



Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council

MINUTES

May 16, 2006

2:00 PM

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Headquarters
645 New London Ave. – Cranston, RI

Agenda

I. Call to Order/Attendance

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM. In attendance were:

Janice McClanaghan, <i>RISEO</i>	Scott D. Caron, <i>Smithfield Fire Dept.</i>
Thomas Walsh, <i>TSA</i>	Tom McMillan, <i>Exeter EMA</i>
John Blessing, <i>RISP/RIDFSM</i>	Ray LaBelle, <i>E-911</i>
Jim Swanberg, <i>RISP</i>	Leo Kennedy, <i>Cranston Fire</i>
Thomas Kilday, <i>HEALTH</i>	Robert Warren, <i>RIEMA</i>
Representative Joseph Trillo	John Aucott, <i>RIEMA</i>
Leo Messier, <i>PEMA</i>	Howard Boksenbaum, <i>RIDO-DOIT</i>
Joseph S. Salter, <i>TSA</i>	Thomas Kogut, <i>RI DPUC</i>
Ross L. Aker, <i>Exeter Town Council</i>	Robert Johnson, <i>Exeter Town Council</i>
L. Anthony Cirillo, <i>RI DOH</i>	

II. Approval of Minutes from March 21, 2006

The chairman requested the approval of the previous meeting minutes from March 21, 2006 pending any corrections. The minutes were approved.

III. Introduction

A. Comments from the Chairman

Lt. Governor Fogarty noted the appointment of Rev. Holt as the new CEO of the Rhode Island American Red Cross.

Chairman Fogarty stated that he recently had communication with Mayor Avedesian of Warwick regarding its communication situation, regarding a

recent story in the Warwick Beacon. He then asked John Aucott if there was any money left from the DHS Grants to help Warwick implement an 800mhz interoperable communications system. According to John Aucott, the records show there is approximately \$7 million that communities have not spent and those funds should be available for reallocation to help Warwick implement 800mhz, should the city express an interest in doing so. Chairman Fogarty noted that as the second largest city of Rhode Island, it is imperative that their communications are up to date.

IV. Interoperable Communications Howard Boksenbaum, *RIDoIT*
Chief J. David Smith, *Narragansett Police*

Howard Boksenbaum and Chief Smith were introduced to update the council on Interoperable communications. The state now has 800mhz coverage for almost half of the state. This accounts for coverage of 75% of populated areas within Rhode Island. On June 5th there will be a new tower installed at DOT in Providence. The system allows fire or police in Westerly to talk with people all the way in Cranston, this is a first. The State of Rhode Island is two years ahead of schedule. For \$35 million the entire system would be complete and \$7 million less than the *RCC Study* “low estimate”.

They are very close to full implementation and are willing to work with any cities or sites interested. Chief Smith noted that RI has asked for \$30 million in additional funding to give 100% for all involved. Chief Smith is extremely confident that the RI plan fits exactly what the Federal government is looking for, and RI is ahead of schedule. He noted the URI search for the drowned students and how all the people involved were on the same band at the same time live and encrypted. There is currently an implementation to bring the communication to the cabinet level vehicles.

Representative Trillo asked if there were any “super sites”. Chief Smith answered that they are all now “super sites” and he can explain in detail privately. Essentially, the 800mhz band is so powerful that there is no longer a need for what in today’s standard is referred to as a “super site”. Representative Trillo asked how many talkgroups and people could be on the system before it is maxed out. Chief Smith answered that it would take hundreds and hundreds before it was maxed out. The ability to organize talkgroups on the band will prevent any particular band from being “maxed out”.

Lt. Governor Fogarty thanked Mr. Boksenbaum and Chief Smith for attending and presenting.

V. Hurricane Preparedness 2006 Preview – Robert Warren, *RIEMA*
Armand Randolph, *RIEMA*

Director Warren was introduced to give a preview of Rhode Island's hurricane planning. He began by noting that the plans call for the monitoring and implementation of procedures beginning at 72 hours out, then at 48 hours out and 24 hours out.

At 72 hours, the state must be aware, in stand by and capable of response. Because of the changing nature of hurricane monitoring, the details this far out must be vague. Once a hurricane is in the Bahamas, RI needs to pay attention.

Action plans must be ready to go at 48 hours. The hurricane plans have been broken down into a number of different areas: Donations and Volunteer Management, Resource Staging, Debris Management, Electric Power and Public Awareness.

For Donations and Volunteer Management, Adventist Community Services, United Way and Volunteer Center of RI have been contacted to help with donated goods, monetary donations and volunteers, respectively. For Resource Staging, RIEMA has adopted the FEMA staging, including the POD system. It is a manpower intensive plan. Debris Management has been rewritten and includes ID'd assessment teams. Electric Power has involved the PUC and National Grid. There is a re-entry plan. The Island Communities have been contacted and must consider evacuation at 72 hours.

The public awareness campaign will begin in June. RIEMA is working with the Providence Journal, programs with tourism and will be piggybacking with the state of Massachusetts for outreach.

Lt. Governor Fogarty asked about special populations. Director Warren noted that they have been identified and will be notified at the 48-hour mark. Director Warren also noted that there is a new EOC Manager position, which will be in charge of all ESF's. There are new purchasing agreements established for food and water, generators, public assistance and debris management. FEMA has warned that both the State and its citizens must be self-sustaining for 72 hours before FEMA will be ready to arrive.

Local EMAs have been asked to fix the evacuation signs. There will be conference calls available for all locals beginning at 72 hours out. Tom McMillan has asked what to do if his town will not cooperate. Director Warren responded that he would be happy to speak with the town council and anyone else involved in the planning.

Director Warren also announced that there is a regional drill for the Northeast in June by FEMA on June 20, 21 at the Coast Guard Academy in New London

V. Amber Alert Update - Capt. Jim Swanberg, Rhode Island State Police

Captain Swanberg was introduced to brief the council on Amber Alert. He announced that the Rhode Island State Police want to have another training. EAS redundancy has been installed at the State Police headquarters. There will be an after action report on the events from April 27th. Captain Swanberg ran through the policy for issuing an Amber Alert and noted that if a local police district feels an alert is necessary, they fill out a report and request the alert, the State Police review the report and information and determine whether or not an Amber Alert is in fact necessary. Lt. Governor Fogarty noted that testing, redundancy mock drills and the effort to work with locals by the State Police has all been excellent and a crucial piece to making the Amber Alert work.

VI. Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan – Dr. Anthony Cirillo, *RI Dept of Health*

Dr. Cirillo was introduced to brief the Council. He noted that a Pandemic will occur and that it is a matter of time. The key to surviving through the flu will be personal preparedness. So far to date there have been 208 documented human cases of H5N1 and millions in birds. RI has looked at national plans. There will be 10 geographic areas for health care in RI. There will be a tabletop exercise this Thursday. Dr. Cirillo noted that there will be a Pandemic Flu Advisory Committee meeting on May 31.

VII. New Business/Comments

Leo Messier announced a tabletop exercise and Amtrak drill for June. Janice McClanaghan noted that because of some extra dollars, the heating program was able to stay on a little longer and in total helped 28,891 people. RI received a total of \$21 million. Some of that money will be carried over into next year. TSA announced a hijack drill in July and a full exercise in the fall, the first large-scale drill since 1985. Ray Labelle noted a potential difficulty with Federal law and reverse 911, but is looking into it.

IX. Adjournment

The Lt. Governor motioned to adjourn and the motion was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 3:41 P.M.