

# **Berks County Fire Services Working Group**

**March 23,2023**

**Officers:** Chair Colin Hackman, Vice Chair Chris Schaeffer, Secretary Mike Kline

Meeting was called to order at 1805 hrs. There were no additions or corrections to the previous months mins, they stand approved as read.

## **Attendance:**

**Zone 1** No one in attendance

**Zone 2** Rusty Wagner

**Zone 3** No one in attendance

**Zone 4** Nevin Klahr, Colin Hackman

**Zone 5&6** Brian Sierociniski, Mike Kline

**Zone 7** No one in attendance

**BCFA** Roger Weidenheimer

**BCFT** no one in attendance

**BCFPA** Andy Culp

**DES** Brian Gottschall, Mike Smith, Matt Stairiker, Christine Wood, Phil Salamone

## **Communications**

None

### **Zone 1**

No one in attendance

### **Zone 2.**

Nothing to bring before the committee.

### **Zone 3**

Nothing to bring before the committee.

## **Zone 4**

Zone 4 requested an update on the crew force program. DES is in the process of testing internally. They will be performing field tests utilizing EMS agencies. A question regarding Lithium-Ion Battery fires was brought forward by the zone. Phil Salamone is planning to get ahold of the Lancaster County Hazmat team to go over lessons learned during an incident that recently happened.

Regarding the issue of Lithium-Ion Battery fires DES is asking Depts not to make significant investments in handling lithium-ion battery fires. The county would like to come up with a standard practice for these types of fires and possibly invest in equipment. This request will need to be presented to the zones for input and assistance with creating a sub-committee consisting of two to three seasoned Officers from each Zone to work on procedures for lithium-ion battery fires.

## **Zone 5 & 6**

Nothing to bring before the committee.

## **Zone 7**

No one in attendance

## **BCFA**

Nothing to bring before the committee.

## **BCFT**

Nothing to bring before the committee.

## **BCFPA**

On May 17<sup>th</sup> the association is holding a class "Emergency Response for Railroad Incidents. Also if any dept needs Fire Police support for any events they are having you can request the group for assistance.

## **DES**

- DES will be sending out a survey to agencies to inquire about what technological devices are present in fire apparatus/command vehicles.
- There will be a Motorola engineer present in the County the week of 3/27 to reproduce and resolve the "hot mic" issue. There will then be a 30–45-day window with a focus on the reprogramming of portable radios.
- DES is asking that companies not make significant investments in the handling of Lithium- ion battery fires – The fire service working group will be creating a sub-committee to evaluate the process for these incidents through a partnership with DES.
- Discussion held about the escalation of alarm levels that are impacted by apparatus that was specially called by command or self-dispatched in the time between the initial alarm and when the upgrade of the alarm was requested. It is important to remember that during an alarm level escalation, it is not about bringing a certain amount of apparatus but rather getting the incident to its desired resource level.

- If a Ladder self-dispatches during the initial response and the next alarm is requested, CAD will see that apparatus as part of the response and only dispatch one additional Ladder, when the run card calls for two additional Ladders. It is possible that if additional apparatus has responded, (by either special request or self-dispatching) CAD would see the next alarm as fulfilled and no additional apparatus would be recommended. DES personnel will engage the Incident Commander and advise them of the situation and inquire if they want their next alarm. FSWG members in attendance understood the explanation.
- Discussion held about fire officers requesting a response by their company and /or additional companies to incidents outside their primary response area. This also includes an individual requesting to activate other companies' tones for reasons that do not relate to the requestor being in an active incident command role. DES will not honor such requests. No objections were noted from FSWG members in attendance.
- Discussion held about changing the call type from RESCUE to MF for a child locked in a vehicle with the understanding that DES may need to add EMS in applicable situations. No additional action would be required as the MF run card would be utilized. This information would be funneled back to the zones for review/discussion. Representatives are then asked to return the feedback from their zone meeting to the FSWG.
- DES will change the call type for CMA (Carbon Monoxide Alarms/Carbon Monoxide Alarms w/ Symptoms) to CMI (Carbon Monoxide Incident/Carbon Monoxide Incident w/ Symptoms). No objections were noted from FSWG members in attendance.
- Discussion held that DES will be dispatching the Cardiac Arrest assignments on incidents where an individual is reported to be unconscious, and the caller cannot verify if the patient is breathing normally/adequately. No objections were noted from FSWG members in attendance.
- Total Visibility - Fire Departments will be able to upload photos into the system, with the process guidelines coming soon. Agencies are reminded to evaluate who the system administrators are and update their status accordingly with any changes.
- DES is still working with Rave to figure out a solution to the text paging.

Old Business- Tax Credit Group is meeting to discuss the program thru out the county. The group will be making themselves available to the depts and their local government to help create a program if there are interested.

New Business- None

The next meeting will be May 25<sup>th</sup> at 1800hrs via TEAMS

There being no further business to come forth, Chair Hackman adjourned the meeting at 1907hrs