LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMISSION ASSOCIATION

FALL BI-ANNUAL MEETING 2026

Virtual Business Meeting | October 16, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER – WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Good morning.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Good morning. Hello, all. looks like we have another minute or so. we're also waiting for our. Only co-chair to join. So hopefully he will be on momentarily. Hello all, this is Kim Barenburg, State LEPC Coordinator. still currently trying to get a hold of our only co-chair at the moment. I might wait a couple more minutes before we attempt to continue the meeting. Our LEPCA co-chair is currently experiencing some technical difficulties, and he is currently in the process of getting on, as soon as possible, so please stand by, and thank you for your patience. I appreciate it. Let me know if you have any questions. I am monitoring the chat. I also put a copy of the LEPCA meeting packet in the chat, if you didn't get my email, and your, if you'd like to download the packet and you haven't done so already. it's, it's there for you to review if you haven't done so. please let me know if you have any questions, and, thank you for your patience.

Ryan O'Shaughnessy-CBJ: Hey, Kim, for those of us who joined after you posted that in the chat, it doesn't look like it's available. If you're able to post it again, that would be really helpful. Thank you.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you for letting me know, Ryan. I will do that. Might wait a minute or so, to let other people join, and then reshare that document for you guys. Hey, Ryan, did you… were you able to download that meeting packet? Hopefully, our co-chair will be able to hop on soon and we can commence forth with the meeting today. thank you again all for your patience, and… We will start as soon as our co-chair joins.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Hey, Kim. This is Amanda over at Anchorage.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Hi, Amanda.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Hey, so I just have a couple clarifying questions. Number one, is this meeting a public meeting, the online version?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: The LEPCA, annual meeting, or biannual meetings are public meetings, yes.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Okay, and where are they advertised?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: So the, the SERC is the one that's published on the state webpage. If you'd like, I can send you the link for that.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Okay, so only the SERC is, advertised online, is that correct?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Only the SERC is advertised on the state, administration webpage. However, the LEPC and the SERC are on the state webpage. With a request to contact, myself through the planning mailbox for the meeting link.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Okay, so if you don't mind giving us the SERC link that would be helpful, and I can discuss offline how we can make these meetings more accessible. with less clicks and requests. Thanks. I can discuss that offline, thanks.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Yes. I can drop the Circ link in the meeting chat if you'd like to join that in the afternoon today. While we are waiting for co-chair Tom Baden to join. I'm going to ask about introductions, so I'd like you to introduce yourself with your position as LEPCA, or if you're not with the LEPCA directly, that position and the. agency or community/borough that you work for. So I'll go… I just… just a minute. All right. Thank you. So, I'll get started. My name is Kim Barenburg. I am the state LEPC coordinator for the state of Alaska, and I work for the DHSEM. Dave, if you'd like to introduce yourself.

Dave Reilly-DHSEM: Dave Reilly, program manager for the planning section at DHSEM.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Okay, and then I'll go down the list, so, Erin Williams…

Erin Williams-EPA Region 10: Hi, I'm Erin Williams. I'm with EPA Region 10. We're based out of Seattle, but we oversee Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska. And we'll be doing some RMP and EPCRA inspections up in Alaska this year, a few more than we have in the past years. We'll be in Anchorage next week and then back in Anchorage over the summer. Also Sitka and Fairbanks. So I'll be reaching out and coordinating with each of the LEPCs in the states when we're up in your region and conducting inspections.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Erin. Kara…

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Thanks, Erin. Erin, could you define RMP and EPCRA, please? Thank you. Thank you.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: excuse me?

Erin Williams-EPA Region 10: Here.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: this isn't the appropriate forum for that. we can ask about that a little bit later. this is just introductions right now. Thank you. Kara, could you please introduce yourself?

Kara Dunham-AKRR: There's a couple of Kara's. I'll assume you're talking to Kara Dunham. I'm with Alaska Railroad Corporation. I am the environmental program manager here.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Oh, I'm sorry. Thank you. Thank you. Kara from the Alaska Railroad. Kara with DEC.

Kara Kusche-DEC/SPAR: Hi, good morning, everybody. Kara Couche, ADEC. I'm with the Spill Prevention and Response Division, and serve as the Prevention and Technical Support Manager. Thank you.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you. Kevin Knowlton? Kevin Knowlton? With Quark?

Kevin Knowlton-Kawerak: Morning. Kevin Knowlton with Kawera Karen Noem, also LEPC, and I'm also a member of the SERC.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Kevin. Eric White?

Erick White-AKRR: Good morning, everyone. Hi, my name is Eric White. I also work with Kara Dunham at Alaska Railroad Corporation. I'm also part of the emergency response team there and ICF team as well.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Eric. Kalina Barnes?

Kaleena Barnes-KPB EM/LEPC: Good morning, everyone. I'm Kalina Barnes with the Kenai Peninsula Borough Emergency Management. I'm the emergency manager here.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Kalina. Ryan O'Shaughnessy?

Ryan O'Shaughnessy-CBJ: Thank you, Kim. Good morning, everyone. My name is Ryan O'Shaughnessy. I'm the Emergency Programs Manager for the City and Borough of Juneau, and I fill the City Manager designee seat on our LEPC. Thanks for putting this on, Kim.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Ryan. Kate Janoski?

Kate Janoski-FEPC Chair: Good morning, everyone. My name is Kate Janoski. I am currently the emergency manager for the University of Alaska Fairbanks, as well as the Fairbanks Emergency Planning Committee chairperson.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Kate. Amanda Hadley?

Amanda Hadley Coward-City of Cordova: Hi, I'm Amanda. I'm the city planner in the city of Cordova.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Amanda. Aaron from DEC.

Erin Leaders-DEC: Good morning, everyone. Erin Leaders, Department of Environmental Conservation. I'm the Disaster Program Coordinator, and I'm also the SERC Work Plan Committee Chair.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Erin. Kathy Shea?

Kathy Shea-Alaska DEC: Good morning, everybody. Kathy Shea with DEC, and I am in the Spill Prevention and Response Program. And I am the… SERC and LEPC coordinator, along with Kim and Alex at DHS&EM. And just a heads up, I'm on here twice, Kim, so don't call the next Kathy Shea.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Got it. Thanks, Kathy. and then, I apologize if I messed up your name, but Ytamar from DEC?

Ytamar Rodriguez-DEC/SPAR: Yes, good morning, everybody. My name is Ytamar Rodriguez with State of Alaska DEC Spill Prevention and Response Program. And I'm also the Interagency Coordination Unit Manager. Thank you.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you. Tiffany Peltier from DHSEM.

Tiffany Peltier-Alaska DHSEM: Good morning. Tiffany Peltier, Deputy Director for Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management here with the State of Alaska.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Okay. Thank you, Tiffany. Faith Espinosa.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: She typed in the chat, she's having mic issues.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Alright, thank you. Nancy?

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Nancy Durham, Fairbanks North Star Borough Emergency Manager and EOC Director and FEPC Vice Chair.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Nancy. Amanda with Municipality of Anchorage.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Hey, this is Amanda Loach. I'm from Anchorage Local Emergency Planning Committee. I'm also the Office of Emergency Management Director in the Municipality of Anchorage.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you. Amanda?

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Thanks.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Tracy from Mat-Su Borough.

Tracy Woelfel-MSB EOC: Hi, I'm Tracy Woelfel from the Mat-Su Borough EOC. I'm also the Mat-Su LEPC Ad.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Tracy. Director Fisher?

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: Morning, everybody. Bryan Fisher, director of the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the co-chair of the State Emergency Response Commission for one more meeting.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Director Fisher. Amy Penney?

Amy Penney-Alaska Forum: Hi there. My name's Amy Penny. I'm the deputy director with the Alaska Forum. We're a local nonprofit and we were given some time to talk about what we do this afternoon. So we're looking forward to.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Amy. David Hines?

David Hines-NSB: Emergency Manager as well.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: thank you, David. Torrie from, the EC… or, I'm sorry, EPA?

