



Town of Trumbull Emergency Medical Services Comprehensive Review

TOWN OF TRUMBULL, CT

February 14, 2019
Therese Keegan
Financial/Accounting Controls Analyst



tkeegan@trumbull-ct.gov

Phone: (203) 452-5072

February 14, 2019

Mrs. Elaine Hammers, Chairperson
Town of Trumbull Board of Finance
5866 Main Street
Trumbull, CT. 06611

Dear Mrs. Hammers,

I respectfully submit the enclosed report entitled Town of Trumbull Emergency Medical Services – Comprehensive Review.

The objectives of this audit were to ensure:

- that since the Department's Chief terminated Town of Trumbull employment on 1/17/18, a review at this time ensures the EMS Department's Policies & Procedures are maintained during a period of transition and appropriately documented to assist personnel going forward,
- that prior audit recommendations have been implemented or that there is appropriate reason why they have not been,
- the Department's processes are documented and accurately and efficiently administered, and that appropriate internal controls exist and are monitored.

I would like to thank Leigh Goodman, Trumbull's new EMS Chief and Barbara Crandall, Interim EMS Chief, and for their assistance in the completion of this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Keegan
Financial/Accounting Controls Analyst

Table of Contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Executive Summary	4
Scope & methodology	4
Prior audit results	4
Facilities & equipment	5
Management structure & staffing	6
Contractual agreements	6
Operations	7
Call analysis	8
Financial Summary	8
Key accounting functions	9
Findings & recommendations	10
Appendix	16
• 12/8/11 Audit Findings & Recommendations	
• Report by Payor	
• Budget/Actual Special Revenue Accounts	

Executive Summary

This month's review is entitled Town of Trumbull Operational Review of Emergency Medical Services. Trumbull EMS was established in 1976 and was the first freestanding EMS facility in the United States. The Department is dedicated to providing the highest level of pre-hospital care to ensure the health, safety and well-being of Trumbull's residents, neighbors and visitors.

There are several reasons why this Department was given a high priority in the 2019 Audit Plan, including:

- the department's prior Director terminated Town of Trumbull employment on 1/17/18 and a new Chief was hired 1/2/19; a review at this time ensures the EMS Department's Policies & Procedures are maintained during this period of transition and appropriately documented to assist personnel going forward,
- to ensure appropriate internal controls exist and that they are monitored,
- prior audits resulted in multiple Findings & Recommendations; the status of implementation progress had not been documented.

Scope & Methodology

Information was gathered via observation, interviews, and review of available documentation.

The scope of the review included the following:

- Follow-up on prior audit recommendations
- Facilities and equipment
- Management structure & Staffing
- Contractual agreements
- Operations
- Call analysis
- Budget/Actual history
- Key accounting processes

Prior audit results

Two audit reports were available for my review. The first, the "Performance Audit Review of Trumbull Emergency Medical Services" was issued by Trumbull's Internal Auditor in December 2011. The three audit Findings, Recommendations and Management Responses were summarized and are included in the Appendix, page 16. The Findings related to:

- The inability of the Department to adequately staff shifts. Staff had been lost to competitors paying higher wages, offering benefits and more work hours; additionally, volunteer staffing had decreased over several years;
- The in-house model of operations reports to elected body; the model fails to achieve the hallmarks defined by the American Ambulance Association;
- Patient accounts receivable of 120 days and over as of 7/31/11 was almost \$367k, which is outside industry standard; the rate of collection of the utilized agency was considered "poor".

Implementation status is as follows:

Recommendations	Status
Perform a demand analysis to capture historical call volumes; implement peak-load staffing	Engaged Hollsworth
Increase EMT wages, benefits and hours to competitive levels	Vintech contract
Consider adding a volunteer recruitment program, potentially with incentives such as at least partial certification course and licensing cost reimbursement	Implemented - see pg 15 #7
Town should consider contracting the services of an EMS system design expert to compare EMS model to highly rated ambulance services	Engaged Hollsworth
Trumbull EMS should more closely monitor outstanding accounts receivable	Inconsistently performed
The collection of receivables should be turned over to a new agency	with Comstar
Account billings returned due to inaccurate addresses should be skip-traced and pursued for collection	Not implemented

The second audit report reviewed was prepared by The Holdsworth Group, LLC of Cromwell, CT. The report, entitled Town of Trumbull – Trumbull Emergency Medical Services, dated January 15, 2013, provided 15 Recommendations addressing in-depth the situation at the time as well as an assessment of future needs. The Recommendations, listed in the order presented in Holdsworth’s report, are included under Finding #7 on pages 14 & 15. A column was added to indicate Management Response / Current Implementation Status. The Holdsworth report stressed the Department was operating in a self-destructive manner, and that significant structural and managerial changes were a matter of survival.

