

Chatham Emergency Squad Annual Report

2016



Joseph Korkuch
Captain

Richard Crater
President

Introduction

Chatham Emergency Squad, Inc. (CES) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation founded in 1936 that provides basic life support (BLS), pre-hospital emergency medical services to the Chathams. The squad utilizes three BLS ambulances (Type III) operating out of two stations: 45 Spring Street in Chatham Township (2 ambulances) and 31 North Passaic Avenue, Chatham Borough (one ambulance). The squad's website is at chathamemergencysquad.org.

Mission

The mission of the Chatham Emergency Squad has six major elements:

- To render basic emergency life support and ambulance transportation for Chatham Borough and Township residents and visitors in the event of accident or sudden illness.
- To transport residents of the Chathams whose health requires non-emergency ambulance transportation to and from hospitals, rehab centers, or nursing homes (when such transport can be accomplished without reducing emergency coverage below acceptable levels).
- To render assistance to Chatham residents in such matters as moving helpless, sick, injured, or elderly people to and from automobiles or upper floors of homes.
- To provide an on-site ambulance and crew for community events (such as football games, road races, and other sports events and festivals) where there is an increased likelihood of injury and/or large number of attendees.
- To participate in emergency disaster response as requested by emergency management authorities and to provide firefighter rehabilitation at fire or disaster scenes.
- To provide mutual aid to neighboring communities when their squads are unable to respond to a call.

Affiliation

The Chatham Emergency Squad is a private self-governed corporation unaffiliated with any municipality or agency. The squad is a member of the EMS Council of New Jersey and

cooperates operationally with the following local municipal departments and outside organizations:

- Chatham Borough Police Department
- Chatham Township Police Department
- Chatham Borough Fire Department
- Chatham Township Volunteer Fire Department
- Green Village Volunteer Fire Department
- Chatham Township Office of Emergency Management
- Chatham Borough Office of Emergency Management
- Atlantic Health System
- Morris County EMS Alliance
- Morris County Communications Center

CES also resupplies both Borough and Township police with oxygen, masks, gloves, and other medical supplies. When police defibrillators are used, CES downloads, assembles, and files the necessary reports for the event. Continuing an initiative started in 2015, CES provides training and CPR recertification for all police officers, firefighters, and DPW workers in both Chatham Township and Chatham Borough.

Qualifications and Training

Every CES member providing patient care is certified by the State of New Jersey as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). This certification requires completion of an extensive training course of over 200 hours, culminating in the New Jersey State qualifying test. EMTs are trained in basic emergency-care skills including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, defibrillation, using airway adjuncts, oxygen therapy, first aid, splinting, childbirth, assisting patients with certain medications, administering epinephrine, and lifting and moving patients. Recently, EMTs in NJ have been authorized to administer aspirin to suspected cardiac patients and Narcan to reverse opioid overdose.

EMTs must recertify every three years by taking a mandated number of State-certified continuing-education courses and refresher courses. CES hosts such courses at our facility periodically. Many CES members greatly exceed the required minimum number of courses and seek the broadest possible training.

The standards of CES membership are considerably more rigorous than simply earning a State EMT certification. New members enter as “probationary members” and must demonstrate an understanding of CES protocols and prove key skills in the field before being promoted to Certified status, a process that takes up to 18 months.

Highlights of 2016

- Purchase, delivery and installation of two new Stryker power cot and power loading systems to join the one system purchased in 2015. All three CES ambulances now have

the Stryker system installed. The power cot/power load combination, rated for patients up to 700 lbs., reduces the likelihood of injury to our patients and members, reducing insurance costs over time. The systems also have the added benefit of meeting new, more stringent dynamic crash test standards. Each system costs approximately \$50,000.

