

State EMS Advisory Board

05/01/2026

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DRAFT

Full Board Meeting Minutes
 Public Safety Training Center
 7093 Broad Neck Road, Hanover Virginia 23069
 Friday, February 6, 2026

Attendance

Members Present:	Members Excused:	VDH/OEMS Staff:	Others:
Dr. Paula Ferrada, MD, FACS, FCCM	Benjamin D. Nicholson, M.D.	Stephanie Dunkel, VDH Deputy Commissioner, Population Health and Preparedness	Kevin Dillard
Lisa Baber	Beth Matish	Marian Hunter	Megan Middleton
Joseph Williams	Walter Bailey	Daniel Linkins	Kelley Rumsey
Kim Craig		Mohamed G. Abbamin, MPA	David Long
Brian Frankel		Wayne Perry	John H. Craig III
Dr. Joseph Lang, MD		Jacqueline Hunter	Gary Samuels
James Reynolds		Julie Franchok	Robert Trimmer
Melissa Meador		Michael Berg	Ryan Scarbrough
Matt Rickman		Sam Burnette	Ali Akbar
David Hupp		Ashley Camper	Heidi Hooker
Madison Blaska		Chad Mason	Greg Neiman
Bill Streett		Greg Woods	Ed Rhodes
Dr. John Morgan, MD		Doug Layton	Connie G. Moore
Jason Stroud		Sayed Sadaat	Bryan Kimberlin

Members Present:	Members Excused:	VDH/OEMS Staff:	Others:
Theresa Kingsley-Varble			Karen Owens
Dr. Patrick M. McLaughlin, M.D., M.S.			Robert Hawkins
R. Bruce Stratton			
Steve Higgins			
*Dr. Rebecca Branch Griffin, Ph.D.			

*Remote participation - **

DRAFT

Opening Session

Call to Order

Chair Dr. Paula Ferrada called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by attendees.

Chair Dr. Paula Ferrada asked Board members to introduce themselves for the record.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion: Approve minutes from the February 6, 2026 meeting.

Vote: Unanimous

Action: Motion Carries

Approval of Current Meeting Agenda:

Motion: Approve the current May 1, 2026, meeting agenda.

Vote: Unanimous

Action: Motion Carries

Reports

Chairman's Report, Dr. Paula Ferrada, MD, FACS, FCCM

Topic: Chairman's Report

Dr. Ferrada expressed appreciation for the level of collaboration, transparency, and partnership currently being demonstrated throughout the Virginia EMS system. She noted that while the Commonwealth has experienced significant operational and organizational challenges over the past several years, progress continues to be made through collective effort and open communication.

Dr. Ferrada emphasized the importance of maintaining transparency and encouraging stakeholders to elevate concerns or questions whenever confusion arises. She reiterated that continued improvement of patient care across the Commonwealth will require ongoing communication, collaboration, and partnership among all EMS stakeholders.

She further highlighted the importance of the EMS system funding presentation and accompanying educational video, stating that a shared understanding of EMS finances is critical to the long-term sustainability of the system. Dr. Ferrada noted that the EMS Advisory Board represents one of the most engaged and participatory advisory bodies within the Commonwealth and acknowledged the significant volunteerism and time commitment demonstrated by board members and stakeholders.

Dr. Ferrada stated that the goal moving forward should be to continue empowering participation, expanding collaboration, and involving additional stakeholders in advancing EMS initiatives across Virginia.

Lastly, Dr. Ferrada thanked Former Chairman Kevin Dillard for his leadership in developing the proposed Committee and Work Group Administration framework, noting that the effort would provide additional clarity and structure for committees and work groups moving forward. The report will be presented later under the Executive Committee Report.

K9 Workgroup Report (HB1309) - Update - James Reynolds

Discussion: Presented by James Reynolds

Mr. Reynolds reported that the HB 1309 Canine Workgroup has successfully completed the objectives and deliverables assigned to the group related to the development of guidance and recommendations for the emergency treatment and transport of injured public safety canines.

Mr. Reynolds stated that the workgroup is now focusing on development of legislative and advocacy materials to support future implementation and advancement of the initiative. This includes preparation of a legislative presentation and informational slide deck intended to support stakeholder education and legislative engagement efforts.

Mr. Reynolds further noted that a new legislative and advocacy team within the Trauma Administrative and Governance Committee has been asked to review the workgroup deliverables and assist with development of the legislative support materials.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Coordinate with the legislative and advocacy team to finalize review of the HB 1309 Canine Workgroup deliverables.
- Develop a legislative slide deck and supporting materials for future advocacy and legislative efforts.

