

MEETING MINUTES

Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC)

Friday, March 7, 2003, 10:00 a.m. – 1:25 p.m.

Call To Order: Dr. Ed Racht, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Members present included: Ed Racht, MD; F. E. Shaheen III, EMT-P; Peter Wolf, EMT-P; Maxie Bishop, Jr., LP; Ronny Stewart, MD; John L. Simms; Mario Segura, RN; Gary D. Cheek, RN, EMT; Raymond P. Holloway; Shirley Scholz, RN, CCRN, EMT-P, CMTE; and Kris J. Gillespie. Members absent include: Rebecca Campuzano-Salcido; Joan E. Shook, MD; and Frederick N. Hagedorn, MD.

Approval of Minutes: *A motion was made by Pete Wolf and seconded by Ronny Stewart, MD, to approve meeting minutes from November 24, 2002. All council members were in favor; the motion passed.*

Chair Report: After welcoming everyone, Dr. Ed Racht: announced the new standing committee membership that will start at the May meetings; requested that the committee chairs put the issue of committee membership/terms on their May meeting agendas, stating that the committees might benefit by having specific “seats” and terms of appointment to assure representation and continuity; stated that the GETAC EMS County Provider position is still open; appointed Pete Wolf as Vice Chair for GETAC saying that Mr. Wolf had gone above and beyond his duty on the council and that he would be the best person for the position; thanked the bureau final GETAC Strategic Plan that was mailed out to the Legislators; and stated that budget problems are everywhere and the public perception of EMS/Trauma services is that “we can make splints out of twigs and bandages out of leaves” and that we (EMS/Trauma Systems) will always find a way to make things work.

TDH Staff Reports: Richard Bays, Associate Commissioner for Consumer Health Protection, reported on TDH Legislative Issues; TDH Budget issues for FY03-05; the state Comptroller's recommendations for consolidation of agencies under the Health and Human Services Commission; and the response from the Texas Department of Insurance regarding the Blood Alcohol Content issue.

Kathryn Perkins, Chief, Bureau of Emergency Management (BEM), reported on implementation of National Registry testing, the 2003 Legislative Session, and BEM budget issues.

David Zane, Director, Injury Epidemiology & Surveillance (Injury) Program, discussed staffing changes in his bureau; proposed amendments to reporting rules; regional registry meeting with stakeholders; the status of the TRAC-IT project implementation and training opportunities; Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act issues; website changes; and the 2003 Legislative Session.

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Standing Committee/Task Force Reports:

Pediatrics – Muriel Lanford reported, in the absence of Dr. Shook, that the committee discussed the following: pediatric trauma facility designation and pediatric categorization, including implications for the state/individual hospitals; Regional Advisory Council (RAC) pediatric committees and the concept of the RACs categorizing hospitals as to the pediatric capabilities; plans for an April 16th meeting in Dallas with members of the Trauma Systems Committee; and completion of the mail-out of the American College of Emergency Physicians and the American Academy of Pediatrics', Care of Children in the Emergency Department: Guidelines For Preparedness to all hospital administrators, Emergency Department (ED) Medical Directors, ED Nurse Managers, Trauma Nurse Coordinators, and RACs with a cover letter from Dr. Racht and Dr. Shook.

EMS – Mr. Wolf reported that the committee discussed the following: status of national registry testing implementation; overview of upcoming staff recommendations for revisions to the EMS Provider licensing rule; recent issues that have arisen regarding TDH holding a "blanket" statewide Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) certificate of waiver for all ambulances, which will likely require TDH to stop holding such a waiver when it expires in about two years; draft policy clarifying the requirement that written EMS run sheets should be left at a receiving facility when the patient is delivered - the committee asked that the words "when operationally feasible: be added to this policy before it is finalized; the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) requirement that Registered Nurses (RNs) (and other health care professionals) seeking paramedic certification must have basic certification first; and the statewide Trauma and Emergency Services Coalition being facilitated by the Texas Hospital Association - Mr. Wolf asked Leon Charpentier to become involved in this Coalition and keep the Committee informed of its activities; certified/licensed EMS personnel working in a hospital setting - the Committee asked BEM to post the current document to the EMS Committee e-list.

Education – Mr. Bishop reported that the committee discussed the following: status of national registry testing implementation; the final policy entitled, "Clinical Substitution for EMT Basic Courses" including some comments from stakeholders; the NREMT requirement the RNs (and other health care professionals) seeking paramedic certification must have basic certification first; and the EMT-I curriculum.

