



## Meeting Notes

Wednesday, August 21, 2019

TX A&M Hotel and Conference Center  
177 Joe Routh Blvd, College Station, TX  
1515 – 1700

### Attendees

Judge Jimmy Sylvia	Monty Dozier	Juan Ortiz	Kit Marshall
Chuck Phinney	Mark Sloan	Dede McEachern	Billy Delgado
Maribel Martinez	Francisco Sanchez	Robert Newsome	Emily Nolte
Irish Hancock	Andy Cardiel	Ricardo Saldana	Christopher Boyce
Kenny Merchant	Jeff Kelly		
David McCurdy	Carrie Reyes		

### Meeting Summary:

- 1) Last meeting was held on: April 15, 2019
- 2) Introductions
- 3) Review and approval of previous meeting's minutes

### Notes

General Discussion:

1) Judge Sylvia recap of last meeting's "spirited discussion." LTEM should be just as important to elected officials as it is to emergency managers because hiring a qualified person can make or break you.

2) Proposed Training Requirements presentation by Paul Hahn, TDEM.

Judge Sylvia emphasized this is a start and that we are moving toward licensing as opposed to credentialing.

-Member stated group was expecting some more information regarding researching the need to better understand which direction to go before discussing training requirements. Does not believe that was brought back at second meeting. Jumping into training now may be premature. It's okay to look at training without making commitment but more research needs to be done.

-Chair agreed due to training information only received today and therefore work group needs to digest information, however no one is asking for approval today. Training is one of the many areas we need to focus on.

-Member emphasized the need to conduct due diligence about what the needs are (licensing vs. certification), we need to understand what is required and what is necessary based on research and data. Feels that we would be making a decision in the blind and knows that we would get it wrong.

-TDEM Training explained that based on previous discussions and meetings, he and his training section did not determine, but instead setup what they thought would be a good starting point for training hours for a basic, intermediate and advanced certification or license. Training hours were broken down by mission area going from NTED catalog, Preparing Texas, CDP, EMI and all the different training out there. Tried to provide a starting point for training hours for the work group to recommend or accept them for the different levels of licensing or certification (basic, intermediate and advanced) along with the other requirements such as experience. TDEM should make the training accessible and available. TDEM Training provided an explanation of mission areas and course hours available. Some of these hours are already in your portfolio. Again, this is just a starting point. All courses are available through the National Training and Education Division through the state of Texas so TDEM should be able to get all the courses. Some courses required at the advanced level will need to go external; whether that's EMI, CDP, which are refundable, or can be delivered locally. All courses are listed on FirstResponder.net and broken down by mission area. What was also looked at is an emergency manager should not have all of their training in mitigation mission area; should be well-rounded in all areas. Hopefully this is a starting point that the work group can work with.

-Question: TDEM Training was asked to discuss methodology on, "...how he got here." TDEM Training explained that he sat through meetings and listened to discussions and tried to model the levels after TCOLE. Also looked at other states requirements (i.e., Alabama, Florida, and Michigan). Also looked at some of the substitutes or equivalencies such as CEM, master's degree, TEM and how they can equate to training hours.

-Member asked if anyone on Paul's team had emergency manager experience and if they looked at existing regulations that require specific emergency management training.

-TDEM Training explained that all members have worked for TDEM for many years.

-Member stated that he did not see the basic EM workshop required by TDEM for new emergency management coordinators or the senior official's workshop.

-TDEM Training explained that basic requirements are on a separate table and that he is discussing additional training hours on top of basic requirements.

-Member asked if any of the training is Texas-specific.

-TDEM Training explained that the "G" courses are FEMA courses that are allowed to be taught at the state level and are "Texified."

-Member asked if there is any intent to develop Texas specific courses.

-TDEM Training replied that TDEM is here to do what the work group needs even if it means developing new courses.

-Member stated that TDEM has developed courses that have been very helpful. TDEM Training stated that he failed to add certain courses that should have been added and

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thanked member for the reminder. He also stated that he is relying on the work group to recommend additional courses especially those that are specific to Texas.

-Member recommended that Texas Municipal League (TML) be engaged; they represent office holders who make appointments so they may be a voice in this process. General observation is that training requirements are one piece of a larger puzzle and that he will need to see other pieces. Need to give some more thought on what are the basic courses that are needed depending on jurisdiction and scope of EMC's duties. There still seems to be confusion on whether talking licensing or credentialing. Member recommended having something in writing describing what is licensing and what are the legal implications, and what is credentialing, and what are the legal implications. Having that in writing may lead to some agreement from the group.

-TDEM COS requested that TDEM Training explain the basic table. Discussion about TDEM 610 (16hr crs) and development of new courses.

-Member stated that the state should include previous courses that worked well.

