

From: Eva M. Zito
Recording Secretary

Date: December 27, 2005

Subject: Minutes of the Domestic Preparedness Subcommittee

The following members were in attendance:

Robert J. Warren	Member	RIEMA
Dr. Terrie Fox Wetle	Member	Brown University
Dr. Robert Seltzer	Member	RI Assoc. of Fire Chiefs
Raymond LaBelle	Member	E-911
Capt. James Swanberg	Member	RISP
Lt. David Hayden	Alternate	RISP
Hollie Capuano	Alternate	US Attorney's Office
Janet Essex	Alternate	Governor's Office
John E. Aucott	Alternate	RIEMA
Nathan Rodgers	Alternate	RIEMA
Meredith Arnold	Alternate	HARI
Paul Choquette	Alternate	Dept. Human Services
Todd Manni	Alternate	Providence EMA
Tim Howe	Alternate	RISEO
Audra Dolan	Guest	VCRI
Bob Sestito	Guest	USDOL-OSHA
Douglas J. Pesce	Guest	Dept. Homeland Security

Members not in attendance:

URI
Office of the Fire Marshal
RI House of Rep/Lifespan
US Coast Guard
Department of Corrections
Emergency Legal Issues Working Group
RI Police Chief's Assoc.
RI Department of Attorney General
RI Health Center Association
VA Medical Center
RI Disaster Initiative

RICOSH
Urban Search and Rescue
American Red Cross
Dept. of Transportation
Amb. Services Advisory
Haz/Mat Decon Work Gr.
Communication Work Gr.
Private Security Association
RIDEM
Naval Amb. Care Newport
MHRH

The 50th meeting of the Domestic Preparedness Subcommittee was called to order by Chairman Robert J. Warren at 10:03 am.

1. Paul Choquette, the new Chairman of the Elderly and Disabled Working Group, was introduced to this group.
2. Minutes of the November 22, 2005 were reviewed, accepted, and passed.
3. **REPORTS:**

HAZMAT/DECON WORKING GROUP-not present

COMMUNITY WMD PREPAREDNESS WORKING GROUP-(In abeyance)

EMERGENCY LEGAL ISSUES WORKING GROUP-not present

COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP-not present

VOLUNTEER WORKING GROUP-“Citizens Corp Council”

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION WORKING GROUP-not present

HOSPITAL PREPAREDNESS PLANNING COMMITTEE-Meredith Arnold

- HARI met last on December 20, 2005. The hospitals have standardized their internal emergency codes for things like hazmat/decon, bomb scares, and cardiac arrest. All hospitals will now be posting them, and they will be in full swing by January 1, 2006. HARI has a power point presentation about these codes and what they mean.
- About four hospitals volunteered to serve as pilot institutions to try out the new Pandemic Flue plans and program and have input into the planning process. There will probably be an inner city hospital in Providence, one in North Providence, and hopefully Newport and South County will be part of the facilities. We spoke about the bomb threats from a few weeks ago at several hospitals throughout the state. There was discussion on how hospitals can speak to each other when something like this happens.

I think what will happen is that we will link this to the diversion system when it is up and running on a web base so that the hospitals can alert each other that they have had a security threat or impingement.

We are now in the process of developing a Standardized Exercise Evaluation tool for the hospitals.

Chief Seltzer stated that these codes are a great idea and makes sense for all of the employees, but once it leaves the facility there is more information that needs to be presented to the local law enforcement, police, etc.

Chief is proposing that when it leaves the facility, it needs to be spelled out and not just color coded so that there is a clear picture of what is going on and what kind of help to send.

Meredith stated that she will bring this idea back to the group.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE CRISIS MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE (MHRH)-not present

URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE-After the deployment to Katrina with our Urban Search and Rescue Team, a few issues arose that have to be ironed out. We now have an Executive Committee to work on policy issues with the team. The team continues to receive equipment and receive training. and still working very hard with their duties.

MASS CASUALTY INCIDENT (MCI) WORKING GROUP-Nathan Rodgers

Nothing new to report at this time.

PORT SECURITY-not present

LAW ENFORCEMENT WORKING GROUP-Capt Jim Swanberg

At the beginning of December, 20 attendees and I attended a WMD Team Commander's Course sponsored by LSU. It helped us out from the law enforcement side and there was a lot of information on OSHA. This quarter there will be a training session at LaSalle Academy, Kent County Court House, and Bridgewater Prison. John Washburn is doing a great job getting us our equipment.

ELDERLY AND DISABLED WORKING GROUP-Paul Choquette

We are setting up an initial meeting for the month of January.

Working on getting people representing different disability groups and trying to see what issues are out there.

If anyone wants to take part in this group, please let me know.

Al Tardie is helping me coordinate things.

Hopefully by our next meeting, I will have something to report.

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Chief Seltzer stated that the RI Fire Chief's Association would be willing to send a representative.

Dr. Wetle suggested David Dosa who does work in nursing homes and has done some work on vulnerable populations.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE CENTER WORKING GROUP-Nathan Rodgers

Along with the dissemination of our previous minutes, there was an additional one page regarding the remarks from our initial meeting of the four representatives from RIEMA, Health, MHRH and the American Red Cross of the Family Assistance Center Plan. For those of you who have had a chance to review it, I am accepting comments on the initial remarks especially on the initial direction that we plan to take on putting the plan together for review. The working group will be looking at the Family Assistance Center Plan and the Family Resource Center Plan will have to be developed.

