STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMISSION
MINUTES
April 10, 2015
Anchorage, Alaska

I. Call to order - Chairperson

Chair Hummel called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

A. Roll Call – SERC Coordinator Melanie Wright. Roll call was taken.

Members Present:

Laurel Hummel (Chair) Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Kristin Ryan (Co-Chair) Department of Environmental Conservation
Katherine Eldemar Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Zack Fields Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Jay Butler Department of Health and Social Services
Matthew Leveque Department of Public Safety
Marc Luiken Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Casey Cook Local Government
Jamie Sunderland Local Government
Brian Templin Rural LEPC
Tom Vaden Rural LEPC
James Butler III Public Member at Large

Members Absent:

Department of Fish and Game
Urban LEPC
Urban LEPC
Department of Natural Resources

Ex Officio Members Present:

Donald Jurewicz Alaskan Command
Robert Forgit Federal Emergency Management Agency
CDR Shawn Decker United State Coast Guard
Sheldon Fisher Department of Administration
Jo Dawson Department of Education and Early Development
Nick Knowles Environmental Protection Agency

Guests Present:

Roberta Carney, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Kathy Cavyell, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
B. Quorum Determination – SERC Coordinator Melanie Wright. It was concluded that a quorum was present.

C. Administrative Announcements – SERC Coordinator Mrs. Melanie Wright gave a safety briefing. She also stated there was a public comment sign-up sheet.

II. Welcome and Introductions

A. Opening Comments by Chairperson and Co-Chairperson – Chair Hummel thanked everyone for attending. She requested that no acronyms be used as this was her first meeting. Co-Chair Ryan stated the Department of Environmental Conservation has been working on legislation that provides funding for spill prevention and response. There have been a high number of spills this past year on the Dalton Highway. EPA is working with them and the trucking association to find ways to reduce the number of those spills and accidents.
III. Approval of Previous Meeting’s Minutes – October 10, 2014

Mr. Tom Vaden MOVED to accept the minutes of October 10, 2014 as presented. Mr. Jamie Sunderland seconded the motion. There were no corrections. The MOTION passed with one abstention.

IV. Public Comment

(None)

V. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of and Changes to the Agenda

Ms. Eldemar MOVED to approve the agenda as amended. Dr. Jay Butler seconded the motion. There were no changes to the agenda. The MOTION passed unanimously.

B. LEPC Appointments – Ms. Weibl explained how the names got on the list for those who were new to the SERC. The names on the consent agenda come from the local LEPCs. In response to Ms. Eldemar, Ms. Weibl explained these are new appointments, not a complete list of people who were on the LEPCs within each community. In response to Chair Hummel, she explained that there are 21 LEPCs, and the number of members within the LEPC can vary from community to community.

Mr. Sunderland MOVED to accept the LEPC appointments found at tab 5. Mr. Vaden seconded the motion. The MOTION passed unanimously.

C. Approval of Spring 2016 SERC Meeting Date Change from April 8, 2016 to April 29, 2016 – The reason for the change was to put the meeting after the Alaska Shield 2016 exercise.

Dr. Jay Butler MOVED to approve the change. Mr. James Butler seconded the motion. The MOTION passed unanimously.

VI. Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) Report

A. DHS&EM Updates – Mr. John Madden, Director, gave an overview of what the Division and some elements of the Department are doing. He talked about what they were doing collectively and jointly with the communities to raise their capabilities as well as what they were doing to educate and influence Federal partners so that the national policies also well serve the communities. The preparedness conferences they hold bring together communities from around the State and helping them develop the skills of damage assessment, skills of working within the public assistance, individual assistance, and exposing them to views from people who have had different experiences. The Division has been working to improve their outreach and customize it where necessary. Alaska has joined with several other states to make sure that we view cyber and the cyber threat as a human threat having human consequences. It is not just about national security and privacy.
of information. He stated they have added a portion to the State Emergency Operations Plan to include that mechanism by which we unite against a cyber-threat.

