

Missoula County Commissioners

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BCC 2021-010
Jan. 14, 2021

Scott Kennedy, Seeley Lake Fire District Chair
Sam Hunthausen, Executive Officer, Board of Medical Examiners

Dear Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Hunthausen,

The Missoula County commissioners have recently received complaints regarding the level of service provided by the Seeley Lake ambulance service. As fire districts and fire chiefs have great responsibility for the care provided to patients in the field, we generally direct concerns over the nature of responses to the appropriate local authority. In this case, having made those referrals, we have heard from those we referred that they felt their concerns were not adequately addressed. As we are charged with the health and safety of our community, we feel it our duty to pass those concerns on to the Board of Medical Examiners, which oversees the emergency medical service (EMS) system, through its licensing of both EMS and emergency medical technicians (EMTs).

The general nature of these complaints is that the level of care and response has been inadequate and that the oversight by their medical director has been lax. In one case, Missoula County 9-1-1 dispatched medical units to a male with difficulty breathing, and more than 30 minutes elapsed before a Seeley Lake unit indicated they were responding to the call. In another, a male with a history of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) waited more than 19 minutes for medical responders to be en route. In another instance, the canceling of advanced life support (ALS) ground resources following a motor vehicle accident resulted in delayed transport for a critically injured patient, who later died. We have included information on each of these three calls in this correspondence.

As you know, Missoula County operates the Public Safety Answering Point, which provides emergency police, fire and EMS for all of Missoula County and portions of our neighboring counties. In 1996, we enacted one of the state's first emergency medical dispatch (EMD) programs, which a local medical director oversees. This system was developed over several years to ensure the most appropriate medical resources were dispatched to medical calls in our county. At its core, this system has a cooperative and collaborative approach that takes input from response agencies through our 9-1-1 Advisory Board.

The backbone of this system is the cooperation between local and countywide resources. This partnership ensures that there are adequate ALS resources to cover the needs of all our citizens by dispatching not only the closest medical unit but also recommending ALS resources when appropriate. This cooperative approach, which includes not only the responders but medical directors, has the added benefit of a continuous improvement process, where agencies can work

together to ensure the best response in their area of responsibility. We hope this letter serves to further that spirit of cooperation in addressing the complaints we've received.

We recognize that oversight of the EMS system is only one aspect of the work of the Board of Medical Directors. As such, we have also sent a copy of these concerns to the Seeley Lake Fire District Board and the medical director of Seeley Lake Ambulance in hopes that the concerns of these citizens can be addressed.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

DocuSigned by:



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David Strohmaier, Chair

Not Available

Josh Sletnick, Commissioner



F68F48EA518944F...

Juanita Vero, Commissioner

BCC/ac

<u>Incident Number</u>	<u>Call Type</u>	<u>Address</u>
2020-00000071	Medical Call ALS	3050 HIGHWAY 83
2020-00000071	Medical Call ALS	3050 HIGHWAY 83
2020-00000071	Medical Call ALS	3050 HIGHWAY 83
2020-00000071	Medical Call ALS	3050 HIGHWAY 83
*2020-00000143	Accident - Injury	RICE RIDGE RD / HIGHWAY 83
2020-00000143	Accident - Injury	RICE RIDGE RD / HIGHWAY 83
2020-00000143	Accident - Injury	RICE RIDGE RD / HIGHWAY 83
2020-00000143	Accident - Injury	RICE RIDGE RD / HIGHWAY 83
2020-00000143	Accident - Injury	RICE RIDGE RD / HIGHWAY 83
**2020-00000230	Medical Call BLS	218 HAUSER DR
2020-00000230	Medical Call BLS	218 HAUSER DR
2020-00000230	Medical Call BLS	218 HAUSER DR
***2020-00000270	Medical Call BLS	401 SEELEY LN
2020-00000270	Medical Call BLS	401 SEELEY LN
2020-00000270	Medical Call BLS	401 SEELEY LN

* Seeley Lake, MESI
and Life Flight were
dispatched at
16:07, Med4 went
enroute at 16:10.
710 went enroute
at 16:09. 710
cancelled Med4 at
16:14.

** Nothing heard from Seeley
until 15:22 when 719 requested
we page out MESI. This was
after the caller recontacted and
9-1-1 sent out a second page.

*** Second page sent at 07:48
after not hearing from Seeley. At
07:49 703 acknowledged the page.

<u>Call Date/Time</u>	<u>Apparatus</u>	<u>Dispatch Time</u>	<u>Acknowledge Time</u>	<u>Enroute Time</u>
04/26/2020 12:40:11	723	04/26/2020 12:40:33		
04/26/2020 12:40:11	703	04/26/2020 13:01:00		04/26/2020 13:01:00
04/26/2020 12:40:11	710	04/26/2020 12:40:33	04/26/2020 12:53:43	04/26/2020 12:59:33
04/26/2020 12:40:11	719	04/26/2020 12:40:33		04/26/2020 13:01:56
07/13/2020 16:06:23	723	07/13/2020 16:07:12		
07/13/2020 16:06:23	711	07/13/2020 16:07:12		
07/13/2020 16:06:23	716	07/13/2020 16:07:12		
07/13/2020 16:06:23	710	07/13/2020 16:07:12	07/13/2020 16:08:47	07/13/2020 16:09:24
07/13/2020 16:06:23	719	07/13/2020 16:07:11		07/13/2020 16:13:35
09/23/2020 15:07:57	723	09/23/2020 15:08:08		
09/23/2020 15:07:57	729	09/23/2020 15:08:08		
09/23/2020 15:07:57	710	09/23/2020 15:08:08		
10/31/2020 07:37:33	723	10/31/2020 07:37:35		
10/31/2020 07:37:33	710	10/31/2020 07:37:35		
10/31/2020 07:37:33	719	10/31/2020 07:37:34		10/31/2020 07:56:32