

Rhode Island State Emergency Response Commission

July 11, 2011

2:00 PM

645 New London Avenue

Cranston, RI

Attendees:

Chief J. David Smith, RIEMA

Paul D'Abbraccio, RIEMA

Michael Dillon, LEPC-2

Raymond Laprad, RIEMA

David DiMaio, LEPC-3

James Larisa, Dept. of Labor and Training

Ed Johnson, RIEMA

Michael Carey, LEPC-5

Gina Friedman, RIDEM

Maryann Medeiros, USDOL – OSHA

Jim Ball, RIDEM

Old Business:

Chief Smith, who is leaving RIEMA this month, expressed his appreciation and gratitude for the partnership, support and relationships that developed during his tenure on this Commission. Due to the loss of funding, Chief Smith urged members of the Commission to apply for different grants and keep the work of this Commission on track. The Department of Commerce is announcing a

new grant for training in education and cyber security. The Commission should explore non-traditional avenues for securing grants.

FEMA has an initiative, and DHS is very interested, to tie in campuses to student evacuations, or whether campuses can be used to house people during a crisis, and if chemistry teachers could provide technical experience, meteorologists, etc.

Chief Dillon made a point that many projects were achieved under Chief Smith's direction. Chief Smith spoke briefly about a few recent accomplishments, for instance:

- Rhode Island is the first state in the country to have a statewide data network. The goal is to enhance that out to LTE.**
- The excellent quality of the web EOC**
- The primary service site, which was located in the trailer has been offloaded to another site, leaving the backup here, to allow for better resiliency and redundancy.**
- Also the credential/badges piece was discussed briefly. Craig Wilson is visiting EMA on August 21. Mr. Wilson is the country's top person for credentialing. He will be here for two days to explain how credentialing software can increase knowledge and security.**

Chief Smith turned the meeting over to Jim Ball.

Further old business: Gina Friedman emailed information regarding

mercury thermometers to members of the Commission and asked that any questions be forwarded to her. Mercury thermometers are still being manufactured and are sometimes hard to identify, but generally, they have a silver tip, though not necessarily. These thermometers are red and blue.

Jim Ball reminded everyone that EMA was doing a SEP with Westerly to clean out the chemicals in their schools. The town will pay for schools that have not been cleared out.

Chief Stanley, who is not present at the meeting today, had several questions related to radiological issues. Paul D'Abbraccio will be in contact with Chief Stanley on this.

Concerning the new SERC website, Ralph Bubar appeared before the Committee to answer questions concerning the use of grant monies.

Planning Committee Report:

No meeting last month. Everyone got \$10K to upgrade plans. Don't know if there is money for the conference in September. HMEP last year paid \$12K to support the conference besides money for tuition and hotels. Mike Castro is coming down to tour MOTIVA and Mike Sullivan is going to do a presentation on Thursday at the conference. Jim Ball will be meeting with Rick Jones.

Ralph Bubar: on website, we sent the request for 2010 grant and Ms.

Hamilton said it was not covered in grants. We when we wrote the 2011 grant application we put it in specifically for the website. We have not been notified yet if it is in the application. As for using grant money for the conference, if there is a planning component, the funds can be used for the conference. The grant closes on September 30th (HMEP). The grants expire on September 15, 2011. Suggestion to sit down with Ricky and discuss where funding for the conference attendees can be found. Chief Dillon will meet with Ricky in the next couple of days.

Training Committee Report:

All the money has been spent, so there have not been any meetings, but there is a meeting this month, as well as a Hazmat Tech class that was supposed to have happened but fell through; that money is back on the table. The training class had only two applicants. There is a meeting on July 20th at 1400 at the Armory. Also request for a HAZWOPER refresher probably in August or September. Gina Friedman said there were requests for the 40-hour course for those people who were shut out of the last class because there was no room. The Fire Academy can run an ops training class if enough people are interested (minimum of 10 needed). Michelle San Sousi is talking about bringing in a 40 hour ops training that is free, although there is no date yet (TEEX).

Tri State Report

- As it stands now there will be a functional exercise that was

supposed to be held in August but has been shifted to November, tentatively on the 9th.

- July 13th final planning conference for functional exercise, Blackstone Public Library
- August 9th functional for TTX at the site of the original full-scale, on the Blackstone River, in Blackstone Massachusetts, from 800-1500.

Functional exercises are more in-depth than tabletop exercises, in that you actually make the phone calls and make sure the connections work. It is being used to educate people for when there is a real situation when there is a full-scale exercise, so that they know what the issues are associated with bringing in equipment or personnel from one state to another, or whatever is necessary. The full-scale exercise, in the Port of Providence, is on September 10th, before the functional exercise, because of the funding requirements (expiration dates). Looking to have Connecticut bring in some buses so that we can bus people from the locations at the Port of Providence down to MOTIVA, which will put on a show and tell, explaining their equipment, safeguards, etc. Water supply is a problem and one that will need to be addressed at another time. Ray Laprad stressed the need to submit the paperwork (play forms).

LEPC District Reports

LEPC-1 Not Present

LEPC-2 Port evacuation drill was on June 8th.

On June 15th, held LEPC meeting.

On June 23rd, exercised LEPC Hazmat Response Plan; the plan was updated in June 2011.

Providence Fire Department put up a Facebook page this past Friday.

LEPC-3 Held meeting June 9th at 10 AM at CCRI; 25 attendees

Work on a district plan continues

Severe weather event on June 9th that came through Cranston and Providence affected 1.5 square miles, severely damaged trees. Were able to use the special needs registry, which worked well; able to identify about half a dozen people who needed oxygen.

LEPC-4 Not Present

LEPC-5 Last meeting June 23rd, approximately 14 people in attendance, held at the Newport Police Station.

Planning is ongoing to improve our emergency response plan subcommittee.

Next meeting on September 16th at the Middletown Police Station

New Business:

Gina Friedman:

Risk management planning website is being updated; an intern is working on it. The links are mostly broken because EPA switched all data to a new server without any way of linking to it. Instead of putting LEPCs up separately, we are just going to link to your website, so when you update there is not a double update.

Ms. Friedman requested that a letter to all school superintendents be mailed over the summer to remind them about chemical storage and

mercury thermometers and their disposal. These letters could be mailed by SERC or, better yet, LEPC Chairmen with their signature, or with OSHA signing off, or the Department of Training, Department of Education, etc.

A suggestion was made that the Department of Education should be made a part of SERC. (See following paragraph.)

Department of Labor and Training no longer inspects public schools. There is a Safety Compliance Unit, but there is no staffing for that unit. The law still requires that any school certified by the Department of Education needs to be inspected by the Department of Labor, Occupational Safety. The chemical labs, which in the past were inspected, all had a chemical hygiene plan and a chemical hygiene officer. Department of Labor would make sure they were adhering to the plan (labeling, discarding, safe storage, etc.), but that is no longer done. In addition, seminars on chemical hygiene that were effective in the past are no longer offered. Fear that there will be an increase of “incidents” in the future is growing, due to lack of inspection. Safety Compliance on the Occupational Safety website does not exist.

Gina Friedman will generate a letter concerning inspections, with input from each agency represented on SERC. This letter will be circulated to each school with an accompanying list of prohibited chemicals. Incorporating state colleges (RIC, CCRI, and URI) into the

letter circulation was strongly suggested. Hopefully this letter will be circulated before September school openings, at least to the superintendents and the Independent Schools Association. Letter to be ready for review at next meeting of the SERC.

Next Meeting:

SERC will meet on August 1st at 10 AM at RIEMA Headquarters.

Meeting adjourned at 3:16 pm