

SOUTH CAROLINA FIREFIGHTER MOBILIZATION

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MEETING MINUTES

Firefighter Mobilization Oversight Committee

August 20, 2020 at 10 a.m.

Virtual Meeting

Public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the South Carolina State Fire, 141 Monticello Trail, Columbia, SC 29203 and provided to all requesting persons, organizations, and news media in compliance with Section 30-4-80 of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

In accordance with the Governor's directives regarding social distancing, the meeting was held via video and teleconference.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was posted and advertised pursuant to South Carolina laws, rules, and regulations. The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. by Chairman Jones. Others in attendance included Chuck Black, Rick Dangerfield, David Reed, Mike Ellis, Brandon Hollman, Chris Blankenship, Pierce Womack, Russell Alexander, Keith Minick, JD McCarley, Emily Farr (LLR Director) and State Fire employees Chief Ken Kerber, Chad Beam, Shon Hamilton, Susan Duncan, and Amy Williamson.

A quorum was present. Chairman Jones welcomed the Committee members and guests and reminded them the May 6, 2020, meeting was postponed due to COVID-19.

II. Roll Call of Members

SC Firefighter Mobilization Committee											
Jonathan Jones	Z	Darryl Jones	Z	Charlie King	Z	Bruce Kline	A	Brian LeGette	A	Mark Davis	Z
Kim Stenson	Z	Mike Bedenbaugh	Z	Phil Jolley	Z	Steve Kovalcik	Z	Joey Tanner	Z	Mark Keel	Z

Z: Via Zoom (phone) X: Present A: Absent

III. Approval of Agenda and Previous Minutes

Darryl Jones made a motion to approve today's agenda. Mark Davis seconded. Motion carried unanimously, without discussion.

Steve Kovalcik made a motion to approve the Feb. 5, 2020, minutes. Darryl Jones seconded. Motion carried unanimously, without discussion.

IV. State Fire Marshal's Comments and Report

Chief Jones announced Don Hedrick has accepted a full-time position with the Academy. He will serve as Special Operations Training Officer and the Training Officer for Task Force One.

For Hurricane Isaias (landfall Aug. 4, 2020, Ocean Isle Beach, NC), staff developed a pandemic deployment plan modeled after a similar FEMA USAR plan. It shifted the 80-person Task Force into teams of eight (each). They receive a schedule for vehicle assignments, lodging, meal times, etc. As

a result, one module does not interact with any another and, if a team member is diagnosed with COVID, it would not jeopardize the entire Task Force.

Chief Jones received a memorandum from the US Department of Defense which has determined that federal military resources are being over-utilized for non-military missions. The memorandum discontinues that use. There are a few exceptions. For the HART program, it means members cannot fly to maintain their currency as helicopter rescue technicians. Members are current through October 2020. The memorandum also indicates that States can request exceptions for specific programs. HART will apply for the exception and is optimistic this will be approved. Director Kim Stenson shared there have been several federal reimbursement issues but has worked through them.

Chief Jones announced he has been asked to serve on a committee with FEMA employees that will work on resource typing definitions.

FY21 Budget Report

The budget year, because as the pandemic, began with a “Continuing Resolution” which funds an agency at the previous year’s level – with no changes. Staff created an interim budget. It will be adjusted based on any authorization.

To track expenses, staff requested new cost centers for HART/HART Academy as well as the Incident Support Team. For FY21 (interim budget) \$375,163.50 USAR (deployment, equipment purchases, etc.) and \$153,512 for USAR training. Total planned interim budget totals \$528,675.50. Does not include grant funding.

HART program funding is \$40,430 and \$32,550 (Academy/one session). HART total funding is \$72,980.

Planned spending is \$601,655.50 compared to \$619,409 in FY20. Budget decreased by \$18,000. This amount does not include IST \$34,728 (training, exercises, and equipment).