Torri Huelskoetter-Anchorage EPA: Hey all, I'm Torri Huelsketter, EPA federal on-seeing coordinator based here in Anchorage.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Tori. Jeffrey Lafferty.

Jeffery Lafferty-DHSEM: Good morning, Jeff Lafferty, Preparedness Program Manager for Alaska DHSEM.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Jeff. Kara Carhill?

Kara Cahill-MSB LEPC: Good morning. It's Kara Cahill. I'm the Director of Emergency Management and Public Safety for Mat-Su Regional Medical Center, and I am the Mat-Su Borough.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Kara. Ken Folsom?

Ken Folsom-Kodiak LEPC: Ken Folsom, Emergency Manager, Kodiak Island, and also the LEPC Chair for Kodiak Island.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Ken. Lori Olson?

Lore Olson-ANMC Emergency Manager: Good morning. I'm Lori Olson. I am the emergency manager at Alaska Native Medical Center.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Lori. Erin from Petersburg.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: Hello, I am Aaron Hankins. I'm the Emergency Services Director for the Petersburg Borough. I also fulfill emergency planning duties, and I'm the Petersburg LEPC Chair.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Erin. Teri from Juneau.

Teri Rehfeldt: Good morning, Teri Rehfeldt, Sydney Borough of Juneau and Manager's Seat Alternate for the LEP.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Teri. LEPC Co-Chair Vaden? Co-Chair Tom Vaden. He still might be having some technical difficulties, we'll hop back to him, And then, Nate? I think that's Nate Grimes.

Nate: Good morning, everybody. Sorry about that. Had a mic issue. My name is Nathaniel Grimes. I go by Nate. I am the new Emergency Manager for the Denali Borough, as well as the LEPC Chair.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Nate. And Michelle?

Michelle Torres-DHSEM: Michelle Torres, Outreach Branch Chief, DHSEM.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Michelle. Tom, the floor is yours. If you'd like to get started with the meeting… he still might be having some technical difficulties. Our co-chair is still experiencing some technical difficulties. He's gonna try to sign out and sign back in. Again, thank you all for your patience. I appreciate it. And hopefully, he will be able to sort out those, Those soundbite issues. Thanks. well, in the meantime, I'll, Our co-chair is working on getting back on. can everyone see the screen?

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Okay, can you hear me now?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: yes, we can hear you, Tom. we can hear you a little bit, Tom.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Hello?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Hi, Tom. if you… can you see my screen?

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Hello?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: let me call you back on the phone. excuse me, I'll be back in a minute.

Kathy Shea-Alaska DEC: Hey, Kim, it's Kathy at DEC.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Yes, Kathy?

Kathy Shea-Alaska DEC: Hey,

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Okay, looks like Tom is back on. Any luck with your mic, Tom? Okay, well, it looks like… our co-chair is still having some technical difficulties. Nancy, are you interested in, temporarily helping us lead the meeting today?

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Sure.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Okay. so I guess we'll get started. We already did… the Walkman introductions, but…

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Okay.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: I'm not sure if we should do call order, if we've already kind of unofficially did that.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Well, we still have to approve the changes, to the agenda and the minutes. We haven't done that yet. So…

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Alright.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Let's, Anybody want to make a motion for approval of the agenda in the meeting minutes?

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: So this is Amanda, point of order. If the meeting hasn't been called to order, we need to call the meeting to order. Please. Thanks.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Oh. Sorry. Thank you.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Amanda.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: I call the meeting to order. at… 9:06 AM.

II. APPROVAL OF, AND CHANGES TO, THE AGENDA

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Okay, now we've done welcome. Okay, any approval of or changes to the agenda? and Appendix A for reference.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: This is Aaron Hankins from Petersburg, and I would move to approve the agenda as presented.

Kate Janoski-FEPC Chair: This is Kate Janoski from FEPC, Fairbanks Emergency Planning Committee, and I second that.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Thank… All in favor? Any opposed?

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Hearing no oppose, approval of meeting minutes, which is in your Appendix B.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Oh, that was Appendix A. next is Appendix B for the meeting minutes.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Yeah, that's what I said.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Next, item number three.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Yeah, did I… Was I not heard? I said, anybody for approval of meeting minutes for Appendix B?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: You just… You just did… Okay. Would anyone like to make a motion to change or accept the meeting minutes as, in the document?

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: This is, Aaron Hankins again of Petersburg, and I move to approve the agenda as presented.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Thank you, Erin. Is there a second?

Kate Janoski-FEPC Chair: This is Kate Janoski again. I'll second that.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Anyone oppose?

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Agenda subitems are retained in the order reflected in the discussion. The co-chair election item was not substantively addressed in the transcript; the discussion proceeds to public alert and warning systems, the 2018 LEPC Handbook, and representation of incorporated and unincorporated areas.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Okay, hearing none, we are moving on to Item 4, Old Business. I don't have Tom's notes, so I'm gonna move on to B, because I don't have his notes for that. Tom, are you on?

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: This is Aaron Hankins, actually. I had a question. I was wondering if Tom is, able to send those to, you, or possibly, someone else that is in on, has microphone issues that could share that later, if that might be a decent workaround.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Yes, Kim, can you… Get whatever,

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: I will reach out to Tom and see if he can drop it in the chat, because he's physically present in the meeting, I'm just not sure if he can hear or say anything, but I will…

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: His notes.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: I will let you know.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Public alert. Oh, well, this is. So the item D is public alert and warning systems. Let's see. Sorry, guys. It doesn't say we're discussing. Kim, was this a discussion item?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: To my knowledge, it shouldn't be a discussion item. It's just a review of the old business item. So, Tom was voted in in the April election. We talked about the public alert and warning systems. I do have a question to bring up for the next item, though.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Okay. Well, I don't… yeah, so I'll ask to…

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: Do we have anyone, available to, speak on that, or is there someone with an update for… like the,

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Mountain Day.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: hazard alert program. didn't know if anyone was… Wanting to speak to that, if that's why it was on.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Thank you.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: Hearing none, I can,

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Yeah, I don't…

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Are you there?

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: I hear someone saying, are you there?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Sorry, my phone was on speaker.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: Ah. I did have an opportunity to meet with, Mike Lucio, also with DHSEM. he did fill me in about, his expectations. I don't know if this still rings true for that program this year. He says there's a lot of requests for maintenance in for people's, say, like, sirens and things like that, and that is what they were gonna be focused on this… next grant cycle, is what he was telling me, and they are not expecting, necessarily, to… be accepting applications that are for new siren requests this year, is the last that I had heard. I don't know if anyone else has heard different. But that was the last that I had heard.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Thank you, Erin. Thank you. Kevin, do you… Thank you, Thomas. Thank you, Tom. Kevin Knowlton? Tom said that you can speak on the public alert, etc. Do you have anything? Are you online?

Kevin Knowlton-Kawerak: Good morning, Nancy. So, Kawerak here in the Bering Straits region has recently signed up for integrated public alert warning system through FEMA. Also known as IPAWS. We are… It's a relatively easy process. Being tribal, we were able to go straight to FEMA to get that approval. There is some training requirements that… for individuals to be certified. the to actually produce and. Send out alerts. But it is a alternate way better alternate form of alerting. other than sirens or other other means, because it it uses the. the national process where it can go to. Any cell phone that's in the geofenced area for an alert. And no matter what the carrier, as long as the phone is on, it's supposed to receive the alerts. So any visitors to the communities or anything like that. They will get an alert. Yeah, it's definitely a alternate. And I know there is a coordinator there in the state EOC office or DHSEM. And, they… this… the DHSEM… Approves. Communities, To be able to apply for the process, or apply for the program. so… but tribal can go straight to FEMA. Yeah, I guess that's… I wasn't really fully prepared to… make a presentation, but, that's IPAWS in a… like in a little basket. Questions?

Alex Temple-SERC Coordinator: Hey, Kevin, this is Alex Temple with DHSNM. I have a question about that regarding your guys' access, if nobody minds me asking a question.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Go ahead, Alex.

