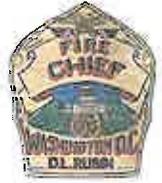




# MEMORANDUM



Series 2008	Number 131	Originating Unit OFC	Effective Date June 12, 2008	Expiration Date N/A
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Subject:

## Transport Unit Staffing Plan

### Background:

On September 27, 2007, the Mayor's Task Force on Emergency Medical Services ("Task Force") issued its report and recommendations to Mayor Adrian M. Fenty. The Mayor accepted the Task Force's six recommendations and directed the DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department, the Department of Health, and related agencies to implement them.

- Recommendation 4(c): "The Chief shall establish, no later than March 31, 2008, and as available staff allows, a practice for assignment to transport duty in which employees are permanently assigned to ambulance service for periods of not less than 90 days, rather than intermittently with fire apparatus duty."

For the past eight months, the Fire & EMS Department ("Department") has actively engaged the representatives of the two bargaining units that represent operational employees (Local 36, IAFF and Local 3721, AFGE) in order to produce implementation plans for these recommendations that reflect the input and concerns of the workforce. This engagement has included weekly participation in the EMS Path Forward meeting, invitations to the monthly senior staff meeting, labor-management partnership meetings, and numerous issue-specific working sessions. In addition, the Department has directly solicited input from its employees through forums such as focus groups, open question and answer sessions with management, and a comprehensive anonymous employee survey.

In order to implement recommendation 4 (c) the Department has developed the following staffing plan, with a projected implementation date of July 6, 2008. The plan includes the following key components:

- The Department will consolidate the transport units staffed by current single-role providers from 20.5 (24-hour equivalent) units to 14 (24-hour equivalent) units. All 14 units staffed by single role providers will now be 24-hour ALS units, staffed at the 1 + 1 level. Personnel assigned to these units will work a 12-hour shift on a 2-2-4 work schedule. The purpose of this consolidation is to right-size the number of single-role transport units to match the size of the remaining single-role workforce. This will create efficiencies in the management and administration of these units, and reduce overtime usage and the downgrading of medic units.
- The Department will increase the number of BLS transport units from 20.5 (24-hour equivalent) units to 25 (24-hour equivalent) units. All 25 of these units will now be 24-hour BLS transport units, staffed by Firefighter/EMTs. The personnel staffing these units will be detailed to the units for a period of 112 days.

- Under this plan, the Department will deploy a total of 39 transport units at all times: 14 ALS and 25 BLS. This is a net increase of 1.5 transport units from the current average of 37.5 (24-hour equivalent) transport units.
- The staffing of all transport units will be administered at the Battalion level following established guidelines, including those described in this plan, and supervised closely by the Operations Division Deputy Fire Chiefs.

The Transport Unit Staffing Plan is designed to achieve improvements in the following areas:

- Equity
- Predictability
- Unit Integrity
- Area Familiarization
- Efficiency of Administration

#### **Equity:**

Each firefighter-staffed BLS transport unit will be assigned to two companies for purposes of staffing. These are either two companies in a double-house, or two geographically compatible single-houses. One transport unit will be assigned to the Special Operations Division. Administration of assignments will be performed at the Battalion level. For each 16-week cycle, one member will be selected for the ambulance detail from each of the two companies on each shift. Officers, PEC Medics, and technicians will be excluded from selection from ambulance details. The two members selected will be detailed to a transport unit located in their house or in the house of the company with which the transport unit is shared. Rotation of assignments will be monitored by the Deputy Fire Chiefs—Operations Division to ensure that all personnel are rotating through the ambulance details and that these details are equitably distributed. If absenteeism becomes an issue, the Department and Local 36 shall meet to discuss the issue and attempt to reach a mutually acceptable resolution to the problem. Subject to the provisions of Article 6 of the CBA, a minimum number of shifts worked may be required if absenteeism persists. The Department will work to maintain an equalized roster across companies, battalions and platoons to ensure that the number of personnel rotating through these details remains as equitable as possible.

#### **Predictability:**

Under the transport unit staffing plan, the duty assignments of personnel will become more consistent and members should experience much greater stability, predictability, and continuity of assignments. This should increase operational efficiency and effectiveness in all aspects of our operations.

#### **Unit Integrity:**

By working with the same assigned partner every day, members detailed to the ambulance will experience improved unit integrity. Improved unit integrity should be realized in all company and unit assignments.

**Area Familiarization:**

By staffing units in their own houses and battalions, members detailed to the ambulance will be able to build and maintain knowledge of their assigned primary response area and its geography, patient population, and target hazards.

