

5/23/2007 Routine Operations & Emergency Committee Meeting

Attending: Larry McKee, Tim Doody, Louis Wittie, Dave Barnes, Tom Jackson

Fran Campbell, Stevan Spencer, Bob Turner, Daniel Dysart, Tim Thomasson, Mel Ryan, Michael Stack, Chris Bodet, Lee Guillory, Jim Baker

Opening Comments: Chairman McKee opened the meeting by pointing out the importance of cooperation and communications between all political sub-divisions. Chairman McKee introduced the officers of the emergency operational centers of St. Bernard, Orleans and Jefferson parishes and the representatives of the Corps of Engineers, DOTD and State Police. The directors for our levee districts were introduced as well.

Mr. McKee introduced all speakers.

The agenda was adopted.

The meeting proceeded with the following presentations:

Col. Daniel Dysart (St. Bernard) – Alert status begins when three out of five estimations place storm in the path of our area and storm is within 200 miles. Col. Dysart states he will work with the levee board. Bob Turner is essential personnel at the Emergency Operations Center. Sirens and low band radio stations will be used. Col. Dysart has complete trusts in Bob Turner and his staff.

Tim Thomasson – (Orleans) Attending for Jerry Sneed. Orleans Emergency Preparedness office comprised of five people. Terry Ebert is the unified commander. Mr. Thompson would like to have a levee representative in their EOC. States the Corps will contact and advise what the Mayor is doing. The U.S.A.C.E. rep has and maintains the emergency plans for the various levee systems. The Corps' rep will apprise the districts of the mayor's activities and status boards would be updated. The EOC is open at the 120 hour mark if the path is felt to be for this area; at the 80/72 hour mark the EOC is totally opened and manned with 20+ people 24/7. Orleans EOC has requested a representation of OLD/SLFPA-E come into the EOC. Stevan Spencer advises police officers available for EOC. Mr. Thompson is to get back to the authority to advise the level of rep they wish to have in EOC (police, OLD rep, or Authority rep).

Mel Ryan (Jefferson) – Main EOC located on Ames Blvd. with satellite office (fusion center) in the Yenni Bldg. The purpose of the satellite office is to house representatives from the state, region and local areas and will allow face to face communication and live updates of area status boards and needed resources. EOC opens at 120 hour mark. State buses will leave from the Yenni Bldg. and Alario Center. Pet evacuation now mandated by law. Regional cooperation to protect citizens exists between St. Tammany, St. Charles and St. John Parishes.

Web EOC has been purchased by the region and allows status board, personnel and equipment updates for anyone wishing to participate. WEB EOC requires user name and password. On line training is recommended.

Michael Stack (DOTD-ESF3) – DOTD has two primary responsibilities; transportation (evacuation of the city) and engineering & public works support. The DOTD is represented in the state EOC and they also have their own EOC in Baton Rouge. Communications are essential with levee districts. Mr. Stack works personally with the executive directors and is also a go between for needed flood fighting, equipment and supplies. DOTD coordinates closing of flood gates across the state highways and is responsible for communicating closures to the public. DOTD is also responsible for reopening the highways for essential personnel and then the public. Mr. Stack recommends using WEB EOC but assures the committee he has people and procedures in place to assist when needed.

SLOSH modeling can predict rainfall and flood prone areas. Tab Trexler in St. Charles Parish is very knowledgeable of SLOSH modeling program.

Chris Bodet (State Police-ESF13) - Coordinates with DOTD for contraflow. The City Assisted Evacuations begin 80 hours out. The states police use the phased 50/40/30 plan. Areas south of the Intracoastal Waterway and areas without levee protection systems are encouraged to leave at the 50 hour mark. The 40 hour mark starts south of the Mississippi River and south of I-10. The remainder of the population begins to move at the 30 hour mark. The population is not tied to the phased evacuation plan and is encouraged to move when they feel the need to. Sandbagging is incremental and the highways are open as long as possible.