Alex Temple-SERC Coordinator: are you guys… have you seen it work? I know it's supposed to work over the GPS, but with the limited cell network that you have up in the rural areas, have you seen it, or have you guys been able to test it to see if it still does work via the satellite? You know, like, on your iPhone, you can still connect to a satellite as it passes, but it may not be. day-to-day communication. have you guys seen it work? It's just… I'm just curious how well it's working in the rural areas.

Kevin Knowlton-Kawerak: We, so we just got approved over the summer, and… we haven't done a live test yet. So I'm not… that I… I do not know how it works as far as satellites. I do know, like, GCI has cell towers in all of our communities, and if we geofence the… the community, then technically it's supposed to go to their cell towers. and then anyone within… within reach of those cell towers, they get the notification. for satellite sat… Satellite connection, like if you're out in the country and not… not within range of us, Of a cell tower. not sure how that is supposed to work, and I've been… that is a good question that I… I should be asking, FEMA. I'm working with them also to make sure that we've got, some other questions answered, but. As I get more information, I can share it with. With the LEPCA.

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: So this is Bryan Fisher. I'll add a little bit to that. So there is no satellite coverage for any satellite telephony on the IPAWS system, so it's strictly… You know, over broadcast TV and radio, and then over the cellular network. One of the challenges that we have here in Alaska is not all of the cell towers are upgraded to carry the signal. So, you know, if you apply through us, and I'll just share this, maybe Kim could put it in the chat, Scott Nelson is the community, the municipality coordinator at the state. to get a certificate, a COG, they call it, from IPAWS. I think it's important, particularly in rural areas, that you do some pretty robust testing to see really where the cell towers, whether it's GCI or AT&T or Verizon, any of them, where the coverage really is in your areas. But definitely know, like, you wouldn't get anything on an Iridium or Starlink or anything like that, it's not configured that way yet.

Alex Temple-SERC Coordinator: Thank you, sir. I appreciate that. I was… I did not know that, and I was, just kind of curious for our own… my own purposes.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Okay, thank you. Tom, are you able to… step in yet? Okay, not hearing Tom yet. So, yes?

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Nancy? This is Amanda over at Anchorage. sorry, I'm having trouble with this interface, otherwise I would put this in the chat. I'm looking at the notes from the last LEPCA meeting. And during that meeting, we had discussed a networking session to be set up for this group regarding best practices and strategies and tactics across Alaska. for utilizing the IPAWS system and other alert and warning systems, because you do need to have. a, software package in order to access that IPAWS system. So as I referenced the notes, I see that there was supposed to be a networking session set up for this group to socialize best practices and discuss this. So I'm not sure if that occurred or not. If it did not occur, maybe we need to make a motion to do that. If it did occur, maybe we need to do it again. Just a thought as I review the notes. from our discussions last meeting. Thank you.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Thank you, Amanda. I have not seen anything. Tom, can you put something in the chat? Do you know if there was a… Networking session, or anything that happened? And should we go ahead and just vote to do one? And I can see your comments in the chat, Tom. I had to hop back off and just try another computer. Amanda, do you want to make a motion to, I don't, hold on, there's a message. Oh, a motion is required of somebody. Wants to volunteer to take point. That would be great. yeah, I haven't heard or seen anything. Kim, have you… Seen anything on that, on a work session, or any notes from that?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Nancy and Amanda, I have not seen a work session on my side. I am unsure if there was one done offline. I'm also not entirely sure how those best practices would be implemented without a group. Coordinating it, and then bringing it to the committee to get voted on or approved if they want to change any… programs or regulations.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: This is Amanda in Anchorage.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: So… Go ahead.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: First, what we had discussed is having a training session with the FEMA and or state coordinators of the systems. FEMA certainly has plenty of experts as the administrator of that system. the state of Alaska does as well. as Brian mentioned, they do have a coordinator for the statewide system. who I'm sure could offer a wealth of knowledge about tips and tricks for how to administer that. Excuse my voice. in Alaska. So what I would suggest is first. an overview of the system for educational purposes. Secondarily, I would suggest just a few tips and tricks from the state of Alaska. Possibly from some. Super users, people that have used it recently, a few cases. to demonstrate. how Alaska communities are able to implement best practices.

From that, the LEPCA can be educated as to the status quo of IPAWS in the state of Alaska and in communities across Alaska. And then from there, perhaps we can, you know. move forward with some changes to not only in our own communities or with our own LEPCs, but also maybe for statewide recommendation as well. So, that is what I would suggest. I think that we, at least, and I, I believe I've made a note of this before in the, in one of these meetings. That currently, the way that system functions, requiring us to all purchase our own technology in order to do that. As far as I know, the companies are charging us based on population. So… there is, at least two systems that I know of that are IPAWS administrators that have statewide coverage right now and are paying for our entire population for the state of Alaska. So I understand we need redundancy but I think we have some of that built into our system already and we just need to become educated about it so that we can make good decisions for our community. And report, thanks.

Alex Temple-SERC Coordinator: Hi, this is Alex with the state of Alaska. to… for the training regarding the IPAWS, there is free training online provided by FEMA. it is IS247.C. It's a two-hour course, and it's… it's geared towards emergency management personnel, and law enforcement and fire departments to give them an overview of what IPAWS is. There's no prerequisites. So just wanted to put that out there for informational purposes that there is free training. That'd be a great source to start with for the baseline. And then, you know, more of the perhaps as if you if the LEPC requests it or would like it. You know, there could be further in-person training. Thank you.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Ryan O'Shaughnessy?

Ryan O'Shaughnessy-CBJ: Thanks, Kim. yeah, Amanda, I agree with you. I think there'd be a lot of value in examining what tools are in place statewide, and what, different political subdivisions have learned and have questions on and where we can share some knowledge there. I know for us at CBJ, you know, we have a public alerting system that we use to. communicate press releases and assembly meetings and all those kinds of things, and that's, that's AlertSense. and we were able to add the IPAWS function and the, the, the public warning function, at no additional cost, but… I would definitely be really interested in hearing like where those redundancies are at. And so maybe that's, you know, a side meeting that could happen at the conference in March, or maybe there's a specialized focus group on that. I don't really have capacity to, to, take on organizing that, and getting those, those experts, and, and, and trainers. organized, but I would… I would be very interested, and I know there's several other people within our… our organization that would… that would be interested in attending that, if we could get that organized.

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: So, my record, this is Brian, my recommendation is that you all shoot something both to Michelle Torres and Scott Nelson about that. Scott could get the IPAWS folks, they're usually very, very happy to come up here and do sessions in person with us. and then, worded the way you spoke there, Amanda and Ryan, you know, Scott might be able to do… we don't have any clue what alert origination software you guys buy, we just do the authorization piece with the IPAWS cog, but, he may be able to help reach out, collect, you know, a little survey before the conference in the spring. on what applications you all are using and what we're using at the state. and then, and have a session there with the IPAWS folks along with… Along with a session for you all to talk about what you're using, lessons learned, and then you guys obviously can talk internally about cost and all those kind of things, but that'd be my recommendation.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Brian. I dropped Scott Nelson's contact information in the chat. Michelle, if you'd like to drop your contact information in the chat, they can reach out to yourself or Scott.

Michelle Torres-DHSEM: Do I have a few minutes to say one thing, Kim? This is Michelle.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Of course.

Michelle Torres-DHSEM: I appreciate, that you guys are looking for this course, and I'll see what I can find for the future. But I will tell you, as of right now, the conference schedule for spring of 2027 is full. But if there's any cancellations or any changes, I'd be happy to slide an IPAWS class in. But in the meantime, I will look for it to be at our 2028 conference.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Michelle.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: This is Amanda. The other idea is to we go to these meetings. And they're hours long. we could have a presentation given, you know, with our intentions of. what we would like presented at this meeting, if that pleases the group. I think this would be a good forum to get some education about that. I'm not sure who it is that chooses the different presentations that we receive. But I think we could line out what the intent is of that presentation. an understanding of what the known current statewide capacity is. for alert and warning. just a general overview of what it is, our known current statewide capacity. because I believe at the last meeting, that's when we learned that forestry was, getting statewide capacity as well. So, you know, I think this might be a good forum for that, knowing that all of you are in… some level of development or improvement, regarding alert and warning. And some of you are using it constantly. That might be an opportunity as well to include that. Over.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: thank you, Amanda. Nancy?

