



# Texas Emergency Management Advisory Committee

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*Meeting notes from 5/14/2014*

## ATTENDANCE

Ronnie Bates	Charles Bauer	Mike Beimer
David Coatney	Leonard Deonarine	Dale Little
Crystal Lyons	Steve Mild	David McCurdy
Sharon Nalls	James Owens	Pilar Rodriguez
Bob Royall	Sarah Somers	Lauren Allen
Denise Walker	Lauren Allen	Shari Ramirez-MacKay
Larry Jantzen (observer)	Michelle Gonzales (scribe)	

## WELCOME

The meeting opened with the introduction of the new facilitator, Michelle Gonzales, and attendance taken.

A statement was made about new staffers and available open positions. A request was made for a complete contact list of current TEMAC members and their service terms. The discussion turned to the process for reappointment. The process was outlined as follows:

- If a member wants to continue to serve then a new application is not required, but a statement of intent to continue to serve must be made.
- If a member is leaving the committee, that member must send notice to the chair.

The following members verbally indicated they wanted to continue to serve and were confirmed for another term:

- Crystal Lyons
- Mike Beimer
- Sharon Nalls
- Denise Walker

## CHAIR REPORTS — Bob Royall and Sharon Somers

Chair Bob Royall gave a report addressing two pressing topics: Bakken crude and propane.

### BAKKEN CRUDE

The first session provided an overview of Bakken crude and its hazards, which are:

- Bakken crude is very light crude.
- It has a flashpoint of less than 73 degrees and a boiling point below 95 degrees.
- It contains highly flammable gases (propane and benzene).
- It is lighter than water and will float.
- Spills near waterways may spread quickly.
- Warmer temperatures can cause light crude to vaporize and migrate.
- Burning tank cars next to other tank cars can cause catastrophic failure.

His report also included issues related to transporting the crude. Because pipeline is limited and the industry is booming, multiple methods are used to move the crude to include over water via maritime vessels and overland via tank trucks. However, the primary method is by rail and tank car. Concerns with this option are pre-1969 versions of the DOT-111car were not designed for these types (Bakken crude) of materials. Pressure from small leak devices on these cars cannot be relieved fast enough which can lead to explosion. Newer versions of the car (2010 and later) have a larger leak release valve, but can still explode as evidenced in Lynchburg, VA in April 2014. The industry is

attempting to get ahead of the issue, but retrofitting all existing pre-1969 DOT-111 cars may take 30 years or more.

Chair Royall emphasized:

- First responders should be aware if Bakken crude is going through their community.
- Emergency management officials should reach out to rail carriers and establish a relationship prior to an incident.
- Communities must identify risks and preplan so they are prepared to respond to a Bakken crude incident, particularly a flammable liquid spill in which the community might be overwhelmed early in the incident.
- Update existing hazardous material and medical plans.
- Preparedness is paramount!

During the discussion, Chair Royall presented the Department of Transportation Emergency Order regarding Bakken crude oil, dated May 7, 2014, which requires any railroad carrier identified by this Order must provide certain information in writing within 30 days of the date of the Order to the SERC in each state in which the railroad carrier operates trains transporting one million gallons or more of Bakken crude oil.

**The group wanted to know if the state (TDEM) already has a method in place to notify local communities about SERC notifications, and if not, how this information will be forwarded to local communities.** Additional questions asked were:

- How will local communities distribute this information?
- Will local communities be notified of other hazardous materials coming through their areas especially if these materials are on the same train?
- How will this impact rural, unincorporated communities that do not have resources?
- What is the overall condition of the railroad infrastructure?
- How to minimize desensitization to numerous notifications about hazardous materials coming through?

As a group, the members brainstormed the following ideas:

- Develop collaborative relationship with railroad to build a rapport and start working together to exercise prior to incidents, take advantage of the railroads' numerous resources, as well as other government agencies such as NTSB.
- Charge a 10 cent a gallon fee on crude to pay for an information coordinator to ensure information is received and distributed quickly.
- Put mutual aid agreement groups into play. Members should be comprised of a cross-section of traditional and non-traditional emergency management providers to include the railroads. In order to be a provider, must identify what resources will be brought to the table. Meet once a month.
- If a community does not have any capability, know where to get it.
- Engage LEPCs.
- Engage oil and gas industry.

Also mentioned was training available from the AAR to respond to these issues. The three-day training is free (students are responsible for travel) and 1,500 slots are available. Slots available to a jurisdiction are based on the amount of crude coming through the community. Members were directed to contact Class I rail providers to schedule slots for training.

## **PROPANE**

The second session covered recent issues regarding propane regulation and requests for variances in those regulations. Chair Royall provided background of the conflict which started when a COG adopted a rule that prohibited propane tank installations near residential and commercial areas. In response, the propane industry lobbied for HB 2663, which added a provision to the Natural Resources Code that the health, welfare, and safety rules and standards adopted by the RRC under sec. 113.051 pre-empt and supersede any ordinance, order, or rule adopted by a political subdivision of Texas relating to any aspect or phase of the liquefied petroleum gas industry. Efforts to make the rules less restrictive are underway and a response is pending from the Texas Railroad Commission. Arianna

Hargrove is chairing a workgroup and a draft copy is expected soon.

