Texas Emergency Management Advisory Committee

Meeting notes from 8/13/2014

ATTENDANCE		
Ronnie Bates	Charles Bauer	Mike Beimer
David Coatney	Leonard Deonarine	Crystal Lyons
Steve Mild	Sharon Nalls	John Owens
Denise Walker		
Shari Ramirez-MacKay	Susan Vessell	Michelle Gonzales (facilitator/scribe)

WELCOME

David Coatney introduced as the acting chair due to the absence of both chairs that were not able to attend because of schedule conflicts.

The meeting minutes from May 11, 2014 were approved.

Agenda Items

SB 1556 (S. Vessell)

Vessell provided an update about the School Safety Certification Program. She reviewed the crosswalk, process flow, and the recommendations submitted by D. Walker (**Note:** The crosswalk and process flow were provided to TEMAC members via Listserv July 30, 2014 to review. Members were asked to submit their recommendations they wanted considered by close of business August 8, 2014. D. Walker sent her recommendations to all TEMAC members via Listserv.)

TEMAC members present applauded the efforts of the task force and complimented them for creating uniformity and a standard for Texas. As the discussion progressed, several concerns and options to address the concerns were brought forward by TEMAC members:

Concerns

- Number of drills (5) at each facility may be burdensome
- ADA compliance
- Funding (particularly in poorer rural communities)
- Perception this is an unfunded mandate
- Clearer line of distinction between the type of schools
- Mixed-use campuses (commercial tenants, colleges, high schools, day care)
- Infrastructure not in place in older buildings (e.g., PA systems, strobes)
- Texas Education Code requirements (Note: If code is met then certification standards are met)
- Transparency
- Board presidents, chancellors or equivalent are not familiar/knowledgeable about plans
- Lack of follow through
- Combat apathy in non-emergency situations
- Resistance to publishing sensitive information such as phone numbers
- Send plan to local emergency manager (may be seen as an endorsement of the plan)
- Are Texas Education Service Centers involved
- Do not have the resources /expertise to create plans
- Lack of community involvement and awareness

Options

- EMPG funds or other grants
- Identify funding sources
- Develop committees
- Develop relationships with local partners
- Encourage discussions about the topic
- Sensitive information can be redacted.
- Guidance to jurisdictions available via DPS Plans Unit and Texas School Safety Center at Texas State University
- Provide a detailed road map of the process
- Publicize after action reports
- Collaborate with media
    - Incorporate in planning consent forms
- Develop best practices to engage the community, schools, etc. to build buy-in with stakeholders
- Make requirement to have plan on file
- Mutual aid agreements
- Work with TEA regions
- Use DPS resources such as planners, Planner's Toolkit, and other
- Put plan on file with local emergency management office

D. Walker asked Vessell if TEMAC was supposed to draft a white paper. Vessell stated no and emphasized the

feedback of TEMAC members, as representatives of the education, police, fire, private, and public communities, was critical.

Regional Recovery Program Update (S. Ramirez-MacKay)

Funding for the program from the Governor's Office had been condensed from two years to one year. The program will hire nine full-time positions: eight regional finance coordinators and one state coordinator. Interviews are ongoing in Region 6 and 2. There has been limited interest in Region 5 and recruiting efforts continue.

Ramirez-MacKay stated TDEM will likely ask for funding to make this a permanent state program instead of grant funded.

Regional Recovery Pilot Areas Needed (S. Ramirez-MacKay)

Pilots have been slotted for Grayson County (Region 1), San Angelo (Region 4), and Beaumont (Region 2). Ramirez-MacKay stated additional pilot areas are needed in Regions 4, 6, 3 and 2. She cautioned those present that training would not be conducted at the same time due to time and resource commitments.

Ramirez-MacKay was asked if special taxing jurisdictions are eligible for the pilot program. She replied not at this time, but that may be a long-term consideration.

She was also made aware that misinformation was out there that TDEM, through this program, will set up "everything" for jurisdictions such as debris removal, contractors, etc. Ramirez-MacKay stated this was not the case and provided an overview of what the program was designed to do:

- Guide jurisdictions in setting up accounting procedures such as time, books, grants, audit tracking, and burn rates
- Help jurisdictions identify what their financial needs (processes) are
- Teach jurisdictions to build customized plans, policy, and processes themselves
- Exercise plans for effectiveness
- Identify strength and weaknesses
- Combat institutional knowledge loss, lack of practice, personnel changes, policy changes, and procurement changes

Ramirez-MacKay emphasized that regional recovery is a core component of Chief Kidd's priorities.

After Ramirez-MacKay conclude her report, a point was made that a lot of jurisdictions perceived insurance would cover all losses and that a lot of agencies are self-insured and may have limited coverage.

Acting Chair Report

Acting Chair D. Coatney provided an overview of his recent meeting with Chief Kidd.

