



# The Surge

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The Hampton Roads Metropolitan Medical Strike Team Newsletter

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Task Force Leadership	2
EMS Operations	2
QDE Update	2
Training and Gear issues	3
Logistics	3
Important Reminders	4

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## Personal Sustainability for Deployment - P. Hoyle

In order to be effective in disaster operations, HRMMRS Strike Team has to be able to work under the conditions that exist upon our arrival until sufficient resources arrive to support these operations. It is very likely that these conditions will not allow for provision of basic needs, such as food, water, medications, etc. for a while, possibly several days. For any response to be effective, strike team members must be able to be self-sufficient for this period of time.

Strike Team managers and members recognize this need for self-sufficiency, but the need to keep the logistics footprint of the strike team as small as practical is paramount. Fiscal constraints, as well as staffing and apparatus limitations, preclude strike team logistics from supplying the personal sufficiency resources necessary for the first several hours of an operation. The responding members of the Strike Team must arrive with the necessary food and water to operate effectively for the first 72 hours of a deployment.

instances, HRMMRS Strike Team members will not be working under normal conditions. Military studies of troops working under extreme conditions indicate that water needs more than double over normal conditions. Remember to at the minimum, fill your Camelback device prior to deploying. Refer to MIR3 messages and any plans information available for an idea of potential operational time periods and try to plan accordingly. Electrolyte solutions in individual powdered packages (such as Propel and Gatorade) are also very important to pack. Known cases have been reported of disaster response personnel "washing out" by drinking too much water without proper electrolyte replacement. During the actual event, team safety officers and task force leaders will provide more information about environmental conditions and the ratio needed of water to electrolyte solutions.

How much and what kind of food do you need to bring? Estimates of caloric needs for working in extreme environments vary between two and three thousand calories per day. That's a pretty easy target to hit. The types of foods recommended vary considerably, but the one thing they have in common is robust packaging and no need for refrigeration or cooking. A lot of response workers favor some kind of packaged meals, such as MRE's, with a healthy dose of energy bars tossed in. Those with medical issues should be cognizant of the high sodium levels found in many prepackaged food products. Keep your stash nutritionally bal-

anced. And remember that many small packages are easier to deal with than a couple of large ones.

Personal hygiene products will make everyone happier. New sealed toothbrushes, travel toilet paper or flattened rolls in Ziploc bags, and baby wipes are highly recommended. Bug repellent (high concentration DEET) will be greatly appreciated during most of the year. Sunscreen is also very important and prevents discomfort and potentially deployment ending injuries. Personal medications are a must. Pack enough for at least 72 hours. OTC meds may be appropriate, depending on your personal situation. If you wear contact lenses, please remember to bring the appropriate supplies.

Remember that all of this stuff must be carried around, so too much is only slightly better than not enough. Everything should easily fit into your kit bags without stressing the zippers.

Final note: Personal fitness and health has a significant impact on your consumption of resources as well as your ability to operate in difficult environments. And, like everything else mentioned, it must be addressed *before* deployment notification. Becoming a casualty ourselves is not going to improve the overall efficiency of the operation.

So get in there and take a look at your kit bags before you need them. What's there? What's not? Repack and prepare prior to the MIR3 notice for deployment.



So what is needed for members to remain personally effective for the first operational periods? The most important need is potable water; enough to satisfy personal drinking needs for 72 hours. Under normal conditions, the average person needs between 3/4 and one gallon of water per day. However, in most

## Task Force Leader



This edition's featured key leader of the HRMMST chain of command is Brigade Chief John Fusco of Virginia Beach EMS. Chief Fusco is designated to serve as one the six

possible Task Force Leaders on the Hampton Roads Metropolitan

Medical Response Strike Team.

Chief Fusco has been with the Virginia Beach Department of EMS since 1987 and currently serves as a career brigade chief. He was one of the first brigade chiefs hired by the department in 2003. Shift commander of A shift, he oversees one career EMS captain, 8 career medics, 16 or more on-duty volunteer rescue members and Fire Department personnel when they are running medical

calls.

Chief Fusco holds multiple instructorships, including EMT, ACLS and PALS. He has been an adjunct faculty member at Tidewater Community College for the past 15 years.

He retired from the U.S. Navy as Senior Chief Petty Officer and was a member of the Chesapeake Fire Department from 1991-2005, serving as a paramedic and EMS Lieutenant.

## EMS Operations



The purpose of this column is to introduce strike team members to the various types of equipment found in the HRMMST caches.

In this issue, the featured equipment item is the SWAT-T™ tourniquet. The SWAT-T™ tourniquet, a unique and multipurpose dressing, allows for a more rapid means to control extremity bleeding and also allows application higher into the groin and axilla than other tourniquets.

The name of this tourniquet pro-

vides a description for its usage: Stretch, Wrap and Tuck. Originally developed for military and civilian special weapons and tactics teams, this device is easy to apply. Providers can effectively apply this device in seconds with little or no prior training. The SWAT-T™ is located in the Triage Kits and in the Bulk Bandage module of the Red Master Treatment boxes on the Strike Team cache and has a shelf life of three years.