-TDEM Training stated that no written exams have been developed at this time. Other requirements included completion of FEMA PDS courses.

-Member stated that courses listed are important but Texas should have its own PDS courses and that these and others should be specific to Texas. Connecting local, county and state jurisdictions is a significant component. Work group still needs to determine what levels to recommend before talking about classes. Member also wanted to talk about licensing or credentialing the emergency management program during open discussion.

-Member asked that we have a process to include input from other emergency managers throughout the state of Texas so that it meets everybody's needs.

-TDEM Training reminded the group that his tasking was to come up with proposed training to start the discussion. The state is here to get the training you need and to tailor the training requirements based on the needs of the work group.

-Emphasis on the need for input from the EMCs.

-Member asked how many courses are on Appendix A.

-TDEM Training replied over 1,200.

-Member discussed the challenges associated with overseeing TCOLE courses and licensees.

-Member asked about basic requirements.

-TDEM Training stated that certain credentials such as CEM may substitute or be equivalent to training. This is just a foundation for the work group to further develop.

-Judge Sylvia asked if there are comments, questions or concerns between now and next meeting, who they should be directed to.

-TDEM COS re-directed the question to the committee.

Discussion regarding what would be the requirements for someone entering EM out of college as opposed to someone with relevant experience entering out of public service field.

-Member repeated need for process to get input from throughout the state before we get into details due to other needs beyond the awareness of the committee. Can be done via survey or town hall meeting. Should be done sooner than later.

-Member stated that we need to move through the agenda slowly.

-Member stated we need a longer meeting; possibly a day and a half or two in order for the work group to come together to hash things out.

-Member agreed and added that in some instances we need time to come to passionate agreement because sometimes we're saying the same things, we're just getting there in different ways but we need to be able to have those frank conversations with each other.

-Question was asked if legislature specified either words: licensing or certification.

-TDEM COS confirmed that legislation stated credentialing and that the tasking to the work group was to make a recommendation to the legislature.

-Discussion on meaning of licensing vs. credentialing; define each and recommend one as a group.

-Group member recommended that the work group come up with a mission statement.

-Member cautioned that if the group asked every county and jurisdiction what they thought, they will get a wide range of answers and that the group only has a limited amount of time to make recommendation therefore we should try to hit the best mark possible for the greatest good. The group only has 14 – 15 months to get this together.

-Question was asked if all EMCs are aware of meetings.

-TDEM COS answered that all who expressed interest were invited.

(Note: the TEMAC calendar invite which included LTEM Work Group meeting was sent to the TEMAC distribution group of approx. 400 personnel.)

-Member recommended that each of the 24 COGs throughout the state ask their group what they think.

-Member stated that the process needs a communications plan that includes communicating through the COGs and TDEM similar to the monthly Preparedness Update so that we can be transparent. We must have a transparent process that provides opportunity for input. If we don't do that, we become an easy target.

-Member stated that we need some direction and to get moving because we are running out of time.

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- Member stated that if we are looking at licensing, we need to think about funding and budgeting due to financial limitations of smaller jurisdictions and the impact unfunded mandates have.
- Member asked who is going to own this credential. Who is going to be the agency that is going to review the credentialing packet? Who is going to be the SME that reviews training and other requirements? That's what TCOLE does for LE; that's what the fire commission does for FF, that's what EMS does for EMS providers. We need to know who is going to own it so that they may be involved in the process early on.
- TDEM COS stated that TDLR is here and was invited to the committee to be part of the discussion. If legislature passes this, it will be part of their discussion with the legislature on how that would get rolled out.
- It was confirmed that TDLR will be part of the discussion. If a bill is passed, it would have to say what agency is going to manage the licensing. TDLR has several template bills which include what information needs to be in it for a license process.
- Member stated that any bill passed would create statute requiring the licensing and the responsible agency which will also include mandatory requirements such as training.
- Member stated that we need to get something on paper as to what this committee recommends that can be submitted to the committee for additional review and can be given to Chief Kidd/TDEM and possibly sent throughout state for comments. Requested permission to move forward with something like mission statement, potential licensing and what type of requirements, and putting them into one body.
- Member stated TDEM Training has already done a lot of the leg work with list of training and chart.
- TDEM Training emphasized that the ball is in the committee's court and to let him know what type of training the committee wants to include.
- Member suggested an all day or two day meeting to further discuss and come together.
- Member recommended monthly conference calls.
- TDEM COS suggested holding meeting next month and starting conference calls thereafter.
- Group consensus to continue meetings at College Station.
- Member stated we will have something on paper and that it will be out before the next meeting.
- Member from audience stated there was good representation from North Central Texas COG and commended the group for passionate and lively discussion.