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Sorry, I'm talking and my mic's off. I was gonna say, Amanda, can you email Tom, like, just a brief outline or bullets, and then, because he does, him and Kim, you know, email both of them, because they do work on our agendas.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: That's okay.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: for these meetings. And then that way we can… they… well, they can get it moving with the… through. Thank you.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Yeah, I can't email, but I mean, we're saying it here. I don't know why we have…

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Okay. Okay. Yeah, it should be captured. Thank you. Any hands… I don't see any other hands up, so we'll move forward to the discussion on rewrite of the 2018 LEPC Handbook Committee selection. So that is, I think, in our packets.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Can you hear me now, Kim?

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Yes, go ahead, Tom.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: I changed computers, Okay, This is the discussion on… basically, this is funding for next year. And so now's the time. To start talking, I… Talking to our legislators about. funding for the LEPC. I think we did a really good job last year. with, you know, getting some funding, although there's… the funding is still from the 2005 level, and not… you know, really a lot of money, but I think it's a good start, but the big thing is telling the legislators what we do. I mean, when you go, like. well, I'm from the LEPC and needs funds, they're like, yeah, sure. So, I'm trying to get, hang on.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Tom, this one was, item 4… yeah, we can hear you. It was for item 4C, the rewrite of the handbook.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Can you hear me? Okay.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Can you still hear us, Tom?

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: I still am. I'm trying to get to the agenda. On another computer. On another computer.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Okay. Yes, it's item 4C, when you can get it pulled up.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Yeah. Hang on.

Dave Reilly-DHSEM: Kim, this is Dave.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Item 4, old business, Now we're talking about, The 2018 LEPC Handbook.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Yes, Tom?

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Right. We need to, you know… There… that needs to be rewritten. Some of the stuff's been done, but nothing's been formalized. Or cat, or what do we, put together. So, we're looking for somebody, a couple of people that would like to help do the 2018, update the 2018 handbook. Do you have any volunteers?

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: Aaron Hankins of Petersburg, I would volunteer to help us out.

Kate Janoski-FEPC Chair: Yeah, this is Kate Janoski of UAF. I would like to help out too.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Perfect.

Kaleena Barnes-KPB EM/LEPC: This is Kalina Barnes with KPB. I would also appreciate that opportunity.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Tom, I can also help in whatever capacity the, the group would like me to assist in. So… I also have some of the, the previous notes from, when, Brenda Alberg, the previous, co-chair, submitted her notes, and Erin Leders, from DEC, her notes, if the committee would like to review that as well.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Thank you.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: And I, Nancy, I can also help.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Good. Anybody else? Thank you very much. Alright, next is… I'd like to discuss about what's going on with unincorporated or incorporated or unincorporated areas for representation. We've had… Several… Informal discussions with this, and… Right now, if you're not a… If the organization is not incorporated. or an unincorporated area. their emergency management and planning is supposed to be done by the SERC, who has turned that over to Department of Homeland Security Emergency Management, if I'm correct. Is that right, Brian?

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: Yeah, yeah, the… The State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is there to help plan in the unincorporated areas of the unorganized borough.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Okay, that's what we thought, but we never heard, you know, an official thing with that. But. the… We're looking at recommending. But the Department of Homeland Security Emergency Management assign. Specific individuals to specific locations around the state, and I know this is kind of like, you guys are short people. But, so, there's one point of contact. For each of the areas to try to flounder their way through some of the stuff it gets very frustrating when you transfer into DMVA, and they're like, well, no, that's not our position, that's… this is so. And so you get bounced around quite a lot. And so we'd like you to kind of consider that, Brian. And I know… you're kind of looking forward to getting the heck out of Dodge quickly. I think you're retiring at the end of the month? And, or going on permanent leave at the end of the month. Either way, you've done a lot for the state over the years, so I wanted to thank you for that.

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: No, thanks for that. I got that till the end of November, and I'll just… I'll just put it out here now. There is no way we're going to be able to assign a single point of. First of all, we have… We have planners, and we have response personnel. each one of those is probably… Three people on a good day, three planners and three emergency management response folks. so they… just because of it being that small staff, their responsibility is actually statewide, so there's not… there's just not gonna be a practical way to do that. I'm not sure if there's any other ideas, but… But that one's gonna be a non-starter. There's just not enough staff to do that.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Good. How short are you on staff? Last I heard, you were, like, down 20?

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: No, we're actually doing really great now. Deputy Director Peltier, Tiffany can tell you the exact numbers, but we're… I've done a really good job over the summer of getting staff put in place, but still, that still is a short amount of people assigned to those sections that do planning support. Training support, exercise support, and response. support, so…

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Okay. Well, thank you for your input, Brian. It's nice just to know what you're capable of, and we appreciate what you've done over the years. Hope you have a great time golfing in Florida. So, next is, correspondence communication.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Tom? Tom? Real quick, there's a hand in the audience – from Dave.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: I'm sorry?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: In the chat. Dave from the chat would like to make a comment.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Okay.

Dave Reilly-DHSEM: Hey, Tom, Dave Reilly, Emergency Program Manager of the Planning Section for the DHSEM. I'm also the Chair of the SERC All Hazards Plan Review Committee. So if there's any planning related items, it can come to me. Our stately planner is also Alex, and I'll put both of our contact information in the chat. But anything that comes up planning related, feel free to send them to me as a single point of contact. I can make sure it gets handled.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Thank you very much. Next up is, Correspondence.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Hey, Tom, can I chime in here? This is Amanda.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Sure.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: So, I think, the remote… work program, DEC's remote work program has an organization for the unorganized borough that has point of contacts. Is that correct? Is that the organization for the remote work program? We still have single point of contacts for the unorganized borough? Anyone? From DEC? Anybody? anybody that's in the unorganized borough.

Kathy Shea-Alaska DEC: Hi, this is Kathy at DEC. I'm not sure which remote… project you're working… is it the Remote Maintenance Workers for Worker Systems?

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Yeah. Yeah, I was just thinking that they do have an organization that's set up for the unorganized borough with a single point of contact, or at least they used to. and I'm just wondering if that's… if that's, what Tom was thinking. because if I recall correctly, the remote work, program was is heavily utilized and valued. So, I'm not in the unorganized borough, but I was thinking that was a program that seemed, very highly valued and organized for the unorganized borough. And then. Yes, if if I'm. Talking about the old days. Then maybe it's it's no longer a organization.

Erin Leaders-DEC: Amanda, this is Erin Leaders. if I may, try to answer part of that question. The Remote Maintenance Worker Program is very specific to, there's 15 regional remote maintenance workers, it's very specific to providing support to, utilities.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Sure.

Erin Leaders-DEC: I don't have, like, the program details, but it's not… it's not meant, I think, in the way that you're referring to. It's not just unorganized, it's very specific to certain. regional communities.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Okay.

Erin Leaders-DEC: That's tied to specific funding, specific grant funding.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Yeah, the reason that I bring it up is because I wanted to give an Alaska specific example of how regional coordination is done in the unorganized borough. But I know that across, the United States, there's lots of, regional emergency management programs that help with coordinating, And I think that's what Tom was getting at is how difficult it is for communities to keep up with the different contacts. but I do know that, there's… there's many states across the United States that have designated regional emergency managers at the state level, and so… Tom, is that what you were trying to get at?

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Yes.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Okay, thanks.

