

# North Carolina State Emergency Response Commission (SERC)

## Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2008

0907 hours Meeting called to order and guests welcomed - Chairman Bryan E. Beatty

### **Commissioners Present:**

Chairman Beatty; Vice-Chairman Hoell; Commissioner Bailey; Commissioner Bullard; Commissioner Cook; Commissioner Dail; Commissioner Devlin; Commissioner Haritos; Commissioner Hughes; Commissioner Palombo; Commissioner Stewart; Commissioner Taylor; Commissioner Wilson; Commissioner Woodall.

### **Commissioners Absent:**

Commissioner Pendergraft; Commissioner Pratt; Commissioner Teeters; and Commissioner Andrews. Substitute representatives were identified & welcomed: Chief Ritter represented Commissioner Teeters; Pam Tulley represented Commissioner Pendergraft; Larry Purvis represented Commissioner Andrews and Holli Hoffman represented Commissioner Pratt.

Chairman Beatty welcomed new Commissioner State Highway Patrol Colonel Walter Wilson, who was appointed to the SERC by Governor Easley. Commissioner Wilson is representing the North Carolina State Highway Patrol.

## **I. Old Business**

**Approval of minutes** - Minutes for the meeting on 11 April were approved with a correction on page two (2) by Commissioner Bullard. The minutes initially indicated that forty-seven (47) community colleges had received grant funding. Commissioner Bullard stated that forty-three (43) community colleges had received initial grant funding with an additional four (4) having only requested, but not received, grant funding.

## **II. New Business:**

### **A. Charlotte UASI Update Deputy Chief Jeff Dulin, Charlotte Fire Department**

Deputy Chief Jeff Dulin, Charlotte Fire Department (CFD), presented an update on the Charlotte Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI). Projects discussed were the mass casualty project, mobile operations center, field communications vehicle, ambulance buses, regional hazardous materials project, animal sheltering operations, and regional radio interoperability. Deputy Chief Jeff Dulin reviewed Charlotte's application for 2008 UASI funding.

Deputy Chief Dulin introduced CFD Fire Chief Jon Hannan. Chief Hannan serves as the CFD Fire Chief as well as the City of Charlotte's Homeland Security Director and the UASI Point of Contact. Chief Hannan started with the CFD in 1978 as a dispatcher and transferred to Operations in 1983. He was awarded Chief Fire Officer Designation in 2005 through Fire Accreditation International.

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Deputy Chief Dulin reviewed the 2008 UASI Conference held on April 21-23, 2008 at the Westin Charlotte. Over eight hundred and fifty (850+) people were in attendance for the interoperable communications, fire, law enforcement, fusion centers, program management and medical tracks.

Trailers for the Mass Casualty Project have been delivered to all nine (9) counties. The prime movers have been ordered and will be delivered in the next two (2) to three (3) weeks. Each trailer can triage and treat approximately 200 patients.

A 53-foot tractor trailer has been acquired and outfitted as a mobile operations center. It will serve as a regionally available mobile command center that houses both command staff and communications personnel and will be fully self sustainable for a minimum of 72 hours. The mobile operations center contains satellite communications and radio communications equipment which supports 800 megahertz (MHz), Ultra High Frequency (UHF) and Very High Frequency (VHF) communications.

Field communications vehicle supports radio system interconnectivity, provides radio communications in areas where communications do not currently exist, and is available for local, regional and state-wide deployments. The field communications vehicle has satellite connectivity, wireless access points, internet protocol wireless phones, and two cameras for situational awareness. The vehicle supports 800 MHz, UHF and VHF frequencies. This vehicle will also be used to support the Urban Search and Rescue team and Regional Response Team Seven (7).

UASI has two ambulance buses scheduled for delivery with each bus being able to transport 20 patients at a time in case of a large fire scene or for an evacuation. Each patient position will have oxygen and EKG telemetry. Final installation of the telemetry equipment is being completed and acceptance is expected early next week. The buses will be available for regional and state-wide deployments as needed.

The goal of the regional hazardous materials project is to purchase equipment that is interoperable and that helps the Catawba County, Concord Fire, Gastonia Fire, Monroe Fire, Mooresville Fire, Charlotte Fire / RRT 7, Lancaster, South Carolina Fire, and York County, South Carolina teams meet NIMS Type II or III standards. Teams are working on creating requests of up to \$50,000 per team.

