



OCCUPATIONAL FIRST AID ATTENDANTS ASSOCIATION NEWS

ISSN: 1202-760X
Printed: January 2005

www.ofaaa.bc.ca

Issue 4, Vol. 2004

AGM
January
26th
2005

Training Agencies Association 1 Year Old

By Allan Zdunich

The BC Association of Independent First Aid Training Agencies (BCAIFATA) celebrated their one year anniversary at their meeting hosted by Elaine Shigetomi, Secretary/Treasurer of the Association held at the Care Institute of Safety and Health in Vancouver Saturday November 20th, 2004.

Although the idea of first aid training schools forming an organization had been discussed for many years it was only with the withdrawal, in the last few years, of the WCB from its role of formulating and guiding first aid policy that the idea became the reality. The BCAIFATA Directors present for the meeting discussed their Association for this Newsletter.

Paul Stephenson, President of the Association and owner of Trauma Tech in Vancouver, explained that the late Richard Courtenay, the long time Director of the First Aid Section at the WCB, had encouraged the schools to form an association for many years. "There had been some ad hoc committees over the years and with the regulatory changes from prescriptive to performance based the Association naturally arose" he stated.

The BCAIFATA proposes in its Mission Statement: "To ensure that our Members provide the highest quality first aid and safety training to all students" among its membership, the privately owned schools. They share knowledge and experience to "come to an industry best practice to fulfill the WCB requirements." Paul, with the agreement of the members, stated: "The Association is in discussion



BCAIFATA Directors Top, L to R: Joe Bellamy, Joan Gallant, Lorna Larsen, Bob Symington, Jenny Symington, Skeleton, Paul Stevenson, and Elaine Shigetomi
Bottom, L to R: John Cole, Sonia Cole, Wendy Lukas, and Jim Launay. *Photo by: A. Z.*

with the WCB; the Board and the Association are looking at industry-wide quality assurance and steps that can be

Mission Statement: "To ensure that our Members provide the highest quality first aid and safety training to all students"

taken to maintain quality assurance of program delivery."

Association members explained that all examiners employed by member agencies must also be instructors, having taught at least two courses in the previous 24 months. This is a dramatic difference from the previous examination system where the WCB Officers conducted the examinations and most Board FAO's had never taught the (post 1999) training

modules with which students were graded.

Jim Launay of Coast/Advanced First Aid in Nanaimo reported that for their students "the pass/fail rates are in keeping with the historical statistics kept by the Board." Other owners agreed.

continued on page 6...

INSIDE:

AGM Notice	...2
Directors Change	...2
Level 3 Equivalent Course	...3
EMR Manual Review	...4
Public Access Defib.	...5
Training Agencies con't...	...6
Discounts	...7
WCB policy changes	...8

...continued from
front page

...Training Agencies

The Association is focused exclusively on the training aspect of first aid and safety, and agencies which do independent course creation are not eligible for membership, due to concerns about course content and liability issues.

Colleges also are not eligible for membership as they are non-profit public institutions, although Paul stated that was still being discussed amongst the members.

This does not mean that Association members do not work with other training agencies; quite the contrary, member schools work closely with other training institutions, such as by conducting student exam evaluations (on a fee for service basis) for some colleges.

The recent WCB decisions to allow other courses to be "equivalent" to WCB courses have raised some concern with the Association members. The equivalency of other types of first aid training is questioned by the Association because students can receive equivalency for courses which are shorter or more varied than the Level 2/3 courses together with certification for an examination procedure that may not be as rigorous. Commenting on the Justice Institute bridging equivalency being less rigorous, Jim asserted that "the examination process is not equivalent to the Level 3 exam process." (See information on course equivalencies on page 8)

After discussing the increasing paramedic content of courses occurring through course equivalency, Paul stated on behalf of the other members that "Employers want a quality occupationally focused course, not a paramedic course, that meets the requirements in a timely cost efficient manner." Jim stated that "About 4 or 5% of first aid students

want to move up in the field to paramedics, the rest do not want to be trained as paramedics."

Expressing the concern that the training must be appropriate to the available equipment; Lorna Larsen of FACTS in Vernon stated that "Employers do not have paramedic equipment; they have first aid equipment for their attendants to use."

Liability issues with independent courses are also a concern to the Association members, since procedures taught may be different from the basic level of care the WCB expects from an attendant (primarily Levels 2 and 3) and therefore a school or an individual may be defending themselves on liability issues for using a protocol that is not the WCB's protocol, relying on the resources of the training agency/course creator without the support of the WCB. Due to this circumstance Paul stated that "The schools did not want the liability of using other courses."

The scope of what the BCAIFATA intends to achieve is to promote a high level of first aid training within and outside its membership: to the whole industry. The Association will be offering Instructor workshops in June 2005 open to all Level 1, 2, 3, and equivalencies Instructors to review training matters, with workshops lead by Dr. Al Holmes, Ron Straight and others.

The Association has member agencies from Vancouver Island, Kamloops, central Okanagan, and the lower mainland, and is hoping to attract members from the northern region. Meetings are held every two months and rotate among the regions.

For further information contact Elaine Shigetomi, Secretary/Treasurer BCAIFATA at, telephone: 604-873-6018, or toll free at: 1-800-923-4566.

Comments are invited.

Instructor
workshops
will be
offered in
June to any
and all
instructors