ESF-1 NEWS

ESF-1 of the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee

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Greater Hartford Incident Management Steering Committee
assumes the role of ESF-1 for the Capitol Region
Emergency Planning Committee

The Greater Hartford Incident Management Steering Committee is taking on a new and expanded role in the Greater Hartford area. Members of the Steering Committee have agreed to assume subcommittee responsibilities for ESF-1 (Emergency Support Function 1 - Transportation) of the Capitol Region RED (Regional Emergency Deployment) Plan. Ken Loock, recently retired Emergency Management Director for the City of East Hartford, is chair of ESF-1.

Most agencies that typically respond to incidents on freeways were represented on the Steering Committee.

In the years since its initiation, the Steering Committee sponsored several tabletop exercises, developed plans for hydrant locators and standpipes, and distributed highway incident diversion plans. A grant proposal for radio improvements in the Region was funded.

In the meantime, the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee was established in 2001. This committee produced the RED Plan two years later. The Plan designates several Emergency Support Functions, one of which is ESF-1 Transportation. The purpose of this ESF is to “facilitate communication and coordination among regional jurisdiction and agencies concerning transportation issues and activities during a major disaster . . .” The ESF-1 was established by CREPC and a chair appointed, but the ESF was not staffed.

In 2003, the GHIMSC, at the request of the federal government undertook a self-assessment of the incident management program in the greater Hartford area. As a result of that assessment, the Steering Committee determined that many of the issues facing the Region could only be solved at the State level. Due to the fact that the Transportation Strategy Board (TSB) had appointed a Statewide Incident Management Task Force to address many of those issues, the GHIMSC has been relatively dormant in the

Purpose:
GHIMSC: promote coordination, cooperation and communication among all agencies responding to incidents on freeways.

ESF-1: facilitate communication and coordination among agencies concerning transportation issues and activities during a major disaster.
last two years. Working through the ESF-1 will give the regional effort new purpose and visibility, and further serve as an opportunity to provide a working group for the ESF. Issues faced during an incident on a highway and during a major disaster are similar, and will be addressed by this “new” committee. The committee will also be expanded to include representatives of public transportation and dial-a-ride services.

**Transportation Strategy Board Incident Management White Paper Update**

In October 2003, the Statewide Incident Management Task Force transmitted a White Paper to the Transportation Strategy Board detailing needed programs and projects to improve the statewide response to incidents on our highways. In March of this year, the Task Force chairman, Steve Cassano (former mayor of Manchester) delivered an update to the TSB. Highlights include:

**Implemented:**
- Dept of Motor Vehicle recommendations regarding tower certification & training
- Dept of Public Safety recommendations regarding tower equipment
- Capability of locating incidents by determining origination of 911 calls using GPS

**Funding provided or identified:**
- Additional diversion plans
- Additional CHAMP services
- Push bumpers for State Police vehicles
- Photogrammetric equipment for State police accident investigation teams

**In the works:**
- 511 traveler information phone number
- Improved traveler information website
- Statewide interoperable communications system

Since then, the Task Force has identified funds, which will be used to obtain the services of a consultant to write a Statewide Unified Response Manual (URM), see full story on page 4.

In addition, the 1992 Statewide Incident Management Policy has been updated and approved by the TSB. It is now on the desks of the State Commissioners of Transportation, Public Safety, Motor Vehicles, Environmental Protection, and Consumer Protection awaiting their signatures, and will soon be made available to local responder representative agencies for consideration and adoption.

The development of a URM and the reissuing of the 1992 Policy were two of the three highest priorities identified by the Task Force earlier this year. Funding is still being sought for the third priority: a major marketing campaign highlighting the State legislation that requires motorists involved in minor accidents on limited access highways to move their vehicles to the shoulder.

**Transportation Resources Survey**

One of the first efforts being undertaken by ESF-1 is to develop a database of local transportation resources that might be available during an emergency. A survey requesting that information has been sent out to each town in the 43-town CREPC service area.

If you are an emergency planning director for your community and have not responded to this request for information, please contact Karen Olson at kolson@crcog.org or 522-2217, ext 15 to obtain the survey form. Completed forms should be sent to her at CRCOG, 241 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06106. As soon as a significant number of responses have been received, the survey information will be shared.
**Emergency Evacuation and Sheltering Plans – State and Regional Efforts**

Following the hurricanes that hit the Gulf Coast last fall, the federal government directed all states to develop emergency evacuation and sheltering plans. CT had already begun work on evacuation planning, traffic management and mass sheltering, and is continuing that effort. Regional Evacuation Planning Teams are being assembled in each of 5 newly identified Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Regions. (See the map on the back page.)

The DEMHS contact person for our region (Area 3) is Tom Gavaghan who can be reached at 860-529-6893 or by email at thomas.gavaghan@po.state.ct.us.

The State is addressing three evacuation-planning scenarios, which essentially occur outside our Region. Early in June, CREPC planners and responders met to begin the process of developing a regional plan that will build on the State’s efforts.

As a result of those sessions, the CRCOG Policy Board adopted two emergency evacuation and sheltering related policies on June 28: 1) that sheltering in place will be the first option for citizens in the Region, with the understanding that some limited number of persons will need public sheltering (those living within a flood zone, for instance) and 2) that a system of “sister cities” will be developed within the Region, matching towns who will assist each other when sheltering needs surpass the ability of a town to care for its own residents.

CRCOG has hired Carmine Centrella, an emergency planner who will work on several projects, the first of which will be the evacuation and sheltering plan for the Region. Carmine can be reached by calling CRCOG at 860-522-2217, or by email at ccentrella@sbcglobal.net.

**Statewide Unified Response Manual**

Judy Gott, Executive Director of the South Central Region Council of Governments, has been instrumental in arranging funding for the purchase of consultant services to write a Unified Response Manual for use statewide in managing incidents on our highways. An RFQ to begin the process of hiring a consultant will be issued this month. Funding is being provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and ConnDOT.

Among other tasks, the consultant will develop the draft URM with input and commentary from a technical advisory committee, and present the draft to various responder representative groups.

In addition, depending upon available funding and the negotiated scope, the consultant may also develop and participate in a tabletop exercise, as a test of the draft URM; and develop a multi-media training program for use by partner State and local agencies.

The intention is to develop a URM that will be compliant with the National Incident Management System and that will be adopted as standard operating procedure by all agencies responding to an incident on our highways.

The consultant is expected to be selected in September with work on the draft URM to be completed by the beginning of the new year.

Development of the URM will be coordinated through the Statewide Incident Management Task Force with State agencies that have incident response responsibilities, as well as with local first responders through their statewide associations. Chief Denis McCarthy Fire Chief for the City of Norwalk will chair the URM subcommittee.

RFQ & related documents are available at www.sercog.org
Incident and Emergency Management Online Resources

**AASHTO**’s Traffic Incident Management Community of Practice website designed for traffic incident responders to share their experiences and knowledge:
http://www.timexchange.org/inc/inc.nsf/home

**FHWA**’s Traffic Incident Management website:
http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/incidentmgmt/index.htm

**FHWA**’s webpage of publications on Transportation Incident Management:
http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/incidentmgmt/publications.htm
See especially: *Simplified Guide to the Incident Command System for Transportation Professionals*

**TRB**'s Transportation Emergency Response Preparedness information:

Please send information about a website you believe would be of interest to incident and emergency responders to Karen Olson at kolson@crcog.org for publication in future issues of this newsletter.