

Regional Emergency Medical  
& Trauma Services  
Systems Development Biennial Plan  
Progress Report For

**Southern Colorado RETAC**  
**Plan Cycle**  
**July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009**



<b>Plan Update:</b>	<b>FY2009</b>
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## **Section 1: RETAC Update/Overview**

### **RETAC Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Southern Colorado Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Council (SCRETAC) is to develop and support a regional emergency medical and trauma care system to improve the health and safety of residents and visitors to our region.

### **RETAC Description:**

The Southern Colorado Regional Emergency and Trauma Advisory Council (SCRETAC) was established as a result of CRS 25-3.5-704 requiring counties throughout the state to establish regional emergency medical and trauma advisory councils with the governing bodies of four or more other counties. This statute required RETAC's to be formed no later than July 1, 2002. Through a collaborative process, five counties chose to create a council in the south central region of Colorado. Those five counties are Custer, Fremont, Huerfano, Las Animas and Pueblo. The RETAC has a statutory responsibility to provide planning for emergency medical and trauma services within the region in addition to providing coordination of services where such coordination would provide for better service geographically. This planning and coordination activity will ensure the safe, efficient and effective delivery of emergency and trauma care in the region.

The State of Colorado, through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, provides funding for the operations of the RETAC. The RETAC currently receives \$150,000 annually. Currently, \$75,000 is budgeted for operation expenses and \$75,000 is allocated for regional funding and regional projects.

The RETAC was formed through the signing of intergovernmental agreements by each of the five member counties. The council is comprised of 15 members and one full time paid Regional Coordinator, who is an employee of SCRETAC. The Board of County Commissioners in each of our five counties appoints council members. Each county appoints three regular members and three alternate members annually. Appointees represent the County Commissioners in the areas of pre-hospital and hospital based

emergency care services. The Council meets monthly at the Office of Emergency Management in Pueblo and must have two members from a majority of the counties present to have a quorum and to do business. SCRETAC enjoys active participation from all of our member counties and the members bring to the Council a broad spectrum of rich experience in both pre-hospital and hospital emergency care. The Council is active in local EMS councils and participates in State Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Council (SEMTAC). The RETAC has excellent representation at the quarterly SEMTAC meetings and will continue to participate in the quarterly statewide RETAC Forums to continue to develop relationships with other RETAC's and governmental agencies and programs that are involved in the planning for and provision of emergency medical and trauma services.

Since July 1, 2005 we have had a full time Coordinator. The Coordinator will continue to act as liaison between the Council and various entities at the State level, such as CDPHE and SEMTAC, other RETAC's as well as other agencies or organizations that affect the concerns and decisions of the SCRETAC. This position will also maintain working relationships with all stakeholders in the region and will also create new relationships. The Coordinator is also responsible for the coordination of the Council's activities to include all meeting preparation, minutes and distribution of documents and timely communication of information to council members. Additionally, the Coordinator is charged with the day-to-day operations of the SCRETAC, which includes production of deliverables under the State funding contract, budget management and development and many other duties and responsibilities too numerous to list here. This position is vitally important to the success of our RETAC.

The Council currently operates with a slate of officers comprised of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer. Standing committees include Budget and Finance, County Funding, Training and Education and Data Collection which includes QA/QI. Task forces are created, and other committees may be formed by a majority affirmative vote of the Board. SCRETAC currently functions as a 501(C)3. We have been functioning as such since July 2004 and plan to continue as a 501(C)3.

Action oriented and competitive by nature, Emergency Medical and Trauma Services providers may often find themselves to be unproductive due to divisive political environments. Due to a unified vision of providing quality healthcare to the citizens of our counties and to the rural perspective of neighbors helping neighbors, we as a RETAC have been very successful in

avoiding political divisiveness. Our agencies currently have a positive political environment of unified support for one another.

CRETAC borders El Paso County, Teller, Park and Chaffee counties to the north, and the New Mexico border to the south. The Sangre de Cristo Mountains and foothills frame the west side of the region with plains to the east. The largest county by landmass in our region is Las Animas County and the smallest is Custer County. Custer County continues to see population growth as well as Huerfano County. This may be attributed to an increase in the amount of retirees to these Counties.

