

**Legislation and Planning Committee
Embassy Suites Hotel
Richmond, VA
August 2, 2024
8:30 a.m.**

Members Present:	Members Absent:	OEMS Staff:	Others:
Gary Samuels (Chair, VPFF)	Bryan Rush (VML) excused	Scott Winston	James Reynolds (EMS Adv. Board member)
Beth Adams (Vice Chair, NVEMS Council)	Beth Matish (VHHA)	Mohamed Abbamin	David Long (TEMS, Leg. & Planning, VEMA)
Byron Andrews (VSFF)	Jeff Meyer (VAGEMSA)		John Craig (SARS/VAVRS)
Steve Higgins (VAA)			Kim Craig (VAVRS)
Michael Player (VFCA)			Michelle Ludeman (NVEMS Council)
Gary Dalton (VAVRS)			Peppy Winchel (TJEMS)
Ed Rhodes (At-Large)			Stephen Simon (WVEMS)

Topic/Subject	Discussion	Recommendations, Action/Follow-up; Responsible Person
I. Welcome and Introductions	Chair Gary Samuels called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.	Beth Adams motioned to accept proposed agenda for today's meeting. Gary Dalton seconded. Committee unanimously approved proposed agenda.
II. Review and Approval of May 3, 2024 meeting minutes	The minutes from the May 3, 2024 meeting were reviewed by the Legislative and Planning Committee members.	Byron Andrews motioned to accept draft minutes from May 3, 2024 meeting of the L&P Committee. Seconded by Beth Adams. Committee members unanimously approved May 3, 2024 meeting minutes. Ed Rhodes abstained from vote.

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III. OEMS Update – (OEMS Staff)	<p>Quarterly report to the state EMS Advisory Board was distributed by email to members of the committee.</p> <p>Fitch and Associates Updates – No report. Fitch and Associates are meeting with VDH leadership to review the draft report and it is anticipated to be completed and released to the public sometime in August 2024.</p> <p>OEMS Next Steps Workgroup – Work Group (WG) last met on June 6, 2024 at ODEMSA. Fitch and Associates provided the Work Group with an overview of the quantitative and qualitative survey. Survey designed to solicit what people need from OEMS and regional EMS Councils.</p> <p>441 out of 940 surveys sent out were returned. 355 responses from 567 EMS agencies. 147 volunteer EMS agencies, 83 locality FD based career/paid and volunteer EMS agencies responded.</p> <p>Essential functions, qualities, priorities of OEMS were identified. Design for the future of EMS, draft critical findings from meetings with Fitch, next steps and timelines were discussed.</p> <p>Beth Adams provided a high-level overview of the last WG meeting. Once the report is finished, Fitch & Associates will share with the Next Steps Work Group and the state EMS Advisory Board.</p>	
IV. State EMS Plan	<p>The final edited draft (2023-2025) of the state EMS Plan ...\\State EMS Plan\\State EMS Plan update for 2023\\FINAL DRAFT 2023-2025 State EMS Plan Draft.docx was approved by the state EMS Advisory Board meeting on November 18, 2022. The state EMS Plan was scheduled to be placed on the agenda for the September 14, 2023 Board of Health meeting, but was withdrawn due to scheduling conflicts and more pressing business of the Board.</p> <p>It has subsequently been decided that because so many changes have occurred since the Board approved the state EMS Plan in November 2022 that it would not be sent forward for approval by the BoH. An interim strategy paper has been developed until the future organizational structure and funding for the Office of EMS is determined. The Plan in its current form is not sustainable due to the current budget restrictions facing the Office of EMS.</p> <p>This high-level strategy paper ...\\State EMS Plan\\2024 OEMS Strategic Work Plan\\DRAFT - OEMS Strategic Work Plan.docx provides the framework to be used to redevelop the state EMS Plan once the future of the Office of EMS and the EMS system in Virginia is decided. The mission of VDH, Office of EMS is to “Support the essential functions of public health through a coordinated, people centered Emergency Medical Care system for the Commonwealth of Virginia.” The vision is to “Support a</p>	