Stephanie Dunkel, Deputy Commissioner for Population Health and Preparedness

Topic: Updates

Discussion: Presented by Stephanie Dunkel, Deputy Commissioner for Population Health and Preparedness

Dr. B. Cameron Webb, Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Health, was unable to attend the meeting. On his behalf, Stephanie Dunkel, Deputy Commissioner for Population Health and Preparedness, provided an update to the Advisory Board regarding ongoing Virginia Department of Health initiatives, EMS system collaboration efforts, and continued organizational support for the Office of EMS.

Ms. Dunkel reported that Dr. Webb had previously attended the February Advisory Board meeting and intends to continue participating periodically in future Board meetings and EMS Week activities throughout the Commonwealth.

Ms. Dunkel stated that she looks forward to continued engagement with EMS stakeholders during upcoming EMS Week events and other statewide EMS activities.

Ms. Dunkel further announced that the Virginia Department of Health's new Chief Operating Officer, Matthew Ahern, officially began his role at the end of March 2026. She noted that Mr. Ahern was appointed by Governor Spanberger and brings extensive operational leadership experience, including prior service as Director of Nebraska Medicaid. Ms. Dunkel stated that his operational and Medicaid experience will provide valuable expertise supporting public health and EMS system operations within the Department.

Ms. Dunkel advised that Mr. Ahern is expected to participate in a future Advisory Board meeting.

Ms. Dunkel additionally noted that the Commonwealth continues to await final adoption of the state budget and acknowledged that many stakeholders are actively monitoring the budget process. She then referred to Ron Passmore for a legislative update regarding the 2026 General Assembly session.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up: NA

Legislative Update – 2026 General Assembly Session

Topic: 2026 General Assembly Legislative Update

Discussion: Presented by Ron Passmore

Mr. Passmore reported that the 2026 General Assembly session had concluded and provided an overview of legislation impacting Emergency Medical Services within the Commonwealth.

HB 1115: Mr. Passmore reported that HB 1115 relates to non-emergency medical transportation fee disclosure requirements. Similar to prior legislation affecting air medical transport providers, the legislation requires development of a standardized patient cost disclosure process prior to transport. The Virginia Department of Health is tasked with developing and publishing the required standardized disclosure form by October 2026. The legislation primarily affects agencies performing non-emergency and interfacility ground transportation services.

HB 1285: Mr. Passmore further reported that HB 1285 modifies the composition of the State EMS Advisory Board by reducing board membership from 28 members to 24 members to align with the revised regional EMS council structure. The legislation becomes effective July 1, 2026.

SB 633: Mr. Passmore additionally reported that SB 633 relates to EMS support planning for large events within the Commonwealth. The legislation directs the Virginia Department of Health to develop and publish guidance and EMS provider resources related to planning and operational support for large-scale events. The legislation becomes effective July 1, 2026.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Virginia Department of Health to develop and publish the standardized non-emergency transport disclosure form by October 2026.
- OEMS to implement Advisory Board membership adjustments consistent with HB 1285.
- VDH to develop and publish EMS event planning guidance and provider resources pursuant to SB 633.

Topic: Legislative Process, Unified Readiness Initiative, and Rural Health Transformation Program

Discussion: Presented by Stephanie Dunkel, Deputy Commissioner for Population Health and Preparedness

Ms. Dunkel provided an overview of the Virginia Department of Health's upcoming internal legislative and budget development process for the next legislative cycle. She explained that the agency's legislative planning process will begin over the coming months in coordination with the Governor's Office through the Commonwealth's confidential legislative development process. Ms. Dunkel noted that the EMS Advisory Board will continue to have involvement and visibility into EMS-related legislative initiatives and associated budget discussions as proposals are developed.

Ms. Dunkel further advised that stakeholder engagement opportunities associated with the State EMS Plan and statewide EMS system and community needs assessment will include future town halls and public engagement activities.

Ms. Dunkel also provided an update regarding the Governor's Unified Readiness Initiative. She stated that in March 2026, the Governor convened public safety and health leaders from across the Commonwealth for the inaugural Unified Readiness briefing, bringing together representatives from public safety, law enforcement, fire services, EMS, healthcare, and public health. More than 1,000 individuals participated in the statewide launch event.

Ms. Dunkel reported that the initiative is transitioning into a series of regional readiness summits led by the Secretariat of Homeland Security and Public Safety in collaboration with the Secretariat of Health and Human Resources. The first regional summit was recently conducted in Southwest Virginia, with six additional regional summits planned throughout the Commonwealth.

Discussion highlighted that the summits focus on unified emergency preparedness planning, regional coordination, tabletop engagement exercises, and identification of operational gaps across public safety and healthcare systems. Ms. Dunkel emphasized that EMS agencies and healthcare partners remain actively represented throughout the initiative and that VDH is coordinating participation from EMS, healthcare coalitions, public health entities, and regional healthcare stakeholders.

