

## MEETING MINUTES

Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC)

Friday, February 23, 2007, 9:07 a.m.-12:13 p.m.

**Call to Order:** Chair Edward M. Racht, MD called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. Members present include: Edward M. Racht, MD; Pete Wolf, EMT-P, Vice Chair; Mike Click, RN; Luis G. Fernandez, MD, FACS; Fredrick N. Hagedorn, MD; Jodie Harbert III, LP; Vance L. Riley, MPA, LP; Shirley Scholz, RN, CCRN, EMT-P; F.E. Shaheen III, EMT-P; Joan Shook, MD; and Ronald Stewart, MD. Members absent: Hector Longoria, Marti VanRavenswaay, and Tivy L. Whitlock.

**Approval of Minutes:** *A motion was made by Edward M. Racht, MD, and seconded by Jodie Harbert III to approve the meeting minutes from November 20, 2006. All council members were in favor; the motion passed.*

**Chair Report:** Dr. Racht welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced that David Lakey MD is the new Department of State Health Service Commissioner. He then began his report with the introduction of the newly-appointed and re-appointed committee members: Air Medical Committee—Stacy Gregory, Dennis Hebner, Robert Phelan MD, Daniel Saltarelli, and Peggy Word; Education Committee: Michael Hay, Lorie Lefevers, Scott Miles, and Lance Villers; EMS Committee: Chris Callsen, Brett Coghlan, Kevin Deramus, Michael Farris, Antonio Garcia, Larry Mitchell, Keven Roles, William Curtis Smith, and Lon Squyres; Injury Prevention Committee: Stephen Hougen MD, Jennifer Northway, Terrence O'Keeffe MD, Claudia Romo, Rohit Sheno MD, and Wayne Dennis; Medical Directors Committee: Richard Bradley MD, Donald Gordon MD, John Griswell MD, Randy Loflin MD, William Moore MD, Paul Sirbaugh DO, and Matthew Young MD; Pediatrics Committee: Kimberly Aaron MD, Craig Huang MD, William Langston, Charles Macias MD, and David Wesson MD; Stroke Committee: Darryl Camp MD, J. Brent Dalley, Robert Knappage, Lise Labiche MD, Warren Porter, Peter Shedden MD, and Beverly Welch; Trauma Systems Committee: Craig Daniel MD, Dennis Dove MD, Jason Martin, Wendi McNabb, Craig Rhyne MD, David Smith MD, and Mark Sparkman MD.

Dr. Racht reminded the newly-appointed committee members to complete the Texas Public Information Act and Open Meetings Act training videos within 90 days of their appointments, and that failure to do so could result in suspension from a committee.

In other business, Dr. Racht discussed the idea of having a council retreat to examine the rules and structure of the GETAC committees and address issues related to possible redundancies. He offered for consideration the development of a survey process similar to the one conducted at the Texas EMS Conference 2006 in Dallas.

Dr. Racht discussed the “Optimal Care of the STEMI Patient: A Comprehensive Statewide Approach” meeting held in Austin on Jan 25-26 that was coordinated by the American Heart Association, the American College of Cardiology and the Texas Medical Association, and he referenced the ongoing forward progress of the National EMS Scope of Practice Model.

Finally, he discussed Gov. Perry’s proposal for a health professions commission that could possibly affect some components of the state EMS regulatory structure. He mentioned that GETAC welcomes all comments and concerns about this proposal and would like to represent all points of view equally and fairly.

**Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Staff Reports:**

Kathryn C. Perkins, Assistant Commissioner for the Division for Regulatory Services, was unable to attend the meeting and her report was given by Steve Janda, director of the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems Coordination (OEMS/TS), who began the report of the Assistant Commissioner with news that a Comprehensive Clinical Management Program (CCMP) and EMS Subscription Plans draft rules would be completed by the next GETAC meeting on May 25, 2007, and will be placed on the next council agenda for a possible vote and from there to the next DSHS Council for consideration.

Mr. Janda reported that numerous bills related to EMS and trauma systems are being followed by DSHS this legislative session, including House Bills 70, 92, 259, 1412, and 1520 and Senate Bills 26, 28, 125, and 570.

He also reported that the remaining GETAC meeting dates in 2007 are May 23-25, 2007; August 22-24, 2007; and November 17-19, 2007, in conjunction with Texas EMS Conference in Houston and stated that Kelly Harrell, manager of the OEMS/TS Stakeholder Information Group and conference coordinator, was accepting proposals for presenters and speakers for this year’s conference until March 15, 2007.