- Took delivery of a new Horton Type III ambulance in the 4th quarter of 2016. All three CES ambulances are now Hortons, with standardized equipment placement and operational constancy. New ambulance cost: \$190,000.
- Continued CPR classes for police departments, fire departments, departments of public works, as well as Chatham school nurses, teachers, and coaches.
- Conducted multiple drills with the towns' fire departments, supported their training exercises at the County fire facility and responded to several working fires and CO alarms in both towns, providing patient care and firefighter rehabilitation.
- Recruited and on-boarded 9 new members, including 5 cadets.
- Completed the process to allow CES to carry and use Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) devices for assisting patients with respiratory issues.
- Participated in Rescue Task Force training and conducted a Mass Casualty Incident drill on premises that simulated a live shooter incident. Considering the variety of transportation modes through our communities, and the security incidents highlighted in news reports, CES has emphasized upgrading the squad's readiness to respond to a large-scale casualty event. Additional training and drills will be conducted in 2017.

Operations

In 2016, CES responded to 1088 dispatches, about 8% less than the prior year but very similar to the number in 2014. The dispatches included 620 to the Township, 451 to the Borough, and 17 as mutual aid to other towns.

The 1088 total includes 64 dispatches to Juniper Village retirement and assisted living facility, 50 to Chatham Hills Subacute Care Center, and 5 to Garden Terrace Nursing Home. This total of 119 dispatches to elder-care facilities is about an 8% decrease from the prior year.

CES responded to 639 medical calls (where the patient was ill) and 353 trauma calls (where the patient was injured). The remaining calls were 10 dispatches to fire scenes, 7 non-emergency patient transports, and 79 other miscellaneous calls.

In addition to these emergency and patient-service calls, CES also provided ambulance coverage and EMT staffing at CHS home varsity football games and community gatherings such as parades, street fairs, road races, and graduations. As appropriate, the squad deploys a trained Bike Unit to assist with coverage during these public events. Each special-purpose bicycle carries medical equipment and supplies that the rider/EMT can utilize to assist a patient until an ambulance can arrive on scene.

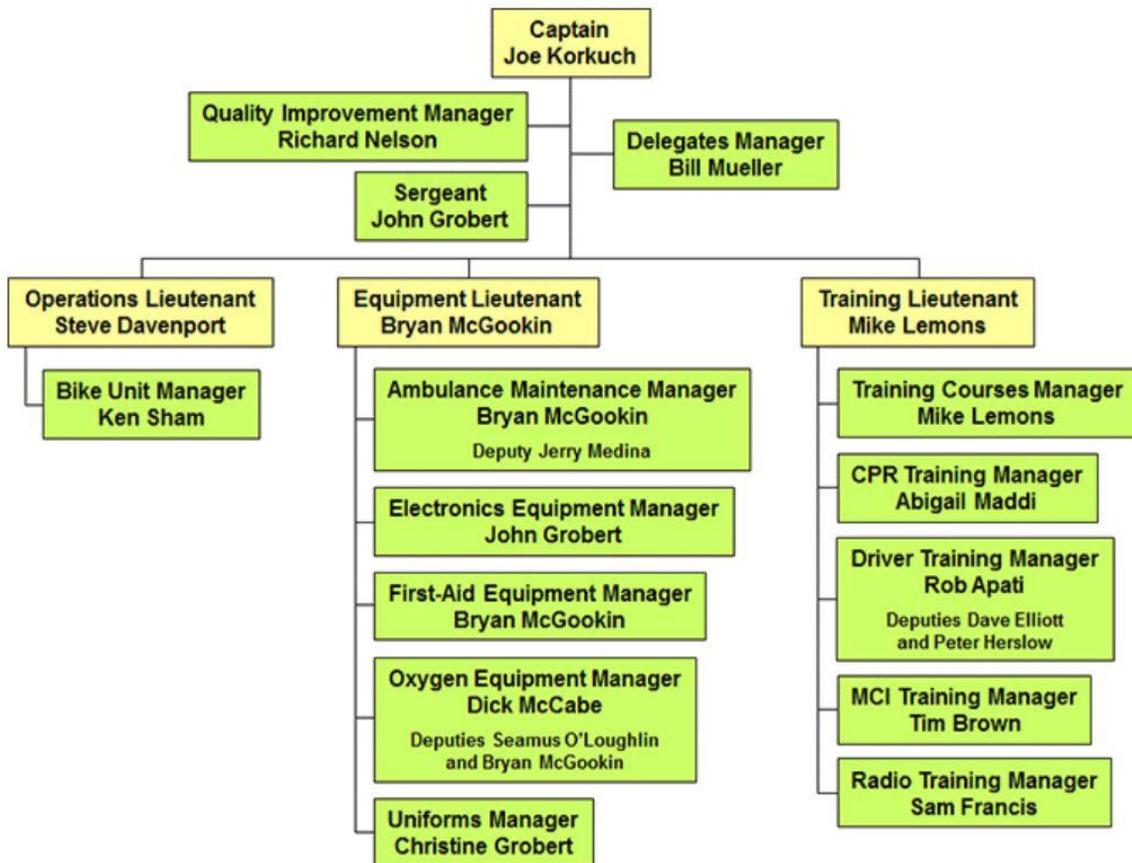
While CES is a volunteer organization, it has many of the same day-to-day needs as a small business with 83 employees. Training and responding to calls accounts for just a portion of the time members spend to keep the enterprise running smoothly and professionally.

