

EMAC Committee Meeting Notes

Saturday, March 6, 2010

John Heltzel called meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

Angela Copple called roll.

Present EMAC Committee Members:

Don Boyce
Dave Smith
John Heltzel
Doug Hoell
Ricky Platt
Tom Sands
Kris Eide
Nancy Dragani
Ed Wall
Dave Maxwell
Ken Murphy
Steve Knecht

Roll call did constitute a quorum.

John Heltzel stated that Kris Eide could not attend, so he would lead the session.

Comprehensive Review:

Kim Ketterhagen reported on the update of the comprehensive review:

Issue 1. Reimbursement

- Kim Ketterhagen explained that in January 7 teleconference, the review was discussed, and #1 area of improvement is reimbursement. Speed is the #1 area in that concern. Everyone realized that reimbursement is backbone of the whole process and need is tremendous for fixing it.
- Lack of guidance to states is a problem in this regard. Many states conduct the reimbursement process differently, with different levels of success. Also, we need to work more closely with FEMA partners due to the major disaster declaration need. How can we work better with these partners? We have built some case studies and noted where things went well and where things went poorly. There are applications of PA process different from one region to another. EMAC is a contract, and although many FEMA people recognize it, not everyone does.
- Have assigned a special assignment task force (SATF) to focus on reimbursement. Matt Parks is chair of that task force. Will provide report in October at Annual Conference.

Issue 2. Role of NCG and how it works with EMAC Committee and Advisory Group. There has possibly been misunderstanding of role of NCG. We need to build stronger relationship with partners so everyone understands fully the role of NCG.

Issue 3. Outreach. Working to build a stronger relationship across all disciplines, not just EM. To help with this, Kim Ketterhagen has appointed 3 members-at-large to ETF from health, fire, and state EM director. Also appointed outreach SATF.

Nancy Dragani asked if there has been an ETF meeting since adding the fire chief and how the response was. Kim Ketterhagen said it was received very well, especially since the group has been very vocal about being represented. Chief Gerard Dio was at the Advisory Group meeting, and he feels more and more law enforcement is responding. Angela Copple noted that Chief Dio has attended all of the training courses.

Dave Smith (RI) asked about the broadcast sent this winter requesting states not to send SITREPs unless they were associated with an actual event. Kim Ketterhagen said he's been sending out daily EMAC briefings noting what's going on. We send to Lead State Representatives and they distribute it as necessary. Seems to be a more effective and efficient way of sharing the information.

Dave Maxwell asked if group had come to any agreement on backup in case NCG is itself impacted to the level that they can't perform their duties. Kim Ketterhagen said policies and procedures say that if NCG can't perform duties, then past chair's state takes care of it and if they can't help, chair-elect's state takes care of it.

Training Update

Angela Copple provided handout and noted that more than 250 A-team-trained personnel exist now. Also have E431 in July and October at EMI. February 17, Leon Shaifer presented at Public Health Summit.

Ricky Platt (SC) to discuss NG hurricane workshop. Director Platt discussed the background of the workshop and described the tools they developed at the workshop to address response through the National Guard. Nancy Dragani noted, when she looks at National Guard capabilities chart, many of the resources are not part of essential support functions (ESFs) of military. How is this being factored into the ESFs? Doug Hoell commented that they had come to him in North Carolina and said historically they'd ask for trucks and personnel, but in 2006 they provided pre-scripted missions. They can now tell how many mission packages they have, not just how many people and trucks they have. Director Heltzel brought up the earthquake exercise and said no one has really done this for this size exercise. Put crosshair on New Madrid fault and bring in all players and pre-identify who would come to what state, some of the designations of who would come where don't make a lot of sense. But we need to look at who's got what to bring. We will likely need a database, not just a spreadsheet. Director Platt brought up an example of how certain parts of an exercise had gone. Director Hoell noted that if we ever have a New Madrid issue, states next to fault states will have to serve as platform states. Director Heltzel said he just wanted to plant a seed in this regard. Director Miller said they are getting ready for spring flooding, and he is excited about the capability building possibilities.

EMAC Accreditation

Do we want to do this? Doug Hoell noted that legislation would have to be addressed. There would be no backbone to the system if a state wasn't compliant. Dave Maxwell added that logistics of getting 50 states to redo legislation could be hard; voluntary might work, but otherwise could be very hard. Dave Smith agreed with Dave Maxwell and said what if this was successful and state didn't comply? The discussion indicated that the EMAC Committee did not want to move forward with an EMAC Accreditation program.

