

Massachusetts Tech Rescue Policy/SOG Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 17, 2024 at 11:07 a.m.
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

A Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams of the Massachusetts Technical Rescue Policy/SOG Subcommittee was opened at 1107, with a quorum, by Chairman Chief Matthew Belsito.

Members in attendance remotely. Roll Call taken:

Matthew Belsito, Fire Chief –Sutton-representing the Council

Paul Betti, Deputy Director of Special Operations, representing DFS

Jon Martin, Lieutenant-Auburn, Representing Region 3

Robert O'Brien, Chief, Hanson, Representing Region 1

David Randolph, Deputy Chief, Brookline, Representing Region 2

Cheryl Barker, Guest-Sutton

Chief Belsito s/w Daryl he will try make the meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion: A motion was made by Chief Randolph to accept the minutes of the **September 26, 2024** meeting. The motion was seconded by Lt Martin and with no further discussion passed unanimously. Roll Call Vote Taken; Betti-yes; Martin-yes; O'Brien-yes; Randolph-yes; Belsito-yes.

3. MTR SOP Subcommittee Correspondence:

Chief Belsito had none.

Although offline he, Chief O'Brien and Deputy Director Betti have been discussing EMAC.

Discussion:

-Chief Belsito reported that after all the EMAC requests they have received the Fire Marshal has requested a meeting with a group of Chiefs to discuss how Tech will be moving forward with EMAC response. The Fire Chiefs present were Chief Belsito, Chief Joe Flanagan, Chief Dave Hubert and Chief Peter Burke. The meeting served as an after action review of all the EMACs that came in.

-The Fire Marshal asked that Chief Burke arrange a meeting to get all the Chiefs together to discuss the future of EMAC response. Chief Burke is to pull together a team that would serve as a selection team charged to review all EMACs coming in from MEMA. Chief Burke is to take the lead of this team at the Marshal's request.

-The team would consist of approximately four Chiefs: Chief O'Brien, Chief Belsito, Chief Burke and possibly a few others if needed. In addition, the team would be working on how to streamline the process, training other regions to do EMAC and any other issues needing review.

-Chief O'Brien has been speaking to MEMA regarding how to train other chiefs to do EMAC.

4. OLD BUSINESS: Discussion-

4.1. Revising and Prioritizing SOG's:

With regards to the question of the five policies taken from DFS and whether or not this Committee should push these policies to the Council as a blanket policy-Chief Belsito reported that these policies and all other DFS policies going forward, will stay in place until that time that the DFS takes over as fiduciary of Tech Rescue. The second the legislature is passed and Tech Rescue falls under DFS, these policies would automatically rollover as Tech policies.

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4. OLD BUSINESS: Discussion

4.1.A-Tiered Response:

- This was kicked back to **Membership and Training Committee**. The biggest talking point at the last Joint Training meeting was the application process. This was revisited and Modifications will be made.
- Discussed at the last meeting: **The five main response criteria** that had been accepted at a previous Council meeting had not be reflected in the application. The application needs to be modified to reflect the new criteria, accommodating all disciplines (Water, Structural Collapse, Trench Rescue, Confined Space and Rope).
- They will also have to change how the **application** gets submitted. Currently the applications are supposed to be submitted to the Steering Committee and not to DFS. Deputy Director Betti researched HazMat application submittal procedure. All of their applications are routed through DFS then to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee would then proceed to the selection process. This process will be adopted. DFS could validate the certifications, etc.
- Deputy Director Betti has created a spreadsheet that takes all the facets of the selection process, ie required training, etc. and gives it a point value, then through the formulas he created, calculates all the numbers for each candidate for a final score for each candidate, streamlining the process for the Selection Committee. If council agrees they would move this forward to the Selection Committees.
- The **Training Team has been reviewing NFPA standards with regards to required training**. The team has designated eighty-eight (88) hours/year/person as a requirement at this time. These are the numbers that have been budgeted. The matrix would show what numbers need to be met. Not even sure if eight-eight (88) is the right number. The matrix is about half done.

4.1.B-Organization Chart:

- Lt. Martin advised that the chart is done but he is unable to access it at this time.

4.1.C-DFS Folders & DFS System Accountability:

- Deputy Director Betti continues to work on making all relevant information accessible.
- Discussion: D4H. Messages from Training and Membership Sub Committee with concern over the delay in bringing D4H on board. There was money budgeted last year in the DFS budget. Deputy Director Betti met with his management to discuss D4H funding. He was advised that DFS could not move forward with the purchase, once again due to the fact that the DFS is not the fiduciary of Tech Rescue. This issue was added to the agenda of the Council's next meeting. DFS management and Legal are revisiting the issue. There could be some language that would allow the purchase of D4H because it's use is in support of the Council. Counselor Rooney will have an answer at the next Council meeting.

4.1.D-HazMat Spreadsheet:

The review of the HazMat Spreadsheet will remain on the agenda and will remain fluid until that time that all members have had the opportunity to review it. Deputy Director Betti will put it in SharePoint. He stated that the document does not need to be duplicated, just used as a guide.

