



## National Fire Protection Association

1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471  
Phone: 617-770-3000 • Fax: 617-770-0700 • www.nfpa.org

### MEMORANDUM

TO: NFPA Technical Committee on Ambulances

FROM: Yvonne Smith, Project Administrator

DATE: January 11, 2013

SUBJ: NFPA 1917 Proposed TIA No. 1089 Circulation of TC Ballot

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The **preliminary ballot results** of the TC balloting on proposed TIA No. 1089 are as follows:

**30 Eligible to Vote**  
**1 Not Returned** (Patrick)

**Technical Merit:**

**0** Abstentions  
**25** Agree (1 with comment: Hicks)  
**4** Disagree (Chestnut, Frazeur, Juneau, Southard)

**Emergency Nature:**

**0** Abstentions  
**25** Agree (1 with comment; Hicks)  
**4** Disagree (Chestnut, Frazeur, Juneau, Southard)

There are two criteria necessary to pass ballot [(1) affirmative  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote and (2) simple majority] with both questions needing to pass ballot in order to recommend that the Standards Council issues this TIA.

(1) The number of affirmative votes needed for Question 1 (Technical Merit) to pass is 22. The number of affirmative votes needed for Question 2 (Emergency Nature) to pass is 22.

**Technical Merit:** (30 eligible to vote - 1 not returned - 0 abstentions =  $29 \times 0.75 = 21.75$ )

**Emergency Nature:** (30 eligible to vote - 1 not returned - 0 abstentions =  $29 \times 0.75 = 21.75$ )

(2) In all cases, an affirmative vote of at least a simple majority of the total membership eligible to vote is required. This is the calculation for simple majority:

$$[30 \text{ eligible} \div 2 = 15 + 1 = \mathbf{(16)}]$$

Therefore, based on the responses received to date the preliminary results show that this TIA **IS** passing ballot.

Explanation of votes received from principal member's are attached for your review. Ballots received from alternate members are not included, unless the ballot from the principal member was not received. If you wish to submit your ballot or change your vote, please do so no later than Friday, January 18, 2013. Ballots or changes may be submitted to Yvonne Smith via email to [ysmith@nfpa.org](mailto:ysmith@nfpa.org) or fax to 617-984-7056. If you do not wish to change your vote, no response is necessary.

Attachments:

**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE LETTER BALLOT  
PROPOSED TENTATIVE INTERIM AMENDMENT LOG NO. 1089**

To Delete 4.12.3 in its entirety and renumber 4.12.4 and its Annex material, 2013 Edition of NFPA  
1917

*Standard for Automotive Ambulances*

Question 1: I agree with the TECHNICAL MERITS of the Proposed TIA 1089 to Delete 4.12.3  
in its entirety and renumber 4.12.4 and its Annex material

\_\_\_\_\_ AGREE                          X     DISAGREE\*                      \_\_\_\_\_ ABSTAIN\*

EXPLANATION OF VOTE - Please type or print your comments:

\*An explanation must accompany a disagreement or abstaining position.

Excessive vehicle speed can be an attribute to vehicle crashes as is indicated in Table - B6 of the Analysis of Ambulance Crash Data – Final Report, which was issued by the Fire Protection Research Foundation. Further, a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed, and the weight of the vehicle, may induce more severe loads on occupants during a vehicle crash. The objective of the standard is to improve ambulance safety of which limiting vehicle speed should be considered which the technical committee attempted to do. To remove the section restricting speed could suggest speed was not considered in the attempt to improve the safety of the ambulance. Finally, the exceptions list is intended to allow a vehicle to be accepted by an end user with a known exception to the standard. The exceptions provision allows for states to accept an ambulance even though it does not meet the speed restriction requirements contained therein. Given there is an initiative to promote TIA 1088 which modifies the sections discussing exceptions and allows for a vehicle to be placed into service with known exceptions, this TIA becomes irrelevant.

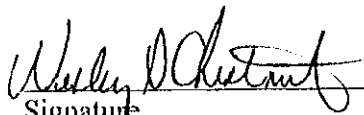
Question 2: I agree that the subject is of an EMERGENCY NATURE.

\_\_\_\_\_ AGREE                          X     DISAGREE\*                      \_\_\_\_\_ ABSTAIN\*

EXPLANATION OF VOTE - Please type or print your comments:

\*An explanation must accompany a disagreement or abstaining position.

I do not approve this TIA and therefore do not agree it is emergent.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Wesley D. Chestnut  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please Print)

1-17-2013  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE LETTER BALLOT**

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\_\_\_\_\_ **AGREE**                        X   **DISAGREE\***                      \_\_\_\_\_ **ABSTAIN\***

**EXPLANATION OF VOTE** - Please type or print your comments:

\*An explanation must accompany a disagreement or abstaining position.

SEE ATTACHMENT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 2:** I agree that the subject is of an **EMERGENCY NATURE**.

\_\_\_\_\_ **AGREE**                        X   **DISAGREE\***                      \_\_\_\_\_ **ABSTAIN\***

**EXPLANATION OF VOTE** - Please type or print your comments:

\*An explanation must accompany a disagreement or abstaining position.

