

Secure Commonwealth Panel Meeting - MINUTES

Roanoke County Public Safety Center

July 13, 2007

Host Remarks: Richard E. Burch, Jr., Fire Chief Roanoke County

The chairman, Bob Crouch, opened the meeting at 10:15 a.m. and introduced Chief Richard Burch of Roanoke County, citing his extensive history of contributing to preparedness in the Commonwealth.

Chief Burch thanked everyone for their attendance and welcomed them to Roanoke. The Chief gave a brief history of the Roanoke County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), including the transition to a new building from the 1939 vintage building that previously housed their EOC. He noted that a tour of the facility was available for those interested after the meeting. Chief Burch then introduced his Division Chiefs for Fire and Homeland Security. The Chief also reviewed the previous days' regional exercise on a school shooting, which had been planned before the Virginia Tech incident occurred and which involved private sector representatives and several counties. The Chief closed with a wish that the members enjoy their visit.

Welcoming Remarks and OCP Initiatives Update: Bob Crouch (OCP)

Chairman Crouch asked the members and the Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group to introduce themselves and mentioned the four new Panel members: Eric Casey (Maersk), Dan Jenkins (Dominion), Kelly Hobbs (Wal-Mart) and Dario Marquez (MVM, Inc.). Mr. Crouch gave a brief history of the Panel, which has its origins in the recommendations of Governor Gilmore's Panel. Governor Warner created the Panel to inform state government leaders on gaps in Virginia's preparedness and provide recommendations for improvement. He issued an Executive Order creating the Secure Virginia Panel and later re-named it the Secure Commonwealth Panel. 2006 Legislation made the Secure Commonwealth Panel permanent in the *Code of Virginia*. During the 2007 General Assembly session, four private sector seats were added to the membership.

Bob Crouch mentioned that the Virginia Tech Situation Brief will be on the September meeting agenda. Invitations and a press release are forthcoming regarding a College and University Campus Security Conference to be held on August 13; participation will be by invitation only. Also there will be a Governor's Cabinet Preparedness Exercise on September 4 and while it is for internal use only, the Panel should be aware of such preparedness activities.

Sub Panel Reports

Outreach:

Ron Keys presented the Outreach Sub Panel Report focusing on engaging local governments by using the Ready Virginia Campaign tools. Particular interest was put on individual preparedness kits, having a preparedness plan and knowing where to go to get information if needed. The group also focused on inclusion of the special needs population. In the Hampton Roads area, people with special needs that

have no transportation are a priority. The Outreach group hopes to assist localities in looking for grant opportunities and utilizing a regional approach by identifying threats and vulnerabilities on a regional basis.

There were three action items that the group decided to pursue. (1) Assist Ready Virginia program by developing stakeholders and partners (Virginia Municipal League, Virginia Association of Counties, and Virginia Corps), (2) Providing presentations at conferences, and (3) Reach out to special needs groups.

A discussion ensued on establishing performance measures for Outreach.

The Outreach Sub Panel are thinking of incorporating Ready Virginia and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) efforts in K-12 preparedness education. Greg Lucyk – action is key at local level, state provide tools and resources to localities.

Oct 14-16 Virginia Municipal League and Nov 11-13 Virginia Association of Counties Annual Conferences, Outreach hopes to participate in these conferences and give out information to conference attendees. We hope to have Susan Mongold (Office of Commonwealth Preparedness) set up grant writing assistance as well. The goal is to have staff participate and localities have access to everything they need and to incorporate people with disabilities into this effort.

Regional workshops were held across the state with regard to this effort. Also, the group needs to make sure awareness is raised on this effort in the non-profit community. We were successful with evacuation preparedness for group homes; reference to the July 9 Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) report on governing regulations for assisted living facilities. This report illustrates how important it is to have policies and procedures uniformly adopted across the Commonwealth.