4. OLD BUSINESS

Ray LaBelle asked if there was any movement as far as the Duty Officer Program was concerned. Bob stated that he spoke to the General about it two weeks ago, and there are a lot of issues to work out. Ray LaBelle stated that there is something in the new union contract that provides a \$520.00 payment for being on call. Bob stated that the Duty Officer Program is a great idea, we are going to do it, but it has to be done correctly.

5. NEW BUSINESS-Grant Discussion-John Aucott

Had a conference call on December 9, 2005 with about 50% of the cities and towns responding even though we invited all the fire chiefs, police chiefs, and EMA directors. The FY04 grant is getting a six month extension. The FY 03 and FY 03-II grants did expire, the first one in September and the second one in October. Our staff has been working diligently on reaching out to the sub grantees to make sure that they were going to finish their projects before the deadline. For the most part they were successful, but a few communities had to return some small amounts of money. Because the Police Department was not able to do a radio project, the City of Cranston is returning \$100,000.00. Because the grant has expired, there is no way that we could reallocate the money. We are looking forward to getting some new staff to focus more on the grants.

REGIONALIZATION OF RHODE ISLAND-Discussion on Pandemic Flu

Each hospital will be responsible for healthcare within a particular geographical location in the event of Pandemic Flu. and also setting up the alternate care facility.

Department of Homeland Security with this year's grant is actually requiring us to look at regionalization within the site for Emergency Management/Homeland Security purposes.

The great thing about working with the DOH on this Pandemic Flu Planning is a tremendous effort to make sure that we do not duplicate efforts and that we are looking at an overall Emergency Management structure.

In FY 06 we will be asked to prioritize funding based upon tiers.

We will be looking at regions and saying what tier should this region be placed.. For example, a large metropolitan area would be a tier one, and Homeland Security would say that a tier one region might have one USAR team, two hazmat teams etc. This is what is coming, and we will have to look into this. At some point and time, we probably will have to put together a working group.

Chief Seltzer mentioned that we have done a lot with mutual aid and statewide USAR teams, Haz/Mat, Decon teams etc. Is this an opportunity to look at other things that local communities are responsible for but have not regionalized like EOC's? There are certain things like law enforcement and public works that have not been addressed. It sounds like a big undertaking and probably should have the town managers and local government people need to get involved. John Aucott stated that we have mutual aid with the fire people and EMS folks, but there is no mutual aid for public works and we need to do some aid with law enforcement which actually may require legislation for local law enforcement mutual aid it has to be a continuous community which presents some challenges.

Bob Warren mentioned that some of this is going on currently with the hurricane planning. The other issue that has come up is the Titan report which has to be looked at again because this is one of the issues that came up in this report. The only statewide public works mutual aid was written in the State of New Hampshire which I am reviewing.. Hopefully in the next year, you will see a lot of this information come together.

DPS WORKING GROUPS-USAR WORKING GROUP AND THE EMERGENCY LEGAL ISSUES WORKING GROUP-John Aucott

For the past two years these two working groups have been called on to give a report at this meeting, and there is no one here to represent them. Two years ago someone from the Lt. Governor's office chaired the Emergency Legal Issues Working Group and they moved on.

Bob Warren does not see the need to abolish the USAR Working Group because we do get reports from them and Chief Seltzer agrees.

Dr. Wetle mentioned that there seems to be two things going on (1) is a working group function and (2) a reporting function to this group. It may be

that there need not be a USAR Working Group, but there needs to be a report back here.

Motion is made and seconded to maintain the USAR Working Group and abolish the WMD Preparedness Working Group and the Emergency Legal Issues Working group.

John Aucott-There has been a discussion at the HazMat/Decon Team Working Group on restructuring the Memorandums of Agreement. This was prompted by an incident at South County Hospital where a regional HazMat team responded to a suspicious powder incident. They were not capable of collecting the sample and had to call in the Cranston team. It raised some concern about the HazMat teams being able to respond and fulfill their mission. I give a lot of credit to the HazMat Working Group who tried to solve this issue within the working group and move towards a more structured certification process for the teams which would include training requirements, and meeting participation. When a new draft comes out, we will share it with the DPS.

Dr. Wetle-Brown is working along with the DOH in planning for the Pandemic Avian flu. This has helped in some of the other disaster planning with the Crisis Management team reviewing food supplies on hand, water supply availability, costs, emergency medical equipment and identification of students and facility with special needs should there be a shortage of staff. This has been quite a sobering experience to think about a real Pandemic flu with 30-40% of the population affected. Dr. Wetle mentioned that she will be gone for six months on a project at the University of Padua, and Dana Cernigliaro, her research assistant, will attend in her place.

John Aucott mention about the Open Meetings Law, and if anyone wants to add anything to the agenda, they have to get it to us the Friday before the 4th Tuesday of the month. Meeting was adjourned at 10:58am.

**NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD
ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2006.**

