Special Emergency Management Council Meeting

June 3, 2021 | 0902 | Meeting called to order by Jason Biermann, Chair

Attendees

A list of virtual primary and alternate member attendees is at the end of these minutes.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Chuck LeBlanc to approve the March 11 minutes as written. It was seconded by Joann Boggs - Passed

Opening Comments

Robert Ezelle gave an overview of support to the Department of Health (DOH) over the last year and a half in response to COVID19. The Emergency Management Division (EMD) is working with DOH to develop a plan for backstock of PPE for the state of Washington. The National Guard and Title 32 orders will extend through the end of the fiscal year. Demobilization is in process to drawdown the National Guard who are helping Employment Security Department, vaccination sites, and food banks.

EMD continues to work four concurrent disasters. Fire season is looking like it might be a difficult one. The Guard is prepped to assist Department of Natural Resources, if necessary. New staff are being hired in Public Assistance and Mitigation because of an increase in workload.

Kevin Wickersham was introduced and welcomed as the new Response Section Manager.

Jim Baumgart said he has been listening to the good efforts of the EMC Strategic Planning Workgroup. He is looking forward to renewed commitment and conversation around how the recommendations turn into tasks in the coming legislative and budgetary cycles. Baumgart shares the concern for multiple concurrent emergencies. The heavy lift is always done by those at the local level.

Committee Reports

EMAG meeting report

Submitted by Jason Marquiss, EMD

During the April EMAG meeting the two primary work items were:

- Grants reviewed for EMPG were:
  - 21 Grants Portfolio Update
  - 21EMPG Allocations and Grant Changes
Key discussion points

- The 21EMPG timeline was published.
- Tentative allocations for 21EMPG.
- Refinement of options to spend down 19EMPG turnback funds.

- EMAG Charter: A EMAG member workgroup was identified to refine the small group work discussions conducted between FEB-APR. The group will provide draft recommendations for permanent changes to the EMAG charter. The most significant of which the establishment of a member serving as the EMAG Chair and the establishment of a member vice-chair.

Inclusion and Equity Subcommittee

E&I Co-Chair: Kim Conner, WA State Independent Living Council (WASILC)

The subcommittee is co-chaired by staff from DOH and WASILC. The subcommittee has not met since COVID began and staff changes at DOH. There are no plans to meet in the future.

In lieu of an E&I report, below are the accomplishment of the Coalition on Inclusive Emergency Planning (CIEP) Network, a WASILC’s program. CIEP’s partners include EMD, DOH, FEMA, local EMD’s, Red Cross, Centers for Independent Living (CILs), disability advocates and more. Also attached are two after action reports and CIEP’s standup protocol.

- Hold bi-weekly CIEP Stakeholder networking meetings
- Ongoing discussion on DeafBlind Access to 9-1-1 and Emergency Notifications with EMD, ODHH, and community members
- Technical Assistance (TA) with DOH on equitable and accessible vaccine distribution
- TA with EMD on Text-to-911 and Real-Time Text and 911 verbiage, ESF6 Plan updates, Cascadia Rising exercise, Greater WA Shake Out Earthquake Drill with new ShakeAlert alerting app
- TA with WA Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network book on Wildfire Recovery for Leavenworth
- TA with FEMA Region 10 on Yakima vaccination site
- Finalized After Action Report on wildfire response from September (Attached below)
- After Action Report on Evaluation of Pierce County Outdoor Alerting System upgrade to include flashing lights. (Attached below)
- CIEP partners with DOH, ODHH and other deaf advocates on ASL videos in response to COVID
- Provided TA to Joshua Hackney and Yakima County Emergency Management on COVID testing sites and wildfire response
- Participated in national advocacy efforts with Partners in Inclusive Disability Strategies (PIDS), National Emergency Numbering Association (NENA), National Independent Living Council Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee (NICL-EP), and Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (TDI)
- CIEP now is part of WebEOC to maintain situational awareness

Discussion and advocacy for an AFN Coordinator position within EMD at Disability Emergency Preparedness Conference, November 2020 (See overview in CIEP Alert newsletter.)
State Emergency Response Commission (SERC)

Submitted by Patrick Reid

Training Coordination (HazMat Training)
- Virtual LEPC-Tribal Conference and HazMat Workshop: The Hazmat Workshop and LEPC-Tribal Conference resources are being pooled to provide a “Whole Community” approach to the trainings. The combined month-long event took place from April 6th to May 6th with classes being held every Tuesday and Thursday during that time frame. Registration will be announced shortly.