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: My comments don't change. So I understand that. I know the regional construct in a lot of other states. The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is not resourced that way. So that's where the challenge lies. And I, you know, we'll see what happens with the new administration, but… we would really need to… really robust the staff to have some kind of presence like that. It's really the same concern that we've had forever about not being able to position staff, you know, physically position staff in offices around the state. We just… we're just a… we're just a small agency, and so we just don't have the funding to have, like, you know, people in the bigger cities or the… or the hub communities and all, so it's a… it's definitely a challenge, but it's… it's… and it's all… it's all about.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Brian.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Anybody else have a comment?

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: I do, Tom. If hearing both Tom and Amanda, what it sounds like the desire is… compared to with what the, what the capability of DHSEM is, if this is something that we're gonna want, this is… Sounds like the place that we need to start is by advocating to make sure that there's enough staff to fulfill that. Which would mean a lobbying effort on the part of all of the. members of the LEPCA and their communities to let… the state legislature and the new administration know that this is something that we hope that they prioritize. So, it may be a good idea, since we're already talking about it, to start work on a letter coming from the LEPCA, and then going back to our community, similar how we did with the funding. you know, requests. To, be able to submit to legislatures.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: That sounds like a great idea. Just start bringing it to the legislature and say, it would be really nice to do this, but you need to fund the, Department of Homeland Security Emergency Management a little bit better.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: As part of that, we would probably need to speak with DHSEM and make sure that, okay, so this is what we're hoping to achieve. What resources, you know, in the form of personnel, etc, do you need in order to make this happen? And having that list handy before we start our letter, you know, our lobbying effort would probably be really important. that way we knew exactly what we were asking for.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: -huh.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: and then, you know, we're not asking for something that's, DHSEM. It's like, actually, we need this. So…

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: Yeah, I really appreciate that. It's Brian again. You obviously have to wait till the new governor and new director is appointed. We're not asking for that. Unless the new administration is asking for that, we are always in a position of supporting the governor's budget. So, we definitely would ask to have. conversations when… when the agency gets a new director on board, before any of that, because… We're we support. So. You know, it's gonna be, I'm sure, a base budget to start with the transition, but we can't go off on our own, and… work with folks to ask for more funding for our agency, so we'll have to be pretty careful about that in the future, so I appreciate that comment.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: Yeah, so, yeah, definitely coordinate, you know.

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: Thank you.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: that, you know, if we're gonna do something like that, definitely. So, that's all I want to say.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Thank you. Anybody else? That's a good idea.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Hey, Tom and Nancy, the Alaska Emergency Management Agency was also. working… sorry, Alaska Emergency Management Association was also working to provide the new administration. as they're coming in. I forget what they call it, but a advocacy letter. for the position of the Alaska Emergency Management Agency. I just wanna make sure with the staff that they they. the LEPCA staff and DHSEM that they see that as an appropriate role just for clarity. Is that an appropriate role for this group as well? to provide position statements or or advocacy. letters.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: I personally think that the LEPCA. is… It's supposed to be a strong efficacy for… to the state, and to Okemah. Let's get together and find out how we can make this much better. Is there anybody that has anything else to say? Thank you, Amanda.

V. CORRESPONDENCE / COMMUNICATIONS / PRESENTATIONS

Includes the DHS&EM and DEC updates recorded in the transcript.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Okay, next is correspondence, communications, and presentations. Do we have any of those?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: I think DHSEM is up first.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Yep.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: if Brian or Tiffany wanted to share something?

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Department of Homeland Security is, you know, Brian should be next.

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Co-Chair. Brian Fisher, Director. Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Thanks. I just want to provide a few updates for everybody. Like Tom said, this will be my last LEPC Association meeting. And, this afternoon, my last, meeting as the co-chair of the State Emergency Response Commission. So, first and foremost, each and every one of you, thank you. I love you. I appreciate all the dedication and service that you have provided to. your communities, Alaska as a whole, my agency and staff, and personally to me, over the years, I'm wrapping up a 32-year career with the agency. And I can't be prouder of all of the work that all of us have done together to make Alaska a safer place. So I'll just start with that.

I will, with the co-chair's indulgence, let Tiffany, jump in a little bit here when I'm done. like I just mentioned in the previous discussion, we are doing really, really well with, getting staff hired again. We had a real tough time after Typhoon Halong, and then with, unfortunately, a couple of deaths in the agency, and a whole bunch of people left after Halong. We were down, at one point, almost 20 positions out of 60, so it was pretty… it was pretty tough for us. we're almost back to full strength right now, and for those who don't know, our agency is 64 employees strong. so we're right around there, we might be somewhere between 60, I think, filled positions right now. So… I think from the staffing perspective, we're doing pretty well. We have submitted our internal budget documents for Governor Dunleavy's proposed budget. I think all of you know, once the new governor is sworn in. It's definitely up to them on… on which, you know, if they're gonna take that budget, there's certainly gonna be some modifications, I would assume. to that budget process is in.

We've also completed our internal transition team documents. for the incoming administration, so I think we're in a spot where the agency is ready to do a successful handoff, to the incoming administration. I will let you know that, not only myself, but Major General Torrence Saxe, the Adjutant General. And my boss, he is also retiring. So I think he's a few days after me, December 3rd, I think, is his day, but he is also leaving state service. So, we'll have a new governor, lieutenant governor, new adjutant general, new director of the agency, so quite a bit of change. From what we've had over the last eight years. at least. So it's going to be, you know, it's time for everybody else to come and talk. Take the reins and move forward with emergency management in the state.

I did want to share a little bit about, you know, we're definitely in the throes of recovering from Typhoon Halong, the most catastrophic disaster I had dealt with in my career. still have two communities largely displaced, Kipnuk and Kwigillingok, still displaced and will likely be displaced for yet another winter, it's pretty tough. We got some, some really unfortunate news. From FEMA, they denied our request for an authority they have called permanent housing construction, which would build new homes, no matter the cost, they denied us for that, essentially said it was too expensive. I said, those folks from those communities are Americans too, we're continuing to fight, however. It's gonna be a long road to hoe there, long road to hoe, for the recovery from Ha Long. we're actively monitoring all the storms that are coming through the North Pacific, we're right in the middle of fall sea storm season, so that's an active operation for us always.

Outside of that, I think, everything else is moving fairly steadily. I want to share, I've had a number of face-to-face meetings. And virtual meetings with Cameron Hamilton, the old and new FEMA administrator? Cam was, if you recall, he was appointed, or nominated to be the administrator under Secretary Noem, and he testified in a congressional hearing that FEMA should not be eliminated. He was fired. Kristi Noem was then fired, and he is back, and the Senate confirmed him a while ago. So, he is the guy for the remainder, I assume, of the Trump administration. I'm feeling much more positive than I was, when Noem was the Secretary of DHS, about both the future of FEMA and the future of resources and funding for all of us at the state and local tribal level. So I will be meeting with. Administrator Hamilton next week again at the National Emergency Management Association conference. He's going to unveil quite a number of initiatives on reorganizing FEMA. And looking at all their programs, the grant programs. And how they're organized. I will tell you, he is definitely an advocate for mitigation. we still have a long ways to go to restore those programs. but he's definitely looking at doing some changes to those, for example, he's looking at things like the. Hazard mitigation grant program being. Administered, moved over towards the Office of Response and Recovery. So for those of you familiar with the act, section 404 mitigation. which is the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, would be tied directly with and compatible with. the Section 406 Mitigation Program, which is Mitigating infrastructure as you're making repairs to it, public assistance mitigation. So, it sounds like he's gonna do quite a bit of reconfiguring of the resilience side of FEMA.

We are still kind of in the throes of a bunch of court orders that are restoring grant funding and removing conditions and restrictions, largely around immigration and election security. So, once those court orders and the previous programs that are getting restored are done, I think we'll see kind of back to some more stability, at least with our grant programs. He definitely recognizes the need for increased emergency management performance grant funding. We're still operating under the kind of the mode where the president wants the states and locals to do more.

