

BETST MINUTES

May 25, 2021



**Board of Emergency Telecommunications
Standards & Training
Teleconference
Ridgeland, MS**

Call to Order, Roll Call, Establish Quorum, Introduction of Guests, and Introductory Remarks:

The Chair, Stan Alford called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

The Director called the roll and declared a quorum present to hold the meeting. The Director announced that Sheriff Charlie Sims of Forrest County has been appointed to the Board to represent the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officer's Association. He is replacing Mrs. Marti Morgan.

Members Present:

Mr. Stan Alford, MEMS

Mr. Robert Cullom, MLEOTA

Mr. Ken Gunter, MJIC

Mrs. Sheri Hokamp, MS Chapter of APCO

Mr. Steven Jones, MS Department of Health, EMS Division

Chief Will Jones, Mississippi Police Chief's Association

Sheriff Mike Lee, Mississippi Sheriff's Association

Chief Terry Tucker, Mississippi Fire Chief's Association

Mr. Terry Wages, State Fire Academy

Hon. Pete Cajoleas, Board Counsel

Members Not Present:

Mr. Jim Hennessey, MS Chapter of NENA

Mr. Marvin Ratliff, Claiborne Co. (Nuclear Facility)

Sheriff Charlie Sims, Mississippi Law Enforcement Officer Association

Standards and Training Staff:

Mr. Robert D. Davis, Director

Mrs. Lydia Edwards, Operations Management Analyst, Principal

Mrs. Mari M. Fivecoat, Operations Management Analyst, Principal

Mr. Bob Morgan, Division Director

Guests:

Director Paul Harkins – Lee Co. 911

Ms. Alta Richardson – Dispatching Training Solutions

Director Kristen Campanella – Oktibbeha Co. 911 & MS 911 Coordinator's Assn.

Ms. Stacey Reed – Marshall Co.

Ms. Trebia Rogers – Grenada Co.

Director Jackie Mathews – Clarke Co.

Ms. Shakeisha Edmonson – Clark Co.

Mrs. Dianne Berry – S & T Retiree

Ms. Ebony Ross – Instructor

Mrs. Kathryn Sullivan – AHA

Mrs. Kelly Kelley – Virtual Academy

Ms. Annette Fells – Adams Co.

Ms. Jolanda Grayson – Adams Co.

Mr. Robert Bradford – Adams Co.

Ms. Wanda Thomas – Warren Co.

Ms. Rosemary Ezell – Lamar Co.

Mr. Allen Bain – Pontotoc Co.

Chief Emma Baptiste – MGCCC, Stone Co.

Ms. Tanya Mayo – Lee Co.

Mr. Billy Crumpton – Lee Co.

The Chair welcomed the guests.

Presentation and Approval of February 2021 Minutes:

The minutes for the February 2021 meeting were emailed to all members. The Chair entertained a motion. Mr. Wages made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and a second was received from Chief Jones, the minutes were approved without opposition.

OLD BUSINESS

Discuss Online and Virtual Courses – Virtual Academy – Presenter Kelly Sanders-Kelley:

Mrs. Marie Fivecoat, BETST certification officer reviewed 3 of Virtual Academy's courses and advised the Board that the material was exemplary, it was in an easy-to-follow format, it offers a variety of scenario-based training, and was organized in a professional manner. The instructors of the courses were highly qualified and she highly recommended Virtual Academy.

Mrs. Kelley, a representative from Virtual Academy addressed the Board concerning their training. She stated that currently her company has 38 hours of online training specifically designed for telecommunicators. By the end of the year, the company should add 10 more hours. About 5 hours of telecommunicator training should be added each year. Their company offers a training management module and also provides policy management. The charge is \$35.00 per user for a 12-month period. If a telecommunicator leaves an agency, a new telecommunicator can be substituted in their place during that 12-month period. They have a 24-hour tech support system to deal with problems. Their courses are prepared by professionals in the telecommunicator field. They offer more than 250 hours of public safety training that would be available at no extra charge.

Virtual Academy is the first online company to seek approval of their courses and system since the Board voted to allow online training for credit in the recertification process. Mr. Wages made a motion to approve Virtual Academy as a provider of online training. Chief Jones seconded the motion. Mr. Wages amended this motion to include that the courses must be telecommunication courses. Chief Jones seconded the amendment. The motion and amendment were approved without opposition.