Facilities & Equipment

The EMS building was built in 1978 as a one story brick building with 6,200 square feet of conditioned space. The site was included in the 2011 Automated Building Systems energy audit. A new EMS (Energy Management System) was installed for the boiler with:

- outdoor reset
- circulating pumps
- temperature sensors
- controls for the existing gas hot water heater
- RTU AC with economizer

Additionally, interior lighting was upgraded with high efficiency ballasts and occupancy sensors were installed. In March 2016, when the Town’s Energy Opportunities report was issued, the upgrades showed a 9.48 ROI.

At the time this review began, amongst other equipment, EMS owned 4 operating ambulances and one that is not in service.

<u>Operating:</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Mercedes	2013	106,247
Mercedes	2015	94,761
Chevrolet	2015	148,957
Chevrolet	2017	160,419

The Capital Plan included funds for a replacement ambulance, which arrived end of January. The new ambulance needs to be stocked and inspected and is expected to be on the road by the end of February. At that point the Department considers itself to be sufficiently equipped.

Management Structure & Staffing

The EMS budget funds 2 full-time employees. The Executive Assistant filled the position of Chief for a period of one year. Trumbull’s new EMS Chief began employment with the Town on January 2, 2019. All other staffing requirements are accomplished via contractual agreement with Vintech Management Services, LLC and also with volunteers.

Volunteers must:

- be certified as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) or Responder (EMR)
- have a clean driving record
- except for students, volunteers must pass a Connecticut criminal background check including fingerprinting
- have a good attitude and be a team player
- commit to a minimum of 12 hours of service each month

Scheduling and supervision of new volunteers is usually the responsibility of the Executive Assistant; experienced volunteers are usually scheduled by the Executive Assistant and supervised by both the Executive Assistant and the EMS Chief.

Year	Volunteers by year		
	Total	EMT	EMR
2018	66	63	3
2017	61	57	4
2016	50	41	9

Finally, per the Town’s Code of Ordinances: the EMS Commission shall consist of 7 uncompensated members selected by the First Selectman. Appointment is for a term of 7 years; the term of 1 member will expire each year.

Per the 2011 Town Charter “The Commission shall have the power in its discretion to provide a location for and to train and instruct sufficient personnel in order to properly maintain an emergency medical services delivery system for the Town of Trumbull. The Commission shall have the authority to design, develop, manage and administer an emergency medical services system for the Town of Trumbull and shall have all other powers and duties conferred or imposed on emergency medical services commissions by the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut or ordinances of the Town of Trumbull.”

Contractual Agreements

TEMS employs only a Chief and an Executive Assistant. TEMS relies on volunteers and contractual staffing of EMTs and paramedics through Vintech Management Services, LLC. Vintech recently provided a 60 day letter of notice of intent to terminate the Paramedic contract as of 12/31/18, but they have continued to service the Town until other arrangements are secured. The Administration and the EMS Commission are currently considering various staffing and/or hiring scenarios.

Vintech hires and trains these employees, provides them with Town approved uniforms, tracks hours and provides payroll services. They ensure all hires have safe driving records, that they are appropriately State certified and that proof of medical control authorization exists, as required by position. Per contracts, Vintech is to make available a sufficient number of staff to meet the needs of TEMS at all times, recognizing that such needs vary.

