



Illinois
Association
of Air and
Critical Care
Transport

Public Statement of Linda Ptack President, Illinois Association of Air and Critical Care Transport Regarding Meigs Field

April 14, 2004

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My name is Linda Ptack. I am the president of IAACCT (Illinois Association of Air and Critical Care Transport) and represent the 12 air medical providers in the state of Illinois.

The closure of Meigs Field one year ago has significantly impacted air medical operations in the city of Chicago. Averaging 200 transports into Chicago annually, comprised of complex medical and trauma patients as well as organ transplant teams, the air medical programs have had to alter operations, often resulting in the delay of patients and team arrivals to the downtown hospitals.

Both fixed wing and rotor wing operations have been affected. The loss of an approved, safe landing area with close proximity to the downtown hospitals and medical districts, have forced air medical programs to transport greater distances by ground following their landing at suitable areas such as Midway and O'Hare airports or by seeking landing permission from privately owned helipads (of which there are few.)

These delays for time critical patients can have a negative impact on patient outcome!

As for homeland security: the threat to the city is real, whether Meigs is there or not! A concern of IAACCT is the air transport of patients out of the city of Chicago, in the event of disaster. An example of the need to rapidly transport patients out of downtown facilities would include situations involving catastrophic injuries or illness affecting the city.

Air medical helicopters and fixed wing aircraft could provide rapid transport of patients to other facilities to reduce census, open up needed beds and free up valuable resources in the downtown hospitals.

Meigs Field provided an excellent facility for this sort of disaster, allowing safe, efficient and rapid access by multiple aircraft.