



Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council

MINUTES

June 27, 2006

2:00 PM

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Headquarters
Cranston, RI

I. Call to Order/Attendance

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM. In attendance were:

Lt. Governor Charles Fogarty, Chairman
Christopher Albert, Lt. Governor's Office
John Aucott, RIEMA
James Lanni, RIPUC
Peter Marinucci, Providence EMA
Ray LaBelle, E-911
Al Araujo, Pawtucket EMA
Janice McClanaghan, RISEO
John Holt, Red Cross of RI
Thomas Walsh, TSA Rail Boston
Mike McDonough, TSA Rail Boston
Ray Sullivan, Prov. Com. Health Centers
Jim Blackburn, TSA, RI
Douglas J. Pesce, DHS, Risk Management

Robert Warren, RI EMA
Alan Gettman, RIDEM
Steven Kenney, NUWC
Lt. David Hayden- RI State Police
Lt. Scott D. Caron, Smithfield Fire
Paul Stasiuk, National Grid
Brian Pires, US Attorney's/ ATAC
Mike Mulhare, RIDEM
L. Anthony Cirillo, RI DOH
Jeff Moore, PSNC
Helen Govoni, Prov. Mutual Fire Insurance
Tom Burkart, Prov. Mutual Fire Insurance
Florence Gobin, Prov. Mutual Fire Insurance

II. Approval of Minutes from May 16, 2006

The chairman requested the approval of the previous meeting minutes from May 16, 2006 pending any corrections. The minutes were approved.

III. Introduction

A. Comments from the Chairman

Chairman Fogarty noted the Senate approval of George Farrell as Fire Marshall on June 13. He will begin in that capacity on July 10th.

The Chairman introduced Chris Albert, Chief of Staff, Office of Lt. Governor, who will be working with the Council, replacing Patrick Lynch.

US Department of Homeland Security “Nationwide Plan Review”

Chairman Fogarty asked for a review from Chief Warren on the Nation Wide Plan Review which was released on June 16th.

Director Warren said the positive review was achieved with the help of partners including the Health Department, Red Cross of RI, DOT and DEM who worked on the review. The Director noted that the planning that has occurred over the years, including the Search and Rescue teams, Decon Hazmat Teams, and planning for homeland security, all contributed to the positive assessment. Rhode Island finished in the top 10 in the country.

Amber Alert

Chairman Fogarty stated that the review of the Amber Alert Drill, conducted on April 27th, was complete and included 5 recommendations.

Lt. David Hayden said State Police were pleased with the success of the drill and said that many of the recommendations will be addressed with the new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) construction.

In new developments, Lt. Hayden informed the Council that there is a National Amber Alert Conference scheduled for July 17th and 18th in Albuquerque, NM, that he will be attending.

Lt. Hayden also stated he would send letters to all cities and towns to appoint a person to be the point of contact for the Amber Alert program. Collectively, those individuals will be brought together for a training session in August to review the National Department of Justice Protocol to initiate an Amber Alert. In order to issue an Amber Alert, certain specific criteria must be met. This will be an effort to make those criteria clear.

Chairman Fogarty said this protocol was important to establish due to recent issues which have developed as to when an alert should be issued.

Lt. David Hayden also stated that along with informing local officials that it is also important for the media to be clear as to what the national protocol is and he would work to involve the media in the training sessions as well.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Construction

Director Warren said Phase I of the project, The Command Center, is complete. Phase II, renovation of Classroom A and B is ongoing at time of the meeting. Classroom A will be an executive meeting room and Classroom B is being redesigned to support emergency support functions. Construction is estimated to be complete August 15th.

Pandemic Flu – Dr. Cirillo- HEALTH

Dr. Cirillo was introduced to update the Council on Pandemic Flu Planning. There were two exercises held, May 18th and June 15th. The exercises included planning of 4 pilot hospitals to coordinate regions throughout the state.

Dr. Cirillo also announced that an exercise is scheduled to take place at the Naval War College- Aug. 28th 29th regarding Medical Preparedness.

Chairman Fogarty asked about the progress on getting the word out to the community on how to deal with the effects of a pandemic flu outbreak.

Dr. Cirillo stated that HEALTH has been working with Catholic and public school superintendents to coordinate flyer distribution and also are working with other groups to distribute common messages regarding how to deal with a pandemic flu outbreak.

Dr. Cirillo also stated that he is working with schools to establish them as alternative care sites and is working with colleges and universities using their resources to address technical needs such as media production and foreign language translation.

Dr. Cirillo also noted that there had been a recent report of a human to human transmission in Indonesia where a family member transferred the virus to another family member. It was a small, contained cluster and had not acquired the ability to be spread to the larger population.

