



D.R.E. Committee Emergency Meeting

Minutes

July 7th, 2025
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Quick recap

The meeting focused on reviewing and amending the New Mexico DRE Committee bylaws, including changes to voting rights and membership structure, which were approved by the committee. The group discussed judicial positions and vacant committee seats, exploring potential candidates and addressing challenges in finding qualified individuals. Updates were provided on DRE program operations, including training sessions, instructor applications, and equipment needs, along with discussions on program retention and upcoming changes to criminal case scheduling.

Roll Call:

Conducted a roll call. The following D.R.E. Committee Members were present:

Jaime Gonzales	Michael Wells	Eden Flores
David Gonzales	Amber Sanchez	Roy Martinez
Candace Coulson	Brett Barnes	Charles Files

The following D.R.E. Committee Members were present via Zoom (online meeting platform):

Chyenne Bunker	Fabian Fernandez
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The following D.R.E. Committee Members were not present):

Kevin Bruno	Judge Kevin Fitzwater
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The following guests were present:

Paul Batcheller (IACP)	Linda Smith	Steve Lujan
Micah Doering		

Approval of minutes from last meeting:

N/A

Next steps

- Charles: Send updated bylaws with voting language changes to committee members
- Charles: Reach out to AOC regarding vacant judicial seat
- Charles: Contact John D'amato and Dory Smith in Santa Fe regarding defense attorney seat
- Charles: Add new enhanced standards regarding enforcement evaluation waivers to DRE documentation
- Charles: Purchase and distribute updated equipment to regional coordinators for DRE officers
- Charles: Open DRE instructor applications around August 1st
- Charles: Send memo to DRE instructors to watch for potential cases that could challenge current case law
- Charles: Work with Amber on exploring tablet funding options for DRE program
- Charles: Schedule next committee meeting for September 22nd and send invitations
- Regional Coordinators: Identify and recommend potential DRE instructors for upcoming openings
- Regional Coordinators: Identify dates for 2026 DRE training in their respective regions
- Committee Members: Submit nominations (if applicable) for 2024 DRE of the Year before next meeting. Watch for potential 2025 candidates for this recognition

Summary

Call to Order

Charles Files called the meeting to order at 0902. Brief introductions were made by those present, followed by those attending virtually.

New Mexico DRE Bylaws Update

The meeting focused on reviewing and amending the New Mexico DRE Committee bylaws. Charles presented changes to voting rights, allowing all committee members except judicial officials to vote, and outlined the updated membership structure. The committee approved the proposed bylaw amendments, and Charles agreed to distribute the updated bylaws after the meeting. The meeting also briefly touched on vacant committee seats, though no new information was provided on this topic.

*0910 **Motion to approve** the bylaws as modified made by Michael Wells, **seconded** by Jaime Gonzales.*

Judicial Seat Filling Discussion

The group discussed several judicial and legal positions, including vacant seats and potential candidates. Charles suggested verifying information (vacant seats) found on the old nmdre website and exploring options for filling the judicial seat, considering retired magistrates as a possibility. They discussed the challenges of finding qualified candidates who meet judicial standards and the importance of having both defense and prosecution representation on the committee. The group agreed to reach out to the administrative office of the courts and potential defense attorneys for consideration (John D'Amato or Dorie Smith).

DRE Recertification and Committee Updates

The committee discussed several updates and issues related to their operations. Charles reported on vacant committee seats and potential new members, including Dr. Gillian from SLD who expressed interest. They reviewed DRE decertification's and upcoming recertification training scheduled for July 18th in Albuquerque. Charles raised concerns about the New Mexico enhanced standards for recertification, particularly the requirement for two enforcement evaluations per year, and suggested the committee consider waiving this standard for certain DREs who are unable to meet it due to their roles.

DRE Re-Certification New Mexico Enhanced Standard

The committee discussed waiving enforcement evaluation standards for DREs who cannot complete them due to agency policies, agreeing to allow DREs to submit a memo explaining the

situation to the committee for review. They decided that department heads should sign off on these memos to demonstrate agency support for the DRE certification. Once received, the memo will be shared with the Committee, who will vote on waiving the enhanced standard on a case-by-case basis.

