

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY

COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting held at Chief State's Attorney's Office, Rocky Hill

April 12, 2007

ATTENDEES: Deb Arrieta, DEMHS; Cheryl Assis, CRCOG; Bill Austin, CRCOG; Edward Badame, South Fire; Timothy Baldwin, Southbury; Brenda Bergeron, DEMHS; Peter Boynton, USCG; Kristin Dean, CRCOG; Douglas Dortenzio, Wallingford; Marion Evans, BHD; Tom Gavaghan, DEMHS; Len Guercia, DPH; Albert Hoffman, USCG; Bob Labanara, CCM; Michael Maglione, Waterbury FD; Katherine McCormack, Hartford; Jim Mona, DOT; Jim O'Leary, COST; Bill Palomba, DPUC; Doug Pesce, DHS; Gary Pescosolido, DEMHS; Ray Philbrick, DPW; Roy Piper, DEMHS; William Podgorski, DPS; Joseph Portereiko, Hartford Hosp.; Susan Rainville, POSTC; Wayne Rioux, Manchester; Ed Rodriguez, USAR; Daniel Ronan, USCG; Robert Ross, USAR; Mark Samsel, Bloomfield; Wayne Sandford, DEMHS; Vito Savino, USAR; John Shaw, MMRS; Erik Snowden, CRCOG; Gary Stango, Hartford; Dan Stebbins, USAO; Scott Szalkiewicz, DPH; James Thomas, DEMHS; Lee Toffey, DEMHS; Michael Varney, DOIT; Roy Walton, CTNG; and Dan Warzoha, Greenwich.

I. WELCOME AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- A. Meeting called to order by Commissioner Thomas at 0909 hours, and Pledge of Allegiance. Introduction of Captain Daniel Ronan of the U.S. Coast Guard who will be taking the place of Captain Peter Boynton in June.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A. Michael Spera excused from the meeting by Commissioner Thomas via email to deal with events in Old Saybrook.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

- A. Motion made to accept the minutes of the March meeting by Doug Dortenzio; second by Bill Austin; approved unanimously.

IV. COMMUNICATION RECEIVED

- A. Letter regarding "Standardized Police Identification Card." Commissioner Thomas advised that he has been in contact with Mike Spera, chair of the Credentialing Committee, DPS, Captain of the Port, etc. to discuss FRAC (First Responder Authenticity Card) and they will discuss how to proceed.

V. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Interoperability Committee –

- The National Governors Association (NGA) in conjunction the National Public Safety Communications Department of Homeland Security SAFECOM Program and the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) hosted a Statewide Planning Workshop March 20-23 to brief states for preparing their Statewide Communications Interoperability Plans. According to NGA all states must submit a statewide plan by September 30th 2007. Connecticut is sent a team of individuals to this conference; an after conference report and presentation was given to detail the project to the Comm. Of DEMHS, DOIT and DPS. A project tem has been identified and initial action steps are being developed. A more detailed report will be made regarding this project in the future.
- A presentation was made at the last monthly meeting at Bradley Fire Air Guard, by the CTNG explaining and demonstrating the new communication capabilities of their Joint Incident Site Communications Capability (JISCC) system
- The Communications Unit Leader program developed for Region 1 has been reviewed submitted to DHS for their possible use as the national program. Significant interest from around country regarding this program.
- STOCS Low power cross-band / multi-band devices operational testing is completed. A contract award is being made for the units. Expected delivery of the units once ordered is eight weeks, they will then be available for training and deployment. It is anticipated to deploy approximately 100 units.
- A Transit Grant working with NY and NJ to enhance communications on the rail systems has been submitted. Connecticut's priority with the grant is to create a mechanism for all emergency responders to communicate with the rail system from Greenwich to New Haven. An enhancement grant of the proposal is being developed for the FY07 grant period to cover more of western CT.
- The I-CALL / I-TAC updated training programs have started to be delivered around the State, 11 programs have been delivered through the CT Fire Academy training calendar. Battery replacement for the issued portables has been coordinated with the Department of Public Safety and was made available at these training sessions. Anyone needing to replace existing batteries should contact DPS Communications in Middletown.
- Next Regular meeting is scheduled for April 17th 1PM at DOT Research lab in Rocky Hill.

- ### B. Citizen Corps Advisory Council – Bill Austin reported that the committee met on March 22nd and the draft bylaws were handed out for action at the next meeting. Citizen Corps will participate in the CCM/DEMHS Conference on May 1st and will be sending a representative to the 2007 Conference in Arlington, VA. They are expecting several hundred participants for the Sheltering Drill and will be part of the exercise scheduled in Region 5. Next meeting will be May 26th.

