

Tucson Fire Department

2007 Alternative EMS Response

(ALPHA Truck Program)

This is one of many sections that contain information, documents, letters, newspaper articles, pictures, etc. They have been collected and arranged in chronological order or by a subject. These items were collected, organized and entered into a computerized database by Dave Ridings Assistant Chief Tucson Fire Department, Al Ring friend of the department, Greater Tucson Fire Foundation and with the help of many friends and fellow firefighters.

All graphics have been improved to make the resolution as good as possible, but the reader should remember that many came from copies of old newspaper articles. This also applies to other items such as documents, letters, etc.

Credit to the source of the documents, photos, etc. is provided whenever it was available. We realize that many items are not identified and regret that we weren't able to provide this information. As far as the newspaper articles that are not identified, 99% of them would have to be from one of three possible sources. The *Arizona Daily Star*, The *Tucson Citizen* and the *Tucson Daily Citizen*, for which we want to give a special thanks.

Please use this information as a reference tool only. If the reader uses any of the information for any purpose other than a reference tool, they should get permission from the source.

Should the reader have additional information on the above subject we would appreciate you sharing it with us. Please see the names and contact information on the 1st. TFD Archives page right below this paragraph.

ALTERNATIVE EMS RESPONSE

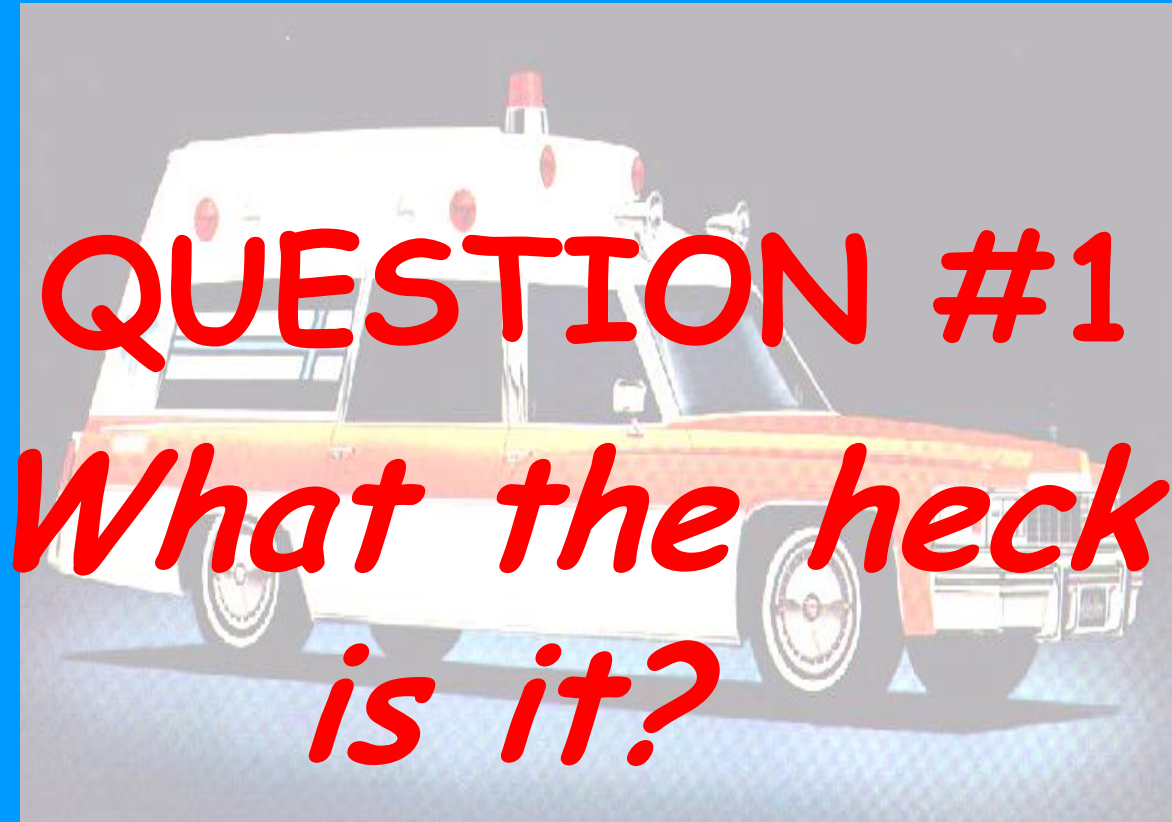
- THE “ALPHA TRUCK” PROGRAM
-

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In short, it's a
*means to address the
exploding growth of non-
emergent calls for EMS
service.*





QUESTION #2
*What the heck are
you
thinking?*



PROGRAM PARTNERS



CITY OF
TUCSON



PARTNER OPPORTUNITIES

Community
Hospitals



Reduce reliance on
911

Social
Service
Agencies



Reduce ED
overcrowding/costs



Connectivity to
proper care



The “PERFECT STORM” of Prehospital Health Care?

- Rising Costs
- Reduced Medical Coverage
- Aging Population
- ED Overcrowding
- 911 System Overload
- Increase of Home-Based Care





The Future is Here Folks.

- Demographics
 - Trends
- System Stress





Reaching Critical Mass?

2000 - 2007

- Pumper Costs - Up 47% (\$200,000 to \$380,000)
- Pumper Service Life - Down 14% (14 to 12 years)
- Total Calls - Up 13% (65,500 to 75,600)
- Fire Calls - Down 18% (11,167 to 9,118)





FIRE-BASED EMS SYSTEMS

- Urban/Suburban Model
- Tucson, for Example





"So, what are we then, a fire department that happens to do EMS, or an EMS department that happens to fight fire?"





