

## **NYS AG & LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE FOR NONPROFIT REVITALIZATION**

The Non-Profit Coordinating Committee (NPCC) reports that NYS Attorney General Eric Schneiderman announced a plan to revitalize and reform the state's nonprofit sector. The plan, "Revitalizing Nonprofits: Renewing New York," is a result of the Attorney General's convening of a leadership committee for nonprofits in 2011 which he charged with putting forth proposals that would reduce regulatory burdens on nonprofits, while strengthening governance and accountability. The leadership committee met regularly for over six months and put forth 38 proposals to help achieve the goals.

The centerpiece of AG Schneiderman's plan calls for a Nonprofit Revitalization Act, which will offer legislation and reform initiatives to be created to eliminate outdated and costly burdens on nonprofits, strengthen oversight and accountability, and reaffirm his office's commitment to policing fraud and abuse. Schneiderman's legislation would enact a number of key reforms, including:

- Streamlining bureaucratic processes to expedite formation of nonprofits in New York and approval of key nonprofit transactions;
- Modernizing outdated requirements, such as permitting the use of technology to facilitate more efficient operations and to reduce costs;
- Requiring that boards provide enhanced and independent oversight of executive compensation;
- Increasing board responsibilities to oversee financial audits;
- Enhancing the Attorney General's tools to police self-dealing and other forms of corruption; and
- Requiring that nonprofits adopt conflict-of-interest and whistleblower policies.

Two initiatives are also proposed, including, "New York on BOARD" and "Directors U," designed to improve nonprofit governance by promoting strong and diverse boards and to expand board director education. The Attorney General's Charities Bureau, led by Bureau Chief Jason Lilien, will assist in the development and promotion of these initiatives.

Among the 38 suggestions submitted by the leadership committee were proposals to fix late payments for contracts such as EMT course reimbursements and legislative grants, capitalizing a cash flow loan fund, and updating outdated filing requirements.

NPCC president, and a member of the leadership committee, Michael Clark, said, "We commend Attorney General Schneiderman for focusing attention on how New York can strengthen its nonprofit sector. This report is a blueprint for modernizing a critical sector of our state's economy."

The report is at

[www.ag.ny.gov/media\\_center/2012/feb/NP%20Leadership%20Committee%20Report%20\(2-16-12\).pdf](http://www.ag.ny.gov/media_center/2012/feb/NP%20Leadership%20Committee%20Report%20(2-16-12).pdf). The AG's press release is at [http://www.ag.ny.gov/media\\_center/2012/feb/feb16a\\_12.html](http://www.ag.ny.gov/media_center/2012/feb/feb16a_12.html).

## **HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES IN CALIFORNIA COVERED BY LIFTING LAW**

A new statute enacted in California requires acute care hospitals in the state to develop a safe patient handling policy to prevent back injuries. Under the Hospital Patient and Health Care Worker Injury Protection Act, hospitals must adopt a plan to prevent worker injuries and cannot discipline employees who refuse to lift or transfer a patient because of personal safety concerns. The law also requires employers to provide lift training and lift teams composed of staff trained in proper lifting techniques.

NYS DOH Policy Statement 00-10 Functional Position Description for EMTs in New York State show one of the qualifications as the "Ability to lift, carry and balance up to 125 pounds (250 pounds with assistance)". Some EMS agencies enforce this requirement with no allowance provided for an EMT's body size or the conditions over which the patient must be carried.

## **BITS FROM AROUND THE STATE**

### **DISTRICT 7 – Suffolk County**

COMMACK VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE, Suffolk County, has approached town officials in Huntington and Smithtown about funding a \$5.2 million dollar expansion of its present quarters in Huntington. Construction would include a new ambulance bay and sleeping quarters for emergency crews. Newsday indicates the ambulance corps wants to finance the expansion by issuing tax-exempt bonds through Huntington Town's Local Development Corporation with taxes collected by the two towns from residents served by the squad going towards paying off the bonds. Formal proposals have not yet been submitted and no official reaction to the idea has been reported. Commack VAC serves residents in Commack, East Northport, Elwood, Hauppauge, Huntington and Smithtown with about two-thirds of area in the Town of Smithtown and one-third in the Town of Huntington. It operates four ALS ambulances and three ALS First Responder vehicles responding to about 2,700 calls annually.

