledge Leslie Mueller's and AMR's commitment to support patient care by responding with more than equivalent assets to resolve a difficult and time-sensitive issue for the Contra Costa EMS System. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding these proposed changes.

cc: William B. Walker, MD, Health Officer  
Joe Barger, MD, EMS Medical Director  
Chief Hugh Henderson, East Contra Costa Fire Protection District  
Leslie Mueller, General Manager, American Medical Response

