



State of Maryland
Maryland Institute *for* Emergency Medical Services Systems

Wes Moore
Governor

Clay B. Stamp
Chairman, EMS Board

Theodore R. Delbridge, MD, MPH
Executive Director

Maryland Emergency Medical System Operations Fund

**House Appropriations Committee
Public Safety and Administration Subcommittee
February 22, 2023**

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Public Safety, Transportation and Environment Subcommittee
February 23, 2023**

**Clay B. Stamp, NRP
Chairman, State Emergency Medical Services Board**

Good afternoon. On behalf of all EMS Board members, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to discuss the status of the Maryland Emergency Medical Services Operations Fund (MEMSOF). I also want to thank Madelyn Miller of the Department of Legislative Services for her comprehensive analysis of the MEMSOF and its future.

The Maryland EMS System is a coordinated statewide network that includes volunteer and career EMS providers, medical and nursing personnel, communications, transportation systems, trauma and specialty care centers and emergency departments. Maryland's EMS system has long been recognized as a national model. The State Emergency Medical Services Board, whose members are appointed by the Governor, oversees the statewide EMS System and reviews and approves the budgets of four of the entities supported by the MEMSOF.

The MEMSOF provides support for critical components of our statewide emergency medical services system:

- MIEMSS
- MSP Aviation Command's Medevac Program
- R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center
- Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute
- Amoss Grants that provide monies to local jurisdictions for the purchase of fire and rescue equipment and capital building improvements

The MEMSOF is supported by a vehicle registration fee surcharge originally enacted in 1992; and funding from moving violations provides additional MEMSOF revenue. Because the vehicle registration fee surcharge is not sensitive to inflation, however, it has required periodic increases to ensure MEMSOF viability. For this reason, the EMS Board, the General Assembly and the Governor have closely monitored the health of the MEMSOF.

The analysis indicates the MEMSOF will be insolvent in FY24. Insolvency endangers the ongoing operations of the MEMSOF-supported entities. Ensuring that MEMSOF remains solvent and is able to provide the financial foundation for the statewide EMS system is a critical need. We are committed to working with the General Assembly and the Governor to identify and implement approaches that will ensure the viability of MEMSOF.

On behalf of all the MEMSOF-funded entities, the State EMS Board would like to express our gratitude to the General Assembly for its strong support of the MEMSOF and our statewide system. With your support, the MEMSOF will remain the strong foundation of our coordinated and effective statewide system of emergency care. We look forward to continuing to work with the General Assembly to the betterment of Maryland's statewide EMS system.



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**Theodore R. Delbridge, MD, MPH
MIEMSS Executive Director**

The Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) is an independent state agency that coordinates all components of the statewide EMS system in accordance with policies set by the State EMS Board and Maryland statute and regulation. MIEMSS' areas of responsibility include medical oversight, promulgating statewide clinical protocols, coordinating and supporting EMS educational programs, licensing and certifying EMS clinicians, maintaining and operating a statewide communications system, designating trauma and specialty centers, licensing and regulating commercial ambulance services, and participating in EMS-related public education and prevention programs.

We are grateful for the efforts of the General Assembly to ensure the ongoing viability of the Maryland Emergency Medical Services Operations Fund (MEMSOF). The analysis by Madelyn Miller is comprehensive and thoughtful. We thank her for her work, as well as that of the Department of Budget and Management and Rebecca Bizzarri, MIEMSS' DBM budget analyst.

The health of the entire statewide EMS system depends on the MEMSOF. Among the core programs and initiatives it funds is the majority of the MIEMSS operating budget, anticipated to be approximately 83% in FY24.

I would like to provide a few brief comments highlighting some of our efforts over the past year that have been possible through the support provided by the MEMSOF.

