

LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

LEPCA

April 03, 2026

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LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (LEPCA)

ASSOCIATION

BUSINESS MEETING
APRIL 3, 2026

ATTENDEES

- Tom Vaden - Nome, Co-Chair
- Brenda Ahlberg - Kenai, Co-Chair
- Aaron Hankins - Petersburg
- Mio Rhein - Ketchikan
- Forest Shreeve - Denali
- Kala Cahill - Mat-su
- Nancy Durham - Fairbanks
- Eric Wyatt - Bristol Bay
- Ken Folsom - Kodiak
- Tim Putney - Kodiak
- Amanda Loach - Anchorage

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

3 LEPCA Co-Chair Tom Vaden called the meeting to order at
4 8:00 a.m.

5 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Calling them -- this is Co-Chair Tom
6 Vaden calling this meeting to order. Just welcome, everybody.
7 If you're new to this, my name is Tom Vaden. I'm from Nome.
8 This is Brenda Ahlberg. She's from Kenai, Soldotna area.
9 We're the co-chairs. Do we get -- can we get a roll call?
10 Petersburg, please say your name, where you're from, and your -
11 - spell your name, please.

12 MR. HANKINS: Aaron Hankins. Petersburg, Alaska for the
13 Petersburg LEPC. A-A-R -- A-A-R-O-N H-A-N-K-I-N-S.

14 MR. RHEIN: Ketchikan.

15 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Yes.

16 MR. RHEIN: Mio Rhein from Ketchikan, LEPC, Chair. And M-
17 I-O R-H-E-I-N.

18 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Thank you. Denali?

19 MR. SHREEVE: Forest Shreeve, Denali LEPC. F-O-R-E-S-T S-
20 H-R-E-E-V-E.

21 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Matsu.

22 MS. CAHILL: Kara Cahill, Mat-su Borough LEPC. K-A-R-A C-
23 A-H-I-L-L.

24 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Fairbanks?

25 MS. DURHAM: Nancy Durham, Fairbanks North Star Borough

1 LEPC. N-A-N-C-Y D-U-R-H-A-M, co-chair.

2 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Thank you. Bristol Bay.

3 MR. WYATT: My name is Eric Wyatt, E-R-I-C W-Y-A-T-T,
4 representing Bristol Bay. Deb Jones is our chair. Couldn't be
5 here today, so she's asked me to fill in.

6 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Thank you. Kodiak.

7 MR. FOLSOM: Ken Folsom, F-O-L-S-O-M, emergency manager.
8 And I have Tim Putney, our police chief with me.

9 MR. PUTNEY: Tim Putney. P-U-T-N-E-Y. Kodiak, LEPC.

10 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Anchorage?

11 MS. LOACH: Amanda Loach, municipality of Anchorage LEPC.
12 L-O-A-C-H.

13 CO-CHAIR VADEN: You have a quorum.

14 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: How about Brenda Ahlberg? Kenai
15 Peninsula Borough Emergency Manager representing our LEPC.
16 Last name A-H-L-B-E-R-G A-H-L-B-E-R-G. (indiscernible -
17 lowered voice) pilot.

18 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Next is approval and changes to the
19 agenda.

20 APPROVAL OF AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

21 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Ahlberg. There are several motions
22 that we'd like to make to the agenda for your consideration and
23 I'm going to read them off one at a time and then I'm going to
24 ask for unanimous. Motion one, new business 7B. Discussion of
25 wildfire preparedness efforts. Move to old business. Item 4A.

1 That's motion number one, asking for a second and asking for
2 unanimous.

3 All in favor?

4 BOARD: Aye.

5 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Motion number two, new business number
6 7A, remove Juneau Glacier outburst topic and replace with the
7 co-chair election.

8 Ask for second.

9 MR. SHREEVE: Second.

10 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: All in favor?

11 BOARD: Aye.

12 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Again, these are -- there's no
13 discussion because I'm asking unanimous. Motion three, add new
14 business, number 7E, incorporated and unincorporated areas
15 representation.

16 Ask for second. All in favor?

17 BOARD: Aye.

18 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Motion, add to correspondence,
19 communications and presentations. Item 5C, lithium-ion
20 batteries presentation. Speaker will announce themselves at
21 that time.

22 Ask for second.

23 MR. SHREEVE: Second.

24 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: All in favor?

25 BOARD: Aye.

1 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Those are the changes proposed and
2 accepted for the agenda. Oh, I had asked for unanimous. It
3 was scratched. Yes.

4 Okay. Promise next time we will make sure that we also
5 reach out to all of our LEPCs with the agenda draft. That's
6 another thing we want to make an effort to do. Tom, we'll turn
7 it back over to you for approval of the minutes.

8 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Chair will approve a motion to approve
9 the minutes from April 18th, 2025.

10 APPROVAL OF APRIL 18, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

11 MR. PUTNEY: Putney in Kodiak. I'll make a motion to
12 approve the minutes from April 18th, 2025 meeting.

13 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Discussion?

14 (No audible response).

15 All in favor?

16 BOARD: Aye.

17 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Any opposed?

18 (No audible response).

19 Motion passes. Okay.

20 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Under Old Business, a new topic A,
21 discussion on wildfire preparedness efforts Ready, Set, Go
22 program. Division of Forestry Fire prevention is -- protection
23 is represented. Go ahead and come on. And then you're right
24 here. Go ahead.

25 MS. SAARLOOS: Good morning, everyone. My name is Sarah

1 Saarloos. I'm the fire Staff Officer for Division of Forestry
2 and Fire Protection. It's a division under DNR State of
3 Alaska. It's good to see everyone.

4 First, I just want to say thanks for having us. This is,
5 I think the second time that we've been able to kind of present
6 this concept to this group. And it would be -- I need to
7 mention and just call out like, a lot of this effort also came
8 from Brenda Ahlberg when it comes to being able to get this
9 program off the ground. Working with her on a lot of wildland
10 fires that happened down in the Kenai Peninsula, but then also
11 around the state and also in the nation down in the lower 48.
12 This has been an ongoing conversation for, I don't know,
13 probably ten years or more. So this just isn't something that
14 we came up with. I wanted to make sure that that's clear.

15 Another, you know, just to add some background, the
16 boroughs in Alaska have done a lot of work with their public
17 and getting them really good information about how to be ready
18 for wildfire season. And when it comes to evacuation
19 communication, right? So you got a fire -- wildfire, it's
20 moving and we're going to have to move the public. And how are
21 we going to do that? And how we are going to communicate that.

22 The areas that are not in boroughs or municipalities that
23 are -- and are not incorporated, that has, you know, really
24 been challenging. And that's one of the reasons why we have
25 put effort and staff time and found funding to be able to get

1 this campaign off the ground. And what we're hoping is to be
2 able to provide a service to those Alaskans that maybe don't
3 have that local government that is doing the awesome outreach
4 that our boroughs have been doing over the last decade or more.

5 So with that, I also just want to give a shout out. This
6 is Emery Johnson. She is our state coordinator for
7 information. And she's been working out on wildfires for a
8 very long time. A lot of it has been behind the scenes and
9 we're really excited. This is -- she's been working as a state
10 employee for us in this position, we're coming up to almost a
11 year and this was kind of one of the big projects that her and
12 her staff have spent a lot of time on. And we're looking
13 forward to being able to get this out on the ground this
14 summer. So I'll pass it over to Emery.

15 MS. JOHNSON: Yes. Thank you for the opportunity to
16 present. We have been able to coordinate with a lot of you
17 guys already and really excited to present since we
18 collectively and you guys major -- in the majority have agreed
19 on utilizing the colors in a standard format with ready being
20 green, set being yellow, and go being red. We've been able to
21 make a statewide campaign, and so we have been able to come out
22 with a standard. And so you can see on this screen.

23 And I've also got swag that we have. We've made swag bags
24 and then upon your exit where you signed in, we will actually
25 have some bags that you guys can grab. Feel free. The

1 campaign actually officially starts next week. So this pitch
2 is for you guys and you guys are the first. But we have been
3 able to create, not only with the color scheme, but also the
4 verbiage as well as we created the dogs in a sitting position,
5 a standing position and a running position to make it
6 accessible for all. So that's kind of the concept behind the
7 dogs, the colors, the numbers and the verbiage and to make it
8 standardized.

9 And so that example there, we will have stickers and we
10 also have magnets that's also going to be in the swag bags to
11 make it kind of that accessibility and pretty simplistic
12 version of that. Another examples that we'll have in the swag
13 bags as well are going to be just rack cards that we'll be able
14 to hand out at different events and outreach activities.

15 Again, just explaining that Ready, Set, Go program that we
16 have and what defensible space is, explaining the go kit,
17 things that we've already been talking about, things that you
18 guys have been -- telling you guys' communities and we're just
19 making sure that we amplify that message. And we do have kind
20 of that Ready, Set, Go logo and that husky, we have a winter
21 background, we've got a summer background, so we can kind of
22 customize things as we move forward and make it truly Alaskan.
23 Right.

24 We also have our trifold that again is going to be in our
25 swag bag to amplify that message, make sure that we are make --

1 getting our community prepared. And then we also have some
2 more reference websites for Alaska fire information, phone
3 numbers, websites, maps galore. Included in here is also
4 little first aid kits as a preparedness thing. And then just
5 miscellaneous Division of Forestry materials like Firewise.
6 And of course, we can't go anywhere without our Spruce Moose
7 promotion, so also have that as well.

8 We are building our web page as well that we will have
9 downloadable PDFs for our trifolds rack cards, so that way they
10 can be utilized and printed off as well. You can also
11 coordinate through my office and our outreach so that way we
12 can help get these materials to you guys as well. But they
13 will be downloadable here soon off of our web -- webpage. But
14 we also have social media graphics as well that can be utilized
15 and customized. So this will be what we will utilize as
16 Division of Forestry and Fire Protection this season for this
17 rollout campaign for statewide evacuation. So promoting that
18 inclusivity and the graphics, utilizing the dogs, the colors
19 and the logos.

20 So we also have different forms that we can attach to
21 different things. And you'll be seeing these throughout our
22 campaign that's rolling out starting next week.

23 Another example here is that we have been working with our
24 GIS team at Division of Forestry and Fire Protection and we
25 have been able to create an interactive statewide wildfire

1 evacuation map. And so what this does is it pulls all the
2 existing borough evacuation maps that are already created. So
3 all the GIS teams and all the boroughs already have their
4 existing maps and we are just pulling all of those records
5 together in one collective place. So that way if you don't
6 know where in the state you are, if you have access to this
7 map, you can essentially geolocate yourself. And it doesn't
8 matter if you are in Seward, it doesn't matter if you are in
9 Talkeetna, you can actually see an evacuation layer yourself.

10 So this is that website. Again, this will be rolling out,
11 but it is live. And so we do have the boroughs linked here as
12 well for reference and then statewide information. And then
13 for example, Forest accidentally found out we were working on
14 this, but he tested it for us and it did work. And so it does
15 show empty polygons when they are not evacuated. And then when
16 they do have evacuation layers on them, they are represented.
17 And we also have our GIS team that utilized polygons on Delta
18 for unincorporated areas as an example for today's meeting
19 and.....

20 MS. DURHAM: That was just a test.

21 MS. JOHNSON: Yes.

22 MS. DURHAM: There's not an actual wildfire Delta Junction
23 right now.

24 MS. JOHNSON: Yes. So for this meeting, this is a test.

25 Yes. As was Forest's example too, testing our system. And so

1 for example, you can see the multicolor layers and the
2 previous example you saw the empty polygons and the colored
3 polygons. And it also works. So we're creating a QR code to a
4 link as well. And we'll also create a short link so that way
5 it can be accessible. If you do scan this code, it does work
6 right now. But again, we will roll it out. We do want to
7 attach it to our website so that way we can point people
8 towards it because right now it's a very hefty link, the link,
9 but it is mobile accessible as well.

10 And so this is the mobile accessibility view of it from my
11 screenshots. But this is the Delta example. So in this
12 example, hard to read from this far, but if you click on it, it
13 says, "This is for testing only, no active emergencies." So we
14 can customize the message on it as well. You can also click on
15 it, you can -- I typed in Delta Junction, Alaska at the top,
16 and then I even geolocated myself, which we're sitting in
17 Anchorage. So you can see that I geolocated myself for the
18 Anchorage municipality. And then you can actually open your
19 location services if you don't know where you're at and it'll
20 find you. So these are some of the things that we're rolling
21 out with our Ready, Set, Go campaign in our statewide wildfire
22 evacuation map.

23 Any questions and comments for us?

24 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Yes, Ms. Nancy?

25 MS. DURHAM: For -- like I see on our maps, we added like

1 the clear, the ready, the words, but I'm not seeing that on
2 the unincorporated areas. Are those going to be there for
3 those areas as well to be ADA accessible?

4 MS. JOHNSON: They are. I just had to -- you just have to
5 zoom. Yes. Yes, ma'am.

6 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Forest.

7 MR. SHREEVE: When - if -- if we're using any of the
8 graphics that you put up there, like to post information out,
9 do we need to seek any permission at this point whether or not
10 it's got forestry logos or we're just good to use it if it's
11 copy and paste?

12 MS. JOHNSON: So the graphics that we have pushed out have
13 this Ready, Set, Go emblem on them, and we're intentionally
14 creating them without our badge so that way they're accessible
15 for anybody to utilize them. That's the concept.

16 MR. SHREEVE: So if something does have the forestry
17 badge, then we need to potentially seek permission to post
18 that?

19 MS. JOHNSON: No, you don't have to. It'll be just
20 branded though. And then if you want it customized, just reach
21 out to my team and we can work on it.

22 MS. SAARLOOS: I would say it's kind of like an example
23 that I can draw upon is like -- so some of our funding comes
24 from the U.S. Forest Service, and so like we'll have a trifold
25 that will have the US Forest Service logo like on the back.

1 But like I don't need to like reach out to the Forest Service
2 if I'm going to be using that at an event or at a -- so kind of
3 the same deal.

4 MS. LOACH: Can you talk to me about your process for
5 coordinating the evacuation layers with local communities,
6 whether they're incorporated or not? Thanks.

7 MS. SAARLOOS: Well, a lot of it comes from our GIS shop.
8 They've been in -- gosh, there's just been some really great
9 like-minded folks that are in GIS that have -- usually what we
10 do is like we'll set it up through the emergency managers and
11 let the GIS folks kind of make connection and then we step out
12 because they're speaking a language that at least, I know I
13 don't understand. So that has happened with, I believe all the
14 boroughs. And has it happened with the municipality? I'm
15 seeing, yes. So I think maybe we've already contacted your GIS
16 shop or they're pulling from it, whatever you have public
17 facing.

18 MS. LOACH: Yes. The reason I'm asking is because I just
19 didn't know that this process was happening and so it can't be
20 just me and there's lots of communities that are included. And
21 you mentioned that it's hard to coordinate with those that are
22 in the unorganized borough. So I was interested in the process
23 just so that we could amplify it across Alaska. And you said
24 that your layer is complete and covering all of Alaska. So
25 it's kind of in the rear-view mirror. And just, if we could

1 know what the process is, we could help amplify the value of
2 it if we understand what the process is so we can reflect it
3 over time as we continue. Thanks.

4 MS. JOHNSON: Yes. So our map essentially pulls from the
5 municipalities and boroughs that are doing their own thing. So
6 we're pulling from anything that they create. We're just
7 mirroring everything. For the unincorporated, we as the
8 division of forestry and fire protection are working with the
9 State Emergency Operations center and our GIS shop creates
10 those layers for unincorporated. And so any unincorporated
11 areas, our GIS shop creates those layers and manages that
12 unincorporated layer for them. So that's how that has been
13 working in the past.

14 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Does that answer your question, Amanda?
15 Forest.

16 MR. SHREEVE: Does the state have any plans on drawing
17 evacuation polygons for the unincorporated portions and
18 specifically use the -- you used the example of showing mine,
19 which by the way, Amanda, I didn't also know that they were
20 doing this. And I got a call from Emery like, hey, it looks
21 like there's a wildfire in your area. Just joking. Because I
22 was messing around learning how to change my statuses. But if
23 you look at our example, you see Denali Borough, Fairbanks
24 North Star Borough, and then nothing in between. Is there any
25 plans to make evacuation zone?

1 MS. SAARLOOS: Yes, that's -- I mean, that's was one of
2 the main reasons why we launched this. And like Emery said,
3 this hasn't -- we're right at the -- this hasn't gone public
4 yet. You know, we are right at the beginning of launch. I
5 have probably been the one that has put the pressure on the
6 team and the staff to get this going this summer because of the
7 last three years, especially in the northern region without, I
8 believe being able to provide the information and service that
9 Alaskans deserve when it comes to evacuation information in the
10 non-incorporated.

11 So yes, we will like, take the area of Delta Junction.
12 That's why I picked Delta Junction, one, because it's my
13 hometown and I like to pick on it. And two, because it, at
14 this time, doesn't have the capacity to like draw its own
15 polygons, right? We don't have a city clerk in there that is -
16 - has a background in GIS that can do that. When they do, we
17 will be really stoked not to have to do that for them. And
18 also, right, like what we've done with the Denali Borough in
19 the past when, you know, if there's staffing challenges, we've
20 been able to -- like I said, our GIS group is -- I can't speak
21 well enough about them. They go above and beyond to fill the
22 gaps when needed. So,.....

23 MR. SHREEVE: Thank you. And yes, the state has helped us
24 through multiple fires. This is our first year having
25 evacuation zones prepared.

