



# VITALS

A Weekly Safety Newsletter For Medical Transport Professionals

Mike Szczygiel (Segal)  
888-969-8033  
meszczygiel@thomcoins.com

## Too Old To Work On An Ambulance Or A Wheelchair Van? Part2



Administrative controls include policies, procedures, and programs that are designed to implement managerial strategies. Naturally, it is not sensible for a person who lacks basic competencies to desire or be hired for a particular job. We'll anticipate that the best people in the current labor pool have been hired and the desired goal is to achieve a reasonable accommodation to minimize the mismatches.

Some administrative mismatch minimizers include:

- Education and training
- Maximally appropriate job assignments
- Job rotation and breaks
- Wellness programs: physical, psychological & financial
- Appropriate crew configuration

Engineering controls are used to minimize risk factors that create poor performance. When people perform poorly they get hurt, sick, and have lower productivity. Some engineering mismatch minimizers that are food for thought:

- Task design ( What physical activities are required?)
- Workstation (In vehicle and on scene)
- Environmental design(Lighting, temperature, terrain)
- Tool design (Weight, balance, triggers, handle design)
- Equipment design (Switches, control locations, similar to tool design)

### CASE STUDY: DISCUSSION

Use the following call description as a basis for discussing which of the mismatch minimizers should be considered in making everybody on the call safe. Make up imaginary crews that combine different types of people. For example, join a young person with an older person, a male and a female, a tall and a short, a strong and a not so strong or any combination of the above.

You are called to transport a bed-ridden 180 pound, 77 year old woman who lives on the third floor of an apartment complex. She is alert, oriented and capable of following instructions. She is bed-ridden secondary to Shy-Drager Syndrome which makes her blood pressure drop when she moves from the recumbent position. The elevator is out of order. The stairs are steep and narrow. It is July and the temperature is 95 degrees with a 70% humidity.



## Poster Pointers

**Use Shoulder Straps;  
Patient Immobilization !**

If you have a patient that is hurt enough to require the use of a long spine board, you would probably agree that they would be better off if they didn't become a missile. One of the things that you do with a trauma victim is to make an assessment of the forces and the vectors of those forces which were involved in the mechanism of injury. The same logic should apply to immobilization. What forces and vectors might occur? How can we prevent them from moving and hurting our patient? A patient without shoulder straps is a potential missile that is directed toward whoever is sitting in the Captain's chair.