*0956 **Motion to approve** amended New Mexico's Enhanced Standard regarding enforcement evaluations made by Jaime Gonzales, **seconded** by Michael Wells.*

DRE of the Year Recognition

The committee also explored awarding a 2024 DRE of the Year, with Andres Lucero from APD having the most evaluations, but requested nominations from members to make a final decision. The Committee discussed that the DRE of the Year should be awarded for reasons beyond total evaluations, but overall contributions to the program. No nominations were made at the meeting. If any nominations are brought forward in the coming weeks, Charles will share with the Committee via email for a vote. Charles agreed to start compiling 2025 evaluation numbers at the September meeting to begin the process for the 2025 DRE of the Year award.

Break between 1000 and 1017

DRE Training Schedule Planning 2025-2026

Charles discussed the scheduling and planning for the upcoming DRE (Drug Recognition Expert) training sessions and events in 2025 and 2026. He proposed holding a large DRE school in October 2025, with the possibility of smaller classes in spring 2026, and requested approval to contact a roster of previously selected candidates. The group agreed to consider scheduling a large class in October (October 20th-31st) and potentially smaller classes in spring, with Charles planning to reach out to the roster to gauge interest.

2025 Field Certifications

Charles discussed this year's field certifications. He noted that Mesa is no longer available for field certifications, and they are exploring options with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) in San Francisco and South Sacramento. Charles will share tentative dates for this year's field certifications with the Committee and instructors as soon as they become available.

DRE Instructor Training Location Updates

Charles discussed the status of Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) instructor applications. Charles outlined the qualifications for DRE instructors, which include being a certified DRE with at least

two years of consecutive experience, being in good standing with the DRE program, and having agency support from their department. He plans to open applications for new instructors around August 1st and will review qualifications at the next meeting.

DRE Program and Subcommittee Updates

Charles provided updates on two subcommittees and the DRE program. He discussed the ongoing search for a case involving bad driving and visual detection of impairment, which the subcommittee is still looking for. A case was identified during the meeting, which was shared with Candace for further follow-up. Charles also reviewed the Aleman Subcommittee's interpretations of key case law regarding DRE testimony and the state's position on DRE protocols. This information was confirmed to be current by the TSRP and will continue to be shared with DREs at recertifications and DRE students in trainings. Brett Barnes also shared issues concerning toxicology using an Arizona case (*Smith v Arizona*).

New Mexico DRE Program Updates

Charles reported that there are currently 61 certified DREs in New Mexico. Charles presented a map showing the distribution of law enforcement agencies across New Mexico, highlighting areas with limited coverage, particularly in the northeastern and central regions. Charles identified an ideal number of around 80 DREs. However, our goal is identified to recruit and certify at least 100 DREs around New Mexico. He noted that cannabis enforcement has become the primary focus, accounting for nearly 90% of enforcement evaluations in 2024, with a total of 219 evaluations, which was a significant increase. Charles also discussed the purchase of new equipment, including pen lights and thermometers, and requested feedback from DRE instructors on any equipment needs or preferences. He proposed distributing equipment through region coordinators and offered to ship items as needed.

DRE Program and Training Updates

Charles provided an update on DRE instructors in New Mexico, noting that Captain Reedy had left the program and that regional coordinators would be considered for future instructor positions. He discussed the upcoming 2025 IDTS Conference and mentioned that the DRE national database would be discontinued, with potential funding available for states to develop their own databases. Additionally, there may be funding available for State DRE Programs for data collection and call-out programs. Both were well received by the DRE representation and will be explored further by Charles and Amber. Charles also highlighted three online training resources available through the DOJ COPS office training portal: ARIDE Refresher, DRE Expert Insights, and Better Encounters. Finally, he mentioned ongoing projects at NHTSA, including an

impaired driving enforcement training study and a central repository for law enforcement traffic safety resources.

DRE Program Updates and Retention

The meeting focused on program updates and retention challenges for DRE (Drug Recognition Expert) instructors. Charles discussed the need to retain DREs and mentioned plans to recognize a DRE of the year. The group also talked about upcoming changes to the scheduling order for criminal cases, which could lead to faster trial dates. Roy Martinez announced an upcoming checkpoint class on July 25th and Managing Police Traffic Services class scheduled for August 18th in Santa Fe. Brett Barns announced he will no longer be serving as the States' TSRP and will be taking a position with the Assistant United States Attorney's Office. The State will be hiring a new TSRP, as well as a MVD specific TSRP. The next committee meeting has been confirmed for September 22nd in Albuquerque.