EPCRA Compliance and Outreach
- Flipped reporting year over on January 1st; those reports are due March 1st, 2021. Tier 2 reports are coming in.
  - 1,300 reports have been submitted, with a historical high of approximately 5,000. Currently at approximately 25% of reports in. There have been many exemptions for not meeting the reporting threshold.
  - Reminder: data collected includes Expanded Hazard category.

HMEP Grant Update
- Received year 3 allocation from PHEMSA was awarded in December. It was $20,000 more than anticipated by SERC.
- The new grant application is due to PHMSA March 11th. Award to be received toward the end of September. Subrecipient agreements will be sent out after it is received.
- SERC allocated $18,000 to purchase additional Emergency Response Guides.
- March finalized state application for SERC to review per the HMEP requirement.
  - Reallocation of Year 3 funding of $34,312 to the Haz-Mat Training program delivered by the WSP because of the funding shortfall in their training program budget.

LEPC Planning Update Benton County turned in their plan for SERC Review. It is with partnering state agencies (WSP and ECY) for review. SERC reviewed and provided feedback to Franklin County EMA.

Strategic Planning and Charter Update. The articles will be out for review in June and a meeting to accept in July.

Emergency Response Guides -
- 11,880 Emergency Response Guides have been sent out so far to first responder agencies.

SERC Chair Appointment- Patrick Reid, Deputy Fire Chief of Pasco to SERC Chair Position.

Update on the progress of the LEPC Survey LEPC survey.
- Of 43 known LEPCs, 25 completed survey for completion rate of 58%
- Kim Moore for Department of Health provided an overview presentation on the American Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) update.
- On Tuesday, April 6th. The SERC recognized chief William “Bill” Whealan for his time and service dedicated to the commission. He officially retired at the end of 2020.
Seismic Safety, Casey Hanell

Nothing to Report

WAMAS

Submitted by Mark Douglas, EMD

There has not been a meeting scheduled as of today 5/25/21.
I recommend that Intra-State Mutual Aid Subcommittee membership be an agenda item for an upcoming EMC meeting and solidify the subcommittee membership. All members must come from the EMC so this seems an appropriate venue. Once the membership is available a meeting can be held to move the team forward as the group intends. Previous actions are below:

The last plan for the subcommittee, October 24, 2018 was to replace the one missing member and Bill Gillespie will serve until a replacement can be found for his position. The positions will be filled using WSEMA, Local emergency management or Sheriff’s from the EMC membership.

The subcommittee met in October 2018 for the annual meeting and it was recognized that the subcommittee membership should have representation from the actual users of the WAMAS system. A vacant member position shall be filled, and a long-standing member will be replaced using EMC members that represent people authorized to use this mutual aid system. Further accomplishment was made towards establishing a coordination and training body for facilitation of the WAMAS system. A new concept will be developed using Homeland Security Regions within the state as advisors and this will be further examined when the committee membership is finalized.

Current committee members of WAMAS are: Robert Ezelle, vacant position, Bill Gillespie, Ray Cockerham, & Philip Lemley

After the subcommittee updates were discussed, Bill Gillespie requested names of committee attendees be included in all the subcommittee reports.

EMC Strategic Planning

Sharon Wallace provided an overview of the 2022-23 strategic plan and each of the six strategies with an emphasis on strategies 1, 2, 3, and 6.

Strategy 1. Provide purpose and focus for the EMC through an annual strategic workplan.
After some discussion, Chandra Fox moved to accept the strategic plan as presented. Greg Welch seconded – passed. Mike Harris will lead this strategy.

Strategy 2. Obtain feedback on EMC Annual Report.
Jason Biermann proposed a new format for the annual report. It is a shorter and more-targeted approach. A change in the timing to align with fiscal year versus the calendar year cycle puts the report in line with budget legislation and keeps the data current. With time running out for this current year report, it was suggested that the report center around COVID19. To focus on one subject rather than tackling multiple subjects will provide for a quick turnaround. During the next fiscal year, the format will be as presented, using the following recurring, current, and future issues as priorities that were identified in the EMC survey this past February:
Recurring issues: Resource ordering, data collection, and information sharing
Current issues: Funding for emergency management and hazard mitigation
Future issues: Attrition of emergency managers, post-COVID.

A workgroup was identified for the annual report to include Jason Biermann, Arel Solie, and Casey Hanell.

**Strategy 3. Increase perception of EMC value and influence.**

Creating a presentation that one could share with constituents, providing written input to venues (i.e. monthly newsletters), refreshing subcommittees to increase momentum going forward, and meeting more frequently for shorter meetings over the year were ideas shared that could help increase the EMC perception. It was further suggested that the FEMA Region X Administrator, Vince Maykovich, TAG, Robert Ezelle, and Jim Baumgart be given more time at meetings to keep the committee abreast of what is happening. Stephanie Wright motioned to meet every other month for two hours and Fred Brink seconded. The motion passed.

