

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Section 54956 of the Government Code of the State of California, a Special meeting of the **SOUTH COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY** is hereby called for:

Date/Time: **Tuesday, April 1, 2014, 6:15 p.m.**
(or as soon thereafter as possible)

Location: **Council Chambers, City Hall**
333 Civic Center Plaza, Tracy

Government Code Section 54954.3 states that every public meeting shall provide an opportunity for the public to address the South County Fire Authority on any item, before or during consideration of the item, however no action shall be taken on any item not on the agenda.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. *Items from the Audience - In accordance with Procedures for Preparation, Posting and Distribution of Agendas and the Conduct of Public Meetings, adopted by Resolution 2008-140 any item not on the agenda brought up by the public at a meeting, shall be automatically referred to staff. If staff is not able to resolve the matter satisfactorily, the member of the public may request a Board Member to sponsor the item for discussion at a future meeting.*
4. REQUEST TO AUTHORIZE, EFFECTIVE MARCH 31, 2014, THE CHAIR OF THE SOUTH COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY BOARD, TO SIGN A LETTER IN RESPONSE TO THE MARCH 28, 2014 LETTER FROM SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATOR DAN BURCH, TO TEMPORARILY EXTEND THE ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT AGREEMENT
5. AUTHORIZE THE FIRE CHIEF TO NEGOTIATE A SHORT TERM AGREEMENT WITH THE SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) TO PROVIDE ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT SERVICES PURSUANT TO SPECIFIED EMS TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT
6. Adjournment



Chairperson

March 31, 2014

The City of Tracy is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will make all reasonable accommodations for the disabled to participate in public meetings. Persons requiring assistance or auxiliary aids in order to participate, should call City Hall (209-831-6000), at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Any materials distributed to the majority of the South County Fire Authority regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection in the City Clerk's office located at 333 Civic Center Plaza, Tracy, during normal business hours.

April 1, 2014

SCFA AGENDA ITEM 4

REQUEST

REQUEST TO AUTHORIZE, EFFECTIVE MARCH 31, 2014, THE CHAIR OF THE SOUTH COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY BOARD, TO SIGN A LETTER IN RESPONSE TO THE MARCH 28, 2014, LETTER FROM SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATOR DAN BURCH TO TEMPORARILY EXTEND THE ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT AGREEMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This staff report requests that the South County Fire Authority (SCFA) Board authorize effective March 31, 2014, the Chair of the South County Fire Authority Board, to sign a letter in response to the March 28, 2014, letter from San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services Administrator Dan Burch, to temporarily extend the Advanced Life Support (ALS) Agreement.

BACKGROUND

On March 28, 2014, the SCFA Fire Chief received a letter from Mr. Dan Burch stating that the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency provisionally authorizes SCFA to provide ALS services after April 1, 2014, if SCFA agreed to specific terms and conditions (See Attachment A: March 28, 2014, letter from EMS Agency's EMS Administrator to SCFA Fire Chief). Additionally, EMS Agency requested that SCFA submit a letter in writing signed by the Chairperson of its Board of Directors accepting the terms and conditions set forth in the letter.

DISCUSSION

The March 31, 2014, letter sent from SCFA Chairman, Jim Thoming, in response to the March 28, 2014, letter from Mr. Dan Burch accepted the terms and conditions outlined by the EMS Agency to receive provisional authorization to continue to provide ALS services until such time as a limited five month agreement with the EMS Agency could be negotiated (See Attachment B: March 31, 2014, letter from SCFA Chairman Jim Thoming in response to the March 28, 2014 letter from EMS Administrator Dan Burch).

The specific terms and conditions are listed in both Attachments A and B of the staff report.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact related to receiving this report.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the South County Fire Authority (SCFA) authorize effective March 31, 2014, the Chair of the South County Fire Authority Board, to sign a letter in response to the March 28, 2014, letter from San Joaquin County Emergency Medical

SCFA Agenda Item 4
April 1, 2014
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Services Administrator Dan Burch to temporarily extend the Advanced Life Support Agreement.