The animal sheltering operations project has set aside one hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) to fund four (4) Companion Animal Mobile Equipment Trailers (CAMETs) to be built in the UASI area. The trailers will be built using the North Carolina CAMET trailer specifications. The UASI has been working with the State to develop a large animal relocation site that will be used to help relocate animals in hurricane paths or after flooding. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's (CMPD) animal control bureau is developing an animal rescue and sheltering team. The CMPD Animal Emergency Response Team has a tandem axle trailer that serves the dual purposes of hauling equipment and housing personnel and is capable of regional or state-

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wide deployment. The shelter is capable of handling 100 pets with fifteen (15) extra large crates, thirty-five (35) large crates, fifty (50) medium crates, and six (6) airline carriers. All of the pets will be cared for in climate-controlled tents and can be electronically tracked through micro chipping on-site and tracking software that will provide daily updates of what animals are in shelter and information on owners' reunification.

The regional radio interoperability project will use FY07 UASI funds to bring the new Union County System into the Project 25 (P25) Regional System. The 2007 Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) grant funds will be used to fund the regional P25 master Site that will link Union County, Mecklenburg County, and Gastonia/Belmont/Mt Holly into a regional radio infrastructure. The interconnection of P25 to Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders (VIPER) and Palmetto 800 (PAL800) is underway. Discussions continue with York County and have started with Lincoln County to include them in the P25 regional system.

The FY 2008 UASI application's focus areas are largely the same as in FY 2007. Emphasis was placed on sustainability and planning for possible funds matching requirements in future grant years. Most of the projects are a continuation of efforts actually begun with FY 2006 funding and continued in 2007. The UASI decided not to request more funds than they had received from the program in any previous funding cycle, due largely to the possible need for matching funds beginning in FY2009, as noted in the FY 2008 grant guidance. The total funding amount requested was eight million two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$8,250,000) for training and exercise, equipment, and planning for the radio interoperability, fusion center, USAR, mass casualty/medical surge, mass care/special needs/pet sheltering, CBRNE response and mitigation, critical infrastructure protection, and regional command and control projects.

#### **Discussion:**

- Commissioner Stewart would like to talk with Deputy Chief Jeff Dulin about the animal sheltering operations.
- The Second Annual Terrorism conference will be held in Charlotte on September 29-30, 2008. The conference's focus will be on domestic terrorism. Invited speakers include responders associated with the London subway bombings, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University shootings, and the D.C. sniper case.

#### **B. Regional Response Teams (RRT) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Update**

**Mike Sprayberry, NCEM**

Mike Sprayberry, North Carolina Emergency Management Deputy Director and Operations Chief, presented a brief on the Regional Response Teams (RRT) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) activities.

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The USARs have received total Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding of four million nine hundred and eighty-seven thousand dollars (\$4,987,000) over four (4) years for eleven (11) teams. The eleven structural collapse teams statewide provide a comprehensive all-hazard USAR response system that is available for response twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. These locally based teams can be on scene within minutes. The USARs utilize standardized equipment, terminology, and methodology, so teams can be combined to respond to large events. Forty-nine (49) swift water rescue teams have been developed that are trained, equipped and positioned strategically across the state. A robust Helo-Aquatic Rescue Team (HART) consisting of highly qualified North Carolina National Guard aviators and rescue technicians has also been developed through the use of DHS funds allocated to USAR development. The USAR system has responded to several events including multiple small structural collapses, two (2) landslides, two (2) industrial complex collapses, two (2) parking deck collapses and Hurricanes Isabel, Francis, Ivan, Jeanne, Charley and Ophelia.

The North Carolina HART capabilities are available twenty-four (24) hours a day/ seven (7) days a week/ three hundred and sixty-five (365) days a year. Equipment resources include strong night vision goggles (NVG) and ten (10) fully equipped UH-60L Black Hawk helicopter platforms that are based in Salisbury. Each aircraft is staffed with four (4) aircrew members and three (3) rescuers. Four (4) aircraft have hoist capabilities with two (2) aircraft having an external hoist and the other two (2) having a swing-out hoist. All ten (10) aircraft are equipped and capable of conducting short-haul operations. The UASI strengthened the North Carolina HART's interoperable communications with the purchase of Techno sonic radios that provide good communications with rescuers on the ground.

