



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

911 Communications * Emergency Management * EMS * Beach Safety



"We protect the health, safety, and welfare of our community with pride and professionalism!"

September 6, 2007

Dennis R. Schrader
Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Mr. Schrader:

I am the Director of Public Safety, Okaloosa County, Florida, and a former Florida State EMS Director. We have been using the Sacco Triage Method (STM) in Okaloosa County for the past several years. Recently, the State of Florida has issued for review A Triage Report: A Brief Assessment of Florida's Pre-hospital Triage Strategy, which has an underlying assumption that the START protocol is a valid triage strategy and meets the criteria established by the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

It is my belief that many people in public safety and EMS have not yet thought through the National Incident Management System (NIMS) concepts as they apply to triage and resource management and how the continued use of START would contribute to many preventable deaths in a multiple or mass casualty incident.

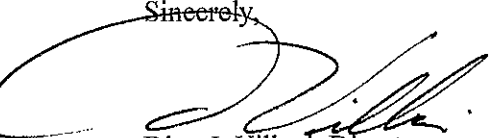
Some of the fundamental elements of STM that caused me to believe that START was not a valid triage strategy seem to incorporate many of the NIMS concepts. We simply have to have a measurable goal to maximize survivors and the methodology and associated tools to accomplish the goal. START does not offer that and doesn't consider resources at all (there is no START decision support other than take to the *Immediates* first). In my experience, START results in subjective, inconsistent, and inefficient triage that is dangerous in terms of our county and states' preparedness and response capabilities.

Can you please answer two questions?

1. Is STM NIMS compliant and/or compatible?
2. Is START NIMS compliant and/or compatible?

Thank you.

Sincerely,


Dino J. Villani, Director
Department of Public Safety