Ms. Dunkel additionally provided an update regarding the Rural Health Transformation Program and the developing community paramedicine initiative associated with the program. She reported that VDH and OEMS recently met with representatives from the Governor's Office and DMAS regarding implementation planning and program design efforts. The Rural Health Transformation Program recently hired a program director, Heidi Hertz, who began her role approximately 10 days prior to the meeting. Ms. Dunkel stated that additional stakeholder engagement and program development activities will continue over the coming months as the initiative moves forward.

Lastly, Ms. Dunkel advised that Dr. Maria Beermann-Foat was unable to attend the meeting due to participation in a national state EMS directors meeting. However, Dr. Beermann-Foat prepared a recorded EMS system funding presentation in response to ongoing stakeholder requests for additional financial transparency and education regarding EMS funding structures, Four-for-Life funding allocations, operational budget limitations, and areas of direct OEMS fiscal authority and responsibility.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Continue EMS Advisory Board engagement regarding legislative and budget development processes.
 - Conduct future EMS State Plan town halls and stakeholder engagement activities.
 - Continue participation in the Governor's Unified Readiness regional summits.
 - Continue development and stakeholder engagement related to the Rural Health Transformation Program community paramedicine initiative.
 - Publish and distribute EMS system funding educational materials and presentations for stakeholder review.
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VDH OEMS Director, Dr. Maria Beermann-Foat, PhD, NRP

Topic: OEMS Executive Director Update - OEMS Budget and Four-for-Life Funding Overview

Discussion: Presented by Dr. Maria Beermann-Foat, PhD, NRP (Video Presentation)

Dr. Beermann-Foat provided a recorded presentation outlining the structure of EMS funding within the Commonwealth, including an overview of the Four-for-Life funding distribution model, OEMS operational funding, restricted funding accounts, and statewide EMS financial responsibilities. The public video link will be distributed upon publication.

Dr. Beermann-Foat explained the statutory allocation structure associated with the \$6.25 Four-for-Life vehicle registration fee and clarified the distinction between pass-through funds, restricted funds, and operational funding available to the Office of EMS. Discussion included breakdowns associated with:

- General Fund allocations;
- EMS certification and recertification funding;
- Rescue Squad Assistance Fund (RSAF) allocations;
- Return-to-locality funding;
- OEMS operational and administrative funding; and
- Trauma Center Fund allocations.

Dr. Beermann-Foat further discussed the distinction between funds that OEMS administers as pass-through accounts versus funds available for direct operational use by the Office of EMS. She emphasized that the majority of EMS funding collected through Four-for-Life revenues is distributed back into the EMS system and local communities rather than retained for OEMS operational expenses.

Discussion additionally included:

- Regional EMS Council funding allocations;
- personnel and operational cost structures within OEMS;

- information technology and software expenses;
- trauma designation operational costs;
- EMS Advisory Board meeting costs;
- grant funding considerations;
- financial compliance measures and audit controls; and
- limitations associated with restricted funding categories and inter-fund transfers.

Dr. Beermann-Foat emphasized the importance of transparency, financial accountability, sustainability, and collaborative problem-solving across the EMS system. She encouraged EMS stakeholders to continue identifying innovative and cost-effective approaches to strengthen EMS services statewide while recognizing the interconnected nature of the Commonwealth's EMS system and funding structure.

Chair Ferrada advised that the recorded presentation would be made publicly available following the meeting for stakeholders and members of the public seeking additional information regarding EMS funding structures and the Trauma Center Fund.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Public release of the OEMS funding and Four-for-Life budget presentation video forthcoming.
- Continue stakeholder education and transparency initiatives regarding EMS funding structures and financial operations.
- Continue evaluation of long-term EMS funding sustainability and systemwide financial needs.

State Medical Director's Report, Dr. Allen Yee, MD

Topic: State Medical Director's Report

Discussion: No Report

State Board of Health EMS Representative Report, Kevin Dillard

Topic: State Board of Health EMS Representative Report

Discussion: Presented by Kevin Dillard

Mr. Dillard reported that the State Board of Health met on March 19, 2026, at the Perimeter Center in Richmond. He noted that the meeting included one item specifically related to Emergency Medical Services.

Mr. Dillard stated that Wayne Perry, Deputy Director of Operations for the Office of EMS, presented the request to extend the current State EMS Plan. Following presentation and discussion, the State Board of Health approved the EMS Plan extension request and authorized the Office of EMS, in coordination with the State EMS Advisory Board, to initiate and complete an 18-month statewide EMS system and community needs assessment aligned with the EMS Agenda for the Future 2050 initiative.