1 MS. SAARLOOS: Yes.

2 MR. SHREEVE: And if you do look at that gap, the NANA
3 area, feel free to call me. I have knowledge working and
4 living there.

5 MS. SAARLOOS: Yes.

6 MR. SHREEVE: I can help with that.

7 MS. SAARLOOS: Awesome. Thanks, Forest.

8 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Ahlberg. Point of clarification, for
9 those that may not have experienced evacuations in their
10 jurisdiction, this is a phenomenal effort that is going to take
11 significant participation with all of us for the rollout so
12 that we have not only the common operating picture, but the
13 unified messaging. Kind of a novel idea. But with that is
14 those who are incorporated, what, you know, let's just call it
15 the big three, Anchorage, Matsu and Kenai Peninsula. Or well,
16 might as well call it Fairbanks and Denali since you guys are
17 pros now. This doesn't preclude your operations, your
18 responsibility of evacuations and what you do as jurisdiction.

19 I just wanted to throw that out there because I think
20 there might be folks who are assuming. I don't like to operate
21 on assumptions. But it's also critical for our unincorporated
22 areas as Sarah is saying, because that can be the -- for lack
23 of a better word, the kerfuffle. And it does take that
24 coordination between the state agencies to assist those
25 communities. This is amazing to me. You know, Sarah and I

1 have been certainly back and forth with this over the last few
2 years trying to make this come to fruition. And I am -- just
3 got goosebumps. This is just -- this is awesome to see this in
4 our career come to fruition. So, thank you so much for your
5 time, ladies.

6 Is there any closeout?

7 MS. SAARLOOS: Just thanks so much and I echo it is going
8 to take -- nothing we start new isn't going to have some
9 glitches, so I just- maybe have grace with us communication and
10 will help us through any of those kerfuffles and yes, hopefully
11 maybe we won't have a lot of wild land fires this summer, I
12 always like to throw that out there, and maybe we won't need to
13 use this at all. But if we do, we look forward to working with
14 all of you. Thanks for your time.

15 MR. RHEIN: Well, this is Mio out of Ketchikan. I just
16 had a curiosity. I didn't hear anything about this at the
17 Alaska Fire Con -- Fire Chief's conference. I didn't hear
18 anything. I haven't heard anything about it from the Alaska or
19 from the like Fire Chief staff. And I wonder if there's an
20 avenue in -- you're talking about, you know, coordination and
21 communication. I didn't know if I just missed it or if we'd
22 not been -- if we'd been -- I don't know. I just think there's
23 an avenue there to maybe communicate a little bit better and
24 maybe understand the process a little bit better also.

25 MS. SAARLOOS: So I was at the Alaska Fire Chiefs and

1 presented. I didn't have a slide to it because we were -- it
2 was still totally concept.

3 MS. JOHNSON: Yes. This map is only two weeks old. This
4 is a brand-new thing. And so this -- like we said, this pitch
5 is, you guys are the first to hear about it. This is a brand-
6 new concept. We haven't rolled it out. It's not public. And
7 so you are the start of us telling people, not even the public,
8 right? So this, you guys are the first stop.

9 MS. SAARLOOS: But you're right.

10 MR. RHEIN: It went from your presentation to this, which
11 just felt like a big jump in a month.

12 MS. SAARLOOS: Yes. We just -- we work fast. But yes,
13 you're right. The Fire Chiefs, definitely what I hope to do
14 next year when I'm down there is present of how it went, you
15 know, and lessons learned and get the feedback from the Fire
16 Chiefs. And also my phone is always on. You can always text
17 and call me with comment.

18 MR. HANKINS: Aaron Hankins, Petersburg. So you're
19 talking about standardized messaging and obviously this is for
20 wildfires, which is great tool. Is there any appetite either
21 from DOF or from like DHSEM to, in later years, expand this to
22 incorporate other disasters that would involve evacuation or is
23 this just intended solely to be a tool for wildfires? Thank
24 you.

25 MS. SAARLOOS: Good question. And right now the intent is

1 for a wildland fire. Of course, with our partnership that we
2 have with the division, you know, we definitely, we're not
3 keeping this just for us, if -- you know, we're open to
4 collaboration in the future if it seems like a valuable tool.
5 Bryan, thanks.

6 MR. FISHER: Good morning, everybody. For the record,
7 Bryan Fisher, director of the Division of Homeland Security and
8 Emergency Management. Yes, like they just said, this part of
9 all of this is brand new. I don't know if you were going to
10 talk about the bill that's out there being worked or not.

11 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Go ahead. You got the mic.

12 MR. FISHER: So with -- and I think you heard this earlier
13 with a great thanks to your co-chair, Brenda, from Kenai,
14 Senator Bjorkman introduced legislation, it is 182, 192?

15 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: 192.

16 MR. FISHER: Senate Bill 192 in this session that will
17 modify the Alaska Disaster Act, one of the statutes in there
18 26.23.100 to standardize this Ready, Set, Go and the color
19 scheme for all evacuation planning and all evacuation
20 documentation statewide. And that is -- it's all -- that is in
21 terms of all hazards, right? So while the division of Forestry
22 and Fire Protection has been working with all your GIS folks
23 specific to wildfire with this, the tools and technology that's
24 out here, we have much more conversation and coordination and
25 planning to do.

1 And I was going to say this later, but I'll just say it
2 now. It's going to be important for you all as local emergency
3 planning committees when you're working with your jurisdictions
4 as they're updating their emergency operations plans to know
5 about this bill. If it passes, I don't feel like it's
6 contentious in any way, shape, or form, but it's got to go
7 through the process of the legislature. There's a committee
8 substitute from the Senate Community and Regional Affairs
9 Committee, that's the current version of it scheduled to be
10 heard and how Senate resources on April 10th.

11 So it's working its way through the legislature. And it's
12 pretty simple. It lays out the colors, the names and says, if
13 you have an evacuation plan or an evacuation annex as part of
14 your emergency operations plan, you have to address this, that
15 this is the way it's going to work, R, E, G, Y, R. So that's
16 going to be an important factor for all of you as if your
17 jurisdictions are updating your EOPs that your committees are
18 looking at that, making sure that that is incorporated if you
19 have specific evacuation guidance in there.

20 The technology piece and taking advantage of what division
21 of Forestry and Fire Protection and the GIS and Public
22 Information Team has put together, there's much more
23 conversations that have to happen. I mean, like you heard,
24 this is brand new. It wasn't available before when it was
25 briefed just a little bit ago to the Fire Chiefs. So, I mean,

1 we're hopeful. We don't -- we certainly don't want to build
2 separate systems for the same purpose, but we haven't talked
3 about any of those discussions yet at all. My agency, my
4 department has just said for the -- for SB182, there is no
5 fiscal note. It's not going to cost us any money to make sure
6 that we're all incorporating the requirements of that new
7 statute if it gets passed.

8 So we are going and we have been going forward with that
9 anyway in this state. All of us, we -- you know, we've been
10 talking to you Sarah and Norm McDonald from Forestry Fire
11 Protection have been talking to you guys for a few -- a number
12 of years to make sure we're standardized in Alaska for this.
13 One of the reasons we want to get codified in state law is to
14 make sure that it is required, not just encouraged. And then
15 we'll move forward from there. This is a huge, huge, huge step
16 forward to providing that support, both for you all that have
17 that capability.

18 And then obviously in the unincorporated areas of the
19 unorganized borough, they're doing it, you know, on behalf of
20 the local communities where there isn't the government, but we
21 got a lot more to go. But our intent, I think moving forward
22 would be to incorporate the system, the connections that
23 they've already made with the GIS teams in your jurisdictions
24 for, you know, if it's a hazmat release and you're doing the
25 same thing.

1 The only other thing I'll say about that is that on the
2 backside of that, we also need to continue to have discussions
3 on reverse Ready, Set, Go for reentry. So there's still a
4 whole lot of work, but you know, we got to be planning for
5 reentry as soon as we're conducting our plan and evacuation.
6 So with our utility providers, all the things we normally do
7 when we're trying to get folks back in other homes and get
8 power restored and all that. So still lots of work for you all
9 to do, and I look forward to seeing it from Florida.

10 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Ms. Nancy.

11 MS. DURHAM: I just have one more comment. I want to say
12 thank you because I think this is fabulous. After the last two
13 wildfire seasons with wildfires rolling out of my borders -- in
14 my borders from unincorporated areas and us taking that lift to
15 add to our maps, I think this is fabulous that we're going to
16 have a statewide system that pulls our maps, our existing maps
17 in and then add for those areas that don't have maps. So be
18 easier for those communities. Thank you.

19 MR. FOLSOM: Ken from Kodiak. Do you have any objection
20 to utilizing the graphics, the concept, the Ready, Set, Go
21 concept and your graphics for -- in our jurisdiction for our
22 other evacuations as we see it? I don't want to put this into
23 the plan and then six months go, oh, you guys can use it and
24 then change it and change it and change it. I want to do it
25 once. If I think it's a great concept, I -- we used the same

1 concept when I was in California and we used it for everything
2 and I want to be able to put it in the EOP once and update
3 instead of using it over and over again.

4 MS. SAARLOOS: Yes. This is -- it's going to be out to
5 the public. So we're not copywriting this. We don't need how
6 communities, organizations, it's open to the public,

7 MS. JOHNSON: I think the biggest thing is that we are
8 open to you utilizing it, and that's something that we are
9 definitely good with. Our lane is wildland fire and that's why
10 we have it specific. And so you guys being emergency managers
11 and being the full circle, that's why you see all of this as
12 fire because that's our lane, but we are definitely open for
13 you guys to utilize it for all hazards.

14 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Yes, sir.

15 MR. WYATT: I am Eric from Bristol Bay. I'd like to see
16 you before you go. I'll get you information about Bristol
17 Bay's GIS as well.

18 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Okay.

19 MS. JOHNSON: Great.

20 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Aaron?

21 MR. HANKINS: Yes. I see the value in, you know, how --
22 what it is now and where it could possibly go. So, you know,
23 thank you to everyone who, you know, put a lot of work into
24 this and, you know, continue to still do the work. Even if
25 you, you know, aren't going to necessarily implement it right

1 away in your community, just kind of getting it out there so
2 that if your constituents are traveling statewide and happen to
3 be in these areas, they understand the process and it goes a
4 long way and just starting to build familiarity statewide. So
5 thank you guys very much for what you guys did.

6 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Seeing none, thank you so much, ladies,
7 this is awesome.

8 MS. SAARLOOS: Thank you.

9 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Next up is LEPC funding letters. Amanda,
10 we're going to have you talk about that, please.

11 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: No, it's the.....

12 OLD BUSINESS

13 LEPC STATUS REPORT

14 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Sorry, status report. I thought we were
15 past that. Okay. These are written status reports and if you
16 send them into DMVA, they're posted and you'll have an
17 opportunity at the end of this session if you want to present a
18 verbal status report, then we'll do that too. Okay.

19 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: I would recommend at this juncture that
20 we call on each of those representing today that they can talk
21 about their status report, add anything or how would you like
22 to proceed with that?

23 CO-CHAIR VADEN: It was down (Indiscernible - away from
24 the microphone).

25 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: So, let's scratch that then.

1 CO-CHAIR VADEN: But leave this is out?

2 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Yes. Well, no, no, no, you're right.
3 We'll just stick with the agenda the way it is. I don't
4 understand why that's on alpha. Good catch. Right.

5 CO-CHAIR VADEN: We'll do that at the end of eight, nine,
6 or whatever.

7 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: It's number nine. We'll state it.
8 Yes, they'll see. So it's basically in there twice today.

9 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Well, this is supposed to be written
10 status.

11 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Mm-hmm.

12 CO-CHAIR VADEN: And the other one's supposed to be
13 (Indiscernible - lowered voice).

14 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Got you.

15 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Now can we go?

16 LEPC FUNDING LETTERS

17 MS. LOACH: Good morning, everyone. My name's Amanda
18 Loach, again from the Anchorage LEPC. I've been asked by the
19 chair to -- co-chair to talk to you today about the funding
20 letters that we have put together over the last few years and
21 months together. I have for you a printed packet, and for
22 those online, I'm sorry that you didn't receive it, of the
23 LEPCA, which came together over the last few months to present
24 a letter about our crisis and concern and recommendations as a
25 collective group here regarding the funding for LEPCs and LEPDs

1 in Alaska.

2 We also spoke with the Alaska Professional Emergency
3 Management Association called AKEMA. And they have -- I'm not
4 sure how many members at this time, if anyone knows, speak up,
5 but there's a lot of our communities here in Alaska and
6 agencies and professionals in the emergency management field
7 are represented there. That board put forward a letter to
8 support the funding for LEPCs being pursued and restored.
9 Aleutian & Pribilof Island LEPC, Anchorage. We have put
10 together two letters to lawmakers and the State Emergency
11 Response Commission as well. Fairbanks LEPC. Keurig from
12 Nome, representing the tribal communities there. Kenai
13 Peninsula LEPC, Kenai Peninsula Fire Chiefs, the Matsu Borough
14 Local Emergency Planning Commission. And Nome has put together
15 several letters, Nome LEPC.

16 So I think the point in calling attention to that is that
17 many communities across Alaska are very concerned about
18 resources available to do emergency planning together in their
19 community in a multidisciplinary group in an organized fashion
20 as required by state and federal law. And we'd like some
21 resources to support that.

22 There's an analysis packet for you that we put together as
23 well from this information. The analysis packet contains
24 language for a proposed resolution from the LEPCA. It's
25 numbered for your convenience, so that you can edit it at will

1 today. There's a one-page summary that we generated, and the
2 appendix to this analysis is intended to be the letters.

3 Is there anything else that you'd like me to present? Co-
4 Chairs?

5 CO-CHAIR VADEN: I just want to say that some of those
6 letters, and I thank you everybody for participating. We're
7 getting a little bit of recognition within the House of
8 Representatives. The finance committee, they just approved
9 \$300,000 and added it to -- for the LEPCs and added to the
10 budget. It's got a long way to go yet, but at least we're
11 getting the message through that this is an important concept,
12 and maybe we should start paying attention to it. Just saying,
13 you know, it'll go away. We don't want to -- you know, we --
14 you know, we don't -- you know, we need to be active with this
15 and not just ignore it.

16 And I think you can see we have a lot of losses with the
17 LEPC chairs and LEPCs in areas that are just empty, you know.
18 And consistently, when we have these meetings, what we hear is
19 we're reforming, we're reforming, we're reforming. And you'll
20 see most of the individ -- most of the organizations that are
21 here have a tax base and paid people. But, you know, many of
22 the missing ones don't have a tax base. And so they're just
23 like, okay, you're running it with volunteers. And it's hard
24 on volunteers. It really is. So, did you want to make a
25 motion with this LEPCA resolution?

1 MS. LOACH: This resolution that is here is drafted as a
2 resolution, so I can make a motion. But I'm certain that it
3 will need revision by the members of the LEPCA here. So I can
4 make a motion and read out the resolution as drafted if that
5 pleases the group.

6 (No audible response).

7 Okay. So I'll make a motion that the Alaska Local
8 Emergency Planning Committee Association request that the State
9 Emergency Response Commission adopt a statewide recommendation
10 urging the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency
11 Management to champion through the Department of Military and
12 Veterans Affairs, in partnership with the Department of
13 Environmental Conservation, the Governor and the Alaska State
14 Legislature, to restore the state LEPCA grant program in the
15 next fiscal year.

16 Whereas the program's elimination in 2019 removed critical
17 statewide support for EPCRA, that's not spelled correctly,
18 required planning Tier 2 chemical inventory processes,
19 hazardous materials exercises, capability assessments, and
20 public right to know functions. Whereas LEPCA submits that
21 restoring a structured statewide LEPC grant program is
22 essential to ensuring Alaska's local emergency preparedness,
23 maintaining statutory compliance, and supporting consistent
24 coordination across all twenty-one local emergency planning
25 districts.

1 MR. HANKINS: Aaron Hankins, Petersburg, seconds that
2 motion.

3 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Discussion?

4 MR. FISHER: I know I'm not part of the association, but I
5 would ask somebody to make a motion to adjust the sentence on
6 line three. It's Division of Homeland Security and Emergency
7 Management. Just want to make sure you get my agency name
8 correct.

9 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Any other discussion?

10 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Ahlberg. On line five whereas the
11 program's elimination of 2019 removed critical statewide
12 support for correcting the acronym required planning, Tier 2
13 chemical inventory process. As it is now, reporting process
14 goes through DEC. That is the requirement of those who must
15 report.

16 What is the responsibility of the LEPC as it relates to
17 that reporting and how does this resolution support that
18 relationship?

19 MR. FOLSOM: Ken from Kodiak. I think it -- you know,
20 your hazards material, exercise capability assessments. The
21 only thing that's missing is planning, and that's the process
22 planning, exercise and training in there also. So I think
23 that's the only thing that's missing is planning. That's the
24 process

25 MS. LOACH: And planning. So adding and planning after

1 05? After it says Tier 2 chemical inventory process and
2 planning?

3 MR. FOLSOM: Including planning, training, exercising.

4 MS. LOACH: Okay.

5 MR. FOLSOM: That's the process. You know, they report
6 then the LEPC's responsibilities per code is planning,
7 training, and exercising. And so that's the process that I
8 feel.

9 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: So, Ken, are you for discussion, asking
10 perhaps in line six that the word planning should be added
11 after exercises?

12 MR. FOLSOM: Yes. The planning and training, but the
13 process to -- you know, it could say chemical inventory
14 process, including planning, training, and exercising.

