



**MINUTES**  
Firefighter Mobilization Oversight Committee  
*June 2, 2008*  
*State Fire Marshal's Office*

**Members Present:** John Reich, Bruce Kline, Tommy McDowell, Paul Watts, Karl Ristow, Phill Jolley, Ron Osborne and Dusty Owens

**Others:** Jason Pope, Ed Roper, Dan McManus, Ken Bell, Chris Harvey and David Wright

- Chairman Reich called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
- Minutes from the January 29th meeting were read and approved.
- Dan McManus presented the US&R Director's report. (See Attachment 1)
  - o Tommy McDowell asked how not having the 13 private sector personnel available for deployment affected the team. Daniel McManus replied that the only discipline in which we have problems is Medical. There are only two medical personnel (nurses) that have valid MOU's.
  - o John Reich stated that the Workers' Compensation bill did not get sponsored so we have no avenue for coverage of the medical staff.
  - o Bruce Kline asked if during a deployment, we could request medical support from the National Guard. Ron Osborne added that DHEC might be able to assist. Daniel McManus stated that a DMAT unit would be sufficient to meet our deployment needs.
  - o John Reich mentioned that after much research and investigation, the VIP tax incentive program was not available for SC-TF1 personnel.
  - o Bruce Kline made motion to accept the US&R Director's report, and Tommy McDowell seconded. Motion carried.
- John Reich and Daniel McManus presented service awards to Ken Bell and Mick Mayers for their outstanding service and dedication to the US&R program during the absence of a program director. Mick Mayers was not present to receive his award.
- Jason Pope presented the Mobilization Coordinator's report. (See Attachment 2)
  - o Jason Pope briefed the committee on the equipment issue with radiation detectors purchased under the FY06 State Fire Project. The equipment alarms at a much lower level than the state recommended level therefore making the instrument very, very safe. John Reich will send a memo to all the departments that received the equipment stating the issue.
  - o Tommy McDowell made motion to accept the report, and Karl Ristow seconded. Motion carried.

## **Old Business**

- FFM Strategic Plan – Karl Ristow had not report.
- Daniel McManus passed out the budget update.
  - o John Reich stated that \$600,000 was requested from the General Assembly for the US&R budget. He also mentioned that he would contact SLED about the availability of any de-obligated Homeland Security funds.
  - o Bruce Kline inquired about the Vigilant Guard reimbursement. Daniel McManus stated we have not received reimbursement from Vigilant Guard, but he would look into it.
  - o Tommy McDowell made motion to accept budget report, and Karl Ristow seconded. Motion carried.
- John Reich gave a report on the VSAFE program.
  - o Karl Ristow asked if John could send a report to the counties detailing the VSAFE requests to establish need among the fire service. John Reich will look into this.
- John Reich stated that 24 pieces of fire service related legislation were submitted this year. He further stated the US&R and VSAFE funds were not approved.
  - o The arson bill was approved and is awaiting the Governor's signature.
  - o The cigarette bill was also sent to the Governor for approval.
  - o The sprinkler bill has been reduced from its original form.
  - o LP Gas regulations failed.
- John Reich stated that F&LS received 1.53 million dollars from LLR for the new US&R building.
  - o Ed Roper added the total cost for the building is estimated at 3.1 million. One addition has been approved and the project will remain within the budget.
  - o The building should be finished by August 1, 2008.
- Daniel McManus updated the committee on the crane repair. The total cost for repairing the crane is \$58,000. \$15,000 will be covered by a grant leaving the remaining \$43,000 to be paid from the US&R budget.

## **New Business**

- Jason Pope presented a scene accountability issue that exists in our state. Currently no one at the state level can provide total scene accountability during

large-scale incidents. Jason mentioned that Mobilization has limited capabilities when it comes to this issue and asked the committee for their input on developing a solution to this problem. There was some discussion, but nothing was decided. Jason will email the committee with more details so the discussion can be continued via email.

- Karl Ristow passed out copies of the IAP for the Charleston FD back fill on June 18, 2008. Committee agreed to review and provide feedback to Karl.

### **Open Discussion**

- None

The next meeting date was not determined.

