



Wishing you a Safe and Happy Christmas!

From the Staff of the Office of EMS & Trauma

DIRECTOR'S WORDS

As with life, the OEMST continues to change. Many of you may know Earl Langley of our staff who is retiring this month. Earl's been a fixture in EMS for many years. We hope that you will join us in wishing him a happy and fulfilling retirement.

Last month, I had the opportunity to attend the National Association of EMS Officials' Meeting in Minnesota. I continue to be impressed with the fact Alabama is in the forefront of the nation's EMS programs. With the implementation of the Statewide Trauma System, we'll have the nation's eyes on us.

The e-PCR implementation is a huge step in our EMS program's ability to continue to progress. While I realize that the process presents challenges to us all, I am 100 percent certain that the future benefits will be worth it all. We can only improve when programmatic decisions are based on real data. I ask you all for your cooperation and support as we make this transition.

Merry Christmas!

Dennis Blair, Director
Office of EMS & Trauma

STATE EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

SUBTRACTION AND ADDITION TO EMT-BASIC SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Because of your many questions about the removal of rescue airways/BIADs from the EMT Basic scope of practice, I wanted to take this opportunity to explain why this was done.

In an effort to standardize EMT levels across the United States, the Department of Transportation (DOT)/National Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA) along with input from multiple EMS organizations have developed new standards for scope of practice for EMT Basic (to be called simply "EMT"), EMT Intermediate (to be called "Advanced EMT"), and Paramedics. The new scope of practice is expected to go into effect in late 2008 with training for the new levels to begin in 2009. Every state has been asked to honor the new scope of practice and Alabama is committed to doing this.

The new EMT Basic scope of practice does not include the use of any blind insertion airway devices (Combitube, King LT-D and LTS-D Airways, Laryngeal Mask Airway, Pharyngotracheal Lumen

Airway, and Rusch Easy Tube). In order to be compliant with the national standards, we are deleting this procedure from the Basic EMT protocols. Since the current Alabama protocols only allow Basic EMTs to use this procedure (rescue airway/BIAD) for people in cardiorespiratory arrest, it should have minimal impact upon Basic EMT practice.

The good news is that the new scope of practice for Basic EMTs will allow use of Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP). This procedure is very effective treatment for congestive heart failure, asthma and many other conditions that cause difficulty breathing.

John Campbell, M.D.
State EMS Medical Director

ELECTRONIC-PCR (e-PCR) UPDATE

REMINDER: The Jan. 1, 2008, deadline for e-PCR compliance is fast approaching. The OEMST will begin tracking submission compliance through the transmission server on Jan. 2, 2008. Will your department or service be compliant?

As of Dec. 5, 2007, 35 Alabama EMS provider services have the free Alabama e-PCR software installed. Additionally, there are three provider services that are transmitting to the State EMS server through third-party vendor software. These provider services and vendors are Mt. Brook Fire Department (Fire House Software), East Alabama Medical Center EMS (EMS Consultants) and Northstar Paramedic Service (Ortivirus).

If you use any of the transmitting software vendors listed above, we urge you to contact them to work out installation and training of their software at your department or service. The OEMST is not “blanket” approving each vendor. We have to ensure that each service is able to transmit successfully through our policies and procedures process before allowing transmission through the Department’s server.

If your software vendor is not listed above, we strongly encourage you to contact your vendor representative and inquire when they plan on being NEM-SIS and Alabama compliant. If they’re not prepared to be compliant by the Jan. 1, 2008 deadline, your department or service will need to install the free Alabama e-PCR and use it until your vendor is compliant.

Our Office has a list of departments and services that have indicated in the IT survey that they’ll be using web-based client. We hope to have this available very soon. No actions will be taken against any department or service that is non-compliant if the fault is ours.

Resource tools, validation, and procedures for becoming compliant are listed at <http://emsis.net/alabama>. Please refer your IT people or vendor representatives to this site. You may also contact Chris Lochte or Craig Dowell at this Office for assistance and questions. The contact number is 334-206-5383.

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS FOR OEMST STAFF?

In order to address your questions promptly, remember:

- Complaints, Investigations, Service Inspections- Call Mark Jackson
- Training, Testing- Call Hugh Hollon
- Individual or Service License- Call Gary Mackey

FREE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

OEMST is working with the Center for Emergency Preparedness to provide free Continuing Education courses to Alabama’s EMTs. Five courses will be offered in 2008, beginning in January. Courses include: Mass Casualty Incident/START; WMD/All-hazard Incident Awareness; Medical Command/EMS Operations; Explosions and Blast Injury; and Advanced Hazmat Life Support (AHLS). All courses, excluding AHLS, will be conducted twice in the six EMS Regions for a total of 12 courses throughout the state. AHLS will be offered only one time.

