

Air Medical Committee
May 18, 2006
Austin, TX

Roll Call-present as noted on roll sheet

OEMS/TS Staff-Terry reported that all members of Governor appointed committees must complete Open Meetings training as mandated by SB 286; if appointed after 01/01/06 training must be completed within 90 days; if appointed prior to that date training must be completed by 01/07. Training is available on the internet and takes approximately 3 hours. Web address: http://www.oag.state.tx.us/opinopen/og_training.shtml

State EMS/Trauma Registry Report-not done

Change in agenda; Matt Rigsby with the FAA Rotorcraft Directorate (Ft. Worth) presented information on the EMS Task Force that was formed to look at the accident history and safety issues within the industry. He noted that the goal of the International Helicopter Safety Task Force was to reduce the accident rate by 80% over the next 10 years. He presented statistical data that has been accumulated on accidents by time of day, fatal/non-fatal, Part 135 and Part 91. There are several Notices that have been published relating to Operational Risk Assessments, AMRM, and Special Emphasis Inspections by the FAA, Loss of Control and CFIT, HEMS revisions, Operator Training. A question and answer session followed. It was noted that it is very difficult to regulate our industry due to our driving factors being medical issues and economic factors. Bill Bryant recommended that the committee formulate a list of questions to be sent to the Attorney Generals Office to get answers on those questions regarding interstate commerce, etc. Mr. Rigsby asked that we send that list to him also.

Bill noted that while, at times, our meetings and processes may seem overwhelming, and we frequently “violently agree” with each other, everyone is encouraged to ask the questions and make the comments that they offer those to the group. If we don’t hear them they can’t be addressed and process improvement takes all for us working together. There is contact information for everyone of the committee and the state employees on the DSHS website.

Bill Waechter asked Steve and Terry to recap where the committee has accomplished, some of the recommendations made over the last couple of years and where those are. Terry reported that several meetings ago there was a recommendation to use CAMTS or another process for state licensure. He reminded everyone that early on Kathy Perkins had informed the committee that the state is not able to develop an alternate process; that they will review and consider and hopefully approve an alternate process if one is presented. Another point is that regardless of what process is used the state will still retain the right to license or not based on their findings and other information they may have. A service could have a perfect CAMTS survey and still not meet other requirements of the state and so not be licensed.

Steve reported that the recommendations from this committee for rule 157.125 Requirements for Trauma Facility Designation requiring a trauma facility to notify the office, its RAC plus other affected RAC's of all changes that affect air medical access to designated landing sites. The rule also contains language regarding reporting times for non-emergent changes and emergency changes, conflicts relating to helipad access changes and their resolution. These will go into affect around October of this year.

Terry reported that at the committees request he has contacted CAMTS and requested permission to adopt the current CAMTS Standards for state standards. He has talked with Eileen Frazer, not received a letter as yet, but reports that the CAMTS Board appreciated our asking, and granted permission to use those standards. He also reported that there was some concern among the board members because we were requesting use of the current standards; their concern being that we would still be using 2004 standards several years down the road. There was one other item concerning the CAMTS trained surveyors and a non-accrediting survey and that item is still under discussion by the CAMTS Board.

Bill opened discussion on the proposed rules regarding the language that was agreed on in November:

DSHS will adopt the current CAMTS Standards and any other rules recommended by GETAC Air Medical Committee as the Texas minimum standards for rotor and fixed wing providers.

DSHS shall license rotor and fixed wing programs either by:

CAMTS Accreditation deemed status or,

A survey using newly adopted CAMTS/Texas standards by DSHS approved surveyors.

The cost of the survey will be borne by the air medical provider.

Surveyors will be, at minimum, CAMTS trained.

Terry asked that we consider changing "survey" to "process" in the second option for licensure. There was no objection in the room regarding that change.

Jan Cody, President of TAAMS, brought forth a letter to the committee expressing the support of TAAMS for the language that was agreed upon at the October meeting.

(Letter attached)

Bill stated that we had, in the past, talked about a 2 year window, and that earlier in this process we had discussed a two year window for programs to meet one of these two criteria. The difficulty now lies in the fact that there is not presently an alternate process to CAMTS Accreditation, so what happens to these programs that are not accredited if this process is not developed? Currently, if a program is not CAMTS accredited, there is no other equivalent process and without an equivalent process, an air medical program would be in jeopardy of losing their state licensure. Bill stated that he felt like if we, as a committee, address this process issue, we have the opportunity to develop a new process that could make us even better than what is available now.

The question was asked if any of the TAAMS members had any problem with continuing their support of the language with the change of the wording from “survey” to “process”. No objection was noted.

There was then discussion on the rule regarding adoption of “the current CAMTS Standards”. David Phillips made a motion to change that language 5E to current rather than October, 2004. The motion was seconded by Jim Speier. There were no objections by anyone in the room to the language change. Motion passed with 100% consensus of the attendees.

Bill talked about reporting data that was agreed upon at the last meeting. He sent requests for the data to be reported; there were only 4 or 5 programs that responded. Several programs reported that they did not receive the request. He reiterated that the data is to be used for statistical purposes only.

Bill recommended that we report this information to the FAA, to AAMS, to CAMTS, to Bill asked that this be taken as a formal recommendation to GETAC that those data points be put into a requirement for licensure.

Those data points being:

- Number of flights

- Number of patients

- Number of hours flown

- Number of scene vs. interfacility transports

And that we collect the data for the past three years anyone else involved with the ARC, to start gathering this information as a state. Steve reminded everyone that some of this information, plus some additional such as scene times, is already required reporting through the trauma systems.

There was discussion that, due to the amount of work that remains to be done, we consider a date prior to the next GETAC meetings to hold a summit meeting to discuss some of the issues that remain. We will look at some dates in late July, early August and send those out for decision.

Time being up the meeting was adjourned.