I. PURPOSE

To provide guidance and procedures for emergency response to a Boston MedFlight helicopter crash at Boston University Medical Center.

II. SITUATION

A. Location

Most helicopter accidents will occur during take off or landing in the vicinity of the Boston Medical Center Helipad, particularly along the approach corridors.

B. Ground Protocols

Normally, an arriving Boston MedFlight helicopter will be met at the BMC Helipad, by BUMC Public Safety personnel and a two person Contract Ambulance Service provider at the helipad gate to facilitate patient transport.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

Boston MedFlight (BMF) operates three helicopters and two critical care ground vehicles, each strategically located in Massachusetts with the capability to transport patients to tertiary care centers. Additionally, BMF also operates a fixed wing jet aircraft that extends long distance and all weather service capability.

This integrated critical transport system brings the technology and skill of the emergency department or intensive care unit to critically ill and injured patients.

Boston MedFlight communications center is controlled in the fact that it is known when and from where it is coming as well as the patient condition and number of persons on board the flight.
Boston MedFlight’s communications center is also responsible for the coordination of all other airmedical programs that utilize the six MedFlight consortium hospital landing pads. Other airmedical programs include, but limited to, UMASS LifeFlight, LifeFlight of Maine, LifeStar, DHART, and Albany LifeFlight. The communications center maintains positive control of these aircraft once they enter Boston MedFlight’s primary service area. This positive control includes exact aircraft positioning, all radio communications, updates to other program’s communication center and receiving hospital notifications (including security, admitting unit and contracted ambulance company).

1. Lifesaving Efforts

   Rescue and medical care of victims will be the immediate priority. All efforts of first responding fire, rescue, and emergency medical personnel should be directed to rescue and care of survivors.

2. Dignity of Deceased

   While every effort to assist survivors should be attempted, the dignity of the deceased should be respected. All responding personnel should be informed on the proper procedures for marking the location of and removal of the deceased, which is the responsibility of the medical examiner. The area receiving the deceased after removal from the site should be isolated from the public and media and secured using available police authorities.

3. Preservation of the Accident Scene

   Preservation of the aircraft wreckage is of vital importance to the investigating agencies. All responding organizations and personnel shall share the responsibility for preservation of the wreckage and accident scene.

   a. No wreckage or debris should be handled or disturbed unless absolutely necessary (lifesaving).

   b. Do not disturb, cover, alter or in any way compromise evidence, such as gouges or marks on the ground made by crashed aircraft.

   c. If fatalities are involved, do not move or disturb in any way the remains until their location has been marked tagged,
and documented by the personnel under the authority of the medical examiner.

d. Prevent the theft of any debris, no matter how small, as it may be a key factor in the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation.

4. Notification and Response

Initial notification of a Boston MedFlight with an airborne problem or crash may come from the Boston MedFlight communication center or a Boston University Public Safety Officer.

a. BUMC Public Safety, located in the Power Plant Control Center, upon receipt of an airmedical aircraft in trouble or a crash will make the following notifications using the attached Notification Sheet.
   1. City of Boston via E 9-1-1.
   2. BUMC Group A Page for a Phase C Disaster.
   4. State & Federal Agencies
      Massachusetts State Police
      Massachusetts Turnpike Authority
      Suffolk County House of Correction

B. Emergency Phases

1. Mitigation

   a. Maintain Safe Helipad

      1) Area should be clear of debris (trash cans, barriers, cones, etc.)
      2) Obstructions should be noted and relayed to the pilot (wires, tall trees, light stations, antennas, etc.
      3) During a night landing:
         · No lights should be pointed toward the sky.
         · Emergency lights should be on to help locate the Landing Zone.
         · Any obstructions should be illuminated.

2. Preparedness
a. Review plans

Review and coordinate plans and SOPs of other agencies and organizations. Establish integrated response plans.

b. Establish communication network

Establish a communications network for all responding and support agencies with pre-designated radio frequencies. Ensure that all communications equipment has required capabilities and identified frequencies. Describe communications control function.

c. Exercise plans

Exercise plans and SOPs for helicopter crashes on a regularly scheduled basis to ensure effectiveness.

d. National Incident Management System

Implement the incident command system for use in aircraft crash responses to ensure coordinated response.

e. Establish coordination

Establish the role and responsibilities of the Command Center to the command post on-site.

f. Develop the site maps for reference and response use, attached to this SOP.

g. Identify debris removal sites and routes.

