



# County of Santa Cruz

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## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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WALTER J. SYMONS  
SECOND DISTRICT

MARDI WORMHOUDT  
THIRD DISTRICT

TONY CAMPOS  
FOURTH DISTRICT

JEFF ALMQUIST  
FIFTH DISTRICT

AGENDA: 3/7/00

February 17, 2000

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
County of Santa Cruz  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMISSION

Dear Members of the Board:

Attached is the Annual Report of the Emergency Medical Care Commission for calendar year 1999. I recommend that the Board accept and file this report and direct the Chair to thank the members of the Commission for their efforts on the County's behalf.

Sincerely,

*Mardi Wormhoudt*

MARDI WORMHOUDT, Chair  
Board of Supervisors

MW:ted

cc: Emergency Medical Care Commission

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EMERGENCY MEDICAL  
SERVICES

# County of Santa Cruz

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

POST OFFICE BOX 962, 1080 EMELINE AVENUE SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061-0962  
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### SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

### EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMISSION

February 15, 2000

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Cruz  
701 Ocean St.  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors:

RE: Emergency Medical Care Commission Annual Report – 1999

Attached to this cover letter is the 1999 Annual Report from the Emergency Medical Care Commission. It has been an active year for the Commission, which continues to help establish the direction for EMS in the new millennium.

The Technical Advisory Group, the Prehospital Advisory Committee and the new EMS Administrator have been helpful in advising the EMCC on specific service delivery issues and challenges. Data collection and analysis, which are necessary for continuous quality improvement, are pressing issues for the EMCC in order to best evaluate system performance. The Commission applauds the efforts and intentions of the new HSA Administrator to resolve this void in the County's EMS system.

On behalf of all the Commission members, I would like to express our appreciation to the Board of Supervisors for the opportunity we share in providing input and oversight of the County's Emergency Medical Services system.

Sincerely,

Ron Prince, Chair  
Emergency Medical Care Commission

Cc: Rama Khalsa, HSA Administrator  
EMCC Correspondence file

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMISSION**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**1999**

**Role of the Commission**

The role of the Emergency Medical Care Commission (EMCC) is to act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors and the County Health Officer on all matters relating to emergency medical services, to review the EMS related activities in the County, to provide residents of the County an opportunity to participate in the making of policy for the emergency medical services system, and to report the Commission observations and recommendations to the designated regulatory bodies.

**Meeting Dates, Times and Locations**

During calendar year 1999, the Commission meetings were held at **8:30** a.m. on the second Wednesday of the month. The meeting location alternates between Dominican Santa Cruz Hospital, Watsonville Community Hospital, the **Aptos/La Selva** Fire Department, and the County Health Services Agency. There were no meetings held in January, July and December.

**Commission Structure**

There were two changes to the membership of the Commission during 1999. Carol Adams replaced Sister Julie Hyer, OP as hospital representative and Captain Dave Stuflick became the Law Enforcement Chiefs Association representative. Chairperson Zuckswert resigned as chairperson but remained on the Commission. Chief Ron Prince was elected to chair the Commission in April.

**Supervisorial Appointees**

- First District: Rayette Andrews, RN, Dominican Hospital
- Second District: **Ira** Lubell, MD, Medical Director, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center
- Third District: Jeanette Applegate, Vice President/Clinic Operations, Santa Cruz Medical Clinic
- Fourth District: Gary Smith, Chief, **Aptos/La Selva** Fire Department
- Fifth District: Lisa Angell, RN, Watsonville Community Hospital

**At-Large Appointees**

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Representing:

Hospitals	Carol Adams, VP, Dominican Hospital
Ambulance Service:	Robert Zuckswert, AMRW
County Medical Society:	Terry <b>Lapid</b> , MD, Medical Director, Dominican ED
County Fire Chiefs Association:	Ron Prince, Chief, Santa Cruz Fire Department
Law Enforcement Chiefs Association:	Dave S tuflick
Consumers:	Sylvia Knapton, Retired journalist
Field Care:	Vacant

**County Support Staff**

George Wolfe, MD, County Health Officer  
 Robert Varty, Medical Care Program Administrator/Acting EMS Administrator  
 Kent Benedict, MD, EMS Medical Director  
 Ruth Shugart, **TCIII**

**Attendance**

See Attachment

**1999 Accomplishments**

**Administration**

1999 was an eventful year for EMS as the Commission dealt with the repercussions of the hiring and unanticipated departure of a new EMS Manager. The turmoil and issues that resulted in the departure of the new EMS Manager generated significant discussion as the Commission sought to help establish the future direction for EMS. The Commission was actively involved in developing strategies to deal with what turned out to be the continuing vacancy in the EMS Manager position for almost the entire year. Some of the associated issues involved the dissolution of the Ambulance Contract Compliance Commission, the establishment of the Technical Advisory Group as its replacement, a proposed interim management assistance agreement with Monterey County, and recruitment strategies to identify new EMS Manager candidates.