FISHERS ISLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT, Suffolk County, is involved in developing a pilot distributive learning on-line web based EMT training course. The Suffolk County DOH EMS Division worked with the Town of Southold IT Department on the project which is pending NYS DOH approval. Fishers Island FD then has to have a critical mass of students before proceeding.

PATCHOGUE AMBULANCE COMPANY, Suffolk County, is one of the latest services to consider billing patients. Established in 1934, the organization has grown to the Advanced Life Support level serving the Village of Patchogue, Blue Point and portions of East Patchogue. Staffing includes both paid and volunteer members. The current half million dollar budget is covered by village taxes.

PORT JEFFERSON VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE, Suffolk County, started billing patients in 2010. A Newsday article reports the service received \$491,000 from the Village of Patchogue in 2011 and was able to return \$80,000 recouped through insurance billing. Port Jefferson operates at the EMT-P level and serves Belle Terre, Mt. Sinai, and Port Jefferson.

SHELTER ISLAND TOWN, Suffolk County, has taken over the AEMT-CC level ambulance service formerly operated by the Shelter Island Chapter of the American Red Cross - the only EMS service in the country that was owned and operated by the Red Cross. The national Red Cross has been on a reorganization and consolidation program over the last few years combining some chapters, eliminating positions, cutting back services and raising fees and divestiture of the ambulance service was at the initiative of the central organization. The Shelter Island ambulance service was begun in 1936 with a special built Packard which accommodated a wheelchair. \$59,350 was allocated in the 2012 municipal budget to run the Town of Shelter Island Emergency Medical Service, however, costs may be significantly higher as a paid executive director and assistant is planned to replace the former volunteer CEO who oversaw 25 to 30 volunteer squad members. A local news report indicates there are "simmering doubts" among members of the Shelter Island Fire Department as to why they were not asked to take over the ambulance service.

SUFFOLK COUNTY DOH EMS DIVISION was facing a 2012 budget cut and layoffs but a major effort seems to have resulted in the restoration of funding. Among the measures proposed was cutting the EMS Division's budget which could have involved laying off 3 Senior Instructors out of a total staff of 11 employees. Some legislators have even proposed selling off assets including the H. Lee Dennison Building in Hauppauge where the EMS Division has offices. The EMS Division is a critical part of the county's EMS system, involved with instruction and certification courses, mutual aid, communications, medical control and major support for REMSCO and

REMAC. Other budget resolutions, however, could have an effect on the EMS Course Sponsorship of the Suffolk County Police Academy. There is concern that the program could be shut down, civilian instructors split between the DOH EMS Division and the Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services (FRES) and EMT training for police officers changed to CFR level or eliminated completely.

#### **DISTRICT 12 - Nassau County**

HEMPSTEAD VILLAGE, Nassau County, has entered into an agreement with NS-LIJ Center for EMS for emergency ambulance and medical transportation services during a six-month trial period starting in June. A dedicated ambulance would be available from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM and would be stationed in the village near the fire department headquarters. The trial period was offered by NS-LIJ at no cost and will start June 1 to coincide with the village's fiscal 2012-13 budget. According to the village mayor, after the trial ends, NS-LIJ EMS would bill a patient's insurance company \$400 to \$600, depending on the services provided in the ambulance and the distance traveled to the hospital adding "If you can't pay, then they are not going to pursue it. They would just write it off". Annual EMS call volume in the village is in the 4,500 to 5,000 range. Hempstead Fire Department Rescue Squad No 1 is also available in the village to provide a BLS level ambulance service, Previously, the village relied on Nassau County PD Emergency Ambulance Bureau for service. Their ambulances respond with only one technician, usually an AEMT-CC, and a NCPD or village police officer would respond to drive the ambulance to the hospital. Taking highly paid police officers off patrol duties to drive ambulances is an issue with some local municipalities.