15 MS. LOACH: Oh, there you go.

16 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Thank you.

17 MS. LOACH: Planning, training.

18 MR. FOLSOM: You could actually put hazardous material
19 planning, training, and exercising. That way it just shifts
20 around

21 MS. LOACH: Uh-huh.

22 MR. RHEIN: Is it just hazardous materials or is it all
23 hazards?

24 MS. LOACH: In law?

25 MR. FOLSOM: Technically in law.

1 MR. RHEIN: That's why I'm asking. I don't know.

2 MR. FOLSOM: It's technically in law. It's just hazardous
3 materials planning, training, and exercising.

4 MR. RHEIN: That was the question.

5 MR. FOLSOM: Yes.

6 MR. RHEIN: Thank you.

7 MR. FOLSOM: And I mean, I know there's other LEPCs in
8 Alaska that do other things, but you can do that by your
9 bylaws. But the SERC code in the statute is planning, training
10 for exercises for hazardous materials on that inventory.

11 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Ken, thank you for this clarification.
12 I think it's important for the group to understand the
13 difference. Thank you.

14 MR. HANKINS: Aaron Hankins, Petersburg. I want to expand
15 off of what Ken was saying. Also making sure that those who
16 are under reporting or should be reporting that aren't
17 reporting, you know, are -- that's the job of the local LEPC to
18 then make sure that business, you know, somehow achieves a
19 compliance either through the state or by just talking to them,
20 like, hey, you need to be reporting this. I've run into that a
21 few times in Petersburg. So just, hey, I didn't know I needed
22 a report.

23 MR. FOLSOM: Yes. Maybe we can add the word enforcement,
24 because I think that's also in the code, and technically it's
25 somebody has to enforce it that they need to file.

1 MR. RHEIN: I don't think the LEPC has that authority
2 though. I mean, maybe within -- again, within -- in the
3 borough or jurisdiction, you might be able to add that
4 authority in some way, shape, or form. But I don't know
5 exactly how that would work. But I'm a hundred percent certain
6 in Ketchikan, we don't have that authority at all.

7 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: You are correct. We do not have
8 compliance authority.

9 MR. HANKINS: Right. Just information boots on the
10 grounds, not -- we can't write anyone a ticket or anything, but
11 you'd report it to the state.

12 MS. LOACH: I have a question. So I was under the
13 understanding that, and my memory is not serving me right now,
14 but somebody could be Googling it and fact checking right now
15 or whatever the modern version of that is, that the statute in
16 Alaska had been modified to make it on all hazard function --
17 the LEPC and all hazard function. So if we're talking about
18 the Tier 2 reporting, it's hazardous materials, but if we're
19 talking about LEPCs and the functions of LEPCs, I believe that
20 in statute that's been modified to all hazard.

21 MR. RHEIN: I thought that from the bylaws, that's why I
22 asked the question, but I don't think it's super clear and
23 someone -- maybe someone else knows and could help me
24 understand that, but.....

25 MS. LOACH: Yes. I mean, there's people here in the room

1 that know it by heart or that are Googling it. So maybe we
2 could have someone comment to that, maybe from DHS and EM or
3 DEC so we can get this correct.

4 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Kathy, come on up, please.

5 MS. LOACH: Thank you.

6 MR. RHEIN: Maybe we need to change the word hazards
7 material to all hazards then, if that's the statute.

8 MS. LOACH: I think in regards to Tier 2, it's chemical.
9 It is all hazards. But in regards to LEPCs, LEPCs are in
10 statute all hazard. Sorry, I think I said that wrong, but
11 hazardous materials for Tier 2 reporting. And there we go.

12 MS. SHEA: Yes. So Kathy Shea with DEC. And I don't have
13 the statute open in front of me but the SERC is an all-hazard
14 SERC in the state, but LEPCs may be all hazards. They're not
15 required to be all hazards. So it's up to each individual,
16 LEPC to make that decision for themselves, to answer the question
17 that you were asking. I don't know if there's anything else
18 you want me to say.

19 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Thank you, Kathy.

20 MR. RHEIN: I think that does make line six then. I think
21 if you call it out as specifically hazardous materials only, I
22 think that may -- if we're asking for funding, that may limit
23 the scope, and that might be something we want to consider in
24 this wording.

25 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Well, in line five, we very specifically

1 said EPCRA, which is what is the title of statute within the,
2 you know, U.S. code.

3 MR. HANKINS: In between line six and seven after public
4 right to no functions, could you just simply add another line
5 for that additional mission? So amend the resolution. So,
6 after you talk about the EPCRA Tier II requirements and you
7 know, as well as, you know, providing for all hazard planning
8 for communities,

9 MR. RHEIN: I would support something like that,
10 especially when you consider that the amount of inclusion that
11 the bylaws recommend, it would be -- it seems pretty clear that
12 all hazards is not only optional, but it's encouraged for
13 communities and especially as we talk about smaller
14 communities, you know, and in our conversation about volunteers
15 and everything else, this -- it would be -- any opportunity to
16 make sure that that's clear, I think would be important.

17 MS. LOACH: I have a suggestion for the language. So, on
18 line eight, where it says essential to ensuring Alaska's local
19 emergency preparedness, we could just put essential to ensuring
20 all hazard local -- Alaska's all hazard local emergency
21 preparedness.

22 MR. RHEIN: I would totally support that.

23 MS. LOACH: I feel like this is a really long resolution,
24 so I'm trying to be brief, if possible at this point. If
25 that's okay, Aaron.

1 MR. HANKINS: No, that's fine with me. I support that as
2 well.

3 MS. LOACH: I got the revisions ready if you're.....

4 CO-CHAIR VADEN: So,.....

5 MS. LOACH: I got the revision.

6 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Motion to accept the amendments.

7 MS. LOACH: I got it ready. If you want me to reread, I will
8 do it. I excel in reading aloud.

9 Do it?

10 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Do it.

11 MS. LOACH: Here we go. My mom would be so proud.

12 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Can you spell out that acronym?

13 MS. LOACH: Which one?

14 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: The EPC one.

15 MS. LOACH: The -- okay. Give me the words for EPCRA,
16 whatever that one is. Can someone give me the words for that?

17 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Just spell out the letters.

18 MS. LOACH: All the letters.

19 MR. FISHER: Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-
20 know Act.

21 MS. LOACH: Community.

22 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: From 1986.

23 MS. LOACH: Emergency Planning Community -- okay. I'll do
24 my best. Okay. The Alaska Local Emergency Planning Committee
25 Association respectfully requests the State Emergency Response

1 Commission adopt a statewide recommendation, urging the
2 division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to
3 champion through the Department of Military and Veterans
4 Affairs, in partnership with the Department of Environmental
5 Conservation, the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to
6 restore the state LEPC grant program in the next fiscal year.

7 Whereas the program's elimination in 2019 removed critical
8 statewide support for the Emergency Planning and Community
9 Right-to-Know Act required planning Tier 2 chemical inventory
10 process, including hazardous materials planning, training, and
11 exercises, capability assessments, and public right-to-know
12 functions. Whereas LEPCA submits that restoring a structured
13 statewide LEPC grant program is essential to ensuring all --
14 Alaska's all hazard local emergency preparedness, maintaining
15 statutory compliance, and supporting existing coordination
16 across all twenty-one Alaska local emergency planning
17 districts.

18 That's my revised resolution with all of your comments.

19 MS. CAHILL: I have motion to approve.

20 MR. HANKINS: Second.

21 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Any opposed?

22 (No audible response).

23 All in favor?

24 BOARD: Aye.

25 CO-CHAIR VADEN: All in favor? Set. Motion passes.

1 Thank you very much, Amanda.

2 CORRESPONDENCE, COMMUNICATION AND PRESENTATION

3 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: We now move to correspondence,
4 communication and presentations. First up, A is Homeland
5 Security and Emergency Management. Director Fisher.

6 MR. FISHER: Thanks to the co-chairs and members of the
7 Local Emergency Planning Committee Association. Bryan Fisher,
8 the Director of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency
9 Management. Thanks for the time. I just want to talk about a
10 few updates on the division activities, and then talk a little
11 bit about some of the other things that are happening statewide
12 and nationwide as well.

13 I think you're all very well aware the division has been
14 fully consumed with the response and initial recovery
15 activities for the disaster that impacted Western Alaska and
16 Northwestern Alaska in October. Most people are referring to
17 it as Typhoon Halong or the remnant of Typhoon Halong. There
18 were some other sea storms that impacted the Northwest Arctic
19 Borough and Kotzebue and some other areas prior to that typhoon
20 remnant impacting Southwest Alaska. But really the real
21 significant impacts were in southwest Alaska in the Yukon-
22 Kuskokwim Delta area.

23 And I will just tell you, in my thirty-two years of doing
24 this, this has been the most significant disaster that we have
25 responded to, the sheer number of homes that have been

1 destroyed in communities throughout the Delta, larger than
2 anything. Maybe the sixty-four earthquakes had more damage or
3 destroyed homes, but this one is certainly one for the record
4 books. So our agency has been wholly consumed since October in
5 responding to that disaster and supporting the survivors both
6 in the region and those that have been displaced. I think many
7 of you hopefully had seen, you know, in the news you know,
8 there are upwards of 1,012 hundred residents from communities
9 in the Southwest in the lower Kuskokwim, lower Yukon region
10 that are displaced from their communities.

11 In particular, the most acutely impacted communities are
12 the native village of Kipnuk and Kwigillingok. The majority of
13 residents from those communities are displaced and have been
14 since we facilitated the evacuations utilizing Alaska National
15 Guard helicopters out of the communities to Bethel. And then I
16 think many of you have seen the photos. You know, there's this
17 -- there's one picture that's been going around of one of our
18 Alaska International Guards C-17s, the entire floor of that
19 large cargo aircraft full of residents from Alaska. It looks
20 like an evacuation photo from Afghanistan. It's not. It's a -
21 - those are our neighbors. It was Americans and Alaskans that
22 we had to evacuate further out of the region into Anchorage.

23 I want to just shout out a couple of entities at the
24 beginning of this. As we were conducting those rescues and
25 then evacuations and further evacuations, the municipality of

1 Anchorage, the University of Alaska Anchorage responded
2 immediately to open up congregate sheltering at very last-
3 minute notice to be able to receive those folks that we had to
4 pull out of the region and take care of those in the initial
5 couple of weeks when they came into Anchorage here. So it was
6 a tremendous herculean effort to get those shelters up and
7 running. Working with our partners at the Red Cross, the
8 South-Central Foundation, and the Alaska Native Tribal Health
9 Consortium as well in both of those congregate shelters to get
10 those up and have a warm, safe place for folks to go when we
11 pulled them out of the region.

12 In pretty amazing time, in about two weeks after those
13 shelters opened, we were able to transition all of the
14 displaced survivors in the Anchorage area into hotels. And so
15 my agency in partnership with FEMA and our contract staff have
16 been taking care of displaced survivors evacuees in -- at one
17 point it was upwards of six different hotels in the Anchorage
18 area since the evacuation in October.

19 We have been working nonstop through the winter to get
20 folks transitioned out of hotels, which is under the non-
21 congregate sheltering program with FEMA to get them into FEMA's
22 program for rental assistance and temporary housing. So our
23 huge effort, the next step was to get folks out of the hotels
24 and into rental units, apartments that kind of thing.

25 State of Alaska is furnishing those apartments, working

1 with our partners at the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation.
2 We expect to have the final few households out of the
3 apartments and into -- or out of the hotels and into longer
4 term apartments in the next couple of weeks. Those folks
5 aren't going to be able to go home for quite a long time. The
6 communities of Kipnuk and Kwigillingok specifically, the tribal
7 councils have passed resolutions asking that their members,
8 their residents don't come home because it's not safe. So we
9 have a tremendous amount of work that's continuing and will
10 continue, you know, for the next four or five years to try to
11 effect recovery for those communities.

12 The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public
13 Facilities, the Department of Environmental Conservation, our
14 agency, our department, many others are in the current planning
15 to get out into the region, do further assessments. I think
16 most of you know the storms hit, the evacuations happened, and
17 then winter came. So there's a lot of work we need to do once
18 the snow melts, once we're past breakup. So I have pretty
19 robust plans in place to get out there and do further
20 assessments in terms of contamination. You know, there was
21 lots of operated oil tanks, household hazardous materials, all
22 of that and affect a pretty incredible cleanup effort this
23 summer.

24 While we are working with FEMA and other federal agencies
25 to determine what resources are going to be available for

1 permanent housing missions out there to be able to repair and
2 rebuild homes, just anecdotally, we -- the numbers change
3 almost on a daily basis, but we're looking at somewhere around
4 350 homes or households that could be eligible for some
5 programs that the federal government is looking at to build new
6 homes. You know, FEMA doesn't do that. They have a grand
7 program that provides \$44,000 for personal property and another
8 \$44,800 for housing repair. That is certainly not going to be
9 sufficient when we have upwards of 350 homes destroyed.

10 And I think many of you have seen the stories, both the
11 tragedy and the heroism. You know, there were many homes in
12 those communities that watched miles and miles out of the
13 community, either upriver or out into the Bering Sea. Pretty
14 incredible impacts from that typhoon remnant particularly on
15 the -- kind of the extreme southwest coast of the Kuskokwim
16 Delta there. So our agency has been fully involved in that
17 response.

18 April 1st was the beginning of wildfire season, so working
19 with our partners at Division of Forestry and Fire Protection,
20 we are preparing to support you all and them -- and the Alaska
21 Fire Service with our fire season this year. And then spring
22 breakup is coming. We're going to -- we're fixing to -- you
23 know, we're making all the final details and plans to launch
24 our River Watch program. I think you guys are all familiar
25 with that.

1 Partnership between our agency and the National Weather
2 Service, where we fly, you know, primarily the Yukon-Kuskokwim
3 and the Koyukuk River to monitor breakup and the potential for
4 ice jam floods. So all of that is still in play while we are
5 still fully focused on the initial response and recovery mass
6 care services to survivors of the storm from October.

7 In the midst of all that, we've had some pretty
8 significant personnel changes at the division. For those of
9 you who are not familiar with us, we're -- my agency is in the
10 military -- the Department of Military Veterans Affairs. My
11 division is sixty-four positions, full-time positions. We have
12 a handful of vacancies right now, but we've had some
13 significant changes in key positions that affect all of our
14 operations, but specifically with you all in your jurisdictions
15 or with your local emergency planning committees as well.

16 So Rich Hildreth, those of you who knew him, Rich Hildreth
17 retired from the agency in November just, kind of just after
18 the storm happened. And I'm proud, pleased to announce Dave
19 Riley, who is sitting up there with you supporting the
20 association today, was selected. He was the successful
21 candidate to replace Rich as our program manager for the plans
22 section. So Dave is still going to be here with you. He's
23 going to be working with you.

24 JJ Little, again has gone. I think that was the third
25 time he came back and left the agency. He wishes you all well,

1 he moved down to Oklahoma. But to replace JJ, we have moved
2 Kim Barenburg from our mitigation team over to the planning
3 section. That's where Todd Russell, where JJ was, Roy English
4 was there at one point. He's moved to a different area, but
5 Kim Barenburg is there now and she'll be around to support you
6 all in moving into the future as well.

7 Tragically, as we were responding to the storm, one of my
8 very good friends, longtime friends, Al Cavallo passed away
9 around Thanksgiving. He was the program manager for our
10 disaster assistance section. So he oversaw all of our
11 response, or I'm sorry, all of our recovery programs. So the
12 State Individual Assistance Program and our Public Assistance
13 Program. With Al's passing created a pretty significant loss
14 of knowledge, wisdom from our recovery programs. He'd worked
15 with us for over 20 years. That position is still vacant.
16 We're working with the state personnel folks to try to
17 reclassify that position, get it up to a little more pay and
18 get it out there and hired.

19 We're also going to lose, for those of you who know
20 Jonathan Zapa. He is -- he was our senior public official --
21 assistant branch chief, and kind of the second most
22 knowledgeable in our public assistance programs. He is
23 retiring in two weeks, so he's moving on too. So we have a
24 fairly significant gap in some of our senior leadership
25 positions in the agency. I think you all know, we didn't have

1 the meeting obviously in October because of the storm, but
2 Tiffany Peltier has been promoted to the position of division
3 operations manager, working title of Deputy Director for the
4 division. So Tiffany will be your continuity in the future.

5 I think all you -- most of you know I am intending to
6 retire at the end of the administration here. November 30th
7 will be my last day in state service. So I will definitely see
8 you all in the fall meeting or on the fall meeting virtually.
9 But there's going to continue to be some pretty significant
10 changes in the personnel in our agency. I've been doing it a
11 long time, you know, almost thirty-two years. And this has
12 happened regularly over those three decades.

13 I think my assessment would be the team that we have at
14 the division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the
15 team with all of our partners, whether it's DEC and Spill
16 Prevention and Response, or DOT and PF, the Troopers,
17 Department of Public Safety. There is an incredible team out
18 there. You just met a couple from the Division of Forestry and
19 Fire Protection at DNR. You are all in very, very good hands,
20 and I'm comfortable with being able to leave after my thirty
21 years of state service and some federal service before that.

22 There is really a great team put together there, but it's
23 a time of big transition. We're going to be bringing on new
24 talent. It's time for me to go anyway, I'm getting old and
25 cranky. There's people that have much better ideas than I do.

