

**London Ambulance Service NHS Trust
Vehicle and Equipment Working Group
25th May 2006, 1300-1600
Conference Room, HQ**

MINUTES

Chris Vale (Chair)	Acting Head of Operational Support	Bow
John Selby	Safety & Risk	Pocock St
Alison Mckee	Purchasing	Pocock St
Tug Wilson	Staff Side Representative (EC)	Islington
Karen Walling	Staff Side Representative (W)	Hillingdon
Ian Lee	Staff Side Representative (NE)	Becontree
Roy Hopkinson	Principal Project Manager	HQ
David Rock	Emergency Care Practitioner	Islington
Ken Murphy	Team Leader	Waterloo
David Selwood	Acting Corporate Logistics Manager	Pocock Street
Nick Pope	Fleet Consultant	Pocock Street
Gordon Ballard	Acting Logistics Manager	Deptford
Dipak Chauhan	Ergonomics Advisor	Pocock Street
Charles Clapson	Staff Side Representative (W)	Hillingdon
Paul O'Neill	Staff Side Representative (NE)	Tottenham
Scott Velleman (Minutes)	ASSD Manager	HQ

Action

26/06

Apologies

Jez Walters
Paul Stewart
Eddie Brand
John Winnister
Alan Payne
Colin Jolly

27/06

Previous Minutes (06th April 2006)

The previous minutes were agreed as a true record with the following amendment:

Page 7, point 20/06 insert: JS stated that there was a risk to crews if equipment was not able to be stored correctly and safely.

28/06

Matters Arising

28.01 Equipment Approval Group (06/05)

IL reported that the group had a successful meeting (minutes attached separately). The only item that had not been settled was the debris gloves. AM is looking for a rubber glove as opposed to a gardening style glove.

DS expressed concerns over the viability of a disposable mattress cover. He reported that a company has been sourced to provide them but that the Service would need to order a minimum of 10,000 per month to obtain a unit price of £1.08. This would mean spending over £100k per year on a disposable item that cannot be used to slide patients as it is too delicate and would tear.

CV pointed out that if the Service were to spend over £100k a tender would have to be publicised in the European Journal. He asked AM to find another alternative product.

AM

28.02 Spinal Immobilisation Equipment (60/05)

DS said that he had spoken with Pat Billups who stated that the required training had been carried out. He will ensure the training is reinforced through the training officers.

28.03 Mangar Elk Locations (75/05)

CV confirmed with DS that he has a list of where all the Mangar Elk cushions are located and asked if many are still missing.

DS replied that he believed 6 or 7 are still on DSO vehicles. Servicing of the devices is now taking place at each site.

CV stated that he now wanted to draw a line under this matter. He told DS that as the numbers appeared to be very small, after receiving the servicing returns any that are still missing should be replaced.

DS

DC asked DS to provide him with a list of the Mangar Elk locations.

DS

28.04 Carry Chair Airport Usage (90/05)

This matter will be covered under item 36/06

28.05 STOR IT Discussions (95/05)

DS reported that this matter has not progressed and that Open House will not be able to address the issue until July.

28.06 Mattress Covers (98/05)

This matter was covered in item 28.01

28.07 Retro Fit Control Layouts

CV reported that CJ had spoken to Macneillies to obtain the costs for retro fitting control layouts such as siren switches on the ambulances so that they were consistent with older vehicles. Macneillies had given a conservative estimate of £46,242 for 210 vehicles. CV continued that this figure does not include the costs of fitting the bracket for the carry chair and that he would also have to obtain this estimate. He asked the group if they wanted to pursue this matter.

CV

IL responded that he did not think the number of vehicles would be as high as 210 and therefore the total would be less.

NP suggested that the amount of vehicles requiring the siren switch to be moved should be calculated. He agreed to assess this. He felt that the carry chair bracket issue would be a higher priority.

NP

28.08 Secure Infant Carriage (10/06)

CV distributed draft guidance prepared by JS to the group.

RH told the group that a company has produced a specialist pod for infant carriage. An SPPP was raised to purchase the equipment but the Trust Board declined it.

IL argued that if a bad incident occurred funding would be reprioritised.