Detail of TEMS contracts currently in force are detailed as follows:

Bid awarded to:	Term	Description	Cost
1 Vintech Management Services, LLC	7/1/18 - 6/30/20 1 yr. ext. option	EMT staffing	Yr. 1: \$25.40/hr Yr. 2: \$26.16/hr Yr. 1: \$39.86/hr Yr. 2: \$41.06/hr Yr. 3: \$42.29/hr
2 Vintech Management Services, LLC	7/1/17 - 6/30/20 1 yr. ext. option	Paramedic staffing	
3 (SWRCC) Southwestern Regional Communications Center, Inc.	2018/2019	Use of system	\$38,024/yr.
4 (SWRCC) Southwestern Regional Communications Center, Inc.	2017/2018	Dispatching: medical interrogation, prioritization, tiered responses	\$52,341/yr. plus cost of 911 lines
5 Comstar, Inc.	7/1/16 - 6/30/20 1 yr ext. option then auto renewal	Billing & collections	Originally 4.5% of receipts; updated to 3.5% 5/17/16
6 First Financial Resources, Inc. (FFR)	4/21/2009	Collection if Comstar is unsuccessful	33 1/3% of collections

Operations

Per an agreement dated July 31, 2012, Trumbull’s emergency calls are serviced by Southwestern Regional Communications Center, Inc. (SWRCC). Through assessment and fees from members, SWRCC provides fixed transmitting equipment and trained personnel to operate communications equipment.

Trumbull Police Department receives direct 911 calls; they act upon their own and transfer EMS calls. Trumbull Fire Department has their own contract with SWRCC.

- EMS calls through SWRCC will be promptly dispatched, toned, telephoned or paged by SWRCC following the Town’s written protocols. Reports prepared by SWRCC for the Town include:
 - ✓ Total number of EMS requests
 - ✓ Total number of EMS responses
 - ✓ Response times:
 - Time 911 call is received to time EMS unit responds
 - Out the door time to arrival on scene
 - ✓ Total of calls turned over to mutual aid
 - Including time of call and time of turnover
 - Agency name that responded

TEMS cross references reports with emsCharts to ensure all calls are accounted for so that all potential revenue can be captured.

Call analysis

Call reports received from Comstar are in PDF format, which makes analysis difficult. From these and other reports, EMS personnel extract data or totals and compile monthly performance reports. Rather than reconstructing reports, the summaries were traced to verify accuracy.

The following report is provided to the EMS Commission on a monthly basis and it is provided to the EMS Commission. The Police Department also has access to this analysis.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total calls	4,052	4,349	4,507	4,730	4,829
TEMS Covered	3,744	4,041	4,293	4,488	4,465
Percent covered	93.0%	93.0%	95.0%	95.0%	92.2%
Mutual Aid	308	308	214	244	391
Total response Times	7.2	7.2	7.3	7.3	7.6
Transport Rate	76.0%	76.0%	76.0%	76.0%	75.3%
ALS Intercept	161	118	75	69	112

Financial

A. Summarized revenue/expense history provided from MUNIS is as follows. It should be noted that employee benefits are not included in numbers by department; they are estimated at \$20k/employee for medical insurance, 7.65% of wages for social security, 7% of wages for retirement contributions and 5% of wages for workman's comp insurance.

ACCT DESCRIPTION	2019 Budget	2019 to 12/31	% to date	2018 Budget	2018 Actual	2017 Budget	2017 Actual	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
FEE REVENUE	(1,500,000)	(930,851)	62%	(1,650,000)	(1,556,407)	(1,450,000)	(1,686,033)	(1,290,000)	(1,597,964)
SALARIES	147,532	49,851	34%	156,517	128,518	154,716	153,520	151,504	150,733
UNIFORM ALLOWANCE	6,755	-	0%	6,755	4,055	7,000	6,838	7,000	6,031
SERVICES & FEES	1,143,101	1,069,132	94%	1,117,971	1,048,524	1,073,577	999,276	967,225	959,193
PROGRAM EXPENSES	3,000	-	0%	3,377	2,820	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES-OFFICE	1,500	133	9%	1,447	1,054	1,500	1,206	1,500	1,454
PROGRAM SUPPLIES	74,250	32,446	44%	72,750	65,785	68,752	68,751	84,590	71,131
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES-CLEANING	386	9	2%	386	216	400	192	400	192
COMMUNICATIONS-PUBLIC RELATION	1,500	1,101	73%	1,447	1,437	1,500	1,498	1,500	1,500
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	6,860	888	13%	6,860	1,274	9,850	5,996	9,575	7,410
TRANSPORTATION-TRAVEL REIMB	-	-		482	-	500	-	500	74
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	7,257	6,774	93%	5,988	1,518	8,115	7,727	9,312	6,279
CAPITAL OUTLAY	31,826	31,825	100%	30,250	30,249	38,179	37,920	26,180	26,180
RENTALS-ANNUAL RENTALS/LEASE	2,100	1,734	83%	2,100	1,806	2,100	1,122	1,932	1,670
UTILITIES	21,348	8,978	42%	28,013	20,126	31,407	27,236	33,005	24,954
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,447,415	1,202,872	83%	1,434,343	1,307,382	1,400,096	1,313,782	1,296,723	1,259,302
NET (INCOME)/LOSS	(52,585)	272,021	-517%	(215,657)	(249,026)	(49,904)	(372,251)	6,723	(338,662)
Estimated benefits	68,990	68,990		70,756	65,254	68,990	70,167	68,990	69,619

