SUMMARY of the December 15, 2005 Meeting of the Radiologic Technology Certification Committee's Subcommittee studying Training Requirements for Operation of Digital Radiology Equipment

Chairman Edgar Bailey called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM.RTCC members present were: Dr. Jack Bois, William Braggins, Joyce Cohen, Dr. Bernie Goler, Melissa Martin, & Dr. Janis Owen. In addition there were 52 interested persons in the audience.

Mr. Bailey opened the meeting by discussing the purpose of the meeting; to examine the training requirements for the safe operation of Computerized Radiology & Digitalized Radiology (CR/DR) and also to review section 30447 (a)(6) of the California Radiation Control Regulations (CRCR) that prohibits holders of a limited permit from operating digital radiology equipment.

Mr. William Braggins questioned why interested parties on the RTCC mail list were not notified of the meeting in advance? Donald Bunn stated that the meeting announcement was mailed to fifty individuals and organizations on the RTCC mail list and the meeting announcement was also posted on the RHB web page under "hot topics".

Ms. Diane Przepiorski of the California Orthopedic Association (COA) opened the discussion by asking, "is the difference in the core radiology knowledge needed to operate analog x-ray equipment different than that what is required to operate digital x-ray equipment"? "There is no difference". Ms. Przepiorski then introduced **Dr. J. Anthony Seibert**, Medical Physicist who discussed and presented information regarding the pros and cons of film/screen vs. digital recording of x-ray images. Dr. Seibert stated that there is a lack of training for digital use in most Radiologic Technology training programs and he pointed out examples of fully licensed technologist who do not fully understand the CR/DR exposure index values. The use of CR/DR equipment has made the field of Radiologic Technology more complex and there is definitely a need for a good quality control and quality assurance program at every radiology facility that uses CR/DR equipment.

Dr. Seibert's entire presentation has been posted on RHB's web page. In summary Dr. Seibert said Vendors who set up CR/DR systems should use a quality control image phantom, and the phantom should be used at least annually at the facility, to verify the system is functioning properly. CR/DR has made radiology more complex and it is important for each facility to establish a quality assurance (CQ/CA) program to monitor image quality and changes in the radiology equipment frequently.

Question by Dr. Golar; what do Community Hospitals do when they establish a CR/DR system. **Answer by Melissa Martin**; most Hospitals have a dedicated QC technician and they also purchase a QC image phantom to check the equipment daily. Vendors who sell CR/DR equipment generally train the QC technicians how to monitor the system. Also, each machine at the facility must have a technique chart that is based on the machines output.

Question by Ed Bailey; who approves the QC phantom? Answer FDA should approve the phantoms.

Presentation by Bob Saltzman & Tony Reina of Imaging Solutions: Imaging Solutions is a small vendor that focuses on Doctors offices that employ limited technicians to take patients x-rays, primarily Podiatrist Offices. The company provides a three-day training program when their CR/DR equipment is installed. There needs to be a mechanism for allowing LPs to use CR/DR equipment and individuals who receive training and pass an examination should be allowed to use the new technology. Patient records are being converted to electronic format and Doctors with x-ray equipment need to convert to CR/DR to maintain high quality medical care.

Presentation by Ann Smetzer, Cabrillo College: There is no Gold Standard for QC/QA training at Radiologic Technology schools. Radiation Protection is the same for LPs and CRTs therefore, each should be allowed to use CR/DR if they receive the proper training and can demonstrate proficiency.

Ed Bailey summarized by saying two things are necessary; Training programs at CRT & LP schools should include CR/DR and CEU courses should be required for technologist who are working in the field.

OPEN PERIOD FOR COMMENTS BY THE AUDIENCE;

R. Nardinelle; read a complaint letter by Anita Slechta regarding lack of notification for the subcommittee meeting. Also, LPs should not be allowed to use CR/DR under any circumstances.

D. Przepiorski; COA wishes to proceed to develop requirements to allow LPs to use CR/DR and they are willing to work with RTCC to locate suitable training programs. She presented AGFA & Kodak CR/DR training syllabus as examples of vendor based QC/QA training.

J. Yates President of Radiologic Technology Training Association; urged the RTCC to not change section 30447 (a) (6).

L. Ortaga; there is a need to grow an educational base and all schools should welcome the additional curriculum covering CR/DR.

A. Bosley; instructor at Merritt College, Merritt College has a 52 hour CR/DR course as part of their CRT program.

C. Weaver; education is the key for successful use of CR/DR by AGFA film Co.

P.Jones; discussed QC/QA programs that were developed to improve mammography image quality why can't the same be done for CR/DR equipment? . Also, the meeting was not announced in accordance with the Bagley-Keen Open Meetings Act.

J. Crais representative of service employees international union. The union is opposed to allowing LPs to use CR/DR

L.Stiff; teaches CRTs and LPs the same basic curriculum

D. McMan, Santa Barbra College; ASRT has adopted CR/DR curriculum and also AIRS has a 3-4 unit curriculum that includes the physics of CR/DR. CRTs in the field for at least five years should all be trained in CR/DR. The training should be at least 15 hours.

L.Reed; there is room for CRTs & LPs to all work together but CRTs are better trained and can handle CR/DR better.

Dr. K. Steel, A podiatrist who also operates a mobile x-ray service and feels that both CRTs and LPs can operate CR/DR equipment safely if properly trained. RHB should set the standard and enforce it.

COMMENTS BY RTCC MEMBERS:

M. Martin; the image is only as good as the equipment used. All facilities should have a good QC/QA program in place.

J. Cohen; education in CR/DR should be offered to all users of x-ray equipment.

Dr. J Bois; the RTCC needs to develop an educational standard and let everyone who can master it use the technology. RTCC needs to set the standard because the new technology won't go away.

E. Bailey; RTCC needs to work toward what training is needed. CR/DR should be the same for CRTs and LPs. RTCC must decide what educational needs to be to use CR/DR.

W. Braggins; RTCC should to look to the work done by the subcommittee on Feb. 5, 2003 to determine what are the educational requirements for CR/DR. Also should look at what ARRT has developed for training.

MOTION by Melissa Martin: A subcommittee of the RTCC should be established to review curriculum for CR/DR training. **Motion Passed**

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM

Respectfully submitted by
Donald E. Bunn