

The CA-6 Chronicles

The latest news and information from the
San Francisco Bay Area Disaster Medical Assistance Team, DMAT CA-6
— Visit us at www.dmatca6.org —

Vol. 6, No. 5

May, 2006

Caregivers to the Nation...Building a bridge between hope and despair



Founded in 1997

Mark Your Calendars

- **01 Jun** – Official start of the 2006 hurricane season.
- **?? Jun** – Official start of the 2006 California fire season.
- **06 Jun** – Operations Section Meeting @ Terry Holbrook's, 1830 hrs.
- **03-18 Jun** – Haiti Mission. See details below.
- **17 Jun** – Team Meeting @ Menlo Park Ops Center, 1000 – 1500 hrs; Clinician's Mtg 0830 – 1000 hrs; New Member Orientation 0900 – 1000 hrs.
- **27 - 28 Jun** – Wildland (live fire) training event. See info in Commander's Corner below.
- **01 - 31 Jul** – Federal on-call month.
- **08 Jul** – Wildland FTX load-out, 1000 – 1500 hrs, Menlo Park warehouse.
- **15 - 16 Jul** – Wildland FTX '06. See info in Training News below.
- **22 Jul** – Wildland FTX load-in, 1000 – 1500 hrs, Menlo Park warehouse.
- **28 - 30 Jul** – San Jose Grand Prix. See below for additional information.

Commander's Corner

By David Lipin, Commander

OK folks! If you haven't figured it out yet from the calendar above, vacation's almost over!

We are officially entering our "busy season". June and July will be chock full of events, then the calendar is basically clear through November for possible missions.

So I won't keep you waiting. Let's get right to it...



Rough & Ready '06

We had 43 members participate in this year's Rough & Ready field training exercise. A great turnout, especially by new members. From the feedback we've received so far, it was a very successful exercise.

CEU certificates will be available at the team meeting for those who turned in the requisite paperwork during the event.

One of the participants this year was a group researching an electronic tracking mechanism called WIISARD. Their write-up and pics can be found at: <http://www.calit2.net/newsroom/article.php?id=844>.

Haiti Mission

The After Action Report from the February mission to Haiti is now available; e-mail me for a copy.

About 4 or 5 of our team members will be joining the summer mission to Haiti, departing in a couple of weeks. As there are no elections currently scheduled, we expect less drama this time around. But it's summer, so more tropical heat and humidity!

In addition to members from WA-1, OR-2, CA-4 and CA-6, this mission will also include some FL DMAT members, and some non-DMAT members as well. As usual, we're sending them off with a small cache of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies. Good luck to all!

Wildfire Medical Support

We're now accepting applications for this year's wildfire medical support mission. The contract is in place, and we're in the process of rehabbing the caches.

As in previous years, we will contact the team commander for approval for any new person who submits an application. People who signed up in previous years do not need to re-apply. In addition, we've instituted some changes to help de-conflict potential federal responses:

- Every participant agrees to notify his/her team commander upon deployment to a wildfire mission.
- If a wildfire participant is deployed and his/her team is placed on federal Alert or Activation status, we will immediately give that person the option of rotating off the wildfire mission.
- We will decline wildfire response requests during any period where a significant, multi-team, federal response appears likely due to an imminent hurricane.

This program is available to all California DMAT members. *Federal (NDMS) membership is not required.* For more information or to sign up, go to www.emsa.ca.gov/dmatcdf.htm.

Wildland '06

Don't be confused by the two Wildland events coming up.

The first (27-28 Jun) is Wildland '06, where we provide real-world medical support to Bay Area firefighters as they learn to fight wildfires, and the second (15-16 Jul) is a DMAT field exercise. Unfortunately, both have similar

names and both are at the same location. Different dates though!

For information about the DMAT field exercise, see Training News below.

Here's the information about the real-world medical event:

We'll be providing a small group (6-8) personnel each day, roughly 0800 to 1600 hours. Lunch provided. This is a non-federal mission, so no salary or reimbursement. Other details to follow.

All non-federal members are eligible to participate, including new members (applicants who have submitted a complete application packet). You can sign up for either or both days, and we'll arrange staffing based on who signs up. [E-mail Bonnie](#) if you'd like to participate in this mission. It's casual, close by, great experience for wildland fires (see above newsletter segment), and it's part of our team's service back to our community and sponsor agencies. So please sign up!



