

SERC Meeting Minutes 10/15-19

In attendance:

Samantha Phillips (MEMA Director/SERC Chair); Sara Zalieckas (MEMA); Andrew Goldberg (AGO); Ally Sleiman (Quincy LEPC/EMA); James Devlin (MSP); Carrie Clifton (MEMA); Andrew Trice (MEMA); (MEMA); Marc Nascarella (DPH); James Mannion (MEMA); Paul Betti (MFA/DFS); Martha Mittelstaedt (MCTA); Heather Shampine (MEMA); Charles Colley (DHS); Michael Castro (Public); Jack Illingworth (EOEEA/OTA); Ryan McGovern (Boston FD); Rich LaTour (MEMA); Bruce Augusti (MEMA); Rachel Fleck (MEMA); Mike Russas (MEMA); Brian Burris (Worcester FD); Meghan Gomes (Worcester EM); Ari Winograd (Worcester DPH); Kelly Parker (MEMA); Mayra Qunitana (MEMA); Brian LaJines (MassDOT); Rebecca Ping (Needham LEPC); Ally Sleiman (Quincy LEPC); Kevin Galligan (MAHMT)

Organizational Changes

SERC Chair discussed proposed changes to the SERC after the departure of Jeff Timperi. The MEMA Planning Unit will have a much larger role in ensuring EPC plans are linked to CEMPs. David Mahr would continue focus on grants. Mayra Quintana would continue as Tier II coordinator. This is a decentralized approach. MEMA is re-committing to the SERC and the Chair is investing in the SERC.

SERC Audit

David Mahr discussed an ongoing audit of MEMA's oversight of the SERC program by the Office of the State Auditor. The audit was initiated in January of 2019 and was still on-going at this time. The Auditors were starting from EPCRA requirements and reviewing or testing how MEME met each of the requirements of the law.

SERC Chair stated that MEMA welcomed the audit as an opportunity to re-evaluate its approach. MEMA may choose to put together a revised approach to how we apply EPCRA.

Andrew Goldberg asked how long the auditors were active; Since January was the response.

Nick Childs asked if the funding model was reviewed; it was not.

James Mannion asked what to do with new applications from EPCs; continue under existing procedures

Tier II Reporting

Ms. Quintana reported that a new version of Tier II Submit would be released in December, 2019. We would receive a package that contains the updates in November.

GIS Mapping

Desiree Kocis reported that she has been able to comb through data to flag issues and has been able to develop a very decent data set.

MA Firefighting HMEP Training

Paul Betti provided an update on training using the HMEP funds that last year most of the awarded \$130,000 was expended. 1,114 students were trained on DoT classes, Propane, OLAR, and others.

Regional Reports

Region I reported that Mike Main was leaving MEMA and that Heather Tecce and Allen Phillips would continue required duties in the interim.

Region II reported that Doug Forbes has retired, Needham has submitted their plan for review and that the Taunton application was close to ready to submit.

SERC Vision

SERC Chair discussed the opportunity the SERC had to look at what we are doing, find ways to get more out of the group, and better meet the requirements of EPCRA. She raised the following areas for future thought and discussion:

First, designation of Local and Regional EPCs. What is the role of the SERC in defining and appointing? Would a map of assigned districts help or weaken the effort? Rebecca Ping of the Needham LEPC offered insights into their process to date.

Second, the Chair discussed the opportunity to connect the planning requirements of SERC to the CEMP process.

Third, the Chair raised the issue of funding challenges through HMEP grants: 1) very small sub-awards and 2) very strict requirements. Could a pilot grant round fund a dedicated planner? Additional training? Stitch together EPC with CEMP? A commodity flow study was also raised as a possible funding need.

Lastly, the Chair raised the issue of applicants and certification requirements.

The Chair indicated these and other areas would be reviewed by MEMA and initial thinking would be shared at the January meeting. Working groups would be formed in the areas of Funding, Outreach, Training, and planning in general.

General Discussion

Ken Galligan of the Mass Association of Hazardous Materials Technicians shared that in the past the SERC discussed reaching out to locals through the Mass Municipal Association. He wanted to confirm if that had happened. He also asked if there was an increase in funding for LEPC training.

Nick Childs asked if it was possible to charge a filing fee for Tier II. The Chair indicated that this was something MEMA would look into. Authorization would be required first.

James Mannion asked if there was a better way to stay in touch with EPC leadership.

Next meeting is scheduled for January 15, 2020.