The following demographic, population and economic data of our counties are based on information at the following links:

[http://dola.colorado.gov/dlg/demog/pop\\_cnty\\_estimates.html](http://dola.colorado.gov/dlg/demog/pop_cnty_estimates.html)  
<http://quickfacts.census.gov>

County	Square miles	Total Population	Population per square mile	Population change in percentage from 2004-2005	Over 65 years old	Under 18 years old
Custer	738	3,964	5.37	0.7%	17.5%	19.4%
Fremont	1532	47,727	31.15	0.6%	15.3%	19.2%
Huerfano	1,590	7,932	4.99	-0.5%	18.7%	19.1%
Las Animas	4,772	16,271	3.41	0.2%	17.4%	22.9%
Pueblo	2,388	151,104	63.28	0.9%	14.8%	25.0%

County	Per Capita Income	Percent of persons below poverty level	Median Housing Value	Employment Trends – private non-farm employment percentage change
Custer	\$19,817	11%	\$134,100	25.8%
Fremont	\$17,420	14.0%	\$104,900	1.1%
Huerfano	\$15,242	19.2%	\$75,200	-7.0%
Las Animas	\$16,829	15.4%	\$84,500	+23.5%
Pueblo	\$17,163	15.2%	\$95,200	-7.4%

The table above indicates the depressed economic conditions of this part of the state. Overall, the residents of our region are low income, with a lower per capita personal income than that of the state average for 1999 of \$24,049. This region of the state relies on tourism, agriculture, ranching, health facilities, state and federal correctional facilities, military depot (chemical stockpile) and the steel industry as the basis of the economy.

Our region contains both rural and urban communities with Pueblo being the largest city, population 151,104 and Cokedale, in Las Animas County, most likely the smallest with a population of 139. The population of our area increases due to traffic that moves through on major highways such as I-25, Highway 50, Highway 10, and Highway 160. All of these may have hazardous materials being transported at any given time. Population also fluctuates due to tourism and visitors to the region who enjoy the Royal Gorge, camping, hiking, fishing, climbing and a variety of summer and winter sports, as well as the State Fair. To meet the needs of our resident and tourist populations, our EMTS system must be flexible and well prepared at all times for any situation.

The SCRETAC EMTS system currently consists of seventy agencies including 16 transport agencies, eighteen non-transport agencies, seventeen first response agencies, eight Dispatch Centers, three Level IV hospitals (two of which are Critical Access Hospitals), one level III hospital, one Level II hospital, one Rural Health Clinic, S&R, and five County EMS councils. Other agencies include Law Enforcement, Public Health, Fire, Emergency Management and Ambulance. Paid and/or volunteer providers staff both Fire-based and EMS agencies.

### **Ongoing Planning Process:**

A Biennial Plan task force was formed utilizing members of the SCRETAC from every county. These members reviewed the current Biennial plan. We held a planning meeting to work on changes and updates. These updates were drafted into the Biennial report and then presented to the entire SCRETAC board for review and formal approval. Commitments of support and resources to accomplish the tasks within this plan are solely through the members of the SCRETAC and the Coordinator. External partners will be recruited when needed.

The regional boundaries and infrastructure are mentioned in the RETAC description above.

The challenges in the planning process that we face are a lack of financial support to fully execute each of our goals. The goals that require funding will be prioritized based on our limited ability to fund and our ability to obtain alternative funding. The second challenge we have is limited manpower to carry out these tasks. Our SCRETAC members are volunteers and work fulltime jobs elsewhere. This limits the time commitment that can be dedicated to the EMTS system.

## **Section 2: Accomplishments to Goals Submitted for fiscal years 07-09**

*Please list any accomplishments in the area of EMTS in your region. Please list any partners on projects or accomplishments.*

### ***EMTSystem Component: System Finance***

#### ***Narrative:***

*In order to increase monies available to the counties in our region, SCRETAC, through our Coordinator will actively seek grants in the next two years to supplement State funding. SCRETAC has made a commitment to keeping operating costs as low as possible in order to have more funding available to the individual counties. SCRETAC plans to use this resource solely for the region's agencies and personnel. This is both a short and long-term goal in that we hope to identify sources for consistent funding as well as funding for short-term needs identified by the agencies. This goal will be easily measured by the success of procuring grant monies and possible other sources of funding for the SCRETAC region.*

#### **Goal #1:**

- To increase funding for the agencies and EMS personnel in our region, in order to promote a quality, sustainable EMTSystem.

#### **Objective:**

1. The Coordinator for SCRETAC will be the primary person responsible for investigating additional income sources for SCRETAC to utilize. The Coordinator, at the Council's direction and with the oversight of the Chairperson, will be tasked with this duty. The Coordinator, a full-time employee of the SCRETAC will not incur additional expense while performing this duty. The Council sees this as an on-going goal and objective.

