

**Financial Assistance Review Committee (FARC)
Quarterly Meeting
Glen Allen, Virginia
May 15, 2008
10:00 AM**

Members Present:	Members Absent:	Administration Staff:	Staff/Other Guests:
Bob Brown		Gary Brown	Jim Nogle
Dan Butler		Dennis Molnar	Karen Owens
Brad Ferguson		Henry Bosman	Ken Crumpler
Wayne Peer		Amanda Davis	Mike Berg
Stuart Smith		Linwood Pulling	Connie Moore
Karen Wagner			Tracy Moore

Topic/Subject	Discussion	Recommendations, Action/Follow-up; Responsible Person
Approval of February 7, 2008 Minutes	Bob Brown, FARC Chair, made a motion to approve the minutes from February 7, 2008.	Minutes approved
Open Discussion: 1) Justification for purchasing ambulances	Stuart Smith, FARC member commented that the committee should start looking at some guidelines for replacement ambulances. Issues that were posed included looking at several categories: (1) Inventory of ambulances (2) Number of calls (3) Mileage on the ambulance they are replacing (4) Out of service ambulances and reason such as why? How? Mechanical? Statements included the thoroughness of the Transportation Committee and their grading process which includes documentation.	FARC recommended ambulances should be based on a minimum of 500 calls/100,000 miles per vehicle. FARC recommended placing this information more visibly on the website, specifically on the Grants Program webpage. This will be implemented for the September 15, 2008 grant cycle.
2) OEMS Subject Matter Expert Grant Review:	Jim Nogle, Manger of the Emergency Operations Division, stated that his division reviewed all grants containing extrication equipment effective this current grant cycle (06-08). Mr. Nogle stated that given there is overlap between certain grant applications, for example if a Regional EMS Council applied for extrication equipment the grant would be reviewed by emergency operations and the EMS systems planner. Mr. Nogle suggested that instead of each OEMS SME reviewing overlapping grants individually that there should be discussion among staff about the agency and the item requested. He recommended that this would be more beneficial to FARC because staff would have a more thorough review knowing all the facts. He suggested that each staff member meet with the respective reviewer to talk about the requested items and then submit one comment as a whole for OEMS staff, this would include the program representative for the affected region.	FARC stated that individual comments from staff are more beneficial because they like to compare the different comments and opinions. Furthermore this gives individual views and keeps the individuality of the graders instead of forcing them to blend their grades. FARC made a motion that “there would be an exchange of information at some meeting level with OEMS staff prior to the submission of grades but

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		will keep separate the grades and comments of each grader". The motion carried unanimously.
3) OEMS Program Representative Comments:	FARC expressed concern over comments documented by some of the OEMS program representatives during the grant review cycle. Michael Berg, Manager of Regulation and Compliance, addressed this concern and invited FARC to meet with the program reps to encourage more thorough comments to aid in the review process. FARC members noted that comments such as "this is needed" or "need justified" without explanation of why the item is needed is frustrating during review. FARC stated that the agency may feel a disservice when comments are redundant and not specified to the specific agency.	FARC agreed to meet with the program reps June 4, 2008 to discuss effective comment documentation.
4) FARC Nomination Process	FARC members discussed the selection process among EMS regional councils and their nominations to FARC during their committee cycle. Effective June 30, 2008, Karen Wagner and the FARC Chair, Bob Brown will finish serving their terms. The next two councils to nominate for FARC will be Southwest Virginia EMS Council and Western Virginia EMS Council. Discussion centered on nomination processes and whether any criteria or standardization had ever been implemented with regard to the nomination process. Some councils nominate through their Board, some are appointed by the Executive Director and others may have another process. With this in mind, FARC suggested that a review process may need to be standardized so the nomination process follows the same format across the state. Other questions that arose are issues such as time commitment for the committee, EMS background or history, attendance at meetings and nomination documents such as submission of a resume. EMS Regulations state that the councils must submit one to three names to nominate and the EMS Advisory Board appoints one of those to FARC. This nomination period, WVEMS submitted three nominations in priority order, however SWEMS only submitted one nomination. Information was brought to FARC's attention that the nomination for SWEMS sold ambulances on a part-time basis which may be considered a conflict of interest, or at least a perception of a conflict, based on the high volume of requests FARC receives for ambulances. It was suggested by FARC that SWEMS submit three names to the EMS Advisory Board in priority order so they may appoint the member.	FARC made a motion to require the regional councils to submit three names for the FARC replacement nominee. The motion carried unanimously. FARC also requested that Michael Berg and Amanda Davis make a change in the EMS Regulations under Financial Assistance for EMS Agencies requiring regional councils to submit three nominations instead of the current requirement of one to three nominations.
5) Vehicle Purchases from RSAF	Amanda Davis, Grant Manager, inquired about prioritizing vehicles that are reviewed to include patient transport vehicles as a higher priority than non-permitted EMS vehicles. Other concerns arose about funding crash trucks which are generally not EMS permitted, vessels, ATV's and/or quick response or training vehicles. Although crash trucks can be EMS licensed vehicles depending on the equipment carried on these units. An example of an awarded vehicle was discussed regarding the original intent of the requested item. The grant was awarded for a crash truck, but the purchased vehicle is a combination crash truck/ /pumper, which may not meet the intended purpose behind the award.	FARC recommended that each grant request be reviewed on an individual/case by case basis.
6) Grant Brochure:	The Grant Brochure will be completed by July 2008 and distributed to all EMS agencies and used for marketing during conferences and trainings. The brochure has been held up to include the results from the 06-08 grant cycle, statistics on grant awards from the 12-07 and	FARC suggested distributing to EMS Regional councils and other agencies as needed.