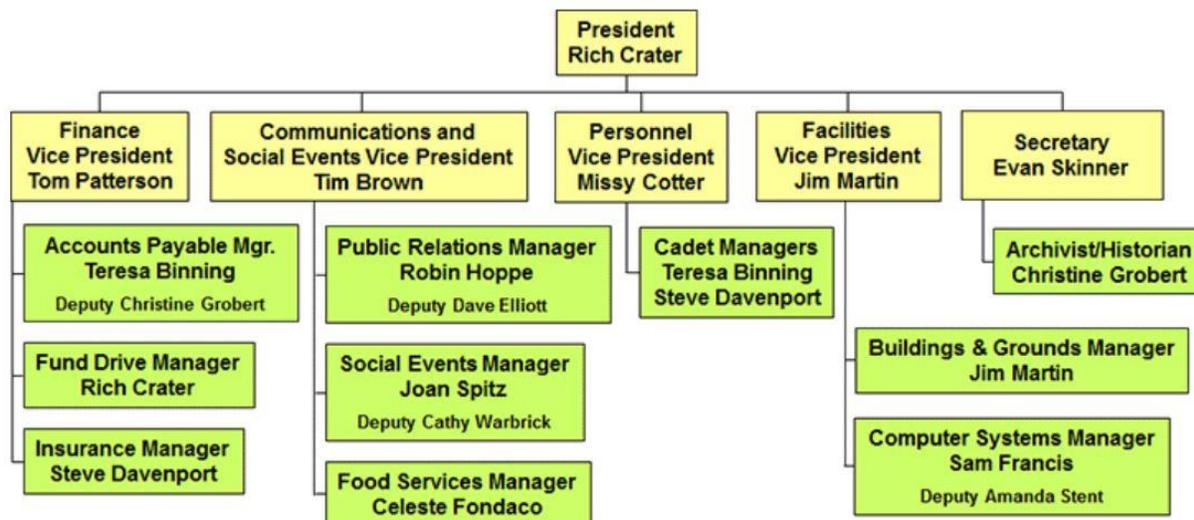
The squad's organizational structure is divided into administrative and operational areas of responsibility, led by 10 elected officers of the squad. The administrative structure is led by the president of the squad, supported by four administrative vice presidents and the squad secretary. Business managers are appointed by the officer to whom they report, and are responsible for functions such as insurance, computer systems, and accounts payable.

The operational structure of the squad is led by the captain, supported by three operational lieutenants. A delegate to the EMS Council, a sergeant, and a quality-improvement manager are appointed to assist in the operations of the squad.

CES prides itself on the quality of care delivered, and on the documentation of that care. Maintaining the high standard expected is the job of CES's quality-improvement manager, who monitors our field operations by managing a reviewing committee. All patient care reports are reviewed to enhance performance and documentation. Ongoing feedback, training, and recommendations are provided to crew chiefs and their crews.

The squad's 2017 organization charts for the operations and administrative branches are shown below.





Community Activities

CES members enjoy being a part of the fabric of both the Township and Borough communities, participating in activities that are beyond the scope of EMS:

- In 2016 the squad sponsored 4 blood drives, yielding 127 pints of blood, almost a 30% increase from the year before in pints donated.
- The holiday “Snow Village” in the Borough station was again enjoyed in 2016 by many youngsters, their parents and friends.
- Youth groups, including various levels of scouts, toured our buildings and reviewed our ambulances and equipment.