Prepared by: David Bramell, Division Chief

Reviewed by: Al Nero, Fire Chief

Approved by: Maria A. Hurtado, Interim City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: March 28, 2014 Letter from EMS Agency's EMS Administrator to SCFA Fire Chief

Attachment B: March 31, 2014 Letter from SCFA Chairman Jim Thoming in response to the March 28, 2014 Letter from EMS Administrator Dan Burch



San Joaquin County

Emergency Medical Services Agency

ATTACHMENT A

<http://www.sjgov.org/ems>

March 28, 2014

Al Nero, Fire Chief
South County Fire Authority
835 Central Ave
Tracy, CA 95376

Mailing Address
PO Box 220
French Camp, CA 95231

Health Care Services Complex
Benton Hall
500 W. Hospital Rd.
French Camp, CA 95231

Phone Number
(209) 468-6818

Fax Number
(209) 468-6725

RE: ALS Service

Dear Chief Nero:

During the March 10, 2014, meeting with representatives from the South County Fire Authority (SCFA) the EMS Agency affirmed its action terminating SCFA's authorization to provide ALS service effective April 1, 2014, due to SCFA's violation of the conditions of its ALS authorization agreement. Following assurances from SCFA, the EMS Agency stated it would consider provisionally authorizing SCFA to provide ALS service after April 1, 2014, based upon a finding by the EMS Agency of credible evidence of correction of SCFA's violations and deficiencies.

Since the March 10, 2014, meeting EMS Agency staff have diligently reviewed the SCFA Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to determine compliance with minimum standards; evaluated a sampling of SCFA's peer review process to determine SCFA's ability to operationalize its QIP; and conducted an onsite visit on March 26, 2014, to further analyze the value and efficacy of the QIP processes. The following are the EMS Agency's findings:

1. Quality Improvement Plan(QIP)

The EMS Agency finds SCFA's written QIP acceptable.

SCFA's successful implementation of its written QIP will enhance SCFA's goal of measuring and improving clinical excellence by addressing the following essential areas:

- Clinical care and patient outcome
- Skills maintenance/competency
- Mastery of EMS Agency policies and procedures
- Patient care and incident documentation
- Evaluation and remediation of field personnel
- Measurable performance standards

However, a definitive assessment of SCFA's QIP implementation is not possible at this time based on the limited data available and other factors discussed below.

2. Patient Care Report (PCR)

The PCR is the legal record that documents treatment provided to patients in the prehospital setting. It is also an essential QI tool that allows for an assessment of the care provided to patients by ALS personnel. Between March 12, 2014, and March 26, 2014, the EMS Agency staff reviewed 23 examples of SCFA PCRs and associated peer review audit forms. Based upon the records examined the EMS Agency found that all of the PCRs (23 of 23) contained significant errors and omissions and that the SCFA review process was not able to identify or correct these errors and omissions.

On March 26, 2014, EMS Agency personnel conducted a site visit, during which SCFA staff admitted that the Zoll electronic PCR (ePCR) software in use by SCFA is incapable of producing an accurate printed version of the electronically written report. When questioned, SCFA staff confirmed they were aware that printed reports were inaccurate and that this problem had been ongoing for a number of *years*. Chief Kellogg and Captain Oliveri further admitted that the fire department had failed to stay current with their ePCR software license and subsequently have not received software updates for at least the past 3 years. SCFA representatives were candid in their assessment of the ePCR's shortcomings.

This was the first time EMS Agency personnel were made aware that SCFA's ePCR software was incapable of printing an accurate printed version of the patient care report. It is disappointing that SCFA chose not to disclose this problem to the EMS Agency during the meeting on March 10, 2014, when SCFA submitted the printed PCRs and peer review process materials to EMS Agency for evaluation, when the EMS Agency's enforcement action began in August 2013, or when the problem was first identified by SCFA. SCFA's decision not to take action to correct the ePCR's ability to print an accurate patient care record when it was first identified by SCFA has led to multiple years of inaccurate patient care records being submitted to physicians, receiving hospitals, insurance companies, the EMS Agency and other consumers and oversight authorities.

