

**Berks County Fire Services Working Group**

Thursday, July 25<sup>th</sup> 2024 Meeting Minutes

<b>Term:</b>	<b>Abbreviation:</b>
<b>Vice Chairman – Chris Schaeffer</b>	<b>VC</b>
<b>Berks County Fireman’s Association</b>	<b>BCFA</b>
<b>Berks County Fire Police Association</b>	<b>BCFPA</b>
<b>Berks County Fire Training Center</b>	<b>BCFTC</b>
<b>Department of Emergency Services</b>	<b>DES</b>
<b>Forestry Service</b>	<b>FS</b>
<b>Microsoft Teams Meeting</b>	<b>MTM</b>
<b>Acting Secretary – Lance Parmer</b>	<b>AS</b>

<b><i>Call To Order:</i></b>
A Microsoft Teams Meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman (VC) Chris Shaffer at 1800 hours as Chairman Colin Hackman was absent. There were no additions or corrections to the previous month’s minutes, they stand approved as read.
<b><i>Previous Meeting Mins:</i></b>
Approved without any corrections or additions
<b><i>Communications:</i></b>
None
<b><i>Notice of Recording of Meeting:</i></b>
VC: Asked if anyone would take the mins for the meeting since Chairman Hackman was absent.
LP: Responded with Yes I will for this meeting however we need to make sure this meeting is recorded in case I miss anything.
<i>VC: Asked if anyone had any objections to the meeting being recorded audibly. No one objected to this.</i>
<b><i>BCFTC (Roger Weidenheimer):</i></b>
1. 2025 Training Schedule- preparing the training schedule and stated that if anyone has training they want added to contact them.
<b><i>BCFPA:</i></b>
1. No report as no one from the association was on the MTM.
<b><i>FS:</i></b>
<b>1.</b> No report as no one from the association was on the MTM.

<b><i>Zone 1- Josh Young, Mark Richards, &amp; Josiah Newsome:</i></b>
1. Met on Monday night. Wanted to know if it was possible to update the run card sheet to excel sheet from word document. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>C. Wood DES Response:</b> Run card form will be updated next year (2025) to excel format. She will add the 3 new call types to this year’s (2024) current run card form.</li> </ul>

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2. Text Paging- Wanted to know if it was possible to send text messages out when an assignment is recalled en route, when the truck hasn't gotten out, or if the truck has gotten out. Wanted to know if this could be a standard across the board. Suggestion was made to not require it if the entire assignment was on the road. However, if there are still trucks that need to go en-route that the recall text should be sent.
  - a. **Gottschall DES Response:** Thinks current policy is to send a text message for a recall if the agency hasn't gone responding yet. Will review existing policy to consider what changes need to be done. Also **text paging is NOT primary notification**. This county is a tone paging operation organization. Therefore, text paging should NOT be the primary source of information.
3. Unication G5 Pagers: What does the county recommend for people who don't have radios since it takes a lot of time to switch between zones on the Unication pager the moment a dispatch goes out over VHF. Wants to prevent people from going lights & sirens to an event that was already recalled however its difficult for people who don't have county radios and or the ones who can't switch their Unication pagers over fast enough to the other zone to hear whats going on.
  - a. **Gottschall DES Response:** States that he & DES Michael Smith will discuss internally and get back to the group on this.

### ***Zone 2- Rusty Wagner***

1. Run Cards (Fire Police): Wondering if we could make it non-mandatory to fill in fire police on the run cards like what it is for rehab. If they chose to leave the fire police section blank would the run card get kicked back.
  - a. **Gottschall DES Response:** Yes it (the run card) would be kicked back. We (DES) cannot be in the middle of inter-disciplinary arguments about the provision of services. You make the best operations decisions of your organization. Please understand that we (at 2:00 in the morning), of being asked to send a resource in your area and being told "we don't know who to send", that's the reason we have run cards. So, I would not endorse us altering our process to allow fire police to be a blank spot on the run card since I don't know how we would handle that when the request would be sent if there's nothing offered to send. I guess we would handle it the same way we do currently which is to randomly pick one if all the other resources on the run card have been exhausted based on our best judgement. I don't believe we should be put in a place where we need to play fire police bingo because an organization doesn't want to designate who should be summoned when the request for that service is made.
    - i. **Rusty Wagner Response:** There (zones) response will probably be that they (fire service) doesn't feel like it should be there problem however DES doesn't feel like it should be there responsibility either.
      1. **Gottschall DES Response:** We the fire service long ago accepted this responsibility for. If we are going to make that change, it needs to be made at the local level / emergency