Mr. Dillard further reported that the next State Board of Health meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2026, and will be hosted at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science within the Three Rivers Health District. He stated that Board members will participate in regional tours and presentations on June 10, followed by the formal Board meeting beginning at 9:00 a.m. on June 11.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee

Topic: Executive Committee

Presenter: Chair, Dr. Paula Ferrada, MD, FACS, FCCM introduced, Workgroup chair - Kevin Dillard

Topic: Committee and Work Group Administration Policy

Discussion: Presented by Kevin Dillard

Mr. Dillard reported that a work group consisting of Matt Lawler, JC Bolling, and Gary Critzer was tasked with developing a formal framework defining the structure, responsibilities, and operational requirements for EMS Advisory Board committees and work groups. As a result, the group developed a proposed Policy for the Administration of Committees and Work Groups.

Mr. Dillard explained that the purpose of the policy is to establish consistent definitions, roles, responsibilities, and administrative procedures for committees and work groups operating under the Virginia State EMS Advisory Board. The policy is intended to ensure consistency, transparency, and compliance with the Code of Virginia and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), while also supporting implementation of the EMS Advisory Board bylaws and committee guidance documents.

The policy defines:

- Committees as standing bodies responsible for ongoing oversight, issue review, and development of recommendations to the Advisory Board.
- Work groups as temporary, project-oriented groups established by committees to complete a single defined project or deliverable.

Mr. Dillard emphasized that work groups are advisory only and do not possess decision-making authority. All final recommendations and actions remain under the authority of the parent committee and the EMS Advisory Board.

Additional discussion included:

- committee membership structure and annual appointment process;
- geographic diversity and stakeholder inclusion;
- vice-chair and recording secretary responsibilities;
- reinstatement of annual committee reporting requirements;
- committee meeting FOIA requirements;
- work group operational limitations;
- documentation expectations;
- project-specific work group naming conventions;

- distinctions between committee meetings and work group activities under FOIA.

Mr. Dillard further clarified that assembly of three or more Advisory Board or committee members discussing public business may trigger FOIA requirements, even within a work group setting. To maintain operational flexibility, work groups should generally consist primarily of subject matter experts and include no more than two Advisory Board or committee members combined.

The proposed policy also establishes that:

- work groups should generally not exceed 12 months in duration;
- projects extending beyond 12 months should be divided into phases;
- all work group deliverables must return to the parent committee for formal review and action;
- the policy should undergo annual review by the Executive Committee.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Publish the Committee and Work Group Administration Policy for interim operational use.
- Reinstate annual committee reporting requirements.
- Conduct annual Executive Committee review of the policy.
- Incorporate the policy into the EMS Advisory Board bylaws following required notice and comment procedures.
- Present the policy to the full board in August 7, 2026.

Following the presentation by Chairman Kevin Dillard, Dr. Paula Ferrada thanked Mr. Dillard and the work group for developing a detailed and transparent policy framework. Dr. Ferrada stated that the policy would provide additional clarity and operational structure for committees and work groups while supporting continued stakeholder participation across the Commonwealth.

Dr. Ferrada requested a motion to make the Committee and Work Group Administration Policy immediately available for administrative and operational use as interim guidance, allowing committees and work groups to continue functioning and advancing projects without waiting for formal bylaw amendments.

Motion: To make the Committee and Work Group Administration Policy immediately available for administrative use and implementation as guidance for Advisory Board committees and work group as interim.

Vote: Unanimous

Action: Motion Carries.

Financial Assistance Review Committee (FARC)

Topic: Financial Assistance Review Committee (FARC)

Discussion: Presented Chairman Robert Trimmer

Mr. Trimmer, Chair of the Financial Assistance Review Committee (FARC), presented a committee update and reported that the committee submitted a motion for consideration regarding committee membership appointments and reappointments.

The proposed motion included:

- Appointment of Matt Rickman to the Financial Assistance Review Committee representing EMS Region Two.
- Appointment of Melissa Meador to fill the vacancy created by the departure of Noah Hilstrom from EMS Region Five.
- Reappointment of Robert Trimmer to an additional three-year term as Chair of the committee.

Mr. Trimmer further reported that the committee is actively engaged in scoring Rescue Squad Assistance Fund (RSAF) grant submissions. Technical grading has been completed and committee members are currently reviewing the applications.

The committee received approximately 151 grant item submissions totaling approximately \$6 million in requested funding. Mr. Trimmer stated that upon completion of committee scoring, the grades will be submitted for further processing and review.

Motion: To approve the proposed Financial Assistance Review Committee appointments and reappointment.

Vote: Unanimous

Action: Motion Carries.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Complete scoring and submission of RSAF grant grades for processing and review.

Rules and Regulations Committee

Topic: Rules and Regulations Committee

Discussion: Presented by Kim Craig

Ms. Craig reported that the Rules and Regulations Committee met with a quorum and provided an update regarding ongoing Chapter 32 revision efforts.

Ms. Craig stated that, pursuant to direction previously provided by the EMS Advisory Board, a Chapter 32 workgroup was established to review proposed edits and recommendations associated with the regulatory revision process. Beth Adams currently serves as chair of the workgroup.

