

DRAFT

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS National Capital region Emergency Preparedness Council

Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, February 8, 2006

Time 2:00pm – 4:00pm

**Place: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Training Center, Lobby Level
777 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002**

1. Call to Order, Introductions and Announcements

Description from Agenda:

- Introduction and Administrative Issues
- EPC Focus for 2006
- National Capital Region Strategic Plan for Preparedness
- Public Awareness Campaign Outcomes
- Outdoor Warning System
- Wrap Up and Adjournment

Summary of Discussion:

Chairman Connelly made a motion to approve the previous minutes and they were approved. He also outlined membership and leadership goals and recommended that the EPC bylaws be amended if necessary. The EPC schedule for 2006 that was distributed in the packet was discussed. The Chair announced that to promote stronger participation by the public officials, EPC quarterly meetings will follow the COG Board of Directors meeting on the second Wednesday, 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Gerry Connolly, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors was appointed to Chair the EPC in 2006. This action is consistent with the bi-laws and was approved by the COG Board of Directors on January 11, 2006. The EPC considered amending its membership and leadership structure to better fulfill its mission and goals. Local officials providing leadership to the EPC still remain priority. The EPC considered amending the vice chair and executive committee structure for continuity of leadership and opportunity for participation. The Handout given at the meeting also gave the names of the Executive Committee in addition to the 2006 EPC Chair and Vice Chair(s).

2. EPC Focus for 2006

Description from Agenda:

Chairman Connolly discussed the Council's draft work plan for 2006 and highlighted Priorities 1 through 4. The discussion expanded the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan; National Capital Region Strategic Plan for Preparedness; Communication, Education & Public Outreach and Advocacy & Urban Area Work Group Roles. Recommended action is to discuss 2006 focus. Recommended action was to discuss 2006 focus.

Summary of Discussion:

The handout given at the meeting discussed the Priorities 1-4 for 2006. Priority 1: Regional Emergency Coordination Plan discussed the background and activities. During the September 11th terrorist attack COG joined the National Capital Region Task Force on Homeland Security and the predecessor to the EPC for the purpose of developing a region-wide plan to coordinate emergency response and preparation efforts. The RECP and the resulting publication provided the framework for these activities. The EPC serves as the custodian of this plan. The COG Board directed staff and the CAO Committee to develop a work scope, milestones and timetable to re-examine the RECP and the lessons learned from the experiences of two Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The EPC also indicated a need to update the RECP and area emergency plans and focus on potential risks/vulnerabilities and to clarify the process for obtaining state and federal resources as necessary. It was pointed out that RESF#5 has submitted a FY06 Concept Paper/Initiative Plan to acquire the services of a consultant assist with the update of the RECP and local plans.

The EPC provided guidance and advocacy for more training and preparedness exercises, for the development of resource inventories and for testing emergency plans. It was indicated that RICCS was developed to bring key stakeholders and critical decision makers together at a moments notice for emergency situations. The EPC would like to continue to expand and promote the use of the RICCS in the NCR.

3. National Capital Region Strategic Plan for Preparedness

Description from Agenda:

In November 2005, the final regional forum was held, involving key stakeholders from various local, state and federal agencies and organizations, to finalize the National Capital Region Strategic Plan for Preparedness. 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 in 2006. The EPC, in its proposed role as custodian of the plan, will be briefed on next steps to achieve and implement the strategic goals and objectives of the plan and to integrate the NCR plan with individual

jurisdiction plans. Recommended Action was to receive briefing and schedule plan review work session.

Summary of Discussion:

Tom Lockwood led the discussion on the NCR Strategic Plan for Preparedness which was included in the Proposed 2006 Work Program handout provided at the meeting. Along with Tom Lockwood were representatives from Booz Allen, the strategic plan consultants. The strategic plan for preparedness is priority 2 of the proposed work program. The ONCRC is responsible for coordinating the efforts of the federal emergency preparedness in the NCR. They supported the development of the first comprehensive NCR Homeland Security Strategic Plan. Mr. Lockwood and his consultant will be working over the next couple of months to finalize the NCR Strategic Plan. Once finalized, the EPC will become the custodian of the Plan and oversee the implementation and updates as necessary in the future.

4. Federal/State Coordination and UASI Process

Description from agenda:

The EPC's priorities for 2006 require that efforts be closely coordinated with federal and state authorities. Working in conjunction with the Senior Policy Group, the Chief Administrative Officers, and the Office of National Capital Region Coordination, the EPC will function as the federally required Urban Area Working Group, with oversight responsibility for the UASI process and related regional preparedness efforts. The EPC will be briefed on recent efforts undertaken at the federal and state level to better prepare the region for a natural or terrorist-related crisis, and on the status of the FY 2006 UASI funding process. Recommended action is to receive briefing.

