



Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council

Meeting Notice

THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE HELD:

January 11, 2011

10:00 AM

RI Department of Labor and Training

1511 Pontiac Avenue

Building 73, 1st Floor Conference Room, Pastore Complex

Cranston, Rhode Island

AGENDA

I. Call to Order/ Attendance—Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts

Lt. Governor Elizabeth H. Roberts

Major General Robert T. Bray

Ed Johnson

Elizabeth Nadolski

Joe Shields

Gwenn Steavr

Bob Sturdohl

Steven Preston

Gregory M. Scungio

Jeffery Stevens

Joseph DeBaver

Vincent Marzullo

Alysia Mihalakos

Janice Pothier Pac

Robert Howe

Jim Ball

James Manni

Paul Stastuck

Richard James

Susan Earley

Verne Gifford

Erin Lambie

Chris Sturgis
Robert Seltzer
James Lanni
Steve Florio
George Salter
Alan Seitz
Brian Pires
Akosua Mensah
Jeffrey Ahern
Vladimir Ibarra

II. Approval of the minutes from December 14, 2010

The minutes from the December 14 meeting were unanimously approved.

III. RIEMA Update

Robert T. Bray, Adjutant General of Rhode Island

The meeting started 10 minutes late as there was a conference call for Cabinet members to provide a weather update.

General Bray and Lt. Governor Roberts relayed information about the storm forecasted for Wednesday, January 12. There are conference calls scheduled throughout the day to inform and educate officials about the severity of the upcoming storm.

The storm is scheduled to impact earlier than first suggested, late night to early morning and it will affect early morning traffic.

The EOC will be operational at 10 p.m. and ESF partners are encouraged to provide their contact information to RIEMA.

The General opened the floor to Joseph Baker Deputy Administrator of the Department of Transportation. Mr. Baker stated that plows would be out by 9 p.m. but it is anticipated that it would be difficult to have roads clear with 2-3 inches of snow per hour.

State Police Lieutenant James Manni spoke of the police presence, patrols would be arriving early for overtime and the tow policy would be in effect.

Mr. Steve Florio asked if the press briefing at 4 p.m. had close captioning available. The General stated that they would check and get back to him with an answer.

IV. Domestic Preparedness Subcommittee Reports

A. Interoperability Communications Committee- *Director David Smith, RIEMA Chair*

Deputy Johnson provided an update in which he spoke of the FCC Region 19 meeting and minor modifications to frequencies to the region. RIEMA is waiting for the grant cycle to begin so that programs can be expanded.

Lt. Governor Roberts asked if the scheduled Rhode Island Training and Exercise Planning Workshop (TEPW) for January 12th from 8-4:30 p.m. would be cancelled due to the inclement weather. The TEPW provides the State with opportunity for coordinating activities in Federal, State, local urban areas and other training exercises. The TEPW will reduce duplication of efforts and overextension of resources and will serve to maximize efficiency of training and exercise funding appropriations. Deputy Johnson confirmed that this would be the case.

B. Hospital Preparedness Working Group—*Alysia Mihalakos, DOH/Dawn Lewis, HARI*

Ms. Mihalakos spoke of the “battle rhythm” for the collection and dissemination information to and from hospitals and other partners during events, which first emerged during H1N1 and hurricane preparation. It is currently used during weather events from 96 hours out to ensure compliance with The Joint Commission.

The Battle Rhythm was utilized successfully through the holiday storm, and received positive feedback from the partners. She also discussed the use of a project management/sharing tool called Base Camp, where the partners can post their GAPS assessments, allowing HEALTH and HARI to gain situational awareness about the needs of hospitals and healthcare organizations before and after an emergency.

Lastly, Ms. Mihalakos spoke of the work of Dr. David Gifford and his departure from the Department of Health.

C. Haz Mat/Decon Technical Working Group—*Steve Preston, Woonsocket FD*

Mr. Preston recapped that the group was meeting monthly. He also said that they were working on a training calendar for late year. He spoke of a biological conference in Louisiana, looking at new sampling collections the group would be attending. Mr. Preston said the working group was maintaining the status quo.

D. Behavioral Health Disaster Response Network Working Group—*Susan Earley, BHDDH*

Ms. Earley reported on the new training tools that had been implemented shortly after the flood and that are available online.

Ms. Earley spoke of efforts to build the team, and work on communication practices including collaborating with the RI Red Cross as the beginning of these efforts.