Note that the Town records income when received not when earned. If the income is not collected it is not recorded. Accounts receivable balance over 120 days as of the Town audit date of 6/30/11 was \$367k. Accounts receivable balance over 120 days as of 6/30/18 was \$1.560m.

	Current	31 - 60	61 - 90	91 - 120	Over 120	Total
At Comstar	-	93,771	55,580	42,838	564,579	756,768
At FFR	-	-	-	-	995,560	995,560
Total	-	93,771	55,580	42,838	1,560,138	1,752,327

Accounts receivable balance categorized by year, by range of amount due and by number of accounts:

Year comprising balance	Balance of receivables	Receivable \$ Range	Account balances	Number of accounts
6/30/2008	14,930	\$1,300 - \$1,538	24,126	18
6/30/2009	95,075	\$1,200 - \$1,299	189,064	152
6/30/2010	107,507	\$1,100 - \$1,199	170,726	147
6/30/2011	111,333	\$1,000 - \$1,099	134,973	130
6/30/2012	76,869	\$900 - \$999	144,513	153
6/30/2013	100,128	\$800 - \$899	177,499	210
6/30/2014	130,758	\$700 - \$799	252,894	336
6/30/2015	206,534	\$600 - \$699	238,229	370
6/30/2016	235,382	\$500 - \$599	184,742	333
6/30/2017	250,279	\$400 - \$499	50,822	111
6/30/2018	423,532	\$300 - \$399	46,558	144
	<u>1,752,327</u>	\$200 - \$299	68,334	283
		\$100 - \$199	40,761	310
		\$50 - \$99	29,045	349
		< \$50	1,241	49
		Credits	(1,200)	4
			<u>1,752,327</u>	<u>3,099</u>

B. Budget and Actual activity for the 3 EMS Special Revenue Accounts is presented in the last page of the Appendix. Balances of The Special Revenue Accounts are as follows:

Fund	12/31/2018	6/30/2018	6/30/2017	6/30/2016	6/30/2015	6/30/2014	6/30/2013
Certification Funds expense	3,037	3,037	3,037	3,037	3,037	3,037	3,037
Certification Capital Outlay	4,150	8,917	8,917	22,367	28,985	-	-
Disaster Trailer Fund	(27)	(27)	(27)	1,901	1,901	1,901	1,901
EMT course supplies/evaluators	61,836	61,047	59,913	45,404	44,923	32,673	33,811
	<u>68,996</u>	<u>72,974</u>	<u>71,840</u>	<u>72,709</u>	<u>78,846</u>	<u>37,611</u>	<u>38,749</u>

The Special Revenue Accounts are further discussed in Finding #5.

Key Accounting Functions

- **Revenues**

TEMS has been billing for EMS services since receiving State of Connecticut Office of EMS approval in 1984. It was originally billed through an agreement with Danbury Ambulance Service, the Town's Paramedic provider. In 2008 TEMS moved to the electronic collection of patient care data using the EMS Charts software, which was not supported by Danbury Ambulance Service. Through a Town

administered RFP, TEMS and the Town entered into an EMS billing agreement with the Comstar of Massachusetts in 2008.

The current agreement states an effective July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2020, with a one year renewal option and then auto renewal unless one party terminates. The Town paid Comstar 4.5% of actual receipts until 5/17/16 when the rate was changed to 3.5%.

- **Collections**

Comstar shall perform billing services for the Town of Trumbull and shall provide the Town all services necessary to collect payments due the Town. Comstar does not guarantee payment to the Town but rather agrees to set up procedures necessary to collect funds due to the Town. Comstar shall coordinate attainment of all necessary Third Party Provider numbers and take whatever steps necessary to submit claims.