Ms. Craig explained that the Chapter 32 revision process originally stalled during review within the Office of the Attorney General. Following return of the draft materials to the EMS Advisory Board, the Rules and Regulations Committee was tasked with reviewing the proposed edits and coordinating submission of recommendations for further consideration.

Ms. Craig reported that the primary committee groups contributing proposed edits include:

- Medical Direction Committee (MDC),
- State Air Medical Committee,
- Training and Certification Committee, including revisions associated with the TPAM framework.

The workgroup currently meets twice monthly and operates as a publicly noticed workgroup consistent with FOIA requirements. Meetings are posted through the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall system.

Ms. Craig stated that the workgroup is expected to continue meeting through July 2026. The current timeline anticipates:

- submission of the revised Chapter 32 draft back to the Rules and Regulations Committee in August 2026;
- committee review and consideration of proposed edits during the November 2026 meeting;
- potential Advisory Board review of the revised Chapter 32 draft in February 2027;
- advancement into the formal regulatory process thereafter.

Ms. Craig additionally reported that the committee reviewed and recommended forwarding two variance requests to the State Health Commissioner for consideration and final determination pursuant to regulatory requirements.

Ms. Craig further reported that the committee approved an Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) program submitted by the National Safety Council.

Additionally, the committee ratified:

- Beth Adams as Vice Chair of the Rules and Regulations Committee; and
- Karen Owens as Recording Secretary.

Ms. Craig acknowledged the extensive work and continued commitment of the workgroup members and encouraged stakeholders to attend the publicly posted meetings and participate in the process.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Continue twice-monthly Chapter 32 workgroup meetings through July 2026.
- Submit revised Chapter 32 draft to the Rules and Regulations Committee in August 2026.
- Conduct committee review of proposed edits during the November 2026 meeting.

- Present revised Chapter 32 draft to the EMS Advisory Board in February 2027 for consideration and potential advancement into the formal regulatory process.
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Emergency Management Committee

Topic: Emergency Management Committee

Discussion: Presented by Joe Williams

Mr. Williams reported that the Emergency Management Committee met the previous day with a quorum present.

Mr. Williams stated that the committee is currently focused on reviewing and restructuring committee membership to ensure alignment with EMS Advisory Board bylaws and committee requirements. The committee is also evaluating current participation and engagement levels to ensure members are actively interested in contributing to committee initiatives and advancing the committee's work in a positive and productive manner.

Mr. Williams noted that the committee has experienced a period of stagnation and is now working toward reestablishing alignment, participation, and operational momentum moving forward.

Mr. Williams advised that additional recommendations and updates regarding committee structure and membership will be presented at a future Advisory Board meeting.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Continue review and restructuring of Emergency Management Committee membership and participation.
- Ensure committee alignment with EMS Advisory Board bylaws and operational expectations.
- Present future recommendations and committee updates to the EMS Advisory Board.

EMS Workforce Resilience Committee

Topic: EMS Workforce Resilience Committee

Discussion: Presented by Brian Frankel

Mr. Frankel reported that the EMS Workforce Resilience Committee met the previous day and achieved a quorum. There were no action items requiring Advisory Board action at this meeting.

Mr. Frankel stated that the committee recently completed appointments to fill two committee vacancies created following the merger of the Health and Safety and Workforce Development committees. The following appointments were announced:

- Chris Vernevi to serve in the Regional EMS Councils representative vacancy; and
- Derek Fuller to serve in the Recruitment and Retention Network representative vacancy.

Mr. Frankel further reported that the committee's primary focus during the meeting involved ongoing work associated with the EMS Development Workgroup and development of the EMS Officer Program, specifically the EMS Officer II program.

Mr. Frankel advised that he had previously been tasked by the Advisory Board with presenting a finalized framework and potential pilot timeline for the EMS Officer II program at the current meeting. However, following workgroup and committee discussions, the program framework was not presented due to several concerns identified during the review process.

Discussion identified challenges related to:

- significant time commitment requirements;
- lack of dedicated funding;

- program development and validation concerns;
- short-term and long-term sustainability considerations.

Based upon those discussions, the workgroup requested that the committee provide the Advisory Board with a detailed summary report outlining the identified concerns and recommendations. Mr. Frankel stated that the report will be presented to the Advisory Board at the August 2026 meeting.

Mr. Frankel additionally provided an update regarding peer support and citizen assistance program accreditation. He reported that the EMS Workforce Resilience Committee previously requested clarification from the Office of the Attorney General regarding the authority of OEMS to provide tentative approval for peer support and citizen assistance programs prior to formal committee approval.

Based on guidance received from the Office of the Attorney General, Mr. Frankel stated that the authority for OEMS and the EMS Advisory Board to accredit such programs requires additional legal and procedural review. As a result:

- no new peer support or citizen assistance programs will receive approval or accreditation until the review process is completed;
- programs previously accredited will continue operating under their current approvals and protections.