Summary of Discussion:

Steve Kral updated the EPC on the status of FY03, FY04, and FY05 Urban Area Security Initiative that had been provided to the National Capital Region. He indicated that the region is schedule to expend all FY03 funds on identified initiatives, that the region is well on the way to expending the FY04 funds, and that FY05 expenditures are moving forward on schedule. Handouts were provided that summarized the current funding status for all three years. Mr. Kral reported that the National Capital Region is now working through the FY06 UASI process that has been changed significantly from previous years. DHS has directed that the region to focus on eight of the new Target Capabilities and the region has selected six additional Target Capabilities for a total of 14 Priority Target Capabilities for FY06. Mr. Kral reported that RESFs had reviewed the 14 Capabilities and had developed more than 100 Concept Papers/Initiative Plans totaling more than \$300M to address areas needing improvement. He indicated that the CAO's and SPG will be meeting to determine priorities for the NCR FY06 UASI submission to DHS. The EPC requested that they be provided an electronic copy of the financial information as well a copy of the FY06 UASI request to DHS.

5. Public Awareness Campaign Outcomes

Description from agenda:

In 2005, a contract to develop the National Capital region Public Awareness Campaign, funded through the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) was awarded to Burson-Marsteller, with project management conducted by the District of Columbia's Emergency Management Agency. The campaign was conducted over a period of several weeks, with a regional media event held to highlight its launch. The Council will be briefed on key campaign accomplishments and measurable outcomes, as well as opportunities for continuing the campaign's "ever-green" elements, as related to EPC Priority 3. Recommended was to receive briefing.

Summary of Discussion:

Barbara Childs-Pair, Director, of the Emergency Management Agency, District of Columbia Campaign Project Manager provided a handout at the meeting on the NCR public awareness campaign outcome. The campaign was funded by a \$4.5 million UASI grant awarded to Burston Marsteller that ran from March 4 through October 31, 2005. The campaigns goal was to increase to 50% the number of NCR residents prepared by advertising, community outreach, training and public relations. When the question was raised as to how do you measure preparedness, Ms. Childs-Pair responded that the consultant had developed the criteria and that it had been approved by the SPG. She further stated that an FY06 Concept Paper/Initiative Plan had been submitted that would allow the region to continue the advertising campaign. The goal is to move the preparedness level up to 50% and much higher if resources permit..

Mernie Fitzgerald suggested that more analysis of what worked and why was needed and that the outcome should be brought back to the committee. The Chair tasked Barbara Childs-Pair's group to make an analysis of what worked out of the four campaign components and what didn't and respond at the May 10th meeting. The evergreen campaign elements discussed at the meeting and provided in the handout were: a highly recognized, research-based logo and tagline, advertising artwork, template on file with the Z-card, campaign web-site, professional training and a core of trainers in individual jurisdictions. These elements will continue after the life of the campaign.

The next steps for the awareness campaign are: to get another presentation on public awareness campaign that involves schools and the picking up of children, target groups not reached at the last campaign and a survey of what campaigns were most successful. A concern of the committee was the release of kids during a disaster and how would the parents receive proper notification of the procedures. One suggestion was to send notification home through kids. It was reported that most schools already provide emergency information to parents. The EPC expressed a concern regarding the lack of standardized policies in this area.

6. Outdoor Warning Systems and Public Notification

Description from agenda:

In 2005, a consultant was hired to analyze the feasibility of installing and operating outdoor warning systems – or sirens – as part of the region’s emergency alerting system for the public. As a tangible follow up to this analysis, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria were selected as pilot areas for actual alert tests that were conducted in January 2006. The Council will be briefed on the status of the feasibility analysis and the outcomes of the alert tests.

Summary of Discussion:

Robert Griffin, Director, Office of Emergency Management in Arlington County gave a handout in the meeting which discussed the purpose, proposed timetable and cost of the Outdoor Warning System Pilot Program. The purpose of the pilot test was to determine how efficient adding the siren system to additional systems of public notification and information throughout the NCR.

The proposed pilot should develop a bid specification that would address control system requirements; perform a study of optimal locations of outdoor devices; install and test the system audibility and intelligibility ranges; develop and test voice messaging strategies; develop and perform suitable training for system operators and issues suitable progress reports and a summary report to document “lessons learned” and final results. The chair asked how do they measure the success of the outdoor warning system and the response was through surveys.

The next steps were: to give clear guidance to citizens regarding the outdoor warning system and

7. Wrap Up and Adjournment

The former Chair, Mr. Williams stated that the EPC needed more local elected officials and that many federal officials still don’t know who’s in charge. He recommended that these items be addressed at the next meeting. The Chair entertained a motion for adjournment and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:10 PM.