

**BERKS COUNTY FIRE SERVICES WORKING GROUP**  
**Meeting Minutes – April 24, 2014**

**ATTENDANCE:**

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

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

**Other Attendees: NONE**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chris Stevens at 18:19 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 March 27th, 2014 meeting was approved as written.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Runcard rollouts:** Challenges have been encountered, recommend pushing back to May 5<sup>th</sup> for “go live”. DES had internal discussions about CAD failure situations and procedure for dispatching calls. Solution agreed upon was using a modification to existing Access database for a backup. Once runcard deployment is completed, next step is assessing and preparing the Access database for backup use.

**DES Radio/Paging Significant Dates:**

Brian Gottschall announced the following significant dates;

June 9<sup>th</sup> – backup paging taken out of service

June 23<sup>rd</sup> – begin using backup paging system as primary means of paging

June 30<sup>th</sup> – take down simulcast paging system, on backup paging for entire county

June 30<sup>th</sup> to July 25<sup>th</sup> – pagers should be narrowbanded during this timeframe.

July 25<sup>th</sup> – bring back simulcast paging system, narrowbanded, expanded coverage.

Train the trainer radio training – 2 week period. Wed June 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, Wed 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## Radio SOP Discussion:

### Zone 1:

- Hailing channel – recommend that Operation automatically gets moved to Ops channel by Comm Center. Current proposed SOP states that the Comm Center or OIC can assign or request based on incident type or system loading. Group agreed to table request until system goes live, and re-visit based on experiences in the first months of use.
- Ops channels are NOT monitored. OIC will need to call Berks on the Hailing channel (Berks Fire A or Berks Fire B) to initiate a conversation. Berks will call OIC on OPS if Berks needs to initiate a conversation.

### Zone 2:

- 1 part transmissions understood that they are not going to be acknowledged by Berks.
- Request all units be acknowledged “responding” or “on location” because of insurance concerns. Insurance is NOT an issue. Current SOP will stand.

### Zone 3:

- Hailing/operations discussion as per Zone 1. Discussion about multiple officers on the radio, and if additional will be given. Brian reiterated additional will be given to 1<sup>st</sup> responding officer, 1<sup>st</sup> responding apparatus, and any time it is requested.

### Zone 4:

- Concern about PD being able to talk to FIRE. PD will have all of the channels FIRE has, plus their own PD channels. PD will have to change to a FIRE channel to talk to FIRE discipline units.
- Monitoring by Berks – Hailing is 100% monitored, Operations are 0% monitored.
- Emergency Radio Traffic – DES has implemented 3 concepts – Air priority, mayday, urgent traffic. Any unit can request an “air priority” (unforeseen life safety priority) due to a life safety hazard, etc. All other units will switch to a different talkgroup. Also added a “Mayday Use” in general, signifying a “personal distress” issue. Urgent traffic – used to alert a system user or Berks to an urgent situation. Attached to these minutes for your reference are copies of the SOG’s that have been added to the County document regarding this topic.
- Tactical versus Revert Emergency handling – Whether the Emergency stays on the “local” (tactical) channel or **reverts** to a “common” countywide channel.
  - **Tactical** – The radio stays on the Talk Group/Channel it was on when the emergency button was pressed. This configuration is used when it is anticipated that the most readily available help for someone pressing an emergency button will already be on the channel/Talk Group the emergency is being declared on.
  - **Revert** – The radio, without user intervention, changes to a designated revert Talk Group after an emergency button press. This configuration is used when it is anticipated that the most readily available help for someone pressing an emergency button will not be on the Talk Group the emergency is being declared on.

A list of Talk Group/Channel Emergency configurations is listed in **Appendix E** of the proposed Radio SOG’s.

- Plan “Charlie” implementation discussion – currently in the SOP, all units will be notified by “all call pager tone”. Recommendation was made about notification at every dispatch. Vote was taken, and WG recommends separate notification on every dispatch.

### Zone 5&6:

- Traffic units: Do traffic units go responding on Hail or FP Ops? Traffic units are to go responding on “Hail” channel, and move to FP Ops for operations.
- Radio abuse inhibiting: Asked about what criteria is. Reference section 3.4 and 3.5 in the Radio SOP.
- Aeromedical: Flight Operation channels: Flight operations will be conducted on a “conventional” channel (available on a dual band portable or dual band mobile). If you do

not have access to the “conventional” channel, you can request an Interop channel to facilitate a patch to talk to aeromedical.

- Security checks: Counter starts at “on location”. 20 minutes is the current counter. EMS WG has requested 10 minutes. Security checks will be applied to Fire units when functioning in a EMS capacity.

Zone 7: NONE

FP: NONE

With no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned @ 20:50 hours.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 29th @ 1815 hours in the Direct Link conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Gehman  
Secretary