Mr. Frankel further stated that the committee requested OEMS update the Office of EMS website with language reflecting the Attorney General's guidance to ensure clarity for organizations seeking accreditation as well as programs already operating under prior approvals. OEMS acknowledged the request and advised that updates would be made.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Present EMS Officer II program summary report and recommendations at the August 2026 EMS Advisory Board meeting.

- Continue review of EMS Officer Program development, sustainability, and funding considerations.
 - OEMS to update website language regarding peer support and citizen assistance program accreditation guidance.
 - Continue coordination with the Office of the Attorney General regarding accreditation authority and program approval processes.
-

Medical Direction Committee

Topic: Medical Direction Committee

Discussion: Presented by Dr. Joseph Lang, MD

Dr. Lang reported that the Medical Direction Committee (MDC) met on April 2, 2026, with a quorum present.

The committee received a presentation from Daisy Banta with the Office of Epidemiology regarding EMS stroke reporting metrics and documentation practices. Discussion focused on reporting related to “last known normal” versus onset of symptoms and clarification of terminology and measurement standards moving forward.

Dr. Lang further reported that the Financial Assistance Review Committee (FARC) presented recommendations related to Rescue Squad Assistance Fund (RSAF) funding priorities and tier classifications. Discussion included Tier I through Tier III funding items and consideration of moving ultrasound equipment from Tier III to Tier II funding status.

The committee also discussed the potential development of a reporting and evaluation process related to funded equipment and projects to better assess utilization, operational outcomes, and future tier placement recommendations. Dr. Lang stated that both MDC and FARC intend to review funding tiers annually to determine whether adjustments or reconsideration of tier classifications may be warranted.

Additional updates were received from various workgroups, the Office of EMS, and the State Operational Medical Director (OMD).

Dr. Lang reported that one item associated with the Landing Zone Safety Workgroup was anticipated for Advisory Board action; however, formatting issues were identified with the project flyer and associated materials. As a result, the action item was deferred until the next Advisory Board meeting to allow presentation of a finalized version of the project materials.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Continue MDC and FARC annual review of RSAF funding tiers and associated equipment classifications.
- Evaluate development of reporting metrics related to funded equipment utilization and outcomes.
- Return the Landing Zone Safety Workgroup materials and project flyer to the EMS Advisory Board at the next meeting for consideration and potential action.

Trauma Administrative and Governance

Topic: Trauma Administrative and Governance

Discussion: Presented by James Reynolds

Mr. Reynolds reported that the Trauma Administrative and Governance Committee (TAG) met the previous day in a hybrid format with both in-person and virtual participation. Although the committee did not achieve a quorum, Mr. Reynolds noted that the reduced attendance was understandable due to several committee members participating in national and international trauma conferences and symposiums.

Mr. Reynolds stated that members of the trauma community were actively presenting and participating in the World Trauma Congress, as well as emergency general surgery, surgical critical care, and trauma symposiums. He noted that it was humbling to be part of a team contributing to advancements in trauma patient care both within the Commonwealth and internationally.

Mr. Reynolds further advised that the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association (VHHA), as a participating organization within TAG, provided updates during the committee meeting. Mr. Reynolds invited Mr. Robert Hawkins, Emergency Preparedness Director of VHHA to provide a summary of VHHA-related items and discussions presented during the meeting.

Virginia Healthcare Emergency Management Program (VHEMP) Update

Discussion: Mr. Robert Hawkins, Emergency Preparedness Director at Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association

Mr. Hawkins provided an overview of the Virginia Healthcare Emergency Management Program (VHEMP), a collaborative partnership between the Virginia Department of Health and the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association (VHHA). He noted that the program is funded through the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) Hospital Preparedness Program.

Mr. Hawkins reported that VHEMP provides funding and operational support for:

- the Commonwealth's four regional healthcare coalitions;
- regional healthcare coordination centers; and
- the Virginia Healthcare Alerting and Status System (VHASS).

Mr. Hawkins explained used to connect healthcare facilities by providing emergency alerts, notifications, incident management capabilities, and real-time clinical and facility status reporting.

Mr. Hawkins further highlighted several recent and upcoming preparedness initiatives conducted through VHEMP, including:

- a Pediatric Pandemic Network virtual tabletop exercise held April 15, 2026, focused on pediatric infectious disease surge response;
- medical response surge exercises conducted for the Southwest Virginia and Central Virginia Healthcare Coalitions;
- the BIO 200 extent-of-play exercise;
- statewide cybersecurity and extended medical downtime assessments conducted within Virginia healthcare facilities over the past two years;

- the 2026 Emergency Preparedness Summit held in Richmond, which included approximately 300 attendees and featured participation from the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, the VHHA Board Chair, and the Virginia Health Commissioner.