The SWAT-T™ tourniquet is latex free and durable and can be reused unless it becomes soiled or damaged. Known for its versatility, this device can be used as a tourniquet, pressure dressing and as an elastic bandage.

The SWAT-T™ can also be used to hold ice near sprains/strains, sling an upper extremity and stabilize twisted knees/ankles. It can also be used to loosely apply pressure across thoracic or abdominal wounds and can assist in the stabilization of the pelvis in blunt pelvic trauma. Additionally, the SWAT-T™ can be used to splint an extremity to the body or to a rigid object for immobilization. More information about the SWAT-T™ tourniquet can be found at [www.swattourniquet.com/](http://www.swattourniquet.com/).



## Quarterly Drills and Exercises

The Strike Team Committee recently approved plans to update the QDE Workgroup. This includes a plan to utilize existing technology to facilitate meetings without the burden of navigating Hampton Roads traffic and higher fuel costs. The structure of the committee will also change and will be open to all positions across the HRMMST matrix. Once fully staffed the QDE Workgroup will have the opportunity to assist in the development, delivery and evaluation of HRMMST training as well as assisting our regional partners in the design, execution and evaluation of multi agency drills. There will also be the opportunity for QDE members to receive advanced training in an effort to develop subject matter experts (SME's) to serve as trainers within the strike team and the region. More information will be forthcoming in the weeks to come.

## Training and Gear Updates

The training staff is continuing to work on curriculum and development of many training programs for the Strike Team. Strike Team members are encouraged to complete all on-line training programs posted on the HRMMRS training webpage. Certificate printing issues are being resolved. If you are unable to print a certificate for completion, please print the results of your quiz, sign the paper and send this to the TEMS office as proof of completion. Any comments and suggestions for improving existing and future training programs are greatly appreciated. Please forward these comments to Stephanie at the TEMS office.



The next component of Strike Team training, the HRMMST Immediate Care On-line Course will be posted

no later than July 31. Training for logistics personnel is slated to be finished in August 2009.

Several new items of equipment have been researched for effectiveness and suitability for use by the strike team. Two new items of personal protective equipment, the Sperian N1125 Saf-T-Fit disposable N95 mask with exhalation valve and the Zytron 100 coverall will be distributed to members shortly.

Saf-T-Fit Plus Respirators are the perfect blend of comfort and protection. These respirators have been redesigned to increase inner volume and surface area. This allows for better speech communication and reduced breathing resistance. Filter media is latex-free and humidity-resistant for longer service life. The color-coded nose bridge allows for easy identification. N95 Flat-Fold offers easy storage and transportation in a pocket.

Zytron 100 garments provide excellent physical strength and basic

chemical resistance, ideal for applications where workers need protection from dry particulates and light splash. These garments are designed and constructed with the wearer in mind, and that includes sizing that simplifies the decision process. Typically worn over other clothing, the Zytron 100 garments are designed so that "combination sizes" comfortably fit the vast majority of users. The garment purchased by the Strike Team is designed with reinforced seams which should help with durability during use.



## Logistics Update

In comparison to the work up and deployment for the Langley Air Show, the Logistics section has quietly been plodding away focusing on maintenance and readiness. Routine maintenance items such as drug and I.V. box expirations and AHA compliant updates to all HRMMST Life Pack 12 and Life Pack 500 monitors/defibrillators as well as calibration to all HRMMST radiological monitors have been the main focus.

Quietly behind the scenes, Fred and Stephanie have been painstakingly developing the Logistics Management System utilizing the York County cache as a test bed. Their efforts will go a long way to ensure accuracy and efficiency in the finished version which will be pushed out to both Logistics groups in Norfolk and York County.

In August the HRMMST WMD pharmaceutical cache is slated for maintenance which will include replacement of expired drugs and updates to the cache to reflect current guidelines. More information will be forthcoming concerning dates, locations and times.

Stay ready, stay safe and see you at the next team drill in August.

## Upcoming Dates

### Quarterly Drill (pick one)

Monday, August 17

Tuesday, August 18

Wednesday, August 19

### ICS 300

August 26-27

October 28-29

### ICS 400

September 23-24

## MMST Trivia

The SWAT-T™ tourniquet is a versatile device which can be used for a variety of uses. Name at least 5 ways or situations in which the SWAT-T™ can be utilized.

Answer: Tourniquet, Elastic Bandage, Pressure Dressing, to hold ice near sprains/strains, stabilize a lower extremity, sling an upper extremity, contain abdominal contents in evisceration, splint an extremity to a rigid device, assist in stabilization of the pelvis in blunt pelvic trauma

## Important Reminders

- For those members that are missing equipment or needed equipment ordered. It has arrived and you may schedule a time to pick them up at the TEMS office. Just give Stephanie a call 757-963-0632.
- Applications need to be signed by you, your Supervisor, your Sponsoring Organization, and your Jurisdictional Representative before they can be submitted to the TEMS office. Please fill these out completely and submit as soon as possible.
- Don't forget to sign up for the August Quarterly Drill. Email Stephanie with the day you choose to attend.