

BETST MINUTES

September 29, 2021



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

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

Chairman Stan Alford called the meeting to order at 10:00 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. Ken Gunter, MJIC

Mr. Jim Hennessey, MS Chapter of NENA

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

Sheriff Charlie Sims, MS Law Enforcement Officers Association

Chief Terry Tucker, Mississippi Fire Chief's Association

Mr. Terry Wages, State Fire Academy

Hon. Pete Cajoleas, Board Counsel

Members Not Present:

Mr. Robert Cullom, MLEOTA

Mrs. Sheri Hokamp, MS Chapter of APCO

Chief Will Jones, Mississippi Police Chief's Association

Sheriff Mike Lee, Mississippi Sheriff's Association

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

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

Mr. Allen Bain – Pontotoc Co.

Ms. Stacey Reed – Marshall Co.

Ms. Davida Hopkins – Metro Ambulance

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

Director Jackie Mathews – Clarke Co.

Ms. Annette Fells – Adams Co.

Ms. Barbara Funchess – Copiah Co.

Ms. Tanya Williams – Monroe Co.

Ms. Deborah Rosenberg – Southaven

Ms. Dottie Daniels – Stone Co.

Ms. Anita Rayborn – Stone Co.

Ms. Davida Washington – Washington Co.

The Chair welcomed the guests.

Presentation and Approval of May 2021 Minutes:

The minutes for the May 2021 meeting were emailed to all members. The Chair entertained a motion. Chief Tucker made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and a second was received from Sheriff Sims. The minutes were approved without opposition.

OLD BUSINESS

Vote for Final Approval to Adopt Changes to Policy:

The Board voted to approve the below changes with the intent to adopt. These recommended changes to the policy are for clarification purposes and to establish new rules. 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. Ms. Deborah Rosenberg addressed the Board about her concern for some of the changes. She requested that the Board delay their vote on making these changes. Other guest expressed their opinions.

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~~ .
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.~~

Removing the ride-along requirement was a concern that was expressed. Board members noted that any agency could continue the ride-along in their training of telecommunicators, the ride-along would not be a requirement for certification and no credits would be given for re-certification.

After much discussion and review, Sheriff Sims made a motion for final adoption and Mr. Jones seconded the motion. The motion was passed without opposition.

NEW BUSINESS

Review MS 911 Coordinator's Schedule:

The Board reviewed the list of courses and instructors for the conference. Mrs. Campanella invited the Board to attend and stated that a lot of hard work had gone into the preparation to hold the conference. The Board had no questions concerning the subjects being taught.

Questions to Board:

High risk instructors not actively teaching due to Covid 19 are seeking guidance concerning their instructor certification. If they do not teach the required number of courses for instructor re-certification, will they lose their certification? Chief Tucker made a motion to forgo the number of course requirements for instructors not teaching the required number of courses

during their certification period because of Covid 19. Mr. Wages seconded the motion and it passed with opposition.

To clarify Board action, the number of QA's were set. Can an agency have 2 QA's if there are more than 15 employees but less than 30? The Board's response was 1 QA up to 15 employees and an additional QA for 16 to 30 employees.

If a state instructor, holds a virtual class, do they charge each student an extra \$50.00 or was the intent of the Board action to reimburse the instructor \$50.00 for holding the course virtually. The consensus of the Board was that \$50.00 should be paid to the instructor for a technology fee per class. The student would still pay the normal tuition.

Director's Report:

The Director stated that Virtual Academy has added 5 new online courses for telecommunicators since our last meeting. Seven credits can be earned by completing these courses. APCO has added an online course " Fundamentals of Tactical Dispatch". The Chair entertained a motion for approval. Mr. Hennessey made a motion to approve the course. Chief Tucker seconded the motion, and it was approved without opposition.

The Director announced that the first orientation course was held. There were 15 new dispatchers in attendance. There were many positive comments from the students.

Under the calendar section in the BETST website, we are now announcing the dates of board meetings and new changes and updates.

Schedule of Next Meeting Date, Time, and Location:

The next meeting will be announced once scheduled.

Adjournment:

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Hennessey made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Gunter. There was no opposition. The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Director, Office of Standards and Training