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	<p>organizations, allow them to accept funds to support the medication kits systems that are not available to local governments for the same purpose. All Regional EMS Councils have or are currently engaged in discussions with their EMS agencies to determine how best to use the new options.</p> <p>At the July 2024 Workgroup meeting, long awaited guidance was received from the DEA's representative in Virginia, Mr. Justin Wood. Mr. Wood, in response to questions stated that he recognized the complexity of consistent messaging from various DEA offices in Virginia (NOVA, Norfolk, Richmond and Roanoke). He stated that he met with the supervisors from these offices on June 28, 2024, and provided guidance to them and their registration program specialists that he developed based on Title 21 USC. He told the supervisors to expect applications from EMS agencies and Regional EMS Councils. He stated that he did not anticipate any concerns with DEA issuing a registration to a Regional EMS Council if the state has issued a CSR. The DEA's guidance was provided to the workgroup and has since been added to the Medication Kit Transition resources and tools available on the Regional EMS Councils and OEMS websites.</p> <p>As of July 10, 2024, the last time the figures were checked, there were 125 active CSR holders designated as EMS, 25 current active CSRs designated as EMS 1:1 Exchange, and 52 pending applications. While that number may seem small, considering that so many locality and regional solutions involve hub and spoke models, we must suspect that many of the current active or pending EMS CSR's represent multiple licensed EMS agencies.</p> <p>That is the conclusion of my report. I am available to answer questions.</p>	
VI. 2024 Legislative Bills	<p>HB 1259, SB 594. EMS personnel; career fatigue and wellness program. Directs the Department of Health to convene a work group to study the viability of establishing or contracting for a professional program for emergency medical services personnel, both professional and volunteer, that addresses career fatigue and wellness, including the costs of such program and recommendations for funding.</p> <p>HB 1259 and SB 594 were both continued to 2025 by their respective committees of origin.</p> <p>Scott Winston reported that the Medical Society of VA (MSV) reached out to him (Clark Barrineau) after the 2025 GA session to continue discussion, explore opportunities, and develop strategies to address career fatigue and create wellness programs to assist EMS and fire personnel. Adding EMS providers to Virginia's SafeHaven program (https://safehavenhealth.org/) has been identified as a viable option.</p> <p>On July 15, 2024, representatives from MSV (Clark Barrineau, Carolyn McCrea, and Mary Beth McIntire) met with Scott Winston, Karen Owens, and Kevin Dillard at OEMS. The group discussed the need to</p>	

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	<p>provide healthcare professionals, including Fire and EMS personnel, protection and privileged communications during counseling sessions, exemptions from mandatory reporting requirements, and address the culture of fear and silence. It was noted, localities generally have EAP programs for their employees, firefighters that are members of the IAFF can utilize services provided; however, others do not have anywhere to turn. SafeHaven offers members coaching services, professional counseling, concierge services, financial well-being and budgeting assistance, etc. MSV reported that 50% of those with coverage utilized the program at least once each year. Individual cost for the program is \$395. Lower per person, per month costs based on anticipated usage can be worked out for larger groups like hospitals, associations, etc. Some individuals use SafeHaven to replace or supplement their existing EAP services.</p> <p>The group decided a good first step would be to educate and inform the EMS community about the SafeHaven program. Placing SafeHaven presentations on the agendas for upcoming EMS Provider Health and Safety and Workforce Development Committee meetings, followed by a presentation to the full state EMS Advisory Board would help introduce the program and determine if there is sufficient interest to sustain the program for EMS and Fire. Representatives from MSV provided a presentation at the August 2nd meeting of the EMS Provider Health and Safety Committee of the state EMS Advisory Board.</p> <p>HB 6001 (2024)</p> <p>During the 2024 Special Session of the GA, HB 6001 was approved, and funding provided to form a workgroup in collaboration with VDFP and Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security to complete a review and assessment of the sufficiency of fire and EMS funding in the Commonwealth.</p> <p>Initial efforts to establish and fund a work group were proposed during the 2023 session of the GA. HB 2175 was passed; however, no funding was allocated to conduct a study. Key stakeholder groups worked collaboratively to conduct a study and present their findings to the Sec. of PS and Homeland Security. The findings in this report were received but no action was taken on the recommendations in this report.</p> <p>HB 6001 is a follow-up to this initial effort to study the sufficiency of fire and EMS funding in the Commonwealth.</p> <p>HB 2175 (2023)</p> <p><i>§ 1. That the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security (the Secretary) shall establish a work group composed of representatives from the Department of Fire Programs, the Department of Planning and Budget, the Office of Emergency Medical Services, the Virginia Fire Services Council, Virginia's Regional</i></p>	