Note for September meeting, evacuation and sheltering needs to be on the agenda with state agencies identifying gaps in hurricane planning, what has been done to fill the gaps, and what remains to be done. Plans exist per Ron Keys, but they are not adequate (ex. same bus company for all evacuations). Bob Crouch asked the members to be frank, honestly looking at our gaps so that we can be more effective.

Davis Walsh from the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness is working on the Ready Virginia Campaign. Davis walked the Panel through the website (www.ready.virginia.gov). Constructive comments included: needs to have a forceful headline on the front page; needs welcoming statement from Governor (per Bob). Davis let the Panel know that the Ready Virginia Working Group has created the web site. A question was raised on marketing Ready Virginia. First step is a Public Service Announcement (PSA), outreach with minor league baseball has begun, and public radio and public television announcements are forthcoming. The problem is the funding constraints. Suggestions were given, such as use of local governments and advertising on their local websites; Chamber of Commerce should be added to the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness web site links; the Ready Virginia Working Group needs to connect with the Outreach Sub Panel. Suggestions also included advertising on weather.com, a feature on weather channel's hurricane stories, and to enlist trucking companies to put on

trucks something like “have you checked Ready Virginia today? Also, there was 2007 legislation on mutual aid liability issues for first responders who respond out of their jurisdictions.

The question of outreach to large college and universities and schools was discussed. Norfolk is planning to work with colleges and universities in January, will continue to work with the CERT program, and will continue their efforts with civic leagues and faith-based organizations.

The state level Higher Education Preparedness Consortium is meeting regularly on preparedness issues. An honorable mention was given to the Virginia Commonwealth University’s (VCU) Homeland Security Program and how Longwood and George Mason Universities and others are looking into establishing their own programs dealing with homeland security. Colleges and Universities have partnered on sheltering capabilities for the state and are included in Executive Order 44 in updating and testing their Continuity of Operations Planning. The Higher Education Preparedness Consortium will have a web site up and running soon. The Consortium is working on how to make a connection between academic community and practitioners; VCU papers on community preparedness may have value for localities. There are 7 Regional Preparedness Advisory Committees (RPAC) established across the state and include academic community from their respected region.

The Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group has determined that emergency managers on campuses are not always feeling connected both internally and externally. Curtis Brown from the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness briefed on two committees – Sheltering Committees and Pan Flu. They meet quarterly and members include the Department of Emergency Management, Department of Social Services, and Department of Health. Jeff Rezin announced that the Pan Flu Program in Winchester & Frederick County held earlier this year will be offered again this fall.

The CERT Program is a key initiative. There is an effort to bring CERT to middle and high school levels. We need to get Virginia’s program going like Wisconsin. Fred Vincent from the Department of Emergency Management and Curtis Brown from the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness are tasked to follow up with Suzanne Simmons, who is lead from the Department of Emergency Management on CERT. The International Association of Emergency Managers just created a college/university subcommittee; there is much networking occurring among the states on this issue.

Bob Crouch invited panel to the All Hazards Conference in November.

Health & Medical:

Dr. Lisa Kaplowitz presented the Sub Panel report. The Health and Medical Sub Panel has been meeting for 5 years, 50 plus attendees with Delegate John O’Bannon as the leader. The last meeting was on May 14 and they focused on sheltering special medical needs populations. The Department of Health is providing templates to hospital nursing homes for emergency planning; it really is starting to pay off. Also, had a brief on an evacuation exercise from the Department of Transportation

Officials handling the Houston Astrodome evacuation process spoke at the tidewater area conference about their experiences. They had intact infrastructure, which made a difference and the Commonwealth applied their lessons learned to our planning process. Progress is good, but there is still a way to go. We need to get more local involvement.

Next meeting is on August 21 and focus will be presentations on the Virginia Tech hospital experiences during the shooting last April. We now have a statewide Pandemic Flu plan. An exercise to test the plan will be held on September 4 to look at the entire state government response and to engage the private sector as well. Sub Panel is looking at perspectives in community preparedness and may overlap with the Outreach Sub Panel. The Center for Disease Control has helped with funding for community preparedness and has made several visits across the state. Please let Dr. Lisa Kaplowitz from the Department of Health know if you are interested in participating in the next Sub Panel meeting.