A workgroup was identified for this strategy as: Kirk Holmes, Eli King, Chandra Fox, Stephanie Wright, Arel Solie, Bill Gillespie, Nate Weed, Scott Engle and Brian Schaeffer.

**Strategy 4. Ensure consistent communications with EMC members and constituents.**

**Strategy 5. Review and analyze funding for emergency management.**

**Strategy 6. Review and update RCW 38.52.040.**

Section I. under III. Purpose of the EMC Charter was addressed and a team was created to review, discuss, and recommend changes (if any) to TAG.

### III. Purpose

I. Shall review administrative rules governing state and local emergency management practices and recommend necessary revisions to the Adjutant General. The list includes, but is not limited to:

1. 118-03 Mt. St. Helen’s closure – Rules for permitted entry and/or occupation
2. 118-04 Emergency worker program
3. 118-09 Criteria for eligibility and allocation of emergency management assistance funds
4. 118-30 Local emergency management/services organizations, plans and programs
5. 118-40 Hazardous chemical emergency response planning and community right-to-know reporting

The workgroup identified for this project is: Chandra Fox, Phillip Lemley, Fred Brink, Eli King, Joann Boggs, and Kirk Holmes. The EMAG will be involved with 118-04, 118-09, and 118-30.

The Strategic Planning Group is asked for volunteers for Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans (CEMP) rulemaking. The EMAG will be involved in the CEMP rulemaking.

Kim Conner and Philip Lemley offered to help where needed. Others were encouraged to let Jason Biermann or Sharon Wallace know if they would like to be a part of any of the workgroups mentioned.

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**Current and Recurring Emergency Management Issues**
COVID

- Vaccine distribution and disease trends

Andy Rose, DOH COVID Response Incident Commander gave a COVID update. To date, there have been 403k cases and 5,801 deaths. The trend is turning downward. There are still spot outbreaks happening in industry and unvaccinated populations. Most of DOH’s outbreak response is focused on providing quick mitigation strategies for these outbreaks. COVID hospitalizations are trending downward. There are currently 457 positive cases with 72 on ventilators. Occasional system surges of non-COVID impacts are being tracked, such as, a baby boom and nursing staff taking much-needed time off or burnt-out nursing staff leaving the profession.

Over the last six months, 7.1 million vaccinations were administered. Vaccine clinics continue in hard-to-reach populations areas, while mass vaccine sites are weaning away. Of the eligible population, 52 percent has at least one dose. Of the entire population, 44 percent are vaccinated. Vaccination trials are currently underway for the 12 and under population. DOH is starting a CAR-A-VAN project to provide mobile vaccination sites.

Today at 2:30 p.m., a big announcement is expected from the Governor about state-led incentives for vaccinations. This is an intense coordination between the Governor’s Office, the Lottery Commission, and Department of Health (DOH).

The Roadmap to Recovery Reopening Plan has a metric of June 30 or 70 percent vaccination, whichever comes first. The state continues to find ways to provide guidance to people vaccinated or not to keep them safe. Businesses, the public, and large events are informed through orders and proclamations of the reopening. DOH continues to point people to the benefits of the vaccine and at the same time protecting and supporting those who cannot vaccinate.

Questions were discussed regarding the June 30 re-opening in the business community. The Governor’s office will continue to provide guidance messaging as the re-opening nears.

Stacey McClain, EMD, State Coordinating Officer discussed federal activities in response to COVID. There are only two active mission assignments happening currently. One is the Yakima CVC vaccination site, which remains an open and supported at the local level for at least for a couple more weeks. The second mission is the Title 32 mission with the National Guard, but nearing the end, likely in September, to prepare for fire season.

FEMA has new reporting criteria for the state and locals for eligibility to the 100 percent cost share, with a big push on equity and inclusion. The funding is being pushed to high-risk communities and underserved populations. This has created a lot of reporting work at the state and local level.

PPE has been ordered through the federal system and this, too, is coming to an end. As the state opens back up, PPE and storage reimbursement will go away. EMD is currently working with DOH for a plan for excess PPE.

The FEMA Individual Assistance Funeral Assistance Program is underutilized in Washington. Currently, the federal FEMA money obligated to the state in response to COVID is about $867million. There is about $1.7 billion pending in the system right now. This does not include the funds utilized in
the Yakima CVC site and Title 32 missions. These two missions alone are running about $156 million in costs. Additionally, the Individual Assistance program, which includes unemployment and funeral costs in running about $780 million. None of these include the CARES Act funding.

