**Massachusetts Tech Rescue Policy/SOG Subcommittee**

Approved Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 12, 2023

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

A Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams of the Massachusetts Tech Rescue Policy/SOG Subcommittee was opened at 1403 by Chairman, Chief Matthew Belsito.

Members in attendance remotely. Roll Call taken:

Chief Matthew Belsito, Chairman-Sutton Fire

Paul Betti, Deputy Director of Special Operations

David Clemons, Director of Operations

Linda Crowley, DFS;

Chief Robert O’Brien-Hanson Fire;

Deputy Chief David Randolph-Brookline Fire;

Jon Martin, Lieutenant- Auburn Fire

Daryl Springman, Firefighter – Northampton Fire, virtual arrival at 1409

Cheryl Barker, Admin Sutton Fire, guest

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Lt. Martin to accept the minutes of the **August 10, 2023** meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Chief O’Brien. With no further discussion and with Chief Belsito, Director Betti, Chief O’Brien, Deputy Chief Randolph and Lt Martin voting Aye and Director Clemons abstaining, the motion passed.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Chief O’Brien to accept the minutes of the **September 13, 2023** meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Lt. Martin. With no further discussion and with Chief Belsito, Director Betti, Chief O’Brien, Deputy Chief Randolph and Lt Martin voting Aye and Director Clemons abstaining, the motion passed.

**Tech Rescue Policy/SOG Subcommittee Correspondence:** None.

**Old Business**:

**Review of Old Items for SOP/SOG:**

Chief Belsito advised that they would be skipping down to #2 on the agenda to discuss the Tiered Response Document that the committee received from Ian McGregor. Chief Belsito feels that this document provides for some good talking points.

Chief O’Brien feels that everything listed is up to par, that it is a good starting point until the “Tiered Response vs Typing” is figured out. Director Clemons stated that he had spoken with Director Betti to perhaps change the title of the document to something other than Tiers as that is the terminology that HazMat uses and there could be some confusion if there was a multiple discipline incident where Tiering could mean something different for the other disciplines. Chief Belsito concurs and states that could probably happen.

Director Betti would like a breakdown of what each person within a particular Tier would be doing in order to justify the funding requests that would be proposed for manpower listed in the Tiering document.

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**Old Business**, cont’d.:

**Review of Old Items for SOP/SOG:** cont’d.

Chief O’Brien thought, and he could be wrong, that Ian McGregor originally brought up that the Steering Committee could mirror HazMat Steering Committee. The thought was that Tiering for Tech Rescue would also mimic the HazMat model. Chief O’Brien also stated that he had no problem with changing the name to something else. This committee was not the one that came up with “Tiering”.

FF Springman discussed how many people would be needed to do a trench rescue. Director Betti stated that it would help if there was a better definition of what position each person within the group held and what the specific charge was for each position.

Lt. Martin stated that the committee could come up with an initial structure of how many are needed within a certain Tier to get the incident moving, taking into consideration the complexity of the incident. Tier II could be for any of the disciplines but knowing the manpower amounts one could estimate the cost of the incident for budgeting purposes.

Chief Belsito, speaking on Director Clemons’ point, stated that he has a valid concern, the other disciplines should be identified differently.

Chief Randolph doesn’t believe that we necessarily need to get away from Tiering to differentiate. We just need to identify the actual incident first then the Tier, ie HazMat, Tier II. For a call in Brookline they asked for a truck and knew they would get four. If they were to ask another town for a truck they may get 2. Everyone needs to become disciplined in their communications with regards to what they need. They should not be trifling over language.

It was stated that the Team Leader has the authority to scale the incident and the response up or down. Director Clemons stated that would be done through Incident Command. He feels that it’s important to differentiate when multiple disciplines are on scene.

Chief O’Brien stated that if this is for a head count then they shouldn’t get hung up on what the incident is or isn’t.

Discussion: Not being specific on the incident, there is no guarantee of getting manpower with the expertise and training needed for that discipline at that time. All techs are not trained in all disciplines. Not everyone responding would be a Technician. The council voted on five disciplines, excluding Dive for now. HazMat does not breakup their disciplines, Tech Rescue is different. If you needed all technicians, you would have to be specific. Region I and II do Large Animal Rescues. The South-west region pulled the hook for a Large Animal Rescue and requested 12 Large Animal Techs for the call.

