



MINUTES
Firefighter Mobilization Oversight Committee
January 29, 2008
State Fire Marshal's Office

Members Present: John Reich, Alvin Payne, Bruce Kline, Tommy McDowell, Paul Watts, Karl Ristow, Wendell Wilburn, and Dusty Owens

Others: Jason Pope, Ed Roper, Dan McManus and Ken Bell

- Chairman Reich called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
- Minutes from the October 24th meeting were read and approved.
- Dan McManus presented the US&R Director's report. (See Attachment 1)
 - o Karl Ristow suggested we recognize Mick Mayers and Ken Bell for their hard work during the time while Mick was interim US&R Director. John Reich agreed and stated both should get LLR's TRIBUTE award along with a plaque from this committee to show appreciation. Alvin Payne suggested the presentation be made during the Firefighters' Association Spring meeting.
 - o Tommy McDowell state the Professional Engineers should be covered under our Workers' Compensation and Liability policy as well. John Reich stated the policy will allow us to cover them.
 - o John Reich asked about paying for Task Force members' meals during official meetings at the Fire Academy. Karl Ristow made motion to pay for meals during official meetings, Wendell Wilburn seconded. No discussion, motion passed.
 - o The Volunteer Incentive Program (VIP) was discussed as it pertains to Task Force members. Wendell Wilburn stated that if we legally offer this to members, then we should. John Reich stated he would research this to determine legality and also discuss it with the Department of Revenue.
 - o Wendell Wilburn inquired on the status of the Crane repair. Ken Bell stated the crane should be ready by the end of February.
 - o John Reich stated he would contact SLED to determine if the Task Force validation project could be conducted during the Vigilant Guard exercise in April. Tommy McDowell asked who would be evaluating the Task Force during the exercise. SLED was supposed to contract with outside subject matter experts to perform the evaluation. Tommy further stated that Homeland Security Grant money should compensate members during the validation exercise.
- Jason Pope presented the Mobilization Coordinator's report. (See Attachment 2)

Old Business

- FFM Strategic Plan – Karl Ristow asked if we should have an annual plan or a strategic plan. The group agreed we should have a strategic plan. Tommy McDowell said a strategic plan should have three to five goals and not get involved with tactics. Karl will continue to develop the plan.
- John Reich passed out the budget update. He stated the US&R proviso money can be carried over into the next fiscal year, but we needed to determine our next budget request amount for the legislature now. John and Dan will work on this. The money allocated for the Regional US&R teams was discussed. John Reich stated that we will distribute \$140,000 from the US&R budget to the regional teams. Each team will receive \$35,000 for equipment and training.
- Karl Ristow made a motion to approve the US&R Strategic Plan and Alvin Payne seconded. No discussion, motion carried.
- Wendell Wilburn asked if we sent a bill for the un-used travel and training to the fire department discussed in the previous meeting. Wendell also asked if we had the authority to do that. John Reich stated he could send a letter to this effect if the committee so desired. The committee agreed to take no action on this. Ken Bell stated a training request form will be developed to try and keep this from happening again.
- Jason Pope handed out the FY07 State Fire Project distribution plan. Tommy McDowell made motion to approve the plan, Wendell Wilburn seconded and motion carried. Jason will begin the procurement process.
 - o Tommy McDowell noted the FY08 State Homeland Security Grant program will be taking a different approach. A new needs assessment will be conducted for the state to identify gaps and capabilities.

New Business

- Jason Pope passed out draft copies of the 2007 Mobilization Annual Report. There was some discussion on the cover art and Jason will re-work. The report will be completed by March 15 and submitted for approval at the next meeting.
- Ed Roper mentioned the Fire Academy will be conducting a six-day All Hazards Incident Management Team class to be held in Columbia April 28 – May 3. There are slots available if anyone is interested.

Open Discussion

- None

The next meeting will be held at Myrtle Beach Fire Station #6 on March 26, 2008.

Motion to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted with two attachments,

Jason Pope

Attachment 1

US&R Director's Report January 29, 2008

The South Carolina US&R Task Force remains operational with 120 deployable specialists with no recent deployments or requests for assistance. The change of Directors has taken place this month with many past, current and new action items listed below.

- **Meetings:**
 - Deputy Director Ken Bell twice a week in person
 - Past Director Mick Mayers, 1/09/2008
 - TFL Meeting postponed until 2/6/08 do to their personal/business conflicts
 - SCEMD, attended 2 training sessions, 1 TTX on WMD
 - The first Task Force Training session of 2008 1/10 & 1/11
 - Fire Chiefs & Firefighters Association meetings 1/22 & 1/23
 - Professor Johnson, USC – about set backs in the SEMS program and future applications of our joint venture with the Task Force 1/25
 - Meeting with Communications & Medical Team Manager – 1/30/08
 - National Guard Bureau, Senior Planning for the upcoming “Vigilant Guard” Response (ORE) 1/22 & 1/24 – All plans considered private.
 - Upcoming with Haz Mat, Planning, Rescue, Search/K9 Managers– in February

