

Berks County Fire Service Working Group Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2010

ATTENDANCE

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|---|--|---|
| ZONE 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Dave Feltenberger (13) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Yenser (21) |
| ZONE 2 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Reeser (37) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eric Schrack (41) |
| ZONE 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Lester Feick (27) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Martin (47) |
| ZONE 4 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scot Landis (67) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bruce Longenecker (79) |
| ZONE 5/6 | <input type="checkbox"/> Matt Gehman (22) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike DeTurck (25) | <input type="checkbox"/> Derrick Nester (49) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vice-Chairman, Chris Stevens (17) |
| ZONE 7 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Moyer (RFD) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ron Wentzel (RFD) |
| BERKS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Gottschall | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craig Wanner |
| BERKS COUNTY FIREMAN'S ASSOCIATION | <input type="checkbox"/> Dick Trostle | |
| BERKS COUNTY FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION | <input type="checkbox"/> Leon Grim | |
| BERKS COUNTY FIRE POLICE ASSOCIATION | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Englebach | |

OTHERS: Theodore Cole (DES), Robert Schegan (46)

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Chris Stevens at 1820 hours in the Berks County Department of Emergency Services Conference room, located in the Direct Link Building, Bernville Road, Leesport, PA.

DISCUSSION

Re-Organization

As discussed at the previous meeting, the Chairman had stepped down from the position both as Chair and as a representative to the group. A motion was made by Scot Landis and seconded by Ron Wentzel to nominate Chris Stevens to the position of Chairman. There were no other nominations for the Chairman position. A motion was made by Scot Landis and seconded by Mike Deturck to nominate Ron Wentzel as Vice Chairman. There were no other nominations for the Vice Chairman position. A motion was made by Mike Moyer and seconded by Mike Deturck to nominate Scott Reeser as the Secretary. There were no other nominations.

Noting that there were no opposing nominations for any of the three positions, the Chairman will be Chris Stevens, the Vice Chairman Ronald Wentzel and Secretary Scott Reeser.

Berks County Fire Service Working Group Meeting Minutes

SOP Issue – Cover Dispatches

In follow-up to concerns that were raised at the previous meeting, the DES staff reviewed the situation and presented two options which they felt would work. The options were as follows:

- Option #1 – Make no changes and continue dispatching procedures as they exist today
- Option #2 – On every fire incident dispatched, a brief tone will be put out on the hailing frequencies followed by an announcement similar in nature to the old pre-alert. This will be done on all fire assignments at the earliest practical time following the dispatch of units for the assignment. The communications center will have the right to suspend such alerting during times of heavy or critical radio traffic.

A discussion was held on two proposed options that were presented by DES staff. After poll of all the zone representatives, it was unanimous that all zones would support Option #2, as presented.

As a result of the discussion on this topic, it was suggested that DES investigate the use of a tone similar to the police air priority tone that would indicate to field user that non-priority radio traffic is not permitted on the hailing frequencies.

Run Cards

Craig Wanner circulated the latest draft of the new run card format. The draft was presented in the form of a sample run card.

- The issue of run card numbering was discussed at length. There was some discussion to have the run card number include the company responsible, the municipality number and a card number. The discussion moved to the City of Reading's Phantom Box numbering system which signifies the use of the premises for which the card is assigned. These would be specialized facilities/structures. This led into the possibility of DES announcing the box card/run card number as a part of the dispatch. DES would obtain the complete Phantom Box numbering system from Reading and the NFIRS identification system for buildings. Scott Reeser would email a list of the building identifiers/uses as per the fire code. The topic of card numbering would have to be revisited at the next meeting
- Run Card Geography – the topic of the run cards was discussed and it was explained that a run card could not cross municipal boundaries. An identical card could be for the neighboring municipality but one card could not cross over the line.
- The idea of companies making wholesale run card changes versus reformatting was discussed. DES understands that there may be some companies that decide to make wholesale changes and they are prepared to deal with such situations.
- Timing of the roll-out was discussed. A motion was made by Scot Landis and seconded by Bruce Longenecker for the new format to be rolled out as presented at the meeting, with the outstanding issue of run card numbering to be decided later. The motion was passed by unanimous vote.
- A due date for the return of reformatted cards was discussed. It was decided that June 30th, 2010 would be the deadline for the run cards to be returned to DES. Cards will be entered into the system as they are received and put into use as DES has them entered. At the time of the submission to DES, they go live date for the new cards would be provided to the agencies making the submission.
- Run Card Training was discussed. DES will set up four sessions for new format training to be held late in February.

Berks County Fire Service Working Group Meeting Minutes

- It was brought to the attention of the group that the fire and EMS cards were to be merged as a part of this project. There would only be one set of “emergency response” cards for the county. The EMS based responses would be included in the new card format. Fire services would be assigned the lead to work with the local EMS providers to complete the cards.

Mayday Policy

A brief discussion was held with respect to a mayday SOP. The working group had adopted a policy in 2008, however it needs to be integrated into the new field user SOP.

Standby Releases and General Announcements

A discussion was held on the DES policy for announcements over the hailing frequencies or paging frequency. There was a concern raised that with the new paging system, personnel would not hear the announcements without first having their pagers alerted.

Representatives were asked to get the feelings of their respective zones for future discussion.

Standby Releases were discussed. A motion was made by Scot Landis and seconded by Mike Deturck to have alert tones dropped when companies are released from standby. The motion carried unanimously.

SOP Concerns

Two concerns were raised related to general SOP items:

- Siren Tone activation on second dispatches – was previously decided that this the tones will not be activated on second dispatches
- Splitting tone sets – the tones would not be split between alert tones on the first announcement and siren tones on the second announcement

I78 Corridor Fire Police

A request was made to provide an alert tone for the I78 Corridor Fire Police. After a great deal of discussion on the topic; A motion was made by Chris Stevens and seconded by Mike Moyer to provide an alert tone for the I78 Corridor Fire Police.

DES General Updates

- Communications Center Operations Manager was hired and is on the job, his name is Robert Ashton
- Hamburg Comcast Tower – progress has been good, RMI will be able to go to the site for their part of the work within a few weeks
- Centre Township Tower & 33.94 – DES is still researching this project
- Dispatch Timer – DES explained that the call timer starts when units are placed into dispatch mode, which occur immediately prior to the tones being transmitted; there was no standard found for the timing of response checks and second dispatches. After more discussion on this topic, the group again felt there was no reason to change the timing of the second dispatching and cover dispatching

The next meeting will be held on Thursday February 25, 2010 at 1815 hours in the conference room of the Berks DES at Direct Link.

The meeting was adjourned at 2109 hours.