Business & Industry:

Leigh Middleditch presented the Sub Panel report. The Sub Panel met last week with 40 participants at the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VETO) and received briefs on the Fusion Center and Virginia Emergency Operations Center.

In the US our public attention span is very short regarding emergency situations. We must deal in people's self-interest. We have found that trade associations are key and networks need to be utilized to get the word out among their members on emergency preparedness. On the state level, this is a harder task. The Governor Elect's Transition Committee report will be distributed once again to panel members.

Leigh Middleditch discussed certification of preparedness planning to business and industry for insurance purposes. This would not work because underwriters have a limited focus. Dominion's experience with New Orleans' credentialing was reviewed. Items of interest were extension of credit problematic with power outage and the import of cash from Houston under guard.

Educational elements and best practices are key to success of this Sub Panel. Murphy's law factor requires drilling on plans continually; any way to cooperate on national level exercises would be great (Lisa Kaplowitz with the Department of Health has been doing this for years now with the Department of Defense and the National Capital Region).

Steve Mondul of the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness provided a brief on Noble Resolve (Joint Forces Command Exercise). This exercised looked at how all players' assets can be brought to bear on a series of threats from an inbound terrorist threat. The focus was on information and intelligence flow through the Fusion Center. Virginia will be a standing partner on working this out with the state.

Working Lunch

Tom Martin of the Virginia Fusion Center and Fred Vincent of the Department of Emergency Management gave a brief on the Virginia Fusion Center.

The Virginia Fusion Center is a joint effort of the Department of Emergency Management and the Virginia State Police and is housed in the Virginia State Police Headquarters in Richmond. Created under the *Code of Virginia*, the Fusion Center is operational 24/7. It has become an all crimes all hazards facility. All analysts have a Secret Clearance and federal partners include Department of Homeland

Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The state personnel housed in the Fusion Center include the National Guard and coming shortly the Department of Fire Programs. They welcome information from other sources and try to disseminate information quickly.

The Virginia Fusion Center does reach out to other fusion center across the United States daily. They have a close working relationship with the National Capital Region Intelligence Center and the Maryland Coordinated Analysis Center. The Fusion Center is 18 months old and still learning. It is a two way partnership with the federal government. The Department of Homeland Security does have joint training opportunities, such as analyst to analyst training and weekly joint state calls with the FBI and Department of Homeland Security.

Public/private partners in the Fusion Center are evolving through such as the partnership with Dominion. Fusion Center is looking for ways to assist all businesses; the challenge is to avoid overloading.

How do you push information to local partners? A daily intelligence brief is disseminated. Chief Stanley does receive good information on a daily basis from these reports which helps educate and develop prevention perspectives. How do declassify information? That is a federal system which we cannot and should not undo. Discussions on what can be released and what cannot; it is evolving. What does a locality report to the Fusion Center? Law enforcement partners have our contact information and the Fusion Center can be reached by phone 24/7. The public uses the TIPS hotline and agents in the Virginia State Police do follow up on those tips. The Virginia Critical Information Shared System can access levels of information; it is a need to know via password type program, though public can have access to their website.

First Responders:

Colonel Stanley gave the Sub Panel report of the top \$ priorities. Virginia Intelligence Management System (VIMS) accesses information on credentialing and background checks. This system needs \$5 M to be able to provide this service.

Bob Crouch spoke about his discussion with Senator Stolle on the First Responder Authentication Cards (FRAC) issue.

Promoting the Statewide Agencies Radio System (STARS) awareness is continuing and essential. This is vital to the Henrico area. They are looking at making it work better for the localities. Colonel Stanley and Chris Essid from the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness will be addressing the Virginia Association of Counties (VACO) next week on this issue.

Heavy tech rescue teams need \$700K to get needed equipment (7 teams).

Transition from 10 codes to common language. Virginia's progress in this initiative has been in the news.

