



# Tactical Emergency Medical Services

- Partnership between Sheriff's Office and County EMS began in the late 1980s
- County EMS, through the Ambulance Agreement, provides –
  - 12 Tactical Paramedics plus a Team Leader
  - Unmarked Response Vehicle – Not An Ambulance
  - Specialized Medical Gear and Personal Protective Equipment
  - Specialized Training – SWAT School, Firearms training, Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC)
  - Specialized Medical Treatment Protocols for austere environments
- Paramedics are embedded in the PCSO SWAT Team
  - Close coordination between SWAT Team Leader and TEMS Leader
  - Tactical Paramedics make entry to treat civilian or law enforcement casualties - seconds count.
  - Call outs for barricaded subjects, clandestine drug labs, etc.
  - Standby for High Risk Warrants
  - Response to Active Assailants to backup regular EMS response
  - Support Federal and State Agencies (FBI, DHS, ATF, FDLE, etc.)
  - Dignitary standby (medical support for Secret Service)
  - Medical standby during SWAT training



# Armed Paramedics

- New law allows SWAT Paramedics to be armed
- Florida Statute § 790.25(q)
- While the law enables Paramedics to be armed the Ambulance Contractor **cannot obtain insurance** since it is unheard of to have a private ambulance employee in this role.
- Ambulance Contractor would do this if they could.
- Utilizing a public employee is the only realistic approach.
- The proposed approach is to have the Paramedics employed part-time directly by PCSO. All options were considered.
- County EMS support for the team would remain the same with a couple of changes
  - EMS funding would flow to PCSO for the Paramedics through an MOU
  - The response vehicle would be transferred to the County and operated by PCSO through an MOU
- PCSO would provide the firearm, firearm training, indemnification, and operational oversight
- EMS would continue to provide clinical oversight through EMS Rules & Regulations and Protocols.





# Armed Paramedics

- Currently Armed SWAT Paramedics
  - Clearwater Police / Fire Rescue
- Will be implementing Armed SWAT Paramedics
  - Largo Police / Fire Rescue
  - Pinellas Park Police / Fire Rescue
- Will not be Arming SWAT Paramedics
  - St. Petersburg Police / Fire Rescue
- Unknown
  - Tarpon Springs Police / Fire Rescue
- Existing Annualized Costs
  - \$100K for Staffing (depending on activity)
  - \$70K for Vehicle – 7 Year life
  - \$24K (\$2K each) – 5 year life Medical Equipment Bags
  - \$36K (\$3K each) – 5 Year life Personal Protective Equipment
  - \$13K per year – On-Going Medical Supplies
  - \$10K per year – Excess Liability Insurance
  - Annualized Cost \$Approximately \$145,000 to \$155,000
- New Costs
  - Excess Liability Insurance = \$5-10K Being Costed



# 2019 Activity

- Tactical EMS Responses = 31
- Call Out Hours = 494 (3 personnel x 5 hour average deployment)
- Tactical EMS Training Hours = 2,100 (2 days per month per member)



# Florida Statute § 790.25(q)

- (q)1. A tactical medical professional who is actively operating in direct support of a tactical operation by a law enforcement agency provided that:
  - a. The tactical medical professional is lawfully able to possess firearms and has an active concealed weapons permit issued pursuant to s. [790.06](#).
  - b. The tactical medical professional is appointed to a law enforcement tactical team of a law enforcement agency by the head of the law enforcement agency.
  - c. The law enforcement agency has an established policy providing for the appointment, training, and deployment of the tactical medical professional.
  - d. The tactical medical professional successfully completes a firearms safety training and tactical training as established or designated by the appointing law enforcement agency.
  - e. The law enforcement agency provides and the tactical medical professional participates in annual firearm training and tactical training.
- 2. While actively operating in direct support of a tactical operation by a law enforcement agency, a tactical medical professional:
  - a. May carry a firearm in the same manner as a law enforcement officer, as defined in s. [943.10](#) and, notwithstanding any other law, at any place a tactical law enforcement operation occurs.
  - b. Has no duty to retreat and is justified in the use of any force which he or she reasonably believes is necessary to defend himself or herself or another from bodily harm.
  - c. Has the same immunities and privileges as a law enforcement officer, as defined in s. [943.10](#), in a civil or criminal action arising out of a tactical law enforcement operation when acting within the scope of his or her official duties.
- 3. This paragraph may not be construed to authorize a tactical medical professional to carry, transport, or store any firearm or ammunition on any fire apparatus or EMS vehicle.
- 4. The appointing law enforcement agency shall issue any firearm or ammunition that the tactical medical professional carries in accordance with this paragraph.
- 5. For the purposes of this paragraph, the term “tactical medical professional” means a paramedic, as defined in s. [401.23](#), a physician, as defined in s. [458.305](#), or an osteopathic physician, as defined in s. [459.003](#), who is appointed to provide direct support to a tactical law enforcement unit by providing medical services at high-risk incidents, including, but not limited to, hostage incidents, narcotics raids, hazardous surveillance, sniper incidents, armed suicidal persons, barricaded suspects, high-risk felony warrant service, fugitives refusing to surrender, and active shooter incidents.