The Chief wants:

- To know who provides direction for what TEMAC is working on
- TEMAC to follow a model similar to GETAC with committees and subcommittees

Chief Kidd is concerned committees/councils (e.g., FRAC, TEMAC) are working at cross purposes and redundancies in tasking may be occurring. To combat this, he tasked TDEM personnel with review of statutory requirements and how reporting can be made to various councils and committees to promote situational awareness.

Chief Kidd also requested the following topic areas be presented to TEMAC for further consideration. Feedback about the issues was given at the meeting.

Concern	*Feedback*
Regional Recovery Program	Excellent preparedness tool and training
Private contractors ▪ What is in place? ▪ How do local jurisdictions reach out to private	▪ Vendors met at conferences want to know why the state does not have disaster contracts like other states regarding generators, pumps, stand-up

contractors during emergencies? ▪ What's in place for long-term recovery?	infrastructure. ▪ Limited resources during a disaster ▪ Local jurisdictions must identify needs before a disaster ▪ Identify gaps. A lot of smaller communities may not know accessories are needed for the generator such as cables, electricians, etc. ▪ Recommend TDEM investigate best practices to educate and prepare communities ▪ Identify core functions and components that all RACs should have in place ▪ Create a sourcing and contracting guide to give to communities ▪ Pre-position contracts with vendors have clause prohibiting vendors from contracting with more than three jurisdictions within a 100-mile radius
Common audit findings in local jurisdictions, how do local jurisdictions handle audit findings? What mechanisms are in place to keep findings from being repeated?	No follow up discussion occurred on this topic.
What is needed from TDEM in areas such as education, services, finance?	▪ Advertise TDEM's Plans Section's capabilities and resources ▪ Chief Kidd should do a road show and make it open to first responder community to help identify needs; he's a draw
Where can the state review local jurisdiction's operations budgets and reserve budgets?	▪ A tricky area due to uncertainty of annual reserve budget ▪ Reserves are key ▪ Use public data and use a forensic accountant to pull the needed numbers ▪ Pushback regarding transparency ▪ Forecast vs. actuals can help identify reserves from a historical perspective
Railroad (Bakken Crude) Reporting	▪ Proprietary information of contents an issue ▪ Concerns about who gets what information and how it will be used ▪ Some jurisdictions are referring requests for information to county attorney or the attorney general for review ▪ Tabled until the subject matter expert, Bob Royall, returns to meeting
Develop a formula to determine a community's ability to prepare for/handle a disaster	▪ Tough since one size does not fit all ▪ Similar to THIRA ▪ Use insurance carrier to identify threats by zip codes (Same criteria used by FEMA) ▪ Communities assess priorities and identify gaps ▪ Are insurance companies worried about Bakken Crude? ▪ Have a representative of the Texas Department of Insurance speak to TEMAC at next meeting about how risk is measured

Effectiveness of district coordinators (DC) What do you want to see DCs do in a district?	▪ Most in the room know their DC ▪ Most are in contact with DC ▪ Have a program within TDEM to assist DCs or possibly have multiple DCs in larger regions ▪ DCs are very engaged (J. Hawes, Sheri Copeland, and Jack Doebbler specifically mentioned for their outstanding relationships and efforts) ▪ Continue outreach and relationship building/strengthening with municipalities, first responders ▪ Community awareness ▪ Be proactive, not reactive ▪ Facilitate connections to provide help ▪ Help rural areas with development and administration of LEPCs.
Effectiveness of plans	▪ Available templates and resources very beneficial and user friendly ▪ Voluminous to use ▪ Some agencies have created plan "Cliff Notes" or "cheat sheets" which are used more than the plan ▪ Jurisdictions should identify priorities and customize the plan to their needs
Effectiveness of COOP Planning	▪ Education about COOP plans limited ▪ Inconsistencies between other plans and COOP plans ▪ Talked about, but often not put into practice ▪ Lack of familiarity with plan and identifying essential functions

OPEN FORUM

- Interoperability fund being tapped to pay for border operations. This is generating frustration among local jurisdictions that have met requirements for interoperability and have been made promises of funding by previous office holders, yet the funds remain unallocated. They feel as if they have been left holding the bag and the issues with interoperability remain. This is a serious concern and local jurisdictions are no longer buying there's been a "shift in priorities" as an excuse for the lack of action by the state and funding.
- Committee members want to revisit having the next meeting at the Texas EMS conference the last week of November. Only one of the 12 members in attendance at this quarter's meeting will be attending the conference. As a group, they would prefer to hold the meeting in early December and meet at TDEM since it is centrally located, comfortable, available, and easy for all to get to.
- After TEMAC's last meeting, held at the 2014 Texas Emergency Management Conference, a TEMAC member suggested a listing of all members be created that had a picture and brief biography for each member. After a few questions about the purpose of the document (information only) and how it would be distributed (internal only), the members agreed to the listing. Additional information will be sent to members via Listserv once a process is determined.

NEXT MEETINGS

Currently, the week of November 24, 2014, at the Texas EMS Conference at Ft. Worth, Texas.