

# Minutes

# State Medevac Committee

April 13, 2006

Called to order at 10:00

Adjourned at 13:56

Location: The Hilton Garden Inn

[www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems)

## Meeting called by: Randy Abernathy

Chair: Randy Abernathy

OEMS Staff: Paul Sharpe, Russ Stamm, Jodi Kuhn, Christy Saldana, Scott Winston.

Guest: Robin Kurz, Office of the Attorney General (OAG), Jonathon Godfrey  
LifeEvac

Attendees: Allen Wolfe, Bob Knox, Brian Solada, Christopher Cannon, Darryl Lazar, Don Childs, Greg Jones, Harinder Dhindsa, Jay Cullen, Jeff Hamilton, John Bianco, Joseph Lapreto, Kathy Colantuono, Ken Burchell, Lisa Clapp, Maggie McCauley, Michael Ortega, Nick Saunders, Peter Martin, Rob Hamilton, Robin Davis, Susan Strasser, Terry Austin, Wayne Perry, Whitney Aycocke.

## Agenda Topics

### Introductions

Robin Kurz from the Office of the Attorney General was introduced by the Chair. Kathy Colantuono introduced Christopher Cannon. Mr. Cannon will be her replacement in May. Susan Strasser introduced herself, she is now the Duke Life Flight representative.

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes to the January 12, 2006 State Medevac Meeting were distributed electronically prior to the meeting and hard copies during this meeting. The chair entertained a motion to approve the 1/12/2006 minutes as presented; Rob Hamilton so motioned and was seconded by Bob Knox. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### Chair Report

The Chair presented the [FARE Document](#). The FARE document is "A Public Policy Paper" by the Foundation for Air-Medical Research & Education. This paper presents information on the costs vs. benefits of air medical transportation.

The Chair also recognized LifeEvac's newsletter "[Response Times](#)" and commented on the quality of the recent JEMS Today Conference in Baltimore.

Mr. Abernathy also discussed the possibility of the committee exploring single point dispatch for Medevac scene responses in Virginia. He concluded his report by introducing Ms. Kurz.

### Attorney Generals Office

The Medevac Committee has been discussing the possibility of a Certificate of Public Need Process (COPN) for air medical providers in Virginia since the February 2005 State Medevac Meeting. The committee requested that a representative from the OAG come address this issue and provide time to answer questions on the subject. This request was made after OEMS staff informed the committee that we would not be able to seek a COPN.

Ms. Kurz from, the OAG, shared that air ambulance rates, routes & services are preempted by Federal

Aviation Administrative (FAA) laws. A state can regulate the delivery of medical services, staffing requirements, the qualifications of personnel, equipment and standards of sanitary conditions.

Ms. Kurz stated Constitutionally we cannot regulate interstate commerce.

**Comment:** A North Carolina (NC) based agency shared that they [NC] were trying to regulate air craft type and they are actively going through litigation related to their COPN process.

**Question:** has it been considered that it may be a hazard having multiple air medical services?

**Answer:** Ms. Kurz reiterated that only the items mentioned could be regulated.

**Question:** Can a COPN be placed on an EMS agency license? Can OEMS deny an EMS license because a need for additional EMS service does not exist?

**Answer:** OEMS can deny an EMS agency license to a “ground unit” because they do not operate under a Federal license, like the FAA.

**Question:** has there been a review of the draft Medevac regulations and are there any items in that document that we are not able to regulate?

**Answer:** The document has been submitted to the OAG, but no information is available at this time.

**Question:** does it make a difference that air medical transportation is very specific?

**Answer:** Ms. Kurz explained that courts have used the “general transport” laws and that specificity of patient transport has not been used.

**Question:** Will the draft regulations be “fast tracked” through the NOIRA process?

**Answer:** by being anticipated that the draft regulations will be, to some degree controversial, they will not be able to go through the Fast Track NOIRA process. Examples of items that have been fast tracked was provided.