Ms. Eldemar commented that Alaskans have a lot of challenges that many in the Lower 48 are unfamiliar with. There are a lot of disasters in the smaller communities that are not always the front page of the newspaper. She stated that DHS&EM has a very active and willing participant through DCRA. She wanted to make sure they leverage their resources in the State with Federal, tribal, and others so that all communities throughout Alaska are successful in responding to disasters. They are trying to have a systemic approach for every community to have a form to follow.

VII. Local Emergency Planning Committee Association (LEPCA)

A. Status Report – Mr. Sunderland, LEPCA Co-Chairperson, reported on the meeting they had earlier that day. He explained what the LEPCA is. The main focus of the meeting is to hear status updates from the 21 LEPCs. In response to Ms. Eldemar, Mr. Sunderland explained that the LEPCs are located all over the State. There is a map on Page 36 of Tab 12. While not all areas participate in LEPCs, most do. Chair Hummel stated that there is a list of all the LEPCs at Tab 8. In response to the Chair, Mr. Sunderland stated that he will be retiring, but will be at the fall conference.

VIII. Local Emergency Planning Committee Status Reports

(None)

IX. Old Business

A. Finance Committee – Mr. Brian Templin reported the committee oversees a couple of grant programs that the Department manages. One is the Local Emergency Planning Committee grants. There are five categories of LEPC and the funding ranges from $5,000 to just over $20,000 for the largest category. The money is used for various purposes ranging from training to planning to outreach and management of the program. The committee met in February to look at the status of the LEPC grant expenditures. Fifteen LEPCs had not quite reached their 45 percent level. They provided progress reports and midyear spending plans to the Division. Six LEPCs were at or above 45 percent. In response to Co-Chair Ryan Mr. Templin explained that the funding for LEPCs comes from the State general fund.

B. Training Committee – Discussion of Chairperson Change – Ms. Roberta Carney explained about Training Committee chairs and how they are appointed. She thanked Mr. Vaden for everything he has done over the years as the Training Committee Chair. The functions of the Training Committee are basically being done through DHS&EM now and they have offered to take over the role of the chair. The recommendation was to move the chair from Mr. Vaden to Mr. DJ DesJardin, the State Training Officer. Ms. Carney also shared with the SERC members the SERC policies and procedures of how committees are populated and what the SERC’s role is. Mr. Vaden stated he supported the move.

Mr. Sunderland MOVED to appoint DJ DesJardin as chairperson of the Training
Committee. Mr. Templin seconded the motion.

Under discussion, Mr. Jim Butler stated that he did not see this so much as a change as much as a maturing of what is occurring and it is a logical fit.

The MOTION passed unanimously.
Chair Hummel thanked Mr. Vaden for his work.

C. Work Plan Committee – Discussion of Chairperson Change – Ms. Roberta Carney explained that this committee was chaired by Mr. Alan Wien at DEC who recently retired. It was recommended that Ms. Merry Carlson be appointed as chairperson.

Mr. Vaden MOVED to appoint Ms. Merry Carlson as chairperson of the Work Plan Committee. Ms. Eldemar seconded the motion. The MOTION passed unanimously.

D. Interoperable Communications Committee – Major Matthew Leveque, Chairperson, reported the committee has been dormant for a number of reasons, primarily because its most fundamental need was to help DHS&EM make decisions regarding interoperable communications grants to communities. When that funding stream died out, it reduced the importance of the committee. A number of people approached the last administration about creating a statewide interoperable governance body which would be an overarching umbrella under which, for example, the Alaska Land Mobile Radio network, the Anchorage-wide area radio network, training and exercises related to communications, 911 issues, and First Net would sit. The last administration forbade them to move ahead on this. Governor Walker is open to examining in what ways interoperable communications in Alaska can be strengthened. On Monday he was given approval to move ahead with First Net, which is a to-be-built public safety grade LTE network. This includes actively beginning working through the outreach and education component. There is quite a bit of work that has to be done by July 31st, 2015. Mr. Fields asked about First Net roll out in Alaska, i.e. when, where, and how will it work. Major Leveque stated that is the giant question. A draft RFP will go out where they will hopefully begin a dialogue with industry partners. Because of the limited funds availability, it will likely come to densely populated areas first, and then the phases will take it out into areas where it is needed but there is no economic viability. It will not be a free network. He stated that they do not believe it will be a replacement for the land mobile radio network any time soon, if ever.

