**ATTENDANCE:**

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Zone 1** | x | Matt Brett | x | Ethan Kunkel | x | Scott Yenser (alt) | |
| **Zone 2** | x | Ken Quell | x | Dean Dalious | | | |
| **Zone 3** | | Bob Martin | | Corey Houser | | Lester Feick | |
| **Zone 4** | x | Bruce Longenecker | x | Bob Snyder (Training) | | | |
| **Zones 5/6** | x | Chris Stevens | x | Chris Schaeffer | x | Matt Gehman | |
| | x | Eric Fox | | | | | |
| **Zone 7** | x | Stephen Serba | | Tom Rehr | | Ron Wentzel, Vice Chair Emeritus | |
| **BCFA** | x | Roger Weidenhammer | x | Leon Grim | | | |
| **BCFPA** | x | Bob Englebach | | J. David Bossard (alt) | | | |
| **Training** | | | | | | | |
| **Taskforce** | | Scott Landis | | | | | |
| **Berks DES** | x | Brian Gottschall | x | Tony Flores | | Matt Stairiker | |
| | | Craig Wanner | x | Todd Boughter | x | Christina Wood | |
| **DCNR** | | Joe Sherman | | | | | |

**\*Ron Wentzel, Vice Chair Emeritus**

**Other Attendees: NONE**

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The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chris Stevens at 18:18 hours in the Berks County Department of Emergency Services multi-purpose room, located in the Direct Link building, Bernville Road, Leesport, PA.

The minutes of the September meeting were approved as written.
There was no meeting in October due to Radio System cutover activities.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Forestry:** NONE

**Fire Police:** NONE

**DES:**

- Brian Gottschall reported upgrade to the RM Server will be made over the weekend. All pending jobs (read, write, firmware) will be removed to facilitate the upgrade. The end-user device programming software will need to be updated also. Brian will send instructions to perform this update to the end-user specified Radio Contacts.

- Brian also noted that Motorola has released a new produce offering, in the form of a dual-knob APX4000 radio.  This product offering utilizes the same charger and accessories as the previous offering.

**CAD:** NONE

**Zone 7:** NONE

**Zone 5/6:** Chris Stevens discussed the policy for announcing recalls and slow/hold responses on the dispatch and hailing talkgroups.  Chris also discussed varying quality of audio on the new system.  Brian Gottschall mentioned that if people are having issues with missed audio or cutting in/out of audio on their pagers, these individuals may want to experiment with setting their pagers back to the "wide band" setting.  Pagers should have preventative maintenance performed on them to keep the "receiver" in the pager correctly tuned around the center frequency.  Drops, bumps, day to day use/abuse can lead to the receiver becoming detuned.

**Zone 4:** Zone 4 representatives reported the same audio quality concerns.  Zone 4 has done several experiments regarding SCBA and voice amps, with mixed results.  Best result seems to come from holding the radio microphone a short distance from the voice port on the SCBA mask, and speaking clearly and with elevated voice, but not yelling.

**Zone 3:** Zone 3 representatives inquired about fire police and what talkgroups they should be using.  FP should be using either Fire Police North or Fire Police South for responding, and switch to FP Ops N1/N2 or FP Ops S1/S2 for on-scene operations.

**Zone 2:**
- Ken Quell voiced same voice quality issues, most noticeable with transmissions originating from the Communications Center.  Dean Dalious confirmed muffled audio quality, but overall, much better communications and response from the Comm Center staff.  Bob Snyder verified lengthy scanlists may cause missed communications, in some cases.
- Questions arose about Medevac landings and clarification on the Couny policy.  The policy is to switch to a "direct" frequency (VTAC or .295 from a 7000/7500 series radio).  If the assigned helicopter does not have VHF capability, the Comm Center will direct the field user to move to an appropriate IOp talkgroup to facilitate communications.
- Questions regarding the Lowband IOp talkgroup arose regarding this talkgroup being patched to an Operations talkgroup. Clarification on the County policy is that it will be used for both Operations and Hailing because there are no alternatives for out of county mutual aid departments still operating on this system.

**Zone 1**: Matt Brett inquired if the County would consider assigning an Operations talkgroup on incidents involving more than 1 company.  Discussion among the group was has, and it was decided to take this idea back to the Zone level for consideration and feedback.

**Radio:**
- Brian Gottschall agreed with the notion that the audio from the Communications Center seems to have an abundance of bass to it.  He is also concerned with the overall audio quality.  Brian reported that Motorola has equipment on-site to attempt to identify issues.  It is noted that people to talk fast are difficult to understand.  The County is working to identify these issues and find remedies.
- Brian reiterated the policy and procedure for EBA's (Emergency Button Activations), and the proper response to the Comm Center for accidental activations.  End users who initiate an accidental activation of the Emergency Button are to respond to the Comm Center with "Berks, (your unit ID), ACCIDENTAL".
- SCBA use: Brian encouraged each department to experiment with their SCBA equipment to determine what works best.
- 800 IOp: Brian reported that the 800 Mhz licenses have not yet been approved by the FCC.  Verification of the receipt of the applications was obtained, however the FCC is still processing them.  Brian also reported that the 8TAC91 National Repeaters on the Berks system may

never go live, because of interference from Chester County.  Berks DES is working with Chester County to try to resolve this issue.

**<u>Fireman's Association:</u>** NONE

**<u>Training:</u>**
- Bob Snyder reported that there is information coming out on new training classes for 2015. The website has been updated.  Online rosters are not currently available, but the training committee is working on bringing them back.
- The training committee is still looking for feedback and trying to determine if a weeknight Essentials class is necessary to accommodate people.
- Enrollment for the 2015 classes has been brisk so far.

**<u>Taskforce:</u>** Scott Landis is still looking for someone to fill the vacant seat on the Taskforce since Ron Wentzel's passing.

**<u>Communications</u>**:
- Brian Gottschall stated that if anyone requires changes to the conventional programming of their APX7000/7500 radios, they need to contact RMI and give them a description of the work needed to be done.  RMI will then quote labor to change the templates for all required radio types for that department as necessary.  RMI will then push reprogramming jobs to the County for push to the RM Software, and the end user will be notified that their jobs are ready for execution.
- Brian Gottschall informed the committee that he will be absent from Working Group meetings from January through April 2015 due to education obligations.

With no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned @ 20:11 hours.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 11th @ 18:15 hours in the Direct Link conference room.

Respectfully submitted,


Matt Gehman
Secretary