- CSZ Highlights of CSZ planning from federal, state, and local perspectives:
  **Shane Moore, EMD**, provided an overview of catastrophic planning currently underway that are centered around catastrophic incidences.

The Critical Transportation goal is to prioritize routes which will need repair following a catastrophic impact. Each region determined their most vulnerable routes and Washington State Department of Transportation did the same. GIS maps were developed for visuals. Discussion continue with local emergency managers to create a plan that will help avoid any issues, such as mismatch priorities and hazards identification.

The Mass Care Services Planning Workgroup was formed through the SCIPT. Services include initial mass care, emergency assistance, housing, and human services. The priority of these efforts is focused on life-sustaining resources.

(Water) Infrastructure Systems (one of the four Core Capabilities) is the focus, because it ties so heavily to mass care. The Infrastructure Workgroup represents all sectors and levels of government, as well as the private sector. The goal is to identify the most vulnerable water infrastructure systems. Most of the infrastructure will not be repaired quickly enough following an incident. Understanding this, the group began work on how they will provide water services through alternate means in a timely manner. They continue to learn local restoration priorities, which are often different region by region.

Operations Coordination describes the structure to implement following a catastrophic incident in which Washington will need to divide either a part of or all the state into geographic divisions and branches to vertically integrate operations with FEMA. This framework utilizes the Homeland Security Regions to implement Multi-Agency Coordination Groups.

**Andy Caldwell, Lewis County Emergency Manager**, provided a snapshot from the local perspective. He shared an interactive map depicting the 200 or more bridges in Lewis County. If the region was hit with a catastrophic earthquake, it would create a series of “islands” across the county. The creation of the map was the initial step in a community preparedness kick-off. School districts were asked to convey the message to parents of the importance of developing a communications plan with their student and family members in the understanding that they may not be able to get to one another during an event. The same information was conveyed to community partners, business partners, and church partners. This map is circulating the community and is on Lewis County’s website.

- CR22 – Community lifelines:
  **Chandra Fox** introduced the use of community lifelines during a Cascadia Subduction Zone event. The Community Lifelines construct has come from FEMA and it defines critical government functions into seven categories, critical to human health and safety or economic security.
Each lifeline consists of components and subcomponents to support its function. For example, food is supported by commercial food distribution, commercial food supply chain, and food distribution programs such as community food banks in cascading order.

This construct supports Cascadia Rising ’22 (CR22), because by the time Washington is 96 hours in, impact analysis should be underway. The model illustrates where there are impacts. It also supports engagement of other communities because they cannot help areas impacted until their own communities are stable first. By understanding the subcomponents that have ties into Western Washington, and the affected systems located in that area, it will help to identify their own vulnerabilities. Preparing this way can put Central and Eastern Washington in a better position to help and support Western Washington during an CR22 event.

Fire Outlook

Expectations for 2021 fire season

Chief Mike Harris, Franklin County FD#3 gave a fire mobilization update. The first fire mob for 2021 was April 20 in Auburn. We started early but there hasn’t been much since. However there have been multiple discussions to prepare. It is difficult to predict, but the drought is significant. There is $500K set aside for prepositioning fire resources to stage them strategically in their region to deploy rapidly when needed. Fire districts must request and coordinate with DNR for the service.

Reid Wolcott from NOAA presented information in coordination with Steve Reedy, Maddie Kristell, and Carley Kovacik. Reid gave the best estimates of the weather based on current trends and outlooks. To make their predictions NOAA looks at the current snowpack and long-term drought. The month of June is a good time to gauge how soon fire season will begin. If June is dry, we tend to have an active fire season. And certainly, the most important indication is the long-term climate outlooks during fire season (July through September).

The 2020 fire season was first in number of acres burned over the last 30 seasons. The Washington acres total reached 842,358 acres and Oregon’s total was topping over a million at 1,141,613 acres. The historic Labor Day east wind event played a huge role in kicking these numbers upward. In the past 10 years (2010-2020), six of the years were in the top 10 for acres burned. These years ran the entire range of the El Nino/La Nina cycle. Indicating there is not a strong correlation.

Most of the West is currently seeing below normal snowpack and drought conditions. If the weather impacts states across the West, resources will be scarce due to demand for them. Temperatures are seeing a slight uptick in the month of June. It is a good practice to head into the fire season thinking that it will be an active one unless there are strong indicators otherwise.