- **Training:**
 - Currently 10 Rescue Specialist in Texas for Advanced Structural Collapse Training Course
 - Fixed and Rotor wing (C-130 & Helicopter) Training this spring
 - NGB working on providing a Disaster Communications & Land Navigation Course
 - CST Haz Mat interested in training with us
 - Redesign of the rubble pile for rescue & one for canine (with O Course)
 - Low-cost refresher training to boost morale

- **Team Assessment:**
 - Started complete organizational overhaul of membership profiles, deployable roster and accounting for MOUs.
 - Cache assessment will be an on going process until further notice
 - Operational Readiness Exercise (ORE) will be held in conjunction with the National Guard Bureau in Beaufort County on April 21st-23rd
 - SCTF1 looks to have a full Type I team (70+) in attendance for the three (3) day deployment
 - “Part-time Project Pool” Part-time employees to aid in the day-to-day operations

- **Recruitment and retention:**

- Meals for volunteer work details
- Workmen's Comp/Malpractice for Specialist that do not have MOUs
- Volunteer Incentive Program (VIP) on State Tax
- Mentoring Program, a veteran member will be assigned a new member during their 6 months of probation to guide them if needed.

- **Equipment:**
 - Tractor is being delivered either Tuesday or Wednesday
 - Nextel account – asset and reorganized
 - ◆ New phones will replace models purchased in 2003
 - Monthly maintenance schedule will be assess (trucks/radios/phones)
 - Monthly communications check – statewide – Pal800/ Satellite phones
 - Day to Day operating standard for K-9's – Veterinarian visits, Food, Training, etc.

Daniel B. McManus

Assistant State Fire Marshal
Emergency Response Coordinator
State of South Carolina
Division of Fire & Life Safety

Attachment 2

Mobilization Coordinator's Report January 29, 2008

1. To date, we have **222** registered fire departments with **4,028** personnel. As a result of the VSAFE grant program, approximately 15 new fire departments have registered. We found that many departments assumed they were registered with us because they signed the state mutual aid agreement. During the VSAFE process, we discovered a “grey-area,” so to speak, with the state mutual aid signatory list. In the past, we have registered departments as long as their governing entity had signed the agreement. For example, Chester County provides workers’ compensation and insurance for its rural county fire departments. In the past, we would allow South Chester FD to register with Mobilization even though they were not specifically listed on the signatory list since we knew Chester County was. During the VSAFE process we quickly realized this “grey-area” needed to be addressed now that a three-million dollar grant program is involved. Using the above example in Chester County, we now require the county to list each FD they cover on the mutual aid signatory list.
2. State Fire Project FY07 – A distribution plan will be discussed during the meeting.
3. The SEMS ID card project suffered a set-back. Both ASG programmers who were working on our project have left the office so a new programmer with no prior knowledge of our project or SEMS has been given this responsibility. Dan and I met with the programmer last week to discuss ideas and we hope to make progress soon.
4. The December meeting of the Regional US&R teams went well. The budget remains the hot topic among the teams. As of today, none of the regional teams will be participating in the Vigilant Guard exercise in April.
5. IAFC Intra-State Mutual Aid grant – I spoke with Chief Nat Ippolito (IAFC representative from Florida) to discuss the grant allowances. He stated the grant money was intended to be used for planning and exercising. Since our plan is well-established and exercised regularly, I asked if we could use the money for another project. I explained my desire to update and enhance SEMS, and he agreed that it was a good project. He did not know whether or not the grant would allow that, so asked me contact Scott Creason (IAFC Intra-State MA coordinator) to discuss it, which I did. Scott forwarded the request to DHS for approval. I offer this spending option to the Committee for input.

6. Tupperware Warehouse Fire Activation, December 12-13, 2007

□ At the request of Williamsburg County, 78 firefighters from 13 fire departments were mobilized and tasked over a 35-hour period to respond to 160,000-square-foot warehouse near Hemingway. Regional Coordinators Baker and Dangerfield were also tasked to respond as a part of our efforts. Units from Clarendon County, Charleston City, Columbia, Conway, Darlington City, Florence, Georgetown City, Hartsville, Midway, Myrtle Beach, North Charleston, Summerville, and Sumter City were tasked during this activation.

□ There was one miscommunication that resulted in some confusion on the scene. The evening of the 12th, Chief Godwin (Williamsburg County) requested incident command support personnel for the night operations, specifically an incident commander, an operations officer and a planning officer. The idea of using the Florence Regional IMT was discussed, and Chief Godwin decided to make that request directly to Florence County. We viewed both as two separate requests and as a result, two groups of people arrived on the scene to perform the same job. We were not aware that by requesting the IMT, the local IC was withdrawing the command personnel request from us.

□ We did discover the Palmetto 800 portable radio coverage is poor in that area. Regional Coordinator Baker used his mobile radio to communicate with us clearly.

Jason Pope
Mobilization Coordinator