1 So pretty significant changes at the division that will
2 continue throughout the year here as we're trying to -- and I
3 think I said this on Monday, if you were here, we're hiring.
4 We're always hiring. We'll be hiring for more, and there will
5 be a process at some point to find my successor. People have
6 asked me about that, so I'll just share on the record here with
7 you all. My position is partially exempt. It's an appointed
8 position, if you will.

9 So the next administration, the next governor, and the
10 next Adjutant General of the Department of Military and
11 Veterans Affairs will have the say in the pick and who replaces
12 me because it's not a regular position in the classified
13 service. So we won't really have much information to share
14 until we know who wins the election in November. And when that
15 transition team comes on and looks at selecting a new adjutant
16 general, general -- Major General Torrent Saxe, my boss, the
17 head of the military department, he's also retiring. So, he
18 and I are -- are leaving, and it'll be a whole new
19 administration. So I don't know, it's anybody's guess, I think
20 you all know following the gubernatorial election. There's
21 lots of candidates right now, so I don't know where that will
22 go.

23 So outside of that, I did want to just share a couple of
24 things, some news that's going on. Co-chair Vaden already
25 mentioned the fact that in the house, I want to say it's House

1 Bill 263, the operating budget for state fiscal year 27, the
2 House Finance Committee this week did adopt an amendment to
3 restore the \$300,000 in funding for the LEPCs. I've said this
4 to you all plenty of times in the past. Our agency has the
5 budget structure for that money to land in. And our agency has
6 the methodology, the rubric, all of that on how we would
7 allocate that funding to you all as committees in your
8 districts.

9 So that's all there. It never -- that never went away
10 when the funding went away. So we -- our agency is certainly
11 prepared if that amendment makes it through the whole grinder
12 to be able to work with you all to put that money out on the
13 street. Like Tom said, it's got a long ways to go. I mean,
14 the budget is still in House Finance. It's got to get through
15 there. It's got to go to the Senate and Senate Finance. Both
16 bodies have to pass it. The Governor has to sign it. So
17 there's a very, very long way to go to see if that funding is
18 available.

19 I will just say, you know, I've been saying for years, you
20 know, you guys write your legislators, you all have. Amanda
21 talked about all the letters that she shared with you today,
22 and I would say they heard you because they just passed an
23 amendment to restore your funding. So I think that's -- I
24 think I have some optimism there because we haven't seen that
25 in the last few years. So I just say our agency is ready to

1 support that.

2 Last time we met, I talked to you and I've been talking to
3 you all throughout the last year. There's still a great period
4 of uncertainty with federal funding, where that's going to go.
5 And I'll just share again for this group, last year when the
6 administration came on and they had the temporary, the acting
7 administrator of FEMA canceled the Building Resilient
8 Infrastructure and Communities grant program, the pre-disaster
9 integration program that FEMA has. So canceled all projects
10 that were underway from previous fiscal years. And we're not
11 planning to administer new funding for the -- for future
12 federal fiscal years in that program.

13 There were many lawsuits about that particular move with
14 canceling the existing programs and not providing opportunities
15 to all of us to apply for future fiscal years. I think it was
16 three court orders in total at the end of the day, told FEMA
17 they couldn't do that. And they had to restore the program
18 last year and continue to make that program accessible to us in
19 the future.

20 So, two weeks ago, they announced it was back from last
21 year, all those programs, the grants that were canceled in the
22 state were back on. And then just last week, we received the
23 notice of funding opportunity for federal fiscal years 24 and
24 25 for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities
25 Mitigation grant program. There is \$1 billion nationwide

1 across those two federal fiscal years for that program.

2 You'll hear from our team from Garrett Brooks and our
3 state Hazard Mitigation Officer and the mitigation team on the
4 further announcement notice that the funding is availability
5 and will be accepting applications for that program. Specific
6 to the work that you all do in your -- as planning
7 organizations in your communities, the development and funding
8 of local hazard mitigation plans is not an allowable activity
9 in this BRIC. This next two years' BRIC cycle. So that's
10 unfortunate. We relied pretty heavily on the BRIC program.
11 And prior to that, the pre-disaster mitigation grant program,
12 PDM, to support that hazard mitigation planning effort.

13 So that's not an eligible expense for us for federal
14 fiscal year 24 and 25. But I think it's good news. They --
15 you know, the courts have clearly said Congress has
16 appropriated -- authorized the program and appropriated funding
17 to it. So you have to administer the programs as Congress
18 appropriated and authorized.

19 So there's still a significant amount of talk on reform in
20 every instance, and that includes mitigation for our disaster,
21 our federal disaster from the fall DR-4893. The president
22 denied the Governor's request for the Hazard Mitigation Grant
23 program, which is the post-disaster mitigation funding from
24 FEMA. That's been denied. And every request from every
25 governor or tribal government that asked for help in this last

1 year, the president has denied across the board that program.

2 We've been told that FEMA is working on -- internally on
3 reforming their mitigation programs completely both the pre-
4 disaster and the post-disaster. But that's still a concern,
5 right? We're not getting access to that funding that's
6 critical to make our communities more resilient. So we'll see
7 where that goes, but I am optimistic, at least BRIC is back for
8 now. So we'll see how that goes.

9 Just this morning, the White House dumped a whole bunch of
10 fact sheets. So if you haven't seen them yet, I mean, it just
11 happened this morning for the president's proposed federal
12 fiscal year 27 budget. So if you ever follow that stuff, the
13 administrations usually drops what they call a skinny budget,
14 not a lot of detail in it. And our legislative folks in DC dug
15 through it this morning. There is a proposed, I think it's 1.3
16 or \$1.6 billion reduction in FEMA grant programs in that
17 proposal. I'll just share with you, that happens in every
18 administration. It doesn't matter what party. That's pretty
19 typical that the skinny budget that is proposed has some
20 proposed reductions to FEMA's grant programs or the Department
21 of Homeland Security's grant programs. So not time to panic
22 yet. That's pretty standard. And obviously Congress has the
23 power of the person and they typically change that and restore
24 it back to, you know, the previous year's levels.

25 We are still struggling on many aspects with FEMA and the

1 grant programs that we have, particularly the Emergency
2 Management Performance Grant and the State Homeland Security
3 Grant program in getting that funding out the door and to us so
4 we can get it out to all of you who have applied for that
5 funding. The current shutdown and the federal funding shutdown
6 of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is the latest cause
7 for delay in getting that funding moving.

8 We were -- until last week, we were unable to access
9 FEMA's grant program. I have a program called FEMA GO, FEMA
10 Grant Outcomes, and that's the -- where we do all of our grant
11 administration with them. And it was turned off when the
12 shutdown happened. So they've turned that system back on, but
13 by and large the FEMA workforce is furloughed, so we have no
14 access to working with our partners on the grant side to get
15 that money moving.

16 And I talked about this Monday a bit. There is still the
17 FEMA review Council report is still out there in the world
18 being worked on. The president extended the timeline to have
19 that report delivered to him till May 29th. So that's the
20 second or third time it's been extended. It was supposed to be
21 delivered in November, then December, and then it was extended
22 to March. And now with the new Secretary of Homeland Security
23 coming on board, Secretary Markwayne Mullin. We just believe
24 they're giving him a chance to take a look at the
25 recommendations that were developed through that.

1 They said this Monday as well, no matter what that
2 recommendation report says, many significant, they call it
3 Reforms to FEMA or the National Emergency Management System is
4 going to require congressional action. So just because the
5 report comes out with recommendations, there's going to be a
6 lot of things that are going to have to go through the
7 legislative process. And so, I'm not sure, you know, there's
8 rumors that there's going to be a proposal to reduce the FEMA
9 workforce by fifty percent significant changes to FEMA in that
10 respect. All rumors now until we see the real report, but
11 Congress is the one that's going to have to take a lot of
12 action on that.

13 So I'm not as worried as I was last year about these
14 changes because in all my time on Capitol Hill talking to our
15 delegation and other members of Congress and folks on
16 committees, they clearly have the jurisdiction to make some of
17 these changes if they're recommended. And it's unlikely that a
18 lot of those would happen. Congress moves slow or something
19 like forty-eight different committees or subcommittees that
20 have jurisdiction over FEMA. So you can imagine the fights
21 just on Capitol Hill in terms of jurisdiction for authorizing
22 and appropriating committees.

23 So I have been told pretty clearly by our delegation and
24 others that it doesn't look like a lot of change is going to
25 happen to FEMA this year because it's -- they're in the middle

1 of a midterm election. So those of you that were following
2 H4669, the FEMA Act, the Fixing Emergency Management for
3 America Act which was reported favorably out of the House
4 Transportation and Infrastructure Committee a few months ago,
5 it's unlikely that that's going to get significant action just
6 because it's a midterm election year.

7 So in terms of big reform and future reform of the
8 national system and the agency itself. We're not sure that
9 there's going to be a lot that's going to happen this year just
10 because it's an election year in Capitol Hill. So, I would
11 still encourage all of you even if Reform does not happen,
12 there is an appetite very much from Congress, from this
13 administration to shift the burden and the responsibility and
14 the resource requirements to us at the state and local level.

15 So, still, I encourage you as you're working with your
16 elected officials and your legislative bodies to keep having
17 that conversation. I mean, there's a very real chance within a
18 decade that we are going to have to take care of ourself with
19 much less federal funding available. So that's something we
20 all need to continue to plan for.

21 If we get less federally declared disasters, if we get
22 less funding on the Homeland Security or emergency management
23 performance side, now's the time for us to prepare for taking
24 care of ourselves with our own dollars, which is going to be
25 difficult for all of us. But that's still a conversation

1 that's happening. Whether it happens today or not, or this
2 year or not, is one thing. But I still think that's the talk
3 in DC is wanting to shift some of that burden and
4 responsibility and financial responsibility to us. So that's
5 still going to be a challenge for all of us to address in the
6 future.

7 As always, if you're seeing this stuff on LinkedIn or
8 you're hearing about these reports and things from Congress, I
9 know many of you work with the International Association of
10 Emergency Managers, but I'm always happy. If you guys have
11 questions or concerns about things that you're hearing about in
12 DC or with the delegation and all, please, give me a call,
13 shoot me an email. I'm happy to dig into it for you if you
14 want additional information. And if I can get any insight
15 while I'm still around, I'm happy to try to do that for you.

16 I think I'll leave it at that. I know that was a lot.
17 Since this is our last in-person meeting, I just want to say to
18 each of you, thank you for your friendship. And I mean, maybe
19 I should blame you all because I am the way I am because of all
20 of you. You've all taught me so much. You all have been not
21 only friends, but you've been peers and mentors to me in my 30-
22 year career here.

23 So I just want to say on behalf of the whole division, but
24 myself personally, as I'm looking to move on, thank you for
25 what you do for the state and for your communities. It

1 absolutely is a partnership. And I feel like we at the state
2 really are just here to support you. You are -- you and your
3 folks are the ones that are doing all the real work. And I
4 can't thank you enough for everything that you've done. So
5 take care of our staff. They are a great team. I will
6 certainly be here on the virtual meeting in the fall, but I
7 just want to take time on here in-person to thank each and
8 every one of you for your friendship and your support over the
9 last 30 years, some of you. So thank you.

10 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Thank you, Bryan. And thank you for your
11 service again.

12 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Next up is the Department of
13 Environmental Conservation, Spill Prevention and Response. Ms.
14 Kathy Shea.

15 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, SPILL PREVENTION AND
16 RESPONSE

17 MS. SHEA: Good morning, everybody. Again, Kathy Shea
18 with DEC. I hate following Bryan because I always have a much
19 shorter update for you. We did provide some written updates in
20 the binder that you already received. But I did want to
21 highlight a couple things. As Bryan mentioned, we were -- we
22 participated in the Halong response as a department. So every
23 division in DEC, Air Quality Spill Prevention and Response,
24 Environmental Health and Division of Water, all participated in
25 that response and continue to do so and will continue to do so.

1 And then the big thing I wanted to mention today is that
2 we're excited to introduce a new home heating oil tank response
3 funding opportunity. The fiscal year 26 state budget included
4 a one-time appropriation of \$450,000 to assist with home
5 heating oil cleanup. The intent of the funding is to assist as
6 many different homeowners as possible to reach site cleanup
7 under our regulations by eliminating response delay as caused
8 by funding limitations.

9 So available funding per owner per property ranges from
10 13,000 to \$17,000 per -- depending on the geographic location
11 and the proximity to the road system. We've already put the
12 funding to use. We've awarded fifteen -- we've awarded funding
13 to homeowners -- to fifteen homeowners, including one in
14 Nikiski was our first one, and then a few following the heavy
15 snow fall in Southeast in late December and January.

16 And so I really would appreciate your assistance with
17 getting the word out that this funding is available.
18 Homeheatingoil tanks.alaska.gov brings you right to the website
19 and the application. And I also have a few flyers that we put
20 together that has a QR code to the site as well as the
21 conditions that must be met in order for a homeowner to qualify
22 for the funding.

23 And honestly, that's all I have. I have a couple extra if
24 you want to take to hang up at your -- wherever you hang up
25 notices in your community where most people see them. But you

1 can also print them directly. Reach out to me with questions.

2 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Thank you. Are those flyers in PDF form?
3 I mean, can you get them through the internet?

4 MS. SHEA: Yes. They are in PDF and you can print them
5 directly from our website.

6 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Anybody else have some questions for
7 Kathy?

8 MR. HANKINS: Kathy, can I have you confirm that website
9 address again?

10 MS. SHEA: Yes. It's homeheatingoil tanks.alaska.gov.

11 MR. HANKINS: Thank you very much.

12 MS. SHEA: You're welcome.

13 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Next up is a presentation on lithium-
14 ion batteries. And I'll stand for who's going to be doing that
15 and their name.

16 PRESENTATION ON LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES FIRES

17 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Hey all, I am Torri Huelskoetter. I'm
18 with the EPA based here in Anchorage. I am on-scene
19 coordinator. To kind of give a brief explanation of that, I do
20 emergency response. So I'm currently the federal on-scene
21 coordinator for the Doyon Rig 26 tip over. So, I respond to
22 releases of hazardous substances and discharges of oil that
23 threaten waters of the U.S. Also, on a larger scale respond to
24 things like the -- any household hazardous waste cleanup of the
25 Maui wildfires, the California wildfires. So I can be deployed

1 nationally, but I'm based here in Anchorage.

2 I want to talk to you guys today about lithium-ion battery
3 fires and everything that we've learned over the years,
4 especially responding to Maui and California and all the
5 electric vehicles and the lithium-ion batteries that are stored
6 in, like you know, solar powers, solar power banks and things
7 like that. And just everyday household items and the dangers
8 they pose and the resources available to communities.

9 Also preface by saying, I am not the Region 10 expert. We
10 do have an expert. If you have any follow-up questions
11 regarding this topic, I can get you in touch with him. Also
12 Liza Sandin with NOAA, the scientific support coordinator was
13 supposed to be here, but she's doing shoreline cleanup
14 assessment work at a oil spill in Louisiana. So I'm going to
15 do my best to present her information. But her contact
16 information is in the presentation. If you have any follow-up
17 questions for her, she's much better at this than me.

18 And then I'll also provide some available resources for
19 lithium-ion battery fire response. We have a whole guide that
20 was put together by EPA that's available publicly online, along
21 with a number of other resources. I will be presenting with
22 our expert at the statewide firefighters convention or council
23 in September in Kenai. I'll be -- we'll be going down there
24 and providing a very brief overview of our two-day class that
25 we do offer. We have a full two-day class to offer to fire

1 departments or anybody who does hazmat response kind of work,
2 because these fires are not like normal fires. There's a lot
3 more that go into them. They're a lot scarier for a number of
4 different reasons.

5 So our plan is to go down there in September, provide an
6 overview of our training, and then we're going to reach out to
7 whoever, like local communities. We're talking about doing
8 kind of a road show doing the two-day class -- full two-day
9 class in like Fairbanks, Anchorage maybe Juneau and any other
10 communities that are interested in this training for their
11 response personnel.

12 I don't -- how many people in the room are familiar with
13 the term thermal runaway?

14 (No audible response).

15 Okay. So that's when a lithium-ion battery can be damaged
16 either overcharging, dropping or overheating, overcharging, and
17 then it causes a chemical reaction that causes it to continue
18 to overheat, which can cause the venting of toxic gases, smoke,
19 fire and potentially explosion. We saw these things on a large
20 scale with the Genius fire or Genius Star Fire on the cargo
21 ship and then also -- in -- that was 2024, and the Morning
22 Midas in 2025.

23 What makes these things really scary is the fact that they
24 cannot be put out and there's -- thermal runaway can happen.
25 If you can drop -- like we have a lot of DeWalt batteries at

1 our house from all of our tools, right? You drop -- how many
2 times you drop those or your phone, right? And that can cause
3 a thermal runaway to happen, but it can be triggered days,
4 weeks, months, even years later. And so that's one of the
5 other -- that's one of the big scary parts about these, is you
6 never know when that's going to happen and how to approach
7 that. So I'm trying to bring awareness to that.

8 So we're going to touch briefly on some of the hazards
9 associated with lithium-ion battery fires, toxic gases, scene
10 management. We're going to talk real briefly about post
11 incident actions, and then we'll also touch briefly on battery
12 -- thank you so much. Battery energy storage systems, the
13 large best systems, which we are starting to get an increasing
14 number around the state, and a lot of our response personnel in
15 the local communities don't know how to effectively and safely
16 respond to these. And that's part of why we're going to the
17 fire conference because we want to keep our responders safe and
18 our communities safe. And these fires do, especially the
19 larger best systems present a significant community potential
20 impact. And so we'll look into community air monitoring as
21 well. Sorry, I've got my notes in like several different
22 places, so just bear with me on some of this and Liza's notes
23 for her presentation.