CV pointed out that by issuing the bulletin/guidance it raises the issue's profile as a risk. CV stated he would write a note on behalf of the group to the Senior Management Group expressing disappointment at the SPPP being declined, and that he would also approach the ASA about the issue. CV asked for feedback on the draft guidance to be given to JS by the end of next week.

CV

CV

28.09 Trolley Bed Concerns (12/06)

This item was covered under item 37/06

28.10 PASA Approval of Equipment – Suction Unit etc (13/06)

AM reported that she had spoken to Dave Whitmore (Clinical Adviser to the Medical Director) and he felt certain that there was enough equipment already in service and did not see the need for a new suction unit presented at the last meeting.

The group agreed not to pursue this matter at present.

28.11 LDV Ambulances (20/06)

CV stated that he had spoken to Russell Smith and Martin Flaherty and both are adamant that local managers had not been under pressure to keep LDV vehicles in service when they were unfit for purpose during the REAP 3 period.

28.12 Airwave Radio Users Group – Nominations (25/06)

IL reported for EB that representatives have been nominated and have met.

29/06 Alternative Response Steering Group (Standing Item)

CC told the group there is nothing to report at this time.

30/06 Risk (Standing Item)

JS gave the group an update on the Risk Register.

31/06 Manual Handling Sub Group (Standing Item)

DC stated that he will be meeting with JS and Tony Crabtree on the 30/05/06 to discuss the Manual Handling Implementation Group. The Manual Handling Sub Group will merge into the new group.

IL expressed disappointment at the length of time taken to circulate the policy.

32/06 MRU Working Group (Standing Item)

KM said he would be seeing Fionna Moore regarding the approval of a trial for an intraosseous gun as MRUs have to attend so many cardiac arrests.

CV reminded KM that any trial would have to be progressed through the VEWG.

33/06 Ambulance Procurement Update (Standing Item)

RH stated that the last ambulance from the current cycle of procurement would be delivered tomorrow.

34/06 RRU Procurement Update (Standing Item)

CV notified the group that DS is preparing a survey for car users (RRU and ECP etc) to assess if they would prefer racking to be placed in the back of each vehicle or for it to be left in the current configuration.

DS

35/06 Specialist Vehicle Update (Standing Item)

RH reported that the SPPP has been approved for the vehicles, but only for half the amount of money that was requested. Therefore 2 vehicles could be brought into service. The method of funding has not been decided upon yet and this raises the risk that the vehicles could not be brought in before the end of the financial year. This would pose a big problem as under new NHS financial regulations that money could not be carried over and would be lost.

36/06 Carry Chair Update(Standing Item)

CV stated that as the SMG meeting in May was an away day he would now prepare an update for their June meeting. He will seek agreement to move away from CEN compliance for carry chairs. If this is granted the VEWG will consider equipment trials.

The group then agreed that at that point in time the Carry Chair Sub Group would be reconvened.

CV asked DS to oversee that task by building upon the original members. CV asked IL to nominate two people, and also asked KW to sit in for airport users and NP for PTS users.

**DS/
IL/KW/
NP**

37/06 Trolley Bed Update (Standing Item)

CV gave an update to the group on the current position with the Pegasus trolley bed. Following the inspection instigated after the last VEWG meeting, 10-12 trolley beds were removed from service and replaced with Falcon 6's. A meeting was then held with Ferno and subsequent to this a bulletin was issued to all operational staff. Spacers are being fitted to all Pegasus trolley beds to prevent incorrect stowage of the push/pull handles. Ferno have identified corrections that need to be made to the x-frame for future Pegasus construction and will fit a brace to all existing trolley beds free of charge. Any trolley beds that are found to have an x-frame deformation outside of a 7mm tolerance will have the x-frames replaced. The Service will be monitoring this process closely over the next 6 weeks. It is still our intention to consider an independent

assessment of the Pegasus.

A note prepared by CV for the Service Wide Risk group on this issue would be attached to the minutes.

IL gave Staff Side's appreciation at having involvement with the Ferno discussions.

CV also reported his discussions with Nicola Foad to see if there would be cause to pursue Ferno over the faults identified with the Falcon 6 trolley bed. All previous actions taken with Ferno were discussed. Nicola's view was that there would not be enough evidence to provide a robust case. CV continued that lessons had been learnt however and that the audit trail we were building with the Pegasus situation meant that the Service would be in a much stronger legal position should it be necessary to take further action.

