

BLET REVISION COMMITTEE MEETING
North Carolina Justice Academy
Salemburg, NC
January 29, 2010

Bob Yow called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He welcomed everyone to the Justice Academy campus. Carolyn Holland called the roll.

Members Present:

Kathryn Bryan
Mack Creson
Jason Godwin
Wrenn Johnson
Wayne Lamm
Sammy Turner
Steve Warren

Nancy Bennett had provided Bob Yow with her full proxy. Jon Worthington had provided his limited voting proxy concerning removing the shotgun from BLET.

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Mark Dearry, Criminal Justice Standards Division
Joy Strickland, NC Dept. of Justice

Staff Present:

Bob Yow, NC Justice Academy
Carolyn Holland, NC Justice Academy
Jennifer Fisher, NC Justice Academy
Stacy Holloman, NC Justice Academy
Alex Setzer, Criminal Justice Standards Division
Mark Strickland, NC Justice Academy
Sam Tracy, Intern, NC Department of Justice
Dan Worley, NC Justice Academy

Visitors Present:

Dr. Donna Bickford, UNC-CH Women's Center
Rachel Braver, Legal Aid of North Carolina
Steve Johnson, Firearms Subcommittee Member

Bob noted that Autumn Hanna could not attend because she was administering a test. Richard Hammett could not attend because he was conducting physical fitness assessments for his BLET.

Bob introduced new Committee member Mack Creson who is a Sergeant with the Asheville Police Department. He replaces member Laura Kruger who was unable to continue to serve on the Committee due to a position reassignment.

Bob asked for approval of the April 17, 2009 meeting minutes. Kathryn Bryan made the motion to approve the minutes. Wrenn Johnson seconded. **The motion was approved.**

Law Enforcement Driver Training

Bob explained that the packet of information on Driver Training had been disseminated to Committee members prior to the meeting. Some members had already offered input. He asked Dan Worley, Specialized Driver Training Instructor, NC Justice Academy, to present recommendations of the Driver Training Subcommittee.

Dan stated the current BLET driver training materials are not specific enough, and that driving instructors across the state vary somewhat in their grading and evaluation of students. The revisions should make more clear how this training should be administered in BLET.

Jason asked if there was any verbiage in the lesson plan concerning what size cones (minimum or maximum) should be used. Dan stated that the Driving Subcommittee talked about the issue, but decided not to include a requirement. A requirement of cone size might force some agencies/institutions to buy new cones.

Jason asked if this could be a problem since the size is not mentioned. Dan stated his Committee was not aware of any problems in the past. Jason mentioned that use of smaller cones could give an advantage in some cases. He suggested adding a minimum cone size requirement.

Several members suggested a minimum of 18 inches for the cone size. Jason suggested researching what is the typical patrol vehicle bumper height and then decide on the minimum size cone.

Bob suggested voting on the driver training packet as presented and at the next meeting decide about the size of cones. He asked Dan Worley to check the patrol vehicles for bumper height so that members can take action at the next Revision Committee meeting.

Steve Warren made a motion to accept the proposed driver training course description packet. Wayne Lamm seconded. **The motion was approved.**

Drivers License Requirement

Bob reported that he and Mark Dearry had received several inquiries from schools concerning this issue. Such questions as should schools require students entering BLET to possess a valid drivers license; should students beginning driver training be required to have a drivers license; should students have a drivers license before driving cars on public roadways during BLET; and do students need exclusively a North Carolina license. Dan Worley's subcommittee addressed the issue and drafted a proposal. This proposal would require students to possess a drivers license

before participating in BLET Driver Training or the Specialized Driver Training Instructor Training course.

Joy expressed some concern that the Commission might be exceeding their authority in adding this requirement. She recommended a note be included in the Course Management Guide reminding instructors that if students participate in Driver Training they would have to comply with NC General Statute 20-7 and 20-28. The goal is to resolve the issue so that a law will not have to be created/changed.

Several members thought students should have a level of competency in order to drive a vehicle in BLET. Having a drivers license would indicate some level of competency. Members agreed there was a need for a drivers license before entering BLET.

Dan Worley reminded members that the language his subcommittee drafted applied to Driver Training only. If the proposal is to be applied to entry into the BLET program, the language will need to be modified.

After much discussion, members agreed not to add this requirement since there is already a statute in place concerning the operation of a motor vehicle. Bob will add an instructor note in the blocks of BLET affected and the *Course Management Guide*. The note will state that students must be in compliance with NC General Statutes concerning drivers licenses.

Steve Warren made a motion to add the instructor note to all relevant BLET lesson plans and the *Course Management Guide* advising school directors that during BLET, students who operate a vehicle must comply with NC General Statutes. Kathryn Bryan seconded. **The motion was approved.**

Off-Road Recovery

Bob stated that the Driver Training Subcommittee also added the information concerning off-road recovery to the Law Enforcement Driver Training lesson plan. No committee action was necessary.