MIEMSS operates and maintains the statewide medical communications system, which connects EMS clinicians treating an ill or injured patient to receive medical direction from hospital-based physicians and alerts emergency departments to the impending arrival of EMS-transported emergency patients. The many components of the EMS communications system include approximately 200 tower sites and 50 hospitals within and adjacent to the state. MIEMSS is in the midst of a multi-year project to upgrade our EMS communications system technology from analog to digital and provide structural updates to support an IP-based, geo-diverse communications system based on contemporary standards. MIEMSS has also partnered with the Harford County Department of Emergency Services to establish a back-up center location in their 9-1-1 center which will fully support our current communications operations to allow for better Continuity of Operations in the event the primary communications center, located at MIEMSS headquarters, becomes unusable due to a building infrastructure failure, disaster or other unplanned event.

MIEMSS continues to work to mitigate the impact of emergency department crowding on EMS which has worsened in recent years. In partnership with the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP), we are developing a new method to monitor Emergency Departments' patient census and replace the outmoded system currently in use. MIEMSS has also developed a web-based application to provide EMS clinicians with real-time awareness of ambulance activity at hospitals, to help them make informed decisions regarding patient destinations. Called "@HA" (short for At-Hospital Ambulances), information on the dashboard includes hospital, number of ambulances at the hospital, the ambulances' jurisdictions and the minimum and maximum times the ambulances have been at the hospital.

With the changes in the health care system brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, and staffing challenges, EMS-to-Emergency Department transfer of care time intervals have increased significantly over the past several months. “Transfer of care” refers to the time interval between EMS arrival at the hospital and when the hospital emergency department accepts care of the patient. These extended, often hours-long delays at the hospitals have impeded the ability of jurisdictions to respond to incoming 9-1-1 calls, as EMS waits to transfer patients to emergency department beds. To help lessen the frequency of such delays, MIEMSS promulgated a “Direct to Triage” Protocol to facilitate delivery of stable patients to emergency department triage waiting areas. It helps ensure emergency department resources are prioritized most appropriately. We have also convened a Collaborative of Hospital Emergency Services to share best practices and develop statewide approaches to managing challenges.

These are but a few of MIEMSS’ current initiatives. We are grateful for the General Assembly’s support of the MEMSOF and we are committed to working with the Governor and the General Assembly to identify and implement solutions to ensure the long-term viability of the Maryland EMS Operations Fund.



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LT. COLONEL
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ACTING SUPERINTENDENT

February 22, 2023

Subject: 410101 - Posting of Testimony – MEMSOF Operating Budget Fiscal 2024 - Maryland State Police Aviation Command

Maryland Department of State Police
Fiscal Year 2024 MEMSOF Operating Budget
Response to Department of Legislative Services Analysis - Maryland Emergency Medical Systems Operations Fund

House Appropriations Committee
Public Safety & Admin. Subcommittee
Delegate Tony Bridges, Chair
Delegate Julian Ivey, Vice Chair
February 22, 2023

The Maryland State Police Aviation Command (MSPAC) remains the leading public safety organization in essential statewide aviation services to the citizenry of Maryland. Its mission to protect and improve the quality of life is accomplished through the airborne delivery of emergency medical, law enforcement, search and rescue, homeland security and disaster assessment services. The MSPAC operates 10 Leonardo AW139 helicopters and one fixed-wing aircraft from seven strategically-placed bases throughout the State 24-hours a day, seven days a week. All helicopters are dispatched from a central operational control center staffed by dedicated State Police and Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems certified communications specialists. In October 2020, an independent study of MSPAC's basing structure, the strategic locations of the seven bases and the integrated emergency medical system within which the helicopters operate resulted in an outstanding response rate of at least 95 percent and an ability to be on-scene within 25 minutes.

The MSPAC continues to capitalize on its multi-mission capability by combining the superior performance of the AW139 helicopter and our dedicated and highly-skilled personnel. In 2022, the MSPAC, with the support of its pilots, trooper/flight paramedics and maintenance technicians, safely completed 1,803 scene medevacs, flying 1,861 patients; responded to 157 law enforcement missions, assisting with the arrests of 45 suspects; flew 162 search and rescue missions, locating 75 victims; and completed eight hoist/aerial rescue operations, rescuing eight victims. MSPAC aircraft logged more than 2,294 flight hours in support of the Agency's missions.