MANHASSET-LAKEVILLE FIRE DISTRICT, Nassau County, in coordination with their local partners, the GREAT NECK ALERTS FIRE COMPANY, the GREAT NECK VIGILANTS FIRE COMPANY and the ALBERTSON FIRE COMPANY received a \$249,000 Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant. The funds will be used for the purchase of a Driver Trainer Simulator. With this tool, the above named fire companies can train their members in all weather without putting a single apparatus on the road enhancing the safety of all civilians and firefighters. This piece of equipment will be utilized by approximately 750 firefighters, operating 26 engines, 8 heavy rescues, 5 ladder trucks covering 50 square miles, protecting 151,000 in population.

MASSAPEQUA PARK VILLAGE and OYSTER BAY TOWN, Nassau County, are awaiting responses from NS-LIJ Health System and Catholic Health Services about construction of a new full service hospital in Massapequa. This is unusual at a time when other hospitals in the area have closed, including the former Massapequa General in Seaford and Brunswick Hospital in Amityville. The area is currently served by Nassau University MC in East Meadow, St. Joseph's Hospital in Hempstead and Good Samaritan Hospital in Islip, Suffolk County. NASSAU COUNTY hospital turnaround time for ambulances is rising. Data from ePCR sources indicate the current time is 27.1 minutes which has risen from 23.7 minutes in the 2008-2009 period. Factors that can contribute to delays include triage backlogs, not enough hospital stretchers to offload patients, emphasis on crews doing more complete PCR documentation, etc. Getting a better grasp on the turnaround situation at hospitals in the county and reducing the time is a regional project for 2012.

NASSAU COUNTY has been approved for a \$661,852.00 FEMA grant to equip all its fire and EMS agencies with radios capable of transmissions on the county Police Department's new 500 MHz encrypted radio system. The system will also used to by EMS crews to communicate with NCPD's Online Medical Control.

NASSAU COUNTY PD EMERGENCY AMBULANCE BUREAU is evaluating chassis options in regards to the onset of new federal emission regulations. Due to issues with Ford diesel engines the past few years the next round of about 12 re-mounts, which have already begun to hit the

streets, are Chevy diesels. Three new Ford/Braun Liberty's were purchased and posted in 3 precincts. There are also two Chevy/Brauns being evaluated. New unit xx88 is a gas Ford/Horton with five Whelen 900 Series Super-LED's across the top front of the box that are very bright and supposedly much more affordable than a full-sized lightbar. The department has also begun to add chevrons the rear for added safety.

### **DISTRICT 16 – Monroe & Livingston Counties**

MONROE COUNTY GIS SERVICES DIVISION is operating its own "GIS technology vehicle" capable of producing on location and in real time products similar to Google maps. The vehicle is on a 1995 Ford Super-Duty F chassis and was donated to the county in 2006 and later converted over to its present use. It has been employed at the Rochester International Air Show, Rochester Marathon and in search and rescue operations. Maps can be produced and overlaid with routes, vendor locations, staging areas, etc. Through a partnership with Pictometry, based in Rochester, real time imagery can be sent from an aircraft through a satellite dish and converted to readable files in minutes. Monroe County gets a good deal of snow coverage in winter months and the vehicle can be used to map out unseen marshes and ponds to help keep responders safe. The vehicle is capable of delivering GIS data to base stations at every county office in an area with 750,000 residents living in 19 towns and 10 villages. Equipment presently includes:

Global Navigation Satellite System	Trimble ProXH receiver;
three Panasonic Toughbook laptops;	Trimble ProXR backpack receiver;
4G wireless network;	Trimble GeoXT handheld receiver;
weather station;	32-inch Smartboard;
wide-format HP plotter;	Onboard generators (two 8,000 watt)
wireless HP printer/scanner/copier;	microwave, refrigerator and coffee maker.
Trimble R8 GNSS survey-grade receiver;	observation deck

Plans are to add a 30-foot mast with a video camera.