24 Hey, that works. Okay. So your typical hazards, you have
25 your typical firefighting hazards, slips, trips, falls,

1 crushing. The hazards associated with batteries, you get
2 potential electrocution, thermal burns and explosions, and I
3 mean, like actual legitimate explosions. It can cause
4 electrocution when they're damaged. So you want to be careful
5 about checking voltage if it's safe to do so. During a runaway
6 intense heat and fire can cause burns and those can also be
7 related to the hazardous gases. And then again, the explosion
8 and fragments of batteries and projectiles, but we'll get into
9 a little bit more of that here.

10 So these are the four -- the top chemical hazards that are
11 associated with lithium-ion battery fires. You have the list.
12 We'll go into a little bit more detail on the top four gases
13 and hazards that are released and vapors during a fire. But
14 this is not your typical fire and it needs to be approached
15 differently than a normal fire. And one of the things to
16 really be aware of is that a lot of these gases and vapors are
17 given off before there's an actual fire. That's called an off-
18 gassing event. So once it starts going into thermal runaway,
19 it'll start off gassing before there's a fire. So the
20 immediate hazard -- there's an immediate hazard right there
21 before the fire to be aware of.

22 So hydrogen gas is the most common gas that's given off
23 from a lithium-ion battery fire, particularly hazardous in
24 enclosed spaces. There was a best fire and I think a surprise
25 Arizona in which there was off-gassing and thermal runaway

1 event in a best system and it created a lot of hydrogen in the
2 container that it was in. They opened up the door allowing
3 oxygen in and it created a massive explosion and killed or
4 injured two firefighters. I have more on that.

5 And then carbon monoxide, second most generated gas. And it's
6 outside of sensor operating levels. So that's really
7 concerning that you can't get an accurate reading on your
8 sensors on that. I think most fire departments wear like some
9 kind of personal sensor, but there is cross sensitivities with
10 some of the gases and vapors that are given off along like with
11 oxygen with their sensors. So that's another complicating
12 factor.

13 Again, you got to be aware of gas buildup in enclosed
14 spaces, don't stand down wind. Sorry, making sure I'm keeping
15 up on these. And then hydrogen fluoride, which is toxic and
16 corrosive, pretty gnarly stuff. Can be very, very hazardous.
17 And then lithium hexafluorophosphate which is a toxic and
18 corrosive liquid that's found inside the battery in the
19 electrolyte solution. So if there's any damages to the
20 batteries, that can leak out and become a hazard as well during
21 a response.

22 And this is not just best systems, this is any lithium-ion
23 battery. That's important to keep in mind. We're not talking
24 about just the large battery systems, but any of your
25 household, like our -- you know, anything rechargeable

1 batteries that's a lithium-ion battery. If you're using off-
2 brand charging stations or cables, you know, if you ever used a
3 cheap cord, you found off Amazon to charge your phone and then
4 it gets too hot, that's concerning, you know, and how many
5 times you've dropped them and things like that, you know, that
6 can cause damage. And so any of these things can be released
7 from a lithium-ion battery no matter the size, no matter where
8 it's at.

9 Metal particulates that are given off are also a serious
10 concern. During the Maui response we had our people in PPE,
11 they would go around to these vehicles that were burnt beyond a
12 crisp. You couldn't barely recognize them for what they were.
13 And those, even though the vehicle itself and the batteries
14 were unrecognizable they still held a charge. And they could
15 still be explosive and they could still go into thermal runaway
16 even after it's been burnt to a crisp. It only takes 140
17 degrees for lithium-ion battery to be thermally insulted, which
18 is what we call it when it's potential for thermal runaway. So
19 even if something hasn't been touched by the fire, but it's
20 been exposed to 140 degrees or more, there's a potential for
21 thermal insult and thermal runaway.

22 And we did some testing. We had our responders going
23 through and helping them with the cleanup wearing personal air
24 sampling. And so they were wearing it all day. We found a lot
25 of metal particulates, and those are, we'll talk about it a

1 little bit later incredibly, hard to decontaminate out of your
2 gear, out of your FR and out of anything that is porous. So
3 that comes with you, that comes -- like for a lot of
4 firefighters who've responded to these fires, it goes back to,
5 you know, the shop. And it's incredibly, like I said, hard to
6 effectively decontaminate the metal particulates out of porous
7 material.

8 And then it's also in -- you know, it's going in through
9 the smoke and you can have metal particulates scattered, you
10 know, however far from these. And if they keep -- if you're
11 not able to accurately or adequately decontaminate, then you're
12 getting more and more metals into your PPE and higher
13 concentrations and higher exposures.

14 So lithium-ion battery fires are different from normal
15 fires because they release toxic gases and create hazardous
16 atmospheres that most responders aren't used to responding to.
17 They burn at higher temperatures, they burn without oxygen.
18 They just -- consistently, that's that thermal runaway. They
19 consistently increase the heat inside those cells and it's a
20 domino effect because you usually have more than one cell in
21 there. So if one cell gets impacted, the other cells are going
22 to become thermally insulted and go into thermal runaway. And
23 it's a domino effect on that. So you can't smother these.
24 These also cannot be put out with water.

25 There is literally no way right now to put out a lithium-

1 ion battery fire. Sometimes you just have to let it burn, but
2 you can use water to cool it off, but you got to make sure
3 you're going around the heat shield, if it's in an electric
4 vehicle because if you're just spraying water on it, you're
5 just creating, you know, fire water runoff and other potential
6 problems. So you can't smother it. You can't use like one of
7 the fire retirement blankets that people sometimes put on. It
8 might help, but not much. High explosive potential --

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Helps with exposures.

10 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Yes, it helps with exposures. High
11 explosive potential, again, thermal runaway. And then re-
12 ignition, like I said, thermal runaway even after a fire, it
13 can catch back on fire. And there's no timeline on that at
14 all. So with working with Anchorage fire department, they've
15 learned that if you have an electric vehicle fire and it gets
16 picked up and towed away, they need to follow that in their
17 firetruck back to wherever it's being stored and make sure it's
18 stored far away from everything else in the facility, and make
19 sure that it doesn't catch on fire in transit back over to
20 where it's at or where it's being stored after the fire.

21 Briefly touch on air monitoring. This is one of those
22 things where I wanted to bring EPA's air monitoring abilities.
23 So if there is a lithium-ion battery fire and you call us, we
24 can help provide assistance on air monitoring. That's one of
25 the things that my -- me and my team up here would do. There's

1 two on scene coordinators for the entire state. So you want
2 to keep that in mind. But if there's also -- after a large
3 lithium-ion battery fire, we can help assess for any metal
4 contamination in the area, in the community and things like
5 that. But we'll look at -- yes, we're serving environments,
6 determine personal health and safety measures, establish hot
7 zones and evaluating the potential for exposures to the
8 community.

9 So your firefighting tactics can influence how to address
10 your air monitoring. If water water's used for fire
11 suppression, you want a localized air monitoring plan, so just
12 nearby to look, evaluate responder safety. And then again,
13 sometimes the best -- the most -- counterintuitive, but the
14 best approach is just to let it burn. And if you do that, you
15 want a community-wide air monitoring event. So we have roving
16 and stationary air monitoring that we can set up to try and
17 assist with determining if there needs to be a shelter in place
18 or evacuation because of a lithium-ion battery fire.

19 So during smaller fires or when we do a removal of
20 hazardous material, cleanup, perimeter air monitoring, some of
21 the most common stuff that we use is for gas meter, PAD with a
22 HCN sensor, or commonly known as an area ray. We have an acid
23 gas meter, SPM flex. Particulate monitor is your dust track
24 and then any specific air sampling equipment for metal
25 analysis.

1 Sorry, SPM flex is the most common used for HF. There's
2 also the dragger, and again, this is not my specific area of
3 expertise, so if you have any questions about this, I don't
4 know the answer, but I can absolutely -- I'm a coordinator,
5 it's my job to coordinate. I can get you the answers. I will
6 figure that out. But this is -- again, this was Liza's bread
7 and butter over here.

8 So yes, like most fires come, trying to figure out what's
9 in the smoke can be very difficult, especially when you're in a
10 firefighting response. You've got a few other things that are
11 on your mind, but that's definitely one of them. But you -- we
12 have things like ALOHA, will touch base on air monitoring and a
13 little more depth with plume modeling in Liza's stuff. But
14 usually a typical public statement consistent with an
15 industrial fire is appropriate for a battery fire. So,
16 anything you would send out for a public statement, if you had
17 any class or Tier II reporting facility that might catch fire,
18 you know, you can send out a similar public statement for
19 concerns about community safety.

20 Scene management, post-incident action overview. So
21 again, assessing public exposure and responder exposure. These
22 are some of the challenges that we face. PPE contamination,
23 assessment of battery integrity, because, you know, most
24 firefighters aren't also electricians. And the shipment of
25 damaged batteries is incredibly convoluted. Trying to dispose

1 of these things is a serious challenge because there's a lot
2 of regulations, shipping regulations about shipping damaged --
3 they're called DDR, Damaged, Defective, or Recall batteries,
4 which are batteries that are at a potential thermal runaway
5 state.

6 In Maui, it was in -- it -- we went through so many
7 iterations of trying to figure out how to make them not
8 batteries, is what we called it. And it ended up taking them,
9 putting them in a electrolyte brine solution for seven days
10 taking them out of that and then crushing them with a roller
11 and even after that, they still had a charge and were off
12 gassing. And then putting -- after they were brined crushed
13 and then put into containers, they were still off gassing. So
14 we had to create vent system to allow them to safely,
15 continuously off gas. And so we were trying to turn them into
16 not batteries, to ship them off the island to find a place to
17 dispose of them. It's usually a recycling facility on
18 mainland.

19 There's a couple of lithium-ion battery recycling
20 facilities in the Lower 48. So it would be pretty much the
21 same thing up here. Like, how would we get rid of them? How
22 do we follow the DOT regs? So this is something we talked
23 about with the Genius Star too, because we had those giant
24 battery packs on there that was damaged going into thermal
25 runaway. And how do we get them out? You know, do we take

1 them off? Do we take them in and not batteries? Where do we
2 do that? You know, it's incredibly complicated up here. So
3 talking about destruction, disposal, recycling capability,
4 these are some of the usual issues. You know, some -- it's
5 pretty much the same stuff we always deal with, right? How do
6 we dispose of has waste up here and things like that. You
7 know, it's not challenges we're familiar with, but different.
8 Same but different.

9 The biggest change from typical levels of PPE is your
10 flame-retardant clothing and coveralls. What we ended up doing
11 in California after we learned everything we did about in Maui,
12 is we had two levels of FR coveralls. And the first level was
13 disposable. So that way the PPE could -- you could just take
14 off that first layer and throw it away. So we had disposable
15 FR coveralls that all of our electric vehicle or our EV
16 lithium-ion battery team wore.

17 Your site footprint. The ERG guide 147 is your best guide
18 to damaged batteries. Again, you want to store them very far
19 away from each other. Like every single one of these buckets I
20 think has like one battery in it. And then I think it also had
21 sand in it. Because again, if you store them close by, you're
22 going to get that propagation of thermal runaway from one to
23 the other to the other, which is not fun.

24 Again, provide space, secure storage. You want to make
25 sure it's monitored 24/7. So in case there is any reignition

1 from thermal runaway, it can be addressed immediately and
2 safely. This is one of our packages in Maui for batteries that
3 were no longer batteries. The not batteries that were still
4 being problematic. You want to avoid any, you know, rainwater
5 and clearly label. And again, if you end up in a position
6 where you need to store and dispose of damaged batteries, just
7 ask for help. Go, reach out to DOT. I could connect you with
8 other -- our EPA experts who have done this before. It's very
9 complicated. So, yes.

10 Again, decons -- dry self-decon is usually sufficient.
11 Your porous materials may need wet decon, but again, those
12 metal particulates really get into anything porous. And that's
13 one of the conversations we've had with other fire departments
14 in region ten. How are you handling decontaminating your
15 turnout gear? Again, if disposable PPE is unavailable, you
16 want to make sure that you're not taking that contaminated
17 turnout out of the hot zone if possible. You don't want to be
18 bringing that stuff back to where you live, eat, and sleep.
19 Again, my notes for this one say it's complicated, get help.
20 That's the easiest and best way I can put this. It's -- I have
21 never had it personally do this. I know I will at some point,
22 but it is extremely convoluted and very difficult, so.....

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: A little cheap.

24 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Oh, yes, so cheap. So we're going to
25 jump into battery energy storage systems here real quick. I'm

1 sure everybody's become more and more familiar with those.
2 They're now -- they're everywhere. They're popping up more and
3 more and more. And I would assume that a lot of like hospitals
4 and major facilities are going to start gravitating towards
5 best systems for their backup energy rather than fuel and
6 things like that. And it's really important to -- for
7 responders especially, and for community members to know where
8 those are at. But there's not really a system in place to keep
9 track of them right now. So that's kind of unnerving. I know
10 that there's multiple databases of where we have systems now
11 where we know, but how current is that? You know, how are they
12 getting that information? And is it always accurate? Is --
13 but it it's one of those -- I think it's -- yes,

14 MR. RHEIN: (Indiscernible - away from the mic) the small
15 versions that are in the remote cabins all over the place in
16 small version of this.

17 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Yes, exactly. And I was going to touch
18 on that too, because it's not only -- if lithium-ion batteries
19 are now starting to replace even like ATV batteries remote
20 cabin locations, there's marine batteries. So can you imagine
21 having one of these fires out on your boat? I mean, you're
22 pretty hosted.

23 MR. RHEIN: Or in the harbor.

24 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Or in the harbor. I mean, again, yet
25 genius star.

1 MR. RHEIN: (Indiscernible - simultaneous speech) way.

2 MS. HUELSKOETTER: You've had way more experience with
3 this than I think you would like. But yes, they're scary.
4 They're incredibly scary. They seem like such a great
5 alternative, but are they? Like, I'm not loving it. So that's
6 right. Yes. So Surprise Arizona 2019, we had a -- so you can
7 see the uptick as we get more and more. And I'm not sure of
8 the regulation, how close it monitors these, but, you know, if
9 you get more people creating them, I think we are getting more
10 overseas creation of battery -- lithium ion battery systems and
11 best systems, you know, you have less regulation on those. And
12 you get more and more failure events. Like they seem like a
13 really great option on the surface, but when you look at all of
14 the hazards included with them, it's not the best.

15 So in China, in 2021, two firefighters were killed from a
16 shopping mall. A battery -- a lithium iron phosphate battery
17 in a shopping mall. Again, Surprise, Arizona, there were
18 lithium manganese cobalt battery ESS that -- it was two years
19 old, caught fire and exploded in a defecation event. Chandler,
20 Arizona in 2022, the system was installed in 2019. And that
21 one resulted in a quarter-mile evacuation. And again, these
22 have sprinkler systems, but that's not going to put out the
23 fire. That's like the number one thing I can tell you is that
24 water will not put these out. Again, Genstar and Midas, the
25 Morning Midas, they used their entire fire suppression system

1 on these batteries and it did little to nothing.

2 Moss Landing in California, 2022. That one prompted a day
3 long shelter in place advisory for the near nearby community.
4 And they just had to allow the unit to burn out and have the
5 community shelter in place, stay inside. Yes.

6 MR. HANKINS: The bottom graph on the left doesn't make
7 sense to my brain. It is saying that newer systems have a
8 higher probability. Is that because once it's made it past a
9 certain time, like clearly they were made right or we just like
10 don't have that many that actually make it to a very long
11 lifespan?

12 MS. HUELSKOETTER: I don't know that we don't. I think
13 it's also in correlation with how many more are being
14 manufactured and where they're being manufactured and those
15 regulations under those manufacturing. Like I think this also
16 just has to do with, you know, if you test more, you're going
17 to have more results. Well, we have a lot more best systems,
18 so we're having a lot more failures. And I don't know -- we
19 don't know exactly why that is. If it's due to shortcuts in
20 the manufacturing, if it's due to, you know, damage and transit
21 that wasn't -- was unidentified, and then they were installed,
22 and again, that thermal runaway can kick in who knows how long.

23 MR. RHEIN: Can it be due to reporting?

24 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Huh?

25 MR. RHEIN: Can it be due to reporting? (Indiscernible --

1 away from the mic).

2 MS. HUELSKOETTER: It might be reporting.

3 MR. RHEIN: Causation is not always clear.

4 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Yes. it could be due to a number of
5 reasons. We're just not, we don't have a good read on why
6 we're having so many more other than there being more
7 implemented, more and more. But yes, I don't have a good
8 answer for that.

9 MR. HANKINS: Because I mean, what it says to me right
10 there is that you can kind of get past a danger threshold and
11 it'll work longer, but also, how long have we been having it as
12 widely used and maybe we're just don't have the data yet.

13 MS. HUELSKOETTER: That is also a distinct possibility.
14 So I wanted to touch a little bit more on the Moss Landing in
15 January 2025. That happened right around the same time as the
16 -- or right after -- a couple days after the Palisades and
17 Eaton fire. It burned for over two days and had a second flare
18 up a month later. Yes. Toxic smoke, evacuation of 1500
19 people. The highway closed a mile, the 101 was closed a mile
20 north and a mile south. And then at some points, residents
21 sheltered in place due to the potential toxic atmosphere. And
22 that cleanup is still underway at Moss Landing. EPA is still
23 overseeing that. They're having to go through the entire
24 system and make them not batteries and monitor them. And it's
25 still an ongoing, so these things are very, very large

1 undertakings as a response goes.