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	06-08 cycle will be included in the brochure for the most up-to-date information. The brochure will be re-produced annually to keep the information current.	
7) Quotes for Grants:	Amanda Davis, Grants Manager, suggested that quotes become required effective for the next grant cycle. Ken Crumpler, Communications Coordinator, reported that only two grants he reviewed included quotes in their grant application. This lack of preparation makes the reviewing process especially difficult when there are no budget or justification for certain items included in the application. It currently states on the Grants Program website that “quotes are highly recommended”. FARC discussed the implications of requiring quotes for all items, quotes show planning on the applicants part and allows the reviewers to make more informed decisions when assessing each grant.	FARC made a motion that each grant application must include a quote for each item requested, unless that item is available on state contract. This requirement would be mandatory beginning January 1, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.
8) Deadline for Grant Submissions:	Amanda Davis reported that the 06-08 grant cycle received 15-20 grants that did not submit an original affirmation page. Effective September 15, 2007 all grants had to be submitted electronically, however the original affirmation page had to be received by OEMS on the deadline date by 5pm. OEMS accepted three applications after the grant deadline because the applicants provided receipts for the mailed affirmations. Due to problems with our mail system, OEMS did accept affirmations that were faxed and the three that provided receipts for mailed affirmations after the grant deadline. Amanda Davis suggested allowing the affirmation to be submitted electronically effective September 15, 2008. This would allow the authorized agent, fiscal officer and OMD to type in their names and submit the affirmation with the uploaded grant application. Dennis Molnar, Business Manager, expressed concern over not having specific signatures for each entity and that this could potentially cause more concern due to certain agents not having knowledge of the grant submittal.	FARC recommended that we leave the process as is for the Fall cycle and continue to receive affirmation only by mail. Electronic applications may be accepted for future cycles once VDH endorses and effective electronic signature policy. OEMS will explore this option for upcoming cycles to decrease the issues with the mail system. It was also recommended that we encourage agencies to send affirmations by Federal Express, UPS or other private agencies so they will have confirmations of delivery.
9) FARC 2008 Spring Tour	Amanda Davis presented a power point outline of the Rappahannock EMS Regional Council tour which took place on April 17-18, 2008. The tour included the following agencies: REMS office, Mary-Washington Hospital, King George County F&R, Chancellor F&R, Amissville Volunteer F&R, Washington Volunteer F&R and Culpeper County EMS. REMS arranged a horse and carriage ride through Old Towne Fredericksburg with dinner in the downtown district.	No further action required.
10) FARC 2008 Fall Tour	FARC will tour the Central Shenandoah EMS Council’s during October 2008. Mrs. Davis announced that due to state budget constraints the fall tour may conclude tours for at least two years.	Dates for the Fall Tour will be confirmed during the August 2008 quarterly meeting.
11) RSAF Guidelines for Regional Councils	Effective January 1, 2008 the Regional EMS Councils must submit grant guidelines to OEMS for approval. Specifically 12VAC5-31-2700, Financial assistance for emergency medical services states “the designated regional EMS council participation in the Virginia financial assistance for EMS program process shall have written guidelines and procedures, approved by the Office of EMS”. Mrs. Davis sent out a request to all councils to submit their grant procedures/policies to the Grants Unit by April 11, 2008. OEMS will review the guidelines and develop standardization procedures for grant review processes.	Grant standardization policies will be developed and implemented by the March 15, 2009 grant cycle.

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Transportation Committee: State Ambulance Contract:	The state ambulance contract was posted to the eVA website in early May, bids will close on May 23 rd , 2008. Once the state ambulance contract has been completed, grantees will be required to purchase off the state ambulance contract unless they can justify a cost-benefit from another vendor.	No further action is required
Meeting Adjourned	Meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM	No further action required

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