But with that in mind, he knows that in order for us to increase our capacity at the state, local, and tribal level. to be able to do that, that we're going to need more funding on the front end. So, I'm pretty excited that he recognizes that. He said that to me 4 or 5 times already. Just back on the mitigation side again, he is very focused on buying down national risk. And in his mind, that means that he wants to focus the mitigation efforts on critical infrastructure, utilities, and facilities. So, and he also said that includes for-profit utilities, so that's interesting. It's never been a thing allowed before. It's a law, so Congress would have to act, but he's very much thinking about mitigating the utilities that are necessary to keep the lifelines up and flowing in the country and in our communities and all, I'm still not sure the details. The devils will be in those. I think he's gonna release some of that next week. I do think you guys should maybe talk. I think most of you have seen his memo defining what emergency management is. which is a little bit concerning. Essentially, his definition is a coordinator of emergency services, so fire, police, EMS. A little troubling. No real mention of mitigation preparedness.

Planning. So I think we have some additional work to do to. Understand what he means with respect to everything else there. the other traditional phases of emergency management, if you will. So I don't think many of us are subscribed or ascribed to that particular definition. He just released some strategic vision documents to the agency today, so I will get those to Kim, and she can share them out with the LEPCA list. So you guys can see what he's talking to internally to the agency there. I can tell you the atmosphere, the climate in FEMA with the staff, much, much better now. They definitely appreciate that this gentleman kind of fell on a sword and got fired for defending the agency and the people that worked there. So so from that vein, they're pretty happy that he's at the helm. My assessment, my personal assessment, he's not an emergency manager. He was kind of an EMS person, medical person. I obviously was a Navy SEAL, and I did some stuff in the office of the chief medical officer in DHS before we got the administrative job, But he has been the most open and transparent and communicative administrator I have seen or worked with in 30 years. like I said, I've already met with him face-to-face 7 or 8 times, and he only came back a couple months ago, so I think that bodes well for he is very open to be able to communicate with folks.

He definitely is interested in hearing from everybody, not just the state, but also local emergency managers, tribal emergency managers. So, if you ever do get a chance to give him a call or see him in person, he's very happy and eager to talk to anybody, he's pretty accessible. He definitely doesn't seem like a DC guy, in my opinion, but I just wanted to share that with you. I think FEMA still have the kind of ways to go to recover from all the damage done to the agency over the last couple of years, but. They're starting to slowly get back to normal, and the atmosphere has definitely improved for the agency staff there.

Our team is working with pretty much the same exact folks at FEMA Region 10 acting Administrator Vince Makovich is still the Regional Administrator, and the team at Region 10 didn't get impacted very much by the changes over the last couple of years, so they're still in place. They still know Alaska. They know us at the state. They know many of you who are especially frequent flyers with disasters. So that's pretty good. They are just standing by awaiting guidance from headquarters on any changes that are going to happen. So I'm going to stop there. I was going to let Tiffany have a chance. I think we're planning to have General Sachs appoint Tiffany as the acting director. in, in about a month or so, about 2 weeks before I, retire. So, we have that continuity in place until a new governor's on board and their transition team does their gig, and finds a new director to appoint. So, Tiffany, did you have anything you wanted to share?

Tiffany Peltier-Alaska DHSEM: Brian, I think you covered just about everything. Circling back around to the grants, as you mentioned, we are working through a lot of those old grants, trying to get the holds removed. There's been a lot of new information that's come out because of the court orders, so some of those are being reissued to us, and then working through how we get all the other holds removed from them so we can push those awards out. That is causing a huge backlog, to the grants, and just trying to deal with all of that, and going back and forth. With FEMA in their systems, they're not user friendly. so we are struggling to do that, but we are working to get that money out as quickly as possible. On the FY2025 grants, we do anticipate that we will be requesting an extension once we finally get those all sorted out. we'll try to get that in as soon as possible so that the communities know if they have, more time to work on those projects or not. The 2026 ones, we are working to get those submitted to FEMA to get their approval and get the holds removed from those programs. That along with the Halong recovery efforts and also the Tolk wildfire recovery efforts, everybody's working away. As Brian mentioned, we are pretty much back to full staff. We've had a couple of vacancies since. And we are working on filling those, but we were able to bring Mike Makins back as the disaster assistance program manager. So we're good at the top level and just working through that in preparation for Brian retiring. And I believe that is all that I have to add to that. Thank you.

Bryan Fisher-Director DHSEM: End of report, Mr. Cochere.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Thank you very much. Appreciate it. Next up is, Hang on. Department of… DC.

Kara Kusche-DEC/SPAR: Yeah, thanks, Tom. Good morning, everyone. This is Kara Kusche. I am with the DEC Division of Spill Prevention and Response, and my role is the Prevention and Technical Support Manager. First of all, I wanted to say well done, Director Fisher, and from all of us at ADEC. Congratulations on your retirement, certainly a step we all hope to get to one day, so that's exciting. we have put together a written brief that includes detailed program updates from the Division of Spill Prevention and Response. And that will be emailed to you after this meeting. But I would like to highlight, just a few things.

We welcomed a new Director of Spill Prevention and Response that started this summer. Her name is Shannon Miller, and Shannon's role as the director is to lead the department's efforts to prevent oil and hazardous substance spills, prepare for incidents, and responding rapidly to protect human health and the environment. Throughout Shannon's career, both with DEC and over at Alaska DNR, Director Miller has advanced complex programs centered on resource management and strengthening Alaska's ability to meet evolving environmental demands. She brings us nearly two decades of experience navigating Alaska's unique operational landscape along with deep expertise in statewide program administration. Director Miller holds a Bachelor's of Arts in Public Communications from UAA.

Let's see. Also, we continue with collaboration with state and federal agencies in our area in regional planning efforts, and during exercises and responses, we're grateful for the support of your agencies and others that provide our team. And these activities, you'll see in the written brief that that includes information about upcoming area committee meetings, which are held both in person and virtually, so encourage everybody to attend those planning meetings. Those are where we plan for oil and hazmat response in the state, so your participation. can have a real impact in your communities.

Our team continues to support disaster preparedness and recovery. Two notable instances are recent site visits to Western Alaska to support Typhoon Holong recovery efforts. And our team in Southeast has outstanding relationships with our partners in Juneau, which it used to conduct both outreach and shoreline cleanup assessment team field visits prior to the glacial outburst flood. As we transition into winter, I want to remind everyone to remember their oil and hazardous material prevention and preparedness. We have a variety of tools on our website and a great team of responders ready to provide technical assistance or answer any questions. Feel free to reach out to us anytime. And then lastly, thank you everyone for your work in putting together today's agenda and for hosting a productive meeting.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Any comments or questions? Thank you very much, Kara.

Kara Kusche-DEC/SPAR: You're welcome.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Includes the EPA Region 10 Enforcement Program introduction and comments by Erin Williams.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Okay, next up is public comments. Kim, do we have anybody signed up for public comments?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Tom, we have one, Erin Williams from EPA.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: I'm sorry, I didn't hear. We have one…

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Yes, Tom, we have one, Erin Williams from EPA Region 10.

Tom Vaden-LEPCA Co-Chair: Okay.

Erin Williams-EPA Region 10: Hi, this is Erin. So I introduced myself really briefly on the introduction as we went around, but I wanted to give a little bit more background on who I am and what my role at EPA is. And let everyone know, I know there's some big turnovers going on, but for everyone that. And while we'll still be around in the spring, I do plan on hopefully attending the meeting in person and doing a little more in depth presentation on kind of our role at EPA of what we do.

I am the EPCRA Coordinator, Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, and I work very closely with our Risk Management Plan Program, which is part of the Clean Air Act. And our two programs are focused on chemical safety and accident prevention around hazardous substances stored at facilities. As I mentioned earlier, I oversee or our region overseas, the Pacific Northwest, so Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska. And our team is focused on helping facilities achieve compliance with both EPCRA and RMP obligations. So this includes the annual Tier 2 chemical inventory reports that facilities are supposed to send to the SERC, the LEPC, and the Fire Department.