The Regional EMS Agencies will work with the UAB South Central Center for Public Health Preparedness (SCCPHP) to schedule and market the courses. A generous assortment of reference materials will be provided to each course participant. Check with your Regional EMS to find out more.

Course descriptions:

Mass Casualty Incident/START – This 8-hour course will prepare pre-hospital care providers to use the Simple Triage and Rapid Treatment (START), Incident Management System (IMS), and Crew Resource Management (CRM) in order to respond with maximum effectiveness to a mass casualty/WMD event.

WMD/All-hazard Incident Awareness Course – This 8-hour course is intended for first responders, law enforcement officers, EMTs, hazardous materials responders, emergency management personnel, public works employees, disaster response agencies, public health professionals and other individuals that may be the first on scene of a WMD incident or a natural/man-made disaster.

Medical Command/EMS Operations Course – This 6-hour course is intended for pre-hospital providers who may respond and establish Medical Command at a Mass Casualty Incident resulting when large numbers of victims are injured or are exposed to hazardous materials or Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) agents during a natural disaster.

Explosions and Blast Injury – This 8-hour course is intended for pre-hospital care provider, including fire and emergency medical services personnel, and first receivers who may be called on to respond to a Mass Casualty Incident resulting from an explosion or blast.

Advanced Hazmat Life Support (AHLS) – This is a Continuing Education program designed for EMS and other health professionals such as physicians and pharmacists. The high quality of the AHLS course was recently recognized when it was reviewed by the Center for Domestic Preparedness and approved to be delivered to 50 states and 6 territories. This is a three-day “Train the Trainer” course scheduled for Feb. 12, 13 and 14, 2008 in Decatur, Ala. For more information or to register for the AHLS course, contact Will Bruer at 205-975-2460 or bruer@ms.soph.uab.edu, or visit www.ahls.org and click on upcoming courses.

COMPLIANCE & INVESTIGATIONS

Beginning in our February Update, we will be publishing the names of individuals and services found to be non-compliant with the EMS Rules.

Ambulance Inspections

September 2007	181
October 2007	203
November 2007	109
Total	493

ambulance inspections

Service Inspections

September –November 2007	
Total	101

service inspections

Complaint/Investigations

September –November 2007	
Total	10

complaint investigations

The outcomes were as follows:

- EMT-Basic & Paramedic x 3; Patient care issues; No EMS violations and no licensure action EMT-Basic x 1; Licensure revocation; Crimes involving moral turpitude, falsification of records
- EMT-Basic x 1; Licensure surrender; Impairment, substance abuse
- EMT-Basic x 1; Licensure surrender x 6 month w/additional 6 month probation; Exceeding scope of practice & performing invasive procedure
- EMT-Paramedic x 1; Admitted into rehab program in lieu of licensure action taken against license
- EMT-Paramedic x 1; Impairment (marijuana); Pending
- EMT-Paramedic & EMT-Basic; EMS Rules review (patient abandonment)
- EMT-Paramedic x 1; Impairment; Pending

COMPUTER-BASED TESTING REMINDERS

National Registry testing candidates are reminded that exams can be rescheduled up to 24 hours in advance of the candidate's scheduled appointment. Should a candidate fail to appear for a scheduled exam, the candidate must complete a new application and pay another fee. If a candidate arrives late for an exam, the candidate could lose his appointment.

Candidates need to follow the instructions provided on the Authorization to Test (ATT) Letter. Two forms of identification are required, and one of these must be a picture I.D. If a candidate chooses to use his Driver's license for identification, make sure the license has not expired.

On Jan. 21, 2008, the Office of EMS and Trauma's rules will change as proposed in the Fall of 2007. Several changes will be effective Winter Semester, 2008:

- The Office of EMS and Trauma will have no authority to approve EMT programs, courses or classes of any type in Alabama.
- Alabama-trained paramedic students will be allowed to test the NREMT exam only if they graduate from an approved ADPE or ACHE Paramedic program that is either already CoAEMSP accredited or in the process of being CoAEMSP accredited. Alabama paramedic graduates of any programs or courses/classes that do not meet these requirements will not be allowed to test the NREMT exam.
- Anyone considering conducting off-campus or satellite programs or courses must gain appropriate approval/designation through the CoAEMSP, ADPE and/or ACHE.

LICENSURE ISSUES

REMINDER!!!!!! Check your EMT License.

- Individual EMT License expiration is March 31, 2008.
- Online renewal is effective Jan. 1, 2008-March 31, 2008.

Note: If you renew online, you are subject to audit.

If you are audited, you must submit verification of con-ed within 24 hours after you are notified.

When completing your written application, make sure that your e-mail address is legible!

Have you moved? Notify the OEMST about your address change!

MEETINGS & EVENTS

State Emergency Medical Control Committee (SEMCC) Meeting has been scheduled for March 4, 2008, at 1 p.m. The location has not yet been determined. Keep an eye on our website, www.adph.org/ems, for further information.