**Question:** how does the State of Ohio regulate the use of single engine aircraft in an air medical agency?

**Answer:** this is a gray area, a state can regulate equipment, but if the state imposes regulations that are excessively strict, this can begin to effect rate, route and service.

### OEMS Report

Paul Sharpe reported for OEMS. The BLS Accreditation plan has been eliminated. The needs that created BLS accreditation will still be addressed, but the accreditation process as it has been presented, will not occur.

The Office of EMS recently held the first of a series of Town Hall Forums in South Hill, VA. These meetings are designed as means to make OEMS and EMS Advisory Board staff available for public comment by our constituents. The meeting was attended by EMS field providers, EMS Administrators, members of local and State government offices. Other meetings will occur throughout the State and be announced.

OEMS staff will be committed, in the near future, to performing Regional Council Contract updates, working with the OEMS Strategic Plan in an effort to turn this document into an operational plan and completing the FY07 budget.

### Best Practices Committee

Robin Davis and Paul Sharpe discussed the activities of the Medevac Best Practices Committee. The full committee was asked for there input on how to proceed, if they wanted to proceed, with a list of topics that the Best Practices Committee feels need addressing. Those items are; 9-1-1/PSAP center education, ground and hospital provider education related to the use of air medical services, multiple helicopter responses, establishing a method of performance improvement (PI) and the development of resources to localities and agencies.

The resources would include mapping of base locations, agency contact and descriptive info in addition to the above. There was discussion on how these topics would be assembled and made available. Several

committee members volunteered to work on the different sections of what will ultimately become an OEMS/Medevac Committee resource manual.

OEMS will explore the possibility of using this resource manual as a template for regional air medical plan, to include local committees and PI.

The question was raised whether it was too late to get Medevac classes scheduled at the 2006 EMS Symposium. Four classes are being set up.

### Agency Updates

**LifeEvac:** attended the Las Vegas Conference and has achieved CAMTS accredited. Related to the Best Practices plan, LifeEvac is willing to share any documents (i.e. policies) they have towards these efforts. They are now taking applications for LifeEvac III in West Point. LifeEvac III is opening in cooperation with Riverside Regional Medical Center and will be located at the Middle Peninsular airport and will be available 24 hours per day.

**Pegasus:** is hosting an educational conference on May 13 and is modifying one of its helicopter and expect completion by the end of June.

**Nightingale:** Kathy Colantuono has resigned after 14 years of service and will be working in a disaster/emergency medicine role with Sentara.

**Virginia State Police, Med Flight I,** has a new Medic, David Powell. **Med Flight II:** has been very busy

**Med Flight III:** cautions that there is a crane up at Lynchburg Hospital and it is lit (strobe).

**Fairfax County Police:** the county's emergency communications has become its own entity and Fairfax Police are working to provide them with education related to air operations. A guest from the Fairfax Communications in attendance.

**Air Medical Transport Specialist:** no report

**MedStar:** has ceased operations at Leesburg and opened a part time (10am-10p) base at MedStar [hospital]. MedStar's communications center is moving within the beltway due to growth. Brian Solada will be leaving MedStar to manage the LifeEvac III base.

**PHI Air Medical Group:** will be celebrating its fifteenth anniversary this November and will be having an event to mark this occasion at their Manassas base.

**US Park Police:** have been having minor difficulties keeping up with all the frequency changes occurring in their area and ask that anyone who has updates from the Northern Virginia area please forward these to them.

### New Business

None

### Old Business

None

### Presentation

Rob Hamilton and Jonathon Godfrey from LifeEvac-Air Methods provided an educational presentation on "Taking the Post Incident Plan Further". The presentation centered around their experience with the LifeEvac II crash in January 2005 and the events that occurred during that event that are not covered within a PAIP.

### Scheduled Meetings

#### **2006 Meeting Schedule**

July 13 and October 12, 2006.

Meetings will be held at "The Place"