E. Citizen Corps Committee – Mr. Daniel Nelson, Kenai Peninsula Borough Citizen Corps Coordinator, reported on Citizen Corp activities around the State. He gave a brief history of Citizen Corps. It includes the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Volunteers in Police Service, Medical Reserve Corps, and others. The purpose was to take preparedness and the volunteer service for emergency response and disaster response to the citizens and let them be a part of the process. With reduction in available funding, many programs went away. There are currently programs in Juneau, Anchorage, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, and Fairbanks. He touched on what each was doing. The Mat-Su program has been discontinued, but the training for that program will be taken over by the North American Outdoor Institute, a non-profit. The interest in the programs is still very high. There is a lack of qualified instructors.
Co-Chair Ryan stated that ADEC’s Spill Division has a lot of interest in volunteer activity related to an oil spill event. They struggle with it in the Alaska Regional Response Team due to concerns they will not be certified to deal with a hazardous substance. She wanted to learn more about the classes and the types of information they provide individuals to certify them so they can participate in an event. Mr. Nelson stated that they are used more in supportive areas.

F. All-Hazards Plan Review Committee – Mr. Paul Valley, Chairperson, stated that the primary role of the committee is to assist communities, jurisdictions, other government agencies in the writing, research, and analysis associated with plans dealing with emergency management. Since the October meeting, the committee reviewed 11 Small Community Emergency Response Plans which brings the total to 43 that they have done over the past few years. There are six actively working. In December they completed the FEMA mandated Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment. They are reviewing the State Emergency Operations Plan, and it is currently in the program management review.

G. Disaster Search and Rescue Committee – Mr. Jeff Lafferty, Chairperson, stated that search and rescue already occurs in the State. All the agencies already work in conjunction with one another. It was recognized, however, that in the event of a catastrophic event, we need to know how would they bring together all of the search and rescue entities to perform disaster search and rescue on a wide scale. Over the past three years they have taken the plan that was in place and condensed it down into 34 pages. It was exercised in Alaska Shield 2014. They identified a few minor discrepancies which they continue to work on. The last thing they really need to do for the plan itself is work on the communications annex.

H. Statewide Mutual Aid Compact – Mr. Jim Butler, Chairperson, gave some background for those who were new to the SERC. Tab 12, C and D are two critical components of how the system has been developed. The work group consisted of local government, DHS&EM, and others with a background in real world inter-jurisdictional squabbles on incidents. They looked at what they could do to develop a system. Tab 12 C is the system framework. It talks about the mechanisms for different municipalities to move resources between themselves, the reimbursement, etc. The goal is to standardized forms. The second part is the qualifications guide. He felt there were still things either the committee or the Division need to do. One is have a skeleton structure. He would encourage following the Forestry model where there is a written agreement between the Division of Forestry and the jurisdiction that sets out the details of what is going on in the relationship contractually. He recommended talking to the Alaska Municipal League. Another complicating factor is the difference between jurisdictions, i.e. first class boroughs, first class cities, second class, etc.

Mr. Fisher stated that he and others at DHS&EM work as staff to the committee. They helped put together the manuals. They will be the holder of the documents and the administrative support. The committee is looking for the SERC to endorse the work that has been accomplished so far.