I've worked closely with Kathy Shea a lot in the past about facilities coming into compliance and making sure they are submitting their annual Tier 2 reports. If you have facilities in your jurisdiction that you think should be reporting or have reported in the past. aren't reporting anymore, and you want assistance with working with them to come into compliance, please feel free to reach out.

On top of that, the risk management plan program is for facilities that store a lot larger inventories of hazardous chemicals. One of the biggest ones in Alaska that we come across seafood processors and their anhydrous ammonia systems. If they have over 10,000 pounds, they have much more stringent requirements they have to meet to prevent accidental releases within the anhydrous ammonia systems, including conducting audits and safety checks and maintenance requirements. And so we come out to facilities and. are doing a comprehensive inspection of their risk management program and making sure they are staying on top of all of these elements to prevent accidents from occurring. As I said, we're, I'm actually gonna be up in Anchorage next week, conducting a couple inspections. I've reached out to Kim and Kathy, and Anchorage LEPC and Fire Department. When we're in the area, we invite locals and the SERC and the LEPC and Fire Department to come along if you have the capacity. It's great relationship building for both the. local responding responders and the community of being able to have that on site knowledge and tour the facility and build those relationships in case something does happen at that facility. You have more background knowledge and then, as I said, this summer, we'll be back up in Anchorage, for more inspections, also in Fairbanks and Sitka.

Our goal is normally about a 5-year inspection rotation on risk management plan facilities. And unfortunately, with the number of staff we have and. The number of facilities in our region, we don't quite get there that often, but we do focus more on facilities that are higher risk, whether they've had releases in the past or whether they're in a geographic area that has higher potential impact to communities and stuff like that. So we'll get out to those facilities more often, more within that 5-year rotation than some of the lower-risk facilities that might be in the middle of Idaho, nowhere where the off-site consequences are, potentially less severe. I… Erin, I see you have a question that you just put in or you said you have a question. If you want to unmute yourself and ask, please do.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: Okay, I'm happy to wait for the end of your, Testimony or, your comment first.

Erin Williams-EPA Region 10: That was really about all I was going to say. I was just going to say I am going to drop my contact information in the chat. So if you have any questions, feel free to reach out. I'm also happy to do presentations at. You can register at your local LEPC meetings if you would like. Most likely would be virtual unless it happens to correlate with like when I'm in Sitka or something this summer.

Aaron Hankins-Petersburg LEPC: Thanks, everyone. We'll see you on the next one.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

The Alaska Forum presentation was delivered early while the meeting was waiting for the co-chair to reconnect. It is placed here under agenda item F. The transcript does not contain a separate discussion of agenda items A–E.

Kathy Shea-Alaska DEC: while we wait, maybe we could have Amy Penny do her Alaska Forum presentation. she can be ready in about 5 minutes, if Tom is not… connected yet. Would that work for everyone?

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Can you hear any of that?

Kathy Shea-Alaska DEC: Giving some thumbs up. Okay, she's readjusting her time. and so she'll let me know when… Oh, and Tanner is also presenting with her, so, When they are ready, they'll let me know. And then if Tom isn't here yet, then we can go ahead with that. Thanks everybody for the thumbs up and the feedback in the chat.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Are you okay with that, Tom? Are you okay with that? Okay. So yes, please, Amy, if you can start the presentation. I can pull up the page for you.

Amy Penney-Alaska Forum: Yeah, just give me 2 minutes and I'll get it up.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Amy.

Amy Penney-Alaska Forum: All right. Are you guys ready for me? Are you able to hear me? Okay, perfect. All right. Thanks, everybody. Sorry I'm getting my presentation up in the background. Thanks for giving us the opportunity to present. My name is Amy Penny. I am the deputy director with the Alaska Forum. We are a local nonprofit. That focuses on, you can flip to the next slide. Sorry, I'm not good at this one.

Local nonprofit, we focus on promoting thriving communities through communication, education, and collaboration. This is our mission. I'm not going to read it to you guys, but many of you probably know us for the Alaska Forum on the Environment Conference, previously on the Environment Conference that we host every year. It's a week-long conference that we host in February, and we cover a myriad of topics that I'll get into a little. Down the road here. All right, next one.

Ken Folsom-Kodiak LEPC: We can't see your presentation.

Amy Penney-Alaska Forum: Oh, It's sure I'm not.

Kathy Shea-Alaska DEC: I can see it.

Kaleena Barnes-KPB EM/LEPC: I can see that.

Amy Penney-Alaska Forum: Kim, should I be sharing?

Erin Leaders-DEC: I can see it.

Amy Penney-Alaska Forum: Okay.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: I shared the presentation on the main page, and…

Amy Penney-Alaska Forum: Yeah, I can see it too.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: can you see my screen? whoever said that? I'm sorry, I missed the name.

Ken Folsom-Kodiak LEPC: I can see your screen, but that's it.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: That's okay, I'm following along for her, so she sent me the slide deck in advance. go ahead and keep going, Amy.

Amy Penney-Alaska Forum: Okay, great. Yeah, you can hit the next slide. So again, our main focus is gathering people together, training them, advising them, and connecting them. We are a group that does not take any political affiliations or anything like that. So our goal is really just to educate the general public when we do. Whether it's training or the conference. And you can go to the next slide.

So our five main programs that we work with are the Alaska Forum Conference, the Green Star Communities Program, Safer Choice Program, the Alaska Landfill Operator Training Program, and then we also offer a free Community Emergency Response Team, CERT. training and 40-hour training. So I'll go into each of these a little more through the presentation. I want to apologize, I was going to have a coworker with me doing the Green Star and Safer Choice, pieces, but he is in another meeting, so he couldn't get on early, but I will do my best to cover those. Next slide, please.

These are just our funding and training partners. we are fully grant funded, mainly through federal grants and, state grants, and then we have some other partners as well. All right, next. So the Alaska Forum Conference, this is probably how most of you know us, previously known as the Alaska Forum on the Environment Conference. Two years ago, we took off the name On the Environment, out of the name, just to kind of open it up and be a little more inclusive to. other topics, like health, public health, things like that. every year, we host a conference that is a week long. This year, or in 2027, it'll be February 1st through 5th, 2027, at the Denina Center. Historically, we've hosted, a virtual option as well, but this year, unfortunately, we won't be able to offer that with funding. just with funding restrictions that we have. So everything will be in person this year. It is the largest cross-sector gathering of professionals, organizations, and community members bringing together businesses, nonprofits, education. and everybody just to kind of collaborate on projects, challenges and and issues going on in Alaska is really our biggest goal to bring people together to sit down in the room to discuss what's happening in Alaska. What are our biggest issues? And. what needs attention. Like I said, we don't take sides, so if there is a controversial issue, we won't talk about that issue at the forum unless we have both sides represented, so people can make their own educated decision on how they feel about it, but we won't be telling anybody how to feel about it. So at the forum, you can expect about 100 technical sessions, six keynotes. We have about 70 exhibitor booths. Networking opportunities, nonprofit, Sorry, networking opportunities. lunches, breakfast, music, things like that. It's a really good time. We hope everybody can always join us. Yeah, we can go to the next slide.

Sorry, I'm trying to keep up on my other screen. At the forum, we talk about a lot of different things, but these are our topics presented on. this year, one of our main focuses is going to be emergency response and preparedness, so we do have a call for… submissions… call for presentations open through the end of today, and it's a little bit of short notice, but if anybody has a topic that they'd like to present on, we do, you could go to our website at akforum.org, and… And… submit your presentation topic, and then have our planning committee review it. But, like I said, all of these topics on the screen are what we cover. Anything from public health and safety, resource development, tribal governance. waste, changing environments, things like that. It's a… it's a very big, diverse conference with a lot of people. I think we see about 1,200 to 1,400 people a year. next slide, please.

And then… yeah, like I said, we've been grateful. We've been around for this will be our 29th conference in February. So we've been grateful for the support from many of you guys and all of your agencies. This is just a small shot of involvement over the years, whether it was people speaking, presenting. having a booth attending, we're grateful for all of the engagement from… from you all, and hope to see you in 2027. All right, next slide, please.

