

**Chittenden County Regional Emergency Management Committee
Wednesday March 20**

Meeting Notes

Attendees

Brian Roberge, Town Manager and EMD -- Bolton
Seth Lasker, Assistant Fire Chief -- Colchester
Adam Argo, Town Manager and EMD -- Huntington
Tate Jeffrey, Fire Chief -- Huntington
Francois Ross, EMD -- Westford
Aaron Collette, Fire Chief -- Williston
John Audy, Fire Chief -- Winooski
Bob Henneberger -- Red Cross, RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service)/ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service)
Dorian Evans, Environmental Compliance Manager -- UVM
August Toynton -- Department of Health
Christine Forde, Dan Albrecht, Pam Brangan, Sarah Muskin -- CCRPC
Julie Benedict -- VEM
Harry Schoppmann -- VEM

Review of September Meeting Notes

There were no comments on the September meeting notes.

Emergency Services Radio Interoperability Discussion – Chief Aaron Collette, Williston Fire

Chief Collette reviewed results of a survey that was sent to REMC members on radio equipment interoperability in Chittenden County. He noted that discussions on this topic started when we were looking at the Chittenden County Dispatch project. It was also discussed during a Regional Rail Response Tabletop Exercise that took place in Shelburne last May.

The survey asked about UHF and VHF capabilities for mobile and portable radios, and also about ability to access federal interoperability channel program.

Important takeaways from the survey include that generally fire and EMS can't speak with law enforcement because of encryption codes that are used by law enforcement. This is a consideration for further discussion especially in the event of a hostile event.

All respondents supported the development of a county-wide interoperability response plan for large scale events.

Questions to consider for the future:

- Does your dispatch center have the National Interoperability channels in their consoles?
- What is the best practice to increase interoperability with Fire/EMS/Police on Incident Scenes? An example is the existing language in the Burlington International Airport Phase Response Plan for multiagency response.
- Is there a best practice for Law Enforcement interoperability with Fire/EMS on Hostile Event Scenes? This discussion may need to occur locally but might be good to see what others are

doing. In Williston the current plan is to put a fire command vehicle next to a law enforcement vehicle at an incident command post.

- What is the best way to evolve a County Wide Interoperability Response Plan for large scale incidents?

Bob Henneberg noted that for large scale events RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service) is coordinated through Vermont Emergency Management (VEM). Ham radio operators have a wide range of channels available and there is a UHF linked repeater system that covers the whole state. A ham radio operator can coordinate messages from a command center. It was noted that is an important option but would not be available immediately after a big event – within the first few hours.

One next step would be for the Chittenden County Fire Chiefs to create a model operating guidance. One issue is that not all fire departments are EMS -- how do we get the right players in the room.

July/August Flooding After Action Meeting – Julie Benedict – Vermont Emergency Management

Julie noted that moving forward VEM will be sharing more widely the results of their after action reviews for statewide and regional disasters to more widely share what is learned and to be more transparent.

A survey was sent to all jurisdictions following the July/August flooding to get information about what happened and asking for comments and suggestions. 39 towns responded. The questions asked about the timing of response, clarity of messaging, frequency of communications, and VEM's response in general. Most of the respondents were satisfied with VEM's response.

Summary of strengths –

- Use of technology reaching out to the municipalities.
- Responsive to the needs of local responders.
- Valuable statewide briefings.
- Monitoring of issues at dams.

Summary of areas of improvements –

- Some of the communications were slow.
- Some towns were not aware that some resources they requested were billable.
- Seems to be a disconnect between EMDs and their local schools in some areas.
- Some thought that the transition to recovery was slow.
- There was some lack of communication about closing tickets.
- Could be better communication about FEMA programs and requirements.
- Some residents suggested having alarms associated with river levels.
- Some noted a need to find a source for generators and all-band radios.
- It was suggested that satellite phones be strategically placed through the state

Julie noted that some of the comments from other REMCs about what is missing included the need for EMD mutual aid agreements and regional EOC at local level. Julie asked for additions or deletions.

Chief Collette echoed that evolving the mutual aid compact statewide would be beneficial. For the July/August storms many parts of the state were not affected. If we had a statewide mutual aid compact, we could fulfill local needs.

Julie also noted that VEM can't track local road closures. VEM is asking municipalities to use Waze. There is a link for municipalities to load their local road closures. Julie will share this information.

REMC Positions Available

Christine noted that the following REMC positions are unfilled. If any member is interested, please let her know.

- Chair – Discuss and review agendas, lead meetings
- Vice Chair – fill in for Chair
- Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC) Representative – participate in statewide meetings discussing hazardous materials. Meetings assumed to be quarterly or less
- Integrated Preparedness Plan Representative – participate in annual meeting to discuss trainings and exercises for the coming year.

Vermont Emergency Management Updates

Eclipse Planning-

- › VLCT is the lead on sharing Eclipse information. Link to past meeting videos and future meetings: <https://www.vlct.org/resource/eclipse-planning-check-recordings-and-resources>
- › Here is the link to report any events happening in your town: <https://forms.office.com/g/F3W73TTJBfv>.
- › www.vermont.gov/eclipse is the state resource for eclipse information.
- › Follow the health and safety guidance listed on www.vermont.gov/eclipse. Don't look at the sun without proper eye protection, for example.
- › Sign up for VTAlert for traffic, weather, and other information at www.vtalert.gov.
- › For traffic, weather, and other information specific to the eclipse, text VTECLIPSE to 888-777. That signs up for text messages, and offers the option of email notifications.
- › For traffic on STATE roads, visit the Vermont 511 site at <https://newengland511.org/region/Vermont>.
- › Waze will also have information on LOCAL road tie-ups: www.waze.com or download the app.
- › VEM will list local road closures that are reported to us: <https://vem.vermont.gov/eclipse/closures>
- › Main points for visitors and locals:
 - Plan for what could be historic traffic. Locals should watch the eclipse from home if they can, and out of staters would be well served to either stay in Vermont another day or just be patient driving home.
 - Motorists should have a full tank of gas in the event they are stuck in traffic for what could be hours. They should also have snacks and water with them for the same reason.
 - Those venturing out to watch the eclipse should bring sufficient layers of clothing. It could be cold, raining, both, or neither the day of the eclipse.

