Boston EMS Emergency Medical Technician (EMT): A Department employee, certified by the Massachusetts Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) as an EMT-Basic, who has successfully completed the Boston EMS recruit training and field internship, and is certified by the Department to perform Basic Life Support Skills in accordance with statewide and Boston EMS protocols and special project waivers.

Boston EMS Paramedic: A Department employee, certified by the Massachusetts Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) as an EMT-Paramedic, who has successfully completed the Boston EMS Paramedic selection process, and subsequently successfully completed the Boston EMS Advanced Life Support (ALS) clinical training and field internship. A Boston EMS Paramedic is certified to perform ALS skills in accordance with statewide and Boston EMS protocols and special project waivers.

Basic Life Support (BLS): An EMT unit or the procedures and skills performed by an EMT-Basic. At peak times there are typically 19 BLS units in service, each staffed by two EMTs.

Advanced Life Support (ALS): A paramedic unit or the advanced procedures and skills performed by a Paramedic. At peak times there are typically 5 ALS units in service, each staffed by two Paramedics.

Incident: Any request for emergency medical service which generates a distinct entry in the computer aided dispatch (CAD) system. A single incident may generate the response of multiple EMS vehicles or may involve multiple patients (i.e. a train crash would be considered one "incident").

Response: A response is generated for each EMS unit assigned to a request for service. A response is distinct from a clinical incident in that an incident is a request/need for EMS, while a response is the dispatch of a unit (i.e. a train crash would generate multiple "responses").

Response Time: Unlike some systems that calculate response time from call dispatch until unit arrival, Boston EMS measures response time from call entry (i.e. the point at which a calltaker determines the nature and location of an emergency and enters it into the computer aided dispatch system) to EMS unit arrival on scene.

Priority One: An incident category representing time sensitive, life threatening or potentially life threatening emergencies such as cardiac arrest, uncontrollable arterial bleeding, unconsciousness, etc.

Priority Two: An incident category representing non-life threatening emergencies such as orthopedic injury, lacerations with controlled bleeding, abdominal distress, etc.

Priority Three: An incident category representing non-acute injury or illness.

Priority Four: An incident that does not automatically generate an EMS response until there is verified need from another responding agency. This process is designed to reduce the number of EMS responses to incidents unlikely to result in a transport, thus freeing up EMS resources for other simultaneously occurring emergencies.

Neighborhoods: Back Bay includes Kenmore, Fenway, and Chinatown; North End includes portions of Downtown; Roxbury includes Longwood and Mission Hill; "Other" includes Boston Harbor and areas outside of Boston.