



**AD HOC COMMITTEE  
ON  
AMBULANCE COLORS AND MARKINGS  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 29, 2008**

Meeting was convened at the Mockingbird Board Room, first floor, 227 French Landing Drive, Heritage Place Metrocenter, Nashville.

Meeting was opened by Richard Land at 12:54 pm.  
Richard Land welcomed everyone.  
All Committee members were present by 1 pm.

**Committee Members:**

Terry L. Arnold, Director, Carter County Rescue and EMS  
Allen Lovett, Director of EMS Williamson Medical Center, Franklin TN  
Dennis Rowe, Market General Manager, Knox Co. Rural/Metro Ambulance Service  
James (Lynn) Thompson, Memphis Fire Department  
Ken Wilkerson, Director, Hamilton County EMS

**State of Tennessee, Department of Health- EMS staff Members present:**

Robert Byrd, State of TN, Chairman of the Emergency Medical Services Board  
Richard Land, TN Department of Health-Division of EMS, Director of Ambulance Services Licensure and Regulation  
LeeAnne Boeringer, EMS Consultant-South Central Region

**Guests of EMS open forum:**

Michael Clements, Assistant director, Bedford Co. EMS  
Steve Feldhaus, Owner Select-Tech Ambulance, Inc.  
David Kelley, Smoky Mountain specialty vehicles

**Robert Byrd, Chairman of the State EMS Board** was present and confirmed committee appointments. Appointment Letters were disseminated.

**Dennis Rowe** nominated **Kenneth Wilkerson** to serve as committee chairman. Seconded by **James Lynn Thompson**, the Chairman was elected unanimously.

(Allen Lovett arrived at 12:58.)

**R. Land** reviewed current rule 1200-12-1-.02, and discussed possible changes and alternatives to ambulance colors and markings.

**R. Land** read from the article titled "Safety Orange, wikipedia.org." and then confirmed why Tennessee has always used Omaha orange striping. This has been due to a National standard, and safety is essential. Now, Rear Chevrons are also allowable.

**Other articles and materials were distributed in a folder to committee members and attendees. These included**

"Michie's Legal Resources"- T.C.A. 68-140-526. Color schemes for ambulances in certain jurisdictions.

Federal Specifications for the Star-of-Life Ambulance KKK-A-1822F, Aug. 1, 2007.

"JEMS" Safety or Marketing? Article from Sept. 2007

"The history behind Omaha orange and "Star of life", by Richard Land.

Due to recent legislation, other fire department services, such as Gatlinburg or Oak Ridge, may want to change their ambulance colors.

**Chairman Robert Byrd-** commented this committee needs to be firm in showing the "writing is on the wall" to make changes. Legislation has resulted because of concerns the EMS Board will take too much time for change. As to the recognition of ambulances by standard color schemes, it was a concept that has not been realized. Citing a situation where Covenant Hospital of Knoxville used a picture of a Las Vegas, Nevada ambulance with a blue stripe, not orange, as required in Tennessee, Mr. Byrd noted his concerns that not all ambulances in TN are recognized by standard colors, as we may have thought.

The Legislature wants a change. So far changes have been extended to Fire Services only, with no recommendations to the other services in the EMS community by the EMS Board. We need to welcome requests and be responsive to change. What are we going to do? If we fail to act, legislation may whittle away from Boards authority. Robert Byrd concluded that Boundaries and Limits need to be set, so there is some standard for the ambulances in Tennessee.

**James( Lynn) Thompson-** Memphis Fire Department may have started the domino's falling. Our new deputy Fire Chief Gary Ludwig wanted all of our Fire Department equipment to be "Traditional" colors.

Handouts of a power/point slide program were provided by Mr. Thompson. The photos displayed Memphis Fire Department ambulances and everyone

commented they maintained a professional appearance while making the change to red and white colors.

All agreed if we adopt new changes they must be professional.

**R. Land** noted that changes in the rule (1200-12-1-.02) will apply to all ambulances, regardless of the operational agency. Fire Services addressed under T.C.A 68-140-526 will still be bound by that law. The language may need to be changed in future legislation to further standardize markings.

Comments were made regarding the roof remaining white. Experts agree there is an increase of twenty degrees in the heat load if roofs are painted any other color. All roofs are now painted white in Memphis according to Lynn Thompson. R.Land mentioned the rules should stress that roofs remain white on patient compartment (box).

Mr. Terry Arnold was asked if there was any interest of rescue squads changing colors? **T. Arnold**, commented, yes, they are ready for a change.

Many photos were shared on color schemes. Page 9 of Power Points (Lynn) compared two ambulances.

