



EMPDWG Meeting Notes

Tuesday, October 29 – Wednesday, October 30, 2019

TX A&M Hotel and Conference Center

177 Joe Routh Blvd, College Station, TX 77840

Attendees

| | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Irish Hancock Arlington OEM | Robert Havens Port Arthur | Steve Rosa Brazoria County | Billy Delgado Corpus Christi OEM |
| Frank Patterson McClennan CC | Carrie Reyes Plano | Dede McEachern TDLR | Juan Ortiz Austin HSEM |
| Jeff Kelley Comal County | Francisco Sanchez Harris County | Chris Medina DSHS | Andy Cardiel New Braunfels |
| Maribel Martinez-Mejia Fort Worth OEM | Emily Nolte PRPC | Bryce Bencivengo Austin HSEM | Suzannah Jones TDEM |
| Gary Webb University North Texas | Ricardo Saldana Hidalgo County | Mark Sloan Harris County | Eric Shuey TDEM |
| Evelyn Njuguna Texas Municipal League | David McCurdy Tarrant County | Aurora Flores TX Assoc of Counties | Kyle Jones TDEM |
| Gabriela Stermolle TDEM | Jay Hall TDEM | E. Manny Magos TDEM | William Sederholm TDEM |
| Christopher Perkins Houston | | | |

Meeting Summary

- EMPDWG met from 1300/Tues/Oct 29 – 1100/Wed/Oct 30
- Last meeting was held on Sep 24 – 25, 2019

1. Introductions
2. Review/approval of previous meeting notes
3. EM Issues/Concerns/Feedback shared with EMPD Members
 - Irish mtg with TARC in Feb in Austin. Would like recommendation ready by April 2020. TAC, TML
 - Saldana concern: Tax cuts, budget cuts, and an unfunded mandate.
 - Irish: Concerns will be a standing agenda item.
4. Discussion Items:
 - a. EMPD Mission Statement approval updated
 - b. EMAT survey results - Francisco
 - EMAT has around 500 members, there were around 135 survey results, seeking open ended feedback. They like professionalism of EMCs in general. [Goes through slides sequentially.]: Credentialing as less qualified than licensed...licensed baseline based on LE and FF qualifications...
 - Irish: Would like to use EMAT again before going public for comments and outreach can occur at EMAT in Feb...
 - Tier system is preferred, proving qualifications up the chain...
 - Would like to explore how to get broader input such as via EMAT. Francisco:

Qualifications applied to local and/or state question...local and state was at 97.78...

That matches the bills...Were different types of EMs considered?

Slide 8: Discussion—breadth and depth of knowledge...

Slide 9: Majority in favor of salary increase.

Slide 10: Required for elected officials...80+% said yes...

Irish: Covering this in agenda item E.

Slide 11 re: financial costs...explanation of differences.

Slide 12: Existing certifications...

Slide 13: Years in public safety.

Slide 14: re: CEM or TEM..

193 have CEM, 87 TEM, 17 AEM.

Training vs experience was a concern.

Slide 15: Experience in declared disasters.

Slide 16: Formal education level.

Slide 17: Hours in training/year...type of training wasn't specified.

Slide 18: Training types.

"Frequently, local and free" has been heard often. Member used as an example, their funding was slashed which is why they aren't present...travel and \$\$ for on-site training is prohibitive...

Slide 19: Outside contributions...

Would like to have another survey in spite of upcoming holidays.

c. Licensing vs Credentialing

Licensed Peace Officers...firefighters aren't licensed but are certified...Licensed paramedics vs certified, the difference is that one has a degree.

Discussed it and decided to call it qualifications. We need to meet the level of what the bills call for.

Licensing raises a flag and argument and conclusion. TDEM needs to acknowledge that folks have met criteria of their position. Ditch "licensing" and leave it to the legislature. Argument is on the defensive for licensing vs the side for credentialing.

What's the issue w/ licensing?

Responses include funding/money, time, liability,

Licensing is important, it's required vs voluntary. Is it needed or required?

Licensing and credentialing both have agencies that require funding and adherence to policy.

Those in favor of licensing are those who have already done it. Rural and civilian EMs are the ones against it. This group gives TDEM ammo to take to legislature. We can also avoid this discussion and leave it to the licensing experts.