Flooding Situation

Chairman Fogarty asked the director about the current flooding situation given the recent heavy rains.

Director Warren noted that the Pawtuxet River crested at 1 inch over flood stage at noon and that the flood watch would be reduced in the morning.

B. Comments from the Vice Chairman, MG Robert Bray

Chairman Fogarty noted that MG Bray was in Iraq and not in attendance.

IV. West Nile/EEE Report – Alan Gettman, Ph.D., RIDEM

Alan Gettman, Ph.D. was introduced by Chairman Fogarty.

Dr. Gettman explained that the heavy rains mid-May produced a bumper crop of mosquitoes larger than past years. People started seeing mosquitoes around Memorial Day. This weekend received 3 inches of rain and has re-flooded depressions in woodlands and will likely produce a new crop of mosquitoes which will develop into adults in about 14 to 12 days.

Given that both West Nile and EEE have a strong tendency to be late summer diseases, Dr. Gettman stated that it is early to predict if it will be a bad year for either. A dry period through mid summer may reduce the number of mosquitoes and possible transmission of the diseases.

Dr. Gettman stated that this week (June 26th) is the 4th week of the state-wide mosquito disease surveillance program. During the first two weeks, mosquitoes collected were sent to HEALTH and were found to be negative for both diseases

On the National Level, West Nile has swept across the nation and has been present in every state except for Alaska and Hawaii. So far this year in our area, there has been no detection of either virus in mosquitoes, birds, horses, or humans. The closest finding this year has been 3 birds that were infected in mid state New York.

Chairman Fogarty asked about Larvicide funding.

Dr. Gettman stated that they have sufficient funds for Larvicide. The State purchases a Larvicide product which kills mosquito larva in the water. The State distributes it to all communities and trains public works employees to apply it to underground storm water catch basins. These catch basins are the highest priority habitat. Mosquito species that breed in underground basins are the group that is regarded as the most likely to transmit West Nile Virus in urban environments. Other states likewise have established the basins

as priorities. Dr. Gettman stated there is some indication that CDC may be scaling back its state support for surveillance for West Nile virus but that is yet to be confirmed.

John Fulton, of the Department of Health, had supplied written update for the committee. **Attached is his report:**

Report on West Nile Virus prevention and control activities requested from HEALTH:

6-26-06

Human Surveillance

HEALTH conducts human surveillance for WNV by investigating all case reports of: encephalitis, viral meningitis in individuals ages 18 and over, and Guillian-Barre Syndrome, and all laboratory tests of CSF (Cerebro-Spinal Fluid) yielding 10+ white cells. [NB: HEALTH investigates ~ 150-200 cases/year for WNV.]

Laboratory Services

The HEALTH Laboratory tests mosquito specimens (collected by DEM) for WNV, EEE, and other viruses dangerous to humans, and is prepared to test dead birds collected by Al Gettman and staff in the field.

Public Information

In May, HEALTH printed new WNV palm cards in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and distributed order forms for the palm cards to schools, health care practices, nursing homes, and municipalities. As fax-back order forms are received, palm cards are mailed. Also, HEALTH maintains a web-page with public information on WNV:

<http://www.health.ri.gov/disease/communicable/wnv/index.php>

Provider Information

HEALTH has added an update on "Diseases of Summer" to its health care provider education program, run under contract with Dr. Andrew Artenstein's group at the Memorial Hospital, Pawtucket.

V. Federal Grant Update – John Aucott, RIEMA

Chairman Fogarty stated that federal funding had been cut to \$7.8 Million this year, and asked John Aucott to brief the Council on how the cuts will effect the agency and state preparedness.

John Aucott stated that Rhode Island received a significant reduction from the \$20M received last year to \$7.8M. EMA is in the process of establishing priorities and looking at the funding allocations in light of this reduction. The agency will not have enough funds to distribute to all cities and towns as they have done over the past couple of years. EMA will focus on a regional approach.

Mr. Aucott met recently with a stake holder committee consisting of first responders, 911, Health, DEM, Fire Marshall and other organizations, to look at the 13 projects EMA requested funding for (\$60M worth of projects) and allocate the \$7.8M to those 13 projects.

EMA will evaluate projects and present its findings and priorities to the Adjutant General and Governors office.

