



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

JUN 20 1995

**MEMORANDUM FOR:**  
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE ARMY  
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY  
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE

**SUBJECT: MHSS VIDEO TELECONFERENCING (VTC) MEETINGS**

In our continuing efforts to enhance communication among the Offices of the Surgeons General, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs), and TRICARE Lead Agents, we plan to maximize the use of both point-to-point and multipoint video teleconferencing (VTC). To allow us to communicate effectively with VTC as a medium, it is essential that a number of criteria be established to serve as guidelines for VTC communications. To accomplish successful VTC meetings, we must have compatible network circuits, data transfer rates, equipment, and proper VTC etiquette. To ensure a high-quality VTC session, we would like to establish the following as initial guidelines:

1. VTC equipment must be capable of supporting International Telecommunications Union H.320 standards.
  - A data rate of 336 kbps is desired, 224 kbps is acceptable, and 112 kbps is the minimum requirement.
  - Data rates below 112 kbps will be conferenced in as voice calls only.
2. All multipoint VTC sessions should be scheduled 1 week in advance to allow for coordination of scheduling and testing between VTC systems. Certified point-to-point VTC sessions may be scheduled the same day.
3. An MHSS VTC working group will be responsible for maintaining the MHSS VTC directory.

4. As a matter of courtesy and to help facilitate multipoint VTC meetings, the following guidelines are suggested:
  - Prior to a meeting, determine whether it will be controlled by voice, central director, or distributed directorship.
  - Always come into a meeting with your system muted.
  - Keep presentations short and concise.
  - Make briefing materials available to participants one week in advance so they can become familiar with the briefing details.
  - Limit camera control to your site only.
  - Keep background conversations and other distractions to a minimum.
  - Have a list of questions prepared, and check them off as they are addressed during the meeting.
  
5. The MHSS VTC working group I have established will ensure standardization and compatibility for all future VTC acquisitions. The working group will pre-approve all VTC hardware and circuit procurements to ensure compatibility with existing MHSS VTC infrastructure standards.

*Edward D. Martin*

for Stephen C. Joseph, M.D., M.P.H.

cc:  
Tricare Lead Agents

**HA POLICY 95-008**