The MSPAC training staff conducted 163 hours of intensive training in the Flight Training Device and coordinated more than 600 hours of quarterly medical continuing education, skills evaluations, and hoist training. Under the leadership of the State Air Medical Director, and in coordination with research provided by the University of Maryland Blood Bank and the R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma,

**SUBJECT: 410101 - POSTING OF TESTIMONY – MEMSOF OPERATING BUDGET FISCAL 2024 –
MARYLAND STATE POLICE AVIATION COMMAND**

trooper/clinician instructors are finishing up the steps and policy development to carry and administer whole blood to critical patients on MSPAC aircraft. Additionally, the seven sections completed more than 710 hours of in-aircraft training for its crews.

Due to a nationwide shortage of pilots and the aggressive commercial airline recruitment and salary enhancement campaigns, the MSPAC continues to face challenges recruiting qualified pilots and aviation maintenance technicians. Despite these obstacles, the MSPAC was able to hire three (3) new pilots and two (2) new aviation maintenance technicians in 2022. In addition, the MSPAC was able to promote and internally upgrade sixteen (16) current pilots and two (2) aviation maintenance technicians creating vacancies in entry level positions which are often easier to fill with new hires. The MSPAC was also able to hire five new (5) trooper medics who successfully graduated from the police academy, completed field training and aircrew training. In addition, thirteen (13) trooper medics were upgraded from Rescue Technician to Crew Chief. The MSPAC proactively recruits to fill vacancies in an accelerated format through a revised MSPAC Human Resources Division-designed Recruiting Plan of Action.

The MSPAC applauds the hard work of the MEMSOF Coalition, the Emergency Medical Services Board, the Department of Budget and Management and the Department of Legislative Services in its preparation and analysis of the budget before you today. The MSPAC, along with its partners, acknowledges the forecasted insolvency of the EMSOF and intends to maximize the resources provided in the FY 2024 budget in order to continue its commitment to excellence when providing airborne public safety aviation services to the citizenry of Maryland.

Should the MEMSOF become insolvent, the MSP would need to seek a supplemental funding source or identify MSP general funds to support the remaining 80% of the MSPAC budget. If the MSPAC was no longer able to fulfill its medically oriented mission, EMS ground providers would be forced to utilize commercial helicopter services to transport patients to area trauma centers. Costs associated with these helicopter services would then be the responsibility of patients and insurance providers. Currently, there is no charge to patients for MSPAC's helicopter transport services. In addition, there are currently no statewide supplemental aerial search and rescue providers as well as no other aerial hoisting rescue services in the State of Maryland. Without this component of MSPAC's program, the state of Maryland and EMS ground providers would need to identify another agency to be able to perform these services and/or develop new rescue protocols to reach injured and trapped patients on Maryland's waterways and mountainous terrain.

Respectfully,



Major M. R. Tagliaferri
Aviation Command
Maryland Department of State Police



Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget (MEMSOF)

House Public Safety and Administration Subcommittee (Appropriations)

Hearing date February 22, 2023

The Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI) a part of the University of Maryland since 1930, is the State's comprehensive training and education system for the emergency services. The Institute delivers high quality EMS/Fire/Rescue training programs to every jurisdiction of the State and on average MFRI trains approximately 34,000 students each year.

The Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI) operates a main training facility headquartered at the University of Maryland campus in College Park. Likewise, MFRI also operates six additional full-fledged regional training centers strategically located throughout the state. The regional training centers are located in:

- MFRI Headquarters/College Park Training Center (UMD Campus College Park, MD-servicing- Prince Georges County)
- Northeast Regional Training Center (Edgewood, MD - servicing- Baltimore, Cecil, and Hartford Counties)
- Western Maryland Regional Training Center (Cresaptown, MD - servicing- Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties)
- North Central Regional Training Center (Mt. Airy, MD - servicing – Carroll, Frederick, and Montgomery Counties)
- Upper Eastern Shore Regional Training Center (Centreville, MD – Servicing Anne Arundel, Kent, Talbot, and Queen Anne Counties)
- Lower Eastern Shore Regional Training Center (Princess Anne, MD – Servicing – Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties)
- Southern Maryland Regional Training Center (LaPlata, MD – servicing- Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties)