**R.Land** mentioned whether all ambulances within a service should be marked in the same manner. All members agreed they should.

**Ken Wilkerson** cautioned there should be no rolling Billboards. It was agreed the star of life should be prominently displayed and Memphis Fire Dept. is good with that provision. Markings should be "Professional" everyone agreed. Lettering should be large enough to make it obvious the vehicle is an ambulance.

**Lynn Thompson-** said a member of the EMS board commented that we may need to retrain our children to know what a TN ambulance looks like. Safety is Important! Safety is a must.

**Allan Lovett** asked if the Board makes a change in the markings, will the whole legislation change be needed? **R.Land** commented that we may need to see what our advisory attorney says on this question.

**R. Land-** We need our EMS Board to gain perspective from several sources. Having this committee allows the fire-based services, hospitals, private services, rescue services, and county (local government) services to have a voice in setting new standards.

**Dennis Rowe** commented Colors are Colors. Markings are identifiers. Is there a way that the board can remain proactive? Chevrons, what wording needs to be on it (an ambulance)? How is it worded now?

Chevrons for safety are in the KKK standards, it has already been incorporated in these current specifications.

[Chevron is allowed or encouraged now in the F specs, clarified **R. Land**]

**Kenneth Wilkerson**-What are Minimums, absolutes, and allowable to verify the ambulance and ownership of the unit. What is truly needed?

**Dennis Rowe**- Color is not the primary issue here. Should band on ambulance have a minimum width?

**R.Land** stressed unity in each service's color scheme is necessary. While there are red Ambulances in Memphis Fire Department, are all their ambulances red?

**Lynn Thompson** responded, Not all – not yet. We have a few left. We just ordered eighteen and those are all red.

**Steve Feldhaus** noted where we have a red ambulances, the KKK color standard does not apply. Please educate all Consultants to the decisions made and the policies that may apply. (There is a need for fair administration.) He suggested showing photos to identify units which were passed or failed and did not comply with the rules. Consistency is important and a must. All agreed. Many committee members agree simplicity is necessary. Keep the Federal specs the same in many areas. This will make our rule clearer for all.

Brainstorming possible issues resulted in these questions and comments:

**R.Land**- When certain identifiers are needed, decals are fine. John Dabbs suggested uses for decals on DMAT or Strike Team units. Decals can be temporary identification.

**Kenneth Wilkerson** raised another issue. What about existing units in a fleet? How do we deal with changes?

**Lynn Thompson** stated "We have the opportunity available here to present a good option for change to the Board. We need to keep it simple."  
All Members agreed.

**Steve Feldhaus** then commented "Clear and enforceable, please."

**Dennis Rowe**- Bottom Line is, do not make it complicated. The heck with measuring!

**R. Land** then responded that there has to be some relative standard. To support Mr. Land, **Steve Feldhaus** then questioned: Do you want is *wide open* or *enforceable*?

**Dennis Rowe**- Why are we worried regarding the stripe? Or the Square inches?

**R.Land** commented that a minimum width in inches for striping & lettering is needed for highway visibility and safety at highway speeds. Other than the Star of Life/ The word Ambulance identifies the purpose, but what about the service or ownership? **Dennis Rowe** then stated "Let's agree, the Name of the Service must be prominently displayed." But what else applies- Safety of the unit; the degree of simplicity?

### New Units/Remounts-

Ken Wilkerson restated: "the number one issues are with red ambulances and rear chevrons. If Memphis and Nashville have them, why can't others?"

**David Kelley** told the committee that "one year ago four States were strictly KKK Standards; Tennessee is now the only remaining state."

### Comments from members:

We have issues with rules only allowing three numbers, built with or certified KKK specs. This will come back to the final draft presented.

**R. Land** questioned "shall TN ambulances be manufactured to meet Federal Specifications? Options are to rewrite or to revise. We may need to start with a blank slate.

This may make KKK go away. The (ASTM "F-30 committee") American Society of Testing & Materials standards, have too much leniency. Independent manufacturers may not build to certified standards.

**David Kelley**- you can build to these standards without the unit being certified. Steve Feldhaus cautioned every model has to be certified. Certified Ford F550 has the same certification. The ambulances should have the same components. Many Agreed.

**Ken Wilkerson**- do we standardize on the vehicle or chase numbers (from different builders). **Allan Lovett** brought up that an engineer may say ok and sign off on it anyway. Comments ensued that vendors may need to retest each new chassis model.

Mr. Wilkerson then brought the group back to topic, "let's stay with colors" (and the discussion of markings.)

