



**Arizona Fire Chiefs Association  
2013 Leadership Conference**

**Changes in Fire Department EMS  
Delivery  
The Mesa Experience**

**Fire Chief Harry Beck**

Mesa Fire and Medical Department



The logo for the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association is circular, featuring a central emblem with a fire hydrant and a ladder. The text "ARIZONA" is at the top, "1966" is in the center, and "FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION" is at the bottom. The word "Orientation" is written in large, orange, 3D-style letters to the right of the logo.

# Orientation

- \* **2008 - Early Signs of the Great Recession**
- \* **National Health Care is a Major Issue**
- \* **Private EMS Lobbying Congress**
- \* **Impact on Local Economy**
- \* **Fire Departments Under Attack**

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# Orientation

- \* **Structure Fires on Downward Trend**
- \* **Imminent Budget Cuts Looming**
- \* **High Expectation for Change**
- \* **Perception of “Traditionalism”**

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# Preparing for Change

- \* **Establish Labor/Management Values**
- \* **Four Person Staffing Threatened**
- \* **Emergency Response Times Creeping  
Upward**
- \* **Manage Within the Environment**
- \* **Control Our Destiny**

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# Preparing for Change

- \* **Timing is Everything – Manage It**
- \* **Do What Works – Sell What They’re  
Buying**
- \* **Demand for Reduced Staffing Model**
- \* **Demand For Lower O/M costs**

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# Preparing for Change

- \* **Expectation for Innovation**
- \* **Demand for New Sustainable Model**
- \* **Entrepreneur Spirit**
- \* **Thinking Outside the Box Puts You in  
Somebody Else's Box**



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# 2008-Implemented TRV Program

- \* **Overcrowded Emergency Departments**
- \* **Ambulances Backup at Hospitals**
- \* **Concern about adequate Primary Care Physicians**
- \* **Coincided with Record Flu Season**
- \* **One Hospital went Code Purple**

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# 2008-Implemented TRV Program

- \* More Than Half of All Emergency Units Over 3000 Incidents/year**
- \* Emergency Response Times Steadily Increasing**
- \* Second-due unit covering more than 30% of the Time**
- \* Labor/Management Support**



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# 2008-Implemented TRV Program

- \* What is a TRV? Transitional Response Vehicle**
- \* Two-person Low-emergency Response Unit**
- \* One Medic Captain and One FF EMT**
- \* Added back \$600,000 in Overtime/Constant Staffing**

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# 2008-Implemented TRV Program

- \* **Four Units Staffed at Peak Times with Overtime Pay**
- \* **Increase or Reduce Service Time based on Budget**
- \* **Pilot Program Approach – Dynamic Modifications**
- \* **Expanded Dispatch Triage Capability and Deployment Options**

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# 2008-Implemented TRV Program

- \* Meetings and Constant Feedback From the Troops**
- \* Demonstrated Willingness to Change and be Innovative**
- \* Conducted 2 Month Trial with PA TRV – Data  
Collection**
- \* Assistance From Medical Director and AT Still Medical  
School**
- \* All TRVs Currently Running Over 3000 Incidents/year**



# 2012-Implemented PA TRV Program

- \* **Contract with Mountain View Medical Center (IASIS)**
- \* **Hand-picked Nurse Practitioner Provided 40hrs/week**
- \* **Replaced One TRV**
- \* **NP Replaces EMT and Lowers Overall Cost**
- \* **Expanded Level of Service – Prescriptions,  
Diagnosis, etc.**



# 2012-Implemented PA TRV Program

- \* **Treat and Release**
- \* **Allows Post-surgical Follow-ups at Home**
- \* **Hospital Billing Insurance Only for Cost Recovery**
- \* **Assists PD Medical Clearance in the Field**

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## 2013-Implemented Behavioral Health TRV

- \* **7-10% of Calls Involve Behavioral Health**
- \* **80% of Those Calls are Not Emergency**
- \* **Time Consuming for Fire and Police**
- \* **Transported to Hospital as Last Resort**



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# 2013-Implemented Behavioral Health TRV

- \* Patient Wait in ER 6hrs to Two Days  
Without Definitive Care**
- \* Many Times Patient Released or Walked Out**
- \* Conducting Study Involving Behavioral  
Health Professionals**
- \* Two Crisis Councilors Accompany TRV Staff**
  - \* Operates 40hrs/Week**



- \* **Labor/Management Strategic Initiative for EMS**
- \* **Updating Public Awareness About Modern  
Advanced Life Support**
- \* **State of the Art Training and Equipment**
- \* **Department Name Change Emphasizes EMS Role**

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# Embrace EMS

- \* **Department Logo Change Emphasizes EMS Role**
- \* **Media Recognition for Citizen Assistance**
- \* **Community Based EMS**
- \* **Continuous Quest for Innovation and Quality**



# Future Plans

- \* Transition to Broader-based Mid-level Provider Program**
- \* Increase Partnerships with Hospitals, Speciality Providers and Insurance Carriers**
- \* Expand Relationships with Hospitals, Speciality Providers and AT Still Medical School**



# Future Plans

- \* Participate as Member of Local Accountable Care Organization (ACO)**
- \* Evaluate and Implement Opportunities for Cost Recovery**
- \* Anticipate Receipt of Medicare Grant**



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