2 MR. FOLSOM: Highway 1.

3 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Highway 101?

4 MR. FOLSOM: No.

5 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Oh, was it one?

6 MR. FOLSOM: I was there.

7 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Oh, shit.

8 MR. FOLSOM: So I was in -- last time I was in the county
9 (Indiscernible -- away from the mic), but Highway 1 is the most
10 scenic route up the coast and it shut down tourist traffic all
11 the way to San Francisco.

12 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Yes.

13 MR. FOLSOM: Yes. We almost evacuated (Indiscernible --
14 away from the mic).

15 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Well, that makes me think a lot, and
16 we'll get into plume modeling a little bit about the Best
17 Systems we have in Anchorage, like the Chetak Electric best
18 system that's like right in Midtown next to the airport, to --
19 you know, it's very centrally located. Do they -- what are
20 their safety precautions? Do they know how to safely respond
21 to this? I know I've talked to Anchorage Fire Department and
22 they're not super sure on how to approach bigger fires like
23 these from Best Systems. So it's one of the things that we're
24 going to be working with them on.

25 MR. FOLSOM: The response Fire Department had little

1 knowledge on.....

2 MS. HUELSKOETTER: Yes.

3 MR. FOLSOM:this type of incident at that facility.
4 And I felt there was a lack of communication from the facility
5 battery manufacturers to tell us what actually is being
6 delivered. I know we've come a long way. We have the staff.
7 They couldn't get that.

8 MS. HUELSKOETTER: I mean, during the Maui fires, we were
9 asking Tesla and other EV producers for assistance, and they
10 had none. They were kind of watching over our shoulders being
11 like, what are they doing? How's that going? Like, you know,
12 learning about the cross sensitivities in our air monitoring
13 equipment, not a fun way to learn that in real time.

14 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Could you wrap this up? We're pushing
15 time.

16 MS. HUELSKOETTER: So sorry. So tactical considerations,
17 it is incredibly nuanced. Usually again, it's the best to just
18 let it burn. So I won't go into that. Here is the helpful
19 links. And if you guys have any questions, you can find me and
20 I will get you whatever. But if you literally just, you know,
21 Google EPA lithium-ion battery response guide, it'll take you
22 to this site and there are a plethora of documents on it and
23 all -- again, all publicly available.

24 We'll jump into Liza's stuff real quick. Again, available
25 to replace any lead and acid batteries. So again, we're

1 looking at remote cabins, boats, ATVs. And the other primary
2 concern, there's a lack of awareness on where anything smaller
3 than a Best System is located. So -- and then if you're in a
4 remote community, do you -- do they know that that's a
5 different kind of battery? That that's, you know, a different
6 kind of danger that those present and how to respond? I mean,
7 they're just going to treat it like normal fire and put water
8 on it. And they're not going to know how to safely protect
9 themselves, especially as they're talking about bringing Best
10 Systems into rural communities across the state makes me
11 nervous.

12 So these are different batteries. We -- the smallest that
13 we know of right now, Best System is in Kwig and the largest is
14 in Soldotna. That is a map there on the left of all the Best
15 Systems that we know of in the state as of February. But
16 again, they can be in your home, off-grid power, all of that.

17 So this plume, this is a plume modeling, this is Galena.
18 Note that there's -- I can't see it really well, but there's a
19 curved building just east of the plume that's an assisted
20 living home. And the school is located just to the north of
21 the Best. Wind direction, you know, can vary depending on time
22 of year and weather. But if you'd like plume modeling
23 assistance, you can reach out to -- you can go through ALOHA
24 and EPA and/or NOAA would be happy to try and help provide that
25 plume modeling. It's never perfect, but it's better than

1 nothing.

2 You know, the models are run with ALOHA using gas
3 production, but values per kilowatt hour. It does not affect
4 for the -- the models don't account for the effect of the fire.
5 And again, it's important to remember that off-gassing happens
6 early on in the thermal runaway and in the response. So, if
7 you're not doing the plume modeling within the first like
8 twenty, thirty minutes, it may not be, but if it's a larger
9 best system and it's an ongoing fire, the plume modeling will
10 be helpful.

11 Sorry. Gas production by battery type. The hazard symbol
12 refers to when vapor levels are at an immediate hazard level.
13 For hydrogen, it's the LEL for HF. This refers to the AEGL,
14 which is the acute exposure guideline level for ten minutes of
15 exposure. These define thresholds for acute HF gas exposure
16 determined by the CDC. So an AEGL of one is one ppm, and
17 that's just discomfort, two is serious, irreversible, and then
18 three is life threatening. So this just gives you an idea of
19 the potential hazards for even just one battery and the
20 kilowatt hours and how hazardous it can be. Okay. Last one.

21 So, this is the start of the conversations and as these
22 become more common throughout rural Alaska, we want to bring
23 this to awareness and start these conversations. And again,
24 like I said, EPA has a two-day class. We are offering and
25 we're trying to get to the hubs. So as we get out to like

1 Fairbanks or Juneau, Anchorage, as we're able to do that,
2 depending on our budget, which, you know, is up in the air a
3 lot, we'll try and reach out to the LEPCs and see if -- what
4 kind of coordination we can get because We'd like to bring
5 awareness to as many communities as possible.

6 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Thank you very much. Let's take a 15-
7 minute break. Stretch your legs.

8 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Go ahead, Amanda -- Aviva.

9 MS. AVIVA: No problem. Hi, everyone. Aviva Braun,
10 National Weather Service. I just want to add Weather Service
11 falls under the umbrella of NOAA and the plume models that she
12 was just speaking about are really detailed and very good and
13 speak directly to the chemicals that are released. Weather
14 Service under the umbrella of NOAA can issue a high split model
15 plume runs really quickly as a first guess, and then NOAA can
16 do the more elaborate in-depth version through Liza. So I just
17 want to put that out there, that Weather Service has the
18 capabilities to produce something really quickly at first that
19 is non-chemical specific.

20 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Thank you.

21 MS. AVIVA: Yes.

22 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Be back at 20 after.

23 (Off the record)

24 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Next up is public comment. Is Darryl
25 Schaffer present? Please limit your comments to five minutes.

1 PUBLIC COMMENT

2 MR. SCHAFFER: Good morning. My name is Daryl Schaffer.
3 D-A-R-Y-L S-C-H-A-F-F-E-R. I'm with the Center for Arctic
4 Security and Resilience at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.
5 I was only going to mention from what Ms. Loach had asked about
6 the Alaska statutes and the LEPC and the wording in there. And
7 within the Alaska statute Section 26.23.071, Alaska State
8 Emergency Response Commission, section 9 -- Subsection 9,
9 perform other coordinating advisory or planning tasks related
10 to emergency planning and preparedness for all types of
11 hazards. Community right to know reporting, toxic chemical
12 release reporting or management of hazardous substances.

13 So it's the clarification of it does not say all hazards.
14 It does say all types of hazards. And the point on that is,
15 having done a lot of research on this, all hazards as one word
16 or as a hyphenated word, is actually a misnomer. You actually
17 can't do all hazards, but you can address all types of hazards.
18 So if that's the wording that you need, that would be
19 appropriate. That is all I have. Thank you.

20 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Thank you very much. Next up is John
21 Huffman. Please limit your comments to five minutes.

22 MR. HUFFMAN: Sure, absolutely. I'll be super quick.
23 Good morning everybody. I'm John Huffman. I'm a researcher
24 with the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Some of you have
25 already met with me, but I'm conducting research on local

1 emergency planning committees here in Alaska, focusing on kind
2 of understanding where they are, their stats at the moment, and
3 then historically how they've been supported in the past.

4 Part of that research is conducting a questionnaire. I've
5 done my best to reach out to most communities to get
6 solicitation and to participate in such research. If you've
7 not had a chance to hear about my research or to make a
8 determination whether you wish to participate, I'll be here for
9 the rest of the meeting and following. And I'd be happy for
10 you to come up to me to have a conversation about how your
11 community could potentially be a participant in such research
12 and for the betterment of all LEPCs. And that's it.

13 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Questions?

14 MR. HUFFMAN: Thank you.

15 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Ahlberg. Next is new business and this
16 is the co-chair election. And I'm going to pass it to Dave
17 Riley.

18 NEW BUSINESS

19 MR. RILEY: Hello, Dave Riley, DHSEM. We are going to
20 hold nominations and votes for co-chair replacing Tom Vaden and
21 I want to thank Tom for his service to the LEPC and LE.....

22 CO-CHAIR VADEN: I'm still in the running.

23 MR. RILEY: Oh, well, I guess, yes, you still are in the
24 running.

25 CO-CHAIR VADEN: But thanks.

1 MR. RILEY: You're welcome. Thank you anyway. And what
2 we're going to do first is open the floor for nominations.

3 Co-chair.

4 CO-CHAIR VADEN: (Indiscernible - away from the
5 microphone) nominate himself.

6 MR. RILEY: Does somebody want to nominate Tom?

7 MR. FOLSOM: I'll nominate Tom.

8 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE 1: I'll second.

9 MR. RILEY: Are there any other nominations?

10 MR. HANKINS: Just for clarification, we're only voting on
11 one position, correct?

12 MR. RILEY: Correct. The pending question is Tom Vaden
13 for -- to continue as the co-chair calling for a vote.

14 MS. LOACH: Can we just have discussion or anything like
15 that? Yes. Because this is a new item on the agenda and it
16 was given today. And we would like to know like what are the
17 roles and duties, like all the different things for
18 consideration. I think just introducing an item like this on
19 the agenda and then not having time to consider it doesn't
20 really give people a chance to consider what's the actual
21 leadership value of a partnership and a co-chair. Thanks.

22 MR. RILEY: Tom, would you please describe your duties?

23 CO-CHAIR VADEN: The co-chair basically runs two LEPCA
24 meetings a year and arranges the -- supposedly arrange the
25 agenda. And then now we've been working a little bit more on

1 more prevalent issues instead of having -- we decided early on
2 and around in December that, you know, it just doesn't do any
3 good to have meetings twice a year and try to do something when
4 we really need to be proactive with funding and other LEPCA
5 issues. So that's why we've been hiring, what you would call
6 networking missions -- networking sessions to kind of get that
7 out there because it doesn't do any good for us, for example,
8 to say, let's, like, get ahold of -- have a motion to get ahold
9 of the legislature during this meeting, and then come up with a
10 letter to the legislature and they're going to be out of
11 session by the time we'd get it done.

12 So we're trying to be a lot more proactive with this.
13 And, you know, it's, you know, similar to AKEMA who are working
14 with, you know, similar issues and we are part of AKEMA, but
15 not the LE -- the LEPCA is not part of the AKEMA, it's just
16 everybody's an individual member.

17 MS. LOACH: Thanks, Tom. And may I add to that? Okay.
18 So I'm also interested in what is the term of the co-chair. So
19 I would assume that we're doing this for a reason. I don't
20 know what that reason is other than we just had it introduced
21 on the agenda today. So maybe we could talk a little bit more
22 about the background for the introduction of this and then as
23 well, the guardrails for when you accept this position once
24 nominated, how long the position stays. And I don't -- and I
25 see this as a staff question not as a, hey, Tom, you better

1 know all of this stuff. I'm assuming that we're getting this
2 from some sort of policy or procedural document. Thanks.

3 CO-CHAIR VADEN: This is a two-year position and the co-
4 chair stagger off every year Okay. With the hope that we have
5 consistently through so we just don't lose everybody and have
6 no co-chairs. This was on the agenda in October for the
7 October meeting. Well, we didn't have the October meeting and
8 so we put it on this agenda here in February, but it didn't get
9 carried through as being put down on the agenda to work through
10 this. And so then essentially last night it showed up, but
11 we're trying to stagger it every two years.

12 MR. RILEY: And it is outlined in the LEPCA handbook is
13 where it is.

14 MR. SHREEVE: I guess question I had is, is there anybody
15 else interested in filling that position? I am not.

16 MR. HANKINS: Well, and to tag onto that, Aaron Hankins,
17 Petersburg. Not just interested, but interested in learning
18 the roles. So then you could be comfortable being nominated
19 into that position because I like you, Tom, you're a great guy,
20 but we all don't live forever and we can't keep putting you up
21 there. Eventually we got to have a replacement. And so making
22 sure that's the individual members names, especially, there's a
23 lot of new faces that keep reoccurring, are comfortable
24 fulfilling those duties. So then it doesn't all fall on Tom,
25 it doesn't all fall on Brenda or just a few of the LEPCA

1 members.

2 MR. RILEY: Any other nominations? Any other questions?
3 Any other discussion?

4 MS. LOACH: I'll have one more item of discussion. So I
5 would just say that I feel like we are in a inflection point of
6 change, which often large disasters provide for us. And we are
7 seeing that change supported by our leadership that is
8 currently sitting. We've had not one, not two, but three
9 meetings in between the last official meeting that we had here
10 as LEPCA a year ago. And that's under the leadership of Brenda
11 and Tom. So I appreciate your support and your consistency and
12 your step up and pace to support that change. And for sure,
13 I'd like to continue with Tom and Brenda for now. Thank you.

14 MR. RILEY: Anything else?

15 MR. HANKINS: Call for the question.

16 MR. RILEY: All in favor of Tom staying on as co-chair.

17 BOARD: Aye.

18 MR. RILEY: Any opposed? Tom has voted in as a co-chair
19 for the next two years.

20 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Congratulations.

21 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Should have volunteered for Congress.

22 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Ahlberg. Item B, public alert and
23 warning systems. Need a little bit help with this topic, it
24 was added to the agenda. Review current use of IPAWS and other
25 local alert systems by LEPCs and brainstorming ways to improve

1 public awareness. Can you help us out with that, Dave? Why
2 that was put on?

3 MS. LOACH: So, I did not put this item on the agenda.
4 What I did is observe this item on the agenda and develop some
5 comments related to that. However, if no one wants to lead
6 this topic I certainly don't want to. So I will -- I have
7 nothing to say if no one has items. I do have things to say
8 after I hear the discussion, if there's something that needs to
9 be discussed regarding IPAWS.

10 MR. RHEIN: We're still trying to figure it out in
11 Ketchikan, like we're just switching from -- to Everbridge and
12 trying to figure out. We're not even totally set up with
13 IPAWS. So I got -- I mean, basically I have no comment other
14 than we don't know much about it. We're trying to get it all
15 sorted.

16 MR. HANKINS: Perhaps because this is listed as a
17 discussion item under new business. But as a discussion item,
18 maybe we want to go through the different communities and have
19 them talk about their IPAWS status if they even know what IPAWS
20 is. After you have any questions, then it could be just a
21 decent information exchange. It could be one way to go.

22 CO-CHAIR VADEN: This is an agenda item from last fall. I
23 don't know who -- it was just on the agenda, so we forwarded.
24 Essentially IPAWS stands for Integrated Public Awareness and
25 Warning Systems. And you can get ahold of Department of

1 Homeland Security Emergency Management. They have a section
2 there that can teach you how to do it and how you would do it.

3 It's run by FEMA and so it allows you to notify your
4 residents of emergencies and stuff like that. Currently, Kevin
5 Nolton from Kawerak is working to make an IPAWS system for the
6 Norton Sound Region. So we can put out information to various
7 villages individually or -- you know, individually or as a
8 group to tell people, you know, we're doing a search and rescue
9 watch your traveling, you know, watch out for high water, watch
10 out for blizzards and that type of stuff. That's all. I
11 really don't know that much about it.

12 MS. LOACH: Can I make a suggestion? Just a suggestion.
13 I would suggest after working with Division of Homeland
14 Security and Emergency Management on being an IPAWS originator
15 in the last couple years that there are best practices
16 available and certainly recommendations from the division
17 because the division is supporting statewide use of IPAWS
18 through the system that they have, which I assume covers the
19 whole state. I'm hopeful that it does cover the whole state
20 that maybe we -- if we would like to, we could have a
21 presentation from the Division at our next meeting regarding
22 the capability of IPAWS, baseline capability, and then as well
23 the state of Alaska capability because there's any number of
24 originators in the state of Alaska, it's designed that way for
25 resiliency.

1 So I know at least from my interaction with the division
2 that they support that system of resiliency and having as much
3 redundancy within that system as possible. For example, under
4 my program's strategic plan, we are looking to our neighbors on
5 left and right borough to try to get them to be able to have
6 message origination for the municipality of Anchorage in the
7 event of an emergency where the municipality would not be able
8 to accomplish that message origination. So there's all types
9 of things that you can do with the IPAWS system. It's just we
10 need to be aware of the baseline capability and how it's used
11 in the state of Alaska. And then from there we can build from
12 best practices. Thanks.

13 MR. RHEIN: Can I add to that, that the -- maybe some of
14 the best practices, tips and tricks kind of thing would be
15 helpful too. Because capability is one thing. It's -- it --
16 what we've discovered is it's great to know what it'll do, but
17 then figuring out how to do it has become -- is a bit of a
18 challenge for us and getting that coordinated effort, and
19 particularly in ways that you can -- like test messages because
20 it's a real drag to screw that up in the community and have
21 your test message be less of a test. So those are things that
22 we've struggled with a bit. And so if we could add that to the
23 -- to some of that would be helpful.