**Mike Clements** stated Chevrons are a safety issue for all of our crews.

**Allen Lovett** agreed on that point.

**Mike Clements**-then questioned: "Can we have clarification from the EMS Board on 10%, 20% or 70% white field, Logo size on the sides of the units. Which is the rule and how do we fix this? Black and white in KKK has a special designation within KKK.

My questions is, have people expressed their opinions? Small departments want to express their thoughts. Bedford County EMS requests level playing fields for all.

**Steve Feldhaus** asked if the input from smaller services be taken into consideration.

**R. Land** emphasized: "This is why we have established this committee and we will offer a open forum for our work here at the next meeting. The meeting will be May 27, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. We hope many can attend.

I regret I have to leave to attend a TEMA meeting. I you here to continue. It is great working with this committee! R.Land- exiting meeting 2:30.

Short break taken.

### **Meeting Continued -**

**Robert Byrd and Ken Wilkerson-** Called meeting back to order.

**Dennis Rowe-** This Committee overall has specified:

All vehicles need to be identifiable. White Roof on box. Over a set period of time Agencies needs to be agency specific design.

Discussion followed by all members on Horizontal colors.

All ambulances shall be (of a design) determined by the agency. Roof will always be white.

**Dennis Rowe** then suggested a single front to rear reflective stripe. This stripe shows movement at highway speeds. Two sides and rear are necessary?

**Kenneth Wilkerson** recommended a minimum of four inches reflective striping Replacement on the rear with Chevrons pattern is acceptable.

Discussion among the members with input from the guests-

Minimum four inches compared to six inches up to 14 inches for chevron stripes. Which is safer? Markings compared by members from disseminated pictures and articles.

All Consultants need to work on the same page. Becoming familiar with the KKK specs- minimum standards six inches to meet KKK standards. Six inch chevrons Maximum entire rear is allowed.

**Allan Lovett-** My units will not be barricade units. Will the maximum Chevron apply?

Discussion continues- some rural services may not have a choice, example first unit on the scene. All agree-Safety shall always come first.

**Kenneth Wilkerson-** moved onto Lettering. We have agreed, the service name shall be visible. Four inch lettering contrasting reflective shall be visible on both sides and rear. Shall service name be displayed on rear of unit?

On International units room is very limited.

Robert Byrd- Omit D 1, Internationals and some others are difficult and have limited room.

**Kenneth Wilkerson and Dennis Rowe** agreed contrasting reflective block type letters. Sixteen inch star of life on rear and on each door. Discussion about size and area in which star of life will be displayed. Both rear and on the sides of the unit. Thirty-two inch star vs 16 inch stars on roof. All agree a star of life on

each door. All stars of life must be reflective. Comments some are painted on the top of units. Larger Star of life on top is decided. All agree.

**Terry Arnold-** We are trying to keep consistency with Triple K specs. Discussion on changing limitations on size of unit numbers and minimum of four inch for these identifiers.

**Dennis Rowe** recommended we set no minimum for numbers. All Agree.

**Robert Bryd-** Leave "e" of the current rules in effect. All agree. Addition of D "5" – Ownership must be visible. Discussion on Service Logo's and Ownership. All agree to leave block lettering out of service name. and amend D "2" of the rules

**Robert Byrd** reads all changes as they have been made and agreed upon. "H"- Recommendation from Robert Byrd and Committee- Ambulance refurbished or new, Let Richard Land set time frame of when this needs to occur or be scheduled in. ( Notes made on working rule for R. Land ).

All agree that changes are correct.

**Kenneth Wilkerson-** Would what work we have done here adhere to legislation? All agree YES.

Discussion took place on who would change from" Omaha" Orange/White. Change is not cost effective now. The Committees thoughts are, not many would change.

**Lynn Thompson-** Memphis will stay Red. Color was the main reason.

Discussion on commercialization was mentioned: example- Stryker could place Logo on unit and may donate a cot to that service at no charge? Ferno may do the same. No rolling bill boards. Kick backs were mentioned. (Can the Board impose a limit on commercial advertisement or endorsements?)

**Mike Clements-** With gas prices so high, it may help some local governments to benefit from adding signage. Discussion continues- Also, Anything is possible with Legislation. All agree more conversation is needed. Hold for the next meeting. R. Land and O.G.C may need to consult on this.

**Robert Byrd, Chairman of the EMS Board mentioned how fast and efficient this committee had been, thanking all who took time to attend. "This is an important topic. We have a good draft proposal of changes to deliver to the board."**

*Next meeting date is set for May 27, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. Location is to be announced. We may need additional room.*

**Motion to adjourn at 4:22 p.m**

Respectfully Submitted by: *LeeAnne Boeringer*

DRAFT