### **REGION 1 – Western NY**

BUFFALO GENERAL MEDICAL CENTER (Kalida Health), Erie County, opened a new helipad in mid-February atop the "A" tower. Previously, critical patients arriving by medivac were transported first to the helipad at Erie County Medical Center (ECMC) and transferred by ground ambulance. Buffalo General, with the opening of its Gates Vascular Institute in 2012, expects good use of the helipad as a specialized tertiary care center providing cardiac, stroke and vascular care and operations. ECMC continues to be the region's Level 1 Trauma Center.

MILLARD FILLMORE GATES HOSPITAL (Kaleida Health), Buffalo, closed its Hyperbaric Medicine Program effective 11/30/11 and the facility will no longer provide hyperbaric treatment for individuals who have suffered from carbon monoxide poisoning or from "the bends" from diving accidents. The NYS DOH advised that patients with emergent carbon monoxide poisoning be transported to University Hospital in Syracuse. The distance is about 150 miles. Subsequently, the Western Regional Medical Advisory Committee issued a directive advising: All patients with symptoms of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning or "the bends" from diving shall be placed on high-flow oxygen via non-rebreather and transported as follows:

- Patients with burns and symptoms of CO poisoning shall be transported according to the *Adult and Pediatric Trauma Triage and Transport Guidelines*.
- Patients without burns, but with symptoms of CO poisoning or "the bends" shall be transported to the closest hospital.

CAMILLUS FIRE DEPARTMENT, Onondaga County, had its 501 (c)(3) status restored retroactively through the efforts of US Senator Charles Schumer enabling it to accept a \$13,000 donation that had been held up. Fundraising events such as hosting pancake breakfasts, comedy nights, etc can be resumed. Under a federal law passed in 2006, most tax-exempt groups must file an annual information return or notice with the IRS. For small organizations the law imposed a filing requirement for the first

time in 2007. The law also called for the automatic revocation of the tax-exempt status of any organization that does not file the required returns or notice for three consecutive years. The IRS notified non-profits nationwide that they had to keep current with filing paperwork such as FORM 990 annual informational returns if they wished to retain their ability to accept tax-deductible contributions. In 2011 the IRS began notifying non-complying organizations, mostly long inactive groups including 480 in central New York alone, that their 501 (c)(3) status had been revoked. Active organizations such as the Camillus Fire Department, that had for some reason failed to file the necessary annual paperwork also got caught up in the "housecleaning". Losing 501(c)(3) status would also affect an organization's ability to receive government and corporate grant. Organizations can regain their tax-exempt status but must file as if first time filers. A full list of New York organizations that lost their tax-exempt status is at [http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2011/06/irs\\_revokes\\_tax-exempt\\_status.html](http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2011/06/irs_revokes_tax-exempt_status.html)

EAST AREA VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY SERVICES (EAVES), Onondaga County, received a \$60,000 Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant. EAVES will use the federal funding to purchase three new Lifepaks, 15 cardiac monitors and an emergency generator for their station. In 2011, EAVES responded to 2,570 emergency calls in areas covered by the East Syracuse Fire District.

FINGER LAKES REMSCO, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne & Yates Counties

The region presented a proposal to SEMAC/SEMSCO to begin a pilot project on the application of continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) by basic life support personnel in the Finger Lakes Region. This project is in the beginning phases with some agencies already having been contacted regarding participation in the project. Other potential participating agencies have yet to be contacted and as the project gets closer to implementation more details will be made available.

