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CHIEF KEVIN NORD
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IAIN MCGREGOR
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MASSACHUSETTS TECHNICAL RESCUE
EQUIPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE
(October 25th, 2021)

The Massachusetts Technical Rescue Coordinating Council held a meeting on **October 25th, 2021 at 1000am** via WebEx Meeting per Governor Charles D. Baker's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, and s.20 signed and dated March 12, 2020.

Present at the meeting were the following Subcommittee members:

- Linda Crowley (Department of Fire Services)
- David DiGregorio (Department of Fire Services Representative)
- Michael Mansfield (Massachusetts Technical Rescue Coordinating Council Representative)
- Neil Tuepker Tech Rescue Region 1
- Paul Morrison Tech Rescue Region 2 (Assigned as the scribe for this subcommittee)
- Sean Smith Tech Rescue Region 3
- Jason Saunders Tech Rescue Region 4

Absent from the meeting were the following Subcommittee members:

- Jon Burt Tech Rescue Region 5

DFS Employees in Attendance:

Linda Crowley, David DiGregorio

Other Attendees: None

1. **Meeting Opening and Introductions:** All present members identified

2. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** Meeting called to order at 1000 with a quorum present. Minutes of the previous meeting were electronically delivered in advance. There was a motion to accept them as recorded. Seconded. Passed.

3. **Discuss Tech Rescue Sub-Committee Correspondence:** None

4. **Old Business:** DFH follow up and discussion on the need to secure funding to support the program.

5. **New Business:** Research is necessary to identify and communicate performance standards.

What standards, if any would we choose to apply (NFPA, ANSI, CE)? Would we use a combination of each with minimum recommendations?

Is it possible to make a determination as a committee to state that we would only allow for NFPA approved equipment? What difficulties would that present with acquiring and maintaining an equipment cache?

The concern was raised on the legality of NFPA ratings being a well-established standard in the legal system and the legal impacts if someone was hurt using equipment that is not NFPA rated?

There are many useful pieces of equipment in the rope access industry that have not yet been approved by NFPA. We should not automatically discount the safety of equipment that is not yet NFPA rated.

A discussion was held about the possibility of using a scoring system for selecting equipment. The scoring would be weighted toward NFPA 1983, but other equipment could still be considered. Some pieces of equipment that do not have NFPA ratings are unique and do not have a rated counterpart. Would these devices be considered? It was proposed that we may recommend that teams only purchase NFPA approved equipment through 3rd party testing. The intent is to discourage the purchasing of non-rated equipment just to save money. A motion was made.

Motion: That the NFPA standard be considered the gold standard and we should endeavor to purchase equipment that meets that standard. In the absence of an NFPA rating equipment with ANSI or CE ratings could be considered. The motion passed.

How do we want to apply a specific number of items for each team inventory? We could possibly look at each team inventory and come up with an attainable average. The intent is to come up with an operational minimum for teams. We may need to look at inventories by discipline or with mission specifics. A trench rescue package may have a compliment of rope stored in the cache.

We need to look at PPE for tech rescue. Do we apply the same NFPA gold standard on PPE or tech rescue over garments? The NFPA rating may have a flash component that may not apply to necessary attire for a rope rescue incident. Would we require long sleeve cotton clothing or something with abrasion resistance? Hazmat PPE is organized by tiers and may be incident specific. Standardization could be applied to helmets, gloves, and boots. Steel toed boots should be standard for all tech rescue disciplines. Brand specific footwear should be avoided as long as it meets a general requirement on safety.

Should there be a glove standard? Utility vs. rope gloves? Should not be interchangeable. Utility gloves should not be used when handling ropes.

6. **Any matters not reasonably anticipated by the Chair:** None noted
7. **Tasks/Assignments:** David DiGregorio will provide his matrix on scoring equipment or vendors for purchasing Hazmat related equipment. The committee will review to see if it can be applied to tech rescue.
8. **Future agenda items:** None noted
9. **Determination of future meeting date(s):** A discussion was held about the need to meet twice in the month of November. The meetings are scheduled for November 8th, 2021 at 11am, and on November 22nd, 2021 at 11am

Motion to adjourn was made. It was passed unanimously with a roll call vote at 10:59am