TCPR – American Heart Association – Presenter Kathryn Rehner-Sullivan:

Mrs. Rehner-Sullivan appeared before the Board for a second time to promote TCPR (Telecommunicator CPR). She played a short video of a true story where a telecommunicator trained in TCPR was able to help save the life of a baby. She stated that the American Heart Association believes that high quality TCPR should be a standard of care for every 911 Telecommunicator that provides dispatch because it saves lives. They would be able to provide detailed instructions to a caller during an out of hospital cardiac arrest. For every minute without CPR, the survival rate drops 7 to 10%. Other states including Alabama and Louisiana have passed legislation dealing with TCPR. The AHA recommends that training (TCPR) should be provided to all telecommunicators providing dispatch, the training should be evidence based and nationally recognized and telecommunicators should receive yearly refresher courses. The courses are available online. The AHA requests the Board to consider passing policy to make TCPR a requirement for basic training of new telecommunicators and refresher training from a nationally recognized provider.

The Board, visitors, and Mrs. Rehner-Sullivan discussed this issue at length. Liability was an issue. Many states have passed legislation to implement TCPR. Should the Legislature take up this issue and decide whether to pass laws to require agencies to dispatch TCPR? Some agencies have policies that prevents the telecommunicator from dispatching CPR instructions. The Board doesn't have the authority to mandate that an agency dispatch CPR instructions. Mr. Wages and Mr. Alford will check with the Health Department about this issue.

Mr. Wages made a motion to make TCPR an optional course for EMD certified telecommunicators and to approve TPCR to the list of electives. Mr. Cullom seconded the motion, and it was approved without opposition.

Vote with the Intent to Adopt – Changes to Policy:

There are recommended changes to the policy for clarification purposes and changes voted on at the last meeting. The below underlined language is proposed to be inserted into policy and the language that has strikeouts are recommended to be removed from the policy.

Rule 6.2 Policy

1.

- B. Reimbursement shall be allowable for telecommunicators in attendance at board-approved training programs established at such agencies or institutions as the board may deem appropriate within one hundred-fifty (150) ~~(100)~~ miles from the telecommunicator's agency. A justifiable written explanation must be provided to the Board requesting approval for reimbursement of training one hundred-fifty (150) ~~(100)~~ miles or more from the telecommunicator's agency. Only allowable tuition may be reimbursed for training over ~~100~~ 150 miles without prior approval.

D.

4. All administrative requirements must have been completed pursuant to this Policy and Procedures Manual to include all forms completed in full; these include the Application for Certification (Parts I, II and III), ~~Eight-Hour Field Observation~~ and the Reimbursement Worksheet; and

E.

- d. ~~Field observation (ride-along) programs are required to be certified as a telecommunicator (Salary reimbursement only).~~

Rule 7.2 Policy

1. The Board approved Basic Emergency Telecommunications Training Courses shall include classroom activity ~~(no online basic course)~~ as well as hands-on skill certification. To begin the certification process, the successful completion of the Mississippi Emergency Telecommunications 16-Hour Orientation Course is required within the first ninety (90) days from the date of hire as a telecommunicator. There are two types of courses used in the certification process. They are divided into:

B. Emergency medical.

1. The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) Basic 40-Hour, the National Emergency Communications Institute (NECI) Basic 40-Hour, and the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) Basic 40-Hour courses have been approved for basic emergency telecommunications training. Basic online courses are not approved for certification. For the emergency medical training the APCO 32-Hour, the NECI 24-Hour, and the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) EMD courses have been approved. EMD Basic online courses are approved for certification.

Source: Miss Code Ann. § 19-5-353

Rule 7.3 Procedures

1. A.

1. Current certification by APCO Institute 40-Hour Telecommunicator Training Program or NECI Basic Emergency Communication Officer 40-Hour Training Program, or IAED 40-Hour Emergency Telecommunicator Course, ~~and~~ and.

2. ~~Successful completion of field observation (ride-along)** with a law enforcement field training officer (8 hours).~~

Note: This does not qualify the participant as an EMS telecommunicator, ~~Fire Service telecommunicator~~ or as a certified Mississippi Justice Information Center (MJIC) terminal operator.

B. Minimum Standards of Training and Certification for Fire Service Telecommunicators/Dispatchers.

1. Current certification by APCO Institute 40-Hour Telecommunicator Training Program or NECI Basic Emergency Communication Officer 40-Hour Training Program, or IAED 40-Hour Emergency Telecommunicator Course, ~~and~~ .
2. ~~Successful completion of field observation (ride-along)** with a fire service field training officer (8 hours).~~

Note: This does not qualify the participant as an EMS telecommunicator, ~~Law Enforcement telecommunicator~~ or as a certified Mississippi Justice Information Center (MJIC) terminal operator.