- Members of the ambulance crew are to use all reasonable efforts to secure patient’s name, address, insurance information, signature, and any other information required to bill for services. Comstar shall promptly ascertain all required information has been recorded and take the steps necessary to submit forms and secure payment from Third Party Providers.
- Comstar to perform a direct billing service to collect all funds from patients where no insurance information is available.
- A bill and insurance questionnaire shall be sent to the patient’s address upon receipt of the necessary information from the Town. Follow-up bills shall be sent at 30 day intervals but no more than 3 patient bills will be sent for any one ambulance run.
- After the 3 month follow up, a letter is sent to the patient letting them know that they may now be placed with First Federal Reserve (FFR) under a contract between Comstar and FFR.
- The Town shall promptly notify Comstar of any decision to grant a write-off for a portion or for the full amount of a patient’s bill.

- **Expenditures**

Expenditure requests are processed per budgetary and purchasing policy guidelines.

Disbursement from Special Agency accounts are aligned with the purpose of the fund; non-routine disbursements are authorized by the EMS Commission.

Findings & Recommendations

Finding #1: A comprehensive set of written Policies & Procedures does not exist. This is currently of particular concern as the Department’s Chief terminated on 1/17/18. Documentation would ensure:

- Policies & Procedures are maintained during a period of transition
- operational and reporting is complete and consistent,
- Roles & Responsibilities are defined to assist a new Chief going forward.

Recommendation: Policies & Procedures should be documented and available to TEMS employees, contract employees and volunteers.

Management Response:

The Department will work on preparing Policy & Procedures and Roles & Responsibilities documents.

Finding #2: Accounts receivable collections had not been addressed at least from the time the EMS Chief departed in January until mid-August. The Interim Chief believed Finance Department was managing.

The Town’s prior auditor issued a report in December 2011 which stated “patient accounts receivable of 120 days and over as of 7/31/11 was almost \$367k, which is outside industry standard; the rate of collection of the utilized agency was considered poor”.

As of October 31, 2018 aged balances were as follows:

	Current	31-60	61-90	91-120	Over 120	Total
At Comstar	89,892	123,464	68,435	37,138	217,504	536,433
At FFR	-	-	-	-	1,351,071	1,351,071
Total	89,892	123,464	68,435	37,138	1,568,575	1,887,504

As of January 31, 2019, aged balances were as follows:

Current	31-60	61-90	91-120	Over 120	Total
100,592	164,121	69,114	45,447	1,583,934	1,963,209

Recommendations:

EMS Commission and Trumbull’s Administration:

- should document Policies & Procedures and Roles & Responsibilities
- should agree on a monitoring and collection strategy, including the assignment of responsibility to a specific person,
- may wish to consider some “blanket” instructions such as to write off balances under \$50
- should agree on how vigorously they wish to collect, and what should result as a consequence of non-payment,
- may wish to consider whether the collection of receivables should be turned over to a new agency or law firm or possibly accomplished by a Town employee,
- should ensure the accounts receivable monitoring and collection strategy should be documented and monitored.

Management Response:

The Interim Chief brought the Request for Disposition Report to the attention of the Finance Department in March 2018 through the Assistant Finance Director when the Finance Director was not available. The Interim Chief was told that Mrs. Pires was addressing the report and not to do anything with the report at the time. She said she would speak to Mrs. Pires about the report and get back to EMS if anything needed to be done. An updated Disposition Report was pulled from Comstar on August 9 and it was discovered that the report was essentially the same. On August 17, I spoke with Mrs. Pires about the report and she stated that she was not addressing this report, as she would not know interactions with patients or any other particulars with regard to patient transports. She noted this had been the responsibility of the Chief in the past. The report covers accounts dated 2012 (one account) 2013 (three accounts) through 2018. This is a very fluid record since accounts are continually added as they go through the process. All 2018 account are being addressed by the EMS Administration through direct contact or letter to patients to resolve balances before being sent to collections.

The Interim Chief addressed the collection policy with the Administration and legal counsel on August 22. It was agreed that this area needs to have a more definite strategy but at this time, no decision has been made with regard to changes to the policy which is currently being reviewed. Monitoring of patient account balances is the responsibility of the Chief. At this time, the Request for Disposition Report has been reviewed by the Interim Chief and the appropriate designations for disposition have been made.

Comstar does not receive any money on accounts they have turned over to FFR. They only receive 3.5% of what they collect. Trumbull does report to Experian which shows on a credit report. This option is also available with FFR.