Injury Prevention - Mr. Segura reported that the committee discussed the following: final approval of the Injury Prevention Resource Manual - will be posted on BEM website; approval of a draft Injury Prevention strategic plan - will be posted on BEM website for comments; planning for injury prevention activities at the 2003 Texas EMS Conference; and a request to GETAC to appoint an ad hoc committee/task force for data collection/informatics and a GETAC liaison to the Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (CODES) Advisory Committee.

Medical Directors – Dr. John Ansohn, reported, in the absence of Dr. Fred Hagedorn, that the Committee discussed the following: initial discussions on identifying high priority clinical areas; working with Texas Council of Emergency Physicians on a Texas Medical Director course; Medical Director Peer review and conflict resolution; and the concept of standard run sheets.

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Trauma Systems – Dr. Ronny Stewart reported that the committee discussed the following: the current challenges facing the Texas EMS/Trauma System, particularly in regards to specialty physician coverage of the ED; the TDH proposal to use the Tertiary Care Fund to partially meet the Governor's request for 2003 budget reductions; Senate Bill (SB)178 which would divert the unclaimed lottery monies to the Health and Human Services Commission, effectively eliminating the Tertiary Care fund beginning 9/1/04; SB 426 which would create a new RAC out of the 13 county Houston Galveston Area Council Of Governments; the Pediatric Committee's request for a joint meeting with Trauma Systems Committee on 4/16/03 at Dallas Love Field; and the need for a liaison to the Pediatric Committee - Dr. Stewart appointed Dr. Maxson as the liaison. The committee did not have time to address the current draft of the RAC essential criteria document; the draft of a RAC "survey" process; or the draft policy entitled, "Trauma Facilities: Capabilities and Role of Texas General (Level III) Trauma Facilities," and asked staff to post these documents to stakeholder e-lists for input.

Rural Task Force Report – Mr. Wolf reported the Task Force discussed the following: possible rural funding programs from Texas Department of Transportation (TxDot); future dialogue between the Task Force and the RAC Chairs; and re-focusing the Task Force to the concept of developing a white paper in an effort to secure a large funding stream (grant/appropriation).

Air Medical Task Force Report – Mrs. Scholtz reported the Task Force discussed the following: the charge of the Task Force - they agreed that it is to deal with patient "transport" not "care" criteria and the focus is scene response only, not transfers; communications between Task Force members - the members agreed to establish a group e-list; and review of the current RAC protocols.

Discussion of Reports/ Public Comment on Action Items: GETAC members discussed the staff, Committee, and Task Force reports. Public comment was heard on the above issues.

Action Items:

A motion was made by Ronny Stewart, MD, and seconded by Maxie Bishop that GETAC advise Governor Rick Perry that GETAC opposes the reduction or elimination of the Tertiary Care Fund that utilizes unclaimed lottery proceeds to reimburse a part of uncompensated hospital out-of-county tertiary and stabilization care. The motion passed unanimously. Dr. Stewart will draft the letter and forward it out to GETAC members for review.

A motion was made by Ronny Stewart, MD, and seconded by Maxie Bishop that GETAC advise Governor Rick Perry that GETAC recognizes the critical nature of the problems in the Houston/Galveston area with respect to EMS and trauma care, however, GETAC feels that SB-426 is threatening to the current Texas EMS/Trauma System as defined in the strategic plan for Texas, that GETAC would instead suggest a

unified solution throughout the state, and that GETAC members should establish a dialogue with the Houston Galveston Area Council of Governments regarding SB-426. The motion passed unanimously. Dr. Ronny Stewart will draft the letter and forward it out to GETAC members for review.

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A motion was made by Ronny Stewart, MD, and seconded by Gary Cheek to appoint a Task Force to study the issue of physician specialty call coverage for the emergency department, identify the problems and recommend solutions. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mario Segura and seconded by F E Shaheen to activate the Research Task Force and to include the elements of data collection and informatics in the charge of that committee. The Task Force will be comprised of members from each GETAC Standing Committee. The motion passed unanimously. Dr. Racht appointed Robert Folden, EdD, as the Leader of the Task Force. Dr. Racht asked the general membership for a volunteer to be the representative liaison on the CODES Advisory Committee.

A motion was made by Ed Racht, MD, and seconded by Ronny Stewart, MD, to recommend that BEM allow continuing education to be earned by EMS certificants/licenses for review of "A Strategic Plan for the EMS/Trauma System." The motion passed unanimously. BEM staff will review this possibility and notify GETAC of its feasibility.

General Public Comment: Public comment was heard on a number of issues.

Meeting Dates for 2003, May 22nd & 23rd, August 28th & 29th, and November 22nd & 23rd were announced.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.