Mr. Templin MOVED to accept the Alaska Intrastate Mutual Aid System and all-hazards
qualifications guide documents as presented. Mr. Luiken seconded the motion.

Under discussion, Mr. Jim Butler stated that the qualification guide says incident complexity type 3, which is an important conceptual model he would like the SERC to feel comfortable with. They are talking about an incident that is going to go for several operational periods that is typically handled with the local resources that are available and the addition of some external resources, but is not anticipated to go for a long period of time. A type 2 team would have a higher level of qualification and experience.

The MOTION passed unanimously.

X. New Business

A. Recent earthquake activity – Dr. Michael West, Alaska Earthquake Center, discussed how earthquake monitoring is carried out in Alaska. He also touched on some notable events of the past 12 months. He stated that the mandate for the Alaska Earthquake Center is to provide timely information about earthquakes and volcanic hazards to public officials, industries, private citizens, etc. They operate many seismic stations across the State and also partner with other organizations to operate other stations. There have been about 40,000 earthquakes in the last 12 months, most of which were very small. Knowing where all those little earthquakes are paints a picture over the years of where they anticipate larger earthquakes to occur. He stated that the Alaska Earthquake Center and their partners play a critical role in a number of different ways.

B. Challenges of Arctic Response – CDR Shawn Decker, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Anchorage, gave an update and overview on their ongoing efforts for Arctic response and the partner agencies they were working with. Maritime activity in the Arctic is greatly and quickly increasing. As it increases, it will require the Coast Guard and their partners, State and federal agencies, to increase their capabilities in the region. They typically only have Coast Guard presence in the area during the months of June through the end of September/early October. They conduct an annual exercise called Arctic Shield when they deploy multiple assets to the Arctic region. This past fall they conducted a joint U.S./Canadian oil spill exercise in Juneau. He discussed a Canadian fuel barge that broke free from its tug boat on the Canadian side and the last position they had for it was in Russian waters. Early models had shown it coming ashore in the Prudhoe Bay region. There were no vessels in the areas to respond to get the barge. It showed the current limitations of operating in the Arctic region. In response to Mr. Fields, CDR Decker stated that the cost of monitoring the barge through U.S. waters was borne by the U.S. Coast Guard for the overflights. If there had been a spill or incident, the responsible party bears the cost. Mr. Fields felt this was a massive loophole given the increasing maritime activity in the Arctic. CDR Decker added that as maritime activity increases, U.S. Coast Guard activity will have to increase.

Co-Chair Ryan stated that prevention is the key. Why was the barge up there when on the U.S. side they knew not to have any boats in the water?

CDR Decker stated that at the time they were taking fuel between villages before they started to ice up. They started to experience an early winter this past fall. In response to a question from Chair Hummel, CDR Decker stated that there are international safety standards. In this case they got caught up in a significant storm and a wave action that
exceeded the capacity of the cable. In response to Ms. Eldemar, CDR Decker stated that it was only in Canadian waters for about 48 hours. As soon as the Canadians learned of the problem, the owners were making multiple efforts to capture it. With respect to lessons learned, it validated the level of cooperation that the U.S. and Canadian governments have. It also validated the level of oil spill response expertise. As far as creating operating procedures, that is still in progress.

C. Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) National Disaster Resilience (NDR) Process – Mark Romick, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, and Ann Gravier, DHS&EM. Mr. Romick stated the funding became available as left-over funding from the Sandy disaster. Alaska is one of 67 eligible applicants. They turned in the Phase I application in March.

Ms. Gravier stated that there is $1 billion available for competition nationally. The grants could range from $1 million to $500 million. She added that it is a very narrow grant.

D. Alaska Partnership for Infrastructure Protection (APIP) - Tony Lazenby and Chad Fullmer, APIP Co-Chairs. Mr. Fullmer introduced himself. He stated that anyone who owns infrastructure in the State of Alaska is invited to be a member of the partnership. It is a public/private partnership; however, the majority of infrastructure in Alaska is owned by private organization. It is imperative to create a forum where they feel comfortable sharing not only their proprietary information, but their ideas in the same room with organizations that may be their competitors or their regulators. There is also a cyber coordination group that also meets separately.

