

1

ONTARIO EMS SERVICE AWARDS

The Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, November 10, 2004, from the Commissioner of Health Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council receive this report for information purposes.

2. PURPOSE

To provide Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council information on the EMS Service Awards presented to York Region Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Branch and paramedic staff.

3. BACKGROUND

The Association of Municipal Emergency Medical Services of Ontario (AMEMSO) is a non-profit corporation that was created to develop common strategies for optimizing the transition to municipal operation of ambulance services. AMEMSO is the primary link providing municipal EMS providers advice and making recommendations to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. Today, 46 member municipalities and designated delivery agents, as well as nine contract ambulance providers, are represented through AMEMSO.

On October 15, 2004 AMEMSO held its annual conference in Sudbury, Ontario. An awards ceremony was held to recognize outstanding accomplishments of paramedics and EMS operators in the province of Ontario. Several York Region EMS staff were honoured and special recognition was given to York Region EMS for outstanding accomplishments in the industry.

3.1 EMS Service Awards

EMS service awards have been in place since 2000 and over 80 paramedics have been recognized province-wide for outstanding contributions to emergency medical services in Ontario.

Recognition is made for six distinguished awards:

- Exemplary Service Medal
- Rand McNally Award of Bravery

- AMEMSO Award of Innovation
- EMS Television Series of the Year
- EMS News Photograph of the Year
- EMS Feature Photograph of the Year

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Recognition of York Region EMS

The awards were presented by the Governor General's representative, retired Canadian Armed Forces Major General Richard Rohmer. York Region EMS and paramedic staff were honoured to receive the following awards.

4.1.1 Exemplary Service Medal

As part of the Canadian Honours Programme, the Governor General makes available Exemplary Service Medals for EMS professionals. The award was created in 1994 and is available to eligible members of the out-of-hospital emergency medical service who have served for at least 20 years in a meritorious manner. It recognizes those professionals who have performed their duties in an exemplary manner, characterized by the highest standards of good conduct, industry and efficiency. To qualify, at least 10 of these years of service must have been street level duty involving potential risk to the individual.

The following York Region EMS paramedic staff were honoured:

- Norm House – Primary Care Paramedic (31 years of service)
- Ian Phythian – Primary Care Paramedic (35 years of service)
- Brian Hall – Operations Supervisor (24 years of service)
- Glenn Munro – Operations Supervisor (26 years of service)
- Susan Wood – Operations Manager (27 years of service)

4.1.2 Rand McNally Award of Bravery

The Rand McNally Award recognizes acts of conspicuous bravery by out-of-hospital professionals in the performance of their duties. The award was established in 1976 to honour Dr. Norman McNally, the founder of Ontario's ambulance system. The award in his name has a rich history of acknowledging individuals who risked their lives to rescue or protect others from harm. It is not an annual award, and only presented when deserved.

This award was presented to three York Region EMS paramedics for their actions surrounding a dramatic rescue of two accident victims trapped in a car submerged in a frozen pond in Newmarket in 1999.

- Ian Phythian – Primary Care Paramedic
- Shawn McLeish – Advanced Care Paramedic
- Mark Hinton – Advanced Care Paramedic

4.1.3 AMEMSO Award of Innovation

The Award of Innovation acknowledges an EMS Service, an individual, a manufacturer or program whose efforts have significantly advanced EMS in Ontario. These efforts may be in the form of research, product development, operational innovation or education.

Two awards were presented to York Region EMS for the EMS Staff Reference Site and the Quality Review System (QRS) Database.

The EMS Reference Site is an electronic warehouse of information that was developed by York Region EMS. It includes legislatively required documents, core training and basic life support/advanced life support patient care, equipment standards, research materials, provincial and local health alerts, service contact information, and corporate resources. Paramedics are able to access this information at any time from any regional computer.

The QRS Database was also developed by York Region EMS and has become a best practice tool for cost effective management of day-to-day EMS business information. The database provides one central access point for staff to submit up to 18 different types of EMS information. This system replaces a manual documentation process that eliminates numerous staff hours to complete. The system incorporates forms and information used by all areas within EMS including paramedics, scheduling staff, fleet and property personnel, supervisors, managers, directors, training, risk management and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) personnel. It is the only system of its kind in Ontario.

4.1.4 EMS Television Series of the Year

The award acknowledges an EMS television feature or news story broadcast on an Ontario television station that best reflects the current practice of emergency medical services in Ontario, provides a balanced view of the issues presented, correctly identifies EMS professionals, and challenges common misconceptions.

York Region was the second largest epicentre of the 2003 SARS emergency and played an integral part in the response to safeguard our communities. That response and the role of EMS paramedics were chronicled in a Rogers Television 3-Part series titled “York Region EMS – Life After SARS”.

The series originally aired in October 2003. Rogers Television, First Local reporter Fil Martino and videographer Adam Grabowski spent three days with York Region EMS staff. The three parts of the series focused on the York Region EMS role in the response to the SARS emergency, the changes in clinical practice, equipment and other operational issues, and the impact on day-to-day life as a paramedic in York Region.

4.2 Relationship to Vision 2026

Supporting safe and secure communities and continuing to provide and support high quality emergency services is achieved through formal recognition of dedicated and professional EMS paramedic staff.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Recognition of York Region EMS and paramedic staff increases public awareness about the profession and the exemplary service provided to York Region residents.

7. CONCLUSION

The EMS service awards recognize the high quality services that York Region EMS paramedics provide and the accomplishments of the branch. York Region EMS is honoured to have been recognized by our peers in such a distinguishing fashion, and we continue to proudly serve this committee, our Regional Council and the residents of York Region.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.