- Member asked the committee to consider sharing working documents via a dedicated TDEM webpage to include information such as agendas, meeting notes, participants, meeting schedules/locations in an effort to get more interaction from folks around the state. Almost everyone in the room is going to stay on top of the matter as best they can but they must be informed about the process and need something to look at. Member's work with the fire commission when developing something involves putting out information for comment and review. TCOLE and DSHS do the same thing. Provides a degree of transparency. Would be the best way to prevent misinformation.
- The TEM Process was explained so that members could have a better understanding of what equivalency might look like.
- Patrice Reisen-Hicks is the Chair of the TEM Commission. Discussed application packet and training requirements which are similar to CEM, however training and events must have occurred in Texas.
- Chief Bob Royall addressed the committee to discuss evolution of TEMAC and asked that they trust the process so that the committee can work together step-by-step. It was emphasized the need for committee to have input on how this is going to look or the legislature will decide for us.
- Member stated that if the purpose of this initiative is to serve the citizens, we might want to look at credentialing or licensing the EM program of the jurisdiction, not just the individual. The EM is one person and if that position was to be vacated, you still have a structure and process in place that is more important than the individual. Suggested that the committee make additional recommendation that includes credentialing the program, as well.
- Member added that emergency management is the responsibility of everyone in the community and recommended certifying the community.
- Member asked for permission from committee to include recommending credentialing of EM programs.
- Judge Sylvia asked how many states require certifying licensing and credentialing of EMCs.
- Member replied that within our region, Louisiana, Arkansas and New Mexico have state association certifications for Emergency Managers. Oklahoma and New Mexico have specific training that new EMs have to complete within first year.
- Judge Sylvia asked if we should be looking at modeling any of those; are they working?
- EMC Lubbock County stated that programs are credentialed now and that plans stay in place if EMC leaves.
- Judge Sylvia stated elected officials need to be involved with hiring the right person. Licensing or credentialing would be good for EMCs because someone with advanced certification could request higher pay.

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-Member discussed planning profiles and how state and federal government requires certain things be in place for locals to qualify for funding. I.e., Homeland Security Grant funds require intermediate level; federal mitigation grant funds must have approved mitigation plan, requirement for full-scale exercise every five years to qualify for EMPG funds.

-Member stated it's not a bad thing but we need to stick to the task we've been given from the legislature and stay focused.

-Member asked what created the need for this legislation; why did this come up?

-Judge Sylvia explained circumstances in his area with previous judge and EMC. Member explained that communities should have an option. Does not have to be tied to this process but likes the idea of making recommendation to conduct further review or study to explore possibility.

-Member asked for permission to include putting this on paper.

-Judge Sylvia stated he does not have an issue with that and we could always strike it if committee does not agree.

-Johnson County expressed concern to member's proposal due to existing resistance to licensing. Recommended until there is better understanding to the licensing, there should not be an addition on top of that because it will compound the committee's push-back. Additionally, licensing implies authority. EM is not invested with authority regarding providing individuals with something. The idea of licensing should be credentialing, not licensure. Recommended every emergency management coordinator in Texas attend an academy regardless of background. Upon completion, can then work on additional training and advancement.

-Deputy EMC City of Beaumont explained the emergency management accreditation program is already available and that additional unfunded mandates should not be created; the task of the committee is to focus on personnel.

-Member stated 30 – 40% of their EMCs are getting stipend plus \$12,000.00 per year. An academy would be impossible for them to do. Concerned about those who are not full-time EMCs.

-EMAT was volunteered to look at what TEM and IAEM credentialing would look like. Recommended caution when looking at other equivalencies and will research.

-Judge Newsome explained that state of Texas must step up and help local jurisdictions fund any required training.

-Member shared that what he found while working with fire commission, they were very careful not to box-in some of the equivalent education requirements to just fire service backed degree programs. Other valuable programs were considered. College does not teach how to do job; teaches thought process.

- Member explained past requirements for CEM and asked how we are going to assess equivalencies and other requirements.
- Tarrant County Fire Marshall discussed funding challenges for local jurisdictions.
- Member discussed differences such as funding, availability of training and quality of EMCs between small and large jurisdictions and cautioned against a one size fits all approach.
- Judge Sylvia acknowledged that the issue of unfunded mandates has been on the radar since committee started meeting.
- Member invited members to attend a breakout meeting/work group on September 19 in Amarillo to help get input from grassroots EMCs.
- Judge Sylvia is also trying to coordinate meeting with Southeast Texas Judges and EMCs to discuss among other things, LTEM for grassroots input.

**Action Items:**

1. Task for TDEM is to schedule two-day meeting at College Station at end of September from noon to noon.
2. Closing comments from Judge Sylvia and Chuck Phinney included posting of meeting documents on new TDEM website. Anyone interested in participating or contributing comments may send email to Irish.

**End of meeting**