Motion to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted with two attachments,

Jason Pope

## Attachment 1

Assistant State Fire Marshal's Report  
June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008

### US&R Task Force One

Status: Deployable

Task Force One is currently available for a modified Type I deployment with 106 Members Strong, spanning 35 Departments and agencies

### Meetings & framework:

- With the following Fire Departments & Agencies: Greenville, Lancaster, Clemson, Mt. Pleasant, Hilton Head, Bluffton, Berkley, SLED Fusion Center, DHEC-ERT
- Low Country / Midlands WMD Seminars
- Anderson County Inoperability Seminar
- Midland Region, Regional Response Seminar
- State Wide Hurricane Exercise / State Assessment Team
- FEMA Region IV, ESF 9 - Coordinator & State US&R Liaison
- GEMA (GA) ESF 9 Coordinator
- Participated in GA State wide EMAC exercise via internet
- USC Structural Engineering Department, donation of 20k lbs of concrete and forms
- National Guard Aviation assets and the 151 Aviation Support Wing

### Membership

- The new standard for membership is requested to attend 50% of all scheduled events at a minimum. This equates to three training days, five logistics days and one annual meeting totaling nine days a year.
- All active members have current MOU's and are available for required training and deployment.
- We currently have thirteen members who do not have employer support to sustain a valid MOU. Among these members are all of our medical managers, a rescue manager, safety officer, medical specialist, hazardous materials manager, communications specialist and one of our chaplains.
- Unfortunately these members have been placed in to a "non-active" membership until the workmen's comp can be resolved.
- We can not recruit new members from private industry (Medical, Structural)
- We have accounted for and documented all previous members with state issued US&R gear. The process of returning this gear will start by the end of this month in the following manor. A formal letter will be sent to the member and their sponsoring agency (if multiple members in one dept. the chief will receive one letter) thanking them for their time and the need for them to return the state owned gear. Drop off locations will be in the following areas; Greenville, Aiken, Columbia, Florence/Darlington, Hilton Head/Bluffton, Mt. Pleasant and Myrtle Beach. Each location will have two points of contact with a paperwork process in which to return the gear back to Columbia.

*Membership has appreciated the meal tickets and the process has been a seamless one with the academy.*

### SC-TF1 online community:

Following the strategic plan I have organized the production of a new online community for SC-TF1. This online community is built and maintained by the Google and delivers us cutting edge technology that is free to our organization. The features include our own URL, email, interactive calendar, training and logistic days rsvp, document sharing and much more.

### Task Force One News Letter

There is no better way of keeping 100 + personnel and sponsoring agencies informed then a newsletter detailing the task forces activities every couple of months. I have encouraged guest articles written by our members and post our annual training calendar to remind everyone of our scheduled dates. This electronic newsletter will be released six times this year by email.

### 2008 Operational Readiness Exercise (ORE): Vigilant Guard

Dates: April 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008

The 2008 O.R.E. was a success in every phase for the task force; this being the first time the team has deployed a full Type I US&R Equipment Cache.

SC US&R Team was air lifted from the Fire Academy to Beaufort County by two (2) CH-47 Chinook Helicopters. The 151 Aviation Support Wing transported sixty six (66) task force members, three (3) Canines and 4,700 lbs of cargo one hundred forty two miles in just under an hour flight time. We were returned to Columbia the afternoon of the 24<sup>th</sup> to demobilize and return most of the equipment into service.

The team established a 60,000 Sq Ft (1.5 Acre) Base of Operations for the 72 hour operational period. The taskforce successfully completed the twelve tasking orders assigned to the team for the operational period.

This ORE has exposed many positive aspects of the teams' effectiveness during an operational deployment. It has also exposed the team as a whole as to where they stand on many items such as equipment, communications and overall sustainability. This experience has also allowed the team to asses any adjustment it needs to make on any current operational procedures or logistical issues it other wise has not known about until a full deployment.

Some of those adjustments are:

- Finalize (and train all personnel on) a computerized and manual inventory system.
- All team members will choose a primary and secondary specialty during their active membership.
- Standardized base of operations layout plans will be designed and placed into our operating procedures.
- A user friendly, mobile satellite communications package

The support the task force received from fire departments and agencies state wide was over whelming. The wide range of departments supporting the members' multi day participation and the reception our team received from all the local agencies with in Beaufort County. Formal thank you letters were transmitted to a majority of those departments and federal agencies from the task force.

### Logistics

- There is a strong need for the US&R team to finalize its cache inventory
- There is a plan/timeline in place for a total reorganization starting in mid August and ending in November of this year.

