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Inside this Issue:

- › Case Report: Far Forward Fresh Whole Blood Transfusion
- › Case Report: Treating Combat Burns With Silver-Nylon Dressing
- › A Triple-Option Analgesia Plan for TCCC: TCCC Guidelines Change 13-04
- › Emergency Thigh Tourniquet Effectiveness in Four Positions
- › ReSTART: Resource-Based Triage in Mass-Casualty Events
- › Prehospital Cadaver Study of Junctional Emergency Tourniquet Tool
- › Design Rationale of the Cric-Key and Cric-Knife
- › Contingency Telemedical Support: The EM-ANGEL Study
- › Articulating Traction Splint Use on Pulseless Forearm Fracture
- › Optimizing Vitamin D Status to Enhance Physical and Cognitive Performance
- › Operational Stressors on Physical Performance in Special Operators
- › Effects of IO and IV Administration of Hextend
- › Surveillance for Vector-borne Diseases in Dogs in Colombia

*Dedicated to the
Indomitable Spirit
and Sacrifices of
the SOF Medic*

TEMS v. 2014

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The Tactical Emergency Medical Support (TEMS) arena in the United States (and worldwide) continues to undergo a dynamic state of change as agencies, jurisdictions, and departments scramble to deal with the everyday needs and concerns of the populations they serve. Those aforementioned entities compete for ever-diminishing resources and wrestle daily with the perceptions and expectations, real or otherwise, of local, state, and federal leaders to whom they answer.

This struggle is further exacerbated by real-world events ranging from local active shooter tragedies to Mumbai-style operations planned, executed, and coordinated with precision.

In the midst of these events is the struggle to determine best science and evidence-based TEMS practices that will deliver training, and operational solutions to best deal with the TEMS component of any crisis.

I have been an active member of the Special Operations community for more than 40 years and observed the dynamic changes from the Vietnam conflict to the current conflicts. And while progress is being made to translate conflict-related TEMS experience into stateside practices, there are some impediments to that translation. In my view, it is imperative that egos, publishing credit, legacy generation, profits, and other related self-serving afterbirths of this grand global crisis be set aside for a more cogent team approach. Analogous to that is the great command given as a tactical team attempts to break through the surf in their inflatable vessel, “Give way together.” It is time for leaders to lead to get this TEMS “boat” moving together. One example in my view is for the National TEMS Council (NTEMSC; formerly NTIC) and the Committee for Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (C-TECC) to work together to bring solutions to TEMS-related issues and problems.

I do a considerable amount of traveling in support of these endeavors. I recently received this report from a colleague who leads the California TEMS Initiative and Council (CAL-TIC), a separate 501c3 offshoot of the NTEMSC. He is also a member of the C-TECC and the NTEMSC, frequently existing in the gap between the two important agencies. Ray Casillas is a senior Firefighter Paramedic and a tactical medic/leader of almost two decades. He writes:

The California Fire Chief’s Training section convened a symposium on February 4, 2014, Burbank, California, to orient many from the fire and police professions to crisis response to active shooter events. This was a follow-on to the well-received conference hosted by the same in November of 2013. In a somewhat historical moment, it was amazing to witness 120-plus firefighters and police officers with varying ranks sitting in the same room, receiving the same information, vastly agreeing to work together.

The 2014 symposium was led by certain members of the NTEMSC and the grass-roots consortium, CALTIC. The day started out with presentations on the NTEMSC, CALTIC, and the National Education Security Initiative (NESI). Unbeknownst to many in the audience, schools K–12, public and private, have access to many great Critical Infrastructure Protection training opportunities under the NESI umbrella. Frank Quiambao, EdD, an executive loaned officer to the United States Secret Service, presented a succinct, but powerful presentation on the many NESI products, as well as the connectivity and continuity of care as it relates to crisis response to school shootings and allied first responder methodologies. Captain Jack Ewell and Deputy Paramedic Dave Carver from the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, Special Enforcement Bureau briefed the audience on best practices as it relates to Hot Zone Operations. Interestingly

enough, with complete respect for TC3 and TECC, the intuitive language of Haz-Mat was the language of choice by all: Hot Zone, Warm Zone, and Cold Zone. The follow-on presentation to this was given by Assistant Chief Mike Little of the Los Angeles City Fire Department. His commanding knowledge of ICS and NIMS was very complementary to the summit as he demonstrated the efficacy and obvious need for strong command and control at these events. Building on the previous topics, Dr. Andy Pennardt was able to authoritatively speak on lifesaving interventions in the warm zone. Additionally, he was able to identify and pinpoint where the California EMS scope of practice can adopt the interventions validated by TC3 and TECC and apply them to this zone of operation for all responders. Further tying it all together, FF/TEMS Specialist Jason Shelton articulated the benefit of identifying three levels of provider and applying specific scopes of practice to each. The day culminated with vendors presenting static displays from Adamson Police Products, Tactical Medical Solutions, Z-MEDICA, and ADS Inc. Along with this, equipment was donated from Tactical Medical Solutions and North American Rescue Products.

The NTEMSC and CALTIC have been very instrumental in bringing many to the table, locally and nationally, that would normally not dialogue. Because of the chronic tragedies that continue to plague our nation, both groups will continue to collaborate with any and all stakeholders that have a true and sincere interest in the end user. That said, during and after the meeting, many in the audience made requests for training and educational information from the NTEMSC and CALTIC.

There are many outstanding men and women nationally who are silently leading the charge in their respective communities and anxiously awaiting answers from higher leadership to problems they encounter in TEMS. As my granddaughter would say, it is time for that leadership to “step up” and this granddad adds, “Give Way Together.”