Finding #3: Data shows that over the past 3 years, an average of 30% of write offs were due to inaccurate or incomplete billing information. The high past due balances presented in Finding #1 would indicate the 2018 reduction in write-offs and the percentage of those write-offs described as missing information is not due to an improvement in patient data collection, but rather a result of the lack of receivable management.

	Missing info \$	Total write-offs	% of total
2018	1,156	6,359	18.2%
2017	-	6,366	0.0%
2016	10,388	25,285	41.1%
Totals	11,544	38,010	30.4%

Recommendations:

- EMS Commission and Administration need to decide on desired level of collection diligence.
- Transport documentation should be tracked to runs/drivers and monitored for compliant gathering of insurance and other patient information.
- Town should contact local hospitals to institute patient/insurance sharing procedures.

Management Response:

The prior Chief of EMS and the former Administration decided on the current collection policy, which is being reviewed.

The EMS Administration is consistently reminding staff to collect insurance information each time they have a transport and not rely on the information stored in the charting system. A list of charts missing insurance for May/June/July was recently given to Vintech in August for resolution of this problem. As of this date, there is a reduction in the amount of missing insurance information.

Currently, the Executive Administrative Assistant contacts the patients directly to gather information, if there is telephone number. A letter is sent to those patients who have no telephone listed requesting specific missing information – insurance, telephone, social security number. If no response, the chart is forward to billing for processing. The Interim Chief is requesting the EMS Coordinators at Bridgeport Hospital and St. Vincent Medical Center to provide a contact within the hospital that would be able to help secure this information. This has been requested in the past but no individual has ever been designated at either hospital. Bridgeport Hospital’s record system will not allow individuals to look up patient information due to the strict regulations they must follow. The Hospital has given the EMS Coordinator another level of access to patient information; however, he may not be able to pull the information we need. Crews have been requested to gather the patient’s face sheet from the registration desk prior to leaving which the Hospital will release to the crews. St. Vincent’s Hospital has not come back with a solution, however, they also have patient face sheets that they are given at the Hospital Triage desk.

Finding #4: Billing, collection and receivable reports are not in workable or consistent formats; time consuming to use for reporting, metrics; manual compilation subject to error.

Recommendation: EMS administration needs to partner with Comstar to receive reports in a workable format.

Management Response:

EMS can work with Comstar to reformat those reports that may need data manipulation.

Finding #5: Detail of the Special Revenue Accounts activity is provided on the last page of the Appendix.

- The Disaster Trailer Fund continues to carry a credit balance.
- The Certification Fund has had no activity for at least 9 years.
- The EMT Course Supplies and Evaluators Fund continues to increase.

Recommendation: EMS Commission and Finance should discuss potentially moving balances and activity to the general fund.

Management Response:

EMS was unaware of two of the Special Agency Accounts until the 2011 Audit. When the Executive Administrative Assistant was hired in 10/07, she was only made aware of the EMT Course Supplies and Evaluators Fund. All donations and course fees have been deposited in this account. Discussion should be held between the EMS Commission and the Administration regarding these accounts before any changes are made.

Finding #6: Per contract, Vintech is paid in advance. Scheduled employee hours are prepaid and adjusted later. Vintech employee tardiness/no-shows are not tracked by EMS; in addition to billing issues they create coverage difficulty for EMS staff. Vintech is usually able to provide a replacement employee but occasionally they cannot and TEMS shift is understaffed.

Recommendations:

- Consider negotiating or changing next contract to possibly pay in arrears based on actual hours worked,
- TEMS should track employee tardiness/no-show for discussion with Vintech; repeat offenders should potentially be replaced.

Management Response:

Vintech contract currently states they are paid in advance. It is possible to revisit this arrangement at some point in the future.

Over the past several months, there has been an increase in lack of coverage, especially at the paramedic level. Several circumstances have created this problem, including loss of medical control from Sponsor Hospital, injury at another full time position, having to give up the part-time position in Trumbull to concentrate on their full-time position at another service and a general dislike of working for a staffing company (including low pay and no benefits). This situation has resulted in our staffing company, Vintech, to admit that they cannot provide paramedics to meet contractual obligations at this time and have asked that we move forward to make other arrangements. We are reimbursed for hours they are not able to provide coverage for the 24/7 paramedic. The current contract covers a 24/7 paramedic on site but our business model is set up for a second paramedic from 8am to 4pm Monday through Friday. They are not obligated to provide this coverage. We are reimbursed for any calls missed if there is no 24/7 paramedic on

site. Vintech has contracted AMR to cover instances where they are not able to provide paramedic coverage for the 24/7 paramedic.

