Mobile Emergency Disaster Unit  
(MED-U)  

PURPOSE  

The Mobile Emergency Disaster Unit (MED-U) is a fully equipped Mass Fatality Incident Center established for the purpose of serving the public interest by assisting a Medical Examiner or Coroner in the process of recovery and identification of fatalities involved in any potential type of disaster. The MED-U consists of mass fatality incident equipment that is utilized to recover, identify, assist in medical-legal autopsies, and prepare human remains and effects for disposition to the families or legal guardians. The Units design and equipment have been specifically assembled to be erected and operated in most environments and terrains that can be secured in an available enclosure. The MED-U is available to various regional and state emergency services based on a valid and cogent request should the need arise. The MED-U is owned by the Midwest Forensic & Mortuary Support Foundation (MF & MSF), a not-for-profit Illinois Corporation, for the sole purpose stated, as well as disaster training.  

Location  

The MED-U is located in Chicago, at O'Hare International Airport, County of Cook, in Illinois. The Unit is housed in a permanent facility solely provided by the City of Chicago Department of Aviation specifically for this equipment. The Unit is supported with services from the Cook County Medical Examiners Disaster Response Team, City of Chicago's Department of Aviation, in particular O'Hare Airport Operations, O'Hare Airport Fire/Rescue-Chicago Fire Department, O'Hare Airport Construction, and O'Hare Airport Security. The Mobile Emergency Disaster Unit is housed in a gated airport site in a 48’ stationary secured trailer that is approximate to Fire/Rescue Station 3.  

Equipment and Operation  

The MED-U is kept properly equipped and ready for mobilization by the MED-U Support Team. All equipment and stored supplies are in pallet mounted transportable containers. The Unit is equipped with surgical autopsy and pathology instruments and associated supplies, medical and dental X-Ray units, an automatic dental X-Ray processor, 38 wheeled stainless steel gurneys, gas-electric generators, electrical service and portable lighting, partitioning equipment for setting up separate morgue stations, decontamination equipment and sinks, personal protection wear for the participating team members, a full compliment of surgical disposable supplies such as surgical gloves, masks, gowns, booties, gauze, scalpels and blades, dental x-ray supplies, disinfecting solutions and soaps, computers, printers, and administrative and office supplies. (The disposable supplies are to supplement existing regional supplies during activation).
The equipment is stored in locked medium sized containers stacked 2-high, that have either a built-in pallet for a fork-lift, or sit on movable pallets that can be mobilized rapidly via land or air as needed. The mobile unit can be assembled by 8 people in approximately 2 hours. Equipment maintenance and supply replacement will come from funds and equipment donations made to the non-for-profit MF & MSF. Fund raising support for the MED-U is ongoing and has been successful.

MED-U Support Team

The MED-U Support Team voluntarily assists the MF & MSF in the Units preparedness. The Team consists of experienced personnel who are familiar with the equipment and its use in mass disasters. The initial MED-U Support Team consists of six individuals who will maintain the Unit, periodically inventory the Unit, and access the Units equipment if mobilization occurs. The second Support Group is the Cook County Medical Examiners Disaster Response Team of which the first team are members. This second Support Team is very experienced in disaster management, and is familiar with the equipment. The Disaster Response Team (DRT) consists of medical examiners that are Forensic Pathologists, Forensic Odontologists, Forensic Anthropologists, Forensic Photographers, Forensic Radiologists, Death Investigators, Mortuary Care Specialists, and Disaster Administration Personnel. The initial MED-U support team is responsible for the activation and equipment transfer to the appropriate transport. Major support also comes from the City of Chicago Department of Aviation and O'Hare International Airport Operations who provide the space, housing, access for mobilization, general housing maintenance, and security. The O'Hare Chicago Fire Department Fire-Rescue provides additional support with storage of temperature-sensitive equipment, and assistance in mobilization and security.