MFRI training programs are essential with regard to a fast and efficient response force to mitigate EMS/Fire/Rescue and all hazards emergencies. There is no effective response to emergencies in this state without a training program to prepare the responders to deal with the emergency situation at hand, as well as, to protect themselves from the inherent dangers of being a firefighter or emergency medical provider.

Given that many of the emergency response personnel in Maryland serve as volunteers, the expenditures for training programs may be one of the best investments in the State. It should be noted, that before a volunteer/career firefighter, EMT or paramedic can even begin to contribute to their communities they must receive proper training. If this training is not available, the service is lost.

In many areas of the state, MFRI represents the sole training source for EMS, Fire, and Rescue personnel. As such, it is important to continue our current initial certification classes, mandatory refresher programs, and address emerging issues facing emergency responders as needed. For many of the reasons stated above, MFRI training courses are in high demand throughout the state. Unfortunately, there are more training classes requested than the Institute can provide.

While MFRI continues to meet the demands of our emergency responders. Our ability to do so, is directly related to the financial resources available within the MEMSOF. The funding that has been granted to the Institute in the past several years has been directly applied to increasing the number of program requests, additional training hours, and the quality of MFRI training programs.

Frequently, due to changes in curriculum, protocols or national standards, the manner in which actual teaching/testing is delivered at times requires major changes to our programs. These changes require major adjustments such as:

- Purchasing interactive training programs to provide targeted activities, tutoring, and monitoring, as well as, exam preparation and delivery
- Additional instructor responsibilities due to changes and/or increases in curriculum hours.
- Additional training for instructors as a result of curriculum changes, the operation of interactive programs, and new delivery methods or platforms.
- Development/purchase of new test banks, programs, and equipment to address new curriculum, standards or emerging issues.

MFRI stands ready to continue its important work of preparing our EMS/Fire/Rescue personnel in the State of Maryland for the ultimate challenge of mitigating all emergencies they are asked to respond.

I would like to thank you for your attention in this matter and ask for your consideration/support in the allocation of adequate resources within the MEMSOF fund to fulfill our State mandated mission to prepare our first responders to successfully mitigate the incidents they are called upon to respond.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Cox, Jr.

Michael E. Cox, Jr., MS, CFO, EFO, NRP
Executive Director



**THE MARYLAND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES OPERATING FUND
(MEMSOF)**

**Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget
Response to Department of Legislative Services Analysis**

**Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Senate Public Safety Transportation & Environment Subcommittee**

Senator Sarah K. Elfreth

February 23, 2023

**House Appropriations Committee
House Public Safety & Administration Subcommittee**

Delegate Tony Bridges

February 22, 2023

Good afternoon Mr. & Ms. Chairman and members of the committee. I am Kristie Snedeker, Vice President of the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, University of Maryland Medical Center. I am pleased to be here today with my esteemed colleagues and as part of the coalition supporting the Maryland Emergency Medical Services Operations Fund (MEMSOF). We are also partners along with our elected officials in ensuring safety and care of Maryland citizens.

MEMSOF has been a cornerstone of this State's capability to provide every citizen a broad and uncompromised safety net. As a special protected fund, it allows the system to respond instantaneously to the variability of Maryland's political and economic fortunes.

As established by State law, the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center is the core element of the State's Emergency Medical Services System and serves as the State's Primary Adult Resource Center (PARC) for the treatment of trauma. Specifically, the law mandates Shock Trauma to serve as (a) the State's primary adult trauma center, (b) the statewide referral center for the treatment of head, spinal and multiple trauma injuries, (c) the regional trauma center for Region III and the southwest quadrant of Baltimore City, and (d) the statewide referral center for patients in need of hyperbaric medical treatment.