Staffing at the basic level (EMT) has become more of a struggle in the past few months. The staffing company, Vintech, has problems with low pay, no benefits and inconsistent treatment of employees which causes a morale problem. The current staff likes to work in Trumbull but have a problem with their employer.

As our staffing is contracted employees, it is the responsibility of the management company to discipline according to their policies. TEMS does have the right to request staff not be assigned if there is a serious problem.

Finding #7: Multiple Recommendations from the Town Auditor's 2011 report (see page 5) and from The Holdsworth Group, LLC audit of 2013 (see page 15) remain open.

Recommendation: TEMS should consult with Administration to determine whether they should, and how they might close the prior audit recommendations.

Management Response:

The recommendations noted in this Finding were presented to the former Chief when he was hired in 2013. Over time these have been addressed with varying amounts of success as circumstances change within the service.

Holdsworth Group Recommendations (1/15/13)	Management Response/Current Implementation Status
# 1 Consider the possibility of creating a scholarship program for volunteer members of the service to enhance their training from the basic level to Paramedic.	N/A: TEMS does not staff Paramedics.
# 2 Recruitment - work with BOE to host EMR and/or EMT certification classes as part of educational curriculum.	Not implemented: BOE was opposed; also, difficulty in finding steady instructors.
# 3 Create a Leadership Team email group that copies all. The time it takes to email is shorter than the time spent dealing with confusion. Set response to email timing expectations.	Complete
# 4 Reinforce chain of command adherence including EMS Commission members.	Has improved but still occurs.
# 5 The Town should work to eliminate related party conflicts of interest; should clarify Roles & Responsibilities including EMS commission.	Partially implemented: most conflicts of interest have been eliminated; documentation of Roles & Responsibilities is incomplete.
# 6 All TEMS personnel should be recruited, hired, trained, equipped and disciplined the same way.	Complete: Hiring, training and staffing provided by Vintech.
# 7 Consider that TEMS volunteer officers be credited either toward hourly shift salary or tax incentive programs for performing non-field functions.	EMS Volunteers are given tax credit for volunteering 120 hours per year for medical coverage according to the resolution approved by the Town Council. In certain instances, additional credits may be given for non-medical coverage events.
# 8 Work with SWRCC to obtain weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual reports including call and response detail in Fractile Time format which meets nationally accepted standards. Note -Definition of "Fractile" response time measurement is a method to more accurately describe response times over a broad geographical area. Measures how often (as a percent of total calls) you can reach a particular area of your response district.	Partially implemented: Receive reports from SWRCC but formatting needs to be discussed with new Chief and with SWRCC; not in Fractile Format.
# 9 TEMS should work with the Town and the PD to definitively identify the areas of the Town considered Rural vs Suburban. Need to clarify response time expectations.	NA - Per EMS Executive Assistant all of Trumbull is considered suburban.
#10 TEMS should initiate a relationship with a 3rd party vendor to conduct retrospective patient care quality audits which can be used for improvement and training purposes.	Complete: conducted by Vintech.
#11 Since the 19.5 hour PT requirement poses difficulty, if recruitment efforts do not work consider contracting staff preferably for 6 hr shifts.	NA: Staffing provided via Vintech.
#12 Clarify with COMSTAR that they have all of the bundle billing agreements with each of the Towns mutual aid providers; ensure all intercepts are being appropriately billed.	Complete
#13 Cancel Blue Cross Blue Shield contract and recapture the 10% leaving on the table for no reason	Currently under review by Administration & Counsel.
#14 Obtain a formal commitment from the Town to utilize tax dollars to fund any system deficits required to maintain TEMS's responsibilities to residents.	Complete
#15 Consider using an EMS Enterprise Fund which can levy specific taxes Town wide.	Not implemented: have discussed with 1st Selectman and Board of Finance; not viable at this time.

Finding #8: The EMS Executive Assistant continues to cover the open EMS Chief position.

Recommendations: Perhaps the Town might consider separating medical requirements from other management expertise.

Management Response:

HR and the TEMS Commission has revised the job description and requirements for the position.