Mr. Lazenby introduced himself. From the private side, his goal is to increase the number of private sector organizations and members with APIP.

Mr. Fullmer stated that the goal of APIP is to break down the communication barriers. He felt that they were succeeding in this goal. There is collaboration. In response to Chair Hummel, Mr. Fullmer stated that public entities cannot be compelled to become members. The carrots they have been able to develop have been resilience, education, training, collaboration, additional knowledge, and a safe place to share information. They are also able to offer security vulnerability assessments. Other states have used legislation, but at this time there is no legislation in Alaska. There is a lot of benefit to compelling membership and collaboration, but he was concerned that with legislation it would become mandatory and minds would close. In response to Mr. Luiken, Mr. Fullmer stated that they offer assistance with continuation of operations plans as part of the security assessment.

E. Tier II Electronic Submission and Database – Roberta Carney, DHS&EM, gave some background to Tier II reporting. It is a Federal requirement under the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act. Tier II reporting is reporting for hazardous chemicals. The Division has taken on the challenge of electronic reporting. They had hoped to roll out the database at this preparedness conference to start next year; however, they have not been able to add a staff member to the team, so things slowed done. As a result they have contracted the work out. The database should be accomplished within two months. In response to Mr. Knowles, Ms. Carney stated that they are not going to use Tier II Submit,
but the database will be connected to a website that provides education to the facility owners on what the reporting requirements are and it will allow them to report online. She added that they want to partner with EPA to do a great public awareness campaign. They want not just the industry users but also all of the public to be aware.

Mr. Knowles stated that EPA stands ready to assist with the outreach effort.

Mr. Jim Butler stated that while there is a public access component, there is also a security component. He asked how that gets balanced.

Ms. Carney stated that following September 11, 2001, the SERC passed some policies and procedures that said a public member requesting Tier II reports has to go to the police department and there has to be a background check done. She added that they are working with the State Troopers and other law enforcement to further refine that policy.

Chair Hummel thanked Ms. Carney for her years of service as she is retiring this year.

XI. Other State Agency and Ex-officio Reports

Alaskan Command – Mr. Donald Jurewicz stated they have conducted reorganization with their headquarters. On October 27, 2014 the Secretary of Defense transferred the Alaskan Command as a subunified command under the Pacific Command to U.S. Northern Command. JFT-Alaska was combined with ALCOM. They are currently reviewing their missions. Their major mission areas are homeland defense, civil support, mission assurance and others. They worked with the State in March in the exercise Rock and a Hard Place in Homer. It allowed them to verify some communication interoperability as well as to train their operators. The command is working towards three major events this summer: Exercise Northern Edge, U.S. Cyber Command’s Cyber Guard exercise, and Operation Colony Glacier. U.S. Northern Command is leading an effort to review and update the Alaska Playbook. With regard to the State’s ability to conduct dual status commander operations in a major event, they have a designated Title X DOD deputy, Col. Chris Rifle who is working to ensure the 16-man Title X DOD staff that assists the dual status commander is trained and ready to conduct operations as the State requests.

