

BERKS COUNTY FIRE SERVICES WORKING GROUP
Meeting Minutes – March 31, 2016

ATTENDANCE:

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

*Ron Wentzel, Vice Chair Emeritus

Other attendees: None

The meeting was called to order at 1816 hours in the Berks County Department of Emergency Services multi-purpose room, located in the Direct Link building, Bernville Road, Reading, PA.

The February 25, 2016 minutes were unavailable for review and will be approved at the next meeting.

The Secretary position was left open as of last meeting due to no interest at the time. Chris Bickings expressed interest in serving in this position. A motion was made and seconded to appoint Chris as Secretary.

DISCUSSION

Forestry (Dean): There will be a change in leadership but not certain as to who it is.

East-Central Task Force: Scot and Mike were unable to attend this meeting, however an email from Scot to Chris states that the Fire/Rescue/Hazmat committee has processed several equipment requests for Task Force funded assets that will improve capabilities. The committee also continues to work on a training plan for the 2016 SHSG.

BCFA (Weidenhammer): Nothing to report.

BCFPA (Minninger): Nothing to report.

Training (Bob S.): Nothing to report.

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: Ron Banks is the new Training Lieutenant. Gail Knauer is now the Fire Prevention Lieutenant. The new cadet class started.

DES:

From Todd Boughter: Please continue to remind agencies about 2-part versus 4-part messaging. 2-part messaging is for simple status changes, while 4-part messaging is for anything above-and-beyond a simple status change (i.e. arriving on location and giving a report, requesting additional resources, MetEd pole numbers, etc.).

From Brian Gottschall:

- Negotiations with Motorola for Final System Acceptance is close and FSA will likely be back-dated to 1/1/2016.
- There will likely be a significant CAD upgrade coming that will provide more efficiency and flexibility. DES is asking for agencies to be reasonable during the upgrades in regards to submitting run card changes. Please only submit changes that are ABSOLUTELY necessary. The current timeline is 6 weeks from run card change submission to implementation in CAD. There is no time estimate while the CAD upgrade is occurring.
- There will be a policy change coming in regards to burning at the FTC due to the issues mentioned at last meeting regarding a larger amount of damage to the burn building after the Fall 2015 season than normal.

UNFINISHED/ONGOING BUSINESS:

Fire marshal numbering:

Z1: use fire company numbering, also liked idea of FM having an individual pager tone

Z2: municipal-based numbering. Not concerned with FM tones, as agencies in this zone know how to reach out to their FMs

Z3: not present

Z4: use fire company numbering, also liked idea of FM being dispatched by fire company tone

Z5/6: municipal-based numbering, dispatch FM using fire company tone

AFTER MUCH DISCUSSION IT WAS AGREED BY ALL TO USE MUNICIPAL-BASED NUMBERING FOR FIRE MARSHALS COUNTYWIDE. AGENCIES SHOULD BE ABLE TO REQUEST A FIRE AGENCY TONE IF SO DESIRED.

Ops channels:

Z1: wants ops channels assigned to EVERY fire incident by DES, not by the IC

Z2: wants to continue following the current radio SOP (ops channels assigned by DES if they sound like there is the possibility of the incident escalating).

Z3: not present

Z4: not present

Z5/6: continue to follow the current radio SOP

AFTER MUCH DISCUSSION THE FOLLOWING POINTS WERE AGREED UPON:

- **IC CAN REQUEST OPS CHANNELS**
- **DES CAN AND WILL ASSIGN OPS CHANNELS TO INCIDENTS WITH POTENTIAL ESCALATION**
- **FIRE AGENCIES NEED TO POLICE THEIR OWN WHEN IT COMES TO MOVING OFF FIRE A/B TO AN OPS CHANNEL**
- **ZONES REPS ARE ASKED TO REMIND THEIR AGENCIES TO MOVE TO OPS CHANNELS RATHER THAN TYING UP FIRE A/B WITH UNNECESSARY RADIO TRAFFIC**
- **DES WILL MOVE AGENCIES TO OPS CHANNELS MORE QUICKLY WHEN NECESSARY**

2nd dispatches and covers:

Z1: 2nd dispatch at 5 minutes, covers at 8 minutes

Z2: 2nd dispatch at 5 minutes, covers at 6 minutes (current SOP)

Z3: not present

Z4: not present

Z5/6: 2nd dispatch at 6 minutes, covers at 7 minutes

NO DECISION REACHED AT THIS POINT, AS THERE IS NOT REPRESENTATION FROM ALL ZONES AND THIS IS A CRITICAL TOPIC

Having to switch back to Fire A/B from an ops channel to call Berks:

Z1: go back to A/B to call Berks (current SOP)

Z2: call Berks on the assigned Ops channel and be acknowledged

Z3: not present

Z4: not present

Z5/6: go back to A/B to call Berks (current SOP)

AGREED TO CONTINUE TO FOLLOW SOP

IC's should be contacted by Berks before covering apparatus:

Z1: didn't poll their agencies yet

Z2: follow the current radio SOP

Z3: not present

Z4: didn't poll their agencies yet

Z5/6: no. ICs should police themselves

AGREED TO CONTINUE TO FOLLOW SOP

Recommended radio ergonomics changes:

Z1: add 2 additional ops groups, take flight ops talk groups out of Fire A/B zones. Radio buttons good

Z2: add 2 additional ops groups, take flight ops talk groups out of Fire A/B zones. Radio buttons good

Z3: not present

Z4: move flight ops talkgroups down the list and move med and admin up the list. Swap EMS and Reading Fire zones.

Z5/6: add 2 additional ops groups, take flight ops talk groups out of Fire A/B zones. Radio buttons good

WORKING GROUP IS RECOMMENDING TO DES TO ADD TWO ADDITIONAL OPS GROUPS, TAKE FLIGHT OPS OUT OF FIRE A/B ZONES, RADIO BUTTONS GOOD.

Chris spoke about efforts the Working Group can take to encourage firefighter recruitment/retention. Some discussion. Chris will work on a survey that can be distributed to all fire agencies to determine current conditions/trends and individual efforts to recruit and retain. Chris will present to a future Working Group meeting for editing/finalization so it can be distributed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2015 hours. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 28, 2016 at 1815 hours in the Direct Link conference room.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Stevens, Chair