Mr. Aucott stated that the following recommendations emerged from the Stakeholders Group as priorities:

- #1 Interoperable communications
- #2 Sustainment of regional teams, foundation of state homeland security strategy, Hazmat, Decon, NCI, Law enforcement
- #3 Law enforcement investigation operations.
- #4 Planning and regional planning – he is hiring several people to assist the locals in conducting the detailed and tactical planning for catastrophic emergencies. Use the 5 counties as regions and locate individuals in that region to work with cities and towns and EMA directors to develop detailed plans for catastrophic emergencies.
- 5# Containment of animal emergencies
- #6 Medical Surge
- #7 Support of RI Fusion Center for intelligence purposes.
- #8 Explosive Bomb Disposal

Mr. Aucott stated that the process for fund distribution has changed. Homeland Security has switched to a risk based distribution formula this year and brought people from around the country together in Maryland to review state applications. Instead of a population formula like they have used in the past, they are now groups of people who reviewed state applications. DHS also looked at the infrastructure within RI and also gave a score. Based upon risk, RI ended up in bottom 25 of all states in the DHS comparative risk analysis. A total of 716 assets from 9 critical infrastructure sectors met the criteria for inclusion on DHS list. For example, they looked at the banking and finance sector and Rhode Island did not have a single facility that met the sector requirement that was a facility that conducted more than 8 billion dollars worth of

transactions. RI received credit for 469 commercial assets (colleges, universities convention centers greater than 250,000 sq/ft, enclosed shopping malls etc).

Chairman Fogarty noted that there were only a couple of states that ranked less than Rhode Island and asked if EMA has looked at some of the other states and why we ranked so low.

Mr. Aucott stated that we have always been near the bottom. The primary reason was that nationally, there was \$500 M less to distribute, and that RI would take a 50% cut.

Chairman Fogarty asked when EMA anticipated that decisions would be made on funding priorities.

Aucott responded by next month (July) and that EMA has a time limit to adhere to.

Chairman Fogarty requested that EMA provide a list of what EMA is going to fund and also other items that are important to address when resources are available. He stated that there was not a consistent federal policy with appropriate funding for states and especially for the needs of Rhode Island, and stated that Rhode Island may be a small state but we are in a critical corridor in terms of ports, military facilities, etc.

Mr. Aucott added that sustainment of current programs is a concern. He stated that EMA can only utilize 20% of the funds to be used at the state level. Eighty percent goes to the locals. Twenty percent of \$20M is enough to keep people employed, and provide grants to state agencies like DEM, State Police, Sheriffs, and do projects at the State House. 20% of \$7.8 M is barely enough to keep the homeland security team in place at RIEMA and is not enough to supply grants to other state agencies. Mr. Aucott stated that this year we may have difficulties sustaining the programs we have here in RIEMA.

Update 2004 Grant

Chairman Fogarty inquired of the status of outstanding 2004 Grant funding to cities and towns.

Mr. Aucott stated EMA received an extension and communities had until the end of May to obligate those funds and have identified 2M that locals had not spent. He stated he would be meeting this week to look at requests from city and towns who have spent their allocations and are looking for more funding. Any of the remaining funds will be reallocated.

Chairman Fogarty inquired if any funds could be directed to Warwick to improve their communications system. This was an issue that was brought forward at the last EMAC meeting regarding the police communications system in Warwick that was in need of upgrade.

Mr. Aucott would look into it.

VI. Hurricane Drill and Outreach Report- Robert Warren, RIEMA

EMA is distributing 3 publications for Public Hurricane Awareness

1. **Hurricane Pamphlet** – Contains common sense info on personal preparedness within your own home.
2. **Map Guidebook** – Manual which will include street maps of the 21 coastal communities that are most vulnerable. Lists closest shelters, hospitals and safe routes for reaching them. Will be sent in July and also available on line @ www.riema.ri.gov.
3. **The Prepare RI Booklet**- Available late in the summer. Comprehensive guide that covers all elements of hurricane preparedness.

Chairman Fogarty asked Director Warren to update the Council on the hurricane preparedness effort and the effort to educate the public prior to and during a hurricane emergency.

Director Warren stated that a drill was conducted last week at the US Coast Guard Academy with FEMA Region 1 & 2 which consists of the six New England states, NY and NJ.

Director Warren stated that Rhode Island was well represented and had personnel from the National Guard, State Police, DOH, DEM, Local Responders, Red Cross and National Grid. The drill was broken down into policy, operations, and PIO. The drill went well and many topics were addressed: Communications, regional evacuation and to discuss where a regional joint field office will be located. The drill also provided a networking opportunity to meet face to face with many of the federal agencies and personnel Rhode Island would have to work with during an emergency. The group was introduced to Phil Pare, Federal Coordinating Officer for Rhode Island should we require assistance. Mr. Pare will be in state next week to work with EMA to become familiar with RI operation and the people.

Director Warren also stated that Rhode Island would be receiving FEMA Resources. Ten trailers of water and 7 Trailers of MRE's will be pre-staged in the state. Rhode Island will also receive 4 shelter containers which will service 250 people each.

One container is scheduled to go to Block Island. The Director is working with Block Island and interstate navigation to get that over there.

