

Maine EMS Exam Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 17, 2006

De Champlain Conference Room, Augusta

Minutes

Present: Jacky Vaniotis – Chair, Bob Hawkes, Kelly Roderick,
Glenn Targonski, Rick Miller

Absent: Rick Doughty, Joanne LeBrun, Gary Utgard, Bill Zito

Guest: Scot Smith, Maine EMS Training & Education Coordinator

Staff: Drexell White

1. Call To Order - The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m.

Rick “Dodge” Miller was introduced as the new Region 4 (Northeastern Maine EMS) representative to the committee. Rick is a Paramedic with Augusta Fire Department and is the training specialist for the Northeastern Maine EMS office

A. Assign Timekeeper – Kelly Roderick

B. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda – None

2. Minutes – May 16, 2006, meeting minutes - review for acceptance

The minutes of the May 16, 2006 meeting were reviewed.

Motion: To accept the minutes of the May 16, 2006 meeting (Hawkes; second by Zito - motion carries 5-0-0)

The minutes of the July 18, 2006 meeting were reviewed.

Motion: To accept the minutes of the July 18, 2006 meeting (Roderick; second by Targonski - motion carries 5-0-0)

Drexell reported that Joanne LeBrun would be unable to attend today’s meeting.

3. Old Business

A. Computer Adaptive Testing

Drexell reported that the sites identified in Fairfield and Machias are working out final technical issues in order to become Pearson Vue Affiliated Test Centers.

Scot reported on his experience at the National Associations of State EMS Officials (NAEMSO) where he met with NREMT staff about setting up educational entities for the Computer Based Testing (CBT), the term now used by NREMT instead of Computer Adaptive Testing (CBT). EMS Education Programs will register online and then receive state approval in order to be able to approve students in their classes to take the CBT exam.

He indicated that programs would receive the NREMT DVD about CBT once the programs have been registered. He said that the DVDs are geared primarily toward the student vs. the instructor.

The goal is to have CBT available so that students can register after November 1, 2006 for tests beginning in January 2007.

The committee then discussed NREMT’s approach to persons who have failed the paper and pencil written exam and how that affects their opportunities with CBT. Currently, a student has 3 attempts at the

written and practical exam, before being required to take a refresher course in order to test again. Because of the administrative problems associate with trying to keep track of a person's attempts (at the written exam) from the paper and pencil system to the CBT system, NREMT is "resetting the clock" as of January 1, 2007 to allow persons who have failed tests prior to the CBT implementation date three opportunities at the new CBT exam (provide that the person's training is in date). During discussion, committee members felt that Maine EMS should adopt the same transition policy as NREMT due to the difficulty in tracking attempts from the old system to the new, and in that the transition would span a relatively small period of time. Once CBT is implemented all persons taking the exams, who completed their first attempt after December 31, 2006, would fall under the "three attempts" requirement.

Motion: To recommend that the Board adopt the National Registry of EMT model for transitioning from paper and pencil tests to Computer Based Testing, to the extent that students, who failed NREMT tests prior to January 1, 2007, would have the opportunity for 3 more opportunities at the written and practical exams (Roderick; Miller motion carries 5-0-0)

B. Paramedic Exam

The Committee reviewed 13 responses from to the committee's October 4, 2006, letter to 135 Paramedic educators, Paramedic programs and regional offices, requesting input on the use of the NREMT Paramedic written and practical exam in Maine. The concerns received included the cost of the exam (\$110 for the written and approximately \$95.00 for the practical) and logistics in providing it. However, a large majority of respondents were in favor of adopting the NREMT paramedic exam in order to ensure consistent standards, professionalism and current tests.

The committee acknowledged that it had researched options for Paramedic testing and that the NREMT Paramedic exam is the best option for Maine at this time.

The committee discussed implementation dates with input from Scot Smith, who spoke on behalf of the Maine Education Committee. He stated that the committee was in favor of adopting the NREMT paramedic exam as the Maine licensing exam and that an implementation date of July 1, 2007 was recommended by the committee to ensure that all Paramedic programs have ample time to ensure that its students are informed of the change.

Motion: To recommend that the Board adopt the National registry of EMT Paramedic written and practical exam as the Maine state written and practical exam at the Paramedic level and that the effective date of the adoption be set at July 1, 2007 (Roderick; Miller – motion carries 5-0-0)

C. IPE Changes for Fall 2006

Drexell stated that he has not yet sent specific information about critical skills use for the First Responder and EMT-B.

D. "3 Strikes" Policy

The committee discussed the "3 strikes" policy with Scot Smith. The current Maine EMS policy allows a person who has failed his or her state written or practical exam three times to take a refresher, which would make the person eligible to test three more times. Under the current model, the person can continue to take refreshers and tests without limit.

The proposed policy would allow the student three attempts at the state written and practical. After the initial three attempts, the student could take a refresher course, which would then make the student eligible for three more attempts. Should the student fail six attempts, an initial licensing course would required prior to the student being allowed to test again.

Speaking on behalf of the Education Committee, Scot Smith endorsed the revised policy.

Motion: To recommend that the Board approve a retest policy whereby a candidate for state testing be allowed 3 opportunities to complete each component of the state written and practical exam; that should the candidate fail three attempts at either the written or practical components, the candidate may complete a Maine EMS-approved refresher course and shall have three more opportunities to complete the state written and practical exam components; and that should the candidate fail to successfully complete the state written and practical exam after six attempts at either the written or practical component, the candidate must complete a full training course-leading-to-licensure prior to being allowed another opportunity to test (Roderick; Hawkes – motion carries 5-0-0)

4. To Do List

The “3 strikes” policy will be removed from the list. Otherwise, there are no other changes.

5. New Business

A. CPR Changes on Practical Skill Sheets

The committee initially questioned the need to update changes on practical exam skill sheets concerning the 2005 American Heart Association changes. It was quickly determined that all sheets at the Intermediate and Paramedic levels should be reviewed and corrected in accordance with current standards and protocol.

The committee decided to assign members the task of reviewing the Intermediate and Paramedic skill sheets and making necessary corrections in time for review at the next meeting. Assignments were:

- Station 1 – Cardiac/Megacode Bob/Drexell
- Station 2 – Airway Rick Miller
- Station 3 – Bleeding Kelly
- Station 4 – Splinting Kelly
- Station 5 – Spinal Kelly
- Station ¾ Fluid Meds Administration Jacky
- Station 6 – Medical & Trauma Assessment Glen

Drexell will check on changes to the NREMT First responder and EMT-B skill sheets.

B. Exam Administrator Manual Update

Committee and staff acknowledged the need to update the Exam Administration Manual. The topic will be included on next month’s agenda.

C. Rawson Letter

A letter from Pat Rawson from Mount Vernon, Maine was distributed regarding her concerns about the use of the NREMT First responder exam and the state written fail rate of a recent course held in her area. Following discussion about the concern, the committee requested that the chair draft a letter of response to Ms. Rawson.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for November 28, 2006 at 9:30 a.m. at Maine EMS. **Committee members should note that the date is the 4th Tuesday in November due to the Thanksgiving holiday week.**

7. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Drexell White