C. Minimum Standards of Training and Certification for EMS Telecommunicators.

1. Successful completion of the International Academies of Emergency Medical Dispatch; APCO Institute of Emergency Medical Dispatch; or National Emergency Communications Institute - Emergency Medical Communications Officer training course.
2. Successful completion of the 40-Hour Basic APCO, NECI, or IAED course.
3. ~~Field observation (ride-along). ** Provide an overview of regulations and recommendations pertaining to emergency vehicle operation; provide an understanding of all records and reporting systems and forms utilized by the public safety agency; promote efficient and proper use of all radio communications equipment and systems that the public safety officer or EMT will utilize. (8 hours minimum).~~
4. Current certification in CPR by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross or an equivalent nationally recognized organization.

Note: These methods of certification for an EMS telecommunicator do not qualify the participant as a ~~Fire Service telecommunicator, Law Enforcement telecommunicator~~ or as a certified Mississippi Justice Information Center (MJIC) terminal operator.

~~**Field observation (ride along) is required of all Emergency Telecommunicators. The field observation may be conducted with the Telecommunicator's local agency provided there is adequate call volume and activity to provide an effective learning experience. In communities with less activity, consideration should be given to attaining field observation experience with more active agencies. The field observation (ride along) should provide an overview of regulations and standard field operating procedures, recommendations pertaining to emergency vehicle operation; provide an understanding of all records and reporting systems and forms utilized by the agency; promote efficient and proper use of all radio communications equipment and systems that the public safety officer or EMT will utilize. A minimum of 8 hours of ride along with a field training officer (FTO) is required for each separate area (law enforcement, fire service and EMS).~~

D. Mississippi Emergency Telecommunicator Training Program - Curriculum development is only one portion of a comprehensive emergency telecommunicator training program. Other topics of a comprehensive training program include:

~~24. Field observation (ride along)~~

Rule 8.2 Policy

1. The Board-approved Emergency Telecommunications Training Program shall include classroom activity ~~and subsequent field observation (ride along)~~. Standards for successful completion of the ETTP program include:
 - A. A passing academic score as determined by the course vendor,
 - B. ~~First hand experience of field observation in an 8-hour ride along in a respective vehicle area of certification (law enforcement, fire or emergency medical). Those agencies which do not allow a telecommunicator ride along with a field training officer, shall provide an alternative orientation program.~~

Rule 8.3 Procedures

1. This section establishes procedures governing the admission, attendance, scoring, and completion of Emergency Telecommunicator training.

~~F. Field observation (ride along) is required of all Emergency Telecommunicators. The field observation may be conducted with the Telecommunicator's local agency~~

~~provided there is adequate call volume and activity to provide an effective learning experience. In communities with less activity, consideration should be given to attaining field observation experience with more active agencies. The field observation (ride along) should provide an overview of regulations and standard field operating procedures, recommendations pertaining to emergency vehicle operation; provide an understanding of all records and reporting systems and forms utilized by the agency; promote efficient and proper use of all radio communications equipment and systems that the public safety officer of EMT will utilize. A minimum of (8) hours of (ride along) with a field training officer (FTO) is required for each separate area (law enforcement, fire service and EMS).~~

Rule 10.2 Policy

1. The Board shall evaluate each applicant's documented record of experience and training. The accomplishments in each area shall be weighed to compare the applicant's credentials with the current standards for professional certification.
 - A. The state certification of any emergency telecommunicator shall lapse after a break in service of more than four years. Telecommunicators who have successfully completed a training course equivalent (as deemed by the Board staff) to the currently accepted Board courses, ~~have completed the Eight Hour Ride Along~~ and meet established employment guidelines, will be eligible for certification upon completion of the required paperwork.

Rule 11.3 Procedures

- C. Approval of New Course(s): Instructors submitting new courses for Board approval must make a short presentation before the Board describing the course objectives. Board members may present the course objectives of a course proposed by their agency. If the Board determines that the course meets the training needs of a telecommunicator, the Board will approve the course to be taught as a pilot program. This course must be taught within one year of approval or the instructor must request an extension from the Board. The staff or board member will monitor all proposed courses and bring their findings back to the Board for final action. Existing courses will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. Course approval requests by instructors from government/non-profit organizations or out of state may be submitted with their professional credentials and course objectives to a Board or staff member for presentation. The instructor must submit prior to presentation, a lesson plan including course overview; a bound student

manual; an instructor manual – containing notes; power points (with videos and audio); handouts; written synopsis of scenarios or tabletops; test with answer key indicating the slide or page number the information may be found; one additional training aid; sample copy of completion certificate; and an authorization letter if copyright material is used.

