

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HOMELAND SECURITY
Communication Interoperability Working Group

April 17, 2007 Minutes
DOT Central Lab, 280 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067

WELCOME, PUBLIC COMMENT AND REVIEW OF MINUTES:

The meeting was called to order at 1305 hours by the Co-Chair, Michael Varney. The following individuals were in attendance: George Carbonell (ConnDOT), Anthony Diaz (Hamden PD), Bob DiBella (DEMHS), Mike Dion (Military), John Gustafson (CMED-NH), Bill Hackett (DEMHS), Paul Jakubson (CPCA/MadisonPD), Dennis Jones (DOC), Frank Kinney (Judicial), John Masciadelli (OSET), Jeff Merwin (Region 1), Bernie O'Donnell (DOIT), Jeff Otto (QVEC), John Ricci (USAR), Gordon Shand (DPH), Mike Stemmler (DPS), Lee Toffey (DEMHS), Michael Varney (DOIT/CFCA), Keith Victor (Region 3), Ed Wilds (DEP) and Jerry Zarwanski (OSET).

Minutes of the March 27, 2007 meeting reviewed; motion to accept by John Gustafson, second by Keith Victor, unanimous/moved and will be posted on the DEMHS website.

There were no public comments.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Technical Committee: Presented by George Carbonell. The contract for the STOC's boxes has been awarded. Awaiting initial delivery of 100 boxes which should start in approximately 8-10 weeks. Next project for the committee will be UCALL/VCALL. Per Bill Hackett if calls are received from towns requesting who gets a STOC's box, or if they can purchase one on their own, advise them that it will be a competitive distribution. The boxes will be distributed and training & testing will be done before any more than the 100 boxes are deployed. Per Mike Varney, guidelines will be released within 30 days.
- B. Training & Exercise Workgroup: Mike Varney reported that the full scale functional exercise of the TICP will be this Saturday (April 21) and Metro-North will be the lead agency. If anyone wishes to attend please contact Mike Varney or Rich Fournier for credentialing.

REPORT OF INTEROPERABILITY USAGE AND INCIDENTS:

- A. Jeff Merwin reported that the system was used to help evacuate eight towns in the southwest region yesterday.
 - B. Tyler Millix, through Mike Varney, said the system was used to help locate a missing four year old, between state, local and fire/rescue personnel.
- No problems reported with any of the usages of the System.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Portable Radio Inventory & Training Program: Mike Varney reported that all requested training has been completed and any additional requests can be handled with the help of the Fire Academy.
- B. ITAC/ICALL Monthly Testing & Training Issues: No change.
- C. Homeland Security Grant Program: No new update at this time but a presentation of the PSIC Grant will be at the end of the meeting.

- D. Prime Mover Radios & Licensing: Bill Hackett reported that the funding for the licensing is included in the interoperability budget.
- E. Transit Security Grant: Mike Varney reported that an email from DHS has confirmed that the project between NY/NJ/CT for the New Haven to New York line corridor has been full funded. The intent regarding the FY07 grant will be to continue coverage up the branch lines to Waterbury and Danbury.
- F. National Governors Association Workshop & PSIC Grant – see handout. Presentation will be at the end of the business portion of the meeting.

UPDATES FROM THE DEMHS REGIONS:

REGION 1 – Jeff Merwin – Rich Fournier will be meeting with all ESF's from the area and each ESF has a subcommittee and chairperson. The next meeting will be April 25th and Chief McCarthy is the overall chair for the combined ESF committee.

REGION 2 – John Gustafson – Region 2 has some difficulties with planning. Many of the ESF's are independent or not operating as a unit at all. Bill Hackett advised that around the entire state the ESF's in each region will be part of an Emergency Planning Team. This will be explained to the CEO's and EMD's at the May 1st CCM/DEMHS Conference. There are also meetings being held with the RPO's in each region who will be administering the FY07 grant funds. Discussion.

REGION 3 – Keith Victor – Region 3 has begun its TICP program and the distribution of Emergency Management radios purchased through the grant program. Tom Gavaghan is running a radio test at the beginning of each month.

REGION 4 – Jeff Otto – No report.

REGION 5 - Tom Vannini – was unable to attend but advised through Mike Varney that the region has compiled all its ESF groups. Bill Hackett commented that this is a very strong group and should work well.

There was discussion on the enhancements made to the DEMHS system – all microwave, all have PL, there is a redundant backup system for all. Mike Varney asked Bob DiBella if he would prepare a short presentation of what the system currently looks like for the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Congratulations to Bill Hackett who has been appointed to represent NEMA on the DHS National Interoperability Communications Committee.
- B. Lost/Stolen ITAC/ICALL radios – Mike Varney advised that a town has reported a lost ITAC/ICALL radio and that he wished to start a preliminary policy discussion of the issue. He advised the group that Commissioner Thomas has recommended the towns be required to file a police report and/or insurance claim and then submit the paperwork to the group before replacement of the unit is made. Discussion ensued to include some of the following topics: Entry of the serial number into NCIC; if we run out of radios how do we fund more?; inventory of radios needed; and town with loss required to pay 50% of replacement unless it is a line of duty loss. Mike Varney to get a draft out to the group for suggestions.
- C. Jeff Merwin with a task force and CMED update to say the committee requested propagation of the 700 MHz system with simulcast. Possible funding coming from DPH, and advised the proposal should be discussed.
- D. Gordon Shand advised that all ambulances are now required to have a common radio so all can respond if necessary to a large scale incident.

E. CSPERN update – prime site will be wired in two weeks and testing will be done.

CORRESPONDENCE/GRANT REVIEWS:

- A. Email from Governor's office requesting a moment of silence at 1400 hours for the victims of Virginia Tech.
- B. SHSGP grant reviews – Bill Hackett reported the following projects approved:
Meriden
Madison
- C. Danger Issues: CERT Teams asking about radios to be interoperable at incidents; and Departments with hazmat encapsulated suits using STOC's frequencies in-suit. Discussion.

Moment of Silence at 1400 hours.

- D. Bill Hackett was advised that FEMA Region 1 office in Boston is having Regional Communications Committee meeting/conference calls in which CT is invited to participate. He asked for someone to represent the committee and advised that there will be a meeting/conference call this Friday. (Lee to send info to the entire group)
- E. Mike Varney advised that the FCC is holding an all-day emergency responder's summit and more info could be found on the FCC website. (Lee to send info to all)
- F. Bill Hackett gave a storm update – the Coast Guard was doing flyovers of the damaged areas in the state to assist with FEMA's preliminary damage assessment.

Presentation by Michael Varney on NGA Workshop and PSIC Grant.

NEXT MEETING:

Next regular meeting will be **May 15, 2007, at 1300 hours**, DOT Central Lab, Rocky Hill.

Meetings open to the public.

Motion to adjourn by George Carbonell; second by John Gustafson; approved.
Meeting adjourned at 1445 hours.