Other items discussed by Mr. Janda included the pediatric trauma facility designation tie to disproportionate share hospital (DSH) funds has been endorsed at two Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) advisory councils and now goes to the HHSC Council itself for consideration on March 29, 2007, and he announced that OEMS/TS has a new website with a new address: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems).

Lastly, he spoke about the National Practitioner Databank and the possibility that this information and a link may be provided on the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems website so certain people or groups can access it.

In response to a question from the council, Mr. Janda responded that approximately \$54 million had accumulated in the Designated Trauma Facility and EMS Account thus far, only about \$31 million of which can be disbursed in April 2007 due to legislatively-mandated constraints.

Maxie Bishop, state EMS director, updated the council about the DSHS memorandum of agreement (MOA) with EMS providers. He thanked the providers that have chosen to participate and encouraged others to apply, and reported that there currently are 88 ground ambulance providers and two air ambulance providers signed up for state missions and/or state facility evacuations. Mr. Bishop also discussed current “gurney car” bills at the Legislature and his recent meeting with State Sen. Carlos Uresti, and stated that he anticipated legislative action on the bills soon, as well as the introduction of another bill.

Mr. Bishop reported National Registry for EMS scores were released recently and compared Texas scores to national scores. The passing rates were as follows:

	Texas	National
First Responders	81%	71%
EMT-Basic	74%	76%
EMT-Intermediate	81%	68%
EMT-Paramedic	59%	59%

Since Texas moved to computerized testing on January 1, scores have been improving in all categories with the exception of EMT-paramedic. This may be because there have not been many established programs that help prepare these students for the National Registry exam, Mr. Bishop said. He also said some students are not applying for the correct exam and that providers should be assisting students in this process to ensure their information is correct.

Linda Jones, program manager of the Environmental Epidemiology and Injury Surveillance Group, reported that Texas EMS/Trauma Registry staff has received its second-year funding for the EMSC projects. Ms. Jones has been working on the revision of rules that is required every four years and did not anticipate any substantive changes. She is hoping to reorganize and consolidate information and databases to improve the process of viewing this information.

**Standing Committee/Task Force Reports:**

**Combined EMS Committee and Air Medical Committee** – EMS Committee Chair Pete Wolf and Air Medical Committee Chair Shirley Scholz reported that the committees discussed EMS subscription draft rule 157.XX and the liability insurance requirements. Both committees agreed to move forward with the draft changes for Title 25 of the Texas Administrative Code, Sections 157.XX, 157.12 and 157.13. Helipad use and landing were also discussed. Mr. Wolf and Ms. Scholz also reported that DSHS legal counsel informed committee members that portions of the draft EMS subscription rule may be in conflict with federal pre-emption laws.

**Air Medical Committee**– Chair Shirley Scholz reported that the committee discussed a letter received by DSHS counsel Don Jansky concerning liability and subscription plans. The committee has considered endorsing that DSHS adopt Commission on Accreditation of Air Medical Services (CAMTS) standards for air ambulance licensing, but is also considering the feasibility of an alternative, state-approved plan with appropriate verbiage. Ms. Scholz also reported that DSHS legal counsel informed committee members that the department is unable to require Commission on the Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS) deemed status as a condition for air ambulance licensure because states are pre-empted from directly or indirectly regulating areas concerning aircraft safety and that portions of the draft EMS subscription rule may be in conflict with federal pre-emption laws.

**EMS Committee** – Chair Pete Wolf reported that the committee was updated on the activities of the Disaster/Emergency Preparedness task force and the Comprehensive Clinical Management Program (CCMP) strike force. The committee also discussed draft changes for Title 25 of Texas Administrative Code, Sections 157.XX, 157.12 and 157.13, as well as bariatric patient transports and the need to increase EMS reimbursements because of growing populations and patient needs. Mr. Wolf stated that the committee had discuss the lack of money appropriated for EMS as an essential service in Texas, and mentioned that Dr Racht and he had visited with an aide to Representative Joe Heflin about this issue. The proposed Health Professions Commission was discussed briefly, but at this point there is no bill formally introduced and thus much is still speculative as to how this could affect Texas EMS. Lastly, Mr. Wolf announced that he had asked Dudley Wait, director of Schertz EMS, to serve as EMS Committee vice chair.

