DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION OF HEALTH RELATED PROGRAMS

Milwaukee County

COPY

February 12, 2001

Larry Gardner, Chief
Milwaukee Fire Department
711 West Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233

Dear Chief Gardner:

Our conversation on Tuesday, February 6th, 2001 was a most productive meeting and I hope that most of your concerns about the Paramedic and Paramedic First Response Contract have been addressed. I have summarized your concerns and the conversation that surrounded this meeting. If you have any clarifications or additional concerns, I would be glad to address those at your convenience.

2.1 Utilization of the County's Training Facility and Participation in Training Activities (Paramedic Contract) -- Utilization of the County's training program in the contract means the utilization of the paramedic training program operated by the County, specifically the initial training requirements for EMT-Paramedic licensure and any continuing education requirements to maintain those licenses. It does not pertain to any other types of training conducted by the County through the Division's Emergency Medical Services Section.

The contract area that pertains to referring fire fighters to other educational programs only applies to paramedic-trained fire fighters since the contract only pertains to the delivery of paramedic level services and not to BLS or fire fighting continuing education. As we mentioned, the municipality has the flexibility to arrange for other continuing education for EMS-paramedic personnel; however, the County Medical Director reserves the right to review and approve those educational programs since they need to be coordinated within the County EMS system.

As we mentioned during the conversation, we are more than willing to review the utilization of the paramedic ride along program and to establish equitability in the program's utilization.

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2.2 Reporting Requirement (Paramedic Contract) -- At this time there are no established reporting requirements for the Emergency Medical Services Council and we would expect that any requirements for the Council would be discussed prior to the implementation of reporting guidelines. During 2001, the EMS Council will be reviewing response zones and workload volumes and we can assume that some information and data from all of the municipalities will be necessary during this review. As a specifically named municipality member of the EMS Council, you or your designated staff will have input into this decision making process.

2.4 Vehicles and Non-disposable Equipment (Paramedic Contract) -- The language pertaining to use of non-disposable equipment by the municipality is to insure standardization across municipalities regarding equipment. The County would not require any municipality to incur costs for equipment above that mandated by Trans 309.

2.7 Inventory and Supplies (Paramedic Contract) -- The inventory accountability program refers to the utilization of County staff to perform supply ordering, distribution and inventory on the Paramedic Transport Units. This language is to insure proper access to the vehicles and ordering process.

3.1 Medical Equipment (Paramedic Contract) -- The section pertaining to ordering supplies and radio communications equipment was not intended to establish the County as a sole source vendor for these items. This language was to insure proper notification of replacement or repair of equipment which the County either provided, or when the County incurred costs for the repair and/or replacement of those items. Again, the intent is to insure a standardization of equipment across municipalities.

2.8 Medical Equipment (PFR Contract) -- The County does not desire to interrupt, replace or cause the replacement of the current communication protocols and distribution of equipment utilized by the City in meeting its PFR needs.

4.1 Levels of Participation and Sharing of Costs (Paramedic Contract) -- While the contract refers to a preceptor program, the County's intent is for any established program operated by the municipality which has a designated officer in charge, or another program or structure which provides support and consultation to trainees or newly trained and licensed individuals and which encourages growth, development and proper implementation of EMT-Paramedic activities.

The staffing levels and number of transport units and engines that are outlined in the Paramedic Contract are, in fact, superceded by the Paramedic First Response contract, if a PFR contract is in effect. A PFR unit is any vehicle that the municipality considers a PFR unit and which has been so designated by the municipality to the Paramedic Communication Base. As was noted during the conversation, we are open to reviewing the necessity of expanding the number of allocated slots for training and continuing education provided that those expansions are cost neutral for the County.

The administrative payment level to the City of Milwaukee was jointly established by the Comptroller's Office and the County during 1999 as a means to eliminate reporting and programming requirements as the City addressed its Y2K transition issue. The City was able to avoid significant programming costs by eliminating the bi-monthly SAS reports from the payroll system and the County was able to reduce its administrative payment due to this savings.

We understand the Milwaukee Fire Department's concern regarding the "service agreement" for providers of Basic Life Support services. The intent of the County is to recognize the right of a municipality to establish alternative means of service provision while also establishing an oversight mechanism for that service. This section does not apply directly to the MFD, as the contract is with the City of Milwaukee (not the Milwaukee Fire Department) and the City has an Ambulance Service Board that oversees both the private and public providers delivering service.

The current contract allows for the incorporation of union wage settlements when those settlements have occurred. The method assumes that the labor contracts have been finalized when the invoices are submitted. Lacking a final settlement, the City provides a projection of the anticipated rate, which is then incorporated into the payments to the City. Upon finalization of the rates, this projection is compared to the payment rates and adjustments are made, either to the amount owed to the City or the establishment of a credit balance to the County.

Attachment A (Paramedic Contract and Paramedic First Response Contract) –

The County is very aware of issues pertaining to the primary, secondary and tertiary response zones for all of its providers. The EMS Council will be addressing all of the issues pertaining to dispatching the closest available unit and the mechanisms that need to be in place if a unit is occupied. The County will work with all providers to insure adequate and appropriate services are available. Again, as a designated municipality member of the Emergency Medical Services Council, the City of Milwaukee will have input into this decision making process.

We hope this communication clarifies the items of concern to you and your staff. If you require any additional information regarding the contract, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Paula A. Lucey
Director

cc: Patricia Haslbeck, EMS Director
Janet Nickels, Accountant
Gloria Murawsky, Milwaukee Fire Department