Steve Warren suggested adding in the instructor notes section of this lesson plan a reminder to school directors of the value to familiarize students with the student's agency vehicle. The school directors can enhance their training program by adding this familiarization activity.

Firearms

Bob explained that he had received several calls from agencies informing him their agency did not issue shotguns; instead, they use rifles and they wished to qualify with rifles rather than shotguns. This issue was referred to the Firearms Subcommittee.

Steve Johnson represented the Firearms Subcommittee and presented its recommendation that the shoulder weapons requirements be eliminated from BLET. Several agencies are now issuing carbines rather than shotguns. The difficulty in adding rifle training to BLET is the many

varieties of rifles and the number of hours needed for this block if rifle training was added. Agencies could use in-service training to meet the need to train on shoulder weapons if it is deleted from BLET. The reduction in time for this block, as a result of eliminating the shoulder weapons training (8 hours), could be used for more extensive and realistic handgun training. Steve felt the total hours should still be 48.

Most members agreed the Firearms block should be left at 48 hours—officers need training in firearms fundamentals. Steve stated that the Commission would probably inquire about a reduction in time for this block since the shoulder weapons training would be deleted.

Steve Johnson stated the handgun training could be expanded by 8 hours to include drills, combat training, night handgun training, etc. The school director could decide in what area of firearms handgun training the 8 hours would be used.

Jason asked how this elimination of shoulder weapons requirement would affect a school's equipment requirements. Bob stated it would eliminate the requirement to own the shoulder weapons. Mark Dearry agreed.

Sammy Turner made a motion to eliminate the shoulder weapons requirements for BLET. Mack Creson seconded. **The motion was approved.**

Sammy Turner made a motion to keep the number of hours for the Firearms block at 48 and add 8 hours to handgun training. Kathryn Bryan seconded. **The motion was approved.**

If approved by E&T, this change will take effect July 1, 2010. Bob will notify school directors of the change after E&T meets and approves the proposal.

Human Trafficking

Jennifer Fisher, Instructor/Coordinator with the NC Justice Academy and a member of the NC Human Trafficking Task Force, presented information on human trafficking and the draft lesson plan the Task Force would like added to BLET. She reported that one study indicated that 77% of law enforcement agencies didn't believe they had human trafficking in their jurisdiction. After receiving training on this topic, then 92% of the agencies believed there was human trafficking in their jurisdiction. Human trafficking is the number two most profitable crime in the U.S.; drug trafficking is number one.

Rachel Braver, also a member of the Task Force, stated that a number of factors make North Carolina vulnerable to human trafficking: major interstate highways, labor intensive industries (agriculture, etc.), large military bases and tourism. She mentioned that this topic will be included in the 2011 in-service training.

Dr. Donna Bickford, another Task Force member, stated that the public is becoming more aware of the human trafficking situation. She mentioned that they have established rapid response teams that have services in place for victims of this crime.

Jennifer stated that law enforcement officers are the primary contact with these human trafficking situations, and the crime is connected with so many other crimes officers investigate. This lesson plan is a basic level awareness training to help officers recognize the indicators that will lead them to victims of the crime. The training will be 2 hours.

Kathryn Bryan added that federal officials had notified agencies in the northeastern part of the state that North Carolina had become a focal point for federal investigation and prosecution of these crimes.

Jason asked if this information was identified in the recent task analysis. Bob answered “no.” He explained that in the past, topics have been added to BLET as new issues emerge after a task analysis has been completed. Jason posed the possibility of this training fitting into another lesson plan, i.e., Patrol Techniques, Dealing with Victims and the Public, or Domestic Violence. Jennifer answered that it could be included in another lesson plan. Jason then asked if the 2011 in-service topic is required. Mark Strickland stated it will be a choice topic.

Overall, members agreed there was a need for this training. Bob stated that if the topic was added, a rule change would be necessary and the change would probably become effective in January 2011. After a lengthy discussion, a motion was presented.

Sammy Turner made a motion to add the 2-hour topic of Human Trafficking to BLET. Wrenn Johnson seconded. **The motion was approved.**

Legal Counsel’s Report

Bob reported that the Health History Form and Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire in the Physical Fitness Training block of BLET has been revised by removing the question regarding family history of heart problems. The corrected form has been sent to school directors and posted on the Academy’s BLET web page.

Joy discussed the federal legislation titled Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA), passed in 2008 and becoming effective in 2009. It prohibits discrimination for employment and insurance based on an applicant’s family medical history and genetic information. Legal Counsel’s recommendation to the Commissions will be to modify the F1 and F2, removing the question concerning family medical history. A physician may collect the information; however, it will not be required for them to provide the information to the Commission. Physicians will not be required to collect the family history information. Joy explained the importance of the Commissions’ not appearing to be “inadvertently” involved in the collection of the family medical history information.

Criminal Justice Standards Division Report

Mark Dearry had nothing to report.

Sheriffs’ Standards Division Report

Bob stated Autumn Hanna had nothing to report.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held April 16, 2010, at 10 a.m. at Johnston Community College.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Holland