C. Credentialing Committee – No report in the absence of Mike Spera.

- C. Training/NIMS Committee – Deputy Commissioner Sandford reported that Libby Graham attended last month's meeting to discuss the stipend issue. The issue of requesting money in excess of the \$200 per day stipend limit was brought up at a previous meeting. Also discussed was having an exercise which included a WMD component, and communication protocols – when to use radio codes and whether to use plain language when an event becomes multi-discipline or multi-jurisdictional. Three members of the committee attended a meeting in Albany, NY with the federal representatives of the National NIMS Compliance group who discussed the issue of ISC 300 and 400 compliance and eligibility for 2007 grant monies. The courses may no longer be required for funding but encouraged. The committee recommends to the Council that Connecticut stay the course and continue to require people in the state to attend the training. A motion was made by Deputy Commissioner Sandford to support the continued NIMS 300 and 400 training regardless of what the federal government requires for FY2007, to comply with our State Strategy. Second by Len Guercia. Discussion ensued. A motion was made by Marion Evans to table the previous motion until the documentation can be researched and to re-address the issue at the May meeting. Second by Bill Austin, passed unanimously.
- D. Incident Management Teams – The IMT committee met on the 29th of March and reviewed the established training guidelines and determined positions within the IMT's by grouping. The hurdles of the training appear to have been resolved and significant discussion on recruitment took place. A presentation has been developed for the recruitment component, and will be reviewed with the Regional Coordinators at our next meeting. The group intends to have a presentation prepared for the council at the next meeting. The IMT committee will have a booth at the Emergency Management Symposium on May 1.
- E. Child Safety & Crisis Response: Deputy Commissioner Sandford reported that the meeting scheduled needed to be postponed until May where a proposal for funding will be discussed.
- F. Mutual Aid Legislative Subcommittee – Brenda Bergeron reported that the bill has passed through the Public Safety and the Planning and Development committees so far.
- G. Regional Collaboration Committee – Gary Pescosolido reported in Libby Graham's absence that the guidance has been released. Commissioner Thomas stated that there have been meetings in the regions and that OPM officials and others have been brought onboard to strengthen these relationships. As an example, in Region 4 the three RPO's have agreed to work together.

Motion to accept committee reports was made by Bill Austin, second by Gary Stango, unanimously approved.

VI. UPDATES

A. Grant Program – Gary Pescosolido gave the following report:

FY07 – The grant application was submitted last month and Libby wished to extend her thanks to all the stakeholders for their help. It is a competitive grant and was submitted with a budget of \$26.7 million. Historically we have received approximately 50% of the requested budget.

FY06 – The grant awards are being released to the Towns and RPO's so spending can begin as soon as the remaining FY04 and FY05 funds are spent down.

FY05 – is over 90% obligated/spent. The remaining monies include part of the Interoperable Communications monies.

FY04 – There is 45 days until the end of the grant period and the grant is 99% spent. The remainder is paperwork in process and will be completed shortly.

FY03 – We received \$2.7 million from DPS relating to FY03 Part 2 grant which we have exhausted. Going into the 120 day closeout period of the grant.

B. CTIC – Commissioner Thomas advised that the CTIC is fully staffed and doing an outstanding job. Hoping to host a RLO's conference soon and will continue to push the HSIN network. CTIC will be assisting with the UCONN Spring break. The next policy board meeting will be in May.

C. Urban Search & Rescue – Deputy Commissioner Sandford introduced Sgt. Vito Savino who replaced Sgt. Mike Nockunas as the head of the USAR Team. Sgt. Savino advised that the next monthly drill will focus on response time. The yearly review is due and staffing positions needed will be address afterward. USAR will have a booth at the CCM/DEMHS Conference. Also a meeting will be set up with DOT to address adding engineers to the Team.

Bob DiPietro submitted his report via email:

Training:

1. The Task Force Training Committee has decided to postpone our plans for training at the Center for National Response (CNR) tunnel in Charleston, West Virginia. It was felt a more cost-effective method of training needed to be explored. The cost of the program became cost-prohibitive. It is still our concern to provide realistic training for our members in order to sustain readiness and maintain morale.
2. The Task Force is planning a "deployment-type" drill to be held in May. The goal is to test our ability to "get out the door". The objectives are to prepare members to load equipment and develop a base camp.
3. The May drill will prepare us to conduct an integrated scenario-based exercise in June. We plan a two-day event with overnight activities. The location of the event will be our training pile at Bradley Field. This will be a hands-on rubble pile operation.
4. Members will complete the ICS-300 class delivered by the Fire Academy this month.

