

BERKS COUNTY FIRE SERVICES WORKING GROUP
Meeting Minutes – October 29, 2015

ATTENDANCE:

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

*Ron Wentzel, Vice Chair Emeritus

Other attendees: None

The meeting was called to order at 1817 hours in the Berks County Department of Emergency Services conference room, located in the Direct Link building, Bernville Road, Reading, PA.

The September 24, 2015 minutes were not ready for review. They will be reviewed for approval at a future meeting.

DISCUSSION

East-Central Task Force (Landis): Nothing new to report.

BCFA: Meeting Saturday, October 31, 2015. Membership cards are available.

BCFPA (Englebach): Nothing to report.

Forestry (Dean): Nothing to report. No budget due to State impasse.

Training (Bob S.):

- Most of the major programs for 2016 have been laid out with tentative dates and instructors; Bob will reach out to Jeff Shilling at the FTC to confirm site availability. The classes should be posted on the website (berkscountyfiretraining.org) by sometime around Thanksgiving.
- Alternating year instructor/officer classes will begin in 2016. One year will be Instructor I and Officer I with the next year offering Instructor II and Officer II.

Zone 1: Nothing to report.

Zone 2: Nothing to report.

Zone 3: Nothing to report.

Zone 4: Nothing to report.

Zones 5/6: Nothing to report.

Zone 7: Nothing to report.

DES:

- Numbering of fire marshals: The current guidance is somewhat unclear. Brian feels that FMs should be using municipal numbers, as the authority for a fire marshal comes from municipal appointment. An additional issue is how a fire marshal who is appointed for multiple municipalities identifies himself/herself (i.e. one identifying number or multiple numbers). After much discussion the WG feels that fire marshals should use municipal numbers (i.e. FM95 for Colebrookdale Township's fire marshal). That said, the Zone reps are tasked to go back to their Zones and poll the agencies as to how they're currently doing things and bring that information back to the January, 2016 meeting.
- SOP discussion: The SOPs have been out for over a year now, and DES has a running document with corrections that have already been made. If any agencies within the county's fire services have suggestions for changes they should forward said suggestions to their Zone WG reps.
- Radio ergonomics: Motorola is obligated to touch each radio again to update to the newest firmware. This is an opportunity for the fire services to look at radio ergonomics and make suggestions for changes to how each button functions. This information should be forwarded to DES. If the fire services wants to make changes to the order of talk groups those suggested changes should be forwarded to Zone WG reps to be brought to the January meeting for discussion.
- From Todd Boughter: There have been an increasing number of field users talking over dispatchers. Field users should wait a few seconds to make sure the dispatcher isn't speaking before keying up. (Field users can't talk over each other, however field users CAN talk over the dispatcher because of how the system is designed).
- Schuylkill County Interoperability: There appears to be some issues in how the Schuylkill County radios were set up to communicate with Berks. Some of the radios have incorrect PLs. Agencies bordering Schuylkill County should be aware that some Schuylkill radios cannot talk to anyone in Berks until fixes are made from their end.
- Lancaster County Interoperability: DES has been working with Lancaster to put in an interoperability control station to Berks can talk directly to Lancaster. This is in place in Chester, Montgomery, Schuylkill, and Lehigh. Lebanon is using UTac42 as their trunked control channel. Lancaster initially did not engage, however they now are, and Brian is attempting to schedule a meeting with them.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1935 hours. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 28, 2016 at 1815 hours in the Direct Link conference room. This will be the reorganization meeting to select a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary for the 2016 calendar year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Stevens, Chair