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response plan to be a dialogue among the emergency service providers in the community about how we'll go about providing that clearly needed service in a different way. Hypothetically if we believe it's a state police problem, then we should be sitting down with state police and saying to them "don't call". We're not going to call for fire police if people don't go for fire police. So, if state police or local police or whoever agree that its their responsibility and they are going to assume that responsibility and never make the ask well then you can have 5 deep and they'll never get called anyway, right?

- a. **Rusty Wagner Response:** No and I'm fine with it, I just have to be the messenger and bring it back to our zone. Thanks for the clear explanation.
  2. **Gottschall DES Response:** How would we decided where we are and aren't going to have some response established?
    - a. **Rusty Wagner Response:** It just seems like the fire service continues to be the go-to/dumping ground for everything. That's why we run all the calls we run. So its explained well enough that I can go back and explain what was brought up by DES.
  3. **Gottschall DES Response:** We are certainly willing to engage from the emergency management perspective if a municipality wants to make alterations to their local emergency response plan and go through those types of re-assignments of responsibility. We are certainly willing to be at the table for that perspective and open up that dialogue. Particularly, when municipality has state police instead of local police. I am not optimistic regarding this change however I was not when it came to them (state police) being dispatched for trees down (before the fire dept) and I was wrong about that. Maybe this is another one where we just need to ask the question.
2. Text Paging- Agree with Zone 1's thoughts on text paging issue. We need standards to reduce liability.
- a. **Gottschall DES Response:** How did we accomplish this after we went to vhf paging when we were still on low band? Like isn't the challenge the same?
    - i. **Rusty Wagner Response:** Yes the paging system is primary however its an extra thing to attempt to reduce liability be sending a text page.

**Zone 3 (Bob Martin):**

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1. Response to Brian Regarding vhf from low band: Everybody pretty much had their own frequency that they were repeating off of for a secondary frequency to listen in on. A lot of them got away from that now
2. We held a zone meeting last month- attendance was light due to vacations. Starting to get feedback from our zone chiefs to try and get them more frequently at the zone meetings to corresponds regarding more information. Hopefully this will improve.

***Zone 4 (Lance Parmer):***

1. On behalf of Colin, nothing to report.

***Zone 5/6 (Chris Schaffer):***

1. Our zone meeting was canceled for this month due to an unknown reason.
2. Had nothing else to report.

***Zone 7 (Tom Kemery, Andrew Getka):***

1. Run Cards- still working on new run cards till the new template is complete. Kudos to Josh & Christina (DES) for their assistance and explanation of the process. Hoping to have project completed by the end of the year.
2. Had nothing else to report

***Department of Emergency Services (DES)***

***(Brian Gottschall, Mike Smith, Matt Stairiker, Christina Wood, and Phillip Salamone):***

1. Run Cards
  - a. Call Types Implementation:
  - b. July 30<sup>th</sup> when the new form will be released for organizations to use
  - c. August 6<sup>th</sup> DES dispatchers will go with these call types
    - i. If call types are not filled, they will be defaulted to a rescue assignment
  - d. Call Type Updates

Updated call types will **go live on Tuesday August 6<sup>th</sup>**. FD can access updated updated run card forms beginning on Tuesday July 30<sup>th</sup>. New responses to the below call types will be entered into CAD in the order they are received by DES and will be activated as they are entered. The call type **highlighted in yellow** below each new call type will be utilized until updated run cards are received by DES and entered into CAD.