The EMS Agency has determined that the SCFA's ePCR software does not meet the requirements of CCR Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 4, Article 8, Section 100171, and EMS Agency Policy No. 6301. As a result, the ePCR is of little to no value in achieving the goals of SCFA's peer review process, tracking of Opportunities for Improvement (OIs), training, key indicators tracking, and degrades the ability of SCFA to oversee the effort to meet the goals articulated in the SCFA QIP. In addition, the current ePCR cannot be used by in-hospital staff in real time as a basis for continuing patient care; cannot be used by the EMS Agency to oversee the San Joaquin County

EMS System; and cannot be used to determine whether appropriate prehospital care has been provided.

SCFA staff stated their intention to purchase replacement ePCR software and to implement the new software by July 1, 2014, in their belief that it will meet all local, state, and federal requirements.

3. Peer Review Process

SCFA's peer review process developed to identify whether appropriate care is being provided and whether paramedics are accurately and correctly completing PCRs involves the use of a core group of paramedics selected and trained to review 100% of all PCRs. Results after one week of implementation (and the use of a newly developed audit tool) indicate that this process may be acceptable. A definitive assessment by the EMS Agency is not possible at this time based on the limited data available and while the ePCR issue is unresolved.

4. System to Track Submissions of Opportunities for Improvement (OI)

This system allows the SCFA QI Coordinator to identify, track and trend OIs with individual personnel. SCFA's proposed process is acceptable. A definitive assessment by the EMS Agency is not possible at this time based on the limited data available and while the ePCR issue is unresolved.

5. Training

The SCFA approach to training its EMS personnel is prospective, concurrent, and retrospective. SCFA's proposed approach to training is acceptable. A definitive assessment by the EMS Agency is not possible at this time based on the limited data available and while the ePCR issue is unresolved.

6. Key Indicators Tracking

A broad selection of indicators to measure the performance of field personnel illustrates SCFA's commitment to their QI program. A definitive assessment by the EMS Agency is not possible at this time based on the limited data available and while the ePCR issue is unresolved.

7. CQI Program Oversight

A full-time SCFA QI Coordinator/EMS Specialist position is temporarily being filled until all approval processes are completed. As currently configured, the management of the SCFA QI Program is acceptable.

8. Directive to Staff to adhere to EMS Policy.

The memorandum #06-14 issued by Chief Nero dated March 10, 2014, directing SCFA personnel to adhere to all EMS Agency policies including EMS Policy No. 5001 is acceptable.

RESOLUTION:

The EMS Agency is prepared to grant SCFA provisional authorization to provide ALS services pursuant to the following terms and conditions:

1. SCFA shall implement either a compliant ePCR platform, or paper PCR using criteria supplied by the EMS Agency by no later than Thursday, April 24, 2014, as described below:
 - a. **ePCR Option:** A satisfactory ePCR shall be capable of producing a printed PCR that has no missing fields or inaccurate information, including procedure times, and accurately and completely describes the prehospital patient care provided by SCFA.
 - b. **Paper PCR Option:** If a paper PCR is selected, SCFA shall adhere to the paper PCR requirements of the EMS Agency, and shall enter data from these paper PCRs into an EMS database system provided by the EMS Agency.
2. SCFA shall in good faith negotiate by no later than April 14, 2014, a limited 5 month agreement with the EMS Agency that includes defined performance benchmarks such as SCFA staff's stated commitment to implement replacement ePCR software by July 1, 2014. This ePCR software shall be National EMS Information System (NEMIS) compliant and HL7 compatible, and approved by the EMS Agency for patient documentation on all patient contacts. The ePCR shall be accurately completed and transmitted to the receiving hospital within 30 minutes of transferring patient care to the transporting ambulance using a secure connection. The ePCR system shall allow for the timely transmission of required data elements to the EMS Agency in a digital format that allows direct import into the EMS Agency's database in order to allow full countywide integration of ePCR and CAD data. The ePCR system must be capable of capturing and accurately reporting the California EMS Authority's Core Measures.
3. SCFA shall comply with all EMS Agency policies and procedures, voluntarily and in good faith keep the EMS Agency informed of SCFA's ability to adhere to EMS Agency policies and procedures and its performance in the EMS system.

