



## **Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council**

THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE HELD:

**June 7, 2011**

**10:00 AM**

**RI Department of Labor and Training**

1511 Pontiac Avenue

Building 73, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room, Pastore Complex

Cranston, Rhode Island

### **Meeting Minutes**

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

The Chair commented on the success of the Hurricane Conference and the awareness of so many complicated dynamics taking place. For example, she was glad to see that Emergency Support Functions were being revised and that Subject Matter Experts discussed general topics not solely Rhode Island.

The Chair informed the members that she had been tasked by the Office of Governor Lincoln D. Chafee to take a leadership role in coordinating some of the recovery efforts from the flood recovery among agencies. She highlighted the pivotal role that Director Smith and RI Emergency Management Agency staff has played in regards to Hazard Mitigation Planning Grants.

The Chair commented that the Council must designate a chair for the Mass Casualty Subcommittee since Chief Robert Church retired.

#### **II. Approval of the minutes from May 10, 2011**

Minutes were unanimously approved.

#### **III. RIEMA Update**

Director Smith provided a Hurricane Conference update and stated that he was pleased with the positive feedback and the amount of vendor displays available on a wide range of topics. Also, he mentioned that a committee had been formed to review and enhance last week's conference.

**Budget.** RIEMA is currently in the middle of their grant cycle with the deadline coming up as of June 20<sup>th</sup>. There seems to be a fifty percent reduction on all grants although EMPG funding has been sustained. Last year the Metro region benefited from UASI funds in excess of \$4.1 Million whereas this year that number has declined to zero.

Lastly, the Director turned the attention to legislation as on June 7 at the rise of the House the Hazmat/Hazardous Waste Bill will have a second hearing.

#### **IV. Domestic Preparedness Subcommittee reports**

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

The subcommittee continues to work on individual projects, including a new tower in Middletown in the Fire Station Complex that will provide resiliency and redundancy. The Director hopes to extend coverage in the region.

Director Smith reported that more and more communities are using the 800MHz system including the Woonsocket Police Department who will be merging over by the end of the month. Also, if RIEMA can submit a performance report that will be provided to Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano it will satisfy request for additional funds.

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

Alysia reported that HEALTH is currently on their grant writing season. The US DHHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response's Hospital Preparedness Program application was submitted.

The CDC's Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative agreement is starting a new 5-year cycle, which required an application based on 15 Capabilities, which will be reflected in the next Target Capabilities List out of US DHS.

- Due to the short timeframe for application submission, much of this coming summer will be dedicated to ensuring that we have a strategic plan for the next five years to accomplish as many of the capabilities as resources allow.
- The grant was "level funded", with some funds moved out of the Cities Readiness Initiative, which supports the municipalities for mass prophylaxis/vaccination, but it will be able to support the municipalities.
  - However, "level funded" is actually a cut, given that the grant supports more than 40 FTEs in full or in part at HEALTH and we have COLAs, longevity, incentive credits, etc. that have increased the personnel budget by more than 6%.
- The Chair asked how cuts would impact this program. Alysia, explained that there are some functions that are unique to HEALTH that we cannot let atrophy (epidemiological investigation, bioterrorism agent laboratory testing), so they must be prioritized and maintained so that we are able to respond appropriately. Without appropriate levels of funding and/or the ability to hire more staff, we will likely not be able to achieve all of the capabilities by the end of the five years.

The Application for the Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals which funds RI Responds has been submitted. This program supports the development of First Responder Authentication Credentials for use by volunteer health professionals and other responders in the field to ensure individuals "are who they say they are", reducing liability to responders and the requesting agencies.

Several Federal agencies (HHS, DHS, DOT, etc.) are in discussions to align all of the preparedness grants to reduce redundancy. It is anticipated that next year, CDC's PHEP and ASPR's HPP will

have a joint application process, but will maintain separate funding streams. Additional agencies' grants may align with HHS's or among themselves.

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

Steve Preston informed members that there was a committee hearing tonight on the Hazardous Waste Bill. The subcommittee continues to meet monthly. One of the issues that has come up is the regionalization of services by shrinking the teams and integrating into a regional team. A decision will be made by the 16<sup>th</sup> of June.

D. Behavioral Health Disaster Response Network Working Group—*Susan Earley, BHDDH*  
No Report.

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

The RI ServeCorps Disaster Team membership is up to 61 with representatives from every county in the state.

**Training** has been opened to include Municipal Community Emergency Response Team volunteers and VOAD volunteers to maximize resources being used for training, Introduce volunteers to SRI, cross train volunteers so state has access to highly skilled volunteers. SRI developed and piloted a new curriculum, *Volunteer Reception Center Train the Trainer* in May to build the capacity of SRI-affiliated volunteers to train spontaneous volunteers in the operation of VRCs in times of disaster. Also, the upcoming scheduled training includes MEDS PODS (in collaboration with CEPR), Volunteers Response in Hurricanes and Floods and Chainsaw Operation.

**Serving Rhode Island Week** recruited 521 volunteers for a weekend of flood waterway clean-up projects. On April 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, in partnership with the Pawtuxet River Authority (PRA), 231 volunteers cleaned two sites along the Pawtuxet River where there will be walking trails and a canoe launch with attendance by Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts and Mayor Scott Avedisian. Also, on April 16<sup>th</sup>, in partnership with the PRA and Ocean State Environmental Education Collaborative (OSEEC), 290 volunteers cleaned the banks and waters of Roger Williams Park's ponds of trash and debris (third annual cleanup event).

**The Disaster Long Term Recovery Group** expects the work to be done by September. There are approximately 70 properties left to address through long term recovery.