It's up to agencies to ask for appropriations or absorb these costs.

We're supposed to provide suggestions for what qualifies people, a framework for training. Let them figure out.

Bills say "credentialing," state called it "licensing."

Have heard this for 25 years. We only need to provide a baby steps suggestion. Let legislature do more. We only need to look at minimum qualifications to do job. It's a framework for where to start. Moves/Suggest tabling this topic discussion and focus on recommended qualifications at a jurisdictional level.

Discussion: Credentialing = accomplishment...use dictionary definition...
Suggest tabling topic, we'll come back to this, changing name of group was to get away from this topic...

Let's leave this, get to main topics and argue this at the end. Motion is seconded.

Table discussion and carry on with qualifications. TML opposes, rest are in favor.

Tabling is fine but we need to define terms for sake of the bill...

Discussion: The bill says credentials, not credentialing (bill 2305), recommendation section of bill mentions credentialing.

Credentials = qualification, achievement, or personal quality or aspect of person's background typically when used to show that they're suitable to be an Emergency Manager in state of text.

Chp 418 includes handling of disasters and incidents.

d. Current EMPD recommendations v1

1500: Prerequisite training paper

Levels of basic, intermediate, advanced. 147 is signed by local official, years of service, basic level can be done within 12 months. Identifying core capabilities and the classes associated with it. Much of training is national in scope so the goal is to make it focused for TX.

Member discussed w/ staff, they thought recovery was a missing component...

Recovery is a core capability

Discussion: Basic is a good start...Core courses do touch on recovery, the challenge is being asked to review required training courses for recommendation...

The extra 8 hours was because not all parts of Texas need the same training... TCOLE is on 2 year calendar. Firefighters have specialty trainings. EMS is a 4 year requirement with different CE requirements.

Discussion: The assignment of EMs without credentials...

We're now in the IA business.

This was discussed at the last meeting. In favor of category bucket list, we wanted to identify 5-6 courses for year 1.

To achieve 40 hours in basic "such as" to be reviewed by TDEM annually"

There's an online basic course for recovery by TEEX. The 480 and 580, prerequisite is online recovery course. It came from the need for PA at the time. It'll probably expand to IA in the future due to needs.

Member suggests adding appendix that covers definitions.

Recovery has different aspects. Recovery bucket needs different lists, ie., housing recovery.

Don't allow simple checking of box. Understanding of process is the key. Path of least resistance won't further knowledge. Recommendation is for meeting minimum classes, topics from buckets we've discussed. Course numbers will change.

Who owns this?

Creating new BASIC list... subcommittee discussed many other core courses, anecdotal stories shared by group members.

Discussion: Letters of declaration, 12 months...courses not offered enough but there's enough demand it, TDEM requests funding and the courses are offered.

Look at fewer qualifications for populations under certain amount, what is someone who's between prerequisites and end of 1st year?

Disasters happen whenever, wherever, and lack of knowledge isn't acceptable.

We wouldn't have this conversation in the arena of firefighting and law enforcement, we can't get into weeds of nuances of rural vs metro...

We need to create a standard...

We're looking for a starting point, the legislature will do what it will with it.

We're creating a transcript that can be turned into an agency and agency can say you meet the credentials to be an EM. Look at topics and then task TDEM with the courses that address the topics.

Public information added to BASIC list...

Last meeting covered specifics, this meeting should be about broad topics...

Need to know what classes exist for these topics (Paul)...

The course numbers might be different but the topics are still offered. Just remove the numbers.

Now looking at prerequisite chart and hours of experience + education...

Change hours of 262 and 417 to 200 and 400.

Years of credit and equivalencies. 2, 4, 6, 8, ie. a Bachelors is 4 yrs credit of Hours

How does TEM and CEM equate?

150 hours.

That undersells the value of TEM/CEM.

Need to be careful with the TEM/CEM, don't want to give too many hours.

We're giving 150 hrs of credit for TEM/CEM in addition to coursework done, which puts them over 300 hours. The chart gives 150 hours credit for the 300 hours done.

CEM/TEM means 150 hours for free.

200 hours is too much.

Would prefer a blanket distinction instead of specific credentials such as CEM/TEM. What's another way to call this?