**Education Committee** –Chair Jodie Harbert III reported that the committee looked at the prerequisites for admission into EMS programs at public and private post-secondary schools and discussed various potential ways to improve the process. The committee also looked into the idea of early reviews by DSHS of potential student applicants to assist them in avoiding investing time and financial resources into a profession where they may never be allowed to receive a license by DSHS.

**Injury Prevention** –In the absence of Chair Gary Kesling, PhD, Rick Moore, a member of the Injury Prevention Committee, reported that the committee discussed the Texas Trauma and Emergency Healthcare Coalition and that the Data Informatics and Research Task Force (DIRT) would have its program completed by May.

**Medical Directors** – In the absence of Chair Steve Ellerbe, DO, GETAC Liaison Fred Hagedorn, MD, reported that discussion topics included Stroke Committee draft recommendations for a stroke EMS transport plan, as well as performance measures. It was suggested that the Pediatric and Medical Directors committee members be present when deciding issues for which both committees are asked for input.

**Pediatric Committee** –Chair Joan Shook, MD, reported that there have been several Pediatrics members assigned as liaisons to attend other committee meetings to provide the pediatric perspective as needed. The committee discussed a letter that could be sent to the state’s EMS medical directors with recommendations about pediatric equipment on ambulances. The committee also discussed building closer relationships between school districts and local EMS providers so that they could become informed on issues related to special-needs children.

**Stroke Committee** –Chair Neal Rutledge, MD, reported that the committee discussed the possibility of composing a state stroke care system coordination plan similar to the present-day trauma care system. Another of the committee’s major discussion items related to EMS stroke education.

**Trauma Systems Committee** –Chair Ronald Stewart, MD, reported that an update was provided on the Texas Foundation for EMS/Trauma Care by Jorie Klein, RN. Dr. Stewart also told the committee that Todd Maxson, MD, member of the Trauma Systems Committee and GETAC liaison to the Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council, will be proposing rule changes for the Pediatric Inter-facility Transfer plan after working with Mr. Janda on recommendations.

**Comprehensive Clinical Management Program (CCMP) Strike Force** –Dr. Racht reported that a draft rule will be completed and an invitation has been extended to all committees for any further input or suggestions. The strike force will continue its work once the draft has been provided to it by DSHS.

**EMS and Trauma Regulatory Task Force** –Co-chair Dudley Wait, EMT-P, reported the task force has met twice since the November GETAC meeting and closed the stakeholder polling process that had been started at Texas EMS Conference in November. The task force received approximately 1,100 responses before the polling closed. Mr. Wait stated that the task force’s next meeting was scheduled for March 22, 2007, at the Austin Learning Resource Center.

**Disaster/Emergency Preparedness Task Force**–Jorie Klein reported that the task force will be focusing on improving the EMS Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) contracts with the state. Evacuation plans and strategies also were discussed, along with education training and the importance of attending or setting up classes with this information.

#### **Other Reports/Public Comment on Action Items:**

**DSHS Preparedness Coordination Council** – GETAC liaison Leon Charpentier reported the registration and database for health professionals has been a major discussion item. The next meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2007.

**Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council** – No report available.

**DSHS Hospital Licensing Rules Review Workgroup** – Jim Parisi reported another rules review meeting between DSHS and stakeholders is scheduled for some time in March 2007.

**Texas Foundation for EMS, Trauma, and Acute Care (TETAF)** – Jorie Klein, RN, reported that the foundation met February 20, 2007, and took action on several items. Ms. Klein also reported that 13 of the 22 RACs have registered with the foundation and have paid their dues to participate in voting and discussion items. She also discussed alternate potential funding sources for the foundation, and notified the council that foundation meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month.

**General public comment:**

Public comment was heard on a number of issues, including a request to implement a two-year EMS certification rule instead of the current four-year certification rule; the timeframe for the Stroke Committee recommendations to become effective; the progress of legislation that is relevant to EMS; concern about bills that are not being listed by the committees nor discussed but that are relevant to EMS; and the possibility of using RACs to inform various regions of the state about the statewide STEMI proposal and possible future conference.

**Action Items:**

There were no items presented for action to be taken.

**Future Meeting Dates for 2007:** May 23-25, 2007, August 22-24, 2007, and November 17-19 in Houston, Texas in conjunction with the 2007 EMS Conference.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:13 p.m.