24 MS. DURHAM: Nancy Fairbanks North Star Borough. We use
25 IPAWS and yes, it is very scary at first. There is a very good

1 dashboard to help you with good training that we have gone
2 through already. But when we're sending it out, we send out
3 our regular rave alerts. Then when we have a go on wildfire
4 season or a 911 outage or anything that's like really, really
5 critical, we're pushing out those IPAWS alerts and you can zone
6 them down to one specific area of your jurisdiction or you can
7 encompass a whole jurisdiction. And I do know one of my alerts
8 actually hit Bethel one year. And I even zoned into my
9 jurisdiction, but somehow one of my friends in Bethel got my
10 alert.

11 So, it -- yes, a little bit more training would be nice.
12 But we are using it more and more now, especially when we have
13 a lot more evacuations and everything. And that could later
14 offline help you with some of those dashboards and get you
15 those training sites for faster use.

16 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Ahlberg. What I'm hearing is another
17 great networking meeting that we could have prior to our fall
18 meeting and then follow it up with a recommendation in
19 coordination with Division of Homeland Security because they
20 have their very specific program protocols for their
21 unincorporated areas. Director Fisher, you had something to
22 add?

23 MR. FISHER: Yes. I just -- I'm glad you suggested that,
24 Co-Chair Ahlberg. So I mean, we're happy to get with you folks
25 before the formal meeting in the fall and do that. Caveat, the

1 federal government is shut down, the DHS is shut down right
2 now. We certainly would want the folks from the integrated
3 Public Alert Warning System division of FEMA to participate in
4 that. We got some great -- you know, we want to hear from
5 their end as well, but -- so that will be subject to us being
6 able to communicate with them when they're not furloughed
7 anymore.

8 And then Mark Roberts is here, our Chief of Operations.
9 He and Scott Nelson, our telecommunications planner are the
10 ones that work with you all to get the collaborative operating
11 group, the COG from IPAWS, which is really the authorization to
12 access the FEMA system.

13 And then for the committee, but as you -- as planning
14 organizations, it's important you guys to know there's a whole
15 another plan out there that we don't talk about very much.
16 It's the local emergency alert system plan. And that is an
17 important part of this process to make sure that you are
18 working with your broadcasters and cable systems and wireless
19 operators and the jurisdictions that have that legal authority
20 and responsibility to determine who is going to be allowed to
21 push the button, what codes are going to be used if you're
22 going to use evacuation immediate or the civil emer -- all of
23 those kind of things, which is documented in a local emergency
24 alert system plan because we regularly just refer to the local
25 plan that has already been vetted and approved for warning

1 originators, if you will.

2 So we're definitely happy to do that. I just will reach
3 out to FEMA IPAWS to see when they might be available to do a
4 remote session with you all. And then Dave can help coordinate
5 with the entire association, all the committees to try to come
6 up with a time to do some online stuff. We just got to wait
7 for FEMA to get back to work once they get funded. So,.....

8 MR. WYATT: Yes. Hi Eric from Bristol Bay. I don't think
9 Bristol Bay is using it, but Matsu is getting heavily involved
10 with it when I was there some years ago. I don't know where
11 they are right now. But the two people that were here
12 yesterday, Casey Cook and Eric Moorman, they were getting very
13 heavily invested with IPAWS when I was working with them. So
14 they'd be good resources.

15 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Ahlberg. So I'd like to recommend
16 perhaps that for the support of this group, Tom and I can work
17 together. We can reach out as we have been collaboratively to
18 this group in collaboration also with the state, and then give
19 you guys a report what we're seeing and perhaps do something
20 online together for those that may be interested. I'd also
21 like to bring in the Alaska Emergency Managers Association for
22 a broader audience. So this is certainly something that has
23 the makings of a far bigger effort. Thoughts on that? Sound
24 good? In other words, y'all are willing to let me and Tom
25 carry the bucket for a bit and get back with y'all? All right.

1 Next up is C, discussion on rewrite of the 2018 LEPC
2 handbook. And it should be LEPCA handbook. There were
3 comments submitted to the state for consideration and certainly
4 it just happened to be around the time of the Western storms
5 and everything else had gone on. So certainly understandable
6 that there hasn't been much more movement on it. But I would
7 like to punt to Dave, your thoughts on the handbook and where
8 you'd like to see us go from here for those for the next
9 iteration.

10 MR. RILEY: We do have comments that we -- JJ Little,
11 before he left, sent that out. We got very, very limited
12 feedback. What I would propose is that we resend that back out
13 to the LEPCA for more comment. We do have a collection of the
14 little bit we did get. And then we can also take into account
15 the updates to the policies and procedures and bylaws that are
16 going to be adopted for the SERC in this afternoon's meeting.
17 And we can deconflict both of those and that way we can have a
18 better product that we can vote on in the October meeting.

19 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Any comments or questions?

20 MR. HANKINS: If we're going to reopen the discussion,
21 what would be the proposed deadline or when would you want to
22 see those back, Dave?

23 MR. RILEY: I'm going to defer to the co-chairs. For our
24 purposes, we would need to get those distributed to you folks
25 two weeks before the October meeting. So we would like to have

1 it probably a month before that so we can, you know, put the
2 final dressings on it. But as far as an internal deadline,
3 that would be up to the co-chairs and the LEPCA.

4 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Another networking session. Look at us
5 go. So that's what I would do is let's pull this up for
6 networking offline before the October meeting. We'll set up a
7 date when we want everybody's comments, and then we'll get it
8 back in coordination with Kim and Dave so they have something
9 to dress up for our October meeting. Sound good?

10 Next up, this is Tom's recommendation Delta Incorporated
11 and unincorporated areas representation. Tom?

12 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Yes. What are -- what the recommendation
13 I'd like to make is, is that Department of Homeland Security
14 Emergency Management assigned one person to each of the
15 unincorporated areas, not one person in charge of an all.
16 There seems to be a really gap with small communities being
17 able to, you know, contact someone they don't know who to
18 contact. If you had someone that could take a couple hours a
19 week and reach out and talk to, you know, local emer -- you
20 know, local communities, then they would at least have a point
21 of contact.

22 And what I'm saying, this is like, they don't know ICS.
23 You know, a lot of times they're brand new and then when stuff
24 -- bad starts to happen, they're going like, who do I call?
25 And so if you go like, "Hey, I'm Joe Blow, this is the number

1 you call, you know, we're here to help." And if you do that
2 routinely, then they'll have a person they can reach out to and
3 talk to. If you do that randomly, they're just going like,
4 "Well, there's some guy on the phone, I don't know who he is
5 and I'd really want to talk to him, honestly," you know. So
6 the consistency is very, very important as far as preparedness
7 for disasters.

8 And, you know, especially in our area, fall sea storms are
9 a big thing, you know. And, you know, we evacuated four
10 villages and partially evacuated two in the last fall storms.
11 And -- you know, and people are calling up going like, where do
12 I go? What do I do? And you know, it's really good just to
13 have a good point of contact. Kevin's working on
14 (Indiscernible - cannot understand) for everybody and which
15 would be a big help because it's a flip page going like, yes, I
16 can call these people. Anyway, I'd like to make that
17 recommendation

18 MR. RILEY: If I may. Dave Riley, DHSEM. That is
19 something that I've heard from several groups throughout the
20 conference. And I am planning on taking that back to my
21 leadership and having those discussions.

22 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Thank you.

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You want me to hold this up for you?

24 LEPC VERBAL STATUS REPORT

25 MS. LOACH: No, that's okay. I'll just bring up my

1 report. I don't know about you guys, but I get a lot of stuff
2 to read every day. So I just wanted to bring to the
3 committee's attention some of the things that the Anchorage
4 LEPC has been working on for the last few months since the last
5 meeting. So, it was quarter four -- quarter one, quarter two,
6 quarter the, and quarter four of last year. Just bringing some
7 of those items to -- for discussion.

8 Our LEPC has a work plan that we review with our LEPC,
9 some of the major plans that we work on in our jurisdiction.
10 So our all-hazard mitigation plan was looked at. We also have
11 a multi-year strategic plan that our program works on, that our
12 EM program and our community works on. And our LEPC was given
13 a chance to review that as well.

14 The Anchorage CEOP has had a lot of updates in the last
15 five year -- in the last three years actually. So we're up to
16 915 pages of just different annexes. And so our poor LEPC was
17 also subject to being a member of our review team for that EOP.
18 And we appreciate that. We do have quarterly meetings in
19 Anchorage, and we have had quarterly meetings since the last
20 time this group met.

21 I did also want to point out our participation in the
22 Typhoon Halong response. As a community, we presented to our
23 LEPC regarding that. And in fact, just as an update to that,
24 our -- one of our program managers is currently at the
25 Hurricane Con -- the National Hurricane Conference in Florida,

1 presenting with the Red Cross and our own Jenni Ragland from
2 Alaska VOADs about that response that we participate in it. So
3 that's just an update on that.

4 We have a new logo as well, courtesy of our friends at the
5 University of Alaska. I understand a real human actually made
6 that logo, so we're excited about that. It has a moose on it,
7 so we have that. And then the other thing that I wanted to
8 point out is that we've been talking with our LEPC about our
9 participation in the Emergency Management Accreditation
10 program. We have been assigned as a program that is the first
11 in Alaska that has been approved with an improvement plan that
12 we've been working pretty hard for the last year or so. The
13 Emergency Management Accreditation Program has seventy-three
14 elements of standardization that we have been working very hard
15 to meet. So we've been talking to our LEPC in our meetings
16 about that.

17 A couple of questions from our LEPC that I said I would
18 bring to this group for you guys' consideration is the SERC is
19 supposed to be reviewing after action reports according to
20 statute. And we know that since -- that, you know, we are
21 currently still responding to the Western Alaska storms with
22 people still in hotels here in Anchorage, thankfully being able
23 to move into apartments this -- later this month. And so we
24 are looking forward to how the SERC will be involved in after
25 action reporting for that storm. And hopefully if this group

1 here could have a brief on that after action report and
2 improvement plan. That's just for your consideration.

3 The other thing is the SERC is supposed to be reviewing
4 plans as well, emergency plans. So the other thing for your
5 consideration that I offered to bring to you all is just a
6 question about how communities are submitting plans to the SERC
7 for their review. Because I've reviewed some meeting minutes
8 to try to do some research on this, and I'm just not really
9 sure what the process is. I noted on their work plan that they
10 said they do have the resources to review those plans, but I,
11 for one, have never submitted a plan to the SERC and had their
12 review and comment. For example, on my 915-page EOP that's
13 coming up here. So just for your consideration, that is
14 another requirement and I'd be interested in what the process
15 is for the review of those plans. Thanks.

16 MR. RILEY: Co-Chairs, if I may, I can answer that as the
17 SERC coordinator. Dave Riley, DHSEM SERC coordinator. The
18 process is that there is a committee that is All Hazards Plan
19 Review Committee for the SERC that was co-chair -- that was
20 chaired by Rich Hildreth. So the process was emailing those in
21 to the DMVA, DHSEM planning mailbox. And then there was other
22 committee members that he sent those out to and got those
23 comments and came back.

24 To be completely honest, most of those were skirt plans.
25 We got very little input from the community in their planning

1 aspects. But that's where we are. We are in the SERC meeting
2 later today. There will be nominations for the new chair for
3 that committee. And then we can have a, a discussion about
4 what that looks like after -- after that takes place and we
5 have that person in place.

6 KODIAK LEPC UPDATES

7 MR. PUTNEY: So Kodiak, we scheduled three LEPC meetings
8 since last April. We were able to hold one meeting where we
9 basically reestablished our LEPC after several years. We are
10 one of those communities that in 2019 when the funding went
11 away, the wheels kind of fell off the LEPC and a lot of staff
12 from the borough was -- they were using that grant funding for
13 their -- some of these positions to -- for their clerks in
14 there, some administrative assistants to put these packets
15 together for us.

16 But we do have a lot of interest now. We've got a large
17 LEPC and also got the growing pains with it now that we're
18 getting reestablished with not having a quorum at one and then
19 not doing the public meeting stuff with our new secretary the
20 first time around, so -- and then Ken Folsom is our new
21 emergency manager for the island, for the Borough. So we're
22 excited to have him on board since December. And then we are
23 going to have to add him to our chair of our LEPC at the next
24 meeting and keep going forward. That's all I have.

25 BRISTOL BAY LEPC UPDATES

1 MR. WYATT: Thanks. Eric Wyatt from Bristol Bay. So I
2 see from last year's notes, Deb was here and she talked about
3 having some ICS training out at Bristol Bay. We did that. We
4 did the G402 course, which is the leadership or senior
5 executive course. The people we had to come out and instruct
6 that were from the Coast Guard here. And they were very happy
7 to come out and do that training for us, and then visit the
8 port. And they would very much -- they've got an expanded
9 mission in the state for more of the coastal areas.

10 And so if you have not touched base with them and on the
11 coast for Nome and Petersburg, Ketchikan, they would definitely
12 like to come out and do that training with you and do a visit
13 and talk about the services that they have available to help
14 protect your ports. And so that turned out to be very good
15 training. The LEPC members also did attend that training last
16 year. So if you're interested in the who to contact over there
17 at the Coast Guard, let me know and I'll be happy to pass it
18 along to you.

19 Coming up here on April 21st, we're doing a tabletop
20 exercise at the Borough, and we are going to be exercising our
21 incident response plan, that's the IRP response plan, and the
22 EOP. And part of that exercise we're going to have hazardous
23 materials, we're going to have evacuations, we're going to have
24 cyber-attack. And so we're going to try to exercise all
25 components of that plan and gather some lessons learned there

1 so we can get our EOP updated. And again, our LEPC is invited
2 to that.

3 We are going to have some remote members, so we are going
4 to have this on Teams meeting. And I would be happy to include
5 any of you if you're interested in listening in on this
6 exercise. Again, that was going to be April 21st. And it'll
7 be kind of an all-day event, three hours in the morning and
8 three hours in the afternoon for two different scenarios. So
9 if you're interested in that at all, please let me know and
10 I'll get you on the list, so -- and I think that's all we've
11 got for Bristol Bay right now. Thanks.

12 FAIRBANKS LEPC UPDATES

13 MS. DURHAM: Of course, it went away. Good afternoon.
14 Well, we're still in morning. Good morning. For Fairbanks
15 North Star Borough, we also have a new logo, Ms. Amanda, but
16 ours was AI. We also had some handmade ones, but the AI one
17 won by vote. We are currently updating our bylaws, which we
18 will have a special meeting in two weeks before our next
19 regular quarter meeting. And to get those updated, we adopted
20 our CWPP in 2025 right after Denali. And we are currently
21 updating and trying to get our comprehensive emergency
22 management plan before our assembly, but they pulled it, wanted
23 them know where all that public participation is, and no, it
24 has not gone to SERC because I did not know. So I will be more
25 than happy to send you a almost 3000-page document to review,

1 if you like.

2 We're in the midst of updating our -- yes, it has a lot of
3 annexes. Our -- and we had to do a complete rewrite for that.
4 Our multi-jurisdiction Hazard mitigation plan is now in-house
5 because of all the federal funding fun-filled stuff that
6 happened instead of being done last year when we were approved
7 for funding. So we have less than six months to get that
8 written internally and out the door before September 12th. So
9 that is our biggest lift right now, and that we start our
10 public meetings next week on that. And that has been going to
11 all of our stakeholders. And at our regular set April meeting,
12 it will go to the LEPC.

13 We did do RG402 class last year because we had a lot of
14 new elected officials. And because some of those have also --
15 they're in different seasons, so we have some newer ones as
16 well. So those, we will be having that within the next couple
17 months again and we've done that as internal training for our
18 officials.

19 For our Emergency Preparedness Youth Safety Day, which is
20 a big expo that we do, that we co-host with our VIPs, Insert
21 and our Kinross group. We -- that is April 12th, so that's in
22 two weeks as well. We moved that up from September
23 preparedness month early on, and we have a lot of our
24 stakeholders participate in that because we do the bike rodeos,
25 and we want kids to get free their free bike helmets before the

1 summer season so they could use them. So that's coming up.

2 And then for our other plans, we're still in the midst of
3 the distribution management plan and our NIMS NQS plan. So
4 we're half -- well, most of the way through those. And
5 hopefully within a couple of weeks that will be fully staffed.
6 So, yay, go us.

7 Wildfire season was -- we had a briefings on that at our
8 LEPC and our questions are -- our biggest questions for this
9 committee is still the same as last time, is anybody doing site
10 inspections of their hazmat facilities? And if so, do you have
11 a form? And how do you go about doing that and scheduling
12 that, because we voted to do that, but we would kind of like
13 some input on other jurisdictions that are doing that and how
14 they go about doing all that. That's one of our biggest
15 concerns.

16 And then I did not get a packet or an agenda or anything,
17 so I don't know where anything is for this meeting today until
18 I walked in the door this morning and saw this. I had no idea
19 what happened. So when y'all keep saying, hey, you received
20 this, or whatever, I'm like, no, not until like five minutes
21 before I walked in the door. So just FYI. Thank you.

22 MAT-SU LEPC UPDATES

23 MS. CAHILL: Good morning. Kara Cahill, Mat-Su Borough
24 chair for the LEPC. For the report period of September through
25 March, we've continued to meet quarterly. The Mat-Su Borough

1 Emergency Management still graciously supports all the LEPC
2 efforts. They're always in a great attendance and supporters
3 of our initiatives. We had quite a bit of turnover, a lot of
4 retirement for a lot of our members. So we're actively
5 recruiting. We also did an election for our new vice chair.
6 So that was completed in our, I believe it was January meeting.