SEE ATTACHMENT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Don Frazer  
Signature

DON FRAZER  
Name (Please Print)

1-4-13  
Date

Please return the ballot on or before **Thursday, January 10, 2013.**

**PLEASE RETURN TO:**

Yvonne Smith  
NFPA  
1 Batterymarch Park  
Quincy, MA 02169

FAX: (617) 984-7056

E-mail: [ysmith@nfpa.org](mailto:ysmith@nfpa.org)

#### Explanation for disagreeing with the technical Merits of the proposed TIA 1089

NASEMSO submitted no proof that ambulances traveling at a slower speed than the maximum allowed (posted speed limit) will create a safety hazard. Speed is the primary component cited when discussing accident severity. NFPA 1917 is designed to be a national standard. The maximum governed speed, 77 mph, is very fast yet reasonable for the road conditions found throughout the country. Only two states, Texas and Utah, have higher speed limits, and only on specified road segments. I think that EMS providers who want their crews to travel at higher rates of speed should accept direct responsibility by signing off as an exception, as required in section 4.17.

#### Explanation for disagreeing with the emergency nature of the proposed TIA 1089

This issue is not an emergency because:

1. Providers that desire to not abide by the standard can take exception as required by section 4.17.
2. The issue should be fully researched and vetted prior to making such a profound change to the maximum speed requirement.

**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE LETTER BALLOT**

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**Question 1:** I agree with the **TECHNICAL MERITS** of the Proposed TIA 1089 to Delete 4.12.3 in its entirety and renumber 4.12.4 and its Annex material

\_\_\_\_\_ **AGREE**                        √   **DISAGREE\***                      \_\_\_\_\_ **ABSTAIN\***

**EXPLANATION OF VOTE** - Please type or print your comments:

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The proposed TIA seeks to remove from the standard any design requirement that would limit or restrict the operating speed of the ambulance in any way. In support of this proposal, the submitter argues that a few states allow a maximum speed of 80-85 mph (in Texas, only on a few rural controlled-access highways), and that many states legally allow a responding emergency vehicle to exceed the speed limit by 10 mph or more. The submitter suggests, therefore, that an ambulance which is not capable of responding at the maximum allowable speed somehow becomes a "safety hazard for operators and occupants."

I do not agree that a responding emergency vehicle needs to be the fastest vehicle on the highway, nor do I believe that a vehicle with the typical handling characteristics of an ambulance can be safely operated at speeds in excess of 75 mph in any but the most exceptional of circumstances. Remember that these are vehicles that are very often operated by drivers with limited emergency vehicle experience, and even less, if any, high speed driver training, and these are also vehicles which all too frequently carry at least one unrestrained crewmember during patient transport operations. The slight marginal response-time benefit that might potentially be achieved by traveling another 10-15 miles per hour faster than 77 mph is, in my view, vastly outweighed by the added risk of serious injury and death posed by such high-speed operations – an extreme risk that extends not only to the occupants of the ambulance, but also to other motorists who may encounter the ambulance en-route.

To the extent that this Committee is charged with promulgating new design standards that make the ambulance safer for crewmembers, patients and other motorists, I believe that the reasonable 77 mph maximum speed limitation contained in section 4.12.3 advances this desirable goal by recognizing that excessive response speed has been, and continues to be, a very well-documented and exceptionally dangerous traditional practice which has not historically been controlled effectively through the application of other less restrictive methods. I am therefore opposed to the submitter's proposal seeking to delete this requirement from the standard.

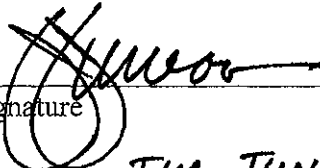
**Question 2:** I agree that the subject is of an **EMERGENCY NATURE**.

\_\_\_\_\_ **AGREE**                        √   **DISAGREE\***                      \_\_\_\_\_ **ABSTAIN\***

**EXPLANATION OF VOTE** - Please type or print your comments:

\*An explanation must accompany a disagreement or abstaining position.

**See above explanation.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**JIM JUNEAU**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please Print)

**07 JAN 13**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please return the ballot on or before **Thursday, January 10, 2013.**

**PLEASE RETURN TO:**

Yvonne Smith

NFPA

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\_\_\_\_\_ **AGREE**                      **xxx DISAGREE\***                      \_\_\_\_\_ **ABSTAIN\***

**EXPLANATION OF VOTE** - Please type or print your comments:

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**Due to the weight and build of the chassis, I do not feel that the vehicle should go to the speed above 77 MPH. In the Fire Industry all Fire Apparatus in 1901 are governed down to 60 or 65 based upon the size of the vehicle. (Engines are 65 and Aerial are 60), as to the danger it creates I have seen no evidence to support the argument at hand.**

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**Question 2:** I agree that the subject is of an **EMERGENCY NATURE**.

\_\_\_\_\_ **AGREE**                      **XX** \_\_\_\_\_ **DISAGREE\***                      \_\_\_\_\_ **ABSTAIN\***

**EXPLANATION OF VOTE** - Please type or print your comments:

\*An explanation must accompany a disagreement or abstaining position.

**Please see Above. I am in disagreement with the argument therefore do not see that it is of an emergent nature.**

Kenneth Southard \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please return the ballot on or before **Thursday, January 10, 2013**.

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**AGREE**       **DISAGREE\***       **ABSTAIN\***

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Supporting documentation substantiates

**Question 2:** I agree that the subject is of an **EMERGENCY NATURE**.

**AGREE**       **DISAGREE\***       **ABSTAIN\***

**EXPLANATION OF VOTE** - Please type or print your comments:

\*An explanation must accompany a disagreement or abstaining position.

Emergency nature is evident from documentation

Brian Hicks  
Signature

Brian Hicks  
Name (Please Print)

1/10/13  
Date

Please return the ballot on or before **Thursday, January 10, 2013**.

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