North Carolina has forty-nine (49) Swiftwater/Flood Rescue (SFR) teams across the state that are trained and equipped to respond to flood emergencies. The teams can be pre-deployed with the needed resources.

The RRTs have received six hundred ninety-seven thousand dollars (\$697,000) funding from the state and three million three hundred twenty-nine thousand dollars in DHS funding in four (4) years. The funding was divided among the seven (7) RRT teams with each team receiving a total of four hundred seventy-five thousand dollars (\$475,000). The state has seven (7) Hazardous Material Response teams staffed with highly qualified technicians that are locally based and available for response twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. The RRT teams' equipment, terminology, and methodology are standardized to DHS and National Fire Protection Association criteria. Since 1993, the RRT Response system has responded to many events – the EQ fire in Apex, the West Pharmaceuticals plant explosion in Kinston, multiple tanker accidents on highways and railroads, floods, schools and hurricanes. On average, the RRTs perform one hundred and fifty (150) local calls, state calls, and technical assistance actions per year. VIPER has enabled all the RRT teams to have interoperable communications.

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#### Discussion:

- The USAR and RRT teams have been strongly supported by the local resources.
- Annual recurring state funding for USAR and NC HART has not been provided, whereas NC RRT does receive annual recurring state appropriations. Two million dollars (\$2,000,000) is needed annually for USAR, RRT, and NC HART sustainment and training. USAR and NC HART program enhancements have been primarily supported with Federal Homeland Security funding. NC RRT has also received additional funding for enhancements from Federal Homeland Security funding.
- Last year Emergency Management used some of its Operations funds to replace Level A suits.
- Spending of four hundred and fifty thousand dollars (450,000) of one-time funds appropriated two years ago focused on USAR and SWR needs.
- The Chairman suggested that local jurisdictions could be more effective than the SERC in requesting that the Legislature sustain these programs with state appropriations.
- SMAT, Agriculture, PHRST, and other teams across the state also need ongoing sustainment funding. Assets that have been developed are too valuable to be allowed to diminish due to lack of sustainability.
- The SERC should develop a coordinated approach to go forward as a group, rather than requesting funding for each type of team on an agency-by-agency basis. Can sustainment figures be calculated for the various teams and passed on to professional organizations (North Carolina Emergency Management Association, North Carolina Public Health Association, etc.) to encourage involvement by locals in requesting ongoing funding? Emergency Management will take the lead to compile the figures and report back to the SERC at the next regular meeting
- State funds must go through state agencies and then can be passed to the teams. Allocation directly to the teams is not possible.

#### C. Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS) Chemical Security Assessment Tool (CSAT)

Brian Harrell, DHS

Brian Harrell, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), represented a briefing on the outline of a chemical security program. The purpose of these initiatives is to gather information on facilities that house the most dangerous, high-risk “Chemicals of Interest,” to help safeguard the facilities from being used as weapons.

Section 550 of the DHS Appropriations Act of 2007 gave the Department the authority to regulate the security of “high risk” chemical facilities. DHS was given six (6) months to plan, build, and implement a complex and extensive new regulatory regime. The DHS final chemical facility security regulatory regime—the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS) Interim Final Rule—was published on April 9, 2007, and went into effect on June 8, 2007. CFATS is risk-based and requires covered facilities to fulfill certain risk based performance standards on security. DHS will identify the universe of potentially high risk facilities using its Chemicals of Interest (COI) list, also known as

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“Appendix A.” A chemical facility that possesses any Appendix A chemical at or above its screening threshold quantity (STQ) must complete and submit a Chemical Security Assessment Tool (CSAT) Top-Screen to DHS. Risk Based Performance Standards (RBPS) serve as the security building blocks for the CFATS program and drive the security performance at facilities in each of the four risk-based tiers. RBPS provide facilities with flexibility and allow for the use of existing measures, ideas and expertise and cover various aspects of security.

#### **Discussion:**

- The CFATS and CSAT will be tied to the Federal Terrorism Center and the state fusion centers.
- There are no inspectors in North Carolina yet.
- The information will initially be shared with the Homeland Security Advisors in each state.
- Ninety (90) percent of the sixty-seven hundred (6700) facilities are private sector.
- CFATS and CSAT will address chemical waste.
- Combinations of chemicals will be considered along with the surroundings. The potential of deaths drives the process for the risk.