Questions asked or concerns voiced after the report were:

- What will happen to existing propane tanks? Note: They will be grandfathered.
- Concerns about new builds in neighborhoods where there are propane systems.
- Licensed plumbers are not required to lay pipes for propane.
- Need to know where installations are.
- Need safety inspections of existing installations.

After Chair Royall's report, an update was requested about the transportation of neutralized weapons of mass destruction and what preparations have been made for their arrival. Chair Royall answered they are prepared and the weapons are expected to arrive in two to four months in south Texas.

Chair Sarah Somers' report followed. Chair Somers deferred to TDEM Deputy Assistant Director Shari Ramirez-MacKay who discussed changes being made to improve local jurisdictions recovery processes.

She reported TDEM has received a grant from the Governor's office to hire nine regional recovery coordinators (one supervisor and eight accountants) that will be go to the field to help local jurisdictions set up a system for recovery and to be there for the recovery process. This is a pilot program and will end September 2015. If successful, the program will be fully funded.

During her report, she outlined the success of the T-600 Disaster Accounting 101 course. Through this course, large (San Antonio) and small (Round Rock) metro standard operating procedures for their respective recovery process have been developed, which can be used as a template for other large and small metro areas. Members questioned Ramirez-MacKay about the development of a county template. She responded a county would need to volunteer because the procedures developed are specific to a jurisdiction, and each may have different processes and procedures. She emphasized the need of jurisdictions to focus on the financial component of recovery to include:

- What players are needed from the county?
- Who puts together the financial (FEMA) forms?
- Who would be put in the EOC?
- Who would have to report how much this event cost?
- What does that accounting function look like?
- How to find a champion within local jurisdictions to support and increase awareness of emergency management.

As the discussion continued, members expressed concerns such as jurisdictions may perceive this as stripping away how they do business and how TEMAC as a group can bring finance to the forefront. Several members stated that too many city managers do not understand the importance of emergency management, and would like to see required position-specific emergency management training for city managers, and more buy in from other senior level officials.

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE — (SB 1556 AND 171)

### **SB 171 – Not discussed.**

### **SB 1556**

TDEM's Susan Vessell provided an overview of the most recent SB 1556 task force meeting. During her report, a TEMAC member raised numerous concerns about the task force's most recent recommendations and the named members of the task force. Those issues were:

- Whether the task force was fully taking into account the structure, culture, and interests of independent school districts (ISD).
- An ISD representative should be named to the task force.
- Including judges, mayors and district emergency manager coordinators in districts' Safety and Security Committee because school districts are often special taxing jurisdictions.

- An issue with local law enforcement being a member of a district's Safety and Security Committee - ISDs often have their own law enforcement.
- The use of common terminology and she suggested going back to the state plan so schools are using the same language.
- Schools are very closed regarding information sharing and exposing flaws in their processes.
- Whether TEMAC could have a liaison in the task force.

Vessell addressed these concerns by explaining SB 1556 named the members of the task force, and in order to add taskforce members, the legislation would have to be changed. However, there were advisors from the education community who were providing guidance to task force members. Vessell continued. She notified the members they would be asked to review the recommendations and provide feedback after the Texas School Safety Center submits to task force members draft guidelines. After it is received, TDEM will send it to TEMAC members for a one week review. The task force wants to know what should be included, excluded, concerns and suggestions, and will address the feedback at their next meeting.

Additional questions and concerns were:

- How is the Texas School Safety Center disseminating this information that these changes are coming?
- Can TEA and other agencies be used to get the information out?
- Legislation does not address private and charter schools.
- What role do Education Service Centers play in this? If none, why aren't they part of the process?
- How will TDEM disseminate this information?

## OPEN FORUM

The following subjects were addressed during the open forum.

### LEPCs

- **TEMAC member want to know who are the members of LEPCs and how often those LEPCs meet.**
- How can TEMAC come up with a funding instrument to make inactive LEPCs active?
- **TEMAC members want a sit rep of TDEM's work on LEPCs, and if there is a committee working on this issue, a list of those serving sent to TEMAC members.**

### Funding

- Due to concerns regarding funding shortages that affect programs such as EMTF, would like Eric Epley's talking points from a recent GETAC meeting distributed to TEMAC members.

### Mutual Aid

- **Change the definition of mutual aid because a lot of jurisdictions chose not to participate in local or regional mutual aid due to the perception local jurisdictions are completely covered under state mutual aid agreements.**
- Get the message out that mutual aid is not going to take care of day-to-day activities and ensure jurisdictions understand they are not being told to rid of mutual aid.
- **Concerns expressed the state hasn't educated jurisdictions enough about mutual aid and the district coordinators are not getting out to talk about the changes that occurred two years ago.**

### Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)

Leonard Deonarine offered his assistance if any support was needed regarding MERS. He stated:

- MERS has now presented in the US.
- CDC is supposed to send out cards and information to first responders, and he urged first responders to take

precautions when dealing with flu-like systems especially if aware of recent travel by the patient.

**NEXT MEETINGS**

The next committee meeting will be held Wednesday, August 13, 2014, at 1:00 p.m. in the Governor's Conference Room at the Texas Department of Public Safety located at 5805 North Lamar Boulevard, Austin, Texas 78752. Chair Royall will not be present and Vice Chair Somers will chair the meeting.