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IAIN MCGREGOR  
VICE CHAIR

**MASSACHUSETTS TECHNICAL RESCUE**  
**Joint Membership and Training Subcommittees**  
**APPROVED**

The Massachusetts Technical Rescue Joint Membership and Training Subcommittees held a virtual meeting in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 30A sec. 20 on Tuesday, June 18, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. and open to the public virtually through Microsoft Teams videoconference.

**Present** at the meeting were the following members:

**Membership Subcommittee:**

Deputy Chief Kelly Manning, Chair  
Deputy Director of Special Operations, Paul Betti  
Francis Otting

Fire Chiefs Association of Mass.  
DFS  
Region 2

**Training Subcommittee:**

Iain McGregor, Chair  
Deputy Director of Special Operations, Paul Betti  
Mark McCabe  
Steven Chandler

Professional Firefighters of Mass.  
DFS  
Region 1  
Region 4

**Absent** at the meeting were the following members

**Membership Subcommittee:**

Shawn Simmons  
Pat Sullivan  
Robert Pensivy  
Paul Pronco

Region 1  
Region 3  
Region 4  
Region 5

**Training Subcommittee:**

Paul Morrison  
Tom Rinoldo  
John Weir

Region 2  
Region 3  
Region 5

## **1. Meeting Opening and Introductions**

Iain McGregor opened the meeting at approximately 10:18 a.m.

## **2. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting – May 8, 2024**

Iain McGregor made motion to table minutes until next month.

## **3. Discuss tech rescue sub-committee correspondence**

No correspondence

## **4. Old Business**

### **a. Review training sub-committee specific of training requirements: Chandler**

- a. Skipped over this item for the moment due to Steve Chandler running late for virtual meeting.

### **b. Review updated Team Response Data, Region Specific Data, and Team Size**

Paul Betti discussed the work he had done in terms of looking at 2017-2023 team data, call volume, calls per team, per year. He reiterated that there was a lot of concern regarding 40% callback and geographical distance in some regions. He stated he had shared his work with his senior management and asked for input from committee members.

Some of the new ideas proposed by Director Betti included:

- Let emergencies be covered by municipalities to cover response cost. He stated that senior management was not comfortable with this as it broke the model from what hazmat does.
- Adjusted some of the office budget, equipment budgets.
  - Added money into L object code – truck trailer maintenance.
  - Added money for disposables (blades lumber, etc.)
- Looking specifically at call data, volume, and region geographic size, Paul got okay to adjust team size/training hours
  - Proposed team sizes – Region 1, 80 members, Region 3, 80 members, Region 4, 68 members, Region 5, 48 members
  - Budgeted at 80 hours of training
- 80 min, max 110. Now everyone will be capped at 80.

Director Betti's proposal shown to senior management and chair/vice chair, will be brought up during regular council meeting.

Discussion: Deputy Chief Manning stated that she had performed a similar exercise in the spirit of proposing team sizes for each region. Of particular concern was the geographic size of the regions and keeping with the mission of being able to perform rescue versus recovery. Regardless of call volume, there needs to be a certain number of people in each region depending on the geographical size. Manning stated that in her exercise, she reduced the number of techs statewide by almost one whole team size (minus 70 techs) would save about \$800K and reducing training hours to 80 would reduce budget by approximately another \$200K. She found similar team numbers sizes as Betti.

Chandler reports 80 training hours would be a minimum but seem okay.

There would be other money available for special trainings under conference line item per Director Betti. There might be some difficulty covering specialty trainings with the minimum training hours per Chandler. Some teams may not be at full capacity yet. Some challenges with marketing and getting people in, particularly region 4. Challenging with call and volunteer departments too.

## **5. New Business**

### **a. Budget Discussion, based on team size and training hours:**

Management was concerned about high cost for low number of calls and has asked the following questions:

- Discussion was about how many of these incidents involved life safety?
  - Director Betti said he didn't have the data regarding "amount of lives saved."
- Was there live victims impacted by these call outs?

Hard to corroborate this. McGregor stated that providing training to firefighters (assigned to these teams) across the commonwealth can help them mitigate smaller incidents. Can help resolve incidents before they become. For example, mitigating someone from entering a trench.

McGregor suggests 88 hours of training to mimic hazmat. Do some rounding of team size. Betti - Stipends were removed for Team Coordinator. Some of the items may be under a DFS employee rate. Will be cheaper than an overtime rate.

Discussion of using stipend to cover training hours – DFS management stated that wasn't the intention of the stipend, but could be a feasible alternate plan if the team isn't full funded.

Chandler – life safety issue. Region 4 doesn't do large animal rescue. Everything region 4 does has to do with life safety. Drawing line of was this life safety or not is difficult until you have progressed through the call and get the nature of it. It may not be apparent at the beginning of the call out.

Director Betti - Data doesn't give us everything we need. Call volume will likely increase one communities realize that the state has a system.

Discussion of the ability to bill. Director Betti brought this up for the reason of recovering cost. i.e. car hits structure, can we bill for personnel costs and material costs for shoring?

Council should start deciding the stipulations for billing. It's in the legislation. Some teams already do standbys/retainers. That would go into Tech Rescue Service fund.

McCabe – less than 80 is going to be a tough sell for R1. Basing everything off of data is tough. Hazmat did not have data to start.

Director Betti agrees with bumping up to 88. Concerns with not getting full budget.

McGregor – the regions have to agree to joining. If it gets cut down so much, who would agree to join? All of the equipment for example, is coming from the cities and towns. The budget doesn't even consider capital expenditures.

### **Back to old business – review training sub-committee specific training requirements**

Steve Chandler on training requirements – he will forward NFPA requirements on rope and trench to McGregor on number of hours per subsection. Have not completed confined space yet and structural collapse. 80 hours

didn't include time for water or FFE. Some skills, particularly with the rope might be duplicated into other disciplines.

**b. Review Road map moving forward with standing up teams**

Director Betti – membership requirements. Marshal wanted to know if the membership process and scoring had been voted by. Membership selection should be by steering committee. Equality in how we select members across the five teams. McGregor doesn't think this document went to the council yet.

Motion made for team size of R1 80, R3 80, R4 70, R5 50 by Deputy Chief Manning  
Training hours 88.

No seconds. After some discussion, members agreed to not make a specific recommendation due to lack of participation on the call. The council will ultimately discuss the options.

Otting - R2 data should be considered. The number of members and call volume dwarf other regions. Otting believes that decision makers should see their [Region 2] data when presenting budget. It shows that there is a demand for tech rescue when communities know that the service is available and members are trained. By excluding it, we are doing a disservice.

**6. Matters not reasonably anticipated by the chair**

None at this time.

**7. Tasks/Assignments**

Chandler needs to finalize training hours. Director Betti asks him to add water – surface and swift water.

**8. Future agenda items**

None at this time

**9. Determination of future meeting date(s)**

Next meeting – Tuesday August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1pm.

Meeting adjourned 1152