

DRAFT

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS National Capital region Emergency Preparedness Council

Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, November 3, 2005

Time 2:00pm – 4:00pm

**Place: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
COG Board Room, Third Floor
777 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002**

1. Call to Order and Announcements

Description from Agenda:

- Public Awareness Campaign Outcomes
- National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement
- Congressional Delegation Emergency Preparedness Briefing
- Regional Emergency Planning and Evacuation Review
- Wrap Up and Adjournment

Summary of Discussion:

Bruce Williams, Chair of the EPC provided opening comments and then asked everyone in attendance to do self introductions. This was followed with an update on various administrative matters. The first matter discussed was the proposed calendar for next year. Chair Williams briefly explained the proposed change in meeting dates. Currently the EPC meets the day after the CAOs meetings. Chair Williams felt that this was too fast of a turn around time for anything that may come up in the CAO meeting. The proposed schedule provides for the CAOs, the EPC and the COG Board meet in succeeding weeks. The new schedule provides more time to turn around information and provides a better opportunity for input. The second matter discussed was the Transportation Planning Board's approval of funding for the CAPCOM Program. This has been a matter of interest to the CAOs, Transportation Planning Board, the EPC and a number of other stake holders, local and federal. This is a transportation information and coordination program that will reportedly be funded jointly through support from the federal government, the Transportation Planning Board work program as well as DC, Maryland and Virginia. This program has been a priority and focus for the TPB and many of the state transportation partners. Two issues of particular concern were expressed. The integration of the transportation community's interest with the public safety community's interest was a concern. Everyone wants to insure that the two are linked effectively. Funding sustainability was another concern that was expressed by a number of individuals.

The last item was approval of the minutes from the last meeting. One member noted that the minutes were accurate but did not include comments from the Board of Trade and the Red Cross. Another member pointed that it was Bob Griffin who discussed the pilot on outdoor warning systems and not Ms. Olson. There was a consensus that on going UASI monies weren't going to be the most viable source of funds for CAPCOM. Support from the three state Departments of Transportation will be essential. This support was evidenced by the approval of TPB funding to match the federal earmark provided by Congressman Moran and others as a step forward. Mr. Schneider expressed his appreciation to all involved especially DDOT, MDOT, VDOT and WMATA for their support.

Lee Ruck, COG Staff discussed the administrative issue of transportation of hazardous material. Mr. Ruck states that the District of Columbia is currently in litigation in the District Court with CSX. Michael Knapp, Chair, Montgomery County Council's Committee on Homeland Security has held a meeting to discuss actions relating to transportation of hazardous materials through their county. The case between the District and CSX could have impact throughout the region as well as throughout the country. Maryland, The District and Virginia are working with the National Capital Planning Commission to find alternate routes for the rail and trucks transporting hazardous material through the region. COG staff will continue to monitor activities involving this case.

2. Public Awareness Campaign Outcomes

Description from Agenda:

The National Capital Region Public Awareness Campaign, a comprehensive effort to change the physical and psychological emergency preparedness posture of the citizens of the region, has been underway for several weeks. Its goal is to increase the number of individuals who identify themselves as 'prepared' to at least 50 percent of those in jurisdictions comprising NCR. The Council will be briefed on progress to date, with regard to this goal and activities undertaken in its pursuit.

Summary of Discussion:

Chair Williams announced that Mernie Fitzgerald would be the first to discuss the Public Awareness Campaign and Bob Griffin would be next. Mernie discussed the on going public awareness efforts. She stated that at the last meeting the need to get information out to the public was discussed. As time goes on post Katrina, we continue to have questions come up as to who is in charge and what evacuation plans are in place. Also, people have questions regarding general preparedness. They want to know how prepared is this region specifically and then locality by locality what kind of efforts are underway.