**Volunteer Liability Working Group** has been working and it appears that protection is offered under federal law and under state law if SRI has a mission number from RIEMA. A meeting in June with RIEMA to review mission assignment SOPs, which will bring us closer to getting these important documents in place

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

Director Smith stated that the Law Enforcement Working Group was able to secure grant dollars for needed items. Also, it seems that Lt. James Manni may be joining RIEMA as the designated person for Block Island.

## G. Port Security—*Erin Lambie, USCG*

**Port Security Grants.** The Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) for 2011 has been announced. More than \$235 million is available to help protect critical port infrastructure from terrorism, enhance maritime domain awareness and strengthen risk management capabilities in order to protect against improvised explosive devices and other non-conventional weapons. Group III allocations \$11,751,450 Narragansett/Mt. Hope Bays Cluster (Providence, Newport and Fall River) is one of the 36 port areas vying for some of the Group III allocation. All other port areas (non-Group I, II, or III) will compete for some of a separate \$11,751,450 allocation.

The deadline for submission for the SF-424 form for all port areas is June 13, 2011. The deadline for all documentation for all port areas is June 20, 2011. Final submissions must be made through ND Grants system located at <https://portal.fema.gov>. For further information on DHS's preparedness grant programs is available at [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov) and [www.fema.gov/government/grant/nondisaster.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/nondisaster.shtm).

For assistance with grants or any questions regarding eligibility of grant applications, please contact Mr. Duane Davis of FEMA at (202) 786-9533 or [duane.davis@dhs.gov](mailto:duane.davis@dhs.gov).

**RI Port Safety and Security Forum.** The next RI Port Safety and Security Forum will be held on 11 August 2011 starting at 9 a.m. at the URI/Graduate School of Oceanography, Coastal Institute Building in Narragansett.

**National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (PREP).** The Exxon-Mobil Pipeline Company will be sponsoring a full-scale PREP exercise on 2 & 3 August 2011. The exercise will test local, state, federal and national entities in responding to a “worst- most probable” oil spill at the East Providence terminal. Involved in the planning of the exercise are the Coast Guard, US EPA, NOAA, RI DEM, RI EMA, East Providence Police and Fire Departments, Providence Police and Fire Departments, and Providence EMA. Exxon-Mobil’s North American Regional Response Team (NARRT) is expected to have over 60 members of the team participate in the exercise. The first day of the exercise will involve the standup of the local emergency response organization. The second day will see the full integration of the NARRT.

**Port Security Assessment (PSA).** During 11-22 July 2011, the USCG Port Security Evaluation Division from Washington will conduct a Port Security Assessment for certain critical infrastructure in the port areas of Rhode Island. The PSA program provides coordinated assessments of combined prevention, mitigation, and response capabilities of targeted critical infrastructure and key resources based on a terrorist operations approach. PSA teams are comprised of a combination of USCG personnel and contracted subject matter experts including former members of U.S. Special Operations Units (e.g. SEALs, Rangers)

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

The Work Group continues to meet on a quarterly basis. The next meeting is June 13<sup>th</sup> at the United Way. The following provides a brief update of the current projects:

**Sheltering Annex.** RI Functional Service Assessment Team concept was presented at 2011 Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness and Response Training Summit sponsored by the US Department of Health and Human Services to positive reviews.

**Rhode Island Special Needs Emergency Registry.** A Public Safety Outreach worker has been hired and has started outreach with Police, Fire, EMS and Emergency Management offices. Additionally, outreach table set-up at RI EMS Expo and the RIEMA Hurricane Conference met

with positive reviews. Continue to work with E911 to provide additional dispatch information to local dispatchers and responding units.

**Communications.** Legislation to create a fund for emergency communications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community (<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText11/HouseText11/H5324.htm>) has been held for further study.

**Transportation.** Members of the subcommittee have been participating in the RIEMA ESF 1 planning review team meetings.

**Long Term Care.** Members of this subcommittee continue to work on a common template for long term care facilities. They are also considering conducting a seminar to better link municipalities and long term care facilities. Members recently worked on notifications systems for nursing homes and long-term care facilities relating to weather events.

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

Director Smith discussed the Memorandum of Understanding for USAR and the need for the executive board to review the membership list and evaluate needs. Robert Leach discussed some of the recent collaborations shared at the seminar including that his team has been vetted for National Credentialing. The discussion turned to Safe Rooms and the utility during the recent tornados.

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

Mr. Pires reported that the group is currently conducting Visible Intermodal Protection and Response (VIPR) operations in the passenger and freight rail, bus, ferry, cruise ship and maritime environment. Typical venues have been at the Amtrak Providence Station, Peter Pan Bus Terminal, Kennedy Plaza, Kingston Train Station, the Block Island ferry and early fall cruise ship operations in Newport.

Next month in July the group will conduct their first VIPR at the commercial Port of Providence. For fiscal year 2011 there has been 75 VIPR operations.

#### K. Mass Casualty

The group has been updating their state plan and should have a rough draft within two weeks. The plan will address the EMS component, technological and structural changes including patient tracking and an alert system to community partners. Trailers have passed the eight month inventory and compared to NIMS. Looking to continue to find ways to streamline the process such as P.O. for the credentialing.

#### V. **New Business/ Member Comments and/or Suggestion**

Norm Menard from the RI Chapter of the Red Cross invited members to the kick off Hurricane Season by participating in the opening of a shelter on Saturday, June 11 at Hope High School starting at 12:00 P.M.

Leo Messier from the Airport Corporation informed members of two tabletops at the Airport involving emergency plan including in October an Active Shooter Tabletop Full Scale exercise involving a domestic situation. Also, there was discussion of dead spots at the airport and ways to address those dead spots. Mr. Messier informed members that Motorola was working on it. Director Smith stressed the importance of systems being interoperable.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

The next meeting will take place on August 9<sup>th</sup> and it will be an educational session.