

BCCTPC Update May 2006



772 Certified Flight Paramedics

Greetings from the Board for Critical Care Transport Paramedic Certification, known to most of you as the FP-C Board. Our last update in the fall of 2005 made you more aware of the process of establishing a certification exam.

The FP-C Board met last month in conjunction with the CCTMC in Las Vegas. I would like to outline changes that will directly affect those of you invested in the exam process.

Exam Sites

After reviewing feedback and suggestions from Flight Paramedics who have taken the exam, multiple exam sites were set up in different areas of the country to ensure better accessibility. The goals were to reduce the costs associated with hosting an exam, while attempting to draw more people to each exam site by regionalizing the testing places. We are monitoring this on an ongoing basis and will make the necessary changes to ensure that we are meeting your exam needs. We have initiated a flat fee of \$450 to host the exam, making it easier for programs to budget. This is a dramatic change from previous tests. The host program was responsible for all proctor travel costs, which varied greatly for each location. I am confident that this will be advantageous to all in cost management.

Applied Measurement Professionals

Most of you know that AMP is the statistical body that provides oversight on the exam process and ensures that the certification process is in compliance. The methods used by AMP are consistent with professional and technical guidelines detailed in the Standards for Educational and Psychological testing (1999) by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education. These standards provide the research framework that is used as a basis for validity of certification. The methodology used meets or exceeds the current professional and governmental standards to assure the defensibility of the exam, as well as meets or exceeds the standards of the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA).

During our meeting in Las Vegas, we handed over the responsibility of scoring the exam to AMP. This is a necessary step that will allow us to statistically track every question on the exam and enable the board to identify trends or issues with specific questions in a more timely manner. This, of course, will be an additional cost to our operating budget. However we have made the decision not to pass this on with increased exam fees. The downside of this process is that you will no longer have the convenience of receiving exam results via e-mail. Those taking the exam will now receive their results directly from AMP, via USPS mail, within four weeks of taking the exam. AMP will provide each candidate with an exam breakdown, giving you a score in every category of the exam. This will help to pinpoint your strengths and weaknesses that will allow you to focus on specific areas.

Item Writers

We have reorganized our Item Writing Committee this year bringing on a new set of faces to ensure that the exam process stays fresh and represents a cross section of the Paramedics from different geographical areas of the United States. We would like to express our thanks to all

of the Item Writers that have participated for the last few years. Their efforts led to the development and success of the exam. We applaud their efforts and thank them for a job well done.

Each Item writer is responsible for the creation, research and submission of approximately fifteen original exam questions per quarter. More information on how to become an Item Writer will be available in the next newsletter.

Computer Based Testing

We have entered into an agreement with AMP to provide computer based testing for the exam. We will continue to provide paper and pencil exams for those who prefer it and, of course, the exam will always be offered at the national conferences. The computer version of the exam will be available to you by August at learning centers throughout the United States. Computer based testing will require an additional fee of \$45. This cost is a direct hand down from the learning centers and hopefully will be less than the costs that you incur in traveling to a current host site. You will be able to register and locate a testing center through our web site. We believe that this will now make the exam process more accessible to all.

German version

We have been approached by German based Flight Paramedics to make the exam available in Europe, and in a second language. We currently have two German based flight paramedics that are certified. We are in the process now of having the exam professionally translated to meet this need. American Eurocopter will sponsor travel costs for us to meet with the German Health Ministry/EMS agencies this summer to facilitate the FP-C process.

Cancellation Policy

Exam registration closes 10 days prior to every exam. This allows us to send all registrant information to AMP. It is crucial that the information is sent out on time to create an exam ID number for each candidate and prepare the exams.

There is a \$50 cancellation fee for all cancellations prior to registration deadline. There will be no refunds for anyone who cancels after the deadline, except in extenuating circumstances. All those who cancel after the deadline will forfeit their fee.

Re-certification

We are currently updating the re-certification process to bring us into compliance with the industry standard. The board had agreed to allow re-certification by continuing education credits (CEC). The concern with this is the considerable costs associated with performing CEC approval and proper CEC audits to ensure compliance with the certification process. We understand that this has been a common request from many exam candidates so we are willing to take on this challenge. We will have the specifics of re-certification requirements ironed out within the next few weeks and will provide additional information as it available.

If you have question or concerns please contact me at gpierce@phihelico.com
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