So it's a Green Star Communities program. I am not as good at talking about these as Tanner is, so I apologize that he couldn't be here. but we offer, with one of our grants through the USDA and ConocoPhillips and the partner of Alpar, we offer the Green Star Communities program, which is a non-regulatory, no-cost technical assistance, for rural Alaska communities. So, people can sign up, like I said, it's non-regulatory, so there's nothing, we're not reporting back to anybody of what they find, but it's really just a voluntary program that helps. communities strengthen their water, wastewater, solid waste, emergency preparedness, hazardous waste, material management, things like that in their communities. So Tanner, my co-worker, will go out on site, do an assessment on what is happening in that community. and how it aligns with 12 community Green Star standards that we have, and assess things that could be improved on, make recommendations, and then work out a 5-year plan with that community to. implement those suggestions. like I said, really the focus is the water, wastewater, and solid waste, and hazardous material management, especially with landfills and things like that. And so, he does about 12 communities a year, all voluntary, so we get a lot of the community recommendations from, from people reaching out directly to us or recommending a community. So if if you know anybody who would benefit from some technical assistance in these areas, please reach out after I get through this. I'll drop my email address in the chat and Tanner's email address, too. All right, next slide, please.

so the Green Start program, this is just kind of walks you through it. you enroll. Again, it's free, it's voluntary, and non-regulatory. so Tanner will get together all of the stakeholders and kind of assess what. The next steps are, he'll do an on-site visit reviewing the water, wastewater, recycling, energy, and emergency systems, build out that 5-year work plan based off of those 12 Green Star standards, and then once. The work plan is being implemented. The communities are recognized. for what they are doing and the steps they're taking to make their communities a better place at the conference every year. All right, next slide, please.

So the other program Tanner works directly on is our Safer Choice and Pollution Prevention Program, which is a grant through EPA that we partner with Kinnick Tribe on. the EPA has a, Sorry, I'm losing the words. it's essentially a program for the EPA to reduce chemical exposure in rural Alaska by using safer choice products. And so a safer choice product is. products that they have identified and listed as… not as toxic as others. So if you go to a grocery store, you can see this Safer Choice logo on the sign that Tanner's holding up in this picture. and that's… what they've… the EPA has deemed as a better choice product. So our goal with this is going out into small communities and looking at. products that they're using in their janitorial… janitorial like in schools and offices and things like that and assessing maybe what could be replaced. Now we never recommend throwing things away that you've already purchased. We don't want to waste your money. But Tanner goes out and. helps identify products that can be switched out, that help reduce that toxic exposure, and just supports, like, a safer, healthier public homes and space. the other thing that we do with this is go out to community stores and. call out some of these Safer Choice products in the stores with some signage that we've developed. Next slide, please.

So, how Safer Choice works, outreach with rural communities, like I mentioned, stores and tribal offices, educating people, delivering physical and digital publications on what products could be used, surveying what is being currently used, like I said, in certain areas when it, like, schools and offices, and then helping adopt and drive, those, product the new products into the areas. All right, next slide, please. All right.

The next program that we offer is an Alaska landfill operator training program through the USDA, through a grant with the USDA. And AILA is a free program. It's based on the Braylow Rural Alaska Landfill Operator training. kind of developed this and made it our own. designed for a Class 3 landfill or open dump, and it's designed to help, local operators. build their capacity for a safer, just more safe environment. landfill. the training is really valuable for facility operators, IGAP staff, public workers, people in administration. We offer this training twice a year. it goes over core responsibilities of landfills, safety practices, how to use PPE, proper handling of hazardous materials. best practices to keep landfills safe. we offer it both in person and online. The last year, we just offered it online. it's free and open to everyone. Doug Huntman, who works with Delta Back Hall, helps us do this training, and he has a lot of experience in going out into these small communities and assessing their landfills and helping them improve them. So I realized after I sent this over our last training was. in early September. Our next one will be in spring of 2027. and then we also can go out to small communities to do an on-site landfill, Landfill assessment as well, and do the training on-site, more targeted towards their local landfill. All right, next one, please. And then our last program is our grant through the EPA. Brownfield job or Brownfield's job training program, and we offer free community emergency response training. So I'm sure you're all familiar with the cert training. But this is one of the reasons why I think we were given an option to talk here, or and. wanted to. blast this off that this is something that we can offer at no cost. we've done this many different ways, so I'll kind of back up a little bit. Obviously, the CERT training is a no-cost training opportunity to provide basic. community… or basic first responder, Response in the event of an emergency. So basic first aid, fire safety, light search and rescue organization, disaster organization. And we've offered it as a hybrid class where half of it's done online, half of it's or then the hands on portion is done in person in Anchorage. We've offered it all in Anchorage in person. And in our next grant cycle, which starts this October, we will offer it. We're hoping to offer it with the state of Alaska in small hub communities where we'll send a trainer out to those communities. and train people up. And then so nobody has to come to Anchorage. So we're still kind of working through how like the best method of training for cert. But it's been a we've had a great response. We've trained close to 100 people. I think we're at 91. for our first grant, and then our second grant cycle begins soon. so with the CERT training, EPA also requires, on the next slide, please.

A 40-hour HAZWOPER training course. so it's paired together. Anybody who takes CERT also has to take HAZWOPER. and HAZWOPER just helps build a local workforce by participating in practical safety skills. Goes over hazard identification, PPE, respiratory protection, site control, emergency procedures, and all of those. It's a 40 hour week long course and it can be done with our training partner EMI online. or it can be done in person as well, in Anchorage, or again, looking to the option of sending trainers to communities. So, we're excited about, our cert… grant and continuing it. So I think the biggest thing is, we are always looking for people interested in taking these trainings. Whether it's cert, whether it's a lot. or interested in technical assistance through Green Star. and looking for to kind of help spread the word. So as these trainings become available, our next Cert training will be a basics class in February at the Alaska Forum Conference, and then we'll do hopefully another full. 40 h has whopper certification and full cert course in the spring. So if you know anybody, or are interested in getting on the list of when that notifications of when we open registration for these trainings again. Once I get through this, I'll pop my email address in the chat. And then I think that wraps it up. Open to any questions. Sorry, I was a little frazzled through this. I was kind of thinking I was going later and I said yes, but I'm not always good on the fly. So thanks for sticking with me. But yeah, I'm happy to answer any questions about the forum.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Is there any questions for Amy?

Amy Penney-Alaska Forum: Cool. Well, I just put my email address in the chat and our website. So happy to answer any additional questions if anybody wants to email or call or visit our website. Thanks for the time. And yeah, like I said, thanks for sticking with me.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you, Amy, and thank you, for hopping in a little bit early, even though you aren't slotted to go until later.

Amy Penney-Alaska Forum: No problem. Thank you.

VIII. LEPC WRITTEN OR VERBAL STATUS REPORTS

No individual LEPC written or verbal status reports are separately captured in the provided transcript.

IX. MEMBERS' CLOSING COMMENTS

The closing portion includes final acknowledgments and the meeting adjournment. The agenda lists the next meeting as a recommended in-person meeting on Friday, April 2, 2027; that recommendation is agenda information and is not presented as a spoken transcript statement.

Amanda Loach-MOA EM/LEPC: Thanks, everyone. See you guys again soon.

Kate Janoski-FEPC Chair: Thanks, guys.

Ytamar Rodriguez-DEC/SPAR: Thank you.

Peter: Thank you.

Kate Janoski-FEPC Chair: All right.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Alright, if anybody's still on, would like to attend the SERC meeting at 1, the meeting is in the link, or you can pop me an email, I can forward it along to you.

Nancy Durham-FNSB EM/FEPC Vice Chair: Thanks, Kim. See you at 1.

Kim Barenburg-State LEPC Coordinator: Thank you. I'm now going to end the meeting. Thank you, and have a good day.