FEMA – Mr. Robert Forgit gave some background on FEMA Region X for the new members on the SERC. He reported that with respect to his staff, Ramona Van Cleve has gone permanent to a tribal liaison position with FEMA, which will leave her position vacant. It will probably be advertised sometime this year. He stated that with the close of the joint field office for the Galena operations, they had a warehouse for equipment from that event. With the amount of equipment they have in that warehouse, they will have another position as well for a logistics person. He reported that the Defense Coordinating Element, Christian Anderson, will be moving on this summer, so they should have a new officer in the office sometime this summer. Due to the continuing resolution issues they have had almost every year, Idaho keeps getting missed for the Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC), so they changed their RISC meeting to take the Alaska RISC scheduled for June and conduct it in Idaho. The Anchorage RISC will now be in September. The U.S. is now the chairman of the Arctic, so there has been a big push to look at Arctic issues, one of which is the climate change. Erosion has come up again particularly on the west coast. FEMA sits on a committee that looks at erosion issues in the Arctic and throughout the
coast of Alaska. FEMA and HUD are both part of that committee and have recommended bringing in the State of Alaska as part of that committee. Mr. Forgit stated they also will miss Ms. Carney. She has been a mentor to many, including her Federal partners.

Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development – Ms. Eldemar stated that with the new administration they have been told they want to make sure DCCED reaches out to the tribal communities as well. She appreciates that First Net is moving forward. She stated that she does have a learning curve and thanked the other members for indulging her for her questions. There are a lot of changes taking place in the Arctic and if they are smart and work together, she felt they can come up with good solutions.

Department of Health and Social Services – Dr. Jay Butler thanked them for supporting the Rock and a Hard Place exercise. They continue to review the exercise to see how they can do even better in the future. He stated that while Ebola has fallen off the headlines, it is an outbreak that continues. They have monitored close to two dozen people returning from Ebola affected areas. They are getting the wave of people back who responded to the peak of the outbreak. They are finalizing agreements with Washington State which would be the nearest actual treatment facility if there was a confirmed case.

EPA – Mr. Nick Knowles pointed out two trends that they have been noting. (1) The uptick in truck rollovers throughout the highway system. ADEC has taken the lead in putting together some workshops which EPA will be partnering with them to put on to help educate the trucking operators on what their responsibilities are should an incident occur, what reporting requirements they have, etc. (2) In the Lower 48 they have seen some states using Stafford Act declarations to assist with spill response activities. EPA wants to work with their partners at the U.S. Coast Guard, DHS&EM, and ADEC to make sure they know what to do and how that will work should that occur in Alaska. He thanked DHS&EM and the 103rd Civil Support Team for inviting EPA to participate in the ORCA Exercise.

Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) – Ms. Jo Dawson reported that their child nutrition unit has been working with the mass care task force feeding subcommittee. DEED facilitates USDA commodity foods for disaster feeding, for emergencies. They will be working closely with the subcommittee on refining the multi-agency feeding plan. The school health unit continues to work with school districts on building capacity and high quality emergency plans which will cover an array of emergencies/disasters that happen at a school. There will be a series of training opportunities in the fall for school districts.

Department of Labor and Workforce Development – Mr. Zack Fields stated that listening to people at the meeting, he sees opportunities to collaborate with the Department in the future.

Department of Environmental Conservation – Co-Chair Ryan stated that with the impending fiscal crisis in the Division, they have been making a lot of cuts and changes. They have combined the planning and prevention unit with the response unit. Planners will be responders and responders will be planners.

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs – Chair Hummel stated that she has been thinking about where they need to be focusing their efforts across the Department. She has put together a
vision statement that focuses on three areas: (1) create and prosecute a viable Arctic strategy; (2) increase capacity in emergency management; and (3) focus on engaging with Alaska communities, not only geographical communities, but communities of Alaskans however they may sort out in time and space.

XII. Informational Items

A. Ethics Information for Members of Boards and Commissions
C. DRAFT Alaska Intrastate Mutual Aid System
D. DRAFT All Hazards Qualification Guide
E. DRAFT LEPCA Bylaws
F. Notice to SERC members that the 2015/2016 Hazardous Materials Emergency preparedness (HMEP) grant packet has been received from the U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) by DHS&EM. The grant application was filed by the April 3, 2015 deadline. Members may contact the SERC coordinator if you would like to review it.

XIII. Public Comment

(None)

XIV. Commission Member Closing Comments

(None)

XV. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.