San Jose Grand Prix

Are you ready for more of last year's racing fun? We're the lead entity for staffing medical stations at the San Jose Grand Prix again this year, daily, 28-30 Jul.

Because there were so many difficult and time-consuming hospital transports last year, this year most transports will go directly to the medical stations. (This is particularly important during races, when many spectators are essentially cut off from transport because they're on the inside of the track.) We'll also likely be relocating the stations to higher-traffic areas.

Sign-ups will go up in late June for this event, but keep your schedule clear!

Rough & Ready Ukraine '06

In addition to the domestic Rough & Ready in which we recently participated, EMSA is a co-sponsor of an international Rough & Ready in the Ukraine. This is a non-DMAT event, and will take place in September. Members of CA-6 who are going are Sam Bradley, Steve La Plante, Mihir Meghani, Andy Swartzell and Gary Zoellner.



Uniform Conversion

As detailed in the April newsletter, we've got a conversion process underway to convert all team- and member-owned uniforms to the new FEMA standard.

If you haven't turned in your personal uniforms for conversion, please bring them to the June team meeting (along with a check for \$13 per blouse or jacket). Contact Bill Bush at logistics@dmataca6.org if you'd like to arrange a separate uniform drop-off.

See last month's newsletter for further details.

Respiratory Protection Program

Also detailed in last month's newsletter was the introduction of our new, *mandatory* respiratory protection program. This is a critically important program as we prepare for response to a flu pandemic or Avian Influenza outbreak. More on this below, and in last month's newsletter.



Administrivia

By Bonnie Atencio, Administration Section Chief

FEMA Badges

We have badges for those members who went through the process at the NDMS Conference. Bring your old badge to the team meeting and we'll exchange for your new one.

For those who did not attend the NDMS Conference, your badges have been "extended" by FEMA until June 30. They may extend on a month-by-month basis until they find a good solution to the new, complex re-badging process.

We're trying to schedule the badging folks to come out to either our June team meeting or July Wildland exercise. Odds are low, but you should plan anyway to attend both of these events if you need a new badge. We'll put out an e-mail blast if we hear further.

Notary Services Available

The team now has a commissioned notary public, Steve La Plante. Steve will be available at the June 17th team meeting to notarize the two documents now required for applicants to CA-6. Any pending applicant who has already been interviewed by Steve is welcome to attend the meeting and get notarized. Other pending applicants will be notarized when they meet with Steve.

[Editor's note: notary services are free-of-charge for federal CA-6 business, including applications; all others are subject to Steve's going rate!]



Operations Update

By Terry Holbrook, Operations Section Chief

Well, it has been a busy month, but not one too satisfying as far as tasks accomplished would show. We have been really busy, but seem to be in the midst of each of our tasks, and not at the end of any of them. Not that it isn't great progress, just none of the gold stars we keep hoping for.

Of course you all know we are right in the midst of the Respiratory program. Most of you have downloaded the forms, and many of those have returned them already...good job!! For those of you with good intentions, remember this is a required process, and must be completed so fit testing can follow. Walt Sanders will be heading up this process, which should begin within the next month or three. An explanatory letter is available at www.dmatca6.org/uploads2/RespiratoryProgramLetter.pdf. After reading this letter, you can download the questionnaire from www.dmatca6.org/uploads2/FOH2-2-RespiratorQuestionnaire.pdf, or a smaller Word version from www.dmatca6.org/uploads2/FOH2-2-RespiratorQuestionnaire.doc. Bring your survey to the June team meeting!

There was good success at finding and immunizing folks at Rough & Ready, but there are still some of you out there who are afraid we don't give stickers and lollypops. Please bring your cards to the next team meeting in June, and be prepared to get another important thing out of the way.

We are about to start plowing through our Pharmacy review and restock for the upcoming fire season, and for our other bags as

well. We are also about to start a more formal and fuller scope of policies and procedures, which will be a positive thing, though daunting until it is done. We are about to begin working of our fitness standards and our deployment and standards.

We are having extra Clinician's meetings, hoping to address all of our clinical concerns and form documents which will make our future deployments less chaotic. This group is also trying to address concerns and clarifications you have all mentioned. You need not be a Clinician, per se, to join us in this broad based attempt at meeting all of our needs when quick answers are needed in the field.