The Committee discussed the need to have both the private and public sectors represented on R-ESF#14. They asked about next steps for the region because the campaign is over officially and the money has been expended. It was reported that RESF#14 is developing a communications plan for the region. The key messages that everyone wants to get out

is that since 9/11 the National Capital Region has made significant progress with plans and preparations for disasters and the efforts are still on going but more can be done. There is still a need to get the word out about how UASI funds are being used to improve preparedness in the region. Millions of dollars have been given to the NCR and these funds have been well spent. People don't seem to realize that these funds have contributed to improved preparedness throughout the region. Merni seemed to think what has been done in the region is a well kept secret. Another key message is that the NCR local, state and federal government, unlike other regions across the country, implemented coordinated disaster planning subsequent to 9/11. An additional key message is that the region now posses communications systems for reaching the public that they didn't have before 9/11. Various elected officials across the region such as Tony Griffin of Fairfax have given presentations to their Councils and their Boards to get information out to the public about specific preparedness activities and specific plans that they have put into place. The Washington Post will be doing something in Fairfax County next week to highlight to the public that plans are in place and that they know who is in charge. In most cases it is the Chief Administrative Officer in that locality. These individuals are also working with media to educate the public. One of the committee members wanted to know the next steps and when do they see the results of the Public Awareness Campaign.

The answer: there was a pre campaign survey and they will complete shortly a post campaign survey. The goal of the campaign was that 50% of people would know what they had to do to be prepared. The beginning survey indicated that only 38% knew what they had to do to be prepared. They are doing another survey now to determine the improvements as a result of the campaign. They will use these results to judge the effectiveness of the Public Awareness Campaign.

At the last meeting Ron Carlee, County Manager of Arlington outlined the issues of confusion in leadership of disasters, importance of local leadership, the weakest link, and the reality of how parents act under crisis despite any request to stay put.

Bob Griffin discussed the status of the outdoor warning system pilot program. At the last meeting, the EPC supported moving forward with the concept of outdoor sirens pilot program. A gap was identified in the ability of local officials to contact people who are outdoors. Since that time Bob hired someone to assist him in the development of the pilot program. A packet was provided to attendees at the meeting that explained how some of the different technologies take Merni's messages and put them out on the siren/speaker system. DHS is discussing re-write the guide for outdoor warning systems. The outdoor warning pilot will big enough so that you can test its ability to work and scale up to a larger system if desired. It should address the basic type of terrain in the area. The outdoor warning pilot should also have the capability to be controlled by two different jurisdictions to insure interoperability. A neighboring jurisdiction can activate the outdoor warning system if the actual jurisdiction cannot.

Once installed you should b able to do some testing, comparing what you analyze to what you really get. Intelligibility is the meaning of, do you understand the message?

Assuming you have normal hearing and assuming you understand the language there are several things affecting intelligibility. Audibility is only a part of it. Modern outdoor warning systems are not like what is imagined when they think about a civil defense siren. A system that is designed and optimized to make a lot of noise is toned which is civil defense sirens are not optimized for voice.

3. National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement

Description from Agenda:

The COG Attorneys Committee, with assistance from attorneys representing the Maryland and Virginia Attorneys General and the Department of Homeland Security, have completed a proposed Mutual Aid Agreement for the National Capital Region which implements and utilizes the authority and protections conferred on the region by Congress as Section 7302 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004.

The Office of the Attorney General of Maryland has reviewed the final draft and interposes no legal objection to Maryland local governments providing and receiving mutual aid under this Agreement. The Maryland Emergency Management Agency is reviewing the document with the Governor's office to determine whether Maryland, or Maryland agencies, should be party (ies) to the Agreement. While desirable, formal Maryland execution is not required for the Agreement to be circulated, considered, and agreed to by the Maryland local governments within the National Capital Region.

COG hopes to have similar approval from the Virginia Attorney General by November 1. If so, staff will present the draft to the CAO's, the EPC, and the COG Board, and transmit it to the Chief elected officials for formal consideration. Mr. Ruck will outline the Agreement, its protections, and discuss the proposed process for developing plans for the various functions and disciplines, e.g., police, fire, public health, etc.

Summary of Discussion:

Lee Ruck, MWCOG Staff led the discussion on Mutual Aide Agreement. Mr. Ruck defined Mutual Aide Agreement as those agreements between entities of government to provide assistance when requested across jurisdictional boundaries. They can be interstate or intrastate. They have been concerned in this region about interstate provision of mutual aide when the court case Biscoe vs. Arlington totally upset what was perceived to be the tort law of the three basic jurisdictions. As a result of that litigation the attorneys (general and local) prohibited their jurisdiction from entering into Mutual Aide Agreements or modifying existing ones. A handout was given at the meeting discussing Mutual Aide Agreements. In this handout it talks about the Purpose of Mutual Aid Agreements and the Guiding Principles. The guiding principles are to strengthen regional coordination among all partners; implement homeland security policies and programs; prepare for all-hazards, including man-made disasters; advance the safety and security of the region; foster a culture of collaboration, respect, communication,

innovation and mutual aid among all homeland security partners across the region; and adopt best practices and strive for optimal balance of preparedness.