Tries to come up with a name but it's too long.

Need to be careful of double dipping.

PhD gives 8 years but is not specific to field like TEM or CEM, but TEM CEM needs to be acknowledged.

We're in the weeds and there are still other credentials we haven't mentioned.

Limit the number of hours you could get, you only get one number, not 150 added to something else.

What's wrong with leaving it at 150 hours? Legislature could sink this anyway.

Our job is training requirements or qualifications and to provide a recommendation. Why are we getting stuck on these requirements? If you've done all the work, submit the #s and it's evaluated.

the experience of CEM/TEM is a value to the idea of "management" that goes beyond the educational path.

We're arguing about something that doesn't exist. People chasing intermediate or advanced are overachievers like the ones in this room. Basic firefighters and law enforcement at rural levels remain basic.

Moves that topic be tabled. Seconded.

Discussion: This was covered at the last meeting. Motion moves.

e. Training requirements for Elected Officials

This is a topic from Judge Sylvia. It's a recommendation beyond current law.

What's current law?

3 hours within 180 days.

What is he recommending to group?

418 chief judge is EMC or he can designate.

He gets that and takes the 3 hour course.

What would reaction be if requiring judges to get to Basic level?

most elected officials are unaware of these changes. They don't know these requirements until they're elected.

Let me take this back to Judge Sylvia. Move to tabled it until after speaking with Sylvia. We'll discuss at TEMAC.

Discussion about which elected officials have taken the 3 hour course: Most say their officials haven't. Austin City managers have taken it.

f. Expanding TDEM-147

Once you're on 147, you must have basic level.

What's average age of people listed on a 147?

This captures years of experience for the agenda.

Although experienced, still have to get the training.

Should be at basic level to be on 147.

All the law says is that it needs to be signed by Jan 1.

g. EM appointment/Oath of Office discussion

Would like an oath for elevating the office of EM. [TML Oath pdf displayed on screen.]

General and home rules may be different city to city, am not familiar with how others do it.

EMs must apply to city in Corpus. Swearing in doesn't seem important.

Anecdotal example about deposition that asked about oath of office.

This group needs stay on task and don't open this box. Each jurisdiction can decide how they appoint.

Can see how this is outside this task.

We took oath for my position as EM as appointed official. Depends on how county/city lawyers interpret law.

Fort Worth has oath of office.

h. Core EM Program recommendation

A subcommittee met a month ago, what would be considered the minimum.

[Word doc Sub-Committee Recommendation v3 shown.]

Identify the EOC. The back of pickup truck is not an EOC, it's an ICT. An EOC is thought of as a room situation. FEMA's definition of an EOC is different from most of Texas' versions.

Nothing specifies what the EOC has to be. A place for coordination can happen anywhere.

It's up to the local jurisdiction.

Some places have their EOC in a different place every time.

What's better verbiage than EOC?

Police departments and fire departments tend to coordinate in different places.

"Gabby: How many don't have a plan?

Gabby: Around 50

Jay Hall: In my region, we have 5 out of 70.

What does it hurt to make the recommendation for a point of coordination?

[Instructs clerk to add line "G" to v3.] Uses FEMA region 6 as an example: 5 states, having basic plans, makes one eligible for funds,

Discussion: These are basics.

Consider individual tiers, would it work here?

It was discussed but settled on letting it occur in future.

Do we want to go down this path?

A sustainability system needs to be in place and these steps are necessary for that. Technology changes and that should be removed.

Member agrees about technology. The items identified should remain. Day 1, a jurisdiction needs to be able to carry out these points.

We don't need to create the ultimate EM plan. These points should be the assumptions for any plan.

..."Jay: How many jurisdictions don't need these points?"

Jay: Not many. There are between 5 - 10.

This is a programmatic issue and we should get back to our base task.

Are we tabling this?

These are core things that can be incorporated into the basic training, this is a roadmap.

Incorporate this into the basic training plan.

Motion to incorporate this into the basic training plan.

The tech issue is still with us, though. Motion has already happened.

Amend motion to adopt this as tech neutral,

V3 is updated.

i. EMPD WG slide presentation discussion

Trying to use standard language about what EMPD is doing. REM group in North Texas is on board. Aiming for December.

