

Maine EMS Exam Committee Meeting

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Fallen Heroes Conference Room, Augusta

Present: Jacky Vaniotis – Chair, Joanne LeBrun, Kelly Roderick, , Sally Taylor, Bob Hawkes, (LeBrun and Taylor via teleconference)

Absent: Rick Doughty, Gary Utgard, Jeff Regis, Glen Targonski

Staff: Drexell White

Guests: Yvonne Drown, Bill Zito

1. Call To Order - The meeting was called to order at 9:38 a.m.

A. Assign Timekeeper – Jacky and Kelly will keep time for the meeting.

B. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

a. **Region 6 Representative**

Bill Zito, MCEMS regional coordinator reported that the Mid Coast EMS Council will appoint a new Exam Committee representative in the coming month. Yvonne Drown, who has been serving as the MCEMS representative indicated that she will seek the At Large position on the committee.

2. Minutes – March 25, 2008 meeting minutes - review for acceptance

The minutes of the March 25, 2008 meeting were reviewed. Bob Hawkes requested that the minutes be corrected to show that he was present at the March 25, 2008 meeting.

Motion: To accept the minutes of the March 25, 2008, meeting with the correction that Bob Hawkes was in attendance for the meeting (Roderick; second by Hawkes - motion carries)

3. Old Business

A. IPE Survey – Discussion and Recommendation

At the March 2008 meeting Committee member requested the following data concerning IPEs:

- Potential difference of the (current) 3 point per critical skill deduction vs. a 5 point per critical skill deduction. Bob Hawkes will review his students' skill sheets from past IPEs conducted at Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) and provide a comparison of pass/fail rates based upon the 3 vs. 5 point deduction.

Bob Hawkes reported that he reviewed the skill sheets of 75 students spanning 5 IPEs conducted at Southern Maine Community College (SMCC). Using the (current) 3 point deduction, three students failed the IPE. If a 5 point critical skill deduction was used on the same group of 75, six persons would have failed the IPE.

- Pass percentages for IPE students. Drexell will track per student percentage scores for IPEs in order to chart the degree to which a student passed an IPE (.e.g., did the student pass with a 70% completion of skills or an 85% skill completion).

Drexell White reported that from a sampling of 549 persons who completed the EMT-Basic IPE, 11 failed (a 98% overall pass rate). The average score per individual was 94.11% with a median score of 95.38%. Of the 28 persons sampled who completed the First Responder IPE, 28 passed the IPE (100% overall pass rate) with an average score of 94.16% and a median score of 96.15%

There was extensive discussion about pass/fail rates for IPE candidates and about a recent IPE where several candidates received a “0” on one station, but still successfully completing the IPE by meeting the cumulative minimum score of 80%. Several suggestions were considered:

- Require a minimum score for each station as well as a cumulative score – this would ensure that each person complete a minimum score at each station, but would require reverting to the “re-testing” model that was abandoned due to the time and cost involved as well as practical exam data that showed a 95% pass rate for exam candidates in their first attempt. In other words in the “re-test” testing model, there was a 95% pass rate even when a student was required to re-test a station;
- Remove the IPE requirement that an IPE candidate could not receive a negative number for any given station. Currently, if a student misses a critical skill, the student is assessed a 3 point penalty against the possible points awarded at a station. If an IPE candidate is awarded 10 points, but misses 4 critical skill (a 12 point deduction) the final score is “0” vs. a minus 2 (-2). The committee considered removing the “0” limitation and allowing negative scores to be assessed to a candidate. The removal of the “0” limitation would place even more emphasis on critical skills, but would not in itself, absolutely prevent someone with a single station “0” score from failing the overall IPE.
- Increase the point deduction for critical skills missed. A 6 point per critical skill deduction would prevent a person who received a “0” at a station from successfully completing the IPE. Committee members were concerned that doubling the critical skill point deduction was too greta a shift for a relatively infrequent issue.

The committee considered a combination of removing the “0” point limitation and increasing the deduction for critical skills. Joanne LeBrun suggested an incremental approach rather than changing several factors at once, which could cause difficulty in assessing the efficacy of any single modification.

Motion: That effective with IPEs conducted on or after August 1, 2008, IPE candidates will be assessed for the actual station score to include scores that result in a negative number due to deduction of critical skills; and that the 3 point deduction for critical skills be maintained (LeBrun; second by Hawkes – motion carries)

The Committee then discussed its overall recommendation concerning the use of IPEs as the practical testing tool for First Responders and EMT-Basics in Maine. This recommendation was considered in light of the 2007 statutory change that allows the Maine EMS Board to consider alternate forms of practical evaluation other than the “6 station end test” model currently in use.

The Committee considered that:

- The practical examination process is one of the tools used by the Maine EMS Board in its public safety mission;
- The examination process is a regulatory function, separate from the education process;
- The results of the recent survey of Instructor Coordinators, Program Sponsors, Regional Coordinators and State IPE Evaluators was inconclusive and offered little in the way of suggestions to radically change the practical testing process for First Responders and EMT-Basics. General statements ranged from doing away with the IPE (with no recommendation for alternative testing) to increasing the difficulty of the IPE or adopting the National Registry of EMT (NREMT) format for practical testing;
- The NREMT philosophy of practical testing for Registration/Licensing is that the practical examination is conducted at the completion of the educational process as part of an overall

evaluation of the candidate's fulfillment of the minimum requirements for Registration/Licensing;

- The IPE process maintains the standard and expectation of a cumulative post education practical exam;
- The IPE process can continue to be refined to include better feedback mechanisms to educators regarding candidate performance and opportunities to better prepare educators and students for the IPE process.

Following consideration, the Committee recommended that the IPE continue to be used as the Maine EMS State practical licensing evaluation and that the Committee will continue to provide oversight and review of the IPE. Chairman Vaniotis and staff will prepare a memo to the Board containing the committee's recommendation.

B. Intermediate Practical Exam – Revision of BLS Skill Sheets – Update

The National Registry of EMT (NREMT) has given Maine EMS its approval for use of NREMT basic skill sheet information in the basic skill sheet revisions for the Maine EMS Intermediate Exam.

Committee members reviewed skill sheets that had been revised by Kelly Roderick and suggested changes.

Once revised, consensus was that the skill sheets be used for all Intermediate level exams for exams conducted on or after August 1, 2008.

4. To Do List - None

5. New Business - None

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Exam committee is scheduled for Tuesday May 27, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at Maine EMS

7. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Drexell White