



# County of San Diego

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June 2, 2021

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## **RE: North Comm Alternate Dispatch Plan**

The LEMSA has reviewed the North Zone Fire Agencies' notification, dated May 1, 2021, of the intent to establish an alternate dispatch plan for the North Comm dispatch center. This proposal includes triaging incoming 9-1-1 calls through the nationally recognized Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS). We appreciate receiving this communication and believe that the project request is generally well-researched and appropriately planned. The LEMSA supports the plan implementation with some recommendations.

We encourage you to establish a comprehensive QA/QI system via the pilot project, prior to full implementation. QA/QI should include measures at the call taking/dispatch level, anomalous call outcomes (e.g., code three transports from a lower call triage), and chart reviews to ensure appropriate call taker triage assignments. This may also include any relevant outcomes measures that are available. We do not recommend using the emergency department ESI triage levels for outcomes data as ESI is not intended or validated to assess prehospital care or transport mode.

The LEMSA respectfully requests data and status reports as the pilot program progresses. This should include the volumes and types of calls that receive alternate dispatch assignments and updates or changes to the alternate dispatch plan. The LEMSA will work collaboratively with the agencies and the dispatch center for any EMS QA/QI issues related to dispatch resource assignment.

To support our goal of equitable care across the county, the LEMSA strongly recommends that the same dispatch plan be used to deploy resources across the entirety of the North Zone. We believe that this will assure that patients (and the Fire/EMS professionals in the field) receive a uniform, expected level of response without regard to the jurisdiction where the incident occurs. A consistently implemented alternate dispatch plan will also improve the data analysis opportunities and foster enhanced plan improvements by establishing a more extensive data set without numerous differences in the response levels from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

On a larger scale, the LEMSA intends to align the existing approved and unapproved alternate dispatch plans and move towards a single, coordinated, countywide, LEMSA-approved multi-tiered dispatch plan.

The North Zone Fire Agencies' plan, and its associated collected data, will further serve in quality improvement of the larger system. We look forward to working closely with your team, and all EMS agencies, to further assist in meeting program goals.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrew Parr", with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Andrew (Andy) Parr  
EMS Administrator