Outreach program is ongoing and the director has been working with local media outlets to promote Hurricane Preparedness Awareness. Director Warren has also worked with the Red Cross of Rhode Island on several outreach efforts in the community (Prudence Island, Cranston, Newport, Saunderstown, Pawtucket, are recently scheduled)

Director Warren said booklet guides are in for distribution at these events and will be distributed by agencies and hospitality centers. A mailing is also being considered. Director Warren is looking at going out to bid and is working with the Governor's Office with the issue.

Chairman Fogarty asked about the planning for evacuations during a hurricane.

Director Warren reported that the report is not finalized. EMA is meeting with DOT and the contractor that created the plan and are working to finalize it. Director Warren stated that in an evacuation scenario that began in the morning with good weather conditions, most of the population could be moved from the coast within 12 hours (best case scenario 7:00 a.m. start with clear dry day). The later you go during the day and worsening weather would expand the timeframe.

Chairman Fogarty met with Block Island Officials on Thursday, June 1st and brought up some of the issues from the meeting. The Chairman stated that officials requested to preposition a generator and fuel supply on the Island, and asked EMA and National Guard to work with officials on request.

Chairman also stated the evacuation of the Island was a concern, at peak 20,000 visitors are on Block Island. The Chairman asked Director Warren to work with Narragansett officials to plan evacuation from Island to the Mainland and from the mainland to safety.

Chairman added that communications with the mainland was also a concern.

Director Warren stated that EMA officials have met with Block Island officials regarding evacuations and are working on the issues. In their meetings they did not request generators. EMA has been working on the communication equipment and that Red Cross provided a new radio for the shelter on the Island.

There was talk of moving the National Guard Civil Support Team out to New Shoreham, however, the communication equipment may be needed on the mainland during an emergency. The director stated that they are looking at other possibilities.

Chairman mentioned that while on Block Island, Red Cross was on Island working with locals on shelter planning.

John Holt, Red Cross of Rhode Island stated that Corporate sponsors are interested in working with Red Cross to help set up community meetings across the state to educate citizens on Hurricane Preparedness. Cranston will be a trial run for citizens and that if it works well, Red Cross will work with local EMA's to go state wide.

VII. Hurricane Season 2006 – David Vallee, National Weather Service

The Chairman stated that Dave Vallee was unable to attend the meeting.

VIII. Energy Update – Janice McClanaghan, RI Energy Office

The Chairman introduced Janice McClanaghan, RISEO, to give an energy update.

Janice McClanaghan reported on Prices:

As of 6/26/06

	Today	wk. ago	1 yr. ago
Crude Oil	71.65	69.05	59.63
Natural Gas	5.89	6.71	7.45

Gasoline

Reg self serve	2.959 (low 2.939 high 2.999)	2.24
Reg. Full serve	3.11 (low 2.999 high 3.359)	
Diesel	3.03 4/10	

Home Heating

Average retail	2.559	2.24
High	2.699	2.44
Low	2.279	2.05

Janice McClanaghan reported on the LIHEAP program. The program is currently using money to get customers service turned on. McClanaghan stated that \$11 - \$12 M is estimated for program for next year, and that more information will come in November. RI Completed the year with 28,997 clients served roughly 2,400 more than last year.

Janice McClanaghan reported that a comprehensive energy bill had passed the state legislature S2903B.

IX. Domestic Preparedness Subcommittee Report – Robert Warren, RIEMA

Director Warren stated that the committee met this morning, June 27th. The Family Assistance Plan Working Group has completed the Family Assistance plan and it was voted on and approved by the committee and will be signed shortly. The plan is based on a station fire model set up to assist families and the agency is also in the process of completing a family resource plan.

Peter Marinucci, of the Providence EMA, offered to host a drill to test the Family Assistance Plan.

The Minutes of the June 27th Domestic Preparedness Sub Committee meeting are available on request.

X. New Business/ Comments and/or Suggestions

Member updates:

Director Warren stated he met this morning with PUC, utility companies, local EMA officials, city officials, and RIEMA to discuss how utilities will respond to a hurricane.

Ray Labelle, E911 stated that legislation for reverse 911 passed and is awaiting signature from the Governor. The legislation allows 911 to release non-published numbers in times of emergency. E911 is currently meeting with municipalities on the issue and are finalizing MOU with OnStar.

Jim Blackburn, Asst. Federal Security Director, Law Enforcement introduced Doug Pesce, Protective Security Advisor, DHS.

Jim Blackburn also announced that the US Attorney's Office, RI Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council (ATAC), Transportation Security Administration, T.F. Green Airport and RIEMA will be hosting a Rail Security Forum on June 28th.

XI. Adjournment- Meeting adjourned 3:05 p.m.