**Efficiency of Administration:**

By staffing units in their own houses and battalions, members detailed to the ambulance will maintain contact with regularly assigned officers. In addition, the Transport Unit Staffing Plan should significantly reduce the use of overtime or last-minute details to staff transport units.

**Implementation:**

The staffing process will be performed in the Battalions and coordinated by the Deputy Fire Chiefs—Operations Division. Each Battalion will project out their ambulance staffing for four (4) 16-week cycles and forward the list to the Deputy Fire Chiefs. The following guidelines will be followed:

**Length of Detail:**

The detail shall be 112 days (16 weeks/8 pay periods) and shall be synchronized with the FLSA cycle to the extent possible.

**Eligibility:**

Officers, technicians, PEC Medics, and members assigned to divisions other than the Operations Division are excluded from the rotation for ambulance details.

Personnel selected for the ambulance detail must be currently certified as DC EMTs (Basic or Advanced) and must be qualified to serve as minimum staffing on transport units at the time of their detail.

Personnel performing ambulance detail shall have completed both their probationary year and their probationary studies.

**Staffing Guidelines:**

To the extent possible, only one member per shift from each company shall be serving on the ambulance detail at any given time (i.e., total of four per company).

Only two personnel will be detailed to each ambulance. If the detailed member is unavailable to work a particular shift due to leave or other factors, the Battalion shall select another member—preferably from the same company and shift—to staff the ambulance for that shift.

The 25 dedicated BLS transport units will not be staffed by personnel working overtime. They will either be staffed by the members detailed to the ambulance, or by other on-duty members selected to cover vacancies.

When preparing the master rotation schedule, Battalion Fire Chiefs shall pay close attention to the master schedule for EMT recertification (and other multi-week training courses) and avoid scheduling a member for ambulance detail during months when they are already scheduled to attend EMT recertification or other multi-week classes.

The Department will attempt to maintain unit, house, and geographic area integrity when staffing the transport units. However, the Department reserves the right to detail personnel to transport units outside of their house, unit, or battalion as necessary in order to create a staffing pool where all personnel detailed to a specific unit are on the same work schedule across all four platoons, or for other reasons of operational necessity.

### **Training:**

Personnel selected for ambulance detail who have not yet been trained to use the electronic patient care reporting (ePCR) system shall be scheduled for this training prior as soon as possible, with the goal of completing the training prior to the start of their detail.

### **Length of shift:**

The scheduled length of shift for members detailed to the ambulance shall be either twenty-four (24) hours or twelve (12) hours, depending upon the individual member's election under the procedures described in this document. Members detailed to the ambulance may not work on any Department apparatus for at least eight (8) hours immediately prior to assuming duty on their scheduled ambulance shift.

### **Work week:**

Members detailed to the ambulance who elect a "2-2-4" schedule under the procedures described below shall normally work a 42-hour work week, as averaged over a 16-week cycle.

Members detailed to the ambulance who elect a "24-72" schedule under the procedures described below shall normally work a 42-hour work week, as averaged over a 4-week cycle.

### **Schedule:**

A member detailed to the ambulance shall, at the outset of the detail, be given a choice between the two shift schedules: "24-72" (24 hours on, 72 hours off); or "2-2-4" (two twelve-hour days, two twelve-hour nights, four days off). The member's choice shall be binding for the length of the detail period. While the Department will attempt to accommodate a member who wishes to change his or her choice during the ambulance detail period, the Department cannot guarantee that it will be able to do so.

If clinical or operational issues call into question an individual member's ability to safely or effectively work the schedule that the member has chosen, the Department may take appropriate action, including changing the work schedule of the individual member for the remainder of that detail period.

**Shift change:**

For members who elect the "24-72" schedule, shift changes shall take place at 0700 hours. For members who elect the "2-2-4" schedule, shift changes shall take place at 0700 and 1900 hours.

**Trades:**

If a member arranges an approved trade, the member working the trade shall be counted as the member detailed to the ambulance. The use of multiple sequential trades to create 24-hour shifts or permanent day or night shifts for members on the "2-2-4" schedule will not be permitted.

**Timekeeping:**

Timekeeping shall be performed by the member's regularly assigned officer.

**Transfers:**

When a member is transferred to a new company, the Company Commander and Battalion Fire Chief shall obtain information on the member's previous details to the ambulance so that they may receive proper credit for details already completed.

**Overtime:**

While detailed to the ambulance, members shall be maintained in the overtime eligibility rotation with their regularly assigned company and shall be offered opportunities to work overtime as they normally would. If the member is unable to accept an opportunity to work overtime because of a conflict with their scheduled shift on the ambulance, then that shall not count as a refusal, and they shall retain their position on the overtime eligibility list until the next opportunity arises that does not conflict with their scheduled shift.