Other Items:

1. Stipend Positions: Task Force Leaders have posted an internal job announcement for two (2) logistics stipend positions. Members have applied. We are waiting for a definitive policy from DEMHS concerning reimbursements before our interview process continues.
2. New Task Force Leader: We are pleased to announce to the appointment of Mark Lewandowski to the position of Task Force Leader effective March 1, 2007. Mark fills the fourth TFL position. He is the Fire Chief for the Kensington Fire Department and Deputy Director of Training with the Connecticut Fire Academy. Mark was promoted from the rank of Planning Manager.
3. CCM/DEMHS Conference: The Task Force will maintain a booth at the May 1 conference in Cromwell. Various pieces of our equipment cache as well as TF members will be on display.
4. Equipment Update: The last stage of vehicle specifications has been completed. The purchase order is prepared to purchase roll-off storage containers and vehicles to haul them. The configuration resembles a large storage container designed to drop at a work site. Equipment is accessed through side opening doors. This allows a sheltered area for equipment deployment by logistics members. Equipment will be permanently stored on these "pods" for fast deployment. These units should be in service by July.
We are in the process of completing the final purchasing of our medical equipment. The Logistics Manager wanted to wait until the vehicles were purchased to ensure enough funding was available for the vehicles. One defibrillator was received as a donation and is being placed in service. Funding for this equipment was from the recent bond appropriation. Logistic Manager John Ricci is chiefly responsible for all the specifications and the facilitation of the purchasing. He is to be commended for his hard work on securing this project.
5. Structural Engineers: TFL John Mancini recently facilitated a meeting with the CT-DOT engineers. The purpose was to present the abilities of the Task Force and to solicit ideas from them on providing engineering services in the time of a building collapse. The meeting served as a networking opportunity but still shows the need for the team to recruit structural members to our team. The team is exploring the private sector for membership.

6. Memorandums of Understanding: The issue of providing State assurance to our membership that become injured in the line of duty and require worker's compensations benefits is well understood. Our members understand the procedures and coverage policies. What needs to be explored and codified is the status of member's health benefits enjoyed by them through their individual agency's collective bargaining agreements. Members fear the loss of these benefits if they were to suffer a career-ending injury while deployed as a US&R member. This is the key human resource issue affecting the task force today. It has been identified as a major objective to maintaining the high morale of our membership. Resolution of this issue through a memorandum of understanding needs to be facilitated soon.

D. Other – Captain Peter Boynton advised that sixteen applications were received for the Port Security Grant from state/local/private sector. They will be reviewed by DHS, USCG, and the Maritime Administration.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation on GIS – Geospatial Information System, by Michael Varney.

B. Commissioner Thomas spoke about DHS Bulletin #247 – “Preparing the States: Implementing Continuity of Operations Planning.”

C. Commissioner Thomas spoke regarding DHS Bulletin #248 – Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant Program. He reported that a group went to the PSIC Conference and that all pertinent parties will be working together to produce a strong project for Connecticut to include voice, data, and video. Michael Varney added that there is concurrence from the other commissioners involved and that this project will help with the TICP plans in the four remaining Regions and the Statewide Plan that is due in September.

D. Jim Mona spoke about the State of Connecticut Highway Policy to be completed and adopted by the State Agencies and the First Responder entities. A Statewide task Force will update the policy originally done in 1992 and it will be sent out to all constituents. The Transportation Strategy Board and the Incident management Task Force are developing a Unified Response Manual for multi-agency incident response which they expect to finish by early summer. They will then look to test the manual with exercises in both urban and rural areas. They hope to solicit staff and funding from all represented agencies to accomplish the task.

E. Bob Labanara requested a Pictometry update at the next meeting. Michael Varney advised that the group is working on a fact sheet that will answer many of the logistical and administrative questions that the Towns have been asking regarding this project. It will be completed by the may 1st Conference.

IX. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. CCM Conference – May 1, 2007, Cromwell CT.

B. Emergency Manager’s Conference – June 6th in West Haven at Savin Rock.

C. Dan Stebbins advised that the Feds are willing to participate so please invite them for COOP drills and that it is very valuable for them to know firsthand what the State’s capabilities are.

D. Commissioner Thomas advised that a handout was in the agenda packet that contained information on what Towns received from the CEDAP awards in the State of Connecticut.

X. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion made to adjourn by Gary Stango; second by Marian Evans; Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 1046 hours by Commissioner Thomas.

XI. NEXT MEETING – May 10, 2007 at 9am, at the Chief State’s Attorney’s Office, Rocky Hill.