We continue to invite any and all members to be active in the Ops section. It is a dynamic and very, very busy section, and we can use all of the help we can get. We would welcome your participation with open arms!



The Logistics Scoop

By Bill Bush, Logistics Section Chief

Ahem. Greetings, Pilgrims. Most of this month's update is dedicated, medicated and ready to serve. Oh, um, I mean, dedicated to Personal Gear, and the Exalted Grand Poobahess of Gear, Catrina Christian.

Personal Gear Unit

Cat inherited this position, and has taken the bull by the horns (at least he still has ... oh yeah, family hour. Never mind.) as far as team-owned Personal Gear goes. We have managed to pare down the extensive list of minimum personal gear requirements, which hopefully means less stuff for you to pack and lighter packs. We've also decided to move towards a "squad

bag" concept. Certain items which can be communal (wow...he used a big word there) in nature will go into the squad bag, and be available for 5 to 7 members on the deployed team. There is also going to be a deposit program initiated for those who want to use team owned personal gear. We've had a terrible time trying to reclaim items from people. To encourage the prompt return of these items, we will be asking for a deposit on the gear you check out. If the gear is not returned in a reasonable amount of time, we'll keep your deposit. This will accomplish two things: 1) we hope to get the gear back fast, and 2) we have a way to defray the cost of replacing the gear if it isn't returned. If you have any questions, comments, thoughts, recipes about this, or anything involving personal gear, contact Cat. She's the woman.

Uniform Unit

Our uniform blouse and jackets need to change to the new DHS/FEMA standard. We collected some member-owned blouses and jackets at Rough & Ready. We need to collect the rest of the team members' personally owned uniforms from those who were not at Rough & Ready. This will be done at the June 17th team meeting at the Menlo Park Operations Center. So, if you have personally-owned uniforms or M-65 jackets, bring them and a check for \$13.00 per item to the team meeting, and we'll collect them from you and send them to be converted to the new standard. If you turned in your uniforms for conversion at Rough & Ready, we're hoping to have them ready for pick-up at the team meeting. For those of you who do not have personally-owned uniforms, stay tuned, and watch the website. There will be more info posted there soon.

Supply Unit

June 1st is coming soon, and with it, the start of hurricane season. There is some talk of sending team caches

out to areas without their teams (or ahead of their teams). To that extent, we've been hard at work readying the cache for deployment. If our team doesn't go, at least we'll have the satisfaction of knowing we've contributed one of the best-maintained, best-equipped team caches in NDMS, and we know it will make a difference to whoever uses it, and the people that are helped by it.

As always, bye bye and buy Bonds.

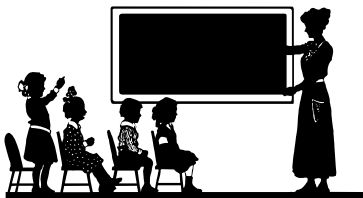


Plans Briefing

By Kathy Burgardt, Plans Section Chief

Plans members are working on updating and improving procedures for mobilization under the direction of Cheryl Tomlinson and DeAnn McAllan. We are developing a manual calldown procedure as a backup to our automated system. Brandon Bond and Aileen Hayes may be asking for your assistance in implementing the manual system.

Future section meetings are scheduled for Aug 17 and Nov 16. Both will be online meetings from 1900 to 2100 hrs. Contact Kathy Burgardt at plans@dmatac6.org for further information.



Training News

By Sam Bradley, Training Officer

Wildland FTX '06

We're in the planning phase for this year's Wildland '06 field exercise. Sign-ups are now up in the Members area, and close in a few

days for federal members who haven't attended a field exercise yet this year.

We've got two areas of focus: DMAT field training for new members, and wildfire response training for experienced members.

LOGEX '06

DMAT CA-11 has extended an invitation to all DMAT'ers to participate in their upcoming LOGEX '06 in Sacramento. Sign-ups are still available at www.dmatca11.org. CA-6 team members are welcome to sign up as long as there's room, but will be participating as non-federal team members. You will not be paid, reimbursed for expenses, or covered by USERRA. (But it's only a drive to Sacramento!)



Bird-Flu Pandemic Would Likely Start in California

Reprinted from the HealthDay News, March 30, 2006

If a bird-flu pandemic does hit the United States, it may well start in California and spread across the country in just two to four weeks.