Director Betti would like a breakdown of the required training for each discipline. Discussion: It is believed that the Training Committee has done this.

Is the committee comfortable with the Activation Tier System and the Dispatch Draft numbers going forward? This document is the stuff that shows the legislation some kind of number to justify the cost of an event. Chief O’Brien believes that this committee could come up with a basic procedure. Then let the Team Leader call for more resources if needed.

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**Old Business:** cont’d.

**Review of Old Items for SOG/SOP**, cont’d.**:**

Director Betti asked if using this new structure would enable us to determine how many times we’ve had a specific call out within a certain time frame. Director Betti realizes that it is unfair to put this on this committee. Director Betti would like this document revised by the Training Committee with any questions being addressed and adjustments being made where needed then sent back to the Policy/SOG Subcommittee.

Chief Belsito asked the committee if everyone felt that the name is acceptable? Is everyone happy with the numbers proposed and the number of techs on each level. All present replied in the affirmative.

With regards to gathering data using this new structure, Chief Belsito asked if anyone had call outs that would have fallen under the Tier 3 in the last five years. All regions agree that they’ve had larger scale events over the last five years that could have fallen under that category. Chief Belsito stated that with regards to Water Rescues/Recoveries over the last five years, the District 7 has had a couple of Tier 4 incidents. Chief O’Brien stated that a water incident usually hits a Tier 3 response out of the gate. Should this be rewritten? Affirmative for Water Calls.

At some point Tech Rescue will need to put forth a budget. It would be advantageous to have a format in place that would provide the statics needed to put forward a justifiable budget.

**AAR Policy:**

Chief O’Brien advised that he sent this policy to Director Betti in the draft folder. Director Betti advised that he has the policies in PDF format but would like them as word documents. Chief O’Brien will get copies in word to him.

**Existing DFS Policies:**

Director Betti advised that there are approximately five DFS policies in place. They are currently on the shared drive that they use for DFS employees. When you become a member of the Haz Mat Team you immediately become an agent of the commonwealth. This should apply to Tech/Rescue as well. We could use the full time state employee templates for the Tech/Rescue members. Director Betti will do additional research.

**Steering Committee:**

The Steering Committee membership for each region is still accurate. Earlier FF Springman had asked how selections for the teams are made and what criteria was used. Director Betti advised that nothing has been documented with regards to criteria used for selection. The Steering Committees will be selected by the Regions. The Steering Committee will be responsible for developing criteria for the selection process.

**Vetting:**

Chief Belsito stated that we will see changes once Vetting falls under the jurisdiction of DFS. Director Betti advised that he was in the process of creating a spreadsheet that breaks down an applicant’s information into numerous categories, which would then be given a point value based on a point system. This would allow appointments to be made based on qualifications and not politics.

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**Old Business: cont’d.**

**Vetting**, cont’d.**:**

Director Betti advised that he didn’t find anything from the Training/Membership Committee on Vetting. Chief O’Brien asked if this committee should create an SOP for selection. Director Betti stated that he’d hoped that you would. He sees this committee creating documents that would be referenced in the future.

Chief Belsito asked Director Betti if the SOP Committee should send a request to the Training/Membership Committee that they work on this using the spreadsheet that has been created.

**Organizational Chart:**

Lt Martin stated that this topic has been a bone of contention. They need to put that piece of the puzzle in place.

No additional old business.

**New Business**:

FF Springman asked if there were any new SOG’s to work on. Director Betti stated that he still needed help finding a Word document for Team Leader. Chief O’Brien will look for it. He also has the PDF’s for Accountability and Rope Rescue but no hardcopies. All have been accepted by the Council.

No additional new business.

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 1300.

**Adjourn:**

The motion to adjourn was made by Director Betti. The second was made by Chief O’Brien. With no further discussion a unanimous roll call vote was completed with all voting aye. The motion passed.

**Meeting adjourned at 1515**

Minutes prepared by Cheryl Barker