Regardless of the setback associated with the loss of the EMS Manager, the Commission addressed several other significant administrative issues during the course of the year. A new EMS Plan was developed and approved by the Commission after substantial developmental work. The Prehospital Advisory Committee was instrumental in the development of the plan. A significant benchmark in the delivery of E.M.S. in the County was achieved when the Commission reviewed the first year performance data of the Central Fire Protection District in its

provision of engine-based paramedic services. The Commission ultimately recommended approval of expansion of CFPD paramedic services to a second station. The Commission also reviewed and recommended Board of Supervisors approval of the Santa Cruz Fire Department's paramedic service delivery proposal. Having heard the endorsements and support for those enhanced EMS delivery efforts from the Pre-Hospital Advisory Committee and the EMS Medical Director, the Commission was unanimous in their recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for the expansion of fire-based paramedic services in the County. 0135

On other fronts, the Commission is addressing concerns regarding Basic Life Support (BLS) transportation services offered locally by a Monterey County based provider that are not subject to the County's regulatory purview. The Commission supports the development of a new County ordinance to address the situation. In the meantime, the Commission has formed a subcommittee with the EMS Agency to establish voluntary compliance guidelines to which the provider will be asked to adhere. The guidelines will focus on quality assurance, data, and system interface concerns.

The Commission is also supporting efforts of the Emergency Medical Services Integration Authority to conduct a community forum on the future of EMS.

### **Field Care and Transport**

The Commission was involved in evaluating and taking a position on several issues affecting field care and transport. In conjunction with efforts to further the development of a Trauma Plan, the Commission has been reviewing the role and function of helicopter transports. The question of whether local patients are being transported to the most appropriate trauma center has been raised. The Commission has also been working on the issues associated with hospital emergency departments going on restricted status. A new system for monitoring restricted/closed status was implemented and additional data has been gathered. The Commission is facilitating additional meetings between hospitals to assure consistency in the use of restricted status codes and the actual impact of ambulance diversions.

### **Communications**

The Ambulance Contract Compliance Commission and its successor, the Technical Advisory Group, have been primarily involved in this activity over the past year. The Commission has been periodically updated on communications issues and changes. There have not been any significant communications issues that necessitated action on the part of the Commission. Communication systems were tested as part of Y2K planning efforts.

### **Medical Disaster Planning**

The primary issue associated with Medical Disaster Planning over the past year was Y2K readiness. The Commission reviewed the status planning and testing efforts of the EMS Agency, providers, and first responders to assure the EMS-related agencies were prepared for possible scenarios associated with the advent of the new millennium.

### **Data Collection and Analysis and Quality Assurance**

Data collection and analysis are an integral component of quality assurance activities. The Commission, through the Prehospital Advisory Committee (PAC), reviewed the QA process as outlined by the EMS Medical Director for evaluation of the performance of the Central Fire paramedics. Trauma quality review is also conducted through the PAC, on a quarterly basis. The Commission feels that the ability to conduct EMS related QA activity is hampered by the continued lack of a person designated to perform the data collection and analysis function. The half-time position EMS data position to perform data related functions has never been filled due to a lack of applicants. Until more comprehensive data can be captured and analyzed, it will be difficult for the Commission to effectively evaluate the more subtle qualitative aspects of system performance. The Commission would like capacity to generate data to support the work of the Public Information and Education Committee as well.

Data is available through NetCom to monitor the performance of the ambulance contractor. This function (originally assigned to the Ambulance Contract Compliance Commission) is now being handled by the Technical Advisory Group. The E.M.C.C. is updated on a regular basis regarding ambulance contract compliance via the County Health Officer and EMS Administrator.

### **Public Education and Information**

The Commission has made efforts to coordinate with the Traffic Safety Coalition to assist in bicycle accident reduction. The Committee has also focused on spinal cord injury prevention. The City of Watsonville Fire Department took a lead role in developing public education information aimed at the prevention of spinal cord injuries. Utilizing the Internet and other resources, the Committee helped develop a model education plan that can be used by community groups in their injury prevention efforts. Funding limitations make it impossible for the Commission to be directly engaged in a prevention campaign. The Commission heard a presentation on back-country rescue issues. There was also a presentation given on aquatic safety. The County Fire Department/California Department of Forestry presented information on rural EMS issues. The Commission voted to support AB750 that would add a surcharge to traffic violations to support neurological research on curing spinal cord injuries.

**COMMISSIONERS ATTENDANCE**  
(No Meetings in January, July and December)

	J A E N B	F	M A R	A P R	M A Y	J U N E	J U L Y	A U G	S E P	O C T	N O V	D E C
Carol Adams *			X	E	X	X		E	X	X	X	
Rayette Andrews		x	x	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Lisa Angell		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
Jeanette Applegate		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
Sylvia Knapton		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
Terry Lapid		X	X	X	E	X		x	x	x	x	
Ira Lubell		X	X	A	X	X		E	E	E	E	
Ron Prince		x	x	X	E	X		x	x	x	x	
Gary Smith		E	X	X	E	X		x	x	x	x	
Dave Stuflick **									x	x	x	
Bob Zuckswert		X	E	X	X	E		X	X	E	E	

X = Present

E = Excused Absence

A = Absent

\* First meeting as a Commissioner in March

\*\* First meeting as a Commissioner in September