And the best way to slow its spread would be to have workers stay at home.

That's the scenario drawn from results of a computer model created by researchers at the U.S. National Institutes of Health's Fogarty International Center. And while the results of that computer model should be interpreted with caution, it is based on data from ordinary flu epidemics for the last three decades, said study author Dr. Mark A. Miller, associate director for research at the center.

"The unique feature of this model is that it challenges conventional

wisdom, which says that flu is spread by children bringing it back to the household," Miller said. "That may be true at the household level, but regionally it is spread by adults."

That's why measures to keep people at home could slow the spread of infection, Miller said. Another finding in the study is that states with large populations, such as California, are more likely to reach epidemic levels of the flu at the same time than less-populous states, where transmission tends to be more erratic, he said.

So California, the most populous state, would be the most logical place for a pandemic to start, Miller said. Another factor pointing toward California is that bird – also called avian – flu is expected to arrive from Asia, he said.

As for the speed of spread, the estimate is based on ordinary epidemics. "What we see is that epidemics with more pathogenic viruses spread more quickly, two to four weeks versus five to seven weeks for less pathogenic viruses nationwide," Miller said.

The findings appear in the March 31 issue of the journal Science.

The Fogarty researchers used epidemiological data on seasonal flu epidemics that have occurred yearly in the United States since 1972. They connected that information with data from the Census Bureau and the federal Department of Transportation, looking at variations in yearly epidemics from state to state and links with local flows of people to workplaces.

Bird flu is pathogenic, but it does not yet spread easily from person to person; close exposure to an infected bird is needed to cause a human infection. The danger will come when, and if, a mutation makes human-to-human transmission easy.

Since 2003, the H5N1 bird flu virus has been detected in 45 countries in Africa, Asia, and Europe. More

than 100 people have died after coming into contact with infected poultry.

The model developed by the Fogarty researchers can go just so far in predicting what might happen if such a mutation occurs, Miller said. This model notably doesn't include previous pandemics, just ordinary epidemics, and a pandemic might have different characteristics, he said.

Still, the model can help plan for ordinary, predictable epidemics by showing how they start and spread, Miller said. It's also not the first of its kind, he said: "We did a similar model to explain the spread of measles."

More information

For more on bird flu, visit the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](http://www.cdc.gov).



Help Wanted

EMS / PUBLIC HEALTH OPERATIONS PLANNER

Submitted by the County of Santa Clara EMS Agency

Classified as: Part-Time Contractor
Recruitment Scheduled to Close on June 9, 2006.

Salary Hourly Equivalent \$30.00 - \$50.00/DOQ.

The Santa Clara County EMS Agency/Public Health Department is seeking 2-3 qualified part-time contractors to assist with ensuring the operational readiness of the Countywide Medical Response System (CMRS).

These positions are a 100% grant-funded contract positions that will expire upon use of allocated funds and/or project completion. Reporting to the Prehospital

Programs Section Manager, the EMS/Public Health Planner may be responsible for the completion of one or more of the following projects (assignments based on knowledge, skills, and abilities).

Develop multidisciplinary response plans related to provision of emergency medical care

- Develop and implement Standard Command Actions Guide for EMS System/Public Health Response.
- Develop and implement integrated response procedures for aircraft and other transportation emergencies.
- Develop and implement other applicable plans and protocols.

Alternate Care Site/Patient Management Site Development

- Develop, implement, and manage staffing.
- Develop, implement, and manage related operations.
- Develop and implement associated materials.

Ensure CMRS Operational Readiness

- Manage response system equipment and supplies.
- Exercise CMRS related equipment and provide instruction to others.
- Develop and implement associated materials.

Assist in the Development of Multidisciplinary Response Plans

- Coordinate the inventory and registry of all medical-health resources/CMRF resources.
- Investigate and coordinate the integration of available resources that will supplement the EMS System (SAR, watercraft, etc.).

Assist in the development and implementation of the MCI Plan.

- Develop and implement various aspects of the revised

Multiple Patient Management Plan.

Qualifications:

Education and experience in the provision of emergency medical services, public safety services, or emergency management.

The ideal candidate will have a minimum of one (1) year of emergency/disaster planning or response experience; or equivalent experience in a public or private health care or regulatory organization; and certification / licensure as an EMT-I, paramedic or equivalent is preferred.

