

**BERKS COUNTY FIRE SERVICES WORKING GROUP
Meeting Minutes – March 26, 2015**

ATTENDANCE:

Zone 1		Matt Brett		Ethan Kunkel		Scott Yenser (alt)
Zone 2	x	Ken Quell	x	Dean Dalious		
Zone 3		Bob Martin		Lester Feick		Corey Hauser (alt)
Zone 4	x	Bruce Longenecker		Bob Snyder		
Zones 5/6	x	Chris Stevens	x	Chris Schaeffer	x	Eric Fox
	x	Chris Bickings				
Zone 7		Tom Kemery		Tom Rehr		
BCFA		Roger Weidenhammer		Leon Grim		
BCFPA	x	Bob Englebach		J. David Bossard (alt)		
Task Force		Scot Landis		Michael Lessar		
Berks DES	x	Brian Gottschall	x	Tony Flores		Matt Stairiker
	x	Todd Boughter	x	Christina Wood		
Forestry 17		Joe Sherman				

*Ron Wentzel, Vice Chair Emeritus

Other attendees: None

The meeting was called to order at 1821 hours in the Berks County Department of Emergency Services conference room, located in the Direct Link building, Bernville Road, Reading, PA.

The February 26, 2015 meeting minutes were approved as written.

DISCUSSION

East-Central Task Force: No report.

BCFA: No report.

BCFPA (Bob E.): Noted that fire police are still using countywide fire police talk group for on-scene operations. Todd Boughter will advise telecommunicators to move and/or assign a fire police ops talk group is they hear operations occurring on countywide fire police.

Forestry: No report.

Training: Brian Gottschall announced that Jeff Shilling has been hired as the superintendent of the Fire Training Center. DES is committed to working with Jeff as he becomes acclimated to the position.

Zone 1: Matt Brett asked (via e-mail to Chris) whether Berks has any information on out-of-county resources for technical rescue assets. DES is able to search for resources within our ECTF region but nothing to the east, west, and south of Berks County. DES is aware of teams in neighboring counties to the east, west, and south but does not have any manifest of their individual assets.

Zone 2: After discussion at their last meeting they would like the FSWG to continue meeting monthly. They discussed the FirstNet topic within their Zone and aren't sure how to support something that doesn't yet exist, however they are interested in receiving more information as it becomes available.

Zone 3: Nothing to report.

Zone 4: They have no objections to the creation of "dummy" types of apparatus for relocations of apparatus types into stations that don't normally house them (i.e. relocation of a ladder and rescue to a station in Berks that normally houses neither).

Zones 5/6: They also have no objections to the creation of "dummy" types of apparatus for relocates.

Zone 7: Nothing to report.

(NOTE: All Zones are requested to go back to their respective Zone companies/departments and bring back to the WG the agencies who wish to have the dummy types of apparatus added for relocates to their respective stations.)

Total Visibility: As an off-shoot to Matt Brett's questions regarding resources and assets, a lengthy discussion ensued regarding the current state and usage of Total Visibility within Berks' fire agencies. Specifically:

- Very few agencies have added or are adding resources into Total Visibility. This was/is due to several reasons (agencies were originally told to not add resources when Total Viz was originally rolled out, admins from agencies need re-training, admins from agencies are no longer in leadership positions and their replacements were never trained to use Total Viz, etc.)

In response to this, Brian Gottschall asked whether agencies would begin or continue to enter resources if DES provided re-training? **Zone reps were tasked with taking this question back to their Zones for a response.**

- A commodity list was created several years prior by Ron Wentzel and Scot Landis identifying "big ticket" items that would be worthy of harvesting from within the county. **(This list was passed on to Chris by Brian and distributed to Zone reps to be disseminated within each Zone).** Some discussion occurred as to whether there should be any other commodity categories added.

Zones are tasked to review the Commodity Report and make suggestions for additional categories which will then be discussed at a future FSWG meeting.

DES:

- Brian spoke to the group regarding the e-mail that he distributed about Bakken Crude. Brian noted that trains are going through Berks County carrying what is believed to be large quantities of Bakken Crude. Some of the information about Bakken Crude is being blown out of proportion due to the politics regarding pipeline construction. That said, there is potentially a bigger concern with these train cars sitting for an extended period of time.

- Brian mentioned that there are some field-user issues with simulcast high-band paging, specifically in the southeastern Berks region. Select companies who used to be receiving pages from tower sites on the legacy system are now receiving them from new tower sites. Several companies are reporting areas that are now dead spots, where in the past they were not. This could potentially also involve pagers that haven't been maintained well and/or have never been serviced. Brian is asking everyone to go back to their Zones and identify potential areas where significant, reproducible pager problems are occurring.....specifically areas that used to successfully activate pagers but now aren't since the tower expansion and relocation of paging transmitter sites.
- The Berks County Commissioners will be meeting in the multi-purpose room of DES on Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 1000 hours. This meeting will include the topic of renewing legislation for the 911 fee. In Berks County, each municipality is billed for operational costs whereas other counties cover the bill. The 911 fees haven't been increased in years.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1946 hours. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 25, 2015 at 1815 hours in the Direct Link conference room.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Stevens, Chair