If SCFA submits a letter in writing signed by the chairperson of its Board of Directors accepting the terms and conditions 1 – 3 stated above without exception or reservation the EMS Agency shall provisionally authorize SCFA to provide ALS service. Provisional authorization would extend from April 1, 2014, until such time the Board of Supervisors approves or rejects the limited 5 month agreement negotiated pursuant to condition #2 or until such time as the EMS Agency, in its sole discretion, determines that SCFA has failed to comply with any of the required conditions.

The EMS Agency is available to provide SCFA with technical assistance as you work through these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Burch", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dan Burch
EMS Administrator

cc: Maria Hurtado, Interim City Manager
Tim Smith, Chairperson, Tracy Rural Fire Protection District



FIRE ADMINISTRATION

MAIN 209.831.6700
FAX 209.831.6703
www.ci.tracy.ca.us

March 31, 2014

Dan Burch
EMS Administrator
San Joaquin County
Emergency Medical Services Agency
P.O. Box 220
French Camp, CA 95231

Dear Mr. Burch:

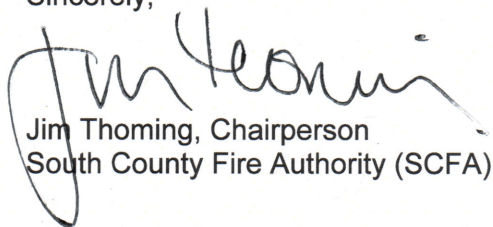
This letter is in response to the March 28, 2014 letter from the EMS Agency relative to ALS services.

I'd like to thank you for acknowledging that the various corrective actions are acceptable to the EMS Agency and that you have granted provisional authorization to the South County Fire Authority (SCFA) to provide ALS services until such time as we are able to negotiate a longer term agreement.

Consider this letter an acknowledgement and agreement to the terms and conditions 1 – 3 outlined in your March 28, 2014 letter.

I look forward to discussing the next steps to address the terms and conditions and negotiating a longer term agreement with the EMS Agency for the provision of ALS services in our community.

Sincerely,



Jim Thoming, Chairperson
South County Fire Authority (SCFA)



SCFA AGENDA ITEM 5

REQUEST

AUTHORIZE THE FIRE CHIEF TO NEGOTIATE A SHORT TERM AGREEMENT WITH THE SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) TO PROVIDE ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT SERVICES PURSUANT TO SPECIFIED EMS TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This staff report requests that the South County Fire Authority (SCFA) Board authorize the Fire Chief to negotiate a short term agreement with the EMS Agency in order to provide ALS Services pursuant to specified EMS terms and conditions and authorize the Chairman to sign the agreement.

BACKGROUND

On March 28, 2014, the SCFA Fire Chief received a letter from Mr. Dan Burch stating that the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency provisionally authorizes SCFA to provide ALS services after April 1, 2014, if SCFA agreed to specific terms and conditions (See Attachment A: March 28, 2014, letter from EMS Agency's EMS Administrator to SCFA Fire Chief).