3. Response

a. Notify emergency services

Fire, rescue, emergency medical services and police should be the primary notification group.

b. Notify support agencies and organizations
All notifications to support or regulatory organizations should be carried out as soon as possible after the primary dispatch of emergency services.

c. Designate staging areas

Provide responding agencies with possible staging area locations for incoming emergency forces. This will allow resource management personnel to coordinate the flow of apparatus, equipment and manpower.

d. Establish Command Post/Incident Command System

A Command Post must be established and an incident commander identified. Create linkage to BUMC Command Center and implement the Incident Command System.

e. Establish Joint Information Center

The BUMC/BMC Corporate Communications Office acting as the Information Officer will establish the Joint Information Center to coordinate and release accident/incident information to the media nad other appropriate agencies.

f. Coordinate with governmental agencies

Boston, state and federal personnel responding to the incident need to be provided with point of contact and pertinent information.

g. Provide unmet needs

Provide for, unmet needs through normal emergency management, channels. Consider food, fuel, lights, heat, etc.

h. Care of victims and responders

Provide medical care for survivors and support city services to provide shelter for persons evacuated from the
area. Open and staff casualty care sites if needed. Identify counseling services for victims and responders on-site and location for conducting of same.

4. Recovery
   a. Account for all personnel and equipment
      Inventory all equipment and account for all response personnel.
   b. Debriefing of response personnel
      Provide for post-disaster counseling and critical stress debriefing.
   c. Compile record of events
      Detail and document all actions, decisions and associated costs, including damaged equipment and injuries to responders.
   d. Inter-agency coordination
      Coordinate with investigating agencies or organizations.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Helicopter on-scene crash operations will normally be carried out by the emergency services supported by other agencies and organizations. A pre-determined incident management system will be utilized for the response operation. The incident commander or a unified incident command should control the scene while interfacing with other response and support organizations through the emergency operations center.

A. Boston University Medical Center

1. BUMC Public Safety
   a. Secure area
   b. Make appropriate notifications
   c. Open Gates to helipad for emergency response
d. Provide liaisons to Incident Commander and Command Center

2. BUMC Facilities Management and Planning
   a. Make appropriate notifications
   b. Open Command Center
   c. Provide liaison to Command Center
   d. Support on going investigatory agencies

3. BU Police Department
   a. Assist in traffic control
   b. Assist BUMC with perimeter security
   c. Provide liaison to Command Center

4. Boston Medical Center
   a. Treat crash victims
   b. Provide counseling services for victims and responders.
   c. Provide liaison to Command Center

5. Contract Ambulance Service Provider
   a. Assist in the initial treatment and transport of victims to Boston Medical Center

B. Boston MedFlight (or other Air Medical Program)
   1. Make Notifications to NTSB and FAA
   2. Send liaison to BUMC Command Center

C. City of Boston
   1. Boston Fire Department
      a. Perform rescue operations.
      b. Control and extinguish fires.
      c. Foam or otherwise control spilled fuel.
   2. Boston Emergency Medical Services
a. Provide emergency care of injured.
b. Establish triage area with designated triage officer, marked areas for different classes of patients and entrance and exit routes for ambulances.

3. Boston Police Department
   a. Establish security perimeter around scene.
   b. Maintain crowd control.
   c. Establish personnel entry procedures.
   d. Provide traffic and access support control.

4. Boston Emergency Management Agency
   a. The Boston Emergency Management Agency Director will provide assistance to emergency response agencies, as required.

D. Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ Departments

1. Massachusetts State Police
   a. Assist Boston Police Department with perimeter security and traffic control along I93 and Massachusetts Avenue Exit Ramp

2. Massachusetts Turnpike Authority
   a. Monitor traffic along I93 and ensure traffic flow for responders

3. Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
   a. The medical examiner will provide the necessary support, for the identification of the deceased.
   b. Maintain access to the helipad through the OCME parking lot

E. Federal Agencies
Federal agencies with responsibilities and authority for accidents and will respond to the crash site and will conduct the accident investigation.

1. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)
   a. Investigates the accident and determine the cause.
   b. Takes custody of the aircraft that will be released to either police or the owner when the investigation is complete.
   c. Coordinates with the authorities in charge to preserve accident investigation information.

2. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
   a. Coordinates with NTSB on the crash investigation.

V. Forms and Maps
   A. Med Flight Helicopter Crash Incident Notifications List
   B. BUMC Helipad Site Plan