The Regional EMS Program Agency is partnering with the Rochester Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO) for a Center for Medicate Services Innovation Challenge Grant. If approved, it would allow the region to provide ePCE capabilities to all of the agencies in the region to provide agencies with training in workflow redesign to more quickly complete PCRs and provide capabilities for all advanced level agencies to transmit 12 lead EKGs to Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) centers to better aid in the care of the region's cardiac patients. Additionally, as this project would move forward all of the agencies' PCR data would be set up to go directly into a regional standardized virtual patient record the RHIO has been developing for the past several years.

FAXTON-ST. LUKE'S EMS EDUCATION PROGRAM, Utica, NY, has been approved by the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Services to offer the Basic EMT Core Program on-line. This program is being offered to all Midstate REMSCO Basic EMT's whose agencies have been approved by the Bureau of EMS as participants of the Core (Pilot) program and would like to recertify their Basic EMT through the Core Program. Students are only required to attend 2 classes and can complete all Basic EMT Core requirements on line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Interested students can register for this program or if you would like more information, you can get this by calling Bill Perry at (315) 624-4539.

OGDENSBURG VOLUNTEER RESQUE SQUAD, St. Lawrence County, is waiting for expected confirmation of a \$1.5 million loan from the US Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Office to enable it to purchase and renovate a former retail location into its new headquarters. The \$1.7 million project calls for \$740,000 to be used for purchase of the Hackett's Hardware store 54,295 square foot building at 1223 Pickering Street and about \$1 million for renovations. In addition to the loan, the squad will cover expenses with cash and fundraisers. About 24,000 square feet will be used by the squad for housing its vehicles and for offices, training and meeting rooms, sleeping quarters and other accommodations. The remaining portions of the building will be offered for rent to help pay off the loan. If the loan is approved, the squad will pay \$90,000 over 30 years. Annual payments to the city in lieu of property taxes may also be involved. An alternative plan of building from the ground up on 25 acres of land owned by the squad was estimated at \$4 to 5 million and was ruled out.

ONONDAGA COUNTY is being permitted to use already-secured federal funds to enable the county to join the Central New York Interoperable Communications Consortium, which will boost public safety. Onondaga County had asked the US Department of Homeland Security for permission to spend \$325,000 of already disbursed funding to reprogram 1,000 public safety radios so that they can communicate with first responders in Madison, Cayuga, Oswego, and Cortland County. Citing department policy, DHS refused the request because the radios were originally purchased using non-DHS funding. Senator Charles Schumer was apprised of the situation and was able to get DHS to reverse its position in February. The regional build-out is progressing on schedule and it is expected that four of the five counties will be online by the end of 2012. Read Senator Schumer's press release at <http://schumer.senate.gov/Newsroom/record.cfm?id=336060>

ONONDAGA COUNTY SHERIFF'S medivac helicopter service available to 13 counties is facing budget issues. The Sheriff is reportedly seeking voluntary \$5,000 to \$10,000 annual payments from each county served.

OSWEGO COUNTY RADIO PROJECT -Oswego County is funding development of a Motorola P25 digital 10-Channel Trunked Land Mobile Radio System (TLMR) to replace the current 800 MHz radio system. There are 47 user agencies in Oswego County who will employ the new system. A local news outlet summarized the status. The first order of subscriber units, portables, mobile and control stations will be submitted in May and training will coincide with the roll-out of the new equipment. Testing is scheduled to be conducted in June, July and August and the new system is on track to be fully deployed and accepted in September. To achieve acceptance, the new system is required to work in 97 percent of the county with portable radios compared to the current system where mobile requirements were only 95 percent. This new communications system will use a total of 14 transmitter sites, compared to 6 with the old system. Existing towers in the city of Oswego, and the towns of Boylston, Constantia, Granby, Hastings and Redfield have all been refurbished and new towers in the city of Fulton and the towns of Orwell, Oswego, Redfield and Sandy Creek have been constructed. The radio sites and network design will have a very high reliability rating and provide continuous communications coverage, even in the event of equipment failure, natural or manmade incidents. A series of servers, monitors, and related equipment that supports the TLMR network is monitored from the Oswego County E-911 Center and connected to the master site in Onondaga County. This system is part of the Central NY Interoperable Communications Consortium (CNYICC). Cayuga and Madison counties are also part of this system and talks have begun in Cortland and Jefferson counties to incorporate them as well.

