

EMS Leadership Conference Call
Friday, October 7, 2011 - 9 a.m.

Attendees: Chris Bell, Ray Walker, Donna Jacob, Mike Paradis, Seth Lasker, Chris McCarthy, Matt Vinci, Scott Cooney, Mark Podgwaite, Connie White, Tom Goddard, Inge Luce, Jay Wood, Jim Baraw

Introductions:

Chris informed folks he was out of town at a meeting and did not have an internet connection available.

Service License Renewals:

Service licenses were printed prior to Hurricane Irene, but mailing was understandably delayed. As they were being readied for mailing, staff noted discrepancies. Staff and IT went to work on the corrupt report and after quite a delay, reports were reprinted and sent.

Licenses are due back to the EMS Office by the first of November. Be proactive in reporting issues and delays.

Chris advised squads that billing data will no longer be collected or data entered, so that portion of the renewals can be disregarded.

Donna told all that Vermont EMS provides an electronic spreadsheet to DVHA as part of the relicensure process. This allows a bit of leniency on the deadline that license certificate copies are due to be received by DVHA from services.

Workgroups:

October 14, 10 a.m.	Interfacility Transport
October 19, 2 p.m.	Clinical Practice
October 26, 2 p.m.	EMS Education Transition

While there are other topics and issues that need addressing, three workgroups is all that can be handled at the moment.

Criminal Background Process:

The EMS Office learns of criminal background issues through various means...either self-disclosed, a news article or tips from others. Regardless, the process is the same. We ask for information from the individual, seek court records, and invite them in for a conversation. If the crime is a misdemeanor of a lesser nature or a long time ago, the applicant is generally cleared to proceed. The process of gathering information includes talking about the circumstances of the crime, comparing the actions of the individual to the principles of EMS certification (access to vulnerable population's person, home and possessions). If the crime holds more weight, conditions may be attached to certification or certification may be outright denied. Once a decision letter is sent, there are three levels of appeal: Commissioner of Health, Board of Health and the Vermont Supreme Court. Normally, the initial lead in an investigation would be the EMS Director position. With that [deputy] position vacant, Chris is acting as lead, putting the Commissioner in the position of first appeal.

EMS Leadership Conference Call
Friday, October 7, 2011 - 9 a.m.

Over the next month or so, the detailed process will be posted to the website.

When asked, Chris noted that a backlog of cases has developed due to changes in EMS staff as well as a new Commissioner of Health. Any service chiefs with applicants pending are included in the decisions. No changes to the criminal background process were specified in Act 142. This is not a new process and no changes have been made. Chris said he is just trying to clarify the process for any concerned parties and get the information out onto the website.

NE States vary in their approaches to criminal investigations. Some have processes similar to Vermont's, while other states list specific crimes in rule that result in denial. Most, however, are case by case, taking the nature and pattern of the crime(s) into account. Very few states rely on the National Registry, and Chris said he did not feel this is the way to go.

Background Checks:

Various agencies have asked the Office if we can do background checks on their behalf. Agencies make these requests for a number of reasons, one of which being that they would be required to have an account in each state an employee might come from. Presently the Office is only set up to do Vermont Criminal Information Center database (VCIC) searches. VCIC checks are only done for individuals who either self-disclose or whose history is otherwise discovered. The Office doesn't have the ability to do fingerprinting, NCIC or FBI checks. Chris asked the audience if VTEMS should be doing background checks more routinely or for agencies despite the monetary increase that would be incurred.

Seth Lasker, BFD, said that checks are important but noted that the City of Burlington HR Department does them. He did not know which agency the checks were run through.

Inge said that at the November 2010 Instructor/Coordinator meeting, there had been a discussion about prescreening students at UVM because of the time/financial resources involved to teach them. They discussed the students paying for their own checks as well, but no decisions were reached.

Chris said the issue has been raised at the VAA meeting and a couple of different district meetings. The rule says agencies are responsible.

Matt Vinci asked about potential statute changes. Chris said that the Commissioner is required to report on a number of things, including the advisory group, an increase in funding and other items, all in the form of draft legislation.

Chris said he would email or survey further on the topic. He said he didn't think the group felt strongly either way. Chris noted that some states don't do background checks, but the vast majority do fingerprinting. One policy is that if the individual is has been in the state less than 5 years, an FBI check is run after education but prior to affiliation or certification. Some states have retroactively checked all certified personnel. The

EMS Leadership Conference Call
Friday, October 7, 2011 - 9 a.m.

problem with that approach is that it opens up cases to sort through. Very few individuals have lost certification due to infractions that have been unearthed, and lots were ancient cases. Chris said his thought was to do them pre-entry for all new certifications at all levels.

New Education Standards:

Chris said he had previously spoken in error regarding the National Registry maintaining current exams for several years after the switch to the NSOP.

When the new EMT exam goes into effect on January 1, 2012, the National Registry will retire the previous National Standard Curriculum EMT-Basic exam. The same will occur with Paramedic on January 1, 2013, and on up the line.

The National Registry is required to pilot test new exam questions. They do this by adding a few questions to each exam that do not count, and do it at all levels. It'll take between 6 months and one year to start adding new questions into the EMT exam, and approximately two years before all the new curriculum questions have replaced the old ones. The EMT-Basic to EMT change is not a huge jump, so it shouldn't greatly affect classes in progress. There is therefore no longer an option to teach either the old curriculum or the new one.

Chris will send a letter notifying existing programs of the change.

Other topics:

Mike Paradis asked if there is a list of services either training on or using SIREN's billing component. He was instructed to call and speak to Ray.

Seth asked about the purchase of devices. Chris said the purchase is still in process and he is still waiting on spending approval. Once a firm date has been set, he said he would share the information.

Inge asked whether holding paramedic certification in one district gives a medic permission to practice anywhere. District 12 is having a rogue paramedic issue. She said the individual has jumped calls in an inappropriate manner and has given meds in a manner not within the scope of practice. Chris explained that if a paramedic is affiliated with a service at the paramedic level, they're functioning under that service. If they choose to affiliate with a lower level service, then they need to deliver only I level interventions. When asked by Matt Vinci, Chris explained that Act 142 introduced the concept of a higher level provider functioning with a lower level service at that higher level. However, the EMS leadership in Vermont did not think the concept was a good idea. Matt agreed that in the hearings it was confirmed that the medic needed to be affiliated with and function with a higher level service. The conditions Inge described were different. She was asked to contact the office.

EMS Leadership Conference Call
Friday, October 7, 2011 - 9 a.m.

EMS Leadership Calls:

Leadership calls will continue every first Friday at 9 a.m. We will try to hold the calls as a webinar and create a voice recording as well as provide PowerPoint presentations electronically. Please send agenda items by the last Friday of the month.

Group adjourned at 10:10 a.m.