

BERKS COUNTY FIRE SERVICES WORKING GROUP
Meeting Minutes – April 28, 2016

ATTENDANCE:

Zone 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt Brett	<input type="checkbox"/> Ethan Kunkel	<input type="checkbox"/> Scott Yenser (alt)
Zone 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ken Quell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dean Dalious	<input type="checkbox"/> Cody Rahn
Zone 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Bob Martin	<input type="checkbox"/> Lester Feick	<input type="checkbox"/> Corey Hauser (alt)
Zone 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Snyder		
Zone 5/6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Stevens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Schaeffer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eric Fox
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Bickings		
Zone 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Tom Kemery	<input type="checkbox"/> Tom Rehr	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Thorpe (alt)
BCFA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roger Weidenhammer	<input type="checkbox"/> Leon Grim	
BCFPA	<input type="checkbox"/> Bob Enlebach	<input type="checkbox"/> J. David Bossard (alt)	
Task Force	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Landis	<input type="checkbox"/> Michael Lassar	
Berks DES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Gottschall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tony Flores	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt Stairiker
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Todd Boughter	<input type="checkbox"/> Christina Wood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jon Fritz
Forestry 17	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Troy Withers		

***Ron Wentzel, Vice Chair Emeritus**

Other Attendees:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chris Stevens at 18:14 hours in the Berks County Department of Emergency Services conference room, located in the Direct Link Building, Bernville Road, Reading, PA.

The February 25, 2016 and March 31, 2016 meeting minutes were not ready for review. They will be reviewed for approval at a future meeting.

DISCUSSION

Secretary Position (Stevens): Chris Bickings agreed to fulfil the secretary position for the group.

Forestry 17 (DCNR): Troy Withers attended the meeting for the first time. He announced that he was replacing Joe Sherman as the Berks County liaison with District 17. He also reported that he views their view as a resource for the Berks County departments for incidents and training.

East-Central Task Force (Landis): Attended a task force meeting on this date. They discussed a new DHS initiative of a tools and resource plan to help private resources plan for an attack.

BCFA (Weidenhammer): Nothing to report.

Training (Snyder):

- Mod 5 (Advanced Firefighting) scheduled to begin May 3, 2016 was cancelled due to lack of enrollment. After a discussion of possible reasons for the lack of enrollment it was recommended to Bob to consider renaming the class to “Fire Fighter 2 Prep Class”

- Fire Fighter 2 Certification testing enrollment is low. The scheduled class for 2015 was cancelled due to this.
- Fire Fighter 1 Certification testing has remained successful.
- The committee will be adding fall classes to the schedule in the near future.

BCFPA: There was no representation in attendance. No Report

Zone 1: Matt Brett (via email to Chris Stevens) reported that it was being noticed that notifications for recalls are not being transmitted on all channels applicable to the incident (i.e. Assigned Ops channel, Alpha, or Bravo). They would like DES to consider sending text messages for recalls. After a discussion with DES, the current policy states that the dispatchers should announce recalls on all “applicable” channels; however, it is the dispatcher’s discretion to what channels are applicable at the time of the recall. The Watch Officer should be contact immediately following the call if the OIC has a concern.

Zone 2: Nothing to report

Zone 3: Nothing to report

Zone 4 (Snyder): The Zone discussed DES “Plan Charlie” policy. They requested some clarification to whether a representative from each department needs to man the individual fire stations to accept calls via a landline whenever the plan is activated by DES. DES clarified that the plan requirements will always be announced via text and radio system whenever the plan is placed into effect. A site rep for each department will not always be required, but if it is, it will be included in the announcement.

Zone 5/6 (Stevens):

- Next meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2016
- It is being noticed that text messages are sporadically received for responding apparatus, mostly fire police vehicles, after receiving the initial dispatch text message. DES is unsure why this is happening, and if one of these text messages are received the actual message should be emailed to Brian Gottschall for review.

Zone 7 (Thorpe):

- They are continuing to update their SOPs.
- They are currently testing voice quality on radio system.

Tabled / Old Business: The group continued to discuss the recommended changes for second dispatches and cover apparatus dispatch times. After a lengthy discussion about this, the tentative recommended change to the DES is for second dispatches to be five minutes after initial dispatch, and automatic cover dispatches at seven minutes from initial dispatch. A final recommendation will be approved and forward to DES at the May Meeting to allow for the Zones to be notified of the WG recommendation.

DES:

- Utilization of Ops channels seems to be going well. The dispatchers have been more proactive to request OICs to move their operations to an Ops channel.
- Tony Flores reported that DES reps attended the New World Conference (CAD System). The current vendor has merged with a larger vendor, so there will be new interfaces coming in the future. There is no timeline of this.
- Berks County Text Messaging – As reported in the previous months, the current provider of the county's alert paging will no longer providing service causing DES to find a new vendor. They have met with two vendors to date. They are still in a fact finding stage of the project, so they have no definitive information to pass on about the switch over.
- MCI Response Card – The EMS Services Working Group developed a MCI Response card for the county. This was an 18-month process. The overview of the card was presented to the WG, and the templates have already been sent to all of the county fire departments. DES will be forwarding more information to the WG so the reps could report back to their individual zones.
- The annual Reading 120 Bike race will be the weekend of September 11, 2016. In addition to this event, there will be several other 911 festivities throughout the county at the same time. DES has encountered some problems with individuals who are setting up this event, but they will be contacting all of the departments that are affected by this race.
- DES announced that there still is no definite start date for the warranties for Motorola radios. Brian emphasized that departments need to be conscious of any radio problems, because they are covered under this warranty. Additionally, all batteries are covered; therefore, departments could get new batteries free.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 20:08 hours. The next meeting is scheduled for 18:15 hours on Thursday, May 26, 2016 at the Direct Link conference room.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Bickings, Secretary