The specific terms and conditions include the following:

1. SCFA shall implement either a compliant ePCR platform, or paper PCR using criteria supplied by the EMS Agency no later than Thursday, April 24, 2014, as described below:
 - a. **ePCR Option**: A satisfactory ePCR shall be capable of producing a printed PCR that has no missing fields or inaccurate information, including procedure times, and accurately and completely describes the prehospital patient care provided by SCFA.
 - b. **Paper PCR Option**: If a paper PCR is selected, SCFA shall adhere to the paper PCR requirements of the EMS Agency, and shall enter data from these paper PCRs into an EMS database system provided by the EMS Agency.
2. SCFA shall in good faith negotiate by no later than April 14, 2014, a limited five month agreement with the EMS Agency that includes defined performance benchmarks such as SCFA staff's stated commitment to implement replacement ePCR software by July 1, 2014. This ePCR software shall be National EMS Information System (NEMIS) compliant and HL7 compatible, and approved by the EMS Agency for patient documentation on all patient contacts. The ePCR shall be accurately completed and transmitted to the receiving hospital within 30 minutes of transferring patient care to the transporting ambulance using a secure connection. The ePCR system shall allow for the timely transmission of required data elements to the EMS Agency in a digital format that allows direct import into the EMS Agency's database in order to allow full countywide integration of ePCR and CAD data. The ePCR system must be capable of capturing and accurately reporting the California EMS Authority's Core Measures.

3. SCFA shall comply with all EMS Agency policies and procedures, voluntarily and in good faith keep the EMS Agency informed of SCFA's ability to adhere to EMS Agency policies and procedures and its performance in the EMS system.

Given the short time frame provided by the EMS Agency, staff requests authorization to negotiate a short term agreement with the EMS Agency in order to provide ALS Services.

DISCUSSION

This staff report requests that the Fire Chief be authorized to negotiate an agreement with the EMS Agency pursuant to the various terms and conditions as described above and to authorize the Chairman to sign the agreement.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact related to receiving this report.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the SCFA Board authorize the Fire Chief to negotiate a short term agreement with the San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to provide advanced life support services pursuant to specified EMS terms and conditions and authorize the Chairman to sign the agreement.

Prepared by: David Bramell, Division Chief

Reviewed by: Al Nero, Fire Chief

Approved by: Maria A. Hurtado, Interim City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: March 28, 2014 Letter from EMS Agency's EMS Administrator to SCFA Fire Chief



San Joaquin County

Emergency Medical Services Agency

ATTACHMENT A

<http://www.sjgov.org/ems>

March 28, 2014

Al Nero, Fire Chief
South County Fire Authority
835 Central Ave
Tracy, CA 95376

RE: ALS Service

Dear Chief Nero:

During the March 10, 2014, meeting with representatives from the South County Fire Authority (SCFA) the EMS Agency affirmed its action terminating SCFA's authorization to provide ALS service effective April 1, 2014, due to SCFA's violation of the conditions of its ALS authorization agreement. Following assurances from SCFA, the EMS Agency stated it would consider provisionally authorizing SCFA to provide ALS service after April 1, 2014, based upon a finding by the EMS Agency of credible evidence of correction of SCFA's violations and deficiencies.

Since the March 10, 2014, meeting EMS Agency staff have diligently reviewed the SCFA Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to determine compliance with minimum standards; evaluated a sampling of SCFA's peer review process to determine SCFA's ability to operationalize its QIP; and conducted an onsite visit on March 26, 2014, to further analyze the value and efficacy of the QIP processes. The following are the EMS Agency's findings:

1. Quality Improvement Plan(QIP)

The EMS Agency finds SCFA's written QIP acceptable.

SCFA's successful implementation of its written QIP will enhance SCFA's goal of measuring and improving clinical excellence by addressing the following essential areas:

- Clinical care and patient outcome
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- Mastery of EMS Agency policies and procedures
- Patient care and incident documentation
- Evaluation and remediation of field personnel
- Measurable performance standards

However, a definitive assessment of SCFA's QIP implementation is not possible at this time based on the limited data available and other factors discussed below.



Mailing Address
PO Box 220
French Camp, CA 95231

Health Care Services Complex
Benton Hall
500 W. Hospital Rd.
French Camp, CA 95231

Phone Number
(209) 468-6818

Fax Number
(209) 468-6725

2. Patient Care Report (PCR)

The PCR is the legal record that documents treatment provided to patients in the prehospital setting. It is also an essential QI tool that allows for an assessment of the care provided to patients by ALS personnel. Between March 12, 2014, and March 26, 2014, the EMS Agency staff reviewed 23 examples of SCFA PCRs and associated peer review audit forms. Based upon the records examined the EMS Agency found that all of the PCRs (23 of 23) contained significant errors and omissions and that the SCFA review process was not able to identify or correct these errors and omissions.