Statewide baseline survey review.

Establishment of the Regional Preparedness Advisory Committees (RPAC).

The Sub Panel will be creating a user focus group to address pertinent questions (Mike McAllister from the Department of Transportation and Steve Mondul from Office of Commonwealth Preparedness) to participate. This reaches many beyond the first responder community.

Bob Crouch briefed on State Interoperability Executive Committee – History, participants, Chris Essid’s role, strategic plan, annual conference, and interoperability grants.

Bob Crouch reminded the Panel for the September meeting this is a critical time as we enter the budget revenue cycle and for legislative proposals. We need to be shifting to recommendations instead of simply reporting out. If your sub panel has something for the House of Appropriations Committee, please provide to Delegate ASAP so he can work on before January.

Virginia Critical Infrastructure Protection and Resilience Strategy (VCIPRS): John Knapp

John Knapp gave the report on the Critical Infrastructure sub-panel activities. They met jointly last week with the Business and Industry Sub Panel.

Due outs:

- VCIPR Strategy will be developed in two parts: (1) Strategy and (2) Implementation.
- Implementation Plan will be developed by January 2008 and will include latest round of Department of Homeland Security grants/programs.
- Need to define terminology in plan (i.e. resiliency, interdependency, etc.).
- Need to define the word “terrorism” (based on Department of Homeland Security definition).
- Panel members should provide comments on the VCIPR Strategy to Constance McGeorge by September 1.
- Comments will be incorporated into the document and will be re-presented/voted on at the next Secure Commonwealth Panel meeting on September 12.
- Critical Infrastructure Protection Program/Projects depend heavily on Department of Homeland Security grant program.
- Discussion on Buffer Zone Protection Program/number of sites on Virginia critical infrastructure list.
- Full implementation of First Responder Authentication Card – 5-10 years out.
- Critical Infrastructure Protection Sub-Committee will meet again prior to the next Panel meeting to discuss incorporation of Panel member’s comments.

Preparedness Measurements: Bob Crouch

Governor Kaine has asked the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness to evaluate how well Virginia is prepared for a Hurricane and other man-made and natural events, a snapshot of the Commonwealth’s preparedness. This Panel and its sub-panels will play an integrated role in this effort.

The Panel will not be tasked with filling out a survey instrument, rather to help create an instrument to assess our preparedness. How should we measure preparedness in Virginia? Red/Yellow/Green concept? Need to be cognizant of using green, could mean compliancy.

Davis Walsh from the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness made a presentation to the Panel on this subject. Items to address include expectations of preparedness, review of the strategic plan, performance measures for each scenario, target capability overview, and possible structure of assessment.

Panel Comments/Discussion:

Lisa Kaplowitz - The Department of Health is agonizing over this as public health is a moving target. Bio-terrorism should be included in this assessment.

Paula Burnette - categorize measures by weather related events versus radiation or cyber; we probably have a good handle on weather related events.

Eric Casey – broad categories (economic, infrastructure).

Leigh Middleditch – combat readiness evaluations type of structure.

Greg Lucyk – several recent tabletops and exercises – what sort of measures have we used for them and are they effective.

Leigh Middleditch– local EOC evaluations.

John Knapp – look at core capabilities for size and scope items.

Lisa – Please do not forget real events and their after action reports; what did and did not work , such as the Isabel and Katrina I after action reports.

Bob Crouch - take this challenge back to your sub panels and will be on agenda for September Meeting. Governor wants to ensure SCP plays a role in this.

General Discussion and Closing Comments: Bob Crouch (OCP)

Bob Crouch mentioned that the projected meeting dates for the Secure Commonwealth Panel, going through 2008, were in the members folders.

Eric Casey from Maersk, mentioned that the Port will be opening and the largest as the only East Coast deep water terminal this year and he invited the Panel members to visit and see the system. (Please work with Eric to arrange a tour.)

Bob Crouch thanked his staff for their assistance and closed by thanking Chief Burch for hosting the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.