The R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center is the State's only freestanding trauma hospital. It serves as a vital statewide clinical resource and uniquely maintains an around-the-clock state of readiness in its dedicated trauma resuscitation unit (TRU), operating rooms and recovery rooms. Over the past ten years, Shock Trauma has diverted zero patients seeking access directly from the scene. The facility and its staff are organized for on-demand access and treatment of the State's most critically ill and injured patients to a degree unparalleled anywhere in the system. The MIEMSS PARC designation represents the State's highest level of capability and



readiness. As a result, the Shock Trauma Center has unique operating and financial requirements that distinguish it from any other Maryland trauma center and are the basis for State operating support.

Stand-By Costs

As a trauma hospital, Shock Trauma is designed expressly for the emergency care of significantly injured patients from resuscitation to discharge. Shock Trauma has 24-hour, 7-day a week coverage with trauma operating room nurses, trauma resuscitation nurses, trauma surgical technologist and trauma certified registered nurse anesthetists. These costs are underfunded and not established in hospital rates. Projected costs for fiscal year 2024 are \$9,287,011.

The Shock Trauma Center has always received financial support from the State for operating and capital expenses. The Governor has included \$3.7 million in state operating support for Shock Trauma for fiscal year 2024.

In addition to the Stand-by Costs, the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center faces unfunded mandates for being the Primary Adult Resource Center for the State of Maryland. Annually, expenditures include costs for an Go-Team operations, unfunded emergency medical services research, outreach and prevention programs as well as training and education requirements.

MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Representing the Volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Personnel



House Appropriations Committee
Public Safety & Admin. Subcommittee
Delegate Tony Bridges, Chair
February 22, 2023

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Public Safety Trans. & Env. Subcommittee
Senator Sarah Elfreth, Chair
February 23, 2023

RE: Maryland Emergency Services Operating Fund

The grants to local fire, rescue, and ambulance services (Amoss Fund) – aid to county government for fire protection rescue and ambulances.

Was enacted in 1985 to support fire and rescue services across our state. This is a line item in our annual state budget. The fund provides 15 million per year in financial aid to continue to provide and promote effective and high-quality fire protection, rescue, and ambulance services, across our spectrum of volunteer services.

Each county shares in the 15 million dollars that the fund receives on an annual basis. With rise in costs of fire, rescue, and ambulances this put a significant strain on the funds received annually. The fund has not had an increase in the last 10 years. The rising cost of equipment for each of these disciplines puts and additional strain on the volunteer's budgets. With a decrease in the abilities to perform fundraising over the last several years due to COVID, this has added additional financial strain to our system. The Amoss fund allows for fire, rescue, and ambulance services to project purchases or to rehabilitate new or used equipment. A 5 million dollar increase to the Amoss funding would provide a needed boost to offset rising costs.

We along with many other entities are experiencing the rising costs to our everyday business needs. This is a vital funding mechanism to our departments and counties.

The current Maryland Emergency Medical Services Operational Fund (MEMSOF), fund that helps support the Amoss Fund at it current rate will be in serious jeopardy in FY25 and is at risk of insolvency.

The Maryland State Firemen's Association is respectfully asking that you take into consideration an increase in the Amoss Fund and provide stability to our fire and rescue system by increasing our funding across the spectrum with our MEMSOF partners.

Under our current mechanism our funds are allotted from our motor vehicle registration via a surcharge. We would ask that you look at an additional funding mechanism that would provide stability to this fund. In addition to the current surcharge for vehicle registrations, we ask that you add a surcharge to moving violations or the marijuana sales tax. By doing this this could offset some of our inflationary costs that we are experiencing. We also ask that you provide some stability to our Amoss funding.

Our MEMSOF, funds are vital to supporting the health of our statewide fire, rescue, and EMS system as we know it today. It allows jurisdictions an ability to potentially offset operational costs and continue to assist with our recruit and rention efforts across the state.

Respectfully,

Eric Smothers, NREMTP, CCEMTP
1st Vice President
Maryland State Firemen's Association