

COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI
PLANNING COMMITTEE

April 1, 2005

**Committee
Report No.**

05-58

Honorable Chair and Members
of the County Council
County of Maui
Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii

Chair and Members:

Your Planning Committee, having met on March 14, 2005, makes reference to the following:

1. County Communication No. 05-69, from the Council Chair, transmitting correspondence from the Director of Transportation, transmitting the following reports relating to the Emergency Aeromedical Helicopter Services:
 - a. AirMed-1 December report and Summation report for the quarter ending December 31, 2004; and
 - b. AirMed-1 Monthly Summation reports for September, October and November 2004.
2. County Communication No. 05-87, from the Director of Transportation, transmitting a copy of the implemented protocols for the MedEvac Helicopter entitled "STATE OF HAWAII MAUI COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDEVAC HELICOPTER IMPLEMENTATION PLAN".

Your Committee notes that the information contained in the quarterly reports relating to the Emergency Aeromedical Helicopter Services includes: the dates of the flights; whether the helicopter reported to the scene of the injury or transferred a patient; the scene or transfer point; the final destination; the condition of the patient; and the total time on task. The monthly summation reports contained within the quarterly reports provide greater details, including canceled or aborted flights and the Census tract served.

Your Committee notes that the implementation plan includes background on the program. The implementation plan also includes protocols for mission safety, medical oversight, criteria for use of the service, a description of the service, procedures for using the service, inter-facility transfers, and quality assurance. Attached to the implementation

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plan are appendices setting forth designated landing zones, transfer standing orders, and the Maui MedEvac Inter-facility Transfer Certification of Need.

Your Committee further notes that the submission of quarterly reports and the implementation plan were required by a proviso in Ordinance 3192, the Fiscal Year 2005 Budget.

At its meeting, your Committee met with the Director of Transportation; a Deputy Corporation Counsel; Dr. Linda Rosen, Deputy Director, State Department of Health; and Donna Maiava, Chief, Emergency Medical System and Injury Prevention System, State Department of Health.

Your Committee received public testimony from one individual, who provided comments and recommended improving the current program by having a nurse and paramedic on board for 911 calls.

The Director of Transportation provided your Committee with a handout that illustrated 19 flights taken by Emergency Aeromedical Helicopter Services from September to December 2004 and the start and end points of each flight. He noted that the total number of flights taken from the start of the program on September 18, 2004 through March 14, 2005 has increased to 34.

Dr. Rosen and Ms. Maiava provided your Committee with a brief overview of the program and thanked the Council and the Administration for its support of the program.

Dr. Rosen and Ms. Maiava reported that the State Department of Health has published a Request for Proposals for the emergency ambulance service (including both ground ambulance and aeromedical emergency helicopter services), and is currently in the process of selecting a vendor. They indicated that the current contract for these services ends in June 2005 and a new contract will be awarded at the end of March 2005.

Dr. Rosen and Ms. Maiava also noted that aeromedical services are not an entitlement. Each County has a different level of service. Hawaii County and Maui County's are the most similar. Maui County's program was modeled on the Hawaii County's program. Hawaii County funds 40 percent of their program and provides and maintains a helicopter that was donated to the County. The County of Maui funds 50 percent of their program. When a helicopter is available, the U.S. military provides free

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services to the City and County of Honolulu. Kauai County is the only county in the State that does not have a MedEvac helicopter service in place.

Dr. Rosen and Ms. Maiava informed your Committee that the project cost is approximately \$2 million for Fiscal Year 2006. The Governor's budget and the Mayor's budget each propose \$1 million appropriations for the Emergency Aeromedical Helicopter Services for the County of Maui. Dr. Rosen and Ms. Maiava noted that the increase in County funding from \$611,500 in Fiscal Year 2005 to \$1 million in Fiscal Year 2006 is due to the inclusion of crew costs. This cost was not factored into the funding request for Fiscal Year 2005. Dr. Rosen and Ms. Maiava also noted that they requested additional funding from the State in the event that the County did not agree to provide matching funds.

Dr. Rosen and Ms. Maiava estimated that approximately 18 percent of the patients who utilize the program are insured. Your Committee requested that information on the number of insured patients utilizing the Emergency Aeromedical Helicopter Services be incorporated into the quarterly reports received by the County.

Dr. Rosen and Ms. Maiava noted that some flight services are aborted due to bad weather. They stated that in these cases, the patient will be stabilized and a second attempt to fly out will be made when the weather clears.

Upon questioning by your Committee, Dr. Rosen and Ms. Maiava said that although neither the State nor the County has immunity from lawsuits related to these services, the County is insured.

Dr. Rosen and Ms. Maiava said that the Emergency Medical Services System handles the billing statewide for the MedEvac helicopter service. Reimbursements received are deposited directly into the State's General Fund.

Your Committee stated that the County should be entitled to receive a portion of any reimbursements received since the County is funding 50 percent of the program.

Ms. Maiava stated that she would research whether the County could be credited any portion of the reimbursement amount or unutilized funding amount.

Dr. Rosen said that there are no plans to significantly change the MedEvac services. The program will continue to be monitored and adjusted, if necessary.

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Your Committee recommended that a letter be sent to the Budget and Finance Committee indicating some of your Committee's concerns regarding this matter. Your Committee also recommended that a letter be sent to the Department of Transportation requesting additional information. Finally, your Committee recommended that this matter be filed.

Your Planning Committee RECOMMENDS the following:

1. That County Communication No. 05-69 be FILED; and
2. That County Communication No. 05-87 be FILED.

Adoption of this report is respectfully requested.

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