

COUNTY OF VENTURA HEALTH CARE AGENCY		EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	
Policy Title: Air Unit Staffing Requirements		Policy Number: 1201	
Approved Administration: Steven L. Carroll, Paramedic		Date: June 1, 2015	
Approved Medical Director: Angelo Salvucci, MD		Date: June 1, 2015	
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- I. **PURPOSE:** To provide guidelines for classification and staffing level for air unit(s) authorized or licensed to operate in Ventura County as a part of the Emergency Medical Services system.
- II. **AUTHORITY:** Health and Safety Code: 1797.103, 1797.206, 1797.218, 1797.220, 1797.252, 1798.2 and 1798.102. CCR, Title XXII, Division 9, Chapter 8: Prehospital EMS Air Regulations.
- III. **POLICY:** Ventura County helicopters will be classified and staffed with medical personnel appropriate to the needs of the patient, according to this policy.
- IV. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. **Air Ambulance Service:** An air transportation service, which utilizes air ambulances.
 - B. **EMS Aircraft Classifications:**
 1. **Air Ambulance**
Any aircraft specially constructed, modified or equipped, and used for the primary purposes of responding to emergency calls and transporting critically ill or injured patients whose medical flight crew has a minimum two attendants certified or licensed in advanced life support (ALS).
 2. **Rescue Aircraft**
An aircraft whose usual function is not prehospital emergency patient transport but which may be utilized, in compliance with local EMS policy, for prehospital emergency patient transport when use of an air or ground ambulance is inappropriate or unavailable. Rescue aircraft includes ALS rescue aircraft, BLS rescue aircraft and Auxiliary rescue aircraft.
 1. "ALS Rescue Aircraft": a rescue aircraft whose medical flight crew has at least one (1) attendant licensed and/or accredited to provide ALS.
 2. "BLS Rescue Aircraft": a rescue aircraft whose medical flight crew has at least one (1) attendant certified as an EMT

3. Auxiliary Aircraft:

Auxiliary Aircraft: a rescue aircraft which does not have a medical flight crew, or whose medical flight crew does not meet the minimum requirements established.

C. Medical Flight Crew: The individuals(s), excluding the pilot, specifically assigned to care for the patient during aircraft transport.

D. Classifying EMS Agency: The agency, which categorizes the EMS aircraft into the groups identified in Section 100300(c)(3) of Title 22, California Code of Regulations. This shall be the local EMS agency in the jurisdiction of origin except for aircraft operated by the California Highway Patrol, the California Department of Forestry or the California National Guard which shall be classified by the EMS Authority.

Note: Military Aircraft are not in the EMS Authority's purview.

E. Authorizing EMS Agency: The local EMS agency which approves utilization of specific EMS aircraft within its jurisdiction.

V. PROCEDURE

A. Aircraft Staffing Requirements

1. Air Ambulance: The medical flight crew has at a minimum two (2) attendants certified or licensed in advanced life support.

2. Advanced Life Support (ALS) Rescue: The medical flight crew has at a minimum one attendant certified or licensed in advanced life support.

3. Basic Life Support (BLS) Rescue Aircraft: The medical flight crew has at a minimum one attendant certified as an EMT with at least eight (8) hours of hospital clinical training and whose field/clinical experience specified in Section 100074 (c) of Title 22, California Code of Regulations, is in the air methods transport of patients.

4. Auxiliary Aircraft: An aircraft that does not have a medical flight crew.

B. Criteria for EMS Personnel to Staff Air Unit

1. Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic (PARAMEDIC)

a. When staffing a SAR air unit based in Ventura County, a paramedic shall be:

- 1) Accredited in Ventura County,
- 2) Designated as a level II PARAMEDIC, per VC EMS Policy 318

b. When accompanying an RN on an air ambulance, a paramedic shall be accredited in Ventura County.

c. An Paramedic who meets the requirements of IV.B.a.1-2 and is selected to staff an air unit may work with an EMT who meets the requirements for a SAR EMT. The names of all paramedics selected to work with SAR EMT will be submitted to VCEMS.

2. SAR Emergency Medical Technician I

- a. While assigned to work with a paramedic on a Ventura County based air unit, a SAR EMT shall:
 - 1) Successfully complete the training module described in VCEMS Policy 306. The SAR EMT is not required to complete the arrhythmia/defibrillation component of the module.
 - 2) Meet skill maintenance requirements.
 - 3) Perform duties as described below.
 - b. SAR EMT Duties and Responsibilities
 - 1) Those functions within the EMT Scope of Practice.
 - 2) May transmit information to a Base Hospital regarding paramedic activity and transport information, but may not ask for, receive, or pass on ALS orders.
3. Registered Nurses
- a. RN with a minimum of two (2) years experience in a critical care area within the previous three (3) years, prior to employment with the provider agency.
 - b. Current BLS and ACLS certification from the American Heart Association.
 - c. Minimum of 384 hours of critical care area (including time worked as a CCT RN) experience per year, unless employed full time as a critical care transfer nurse.
 - d. Successful completion of an in-house orientation program sponsored by the provider agency.
 - f. Endotracheal intubation training.
 - h. Certification in any of the following: Certified Emergency Nurse (CEN); Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN); Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN); Certified Nurse Anesthetist; Post Anesthesia Recovery Nurse (PAR); or Certified Flight Registered Nurse (CFRN) or challenge/pass Ventura County MICN test.
- C. Initial Education for Medical Flight Crews
1. All Medical Flight Crew personnel shall receive training in air methods transportation, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. General patient care in-flight.
 - b. Changes in barometric pressure, and pressure related maladies.
 - c. Changes in partial pressure of oxygen.
 - d. Other environmental factors affecting patient care.
 - e. Aircraft operational systems.

- f. Aircraft emergencies and safety.
 - g. Care of patients requiring special consideration in the airborne environment.
 - h. EMS system and communications procedures.
 - i. The prehospital care system(s) within which they operate, including local medical and procedural protocols.
 - j. Use of onboard medical equipment.
2. Air Unit service providers will provide documentation of training to VC EMS.
- D. Continuing Education Requirements
1. All medical flight crews shall participate in such continuing education requirements as required by their licensure or certification and as defined in VC EMS Policy 334.
- a. All registered nurses, regardless of the certification which qualifies them to serve as flight nurses within Ventura County, must attend EMS updates twice yearly.
 - b. Flight Nurses who challenge and pass the MICN examination to comply with this policy must meet the continuing education requirements of thirty-six (36) hours per recertification cycle, 50% of which, in each category, shall have been obtained at Ventura County Base Hospitals.
 - (1) Field Care Audits (Field care audit): Twelve hours per two years.
 - (2) Periodic training sessions (Lecture/Seminar): Twelve hours per two years.
 - (a) EMS Updates (Mandatory, two times per year)
 - (b) ACLS recertification – 2 hours credit
 - (c) Self-Study/Video CE
 - (3) Miscellaneous Education: Twelve hours per two years.
 - c. SAR EMT Requirements (In addition to EMT recertification requirements)
 - (1) Skills Update - 2 hours per certification period
 - (2) EMS Updates – Mandatory, two times per year
2. Air Unit service providers will provide documentation of continuing education to VC EMS.