7 Let's see. Through the winter, we had our 17th annual
8 Emergency Preparedness expo that's held at the Menards Sports
9 Center. And we always see about 2000 participants from the
10 Borough and Anchorage area attend that. So great turnout. We
11 always get a lot of feedback and it'll help support our local
12 organizations to push out more community efforts and be able to
13 listen to the community and kind of fill in some of those gaps.
14 As you know, we've had some fun weather events. So the
15 preparedness efforts to get communications out has been heard.
16 And I applaud especially our utility companies for pushing out
17 that messaging and increasing those efforts.

18 Let's see. We conducted a Mat-Su Borough full scale
19 event. It was an active shooter scenario back on October 11th.
20 A lot of our LEPC members participate in that. So it was
21 really great collaboration to bring school district and all our
22 response agencies together to, you know, one of those very
23 high-risk scenarios. So great turnout.

24 And then for our work groups for LEPC, we set goals for
25 them to meet some objectives. So we have a medical work group

1 that we're going to hold a small tabletop within our
2 community, kind of like who has what and who needs what kind of
3 scenario, trying to keep it small but obtainable. And again,
4 we want to make sure that we know all our community partners
5 before we have another like pandemic or incident, any of those
6 things. So that's just an example of some of our work group
7 objectives.

8 As we continue to plan, we're working on our 18th annual
9 emergency expo, which will be held usually the last weekend of
10 September, again, at the Menards Sports Center. And just
11 working on those objectives. End of report.

12 DENALI LEPC UPDATES

13 MR. SHREEVE: Forest Shreeve, Denali. I'm going to keep
14 my report pretty short, but we too have a new logo made by AI.
15 Mine was not the one voted on. Somebody else made one to
16 oppose mine and theirs was chosen. But we have -- or the LEPC
17 has now gotten most of our fire chiefs on the LEPC, which is
18 great. And as soon as the fire chiefs got on, they voted to no
19 longer have quarterly meetings. So we have meetings two times
20 a year. That's how it went as soon as they got on. That was
21 interesting. But so we've changed our schedule on that, and
22 we're still trying to come up with what exactly that looks like
23 regularly, but it will be spring and fall. We don't have set
24 dates on those. This upcoming one is this upcoming Tuesday on
25 April 7th, though, is our next one.

1 Our biggest thing that we've been able to produce with
2 the help of the LEPC is our evacuation zones. We were able to
3 get good feedback through the LEPC and develop prepared
4 evacuation zones and at the health and safety fair that we're
5 having coming up also on Tuesday next week that we hold it at
6 Tri-Valley School in Healy, it's for all the community come,
7 but we're going to have kind of a Know Your Zone campaign going
8 on where I'll have a TV there and some printed maps and be able
9 to go through and say, hey, where do you live? And go and show
10 them what zone they live in. So when a wildfire comes, not
11 this year, because we're not having wildfires this year, but in
12 the future, they'll know what zone they live in so that we can
13 just have a little bit quicker communication there. And we
14 don't have to draw on a map as things are going. We are able
15 to just say, all right, here it is, click buttons, change
16 colors, and put out messaging. It's going to be way
17 streamlined and we want to get that public communication,
18 public education out there now.

19 We -- the plan is on Tuesday for somebody else to become
20 the new LEPC chair. We may look at like having co-chair kind
21 of a thing or having a new chair and then me being the vice
22 chair so I can continue to help out from the Borough side,
23 being paid staff, being able to help organize things and do
24 that. But we are still trying to get the LEPC to be a more
25 autonomous group of their own, not necessarily be -- it's not a

1 borough function, but a committee of their own. So we're
2 working on that.

3 The hazard mitigation program, we don't have our plan. I
4 mean, we no longer have an active hazard mitigation plan. That
5 expired last year. And the state was working on for some of
6 the communities throughout the state making those or updating
7 those. And we are waiting on the state on that one. And I
8 think I'll leave it at that.

9 We've had some good participation discussion. Our last
10 meeting went really well. We spent two years trying to form,
11 you know, and then it got kind of the point where our LEPC
12 members said, why the heck am I here? We formed, what's the
13 purpose now? And our last meeting went really well, and we had
14 some good discussion and training, and they said, okay, we now
15 get why we're here a little bit more. We are excited to be
16 here now.

17 So it went really well. And we are planning on trying to
18 have either after-action reviews or training -- small trainings
19 in each of our LEPC meetings. We don't ever plan to get real
20 big and make 3000-page plans, but we will be there and we'll be
21 active in keeping our community partners engaged. End of
22 report.

23 KETCHIKAN LEPC UPDATES

24 MR. RHEIN: For Ketchikan. The LEPC committee is we meet
25 monthly-ish. And we've actually been -- like, our big focus

1 this year in Ketchikan has been -- over the last two years
2 really has been to try to engage community and in our -- get
3 our emergency operations center to function efficiently. So
4 we've done quite a few different levels of exercises. And
5 working with that and kind of helping people, done some
6 training. It's been pretty effective, I think.

7 The city emergency manager and the borough emergency
8 manager mostly get along and work well together, and all of the
9 -- we are one of those communities that have three fire
10 departments on, you know, 130-mile stretch of road, so -- and I
11 think there's a lot of -- there's been actually a lot of
12 community engagement. And that's the biggest thing that I've
13 seen as being a part of that. We tried to elect a new
14 committee chair, and I'm still here, so I tried. But it's --

15 Other than that, we have more engagement and more
16 connectivity. We've worked on trying to figure out again, why
17 our LEPC exists and what -- like, kind of what our purpose is.
18 And I think we have a direction. We're working on our hazard
19 mitigation plan with the state. The state aided us in updating
20 that, and it's in a public review process right now. And then
21 we've been working on our -- we switched from Nixle to
22 Everbridge, which seemed like it should have been easier than
23 it has been. And we've had some -- a lot of discussion about
24 IPAWS and how that's going to work.

25 And we -- our PIO, we had a full-time PIO that left, went

1 to do something else, and he's sort of doing some intermittent
2 training. So that change was part of the delay in the training
3 and understanding, I think. But that's kind of where we're at
4 getting ready for the tour season and that -- and planning for
5 that for us, as I'm sure a lot of people are. That's it.

6 PETERSBURG LEPC UPDATES

7 MR. HANKINS: Aaron Hankins, Petersburg. Start off with a
8 big one that we've been bringing back for the last two meetings
9 that we've had in person. Borough's EOP plan has been expired
10 since our last officially adopted since 2010. It's been quite
11 a while. We -- I'm happy to say we've made some local progress
12 in obtaining funding to get those updated. The borough is
13 actually considering the matter next Monday. It starts as part
14 of the wider budget crafting process. Included in that is an
15 update for all hazards plan as well. We're trying to update
16 them both at the same time, so that's they aren't conflicting
17 and issues listed in one are covered in the other.

18 We've had -- we're affected by the crisis twenty-four hack
19 or leak, well, you know, the security -- cybersecurity incident
20 that they had, that was our public messaging system outside of
21 just sirens and radio ads and Facebook that we just kind of
22 quasi got it back online. But I'm still debating on whether or
23 not I even want to stick with them or if I want to switch to
24 like Nixle or Everbridge or even Conexus.

25 I had a wonderful conversation with Mr. Moorman from Mat-

1 Su. He was happy to dive -- deep dive in, spent about an hour
2 with me after the luncheon or the get together here on Saturday
3 -- yes, long, long days, Wednesday. And so we're kind of --
4 I'm talking with some of my internal folks and seeing what we
5 want to do about public messaging. But for now I process down
6 in Petersburg. So is our public messaging system other than
7 our sirens.

8 We've held cybersecurity exercise last year. We didn't
9 get a report on that in the October meeting. We held a shelter
10 exercise in August kind of as preliminary like test beds for
11 what we might put in those updated plans. Because
12 infrastructure that was listed in those plans, some of it is
13 gone, some -- there's new infrastructure not listed. And so
14 we're just kind of going through the process of what is it we
15 actually want to have in our plan.

16 Landslides continue to be of concern. We're obtaining
17 equipment to try and help with assessing, you know, incidents
18 so that we can determine if slopes are safe for rescue crews to
19 enter. As part of that, the municipal -- the borough Power
20 Light utility, the fire department and the police department
21 and the non-profit fire association got together and they
22 purchased a drone to use locally. So we're training all those
23 department staff members in how to use it. So we have a
24 deployable roster of people that can use it. We're kind of
25 really trying to build up resiliency, so shelter supplies,

1 communications, things of that nature. So that's, if we have
2 to operate by ourselves for a little while, we can.

3 We have upcoming, an active shooter drill coming probably
4 about June. It's -- they're still trying to pin down a date.
5 We have a -- trying to get Alicia Cell from Kwigillingok come
6 up and kickstart SERC for us, hopefully this sometime in July.
7 And then one of the things that the LEPC has accomplished
8 recently is they worked with a local radio station to roll out
9 building your own go bags and emergency preparedness kits based
10 on information from DHS&EM and those are regularly broadcast as
11 a, you know, build a kit -- you know, add to your kit each week
12 type thing. So we're happy that that got done.

13 We're still kind of in a state of flux because we are
14 still rebuilding after COVID trying to figure out what it is
15 we're actually doing. And so we're still having those
16 discussions ongoing. We're not quite as cemented as some of
17 the other LEPCs, but we're trying. So it's a little bit better
18 report than some of my previous ones. So glad to report
19 progress.

20 KENAI LEPC UPDATES

21 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: I believe Juneau is online. Are you --
22 can you report please? Terry, are you online to report? All
23 right. So for Kenai Peninsula Borough, I have nothing to add
24 to the report that was submitted. So I'll stay for any
25 questions that might be had on our report. Right. Seeing

1 none, I'm going to patch it back over to -- oh no, we got
2 Nome.

3 NOME LEPC UPDATES

4 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Tom Vaden with Nome. I submitted a quite
5 lengthy LEPC status report. A lot of it has to do with
6 communications and the frustrations of a lot of people. I'm
7 not going to go over that right now, but I need to -- Dave, do
8 -- there should be a SERC member sitting with the LEPC,
9 correct? Do they have that assigned yet?

10 MR. RILEY: To be honest, I do not know. I'll have to go
11 back and check.

12 CO-CHAIR VADEN: And the second thing was, the LEPC sent
13 you a name for someone to be with the work plan. Is that on
14 the SERC agenda?

15 MR. RILEY: So I was forwarded a name for the work plan
16 committee as well as filling the open LEPC seat on the SERC.
17 It was Kate Jankowski is what I have. We could discuss that
18 further if -- as a association, if you would like.

19 CO-CHAIR VADEN: We mentioned -- you know, we mentioned
20 her.....

21 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: (Indiscernible - mic off)

22 CO-CHAIR VADEN: We sent -- they sent her name in and then
23 we found out that the LEPCA did not have to vote on that, if
24 I'm correct.

25 MR. RILEY: That is correct. Technically to be on the

1 SERC, it's appointment by the Governor. So we take the name
2 that the LEPCA presents forward in that aspect and then she
3 will have to actually apply through the boards and commissions
4 to get the Governor's appointment.

5 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Thanks. We're just making sure we're,
6 you know, catching up. Anything else?

7 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Dave want some additional time.

8 MR. RILEY: Hi, Dave Riley, DHSEM. Different hat, program
9 manager for the planning section. I heard a lot of LEPCs
10 talking about different plans that are in different stages of
11 completion. I just wanted to really remind you guys that we
12 are there to help support in any way we can during that whole
13 process. Along with that, a lot of the people that are on the
14 SERC All Hazards Plan Review committee are pretty in touch. We
15 work together a lot. So that is also another way that we can
16 get it in front of that committee during the process so we
17 don't necessarily take a long time getting it approved on the
18 backside when it's 900 plus pages. So please feel free at any
19 point to reach out to DHSEM's planning section and we can
20 assist you.

21 CYBER SECURITY THREAT CONFERENCE ON JUNE 2RD

22 MR. WYATT: One other thing for the group, if I may. Eric
23 from Bristol Bay. This isn't about Bristol Bay in particular,
24 but yesterday during the planning workshop, there was a lot of
25 talk about hazards and one of the hazards being cybersecurity

1 or cyber threats. And so I'd like to let everybody here know
2 that there is going to be the Alaska Cyber Group, which was
3 started by a CISA member is putting on a conference again this
4 summer. So on June 2nd, over here at the university, there's
5 going to be a conference on cybersecurity.

6 And so there's going to be a capture the flag kind of an
7 exercise that's going on in that, and there's going to be a lot
8 of networking. I know we're talking about cyber, but you'll be
9 able to meet quite a few of the people around. I think we're
10 going to have some keynote speakers there that will be very
11 interesting and I would like to invite all of you to that, if I
12 may. Again, that'll be June 2nd at the university, it'd be an
13 all-day event and we're going to be talking about
14 cybersecurity.

15 This is something that we need to be very concerned with.
16 Obviously we can have a cyber-attack, but what we're also
17 seeing is the cyber attackers, the hackers are hitting us while
18 we're in the middle of another event. And, you know, if we get
19 our communications and whatnot shut down right in the middle of
20 event, we can't deal with it. So this is going to be a very
21 important group. There's over 140 members of this Alaska cyber
22 group, so all of your communities have people as part of, of
23 this group as well. So I would very much encourage all of you
24 to attend if you can. Thank you.

25 MR. HANKINS: One of the things that we got out, or I was

1 getting out of the IPPW that occurred yesterday is the need
2 for regional planning if you need to evacuate portions of your
3 community. That was one of the lessons that was brought up as
4 part of Halong, making sure that the receiving community kind
5 of knows what you're doing and that you have a plan to make
6 sure they get there. So I want to put in a plugin. If you
7 live in a region and what you can't, you know, don't have a lot
8 of extra congregate housing, you might want to get together
9 with your other community members or other communities and
10 start talking about if you have to move people somewhere.
11 Either it's because your local clinic is overwhelmed or your
12 local shelter's overwhelmed. I mean, it's great to say that,
13 you know, being -- like, being in southeast Seattle, we're
14 going to send everyone to Seattle, but Seattle don't know that.
15 So think about how you might actually do it because it's easy
16 to say, a little bit harder to do.

17 CLOSING COMMENTS

18 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Great comments. That's a great segue
19 for closing comments. How we do that. Let's go opposite.
20 I'll start. I have no other closing comments. Thank you.
21 Petersburg.

22 MR. HANKINS: I apologize. I thought we were at closing
23 comments, so that was my closing comment.

24 CO-CHAIR AHLBERG: Kick it off, buddy.

25 MR. HANKINS: Other than that I'd like to thank DHSEM for

1 a great conference. Thank you guys for the earnest
2 discussions, and I look forward to continue to working with you
3 guys.

4 MR. RHEIN: I have nothing else to add. Thank you, guys.

5 MR. SHREEVE: Wanted to definitely say thanks to Brenda,
6 Emery, Sarah, and everybody else that's been involved with the
7 Ready, Set, Go changes and unification there. That's been
8 something that I've been very interested in as my first fire as
9 an emergency manager was a fiasco because of that and the lack
10 of unity there. And I learned a lot real quick with that. So
11 I'm very excited to see some unified messaging, especially with
12 neighboring communities. I think for visitors especially, it
13 will really help public information there.

14 And then wanted to say thanks to Bryan for the years
15 you've served. You've been apparently working this job since I
16 was like three months old. So thanks for protecting me my
17 whole life here. No, thank you though. It is been really good
18 to learn from you. You've had some good patience with me over
19 my years of learning here, so thank you for that.

20 And then John Huffman, I haven't been dodging on purpose,
21 but unfortunately with my job, it hasn't reached the top
22 priority of my life yet. So I'll give -- I'll talk with you
23 today and I'll figure out how to get it higher up my priority
24 list. End of report.

25 MS. DURHAM: Don't feel bad. I've been avoiding him as

1 well. I have no further comment. Thank you. I want to ditto
2 the thanks to Bryan for his service. It's been great working
3 with you. Look forward to whoever replaces you and I -- for
4 Petersburg, we just had that discussion as well, because I was
5 -- if it didn't go to -- if they didn't go to Anchorage, they
6 were coming to Fairbanks and we were all trying to figure that
7 out, how to get that situated with our housing to house them
8 and shelter them. But we had that discussion as well with
9 Forest for Denali, if they have to evacuate into Fairbanks. So
10 we're about to start exercising that. So yes, after the
11 typhoon, that became one of our things. And we already get
12 flood victims that come into our jurisdiction from their
13 disasters outside. So that has been moved toward the top of
14 our list. So thank you, everyone.

15 MR. WYATT: Nothing further. Thank you.

16 MR. FOLSOM: Nothing further from me. Chief, anything?

17 MR. PUTNEY: Nothing.

18 MS. LOACH: Hey, so I just wanted to say that the letters
19 that we put together represent the work of hundreds of people
20 over time, and nobody ever wants to talk about money. And we
21 did that together. And all of the people that are here today,
22 I know that you guys are putting in a ton of work to make all
23 of this stuff happen. And the people in the audience, the
24 people on the phone, just it's been really encouraging. And
25 thanks for that.

1 CO-CHAIR VADEN: I've talked way too much. The chair
2 will entertain a motion to adjourn.

3 MS. DURHAM: I motion. Fairbanks.

4 MR. SHREEVE: I second.

5 CO-CHAIR VADEN: Any opposed?

6 MEETING ADJOURNMENT

7 The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

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