**ELEVATOR ALARM NVC (NO VOICE CONTACT)**

This call type applies to reports of an elevator alarm activation from a monitoring center or received directly from an elevator where no voice contact has been made. **(RESCUE - will be used until run cards are updated.)**

**PEDACC (PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENT)**

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This call type applies to incidents where a pedestrian is struck by a motor vehicle. A pedestrian is defined as an individual on foot or operating a vehicle primarily designed to be human powered (bicycle, scooter, etc.), or an electric powered mobility assistance device (electric wheelchair).

**(MVAWITH - will be used until run cards are updated.)**

For incidents where any involved party is reported to be trapped or confined, **MVAENT** will be used.

For incidents where the involved vehicle strikes another motor vehicle or object (pole, building, sign, etc.), use **MVAWITH** will be used.

For incidents where there is smoke or fire coming from an involved vehicle **MVAWITH W/FIRE** will be used.

### **RESCUE WILDERNESS\*\***

This call type applies to incidents where an individual's location is known, and they require extrication from an area that is not easily accessible nor in close proximity to a roadway or other normal mode of access (woods, mountains, trails, etc.). **(RESCUE - will be used until run cards are updated.)**

### **UNCONSCIOUS**

This call type applies to a patient who is not alert or able to be roused through verbal or physical (arm shaking) stimulation, **or in an active seizure**, and is breathing normally.

*(The **UNCONSCIOUS** call type has been changed slightly by the addition of a patient reported to be in an active seizure now being classified as **UNCONSCIOUS**. Previously active seizures were classified as an **ALS MEDICAL** or **ALS TRAUMA** depending on suspected cause. No run card update is necessary for this call type change).*

e.

f. New Call Types:

i. Elevator Alarm No Voice Contact

1. Defaults to Rescue assignment if you don't set this

ii. Pedestrian Accident

1. MVA w/entrapment – defaults to this if driver is entrapped.

2. MVA w/fire - defaults to this if the MVA involves fire.

3. MVA w/ - defaults to this

iii. Wilderness Rescue

1. Defaults to Rescue assignment if you don't set this

2. CrewForce

a. Received requests for information from fire departments regarding this.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>b. Plan to start working on deployment of additional agencies towards the end of August/early September</li><li>c. <b>Question from Lance Parmer, Zone 4:</b> Does DES plan to expand use of crewforce? to include other officers besides chief officers.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Answer from B. Gottschall: No current plans for expansion.</li></ul></li></ul> <p>3. Radio Re-Assignments(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Radio re-assigned purposes or taken out of service need to be compliant with DES policy.</li><li>b. Please use radio control change form.</li><li>c. Properly assigned radio identifier</li></ul> <p>4. Everbridge Migration from SwiftReach (Text Paging)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. August 1<sup>st</sup> deadline – we must have everything switched over to Everbridge</li><li>b. 20 fire dept not ready for the switch yet.</li><li>c. Does anyone have any questions regarding the migration?</li><li>d. Everyone must use this in order to get alerts to ActiveAlert, FirstDue, and lamResponding</li><li>e. No one needs to sign up for County Text Paging if you have a 3<sup>rd</sup> party alerting provider</li><li>f. Opt In Groups- Each fire department has their own bucket and people can add themselves into that bucket. Simply so the agency administrator can see their accounts and add them into their own internal agency groups.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Do Not receive alerts.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b><i>Old Business:</i></b>
<p>1. Tax Credit Committee- No update at the county level other than that there will be a county budget meeting mid-August to discuss the county’s future financial picture</p>
<b><i>New Business:</i></b>
<p>1. Secretary- Anyone interested please contact Chair Hackman.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. VC Schaeffer asked if Lance Parmer would like to become the next secretary and he respectfully declined.</li></ul> <p>2. Zone Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. A representative brought up about zone meeting being changed to every month instead of every other. VC Schaeffer reported he knew nothing about this.</li></ul>
<b><i>Next Meeting:</i></b>
<p>3. Meeting Scheduled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 1800 hours via MTM</li></ul>
<b><i>Adjournment:</i></b>
<p>There being no further business to come fourth VC Schaeffer adjourned the meeting at 1855 hours.</p>

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*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Lance Parmer*

Lance Parmer

*Acting Secretary*