- The plan is to limit the amount of down time and overall personnel time allocated to this effort.
- Each personnel is not required to spend more than the normal amount of time
- During the week of the re-org members will alternate days to cover the man power needed of the 5-7 days.
- US&R is always dependent on the logistical work of the teams 100,000 plus pieces of its cache of equipment

### Communications

We need to purchase a robust and easy to use communications package. This self contained mobile unit will be able to provide over a dozen digital VoIP phone lines, a secured wireless internet umbrella, video conferencing packaged in to three manageable cases with a satellite dish. This system has become a standard with in the federal and statewide disaster response community.

### Training

- FireTraxx informational session, March, 2008
- Operational Readiness Exercise, April 21-24, 2008
- SCEMD, 2008 Hurricane Functional Exercise, June 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008
- FEMA – Disaster Communications Specialist 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008
- FEMA - Heavy Equipment & Rigging, *refresher*, June 18<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008
- FEMA – Planning Team, June 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008 – Open to RRT #1-3
- Western Shelter & Base of Operations Setup & Audit, July, 2008
- US&R Computer Inventory System Training, August, 2008
- Equipment reorganization, September 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008

### SC Search and Rescue Resource System, DRAFT

- This is a plan to formally organize SAR resources using the NIMS Typing as a baseline
- All SAR teams are registered with FF Mobilization and utilize the State wide mutual aid agreement
- Written and on site audits will be conducted at regular intervals to maintain readiness and response capabilities
- This will reassure that the state can provide a tiered response to natural or man-made disasters and that the money allocated is going to training and equipment needed
- A member from each Regional SAR team Coordinator, the ASFM, a SC-TF1 Deputy Director, and a member from Mobilization will be the foundation of the plans guidance.
- Our Regional Response Teams are the first to be audited and entered in to the system
- I expect to have all four regional teams, the state US&R and IST teams completed by the end of this year.

### Search and Rescue Regional Response Teams (RRT)

- Last meeting: March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008
- Working as a cohesive group
- Common goals in training, equipment and response
- Expectations, process and the delivery of the 35k to the teams
- Test pilots of the SC Search and Rescue Resource System
  - RRT Equipment Cache Inventory (due on April 1)

- RRT Self Assessment Packets (due on May 30)
- As of June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008 – 4 of the 4 teams have fulfilled the deadlines set forth
- Each regional team will host an onsite assessment with in the next three months
- RRT #3 – Charleston was asked to open its roster to add ten members from the region

Strategic Plan elements

- Customer Relations
- Facility Storage/Data management
- Online Community & Communications
- Updated Cellular and satellite equipment and revised account
- Records Management – personnel records recorded digitally/stored securely
- Local Responders: SC Search and Rescue Resource System – tiered response
- Equipment maintenance and sustainment

Respectfully Submitted,

**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

June 2, 2008

1. To date, we have **239** registered fire departments with **4,176** personnel.
2. State Fire Project FY07 – Bid specifications have been developed and will be posted on the state Web site soon.
3. The SEMS ID card project has made great progress. Besides being able to print fireTRAX ID cards, the system will also be able to generate reports, email participating departments and have the capability to register personnel online. Department administrators will have full permission to edit all personnel information contained in SEMS. The total cost for this project has not been determined yet, but after completion, it will save FFM thousands of dollars annually by eliminating the labor costs associated with manually entering personnel data. The development and programming phase of this project should be completed within approximately two months, and then the process of printing ID cards will begin.
4. IAFC Intra-State Mutual Aid grant – still awaiting approval for the project.
5. Horry County Wildfire Activation (February 2008) – Horry County requested assistance from FFM through the State Warning Point as a result of a large wildfire just north of Conway. They requested an Engine strike team, a Tanker strike team and a Brush Truck strike team. Alvin Payne was tasked to represent FFM at the Horry County EOC, which he did. Shortly after he arrived, Horry County canceled the request and FFM stood down.
6. I participated in the Vigilant Guard exercise by deploying with the US&R team and assisting team personnel with the fireTRAX accountability system. The reason for my participation was two-fold. First, I needed to set up and run the system during a real event for my own educational benefit. My only experience with the system has been in training, and I needed the real-world experience to better understand the system – this was accomplished during the exercise. Secondly, I was there to assist the US&R personnel with running the system as I have become very familiar with it. To my knowledge, there is no intention for me to ever deploy with the US&R team for the purpose of running the accountability system.
7. On May 28, 2008 Darlington County contacted FFM through the State Warning point and placed us on standby for a possible activation as a result of a paper storage warehouse fire near Darlington. By mid-morning the fire was placed under control and FFM was advised to stand down.

Jason Pope  
Mobilization Coordinator