SUSQUEHANNA REGIONAL EMS COUNCIL (SREMS), serving Broome, Chenango & Tioga Counties, adopted ImageTrend for a Region-wide ePCR System, at a cost of about \$49,000 plus a few options. The SREMS ePCR Committee worked for a year to come up with a vender that would meet the needs of the Region and be cost effective. SREMS will be paying most of the approximately \$45,000 start-up costs and seeking contributions from other sources such as the hospitals in the region to pay for the balance - about \$15,000 for other options. For agencies that do less than 500 calls a year the annual cost will be a \$500 flat fee. For agencies that do over 500 calls a year, the cost will start at \$2.00 per call. The current ePCR system will be discontinued on January 1, 2013. The ePCR Committee will be working on getting a plan together, to assist in a timely cut-over to ImageTrend. Agencies may still use another vender at their own expense after getting approval from their Medical Director and REMAC to use a different vender. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation with additional information is online at <http://srems.com/site/newsFiles/Future-of-ePCR-in-the-Susquehanna-Regional-EMS-System.pdf>

## **REGION 2 – Northern NY**

CORINTH TOWN, Saratoga County, has begun operating the Town and Village of Corinth EMS, also known as the Jessup's Landing squad, under a temporary two year Municipal Certificate of Need. In order to avoid the significant costs involved in converting the temporary CON into a permanent one it is contesting the sale of Corinth Emergency Squad's Ambulance Operating Authority to Empire Ambulance Service, a commercial provider. Corinth severed its relationship with the volunteer squad over a dispute

about paid paramedics provided by the town and took back the ambulance it owned. On 10/24/11 the Hudson-Mohawk Valleys Regional EMS Council voted 11 to 0 with 7 abstentions to oppose the proposed sale to Empire. The council also questioned whether the certificate was valid since Corinth EMS hasn't been active in the previous 30 days, having last responded to a call in June. In its last days the volunteer squad reportedly hired Empire to respond to calls. This may be a non-issue as there is no indication the NYS DOH held a hearing to revoke to certificate. The proposed transfer now goes to the NYS DOH for review and decision.

ELIZABETHTOWN COMMUNITY HOSPITAL (ECH), Essex County, has obtained a NYS DOH Ambulance Operating Certificate and is operating a new ambulance service. It had previously relied on CVPH Medical Center's Westport based ambulance or a private service such as Varin's for interfacility transports but CVPH now has its ambulances based in Plattsburgh. Waiting 40 minutes for a transport unit and then another 40 minute drive to another facility was not acceptable. The Type II van ambulance was purchased in late 2011 and the hospital hired a driver, full time AEMT-CC and part time AEMT-CC to staff it and work in the Emergency Department when not on the ambulance. Other hospital staff are on call for evening and overnight coverage. Trauma, stroke and other critical transports are taken to Fletcher Allen's Level 1 Regional Trauma Center in Burlington, VT by medivac helicopter.

ESSEX COUNTY's radio system replacement project is moving forward with \$1.7 million of a \$10 million bond issue allocated to buy microwave equipment for the new county communications network's radio towers. \$24,800 was also allocated to buy Daniels Electronics VHF low-band radios to be used for emergency paging. Purchases of vehicle radios, consoles and base radios will follow. Local news reports indicate the county is replacing a 1950's era analog system with a digital network. Fire, EMS and other emergency responders will use VHF low-band frequencies for initial dispatch and VHF high-band frequencies for communications between mobile units and with the 911 Center in Lewis. The system design calls for 95% radio coverage throughout the county through a network of 17 tower sites. NYS Electric & Gas, NYS Police and others will contribute \$1.4 million in exchange for placing their antennas on the county's towers. With timely agreement from the Adirondack Park Agency, the system is expected to be operational by Spring 2013.