For Firefighter Mobilization, the current cash balance is \$208,875.02 as of June 30, 2020 (carried forward from FY20). Will get an additional \$165,000 in FY21 for total available funds in FY21 of \$373,875.02. For FY21, staff has budgeted \$233,585 (equipment, software, etc.).

Mobilizations Coordinator’s Report

Chad Beam, Statewide Coordinator, provided a report to committee members. South Carolina is the first state to go “live” with National Mutual Aid System (NMAS), the new tasking order system. This will allow fire departments to build inventory. Training is still taking place via Zoom.

Beam also provided an update regarding:

- Reimbursement of past reimbursable events (the Richland County Landfill, and hurricanes Florence and Dorian). Hurricane Florence (appeal) payout is the only one pending.
- State Fire Radio template – Comprehensive study is complete. There are 93 zones.
- 2020 Mobilizations
 - Cayce, Missing Child (Feb) - Assisted Lexington County and Cayce DPS
 - Pickens/Anderson Flood (Feb) - No notice flood event. Two days.
 - Pickens/ Hampton Tornado response (April) - In Seneca for a week (TF1) and assisted with damage assessment. Fire Marshal deputies assisted with building damage assessment.
 - Clinton Festival (June) – Communications bus used for unified command

- Poplar Springs Coverage Assistance (July) – Helped with funeral of Chief Norris
- Darlington County Fire (July) – Appliance warehouse fire/ 4 departments (6 hours)
- TS Isaias (August) – High-water vehicle sent to Charleston. Vehicle returned. All regional boat teams were on standby.
- Survey 123
 - Statewide exercise was held two weeks before tropical storm arrived. All regional teams were involved. They used the tool (virtually) for two weeks. There are 20 accounts for SAR and 100 accounts for locals.
- SC recognized for consolidating SAR information by FEMA.
- Future plans – Continue to educate coordinators (NMAS) and meet virtually
- New Region One Assistant Coordinator – Russell Alexander (deployed once)
- Obtaining equipment for coordinators and committee members (polo shirts)

Chief Jones mentioned Chad Beam created, because of the pandemic, a workplace impact dashboard in Survey 123. It will anticipate any upcoming events and can track firefighters who have been quarantined/ tested positive for COVID.

Chad Beam stated CLEAR team also uses Survey 123 (data collector).

Chief Jones stated NASFM will be sharing the data collector on the national level.

V. SC-TF1 and SC-HART Update

Chief Ken Kerber shared summary of events since January 1, 2020. A two-page spreadsheet was shared with members.

Boat team orientation meeting – at least 15 are interested in training. There are 40 members specially trained in boats. The Zodiac boats are 10-12 years old.

Chief Kerber provided a list of upcoming training events. He also stated:

- There are 129 current operational members on the roster. Continue to obtain new members.
- Shared the need to replace 18 tires on one tractor trailer.

Shon Hamilton stated there were three HART responses – two at night. Additionally, three rescuers were sent to Nebraska to assist with their new HART program.

VI. SC-IST (Palmetto IST) Update

Chief Jones stated the entire team completed the FEMA 0305 class in February.

- Purchased needed equipment and repurposed a climate controlled trailer to use as the IST trailer.
- Quarterly training held in July. Due to pandemic, it was broken into sessions.
- At the request of Director Farr, due to COVID, created a communications plan for LLR in March.

VII. Old Business

A. Firefighter Mobilization Plan Update

Chad Beam stated he updated verbiage to include civil unrest and pandemic plans. Will provide the Plan to the full committee for approval.

To avoid conflicts regarding reimbursement, Chief Jones stated the Firefighter Mobilization Plan mirrors the Emergency Operations Plan.

VIII. New Business

EMD notified of a request from California (due to fires) – it was a nationwide EMAC request for 375 Type III Engines (or IV, V, VI).

A S.C. State Firefighters' Association Leadership Institute student is working on a project regarding the expansion of Firefighter Mobilization.

IX. Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next meeting was not scheduled. It will be at the call of the chair.

Mark Keel made a motion to adjourn. Mark Davis seconded. The motion was carried unanimously without discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 a.m.