#### **D. North Carolina Bomb Squads / EOD Update**

**B.W. Collier, NCSBI**

B.W. Collier, North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation Agent, presented an update on the North Carolina Bomb Squads and Explosive Ordinance Device (EOD) teams. The state requested funding for the state bomb squad team and assisted locals in developing Investment Justifications. Approximately \$733,000 was received for 13 local squads. The state received \$500,775 for equipment and a vehicle to establish the Eastern State Bomb Team. They looked at standardization and typing and found many local squads in need. EOD equipment was ordered and delivery to local EOD teams is anticipated in August, 2008. The focus will then shift to the selection process for vehicles and equipment for the state team. Some of the equipment that was purchased for the local agency bomb squads was EOD 9 bomb suits, EOD 9A helmets, Bomb suit cooling systems, real time X-ray units, bomb disposal tools and remote rigging kits.

Some of the special events in which the bomb squads have participated are Operation Tripwire, Tripwire media event, Congressman David Price, North Carolina Bomb Squad Association, 2007 Women’s US Open’s explosive response plan, dignitary protection details, and large sporting events. Some training the bomb squads participate in include dirty bomb awareness, explosive recognition training, confined space training and Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) awareness workshop.

#### **Discussion:**

- Lenoir County had a situation that they called the North Carolina Bomb Squad to handle. They received a quicker response from the North Carolina Bomb Squad than in the past from the military.

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#### **E. Evans Road Wildfire Update**

**Bill Laxton, DENR**

Bill Laxton, Chief Deputy Secretary of North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), presented an update on the Evans Road wildfire. The wildfire started on 1 July 2008 from a lightning strike during a thunderstorm. It is primarily a peat ground fire that is approximately 62% contained. The fire resulted in the first code purple air quality declaration in DENR history. DENR has been monitoring the air since July 3, 2008. Eighty-three (83) million gallons of water a day are being consumed to contain the fire. Fifteen hundred (1500) first responders were on site at nine (9) a.m. the morning of the SERC meeting, most of whom are from out-of-state. The Governor declared the Evans Road wildfire as a disaster. The only structures destroyed to date were three hunters' trailers. FEMA has approved a federal disaster declaration for the fire. More than fourteen million dollars (\$14,000,000) has been expended to date fighting this fire. On 17 July 2008, ten (10) more acres were burned when the fire jumped the containment line.

#### **Discussion:**

- Thanks to DENR for their leadership for this disaster.

#### **F. SERC Standing Committees' Work Plan**

**Gary Faltinowski, NCEM**

Gary Faltinowski, North Carolina Emergency Management Assistant Director and Information and Planning Chief, presented information on the SERC standing committees and a review on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP).

At the SERC meeting on October 2007 the SERC commissioners approved the reconstruction of the SERC standing committees. The eight (8) standing committees are now SARA Title III, Homeland Security Planning Regions, Training and Exercise, Medical, Interoperable Communications, Law Enforcement, Emergency Response and Emergency Management. SARA Title III committee is an original requirement for establishing the SERC and includes the local emergency planning committee, emergency planning community right to know, and risk management plan. The Homeland Security Planning Regions Committee includes the establishment of the seven (7) Domestic Preparedness Readiness Regions (DPRR) and Domestic Preparedness Readiness Regions Chair (DPRC). The DPRC is the SERC regionalization subcommittee (SRS). The Homeland Security Strategic Planning committees include Training and Exercise, Medical, Interoperable Communications, Law Enforcement, Emergency Response and Emergency Management.

The FY 2009 HSGP will continue the process established in FY 2006. Projects are solicited from local and state government agencies that are regional in nature, support the Homeland Security Advisor priorities, align with the State Homeland Security

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Strategy (SHSS) and support DHS National Priorities. During Phase I local project proposals will be submitted to the DPRRs and then reviewed and vetted by the DPRRs and the DPRC. Local project proposals will then be submitted to the Homeland Security Branch. State agencies will submit their project proposals directly to the Homeland Security Branch. The project proposals will then be reviewed by the HSGP work groups, after which Phase II will begin, with additional details requested from the originator.