Upon activation the MED-U Support Team will provide a member or members who will accompany the Unit for in-state and out-of state transport. These members will assist in directing the placement and assembly of the equipment for the Mass Fatality Incident Center. In addition, and at the request of the medical examiner/coroner, the Support Team members may help in the site selection for the establishment of a temporary Mass Fatality Incident Center that best accommodates the MED-U equipment. Sites must be adequate in size, have sufficient and secure access, be reasonably close to the incident, and water and utility compliant.

Procedure for Mobilization

Activation of the MED-U is initiated by contacting the MED-U Support Team Office by phone and fax. The MED-U Support Team Office Phone number is (800) 303-1017. The Fax number is (800) 815-6610. The request should be from the region's medical examiner, coroner or their authorized agent.
**Local regional activation (Chicago and Cook County)** would be at the request of the Cook County Medical Examiner. Due to the incident location, the verification and need would be unnecessary, as the request would imply a need additional to the Cook County Medical Examiners Facility. Support from the Cook County Medical Examiners Response Team would preclude additional support for the equipment mobilization. The O'Hare Operation Command Center would be notified along with the Chicago Department of Aviation, the O'Hare Chief of Fire/Rescue, and the other agencies listed above, as well as other local and state agencies that would have interest in the incident.

**Regional activation within Illinois** would be at the request of the local coroner. Verification of the incident and need based on size and management capabilities would be addressed and again, once transport arrangements are established and the required forms for equipment care, are authorized by fax from the requesting agency, the O'Hare Operation Command Center will be notified along with the Chicago Department of Aviation and the O'Hare Chief of Fire/Rescue, and the other agencies listed above, as well as other local and state agencies that may have interest in the incident.

**State activation outside Illinois** would be at the request of the state or regional medical examiner or coroner. Verification of the incident and need based on size and management capabilities would be addressed. Once the request is assessed and transport arrangements are established, and the required forms for equipment care and supply reimbursement are authorized by fax from the requesting agency, the O'Hare Operation Command Center will be notified along with the Chicago Department of Aviation and the O'Hare Chief of Fire/Rescue, and the other agencies listed above, as well as other agencies that may have interest in the incident. For transportation out of state, air transportation is recommended. Arrangements with local airlines or air transport services should be arranged by the requesting agency.

**Upon completion of the recovery operation** or at the request by the medical examiner/coroner to cease operation of the Mass Fatality Incident Center, the equipment will be cleaned, inventoried, and reloaded into the appropriate storage containers, and then returned to Chicago O'Hare International Airport for housing in the MED-Unit facility. The appropriate Department of Aviation agencies will be notified for the equipment's return.
FORMAL REQUEST FOR DEPLOYMENT OF MED-U

PLEASE NOTIFY ON CALL MED-U SUPPORT OFFICER 1-800-303-1017 ASAP

The Organization/Agency as listed below, makes formal request to the Midwest Forensic & Mortuary Support Foundation (MF & MSF) for the deployment and use of the Mobile Emergency Disaster Unit (MED-U). I acknowledge that I am representing the requesting Organization/Agency and have the authority to obligate said organization financially to the MF & MSF for expenses incurred in the deployment and use of the MED-U. I acknowledge that costs to the requesting entity will include, transportation of the MED-U Response Team expenses, replacement of supplies used during the incident, replacement of lost or damaged equipment, and a fair wear and tear fee. The requesting Organization/Agency will assume financial responsibility for all such costs. Reimbursement from a third party payer is the responsibility of the requesting Organization/Agency, and does not release the requestor from financial obligations to the Midwest Forensic & Mortuary Support Foundation.

I further acknowledge that the MED-U and the Response Team will remain under the control of MF&MSF at all times.

FAX THIS FORM TO (800) 815-6610

Incident Details:
Location of Incident: ______________________________________________________

Estimated Number of Fatalities (if available): __________________________________

Nearest Commercial Airport:
First choice: _____________________________________________________________

Second choice: ___________________________________________________________

REQUESTING ORGANIZATION/AGENCY

Organization or Agency Name:______________________________________________

Full Address:_____________________________________________________________

Phone number you can be reached at immediately: ___________________________

Fax # ___________________ Date/Time: _____________________________________

____________________________________________   __________________________
Signature of authorized requesting organization          Title

MED-U request Rev. 03/04