E. Volunteer/Citizens’ Corps Council—*Vincent Marzullo*

Mr. Marzullo reported on Serve Rhode Island (SRI) outreach marketing campaign. SRI has 40 transit shelter posters and two billboards to recruit volunteers. They have a volunteer membership of 45 members with representation in every county in the state. The group developed operating procedures and a code of conduct for volunteers in coordination with teambuilding.

Mr. Marzullo also spoke of a river cleanup from the historic flooding where 100 volunteers turned up including U.S. Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse in collaboration with the Pawtuxet River Authority. Also, there is a scheduled additional river cleanup on April 16th and 17th for which they will need about 500 volunteers. Lastly, Mr. Marzullo reported that the Center for Law and Public Policy along with AmeriCorps is working together to examine what is inhibiting volunteerism in the state as well as an in-depth look at the Good Samaritan Act.

F. Law Enforcement Working Group—*Lt. James Manni, RISP*

Lt. Manni reiterated the importance of safety of public officials in the wake of the Tucson attacks. Lt. Manni was adamant about officials reporting individuals with ill intentions and those with questionable motives.

Lt. Manni also spoke of the Fusion Center, which would be a great asset in a situation like Tucson. The center disseminates information to all law enforcement agencies.

National Security Specialist Brian Pires spoke of threat assessments and being preventers of these types of events. He also encouraged those in attendance to contact local police first and to take basic steps. Major General Bray also added that looking at potential events where elected officials gather perhaps could mitigate possibilities of an event even when there is no intelligence.

G. Port Security—*Erin Lambie, USCG*

Captain Verne Gifford commented on the LNG process, which he said is working rather well. He also reported on the alert notification system, which is being tested, so far there are no problems with the system.

He commented on two stowaways that were found in New Bedford. The stowaways were removed by the crew and interrogated, the process was without fault.

Erin Lambie reported on two groups Intel and the Command Control Organization Group. Both groups are working on how they can better share information.

Ms. Lambie also spoke of the Port Security grant which is on hold. She also said that the Pollution Report would be issued in September.

H. Special Populations Working Group—*Steven Florio CDHH/Jeffrey Stevens, DOH*

Mr. Florio, reported to the council that Kate McCarthy-Barnett had been promoted as a Regional Disability Coordinator for FEMA Region 1. In that capacity, Kate will be responsible for special needs emergency meetings throughout New England.

Steven introduced the new co-chair Jeff Stevens who had been apprised of Kate's work prior to her departure. The committee will have a full membership meeting on Monday, March 7. The group is working on ensuring that the service assessment teams are up and running. The group is going into shelters and seeing which needs of the population can be

met. Lastly, Mr. Florio and Mr. Stevens recapped that the group was focusing on making improvements to the Special Needs Registry.

I. Urban Search and Rescue—*Robert Seltzer, Coventry FD*

The Urban Search and Rescue is working on restructuring their organization. Chair Robert Seltzer spoke of new training every month for every team. He spoke of the K-9 team which is an excellent resource for the state. They hope to team up with Haz Mat/ Decon and USR so they are not duplicating services.

J. Transportation Security Working Group—*Brian Pires, ATAC/TSWG*

Mr. Pires reported on the protection response that was done in Kennedy Plaza. There were no negative responses. He also spoke of a convention at Providence Place mall where they partnered with Homeland Security. They are worried about the home grown threat: individuals with leadership in al-Qaeda, but who are the average American Teenager. The group is continuing to look at these individuals.

K. Mass Casualty—*Chief Robert Church, Portsmouth FD*

No representatives attended the council.

V. New Business/ Member Comments and/or Suggestion

Chief Seltzer asked if either the General or the Lt. Governor knew what would happen with the RIEMA budget as they need to have the match in either real money or in kind in order to continue several programs. The General responded that at least the 2011-2012 budget was approved but that there would be some challenges.

Lt. Governor Roberts mentioned that it seems that the implementation of the 15% cuts across all state agencies would continue. However, there is a key opportunity for members to lobby to restore funding as half of the finance committee members would be new including the finance chairman.

Steven Preston brought up two pieces of legislation that would be of interest to the membership.

1. The Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning grants (HMEP). This grant does not allow for audit fees or M&A cost to be involved in any other cost. The language on this bill needs to be more flexible as RIEMA has not budgeted to pay these fees nor do they have the ability to accept a donation to pay for them.
2. The Hazardous Waste Clean-up bill was submitted last year and will be resubmitted this year. The bill provides first responders immunity from liability when responding to a hazardous materials incident but there was a problem with the language that needed to be corrected.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, February 8th with a location TBD.