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Standard Guide for Interagency Information Exchange¹

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INTRODUCTION

This guide has been developed to address the need to provide for effective information exchange between agencies involved in responding to emergency medical services (EMS) situations.

Communications in the context of this guide refers to the communications that need to occur (1) prior to the EMS event, (2) during the EMS event, and (3) after the EMS event. *Communications* in this guide includes face-to-face communications, telecommunications, and written communications.

Before EMS events, the agencies that need to work closely together in emergency medical situations need to hold face-to-face meetings to develop communication plans that include an interagency communications component. These communication plans need to include written protocols outlining how the emergency response agencies will interface with each other during EMS events.

During the actual event, the agencies need to communicate either directly between emergency units, or through dispatch centers, or face-to-face (for example, communications related to implementing protocols or communications regarding decision making between agencies' senior officials, or combination thereof). After an emergency, there is a need for the agencies to critique the response. This may include face-to-face meetings to review the events, written critique reports of the emergency events, and revisions to the written protocols as may be found necessary by review of the events. (See the Rationale in [Appendix X1](#).)

1. Scope

1.1 This guide covers the planning, operations, and evaluation phases of interagency communications as part of a comprehensive EMS system.

1.2 This is a guide for interagency communications within an EMS system. Interagency communications involves the EMS responder and support agencies whose primary mission is *not* to deliver prehospital emergency medical care.

1.3 The primary focus of this guide is to address interagency communications necessary for ongoing EMS responses.

1.4 The guide also addresses interagency communications in any major EMS incident, including man-made or natural disasters.

1.5 The recommendations for drills/exercises for the evaluation of interagency communications during an EMS event are also incorporated into this guide.

1.6 Additional information can be found in Guide [F1220](#) and Refs [\(1-5\)](#).²

1.7 The sections in this guide appear in the following sequence:

	Section
Introduction	
Scope	1
Referenced Documents	2
Terminology	3
Significance and Use	4
Procedure	5
Rationale	Appendix X1
Keywords	
References	6

1.8 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.9 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the*

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [F30](#) on Emergency Medical Services and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [F30.04](#) on Communications.

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² The boldface numbers in parentheses refer to the references at the end of this guide.