Lee Guillory (COE – ESF3) – The Corps has 5000 employees available. The COE's Emergency Authorities are primarily responsible for flood control and coastal emergencies for all hazards, flood response and emergency authorization. The Corps also supports the National Response Plan as well as state and local governments. (Presentation in file.)

Jim Baker (EJLD) – Emergency Preparations - Prior to hurricane season, floodgates are cycled to check for problems. The number of gates varies for each district. Coordination is in process with Joe Mater for radio communications. 40 hour payroll system is in place in the event of emergency and will be tweaked just prior to an emergency event. Each district pre-stages supplies throughout their system. The Louisiana Procurement handbook was handed out and is available on line once an emergency is identified. Each district coordinates rail evacuation with Amtrak. The city plans to evacuate people by rail and this will also have to be coordinated. Each levee district maintains a supply of emergency materials. Fuel tanks are topped off. Extra filters are brought in for essential equipment. Extra batteries, tires, etc. will be brought in. Food and water are also stored.

Stevan Spencer (OLD) – Security – Duties of officers during a storm event is to protect facilities, monitor floodgates and provide security for the personnel.

-EJLD provides general security for their facilities. They assist with pedestrian and traffic control for floodgate closings. One police officer is located at the Jefferson Parish EOC. Maintenance and personnel are escorted when requested. Officers are assigned to US61 and the East Return Levee during road closures.

-OLD – Police duties are described in the EOP manual. During general storm activities tide gauges need monitoring. The police are cross-trained to assist with floodgate closures. Escort service is provided for equipment, gate closures and sand bags. Inspection and security of closed gates is provided. Two officers are provided for rotation at the City of New Orleans EOC. The City of New Orleans is constantly updated with gate closure information.

-LBBLD – Coordinates sandbagging operations with hired labor forces; coordinates security and inspection of levees with the sheriff's office.

Bob Turner – (LBBLD) – Radio Communications – After Katrina we learned more reliable communication systems were needed. Communication between districts is needed and Joe Mater at OLD has programmed radios so that the districts can communicate via local 800 frequency. Radios will be provided to one or two board members as appropriate. Communication via the 800 frequency is available as long as there is electricity.

The new interagency communication via the state interoperability communication system was created post Katrina. The districts do not yet fully participate in this system but we should be on board soon. Once we are part of the interagency group, radios will need to be purchased. Once members, talk groups can be created so communication is available between districts and other state agencies.

-Conference Calling available at nine cents per minute. After state conference calls, local districts could conference for more information.

-Internet Options – emergency web site can be set up and used strictly for emergency situations. This would be a secure site with password needed to participate. Ideally, this should be hosted outside of the coastal area in the event of an emergency. Contacts, emergency operation manuals and payroll info could be posted.

Steven Spencer commented that a person should be available to update the website because this was a main source of information for OLD employees. Tom Jackson moved that the committee recommend to the full board that the website suggested by Bob Turner be implemented. Tim Doody seconded the motion. Fran Campbell requested the Orleans Levee District work on this. The implementation will be under the jurisdiction of the Regional Interim Director, Fran Campbell. Tim Doody also requested the conference calling be implemented so that everyone can communicate. Mr. Doody stated the call for any conference calls could be posted on the website. Mr. Jackson accepted Mr. Doody's recommendation as a friendly amendment. Motion carried with no opposition.

Fran Campbell – (EJLD) - Safeguard of Levee Personnel and Equipment - Fran reports we are working with other agencies for safe housing of personnel. She feels OLD and

LBBLD can work together to house personnel. EJLD can work with Pontchartrain Levee district. NIMS training is available.

Equipment is stored on high ground and kept out of harms way as much as possible. EJLD will store some equipment for OLD to spread their equipment out. LBBLD will attempt to use the Violet Bridge but Bob Turner says this may not be an option this year.

At this point, there is no room to house employees at Jefferson Parish pump stations. Ms. Campbell will attempt to get one employee in the pump station safe houses to be close to the levees for inspection. All but office personnel stay for storm event as it is written into job descriptions. Medical hardships are considered.

Tim Doody motioned to adjourn. Louis Wittie seconded. Meeting adjourned.