Cross-Border Agreement

The NEMA Biennial survey identified that 15 states are signatories to an international agreement. Ken Murphy reported on efforts to develop a single cross-border international mutual aid agreement. A group involved with North America Mutual Aid Consortium is looking at all the mutual aid agreements out there and also those not necessarily involved with mutual aid but still affecting the situation. Carol Cameron (FEMA) has sent letter to USAID asking for them to be part of this. Also, we have some attorneys from CSG to help with legal matters. We'll likely question matters that are the big concerns in the United States as well—namely, reimbursement. State governments from the 3 countries (United States, Mexico, Canada) seem pretty agreeable on the agreement; federal governments will be the areas to focus on for agreement. Big difference will be if we can get cooperation from USAID.

Dave Smith was curious if there's any correlation to the Vancouver games—if there's an AAR from which we could learn. Director Murphy said he felt we can get an AAR, and we'll take a look at it if we can.

EMAC Section of Biennial Report Review

Angela Cople reviewed the results of the NEMA Biennial Report, that only 14 states have dedicated disaster funds. Of those, 10 have had to activate their fund for an EMAC response. With current budget times, those funds may not have funding currently but that question was not asked. Thomas Sands brought up concern from last meeting. Seems a seat is missing at the table—namely, FEMA. Problem with the money is bigger than EMAC. He noted that Michigan does have fund, but there's no money in it. Dave Smith said he had to evaluate the choices he had in 75%/25% split; he asked his state government where money was to pay the 25%, and they said there isn't any. If states have never put money in funds in good times, how are they going to now? Doug Hoell said this is a state-to-state agreement, and we don't need to go down this path because of that. Really doesn't have to do with federal assistance.

EMAC Article III

The EMAC Committee was provided as a handout was the language of EMAC Article III. Please review the article and understand your responsibilities as a Member State.

REQ-A Update

Edits have been made: add section on identifying health and safety concerns, staging area/EMU added, tips section with red triangles showing helpful hints. Dave Miller brought up electronic signatures and if this has been revisited. Angela Copple said in last biennial survey, some states said they could never do e-signatures. A potential resolution may have been found, however, and is being considered. Might include either signing and doing an upload or dialing in to an 800 number.

EMAC Finance Training

John Heltzel asked if any state has a course on finance training on EMAC or ideas on how to proceed with a course. Dave Miller asked if this is a state-to-state agreement, isn't there a state financial directors association and, if so, why can't we contact them? Doug Hoell said this is an evolving process and there should be education when demobilizing personnel learn how to reimburse. Dave Miller said it's getting the right people in the room—not just educating people, but when bringing people into my state, can't always educate them.

NEMA Strategic Plan Update

Dave Maxwell, the NEMA President asked each NEMA committee to identify 2 goals: information to support interstate/intrastate, etc.

The EMAC Committee was asked by President Maxwell to identify two goals from the strategic plan that we would focus on this year. We chose to focus on Objective 1.4 and 1.5.

Objective 1.4 Promote and administer the Emergency Management Assistance Compact as the nation's interstate mutual aid system.

Objective 1.5 Provide information and resources in support of interstate and intrastate, and international mutual aid.

Update to Objective 1.4:

- We have been working very hard to promote EMAC through the website, updating EMAC updates through the NEMA Twitter account, the EMAC Facebook page which has over 650 fans that receive frequent updates on EMAC activities & training opportunities.
- We have set up a Regional training schedule to train EMAC A-Teams and now have over 250 trained A-Team personnel who have all completed the same course material.
- We are working to complete the online introductory course.
- We have been holding webinars on EMAC to provide education to disciplines, states, and Federal agencies.
- In short, we feel that we are meeting this objective.

Update to Objective 1.5:

- NEMA has given intellectual property rights to both PNEMA and IEMAC to use the EMAC Operations Manual and EMAC Forms (REQ-A, R1, R2).
- We have integrated intrastate mutual aid into all of the EMAC training materials and worked to push the importance of a solid intrastate mutual aid agreement in states.
- We are working through the North America Mutual Aid Agreement Working Group to make headway on the development of a single mutual aid agreement that spans borders.
- In short, we feel that we are meeting this objective.

Other Business:

Nancy Dragani asked about the National Coordination Team activation for Haiti. Kim Ketterhagen agreed that there was some confusion over how EMAC had been involved. This was to act as liaison between FEMA and USAID for communications purposes. Good to have hand-in-glove relationship with FEMA to help identify needs out to the states. Also, support to NRCC is beginning to degrade due to retirements, etc. and this was great training opportunity for new NCT members. We have to be careful; we do not intend to become international aid. But we also have to support other operations. Director Dragani said she wasn't sure an A-Team was the best mechanism. Angela Copple explained that the NCT was actually for communication; this was not an A-Team function of coordination.

The meeting ended at 4:46 p.m.