

Western Virginia EMS Council
Report from the State's EMS Advisory Board

The most recent meeting was held on February 15, 2013 in Glen Allen, Virginia.

The 2012 EMS Needs Assessment survey was completed by 49% of the EMS agencies in Virginia. Here are some of the interesting statistics from assessment:

- 43.5% of the respondents were from volunteer EMS agencies, followed by 32.9% from combination (volunteer and career) agencies, and 18.4% from career EMS agencies.
- A majority of the respondents indicated their primary response area was rural, followed by suburban and urban.
- Less than 50% of the agencies have a recruitment program
- 85% reported 12-lead ECG capabilities, less than 50% can transmit them to the hospital
- 65% has applied for a RSAF grant in the last 5 years
- Only 4% reported no high-speed internet access
- Hands on skills practice is the preferred type of EMS education
- Over 50% reported problems with covering shifts
- Nearly 60% bill for services
- Overwhelmingly, the top need of EMS was identified as "personnel"
- Top concerns were training and recruitment and retention of personnel

The Virginia Office of EMS Strategic and Operational Plan is mandated to be reviewed and revised every three years. Each committee of the State EMS Advisory Board has been tasked with evaluating the current plan and proposing additions and/or deletions as it pertains to their particular subject area. The schedule calls for the final draft to be available at the August meeting and it be open for public comment in September.

The General Assembly has passed a bill (still must be signed by the Governor) directing the EMS Advisory Board to develop and facilitate implementation of (i) a process for informing an emergency medical services provider who has received an adverse decision relating to his authority to provide emergency medical care on behalf of an agency of the process for appealing that decision and (ii) a standard operating procedure template to be used in the development of local protocols for emergency medical services personnel for basic life support services. The bill also requires the Board, in cooperation with the State Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board, to review training for emergency medical services personnel and address disparities in the delivery of training to and availability of training for emergency medical services personnel.

The General Assembly has passed a bill (still must be signed by the Governor) making it possible to eliminate written testing for re-certification.

Budget Bill Amendments

- Allocates up to \$400,000 from existing revenues in the Virginia Rescue Squad Assistance Fund for grants to local emergency medical services (EMS) organizations to purchase 12-lead electrocardiograph (ECG) monitors
- Provides \$90,000 in funding from the Virginia Rescue Squad Assistance Fund (RSAF) to provide national background checks on persons applying for positions as a licensed provider in licensed emergency medical services agencies
- Provides \$1.0 million from the general fund to restore funding to operate three poison control centers serving Virginia.

Congratulations (and thanks) to Mike Garnett for being selected to serve on the Training and Certification committee.

Thank you for your confidence in me to represent the Council on the Advisory Board. Should you have any questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,
Dale Wagoner