

## MEMORANDUM OF LAW

**DATE:** August 28, 1996

**NAME:** Dick Wilken, Deputy Director

**FROM:** City Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Emergency Medical Services (EMS) System Design Issues

In a memorandum dated August 20, 1996, you have asked our opinion on what impact, if any, Proposition G (attached) has on proposed changes to the EMS System. You indicate that the City is in the process of developing a revised EMS System design. The City's EMS consultants have recommended a system which expands the Fire Department's paramedic first responder program to all stations throughout the City. Under this program, a dual role firefighter paramedic position would exist on engine companies at each of the City's 43 stations. A related recommendation is to change the crew configuration on the paramedic ambulances from the existing two paramedics to a crew of one paramedic and one emergency medical technician (EMT). You further indicate that the County EMS Division has reviewed and approved this revised Paramedic/EMT crew configuration when used with paramedic first responders.

It is our opinion that the proposed changes recommended by the EMS consultants are permissible under Proposition G. We examined the paramedic delivery system in 1990 in two separate memorandums of law dated May 22, 1990 and August 31, 1990. In the August 31st memorandum we stated:

As noted previously in a memorandum of law from this office, dated May 22, 1990, it is our view that Proposition G does not preclude firefighter/paramedics from being assigned to first responder engines; nor does it preclude a paramedic ambulance from being driven by an EMT.

It remains our opinion that firefighter/paramedics may respond through the fire department first responder program. The patient must be transported to an emergency medical facility in a paramedic ambulance, but there is no requirement that the paramedic ambulance be staffed with more than one paramedic.

Please contact me if you have further questions.

JOHN W. WITT, City Attorney

By

Stuart H. Swett  
Head Deputy City Attorney

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