Bryce B. is aiming for high level language.

All are recommendations, basic is required, based on hours of training, education, individual certifications, Texas-specific, shared mission statement, looking at qualifications, CE, applies to those on 147 (member suggests grandfathering in those already on 147s), there will be a webpage which include mission statement, members and contact info, ability to contact entire group, approved documents, (member: include mission areas), minutes, public meetings with various groups (TARC, REM, etc), draft docs for comment, future meetings, timeline for reaching recommendation for 2305 and 6.

Bryce: Needs to know audience.

j. TDEM EMPD WG recommendation timeline

We have 12 months. We have a recommendation for public comment in April 2020, prior to TEMC in May. Open comment is for 60 days, closing in June.

Monthly meetings will be scheduled from May until October, will review input, only constructive input.

[Slide of work group timeline is shown.]

What format is the recommendation going to be in? Whitepaper? Statutory

language? White paper concept type massaged into statutory language could reverse what we're doing. It will take more time and additional help, such as legal. Best to go in with finished product, ready for adoption.

Question to TML: "What are those suggestions who responds?" Answer: "People who had no input are usually first to contest recommendations."

Need to contact Nim for staff support for statutory document to be approved for submittal.

Will ask Judge Sylvia to ask Chief Kidd to help translate into statutory language. Asked TML about white paper submission.

TML: Lobby it, get buy-in prior to session, around July/August.

Motion: subcommittee to meet and write up paper/statutory (after discussion with judge).

Discussion: our job isn't to gain approval, only to recommend. Let politics be politics.

Amend motion: Subcommittee will meet and write up recommendation.

Motion passes.

Back to timeline...

It was a 1st draft.

Open up comment period to April 15, one month prior to TEMC.

Need to do at least one brief out at TEMC.

What is Chief Kidd going to say at opening session? Predicts it will be discussed.

Jay hall: The subject will come up so address it first. Criticism and praise will come either way. The more it's presented, in smaller groups, the better it will be.

PowerPoint is the thing to use.

We need to get something out so conspiracy theorists don't go out of control. Should we do a soft rollout at EMAT? To get a feel for how well it's received or if it's a flop?

TEMAC is for briefing out, not a working meeting. Take feedback but no getting into weeds like we're doing now.

Not advocating a working meeting for TEMAC.

Updating EMPD timeline...

Another meeting in 2019 (not TEMAC which is only a brief-out)...December 3-4 or 10-11 (both Tues Wed) is proposed. December 3-4 is preferred, Manny will check availability in Austin.

Motion to accept timeline. Seconded and passes.

Get to Bryce for PP.

k. TDEM EMPD WG webpage

Is there a limited number of characters in the word blocks?

[Manny does walk through]

Add project timeline instead of schedule

Need to solidify committee members.

Discussion about open meetings but with no input from audience vs closed meetings & inviting conspiracy theories.

Open meetings but with disclaimer that no comment is allowed.

Change "Meeting Agendas" to "Previous Meeting Agendas."

Post upcoming agenda about a week out.

Irish would like website to coincide with Bryce's PowerPoint.

I. TEMAC Meeting Brief-out (1415 – 1530/Wed/Nov 13)

Discuss meetings that have been held, summary of topic of basic levels, years of service, hours of training, still defining terms, the timeline...
The introductions with the years of service is worthy.
Use talking points used for PowerPoint.

m. EMPD WG Membership

This is the 5th meeting and the distribution list has grown to 80+. Yet some people have not attended any meetings. Request to group to cut people who have attended no meetings.

Change to "Participating Members Roster."

Motion: 2 lists – one for participating members (working group), one for full list of all invited agencies (public).

Webpage would include the full invited list. Including those who just recently attended. Only name & agency, not contact info. Motion passes.

Recommend a FAQ section. Working group needs to assemble FAQ, get agreement/feedback from group, website will update FAQ page._

6. Open Discussion

Consider adding CR code for distribution of survey. COG, TDEM, a continuously updating survey.

Anything needed to bring to TEMAC in 2 weeks?

7. Next meeting: November 13 - Crowne Plaza, Austin

Followed by another December 3 – 4, in Austin

8. Meeting Adjourned: 1100