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	<p><i>EMS Councils, the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations, the House Committee on Appropriations, and such other stakeholders as the Secretary deems appropriate to study existing fire service needs, analyze sustainability of current funding, and review alternative funding models from other states. In conducting its study, the work group may hire an outside consultant and shall create a needs assessment survey that analyzes existing fire service needs, the sustainability of current funding, any gaps in current funding, how other states fund fire and EMS services, and best practices from other states. The Secretary shall report the work group's findings and any recommendations to the Chairmen of the House Committee on General Laws and the Senate Committee on General Laws and Technology on or before October 1, 2023.</i></p> <hr/> <p>HB 1309 (2024)</p> <p>During the 2024 session of the GA, HB1309 was introduced, passed, and approved by the Governor. This section 1 bill directs the state EMS Advisory Board, in consultation with the Board of Veterinary Medicine, to develop guidelines and guidance for EMS agencies for the provision of emergency treatment and transport of fire, police and search and rescue dogs (working dogs) injured in the line of duty.</p> <p>The committee agreed that a recommendation to the Chair of the state EMS Advisory Board is necessary to request the formation of a task force to review and develop guidelines for the transportation of “working dogs” in EMS vehicles to a veterinary care facility equipped to provide emergency treatment to such dogs.</p> <p>James Reynolds, Division Chief of EMS, City of Chesapeake FD, indicated there are several members of his department that are knowledgeable about “working dogs” and will be happy to assist, if requested.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CHAPTER 550 <i>An Act to have the State Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board develop guidelines and guidance for the provision of emergency treatment of fire, police, and search and rescue dogs.</i> [H 1309] Approved April 5, 2024</p> <p>Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:</p> <p>1. § 1. <i>That the State Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board shall, in consultation with the Board of Veterinary Medicine, develop guidelines and guidance for the provision of emergency treatment of fire, police, and search and rescue dogs injured in the line of duty and the transportation of such dogs by an</i></p>	<p>The committee agreed that the Chair of the L&P committee recommend to the Chair of the state EMS Advisory Board the formation of a task force to review and develop guidelines, in consultation with the Board of Veterinary Medicine, for the transportation of “working dogs” in EMS vehicles to a veterinary care facility equipped to provide emergency treatment to such dogs. Division Chief Reynolds should be consulted for assistance.</p>

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	<i>emergency medical services vehicle to a veterinary care facility equipped to provide emergency treatment to such dog.</i>	
VII. Unfinished Business	<p>At the August 4, 2023, meeting of the Legislative and Planning Committee, a work group of subject matter experts was formed to help the Medical Direction Committee and their nomenclature workgroups. Jeff Meyer, David Long, James Reynolds, Ed Rhodes, and Beth Adams offered to assist the Medical Direction Committee with the work of their groups looking to clarify the role of EMS Physicians, Physician Assistants, Nurse Practitioners and their involvement with EMS agencies and its impact on the EMS Regulations.</p> <p>Debbie Akers, Accreditation, Certification and Education Division Manager at OEMS will be reaching out to these folks to set up some meeting times to meet prior to the end of CY 2024.</p>	<p>Debbie Akers, Accreditation, Certification and Education Division Manager at OEMS will be reaching out to these folks to set up some time to meet prior to the end of CY 2024.</p>
IX. New Business	<p>Review of Committee Officers and Membership</p> <p>A recording secretary was elected by unanimous vote of the committee.</p> <p>Mr. David Long shared information about Plaud Note, an AI voice recorder for transcribing and summarizing meeting minutes.</p> <p>PLAUD NOTE, the GPT-4o Powered AI Voice Recorder: From recording to transcribing and summarizing, PLAUD AI takes care of it all. Leveraging Open AI's Whisper, PLAUD NOTE delivers highly accurate voice-to-text in 59 languages. Here's a link to their website: https://www.plaud.ai/</p> <p>The committee also discussed the meeting recording features of OneNote and TEAMS.</p> <p>Virtual Meeting Policy</p> <p>The committee discussed remote participation and all virtual meeting options for the Legislative and Planning Committee. Copies of the "Policy for The Remote Participation of Members" and "Policy for All-Virtual Public Meeting Policy" were sent to members of the committee by email. These policies were adopted by the state EMS Advisory Board at their May 5, 2023 meeting.</p>	<p>The Committee unanimously accepted the offer by Mr. Gary Dalton to serve as the recording secretary for the L&P Committee.</p> <p>The committee acknowledged virtual remote participation and all-virtual public meeting policies approved the state EMS Advisory Board. Members of the committee agree that these policies should be utilized, when necessary.</p>

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	<p>Representation on the state EMS Advisory Board</p> <p>It has been noted, potentially there could be a large turn-over in the members of the state EMS Advisory Board when considering the number of members eligible for reappointment that may not be reappointed, and members that are not eligible for another three (3) year term on the Board. According to the Secretary of the Commonwealth website, up to eighteen (18) members of the twenty-eight (28) member board could be replaced at one-time.</p> <p>To avoid the loss of institutional knowledge and the disruption to the board that occurs when a large number of members are replaced at one time, the committee discussed strategies and options to allow the Secretary of the Commonwealth to extend terms of board members, as needed.</p> <p>Michael Player thanked Mr. Gary Samuels for his service as Chair of the Legislative and Planning Committee. The members of the committee all thanked Mr. Samuels for his service.</p>	<p>The committee agreed that the Chair of the L&P Committee should report to the Board, concerns related to a large, simultaneous turn-over in membership of the Board. Motion was agreed to by Michael Player and seconded by Beth Adams.</p>
X. Public Comment	There was no public comment.	
XI. Next Meeting	The next meeting will be on Friday, November 15, 2024, at 8:30 AM at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Richmond, VA.	
XII. Adjourn	A motion was made by Ed Rhodes and seconded by Beth Adams to adjourn the meeting. The committee approved. Chair Gary Samuels adjourned the meeting at 9:28 am.	Chair Gary Samuels adjourned the meeting at 9:28 am.