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The EMS Agency has determined that the SCFA's ePCR software does not meet the requirements of CCR Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 4, Article 8, Section 100171, and EMS Agency Policy No. 6301. As a result, the ePCR is of little to no value in achieving the goals of SCFA's peer review process, tracking of Opportunities for Improvement (OIs), training, key indicators tracking, and degrades the ability of SCFA to oversee the effort to meet the goals articulated in the SCFA QIP. In addition, the current ePCR cannot be used by in-hospital staff in real time as a basis for continuing patient care; cannot be used by the EMS Agency to oversee the San Joaquin County

EMS System; and cannot be used to determine whether appropriate prehospital care has been provided.

SCFA staff stated their intention to purchase replacement ePCR software and to implement the new software by July 1, 2014, in their belief that it will meet all local, state, and federal requirements.

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SCFA's peer review process developed to identify whether appropriate care is being provided and whether paramedics are accurately and correctly completing PCRs involves the use of a core group of paramedics selected and trained to review 100% of all PCRs. Results after one week of implementation (and the use of a newly developed audit tool) indicate that this process may be acceptable. A definitive assessment by the EMS Agency is not possible at this time based on the limited data available and while the ePCR issue is unresolved.

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This system allows the SCFA QI Coordinator to identify, track and trend OIs with individual personnel. SCFA's proposed process is acceptable. A definitive assessment by the EMS Agency is not possible at this time based on the limited data available and while the ePCR issue is unresolved.

5. Training

The SCFA approach to training its EMS personnel is prospective, concurrent, and retrospective. SCFA's proposed approach to training is acceptable. A definitive assessment by the EMS Agency is not possible at this time based on the limited data available and while the ePCR issue is unresolved.

6. Key Indicators Tracking

A broad selection of indicators to measure the performance of field personnel illustrates SCFA's commitment to their QI program. A definitive assessment by the EMS Agency is not possible at this time based on the limited data available and while the ePCR issue is unresolved.

7. CQI Program Oversight

A full-time SCFA QI Coordinator/EMS Specialist position is temporarily being filled until all approval processes are completed. As currently configured, the management of the SCFA QI Program is acceptable.

8. Directive to Staff to adhere to EMS Policy.

The memorandum #06-14 issued by Chief Nero dated March 10, 2014, directing SCFA personnel to adhere to all EMS Agency policies including EMS Policy No. 5001 is acceptable.

RESOLUTION:

The EMS Agency is prepared to grant SCFA provisional authorization to provide ALS services pursuant to the following terms and conditions:

1. SCFA shall implement either a compliant ePCR platform, or paper PCR using criteria supplied by the EMS Agency by no later than Thursday, April 24, 2014, as described below:
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3. SCFA shall comply with all EMS Agency policies and procedures, voluntarily and in good faith keep the EMS Agency informed of SCFA's ability to adhere to EMS Agency policies and procedures and its performance in the EMS system.

If SCFA submits a letter in writing signed by the chairperson of its Board of Directors accepting the terms and conditions 1 – 3 stated above without exception or reservation the EMS Agency shall provisionally authorize SCFA to provide ALS service. Provisional authorization would extend from April 1, 2014, until such time the Board of Supervisors approves or rejects the limited 5 month agreement negotiated pursuant to condition #2 or until such time as the EMS Agency, in its sole discretion, determines that SCFA has failed to comply with any of the required conditions.

The EMS Agency is available to provide SCFA with technical assistance as you work through these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Burch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dan Burch
EMS Administrator

cc: Maria Hurtado, Interim City Manager
Tim Smith, Chairperson, Tracy Rural Fire Protection District