**Accomplishment:**

Our RETAC received a grant from Colorado Rural Health Center. This grant made it possible for us to implement the position of a Regional Medical Director. This position, although in place for less than one year has proven beneficial. Dr Kevin Weber has extended assistance to several Medical Directors within our RETAC Region.

***EMTSystem Component: Education Systems******Narrative:***

*In order to attract and keep qualified EMS personnel in the SCRETAC region, the Council has identified a need in the area of education. One way to increase retention and job satisfaction is to offer educational opportunities to employees. This is especially important in those agencies that have “paid volunteers” and unpaid volunteers as opposed to hourly or salaried staff. The short-term goal is to use the recently completed needs analysis to identify educational needs throughout the region. A long-term goal will be to take the analyzed data and create, with mutual cooperation from American Medical Response, Pueblo Community College (PCC), Saint Mary-Corwin Medical Center, Parkview Medical Center and other interested qualified individuals, an educational system that would be offered to the entire region. This will entail all parties working together to bring forth a curriculum that responds to the identified needs.*

**Goal #2:**

- To employ sound educational principles and methodologies and provide the tools necessary for EMTS providers to serve identified health care needs.

***Objective:***

1. To utilize the needs analysis to identify educational needs and, with that knowledge, bring together a curriculum, agreed upon by all involved and interested parties to offer to the EMTS providers and facility personnel in our region quality educational opportunities.

**Accomplishment:**

Our RETAC has addressed the need for additional CE and ongoing training. Several different individuals within our region have conducted ACLS, TNCC, ENPC, PALS, BTLs, CPR and many other classes. These classes have been offered in some of the more rural areas. Using the SCRETAC meetings as a communication forum announcements are made regarding upcoming trainings and education opportunities. We have also implemented a training and education subcommittee that is currently researching ways to get CE online. This will assist those agencies that cannot leave their service areas for formal classes.

***EMTS System Component: Human Resources******Narrative:***

*In order to attract and retain qualified EMS personnel, SCRETAC will begin to investigate funding sources that may be available to agencies in the areas of recruitment and retention. As in all rural areas, this is a major issue and a continual challenge for small agencies. Through the efforts of the SCRETAC and its Coordinator, additional funding sources hope to be identified.*

**Goal #3:**

- Improve workforce quality and stability by developing and implementing recruitment and retention interventions at the state, regional and local levels.

***Objective:***

1. Improve the recruitment and retention of EMTS system personnel in order to assure diversity and quality of workforce.
2. To compile a focused Human Resource survey of EMS and Trauma agencies in order to develop a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan

**Accomplishment:**

Again by using the SCRETAC meetings as a communication forum, announcements of job openings and vacancies for different agencies are passed along. Ideas for recruiting and retaining personnel were shared.

***EMTS System Component: Information Systems******Narrative:***

*In an effort to continue data collection, along with the needs analysis, in which valid data may be collected and analyzed, SCRETAC would like to implement the use of an independent entity to utilize the data to the fullest. A forensic epidemiologist, or other qualified person, would do this within well-developed guidelines. In addition, policies and procedures would be developed and in place prior to the data being used for a focused Human Resource survey. The information collected and analyzed would then be used to develop a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan for Southern Colorado.*

**Goal #4:**

- To develop effective processes, by which uniform data is collected, transmitted, compiled, and verified prior to use. The short-term goal would be the

development of guidelines, policies and procedures. The long-term goal would be to utilize the survey to plan for recruitment and retention.

**Objectives:**

1. Strive for 100% compliance in Data collection from transport agencies within the SCRETAC.

**Accomplishment:**

To date, we are currently collecting data from all transport agencies.

**Goal #5**

- To use regional data to positively impact quality of care of the Trauma patient as well as for those employed in the medical/trauma field.

**Objectives:**

1. Develop a local CQI program utilizing regional data collected from trauma base as well as CEMSIS.

**Accomplishment:**

SCRETAC has developed a data subcommittee. Our outcome goal is to prove that the EMTS System within our region is continuously improving. The steps in obtaining these goals would be to create regional CQI studies regarding patient care. These studies will either prove that current activities are satisfactory or it will identify a need for improvement. The Data subcommittee has not met for several months. We will be running some regional reports such as response times using the CEMSIS data. We will evaluate the validity of the data entered and proceed with a plan for future steps.