Rule 12.3 Procedures

- d. Elective training may consist of ~~in-house~~ approved virtual/online training if so desired by an agency. Proof of training shall be maintained by the agency in its personnel files and copies of training ~~outlines, certificates, or course descriptions~~ must be attached to the “In-House Online Training Report” when submitted to the Board for credit. In-house Virtual/Online elective training shall not exceed two (2) credits (eight [8] hours per credit) per re-certification period. A separate form must be submitted for each eight (8) hours of credit. ~~Examples of in-house training—online training, agency protocol, classes not approved as electives by the Board.~~ The reimbursement of ~~in-house virtual/online~~ training ~~only~~ includes the telecommunicator’s salary, ~~unless the training has been approved by the Board~~ and approved tuition.
- D. Any persons, ~~who~~ due to illness, class availability or other events beyond their control, ~~that~~ could not ~~attend the required two-day course in the third year or~~ complete the required elective training, may serve with full pay and benefits in such a capacity until they can complete the training. Those requesting an extension of their time must petition the Board in writing and also must note how much re-certification training has been completed at that point in time.
- E. Break-in-Service: There is herein established a set of re-certification guidelines for those state certified emergency telecommunicators who leave the profession and later return.
 - 1. Telecommunicators who have a break-in-service of four years or more shall be required to complete the same certification requirements as those who are new to the profession. This shall include completing a basic course and orientation course (unless the orientation course was completed before the break) for law enforcement and fire certification and/or the EMD basic/CPR course ~~and the appropriate eight hour field observations for EMD certification~~.
 - 2. Telecommunicators who have a break-in-service of less than four years shall meet re-certification requirements within one year of being rehired. ~~Telecommunicators who have a break-in-service of more than two years but less than four years shall be required to complete the 16-Hour Orientation course.~~ Any training requirements

completed after the most recent certification date and prior to the break-in-service shall count towards re-certification.

- ~~a. If a telecommunicator's certification lapses during their break in service, they shall have twelve (12) months upon return to complete re-certification requirements.~~
- ~~b. If a telecommunicator returns to the profession while their certification is still current, the certification period shall be extended an amount of time equal to the break in service but not to exceed twelve (12) months.~~

The new Online Training Report and Recertification Report were reviewed by the Board

Chief Tucker made a motion to approve with the intent to adopt and Mrs. Hokamp seconded the motion, and it was passed without opposition.

NEW BUSINESS

Review and Discuss Reimbursement Rates:

The Board reviewed the list of approved reimbursement rates. The tuition for the APCO Online EMD Basic, which is 32 hours in length, is \$439.00. The APCO EFD and EPD courses are 32 hour in length and the reimbursement should be set at \$439.00. Mrs. Hokamp made a motion to approve the reimbursement rate at \$439.00. Mr. Gunter seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

Online elective rates were discussed. Mrs. Hokamp made a motion to approve any approved vendor's course that is taught virtual or online. Mr. Wages seconded the motion, and it was passed without opposition. Mrs. Hokamp made a motion to cap reimbursement for virtual or online courses at \$200.00 per 8 hours. Mr. Wages seconded the motion, and it passed without opposition.

Mr. Wages made a motion to reimburse Quality Assurance Officer training for 1 officer per 15 employees. Mr. Gunter seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

Mrs. Hokamp made a motion to remove the NCIC recertification test from the list of electives. Chief Jones seconded the motion. Mr. Gunter stated that this test was a requirement for their job. The motion passed without opposition. The Board will no longer count this course as an elective nor reimburse the salary of the person taking the test.

Review MS 911 Coordinator's Schedule:

The Board reviewed the schedule for the conference. The conference will offer 6 hours of training on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. There will be 2 hours of training on Friday. The staff will also meet with agency directors/supervisors on Monday, October 4th to answer questions. The list of courses and instructors will be presented at the next meeting. It was noted that students must attend both classes on Friday in order to receive reimbursement for Thursday nights hotel bill. Mrs. Hokamp made a motion to approve the schedule. Mr. Cullom seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

Director's Report:

The Director thanked those in attendance. The Calendar of Training was discussed, and it was recommended that courses scheduled to be taught be advertised on the calendar up to a year out. The advertisement will have the instructor's name and contact information along with the tuition and how much is reimbursable. The Board meetings will be posted on the calendar as well. At least 4 NECI elective courses are now ready to be taught.

Schedule of Next Meeting Date, Time, and Location:

The next meeting will be announced once scheduled.

Adjournment:

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Hokamp made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Chief Jones. There was no opposition. The meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Director, Office of Standards and Training