The handout also addressed the timeline for objectives. MWCOG will provide the oversight and management for the timelines under UASI agreement except where it is noted additional funds will be needed.

4. NCR Strategic Plan Update and Next Steps

Description from agenda:

On September 9 the final regional forum was held, involving key stakeholders from various local, state and federal agencies and organizations, to finalize the National Capital Region Homeland Security Strategic Plan. The forum produced a number of proposed follow up actions, through which the region's leaders will look to develop and define specific, measurable initiatives for implementation over the coming weeks. Mr. Lockwood will brief the Council regarding proposed next steps to achieve and implement the strategic goals and objectives of the plan and to integrate the NCR plan with individual jurisdiction plans.

Summary of Discussion:

Mr. Griffin, Mr. Robertson, and others briefed the congressional delegation on emergency preparedness on October 24th. The briefing resulted from an earlier conversation that Mr. Griffin had with Phil Sunderland, currently the Chief of Staff for Congressman Moran. The NCR Congressional delegation had two questions following the events in the Gulf. One of the questions was who's in charge and the other questions involved the evacuees. Mr. Sunderland suggested that the CAOs submit a request to brief the NCR Congressional Delegation on emergency preparedness in the region in approximately two weeks. The briefing was a success and everyone was given handouts used by Mr. Griffin and others. In terms of evacuation, the concerns seem to be how are they going to receive the communication, who is going to be evacuated and who is going to evacuate them. Working on two parallel tracks, the NCR will respond to requirements from the leadership of the Council of Governments and the Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP). Local governments will respond to states regarding the ODP requirement and states will provide a copy of the information being provided to ODP to COG. These documents will be used by COG to develop a narrative that will be provided to ODP and the COG leadership. COG has also requested local jurisdiction provide a summary of enhancements they have made since 9/11. Calvin Smith is compiling this information. (Updated information)

5. Private Sector Updates

Description from agenda:

The Greater Washington Board of Trade, the Nonprofit Roundtable of Greater Washington, the American Red Cross of the National Capital Region, and the

Consortium of Universities of the Greater Washington Area have been integral private sector partners on preparedness initiatives undertaken in the National Capital region. Representatives of each organization will provide updates on accomplishments to date as well as planned activities with regard to further initiatives.

Summary of Discussion: A handout was presented at the meeting by The Nonprofit Roundtable of Greater Washington. The handout discussed the overview of Katrina Evacuees in the National Capital Region. Gordon Aoyagi led the discussion. Regional collaboration for public and private central services to make sure the evacuee's needs was met. Several nonprofits in the region played essential roles in meeting the needs of the Katrina evacuees. By doing this they have shown impressive levels of responsiveness and flexibility. They have also demonstrated a high level of coordination which is a critical part of dealing with large scale disasters. The handout also tells the funding sources for the Katrina evacuees such as The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, Freddie Mac, American Red Cross, The United Way of the National Capital Area, Washington Regional Association of Grant makers and a host of others. Under the best practices of coordination, the opportunity for knowledge sharing was one of several topics in the handout. On September 13 the Nonprofit Roundtable of Greater Washington and the Washington Regional Association of Grant makers held a briefing for the nonprofit community. The briefing provided an opportunity for agencies to share information, questions and concerns. It also gave the leaders a chance to assess the situation and identify areas for improvements.

They communicated through strategic conference calls regarding the aftermath of Katrina. Those leading the Katrina relief effort were able to stay abreast of the evolving situation. The focus now is long term recovery and providing support for the Katrina evacuees in the NCR for the foreseeable future. The nonprofit sector priorities for planning for future disasters are improving coordination with government in creating emergency preparedness plans, developing the sector's capacity to be self sustaining with respect to volunteer manpower financial resources and other needs, insuring that the regions most at risk and disenfranchised residents are included in all emergency preparedness plans.

6. Wrap Up and Adjournment:

Chair Williams thanked everyone for their participation and attendance and advised everyone of the date of the next meeting was January 19, 2006.