Field level providers are encouraged to apply for this part-time, flexible schedule, position. The position does not involve any regulatory authority or responsibilities.

To Apply: Please provide a current resume / curricula vitae to Indira Reddy at Indira.Reddy@hhs.co.scl.ca.us.

Please also refer any questions to Ms. Reddy at 408-885-4254.



Safety Corner

Hydroplaning

By Walt Sanders, Safety Officer

Ok, ok, I admit I'm a fast driver, but in my case that's what makes me a safe one. Now with hurricane season nearly upon us, we have something in addition to strange roads and drivers to watch out for: hydroplaning...

This being one of the wettest seasons on record, and since we may find ourselves driving in another very wet state this summer, it might be appropriate to offer a little something on hydroplaning.

Hydroplaning is the loss of tire contact with the road in wet conditions. A tire only makes contact to the road via a small oval patch of rubber against pavement, typically a 4-8 inch oval patch, dependent on the tire size and other factors. Four of these tiny patches are all that is available for maintaining control of a 4,000 pound steel behemoth.

When you turn the steering wheel, the leading edges on the sides of the front tires encounter friction against the pavement. The tires then follows the least resistance by rolling freely in the direction the tires are pointing, rather than scraping sideways against the side of the tires, a process otherwise known as steering.

In order to affect this steering process in wet conditions, a tire maintains contact with the pavement by squeezing water out from under it, up into the tire tread and then channels it away to the side, out from under the tires contact patch. When there is too much water, or too little tread, or the tire is rolling too fast to squeeze the water away, it lifts up onto the supporting water surface, thus losing contact with the pavement. (Water pressure builds up just in front of and then under the tire: hydro pressure.) A car skimming on the surface of water has no contact with the road and hence, no friction to steer with, a behavior referred to as hydroplaning. If you have no tread left, you will always hydroplane. If you drive too fast for the water to channel out from the tread, you will always hydroplane. If there is just plain too much water, you will always hydroplane.

The following is one, somewhat vague approach to managing a car that has lost contact with the pavement by hydroplaning. It is not likely that you will become expert by reading this if you are not already; but, you might come away with the most important part: Don't touch the brakes.

If you suddenly feel the car start sliding out of control on a wet road, don't touch the brakes.

Let off the gas, give the car about one second to hopefully settle back onto the road surface, then quickly ease on the gas as you try to gently correct the cars travel direction. Steer with the skid initially and then gently correct. Do not turn the wheel sharply. Usually this will do the trick. Do not touch the brakes!

Now if the car if wildly out of control, turning the wheel sharply for half a second(!) will sometimes help as it can force the front tires to cut their outer edge into the pavement, giving a brief but effective direction control. If you do this you must do it only for half a second or so and then turn the wheel immediately back to gently easing the car into the correct direction. Sometimes a little judicious fish-tailing by repeating this maneuver quickly two or three times will be needed to finally regain control. Be quick though. But, this is advanced management.

Do not touch the brakes! The whole trick here is to modulate on-and-off power with the gas pedal, together with quick corrective steering to regain control of the car. Do not touch the brakes!

Again, this kind of thing is done best by those with a natural intuitive sense of control or those

who have practiced regaining control of hydroplaning cars. Sometimes the novice can pull it off, sometimes not. Best of luck. Better, be aware of the road condition, your tire condition, traffic condition and then drive appropriately; AMR taxis are costly and usually make you late.

Needless to say, never use any kind of Cruise Control, Speed Control or whatever your automatic speed control might be called in very wet weather. And, sudden acceleration can spin your wheels as though you were driving on sand. Watch out for larger puddles of standing water, or shallow flows across the road, especially in curves; you will almost certainly hydroplane there unless you are very slow. Wider tires will hydroplane more readily since they trap more water beneath them. Under inflated tires are wider. It also helps a little to drive in the tracks of a preceding vehicle which has splashed some of the water aside, but keep a wet-weather-appropriate distance!

In dry conditions, slick tires with no tread whatsoever offer superior traction, but with just a little water, the traction of slick tires will change from extraordinarily good to nearly zero! I never worry about the tread on my tires in the summer months and always wait until early fall to buy new tires designed for wet conditions, in anticipation of winter weather. Tire companies spend millions designing water channeling tire treads to perform optimally in the wet; use that research, you pay for it!

Stay safe, Walt.