Appendix

Summary of Findings, Recommendations and Management Responses from Trumbull's Internal Auditor's report dated 12/8/11:

Finding #1: Lack of available staff to handle call demand

Although possessing three ambulances, there was often only enough EMT's available to staff one ambulance. Volunteer staffing had decreased over several years, and paid staff had been lost to competitors paying higher wages, offering benefits and more work hours

Recommendations:

- Perform a demand analysis to capture historical call volumes; implement peak-load staffing
- Increase EMT wages, benefits and hours to competitive levels
- Consider adding a volunteer recruitment program, potentially with incentives such as at least partial certification course and licensing cost reimbursement

Management Response: Agree that staffing is inadequate at times. Increased wages, benefits and hours would help with recruitment and retention

Finding #2: The in-house model of operations reports to elected body and the in-house model fails to achieve the hallmarks defined by the American Ambulance Association; there is no means to terminate an under-performing government operation

Recommendation: The Town should consider contracting the services of an Emergency Medical Services system design expert to compare its EMS model to highly rated ambulance services

Management Response: EMS encourages opportunities to improve services including the idea of an independent review

Finding #3: Patient accounts receivable of 120 days and over as of 7/31/11 was almost \$367k, which is outside industry standard; the rate of collection of the utilized agency was considered "poor"

Recommendations:

- Trumbull EMS should more closely monitor outstanding accounts receivable
- the collection of receivables should be turned over to a new agency
- account billings returned due to inaccurate addresses should be skip-traced and pursued for collection

Management Response:

- the EMS Commission's position is that they should not be passing judgement on the collectability of receivables; they recommend the BOF through the Director of Finance take on this responsibility
- The Commission will contact the collection agency in an attempt to improve efforts.

By Payor Groups
For the 6 months ended 12/31/18

	Total Transports	Total Charges	Total Allowable	Total Collected	* Percentage Collected
Blue Cross	125	\$ 133,624.22	\$ 100,889.86	\$ 42,650.45	42.27%
Medicaid	236	232,176.18	75,049.15	63,326.89	84.38%
Medicare	947	1,002,045.48	441,818.32	336,786.59	76.23%
Other Insurance	217	230,825.79	217,999.15	134,041.88	61.49%
Subtotals	1,525	\$ 1,598,671.67	\$ 835,756.48	\$ 576,805.81	69.02%
100% Self Pay - Insured	81	81,689.93	81,513.46	24,208.88	29.70%
100% Self Pay - Uninsured	70	72,377.60	72,377.60	2,104.71	2.91%
Subtotals	151	\$ 154,067.53	\$ 153,891.06	\$ 26,313.59	17.10%
Grand Totals	1,676	\$ 1,752,739.20	\$ 989,647.54	\$ 603,119.40	60.94%

**EMS Special Revenue Accounts
Budget and Actual by year**

Fund	2019		2018		2017		2016		2015		2014		2013	
	Budget	Actual 6 mo	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
1. Certification Funds														
STATE OF CT GRANT	6,898	-	6,898	-	6,898	-	6,898	-	6,898	-	6,898	-	6,898	-
PROGRAM REVENUE			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100,000	-	-	-	-
PROGRAM EXPENSES	3,037	-	3,037	-	3,037	-	3,037	-	3,037	-	3,037	-	3,037	-
CAPITAL OUTLAY	8,917	4,767	8,917	-	22,367	13,450	28,985	6,618	100,000	71,015	-	-	-	-
2. Disaster Trailer Fund														
STATE OF CT GRANT	3,200	-	3,200	-	3,200	-	3,200	-	3,200	-	3,200	-	3,200	-
PROGRAM REVENUE	10,350	-	10,350	-	10,350	-	10,350	-	10,350	-	10,350	-	10,350	-
PROGRAM EXPENSES	(27)	-	(27)	-	1,901	1,928	1,901	-	1,901	-	1,901	-	1,901	-
3. Supplies/evaluators for EMT courses														
PROGRAM REVENUE	330,960	(3,823)	323,170	(7,789)	285,348	(37,822)	251,166	(34,182)	218,617	(32,549)	206,915	(11,702)	186,319	(20,596)
PROGRAM EXPENSES	63,415	1,579	67,703	6,655	83,227	23,313	79,106	33,701	65,222	20,298	45,513	12,840	50,583	16,772