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4. OLD BUSINESS: Discussion

4.1.D-SOP Subcommittee Spreadsheet:

New Table of Contents put into spreadsheet format-

-Everything is the same as the Word document. With the spreadsheet the committee can continue to assign SOP's, and establish where each SOP stands at a glance.

Deputy Director Betti will go into SharePoint and change the original SOP numbers to reflect the new table of contents.

Discussion:

-There is an incredible amount of new SOPs that have been added to the new table of contents. There are some SOPs that would be the jurisdiction of other subcommittees. This would require this subcommittee to work with the other subcommittees, as there is overlap in responsibility. Membership and Training is charged with creating policy for anything associated with personnel, ie Uniforms, Discipline, etc. and Training.

-Should some SOP's be created/drafted by other subcommittee then sent to the Policy subcommittee to put into SOP format.

-The Policy Subcommittee would be the keeper of the document. Deputy Director Betti was asked to highlight the items that would pertain to other committees. This committee would be the committee that should be blessing all of the SOPs format, reviewing the content, then pushing them to Council for approval.

-The process flow could be as follows: Other Committees would submit their proposed SOP, the SOP committee would review for structure and content, the SOP committee would submit the formatted SOP to the Council, the Council would adopt. This committee has the template that has been used to format the SOPs to date.

-Chief Belsito does not want the other committees to feel slighted or overpowered by this committee. Maybe there could be a representative from each subcommittee to sit on the SOP committee. Chief O'Brien stated that they could take people from Regional Teams who have the expertise to help create some of the SOP's. The Mobex Committee expanded to allow for expertise from other Regions, this committee may be able to do the same. This would bring people from other subcommittees and regions into the process.

-Deputy Director Betti feels that this could be up to the Chairman of the subcommittee but he will check with Counselor Rooney to see how this could be done. In the meantime, Chief Belsito stated that everyone should have people in mind who could provide the expertise from each subcommittee/region. All agreed.

4.1.E-EMAC:

-Chief Belsito turned this topic over to Chief O'Brien.

-Chief O'Brien presented a draft of a "Letter to the Members" for the committee's review. His plan would be to send it out in June because it would work with Union's Contract schedules, department budgetary schedules, specifically the payroll section of the contracts.

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4. OLD BUSINESS: Discussion

4.1.E-EMAC: cont'd.

-First and foremost the Chief of a department would need to be on board with this. There's a lot required to participate, a lot of information is needed: financial calculation, member's info, ie vaccinations, certifications. Not all Fire Chief want to take this on.

-He feels it would be advantageous to start putting things in place before the team's services are actually needed. At this point this letter is only a template and changes can be made if needed.

-“Letter to the Fire Chiefs”. Chief O'Brien put this letter together because there are many Fire Chiefs who have no idea or have very little knowledge about the many facets of Tech Rescue, never mind EMAC. This would go out when an EMAC is needed and to all Chiefs in a particular region. Fire Chiefs need to be informed that at this time Transportation costs would be the responsibility of each region. The letter talks about salaries and benefits, deployment of manpower, usually three (3) to five (5) people, the number of travel days, fuel costs, other costs, twelve (12) hour operational periods. Time sheets distributed to each member. There would then be a post deployment meeting after the incident to help all with filling out required paperwork.

-This letter can also be changed as needed. He did send a copy of this letter to Chief Burke's group.

-These are recommendations only.

Regional Answering Points-Deputy Director Betti/DFS, MEMA, regional dispatch centers who could be able to notify families via email every night, at the very least Deputy Director Betti should always be in the loop. Next would be to establish what is important. Post deployment recommendations. The Post Incident review is harder than the Pre Incident planning. Chief Randolph stated that Chief O'Brien got deep into what would be needed and did a great job. Deputy Director Betti stated that this is a good starting point. Chief Belsito stated that Chief O'Brien is the one who needs to do not only EMAC but the Post Response as well, as there aren't many regions doing this. Deputy Director Betti provided a document showing received and/or completed requests. The document isn't finished yet. This information should help with justification for support. The report includes the date, State requesting aid, type of team requested and comments related to the request. The information will help show the needs of EMAC.

4.1.F-FIU/TRT Pilot Program:

Chief O'Brien doesn't have anything new to bring to the committee on the FIU/TRT Pilot Program.

Future Meeting: set for Thursday, November 21st, 2024 at 11:00 am. Works for everyone.

The next Council meeting is October 23rd at 10:00 am.

Motion to adjourn:

Chief O'Brien made the motion to adjourn, Chief Randolph seconded the motion and with no further discussion it was passed unanimously, Chief O'Brien, yes; Chief Randolph, yes; Lt. Martin, yes; Director Betti, yes; Chief Belsito, yes.

Chief Belsito: “Yeoman's work everyone.”

Meeting adjourned at 1205.

Minutes prepared by Cheryl Barker, Sutton FD Admin Asst.