Local Emergency Management Plan updates are due by May 1st. If you need any assistance please reach out to either Christine or Harry as either will be more than happy to help with the update process.

Upcoming Training Opportunities

Most trainings require a Learning Management System(LMS) account. If you don't have an account, you can register for one at the following link:

<https://vermont.csod.com/selfreg/register.aspx?c=%255e%255e%255eQGm2wxcSUvINsXvXjRYs1A%253d%253d>

For a complete listing of trainings go to the Events Calendar in the LMS:

https://vermont.csod.com/LMS/catalog/EventsCalendar.aspx?tab_page_id=10&tab_id=20000513#m=2&d=03/08/2023

- ▶ **VT- Alert Manager Training-** this training is now an any time training in the LMS. Not to worry we will still host the virtual live trainings. You can take this training at the following link on the LMS: <https://vermont.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/video/588bdf66-6e68-490e-aa8b-18ccdd115184>

- ▶ **Vermont Local Emergency Management Director Course**
This course will familiarize Local Emergency Management Directors (EMD) and Coordinators (EMC) with major roles, responsibilities, and “how to do it” guidance, across all four phases of Emergency Management.
LOCATION: *Hybrid.* This will be *virtual* in and *in person* at Londonderry Volunteer Rescue Squad, Londonderry, VT
DATE/TIME: March 28, 2024, 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.
REGISTRATION: via State Learning Management System: <https://vermont.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/event/e35883cd-148f-415c-a554-4107b7533679>
There are two registrations for this class. One for virtual and one for in person.

- ▶ **G0191- ICS/EOC Interface (class is full)**
****JUST ADDED** MGT -417: Crisis Management for School-Based Incidents for Key Decision Makers**
The purpose of this 2 day management/planning level course is to provide the operational-level details to support many of the topics covered in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) approved AWR 148: Crisis Management for School-Based Incidents – Partnering Rural Law Enforcement and the Local School Systems awareness-level course. Rural schools, law enforcement, other emergency responders, and community stakeholders are often limited in their access to resources, so it is imperative that all potentially affected parties collaborate in planning, preparation, communication, response, and recovery in the event of a school-based incident. Moreover, these affected parties must come together to practice their interoperable skills through drills and exercises to ensure the strategies in place provide for an effective crisis response and collaborative recovery. With the intent of building upon the foundation of the AWR 148 course and utilizing an all-hazards approach, this two-day course will provide content instruction, develop concept-specific skills, and provide opportunities for law enforcement, school personnel, and community stakeholders to collaboratively apply the course objectives in scenario-based applications.
LOCATION: Williston Central School, Williston, VT

DATE/TIME: April 10, 2024, 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. & April 11, 2024, 8:00 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.

REGISTRATION: required Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium (RDPC):

<https://ruraltraining.org/course/MGT-417/?scheduled=true&id=11324>

▶ **VT- Alert Manager Training**

This training is intended for Town Officials who use VT-Alert for public notifications. This class is required for all people who will be using the program at the manager level. This training can also act as a refresher as needed. The class will be approximately 1.5 hours long and consist of sending live test alerts. A computer and internet connection are required. A second computer monitor is highly suggested as there is a follow along portion to the class. Prior to the training please confirm that your town has the required VT-Alert adoption paperwork. If you are unsure please contact dps.vtalert@vermont.gov

LOCATION: Virtual

DATE/TIME: April 17, 2024, 1:00 p.m.- 2:30 p.m.

REGISTRATION: via State Learning Management System: <https://vermont.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/event/c3384d94-b07a-4ddb-9d83-af8ea6de3713>

▶ ****JUST ADDED** HSEEP Bootcamp-**

The goal of this course, Exercise Bootcamp, is to reinforce prior exercise management training and to coach emergency managers through the planning, conduct, and evaluation of a tabletop exercise. The course is divided into four modules each focusing on a different aspect of the exercise management process, with a combination of classroom instruction and individualized engagement between students and instructors. The modules are:

- Module 1: Scoping
- Module 2: Design and Evaluation Planning
- Module 3: Preparing for Conduct
- Module 4: Post-Conduct (AAR and Beyond)

LOCATION: Virtual

DATE/TIME:

Day 1- June 14, 2024, 8:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

Day 2- July 12, 2024, 8:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

Day 3- August 9, 2024, 8:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

REQUIRED: Conduct your table top between August 10th and October 1st

Day 4- October 11, 2024, 8:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

PREREQUISITES: L0146 Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP), Previous participation in an exercise (as document by a sign-in sheet and accompanying brief narrative describing the student's role in the exercise(s))

REGISTRATION: via State Learning Management System: <https://vermont.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/event/42d3f758-b375-4810-bee6-bfb433b0e867>

Must attend all four days to receive credit.

See attached course announcement for more details.