Russ Lane and George Geissler of DNR worked together give an update on their findings. Russ Lane shared some problem trend of mid-elevations timber fires. The 3000-5000 elevation is causing the most
concern for DNR. Our state will average about 1000-1200 ignitions per year. Our system is designed to
catch 95 percent of those under 10 acres. Creating about 50-60 large fires. The short-term weather
events are what really impact the fire season. About 85 percent of the fires in Washington are human
caused. If we can effect change on that number, there will be fewer large fires.

Regional Issues Impacting Washington

Vince Maykovich, Acting Director, FEMA Region X went over some work that FEMA has done over the last
year and a half throughout the state of Washington. Much COVID response has been wrapped with the
conclusion of the Yakima Community-based center in Yakima. There was a tremendous success in the
partnership with Emergency Management Department and the Department of Health in these efforts.

Vince Maykovich brought up the funeral assistance program for COVID-related deaths to share that one can
get up to $9,000 per funeral and a maximum of $35,500 per applicant. This benefit to the residents of the state if
it applies. These funds are being underutilized. Please help FEMA to get this message out.

President Biden directed that the Building Infrastructure and Communities Program (BRIC) announced the
funding for this program will double. The increased funding will help meet the demand for hazard mitigation
across the nation and will enhance FEMA’s efforts to benefit disadvantage communities. It was emphasized
the need for building and land use code that account for natural hazards and risk as an essential part of
emergency management. Building resilience in lieu of paying for response and recovery.

Washington, Oregon, and Idaho will all participate in the CR22 exercise. FEMA is supporting workgroups in
all three states with technical assistance for exercise and design, as requested. The next major exercise planning
meeting for the region is in October.

Legislative Wrap-Up

Robert Ezelle, EMD

Of the almost 1,500 bills introduced, 341 of them passed. That is about half the number of bills that would be
seen during legislative session. The proportion of bills passed was somewhat higher - 23.5 percent compared
to 15 percent during most years. All the bills that died in the 2021 session will be alive in the second year of the
biennium at the highest point they reached in the house of origin.

Bills passed with a nexus to emergency management.

SB5101: Adds tribal representation to EMC
HB1271: In addition to other provisions, adds a representative from coroners and medical examiners to EMC
SHB1209: Established immunity to civil liability for volunteer providers of certain nonmedical care who are
acting in emergencies.

Additionally:

$1M Wildfire Appliance Grants in 2022 for eligible individuals or households that are residents of Douglas,
Okanogan, Pierce or Whitman County and suffered damage to their home or were displaced from a rental unit
used as a primary residence due to wildfires occurring in 2021 and meet certain criteria.

Disaster Response Account funding for the state match of 18 open federal disasters.
EMD received full funding to continue assisting local emergency planning committees meet their mandatory planning requirements.

EMD received funding and was mandated to lead a Pandemic Response and Recovery After Action Report Task Force – Funded at only 50% of the estimated costs.

Governor’s Emergency Fund was appropriated $5,000,000 to assist individual Washingtonians and families during and after a disaster.

**Open Forum**

An opportunity for interested persons to ask questions or share insights on the meeting and its content.

Ken Reidy, a citizen of Edmonds, brought up that he believes that WAC 118.30 is not being followed properly and further believes this some of this section of the WAC is out of date. Reidy is encouraged that a workgroup is being established to revied the emergency management WACs and hopes that citizens will be provided an opportunity to provide input in that effort.

Mr. Reidy also said his city does not have a comprehensive emergency management plan (CEMP). Several issues have been raised regarding the plan’s functionality. He hopes that the EMC will review the Edmonds CEMP and take steps to make sure the citizens of the city of Edmonds are protected, as soon as possible. He thanks everyone for the hard work being done.

Paula Towne, state contact for Citizen Core Certification, announced her retirement at the end of June. They hope to have a predecessor by the end of the month. She appreciates her working partnerships with the EMC.

Sharon Wallace reminded the EMC members and alternates to take the Open Public Meeting Acts training.

**Closing Remarks**

Robert thanked the Council for their participation and robust discussion to jump into the tough issues that have been a challenge to the EMC for several years. He is looking forward to great things. As the workgroups come together, there will be updates.

Robert also thanked Paula Towne for her years of service and he wishes her well in her next endeavors.

**Adjourn**

Chair Jason Biermann adjourned the meeting at 11:52 a.m.

**Next Meeting**

• August 5, 2021 at 9:00a.m.

Chair Jason Biermann adjourned the meeting at 11:52 a.m.

**EMC Primary and Alternate Member Attendees**

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Emergency Management Council Website can be found at this link. Remaining 2021 EMC Meetings: August 5, October 7, and December 2.