

# Salt River Fire Department EMS Policies and Procedures

## Patient Transfer to Air Transport Agencies



05/2003

407.02

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to outline the process of transferring care of a patient to air ambulance personnel.

### POLICY STATEMENT

EMS providers of the Salt River Fire Department shall not conclude the EMS-Patient relationship once established until three essential requirements are met:

- a) Transfer should be made to helicopter personnel whose qualifications are equal to or greater than the transferring personnel unless approved by Medical Control.
- b) The EMS provider must remain with the patient until transfer occurs.
- c) The EMS provider must convey all relevant patient information and documentation to those accepting responsibility for the patient.

### PROCEDURE

Once the criteria outlined in the policy statement have been met, the transfer can be completed. The subsequent procedure must be followed:

The "Accepting Pt Care" box, on the EMS Encounter Form, must be signed by a member of the transferring flight crew. Upon signing, the signing medical professional accepts patient care responsibilities.

### UTILIZATION OF HELICOPTERS

Response by helicopter air ambulances to emergency situations shall be governed by medical necessity. It is appropriate to utilize an air ambulance when the information available at the time of the transport indicates:

- The patient has an anticipated medical or surgical need requiring transport, where without helicopter transport the patient would be placed at significant

# Salt River Fire Department EMS Policies and Procedures

## Patient Transfer to Air Transport Agencies



05/2003

407.02

risk for loss of life or impaired health; or

- Available alternative methods may impose additional risk to the life or health of the patient; or
- Ambulance services are unavailable or severely limited in the community service area.
- Medical necessity for air ambulance(s) may be established under the following circumstances:
  - a) Where speed and critical care capabilities of the helicopter are essential; or
  - b) Where the patient is inaccessible to ground ambulances or distance to a hospital from the scene would require unnecessary prolonged ground time; or
  - c) Where patient transfer is delayed by entrapment, traffic congestion, or other barriers.

### STANDARD

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Arizona Department of Health Services Rules and Regulations, Arizona Revised Statutes, and Arizona Emergency Medical Systems Guidelines for Air Medical Transport (June, 2002).