### **Discussion:**

- There were no questions for Gary Faltinowski.

## **G. Subcommittee Reports**

- **Emergency Management**

**Ron Wall, NCEM**

Ron Wall gave an update of North Carolina's effort to be accredited under standards of the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP). EMAP accreditation will enhance our credibility in the Emergency Management community and could serve as a selling point in getting industry/businesses to locate in North Carolina. The process has helped Emergency Management to document and institutionalize what they do. Future employees of NCEM will have a written reference base so they will not have to learn on the fly what to do when faced with a disaster/emergency. The preparations and developed or improvements have been completed to many of the NCEM documents for the EMAP accreditation. NCEM has organized the documents and programs to show compliance with the sixty-three (63) established EMAP standards. The baseline assessment visit during the first week in June went well. The rough results are that NCEM is essentially compliant with sixty-two (62) of the sixty-three (63) EMAP standards. NCEM Director Hoell has sent a letter to the EMAP Executive Director asking that NCEM's baseline assessment be used to justify full accreditation, since compliance with sixty-two (62) of the sixty-three (63) standards is a great achievement and it is a level of compliance only rarely reached by States during baseline assessments. NCEM has until 21 July to submit supplemental documentation to show compliance. Before that date, they will have submitted sufficient Continuity of Government documentation to settle the lone outstanding issue.

- **Interoperable Communications**

**CPT Alan Melvin, NCHSP**

Captain Alan Melvin gave an update to the SERC about the State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC). The Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program (IECGP) total for North Carolina is eight hundred sixty-six thousand five hundred seventy-two dollars (\$866,572) which is based on DHS risk assessment. This installment of the IECGP has a two-year period of performance and communications equipment is not an allowable expense. North Carolina will be using its portion of the IECGP grant to hire a full-time State Interoperability Coordinator and develop a Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) for each of the seven (7) DPRRs. The VIPER Strategic Network update is one hundred and eight (108) sites on the air with over twenty-five thousand (25,000) users on the system. Over eight hundred (800) radios from FY 07 HSGP were distributed in May

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and June. There is no Legislative appropriation in the second year of the biennium for the VIPER Strategic Network. North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) will be sponsoring two (2) train-the-trainer VIPER end-user sessions. The first will be held on 23 July 2008 in Raleigh, and the second on 6 August 2008 in Conover. SIEC met on 12 June in Cherokee, North Carolina.

- **Homeland Security Planning Regions**

**Dr. Kim McDonald,  
Public Health PHRST 1**

Dr. Kim McDonald briefed the SERC on the activities of the Homeland Security Planning Regions. The Homeland Security Planning Regions have developed subcommittees and are developing a standardized presentation for all DPRRs to use. The Annual Capabilities Assessment Program (ACAP) will be completed soon in every DPRR. The DPRRs and the DPRC intend for the HSGP projects to be regional and the most meaningful for the regions. DPRC are discussing relining the DPRRs based on the RRT and FIRST teams.

- **SARA Title III, “Community Right-to-Know” Law**

**Commissioner Taylor**

Commissioner Taylor requested that the SERC require local governments and facilities to submit their SARA Title III information in digital format via E-Plan or another approved database. All ten hazardous waste facilities in the state are currently posting daily. In the current hard-copy format, North Carolina Emergency Management has seventeen (17) boxes of information in paper form that needs to be scanned into a computer database. Current capabilities allow for the scanning of one box over a two-week period. Chemical facilities and local governments incur no cost by using E-Plan. NCEM will notify the facilities and local governments via website and letter about the new requirement.

**Motion:**

Commissioner Palombo moved that beginning 1 January 2009 all local government and facilities have to submit their SARA Title III information via E-Plan, ISDI, or another approved database. Commissioner Bullard and Pam Tulley seconded. The motion was approved on a unanimous voice vote.

**Adjournment** – Meeting was adjourned at 1220 hours.

Future SERC meetings scheduled for 2008:

- Special meeting on 8 August to finalize allocations for FY 2008 HSGP projects
- Next regular meeting will be held 17 October.

Both meetings will be held at 0900 hours in the Ground Floor Hearing Room of the Archdale Building.

Submitted by

Sonya Poland  
Homeland Security Branch

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August 1, 2008