**EMTS System Component(s) : Medical Direction**

**Narrative :**

*The SCRETAC believes that the resources of having a Regional Medical Director will better open communications to the local medical directors within our SCRETAC region. An example would be to hold quarterly Medical Director meetings to discuss any potential changes in Rule 500 and or to bring the Medical Directors up to date with any activities for waivers or potential standard of care changes. This position will be funded through out sourced grants and donations.*

**Goal #6**

- To explore and promote the concept of a Regional Medical Director to be used as a resource and local liaison with the State EMS and Trauma division.

**Objectives:**

1. Gain buy in from local EMS agencies and current medical Directors
2. Seek funding to support this position under the SCRETAC

**Accomplishment:**

Our RETAC received a grant from Colorado Rural Health Center. This grant made it possible for us to implement the position of a Regional Medical Director. This position, although in place for less than one year has proven beneficial. Dr Kevin Weber has extended assistance to several Medical Directors within our RETAC Region. During the past year we have held a regional Medical Directors meeting that has a successful turn out. Dr Weber has also been instrumental in communicating with new EMS Medical Directors as they take on new agencies and responsibilities. An Annual Regional EMS Protocol update meeting is held to change and modify any protocols that may have changed or to update the protocols with rule 500 implementations.

**EMTS System Component(s): Mass Casualty****Narrative:**

*Being ready for any incident, whether man- made or natural, is important. The SCRETAC has in the past and will continue taking steps to provide opportunities for agencies and facilities to participate in MCI and disaster trainings as well as any other trainings. Entities will partner when possible with other agencies that are holding mock drills. If needed the SCREATC will plan and carry out an MCI drill to prepare and test our current MCI policies and activation plans.*

**Goal #7**

- To be a catalyst for region wide planning, implementation and testing of resources in an MCI.

**Objective:**

1. Plan and participate in MCI exercises within our region

**Accomplishment:**

Throughout our region there have been several disaster drills, including tabletop exercises. Individual agencies in each county have held various drills specific to their counties. These involved multiple disciplines such as Emergency Management, Law Enforcement, EMS, Fire, Public Health, and Hospitals.

**Section 3: New Goals and Objectives (2007-2009)**

***EMTS System Component: Education Systems***

***Narrative:***

*In order to attract and keep qualified EMS personnel in the SCRETAC region, the Council has identified a need in the area of education. One way to increase retention and job satisfaction is to offer educational opportunities to employees. This is especially important in those agencies that have “paid volunteers” and unpaid volunteers as opposed to hourly or salaried staff. The short-term goal is to use the recently completed needs analysis to identify educational needs throughout the region. A long-term goal will be to take the analyzed data and create, with mutual cooperation from American Medical Response, Pueblo Community College, Saint Mary-Corwin Medical Center, Parkview Medical Center and other interested qualified individuals, an educational system that would be offered to the entire region. This will entail all parties working together to bring forth a curriculum that responds to the identified needs.*

**Goal # 8**

***Objective/Description:***

<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Finish Date (or ongoing)</b>	<b>Start up/ Short term/ Long term</b>
Develop The SCRETAC Regional Emergency Services Education System	SCRETAC Education and Training subcommittee	Feb 2009	On going	Long term

**Estimated costs of objective:**

	<b>Description</b>	<b>Value/Cost</b>
Donated items (goods)	Instructor time and travel	\$ undetermined
In-Kind (services)	Donated equip and time,tvl	\$ undetermined
RETAC Staff	Donated time for coordination	\$ undetermined
RETAC Operating	Regional funding for education	\$ undetermined
Grant/Other Funds	Will seek as needed	\$ undetermined
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ undetermined</b>

SECTION 4: \_Attest Statement

**ATTEST STATEMENT**

Biennial Plan Update

By signing below, the RETAC Chairperson and the RETAC Coordinator attest that the information contained in this document, to the best of their knowledge, completely and accurately represents the most current information available to complete the revisions to the RETAC Biennial plan. The goals and objectives incorporated herein have been reviewed and agreed upon by the RETAC Board of Directors to be included in this document.

**Brandon Chambers**

Print Chairperson Name

Chairperson Signature

Signature Date

**Theresa Jimison**

Print RETAC Coordinator Name

RETAC Coordinator Signature

Signature Date

## ***Appendix***

### **Supporting Documents**

#### **Attachments**

##### **A. SCRETAC BYLAWS (On File)**