Membership Status

A sufficient number of new members joined in 2016 to keep the squad at or above full strength. CES has 83 members in the following categories:

- 48 full-time members (certified and probationary) serving 12-hour weekly shifts plus weekend duty
- 12 cadets who are high-school students serving one 3-hour shift per week
- 3 members on leave of absence
- 11 auxiliary members helping with the administrative tasks of the squad
- 8 students away at college or graduate school
- 1 physician member.

These numbers generally do not fluctuate widely from year to year.

While the current membership of the squad is strong, CES is aware of and actively manages the factors negatively impacting, and in some cases imperiling, volunteer ambulance companies in neighboring communities and across the State. Many squads are incurring great costs to maintain adequate staffing. Increasing training costs also are a drain on squad funds. Some previously all-

volunteer squads are billing for their services or requesting greater municipal funding. CES prides itself on its spirit of “neighbors helping neighbors.” Thanks to this spirit and the organization’s strong reputation in the community, the squad maintains a membership strength that enables it to respond in almost all instances to “duty-crew-out” calls with a second or third ambulance without having to rely on mutual aid from neighboring towns. Retaining current volunteer members, attracting new members, and continuing to provide high-quality BLS service at no cost to patients remain among the squad’s top priorities. The squad does not foresee having to move to a paid-EMT model or a bill-for-service model in the foreseeable future.

Financial Status

CES financial resources come from four sources:

- Voluntary contributions, mostly from Chatham residents, merchants, and civic organizations.
- Bequests and “in memory of” gifts.
- Funding from the Borough of Chatham and Township of Chatham municipal governments (each providing about 5% of annual expenses).
- Special-purpose grants received from the municipalities, private foundations, and charitable organizations.

In addition to assisting with funding for operations, Chatham Borough and Chatham Township jointly fund the squad’s Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP). In recognition of their service to the community, qualifying members receive a modest annual contribution to a supplemental retirement account. Squad members must qualify for LOSAP eligibility points by attending training classes, volunteering for extra duties, or otherwise participating beyond their regular duty-crew assignments. Approximately 40% of eligible members qualified for LOSAP in 2016.

The squad also benefits from worker’s compensation insurance provided by Chatham Borough and Chatham Township.

The squad’s main source of funds is its annual fund drive. This is a well-supported, community-wide appeal primarily through direct mail. At present, total income meets current needs, including ambulance purchases, and the financial status of the squad is stable.

Assets

CES owns and operates three Horton Type III ambulances, replaced periodically to limit each ambulance’s service life to a targeted maximum of twelve years.

CES owns two buildings, one at 45 Spring Street in the Township (housing two ambulances) and another at 31 N. Passaic Avenue in the Borough (housing one ambulance). Both facilities are in good condition with the Borough facility having undergone a major upgrade in 2005 – 2006. Periodically, capital improvements and emergency repairs are needed to keep the buildings operating safely and efficiently.

Other assets include the customary equipment for an EMS organization, including radios, pagers, bicycles, office equipment, computers, and medical equipment and supplies.

Future Plans – Focus in 2017

- Maintain a high level of BLS patient care through training and 100% QI reviews.
- Continue to upgrade skills as the State of NJ expands the EMT scope of practice.
- Continue to project a professional image that our squad and community can take comfort and pride in.
- As technology in pre-hospital medicine evolves, evaluate and, if necessary, secure funding for the purchase of new, state-of-the-art equipment.
- Evaluate opportunities for long-range financial security in combination with an annual community fund drive.
- Continue training to upgrade skills, including incident-command procedures used in mass casualty incidents.

Summary

The Chatham Emergency Squad prides itself on its professionalism and enjoys a mutually respectful relationship with the community, local governments, and the municipal departments with which it interacts operationally. The squad enjoyed a successful 2016, and is positioned to continue as a high-quality, all-volunteer provider of pre-hospital BLS emergency medical care to the Chathams.

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph Korkuch
Captain, Chatham Emergency Squad