

September 8, 2022

RE: BLS Units for the Upcoming Rebid

It has come to our attention that there may be some concern over the introduction of BLS Units into the 911 deployment for the upcoming rebid. Specifically, there is a concern that this introduction of BLS units is the first step in an overall plan to reduce the overall amount of ALS personnel and/or units in our deployment system on a permanent basis. The purpose of this communication is to address this topic.

The Contra Costa County Operation has no intention of permanently or temporarily reducing the number of ALS personnel in the overall headcount, and also has no intention of subsequently reducing ALS units for deployment. Our strategy is actually the opposite; we want to continue hiring qualified Paramedics to get back to pre-COVID headcounts and hire more EMTs as well.

This strategy will help us to accomplish to major objectives. First, it will allow us to provide BLS level of service to calls that are BLS in nature thereby allowing us to provide ALS level of service to patients that require more advanced care. Most of us can attest from personal experience that there are enough of both types of calls to go around in this system. The second objective is to bolster our EMT headcount so that we can accommodate more people through Paramedic school. Additionally, there are classical reasons for keeping our headcount robust to include greater ability to deploy for disasters, further reduce holdover, and reduce the amount of mandation that is currently needed to meet deployment needs.

It's understandable to look at the additions of BLS units into the deployment and conclude that we intend to reduce ALS headcount. That stated, its fair to point out some other Operational initiatives that demonstrate our desire to retain ALS headcount. Currently, Contra Costa is sponsoring (21) Paramedic students to date; this is an unprecedented number of scholarships awarded (prior to last year, the Operation only gave out two annually). Towards that end, the Operation intends to hold another round of scholarship interviews later this year and next year as well. Additionally, the Operation is also offering a \$2,500 bonus for someone that refers a Paramedic that does not already work for AMR.

We hope this clarifies our intent over the issue of BLS cars in the 911 deployment.

Stay Safe!