Mr. Hawkins additionally reported that upcoming activities include:

- an additional Pediatric Pandemic Network tabletop exercise focused on pediatric burn surge preparedness scheduled for May 18, 2026;
- continued National Disaster Life Support Foundation training courses; and
- decontamination training programs.

Mr. Hawkins then invited James Moss, State Hospital Coordinator, to provide additional updates regarding VDH preparedness initiatives and related healthcare coordination activities.

Healthcare Coalition Level and the Statewide Level

Discussion: Presented James Moss, State Hospital Coordinator at Virginia Department of Health

Mr. Moss provided an overview of ongoing initiatives and preparedness activities occurring at both the healthcare coalition level and the statewide level through the Office of Emergency Preparedness.

Mr. Moss reported that statewide education and training initiatives remain a significant focus area. During the current calendar year, the Office of Emergency Preparedness hosted webinars and informational sessions related to winter weather preparedness and announced an upcoming June webinar focused on hurricane preparedness and heat awareness.

Mr. Moss further discussed patient tracking capabilities within the Virginia Healthcare Alerting and Status System (VHASS) platform and advised that multiple training sessions have been conducted related to patient tracking functionality and operational use.

Additionally, Mr. Moss highlighted ongoing efforts related to special pathogen and emerging infectious disease preparedness throughout the Commonwealth. He reported that Virginia currently maintains:

- two Level II State Treatment Centers; and
- four Level III Assessment Centers

capable of evaluating, managing, and treating patients associated with viral hemorrhagic fevers and other high-consequence infectious diseases, including Ebola, Marburg virus, and Lassa fever.

Mr. Moss stated that University of Virginia Health and VCU Health recently received federal funding to maintain and enhance these preparedness capabilities.

Mr. Moss further reported that the Commonwealth is currently conducting a statewide exercise known as “Requisite Cardinal,” associated with the BIO 200 exercise series. The exercise involves participation from multiple offices within the Virginia Department of Health, as well as partner agencies and Secretariats across state government, including the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. The exercise scenario focuses on a biological event involving avian influenza and is intended to test statewide pandemic preparedness plans, policies, and operational coordination.

Discussion noted that the exercise incorporates lessons learned from prior statewide exercises conducted in 2019, as well as operational experiences associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Moss additionally provided an update regarding the Community-Based Emergency Response Seminars (CBERS) program. He reported that the current annual theme is “Critical Mass,” focusing on the intersection of:

- mass casualty response,
- mass fatality management, and
- mass care operations.

A pilot seminar was conducted in the Richmond area during April 2026, and program revisions were made based on feedback from the pilot session. Additional regional rollouts are scheduled to begin the following week.

Mr. Moss also discussed preparedness planning efforts associated with the nation's upcoming 250th anniversary celebrations and related large-scale events occurring throughout Virginia and the National Capital Region. He noted that regional EMS councils, healthcare coalitions, VDH, and partner agencies are actively coordinating preparedness and mutual aid planning activities for major events anticipated in Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

Discussion emphasized the importance of interstate coordination and mutual aid partnerships between Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia in supporting large-scale public safety and healthcare operations.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Continue statewide preparedness education and webinar initiatives.
- Continue patient tracking training through the VHASS platform.
- Continue development of special pathogen preparedness capabilities and treatment center coordination.
- Continue statewide pandemic preparedness and BIO 200 exercise activities.
- Continue regional rollout of the CBERS "Critical Mass" seminar series.
- Continue preparedness and mutual aid coordination activities associated with upcoming national anniversary events and regional mass gathering operations

Trauma Triage Plan and Trauma Center Fund

Discussion: Presented by James Reynolds

Mr. Reynolds reported that the Trauma Administrative and Governance Committee focused discussion on two primary topics during the committee meeting.

First, the committee reviewed the Virginia Trauma Triage Plan. Mr. Reynolds stated that during the February committee meeting, TAG approved creation of a workgroup to review and update the statewide trauma triage plan. Dr. Kelly Rumsey was identified to serve as the lead for the workgroup and coordinate the review and update process moving forward.

Second, the committee discussed the Trauma Center Fund and the importance of maintaining dedicated financial support for Virginia's designated trauma centers. Mr. Reynolds emphasized that the level of readiness, staffing, training, and operational capability required of designated trauma centers is unparalleled within the healthcare system and underscores the critical importance of preserving the Trauma Center Fund.

Mr. Reynolds stated that the committee believes the Trauma Center Fund must remain protected and utilized exclusively for its intended statutory purpose, supporting Virginia trauma centers and ultimately supporting trauma patient care throughout the Commonwealth.