**Annual Leave Periods:**

Personnel detailed to the ambulance will retain their previously scheduled annual leave periods and will retain their rights to use their scheduled and approved leave.

**Partner preference:**

Within the guidelines outlined above, Battalion Fire Chiefs may use their authority to arrange the master schedule of ambulance details to accommodate mutual requests of personnel from the two appropriate companies/shifts to be paired as regular partners, if this supports efficient and effective operations.

**Permanent Assignment to Ambulance Duty:**

The Department will attempt to accommodate members who wish to be permanently assigned to transport unit duty, as long as they are able to maintain operational proficiency in the essential functions of their job and said assignment supports the needs of the Department. Personnel must maintain suppression status and can be periodically called upon for normal firefighting duties.

**Table: Transport Unit Redeployment (all units 24-hrs)**

\* current 12-hour units

	Before	After	Staffed by
<b>Battalion 1</b> 7 transport units (5 BLS) (2 ALS)	M-10	A-10	E-10/T-13
	M-12	A-14	E-24/E-14
	M-14	M-14	Single Role
	M-17	M-17	Single Role
	A-6	A-6	E-6/T-4
	A-12	A-12	E-12/E-17
	A-26	A-26	E-26/T-15
<b>Battalion 2</b> 8 transport units (3 BLS) (5 ALS)	M-3	M-3	Single Role
	M-8	M-8	Single Role
	M-27*	M-27	Single Role
	M-30	M-30	Single Role
	A-7	M-7	Single Role
	A-8*		
	A-18	A-18	E-18/T-7
	A-27	A-27	E-8/E-27
A-30	A-30	E-30/T-17	
<b>Battalion 3</b> 7 transport units (5 BLS) (2 ALS)	M-15		
	M-19	M-19	Single Role
	M-33	M-33	Single Role
	A-15	A-15	Special Ops
	A-19	A-19	E-19/E-7
	A-25	A-25	E-15/E-25
	A-32	A-32	E-32/T-16
A-33	A-33	E-33/T-8	
<b>Battalion 4</b> 5 transport units (4 BLS) (1 ALS)	M-4	A-4	E-4/E-21
	M-24	M-24	Single Role
	A-9	A-9	E-9/T-9
	A-11	A-11	E-11/T-6
	A-22	A-22	E-22/T-11
<b>Battalion 5</b> 6 transport units (3 BLS) (3 ALS)	M-21	M-21	Single Role
	M-29	A-29	E-29/T-5/E-31
	M-31	M-31	Single Role
	A-20	A-20	E-20/T-12
	A-28	A-28	E-28/T-14
		M-5	Single Role
<b>Battalion 6</b> 6 transport units (5 BLS) (1 ALS)	M-1	M-1	Single Role
	M-2*	A-2	E-2/E-3
	A-1	A-1	E-1/T-2
	A-13	A-13	E-13/T-10
	A-16	A-16	E-16/T-3
		A-23	E-23/E-5

<b>Total Transport Units under new deployment plan: 39 24-hr</b>	
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<b>units</b>			
<b>All single-role staffed units become 1+1 ALS</b>	<b>Key:</b>	<b>Single-role staffed</b>	
		<b>Multi-role staffed</b>	

Before	After	Net change
<b>37.5 24-hour equivalent transport units</b>	<b>39 24-hour equivalent transport units</b>	<b>+1.5 transport units</b>
<b>17 ALS</b>	<b>14 ALS</b>	<b>-3 ALS</b>
<b>20.5 BLS</b>	<b>25 BLS</b>	<b>+4.5 BLS</b>

Example of Proposed Detail Rotation within a Double House with a Paramedic Engine Company:

Paramedic Engine Company

Truck Company

1. Captain
2. F/F Technician – WD
3. F/F Paramedic
4. Engine F/F #1
5. Engine F/F #2
6. Engine F/F #3
7. Engine F/F #4

1. Lieutenant
2. Sergeant
3. F/F Technician - TD
4. F/F Technician - T
5. Truck F/F #1
6. Truck F/F #2
7. Truck F/F #3
8. Truck F/F #4

July 6—October 25, 2008	October 26, 2008—February 14, 2009	February 15—June 6, 2009	June 7—September 26, 2009
Engine F/F #1	Engine F/F #2	Engine F/F #3	Engine F/F #4
Truck F/F #1	Truck F/F #2	Truck F/F #3	Truck F/F #4

*Dennis L. Rubin*

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