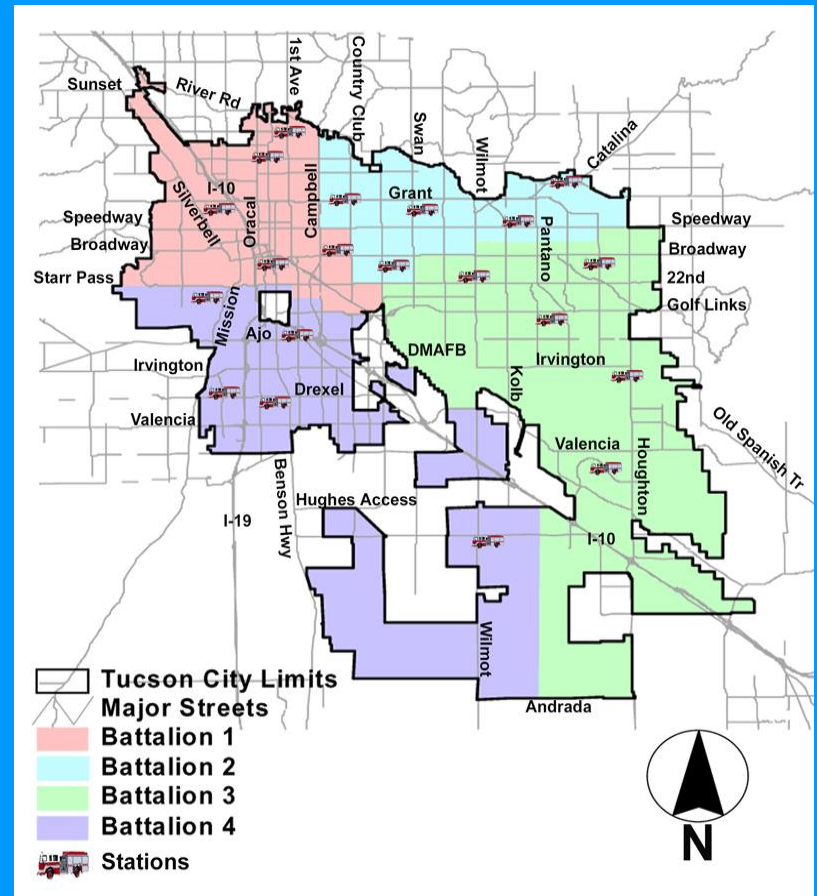
It's About Resource Allocation.



Tucson Fire Department

Serving since 1881

- Four Battalions
- 22 Stations
- 23 Engine Companies (10 PAUs)
- 9 Ladder/LT Co.
- 17 Paramedic Units



TUCSON FIRE'S APPROACH

- The clock ticks backward.
- Fast forward to September 2005.
- Proposal - *Low expense solution to non-emergent EMS calls coming through the 911 system.*
- Pilot - April to June 2006
- Fully operational - July 2006





ALPHA Truck

LOOKS LIKE THIS:

- 2-Person Squad -FF/EMTB's
- 1/2 Ton Extended Cab Pickup Truck
- BLS Equipment - includes AED
- No Transports
- 8 Hour Training Module



ALPHA Truck

OPERATES LIKE THIS:

- Dispatched to Selected “ALPHA” MPDS Calls
- Code 2 Response Only
- Run Area Limited to Single District
- Enables Call “Stacking”
- Spends More Time at Scenes
- Station Captain Supervision
- Crews Rotate



KEY OBJECTIVES

- Connect patients with agencies best suited to handle specific needs.
- Reduce reliance upon the 911 dispatch system.
- Reduce ED overcrowding.
- Reduce costs of TFD EMS service delivery.
- Help pace Department expansion.





We are not *Social Workers* !

No, we are not. But we are:

- Points of contact to facilitate proper care.
- Experts in social service connectivity.
- Providing a more affordable and appropriate alternative to traditional emergency response.



COST COMPARISON

Start-up Costs

Includes wages, fringes, truck, equipment

ALPHA Truck - \$734,000

Paramedic Unit - \$968,000

Annual Recurrent Costs

ALPHA v. Paramedic





Results So Far

April to December 2006

- 9 Call per Day Average
- 1 Social Service Referral per Day
- Partnership Evaluation - Not completed
- Morale Improvement



Unexpected Benefits

- Manager/Mayor/Council endorsement. (**HUGE**)
- Enhances learning process for new firefighters:
 - 1) Report Writing
 - 2) Driving
 - 3) Problem Solving and Decision-Making
 - 5) Radio Communication
 - 6) Customer Service
 - 7) Promotional Opportunity





Related Program Issues

- 211 Dispatch System
- Senior Assistance Program
- Frequent Flyer Activity
- Bariatric/Wheelchair Transport
- Single Point Medical Control
- Electronic Reporting/Billing
- Wireless Network



Where are We Taking This Show?

- 4 ALPHA Trucks City-wide
- Target 12,000 Calls per Year
- Strengthen EMS/Social Service Link
- Improve Data Collection
- Strengthen TFD EMS Hierarchy
- Preventative Health Care Component
- Adapt to Department's Mission



Fire Service Brave New World?



1970's - Paramedicine

1980's - Hazardous
Materials

1990's - Technical Rescue

2000's - Homeland
Security

Alternative EMS Service



Questions...