Discussion also included consideration of future opportunities to increase available funding within the Trauma Center Fund. Mr. Reynolds noted that available funding has declined over time while Virginia's population, overall trauma system demands, and the number of designated trauma centers have continued to grow. He stated that the expansion of trauma services statewide has increased operational and reimbursement pressures on the Trauma Center Fund and may require future evaluation of long-term funding sustainability and potential revenue enhancement strategies.

Mr. Reynolds further highlighted the ongoing need for trauma centers to continue advancing patient care through research, innovation, training, and system development and emphasized the importance of ensuring trauma centers remain adequately supported moving forward.

Mr. Reynolds advised that the Trauma Administrative and Governance Committee will continue to keep the EMS Advisory Board informed regarding trauma system funding discussions and related initiatives.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Continue review and update of the Virginia Trauma Triage Plan through the TAG workgroup led by Dr. Kelly Rumsey.
- Continue evaluating opportunities to preserve and strengthen the Trauma Center Fund.
- Provide future updates to the EMS Advisory Board regarding trauma system funding and trauma center support initiatives.

Training and Certification Committee Report

Topic: Training and Certification Committee

Presenter: Melissa Meador

Discussion: Presented by Melissa Meador

Ms. Meador reported that the Training and Certification Committee (TCC) met on April 1, 2026, and achieved a quorum. There were no action items to bring forward to the Board.

Ms. Meador provided the following informational updates:

- The Education Coordinator (EC) Level I and Level II framework, regarding a potential tiered Education Coordinator model, has been forwarded to the TCC TPAM Workgroup for further vetting and coordination with the Rules and Regulations Committee.
- The June 16–18, 2026, Education Coordinator Institute (ECI) update remains on schedule and is anticipated to be held in Blacksburg, Virginia.
- As discussed during the previous meeting, a workgroup has been established to conduct a comprehensive review of the Education Coordinator Institute (ECI) and the Education Coordinator credentialing process. Chris Croco will serve as the team lead for the workgroup.

Ms. Meador stated that the review will include a full top-to-bottom evaluation of the ECI and EC credentialing system. The workgroup includes broad stakeholder representation, including two members from TCC and one representative from each OEMS region.

Ms. Meador emphasized that the workgroup intends to prioritize an objective and data-driven evaluation process. Recommendations developed by the workgroup will be based on measurable outcomes, statistical analysis, and demonstrated program effectiveness.

The TPAM Workgroup continues its ongoing efforts related to Chapter 32. Ms. Meador noted the importance of forwarding recommendations to the Rules and Regulations Committee as soon as possible to support completion of the Chapter 32 draft in preparation for the August meeting. Larry Oliver continues to serve as the TCC TPAM Workgroup lead.

Ms. Meador further reported that TCC is currently developing its committee charter. A first review of the draft charter occurred during the April 1 meeting; however, additional revisions were identified prior to final review. The committee anticipates finalizing the charter during its July meeting.

Ms. Meador additionally requested clarification from the Board and OEMS staff regarding whether committee charters require formal EMS Advisory Board approval or whether approval remains solely at the committee level.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up:

- Continue TCC workgroup review of the EC credentialing framework.
- Continue coordination with the Rules and Regulations Committee regarding Chapter 32 revisions.
- Finalize the TCC committee charter at the July 2026 meeting.
- Obtain clarification regarding charter approval requirements for Advisory Board committees.

Public Comment

Topic: Public Comments

Discussion: The Chair inquired whether there were any public comments.

During public comment, Ms. Connie Moore addressed the Board regarding recent stakeholder discussions associated with a conference services survey reportedly distributed by the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS). Ms. Moore expressed concerns regarding the exploration of a potential statewide symposium initiative during a period of reported financial challenges within OEMS. She referenced existing regional EMS symposiums and educational conferences currently operating throughout the Commonwealth and questioned whether OEMS resources would be better utilized supporting existing regional educational efforts rather than developing an additional statewide event structure.

Ms. Moore further inquired regarding whether public funds had been utilized in connection with the conference services entity associated with the survey.

In response, Mrs. Dunkel clarified that Sladek Group had approached Virginia regarding the possibility of hosting a conference event within the Commonwealth. Mrs. Dunkel stated that, to her knowledge, there was no financial component currently associated with the discussions and explained that OEMS was presently engaged in exploratory conversations to better understand community interest and determine whether and how the agency may participate moving forward.

Recommendation/Action Follow-Up: NA

Business Matters/ Unfinished Business

The Chair asked whether there was any new or unfinished business. It was announced that the proposed amendment to the EMS Advisory Board bylaws concerning Medical Direction Committee provisions had been withdrawn. No further unfinished business was presented.

Next Meeting

Discussion: The next meeting of the EMS Advisory Board is scheduled for Friday, August 7 at 10:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Training Center.

Adjournment

Discussion: A motion to adjourn was made by Melissa Meador and seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Prepared by: Mohamed G. Abbamin, MPA

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