JEFFERSON COUNTY is reportedly seeking to establish its own medivac helicopter program through a private company as an alternative to calling on Onondaga County Sheriff's resources. The plan is for residents to buy a subscription through a company which would transport them in time of need without further cost. The problem is that such subscriptions programs are considered by the NYS Department of Financial Services to be insurance that can only be sold by licensed insurance companies. Ground ambulance services have already gone this route and had to discontinue subscription programs. Bills were introduced in the Senate and Assembly last year that would exempt air ambulance subscription services from the definition of an insurance company but stalled in the Assembly.

LEWIS COUNTY is making plans to upgrade its radio system after a reviewing the results of a \$53,000 study. The present system has a number of deficiencies including spotty coverage in many areas of the county, little interoperability between emergency agencies and the need to implement narrowband frequencies. According to a local news report, the study by a company called Federal Engineering, provided two cost estimates, one at \$6.4 million and the other at \$11.6 million. Both estimates included a new transmitter system, four new towers, equipment for all paid and volunteer emergency personnel, site development project management and contingency costs. The lower estimate figured in shorter towers, one fewer console at the dispatch center, minimal costs for acquisition of tower sites and lower-tier user equipment. NY Office of Homeland Security officials are slated to visit Lewis County to look over the present radio system and equipment and county officials then plan to submit an application for funding to help start the upgrade process. More than \$20 million was awarded in the initial round of funding for emergency communication projects throughout the state, and Federal Engineering officials said there will be three more rounds later this year. Narrowbanding costs are projected at about \$75,000 and will be handled separately from the radio system upgrades, since narrowbanding will need to be in place by 1/1/13.

**REGION 3 – Capital District, Hudson Valley, Catskills, Southern NY**

HUDSON MOHAWK VALLEY REGIONAL EMS COUNCIL (REMO) moved to 431 New Karner Road (Route 155), Albany, NY 12205. REMO serves Albany, Columbia, Greene, Saratoga, Rensselaer and Schenectady Counties.

HUDSON VALLEY REGIONAL EMS COUNCIL moved to a new location at 103 Executive Drive, Suite 400, New Windsor, NY 12553.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY is receiving two (2) Medical Ambulance Busses under an Urban Area Security Initiative grant. The units will be constructed to generic specifications developed by FDNY which is receiving five (5) units. The vehicles are designed for evacuation purposes and priority is given to maximum stretcher and wheelchair patient transport capacity rather than equipment storage for on-scene operations. One of the units will be at the Department of Emergency Services in Valhalla and the other will be assigned to the Yonkers Fire Department's Special Operations Command. The Westchester Regional EMS Council (REMSCO) will develop operational policies for mobilization, staffing, communications, supplies, etc. A statement was made at a Westchester REMSCO meeting that fire department based deployment for these large vehicles with air brakes is preferred because of the exemption of fire service drivers from state Commercial Drivers License (CDL) requirements. The NYS Motor Vehicle Law was amended in 2009 and regained for the fire service an exemption from CDL requirements for fire apparatus when used in official functions, such as going to and returning from calls, training, inspections, drills and parades. However, there is a provision in the law requiring a CDL for vehicles carrying more than a certain number of passengers which may include a medical ambulance bus.

WESTCHESTER MEDICAL CENTER's Emergency Department in Valhalla held a ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony on 3/2/12 to mark the opening of its dedicated "EMS Crew Room". This room is available to prehospital care providers as a location to complete their prehospital care report, a place to rest and a place to stay current on WMC course offerings and announcements.