

Berks County Fire Services Working Group

Meeting Minutes – July 22, 2021

Attendance:

Zone 1: Larry Moyer

Zone 2:

Zone 3: Robert Martin

Zone 4: Colin Hackman, Matt Keller

Zone 5/6: Chris Schaeffer, Brian Sierocinski

Zone 7:

BCFA: Roger Weidenhammer

Training: Jeff Reinert

BCFPA:

Task Force:

Berks DES: Sean Hart, Michael Smith, Philp Salamone

Forestry: Derrick Etter

Additional Attendance:

The meeting was called to order by Colin Hackman, Chair at 1803 hours via Teleconference.

The May 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes were emailed to the group by Chair Hackman. There was one change adding Robert Martin Zone 3 in attendance. Minutes were approved.

Forestry: Derrick Etter reports the 130 and 190 training announcement was sent out through the Working Group and County. Derrick reports registration will be accepted up to 1 week prior to the class starting. Derrick also reports they are working on a Training Portal for online Wildland Fire registration which should be up and running by January 2022.

BCFPA: No Report / No Attendance.

BCFA: No Report

Training: Jeff Reinert reported a VRT training has been added for August 2021. Jeff is looking for an email list for County Chief's to get the training website and registration link out. Jeff will reach out to DES to see if they have an updated email list.

East-Central Task Force: No Report / Attendance

Zone 1: Larry Moyer reports a Department was questioning getting recalled by a mutual aid officer in their first due without asking the home officer. DES reports that should not happen and addressed a similar issue internally regarding this and advised that if an issue like that happens, the officer should notify DES after the incident to be addressed.

Larry reported a Department ask about DES utilizing Station tones to recall. DES reported the recall should be done over the Dispatch channel, Hailing talkgroup and any assigned operational talkgroup. DES also advised that the Officer should report the issue to DES after the incident for them to research and address.

Larry ask if DES considered assigning Operational talkgroups to Zones to make things easier for Departments to always work on the same Operations talkgroup. DES reported they like the flexibility of assigning talkgroups per incident due to storms hitting one area of the County and having multiple incidents try to operate on one talkgroup. It was also brought up that some incidents could require multiple talkgroups.

Zone 2: No Attendance. Blair Miller emailed Chair Hackman the following questions from Zone 2. An update on in person Working Group meetings and an updated / accurate resource list. Sean Hart stated they could look into in person meetings or some sort of combination if the group wished. Chair Hackman stated he likes the flexibility of the teleconference meetings. No other Zone reps reported. Sean will reach out to Blair to find out what specifically they are look for on the resource list.

Zone 3: No Report. Roger Weidenheimer reported he spoke with the Chief from Frystown and they are reconsidering their initial request to leave Zone 3. Robert Martin reported hearing that but did not know for sure as it was not discussed at their Zone meeting.

Zone 4: Chair Hackman brought up a question from a Departments regarding a Chaplain radio designator as the Chaplain remains on scene at times after all units clear. DES wasn't sure of the need for much radio communications and for the Department to look at another means. Matt Keller stated it may be something to just radio traffic. This will be addressed with Christina Wood to see if it is possible.

Zone 5/6: Vice Chair Schaeffer reported at the Amity fire, DES was talking to Command on the Operations talkgroup but then ask them to switch to Hailing. The County SOP states if DES needs Command they will contact them on the talkgroup and if Command needs DES they should be using the hailing talkgroup. DES reports they addressed a similar issue internally from a complaint.

Vice Chair Schaeffer also reported a Department was assigned to Fire Op's 3 and recalled, which never went out over Op's 3 and they continued responding to the scene. DES reports the recall should go out over Dispatch, Hailing and any assigned operations talkgroup. This type of issue should be reported to DES immediately after the incident so they can research and address it.

Zone 7: No Report / Attendance

DES: Deputy Director Hart reports the CAD vendor is actively working on run cards which were submitted for the update. All run cards that were submitted by the July 1, deadline will be in and ready to go.

Deputy Director Hart stated that if the group, Zone or Departments want to change call types, to put a small presentation together and submit it for review.

Deputy Director Hart reports there is a radio firmware update which will be tested for a week or two with a few agencies to make sure there are no additional issues. After that all radios will need to be updated again and an email was sent to all Radio Managers to make preparations and insure the radio programmer is up to date.

Deputy Director Hart reports no update to the communications between Berks and Montgomery.

Deputy Director Hart reported Crew Force is working with Tyler to rectify an issue to get the system to work. The issue is a Crew Force issue.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1846 hours. The next meeting is scheduled for 1800 hours on Thursday September 23, 2021. The meeting will be via Teleconference and links have already been sent.

Respectfully Submitted,

Colin D. Hackman, Chairman