38/06 PTS Issues (Standing Item)

NP told the group that the last of the manual handling kits will be issued in the coming months, and all vehicles will run with latex-free kits. Additionally the vehicle procurement programme has also begun.

IL asked if the new vehicles will be automatics and have tail-lifts.

NP responded that it has not been decided yet.

39/06 FR300 Oxylator Resuscitation Head & Pipeline Analgesic Head

GB demonstrated two pieces of equipment used in resuscitation. He stated that the products are substantially cheaper than the products that the Service currently uses.

IL asked for a trial to be carried out across the Service.

CV asked AM to do a supplier assessment.

AM

DS offered to coordinate the trial through the Equipment Approval Group.

DS

CV also asked DS to notify Fionna Moore and/or Dave Whitmore about the equipment.

DS

40/06 ECP Equipment & Drug Storage

DR updated the group that there is an issue surrounding temperature extremes where ECP drugs are being stored. This is being looked into. DR also demonstrated a suture kit that the ECP's have asked to trial. Fionna Moore has given her assent and DR suggested running the trial through the Alternative Response Steering Group.

CV told DR he would send him forms designed for formal trial feedback. The results of the trial should be reported to the VEWG.

CV

41/06 Trials Across the Service

IL alerted the group to the fact that he had heard of various pieces of new equipment being trialled around the Service that had not come through the VEWG. He stated that he felt this was wrong and that all trials should go through the VEWG.

CV agreed saying that the VEWG was the constituted body for any and all equipment trials. He undertook to speak to Fionna Moore and other senior colleagues about this.

CV

42/06 Mercedes Saloon Height

IL told the group about a situation in Essex Ambulance Service where an attendant had jumped down from the back of a Mercedes ambulance and broke her ankle. IL brought this to the group as we use the same vehicles.

CV advised that Service procedures were in place to cover this issue.

43/06 Chair Trial

This issue was covered in 36/06

44/06 Siren Use at Night

CV told the group that this issue had been forwarded by Gary Bassett in PALS who had received some complaint letters about the use of ambulance sirens at night. CV stated that he has given Gary some guidance for a reply. The complainant has since enquired about a piercing lights system. Gary has asked that this group considers this. The group agreed this matter was more appropriate for the ASA as a national issue.

DS stated that we should establish from GB how many complaints were involved to assess the scale of the issue.

DS

45/06 Smart Evidence & Baggage System (SEBS)

CV told the group that this item was also from Gary Bassett in PALS. Gary has asked that the Service adopts the use of patient property bags as soon as possible.

KW stated that this system is in use at Hillingdon.

CV stated that Gary has put in an SPPP for funding of the possessions bags, however CV did not feel that this item of equipment was something that the VEWG should become involved in.

The group agreed.

46/06 Any Other Business

Dave Whitmore

CV said that Dave Whitmore has expressed an interest in joining the VEWG. He asked if the group gave their agreement.

The group agreed. CV would speak to DW.

CV

Fault Reporting

CV was pleased to report that funding had finally been secured for the vehicle-based fault books and chains. Fitting will as soon as possible.

Next VEWG Meeting

CV stated that the next scheduled meeting clashes with AMBEX and obtained the groups permission to reschedule for July.

Vehicle Televisions

RH notified the group that a trial had recently been carried out during which it was discovered that a fault resulted in the television only working when the vehicle's blue lights were operating. This fault is now being investigated and will be corrected.

FRU Cleaning

IL asked what the position was on the cleaning of FRUs.

CV responded that Make Ready are only funded to clean ambulances.

CV replied that he would need to look into this and report back.

CV

CD Oxygen Cylinders

DS reported that there seem to be two different types of CD oxygen cylinder in use around the Service at present. One of the cylinders appears to need a special key to operate the release mechanism. DS said that he would speak to BOC and ask them to withdraw this type of cylinder.

DS

CV asked DS to issue a bulletin to warn operational staff about this type of cylinder.

DS

**Date of next meeting: 19th July 2006, 1300-1600
Conference Room
HQ**