



INDIANA EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMISSION

UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES INDIANA EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMISSION

MEETING DATE: March 13, 2023

MEETING TIME: 1:30 p.m.

MEETING LOCATION: 608 Oakland Ave., Elkhart, IN 46516, Neff Center at Elkhart County Health Department

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: (in person participation unless otherwise noted)

Stephen Jones—State Fire Marshall, Chairperson

Michael White—Designee for Joel Thacker, IDHS Executive Director

Matt Bilkey/Chris Barr—Designee for Douglas Carter, ISP Commissioner (via Microsoft Teams)

Jeff Larmore—Local Government Representative

Cara Cyrus—Business/Industry Representative (via Microsoft Teams)

James Pridgen—Business/Industry Representative (via audio) Vincent Griffin—Public Representative (via Microsoft Teams)

Bruce Palin—Public Representative (via Microsoft Teams)

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Peggy Dorsey—Designee for Brian Rockensuess, IDEM Commissioner

Shawn French—Business/Industry Representative

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Hillary Egan—IDHS (via Microsoft Teams)

Casey Kenwrothy—IDHS

Erin Miller—IDHS

Jackie Pulley—IDHS



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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Chairman Jones welcomed everyone to the March 13, 2023, IERC meeting, hosted at the Elkhart County Health Department.

QUORUM

Mr. Kenworthy noted that a quorum was not met. Ms. Egan, IDHS legal representative, confirmed that one more Commissioner needed to attend the meeting in person to meet the requirements for quorum.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chairman Jones felt that with the recent train derailment nearby in Ohio, he would take the opportunity to encourage the state of Indiana to evaluate the awareness, readiness, plans and public information related to hazardous materials. Chairman Jones stated that it encompasses more than just firefighters. We also need to be including law enforcement, EMS and public safety as a whole. Chairman Jones stated that in his experience the weakest link concerning hazardous materials is general awareness; most public safety responders that arrive on the scene of an incident are not part of a hazmat team. Chairman Jones believes that a major way to combat responders going into scenes to quickly without complete awareness of chemical that may be present is to make sure there is a better understanding of the Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG). One of his efforts this year will be to push first responders to refamiliarize themselves with the ERG.

Chairman Jones also wants to make sure that everyone understands that hazardous materials runs should go slowly to gain an assessment of what the chemical is and what the safe distance is, and to allow time for hazmat teams/experts to arrive.

Chairman Jones also noted that the rail industry has free, well put together trainings for hazardous materials and rail car incidents. Chairman Jones has reviewed some of the trainings and will send information regarding them. He feels that it would be very beneficial especially for smaller jurisdictions that may not have hazmat teams to review that information and encourages everyone to do so.

Jennifer Tobey, executive director of Emergency Management for Elkhart County, shared their completed five-year commodity flow study. Elkhart did all major thoroughfares, including two county roads that are highly populated and see a lot of transportation of hazardous materials. Director Tobey can provide copies to anyone interested.



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CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes were not voted on due to a quorum not being present. The minutes from January's meeting will be considered at the May IERC meeting.

ROSTER APPROVAL

The roster changes were not voted on due to a quorum not being present. These changes will be included in the report for the May IERC meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Reporting Fee Process Update-Legislative

Mr. White reported that he will be working with IDHS legislative representative Alyssa Schroeder to get updating fees onto the 2024 legislative session. This will most likely mean that changes in the amount that facilities pay into Tier II and the flat amount each LEPC receives from the state will not change until 2025.

Report Due Date Changes (Committee Task)

It has been determined that the due dates for LEPC reports were established in the IERC Handbook, not by Indiana Code. This allows the Commission to change the due dates.

The policy/tech committee will hold discussion and then present their outcomes to the entire commission.

The fiscal committee will be reviewing the required documents and the entire process for fiscal reports. The current process causes confusion and inconsistencies. The fiscal committee would like to establish a standard process for the fiscal reports to be completed and submitted to make the process easier not only on the counties but for the staff members who review the reports. This will alleviate the numerous hours of review currently spent on fiscal reports both by the LEPC and by the LEPC/IERC Program Managers.

NEW BUSINESS

Training Committee

Mr. White reported that the Indiana Hazmat Conference (previously referred to as IAHMR) will take place in Plainfield, IN, November 1-2, 2023. There will be a pre-conference day on October 31. The agenda has not been released at the time of this meeting.



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New IDHS Email Address Contacts, New IDHS Mass Email Process

Mr. White reported that the IERC now has a new email address for LEPCs to use, which is ierc@dhs.in.gov. There is also a new email address for LEPCs to use, IndianaLEPC@dhs.in.gov. The intent for both emails is so that the LEPC/IERC staff at IDHS can all view the inbox. If your county's LEPC program manager is on vacation, you will not have to wait an extended amount of time to receive an answer.

LEPC/IERC Program Managers will no longer be sending mass emails. IDHS policy now states that any email that goes to ten (10) or more people must be sent through the IDHS Public Information Office review process and will then be sent out through a PIO email address. All major communication from the LEPC/IERC program will be sent out this way.

Committee Tasks

Fiscal committee tasks were discussed above. Policy/tech and Communications committees will be reviewing various documents for needed updates.

LEPC Fiscal Reporting Consideration (Committee Task)

See discussion above under "Old Business."

Funding Recommendations

Ms. Miller reported that she and Ms. Pulley created a spreadsheet showing the dates for when each county submitted their various reports. Ms. Miller passed out copies of the spreadsheet to the commissioners present and indicated she will send to those online.

Due to a quorum not being present, funding recommendations will be considered at the next meeting.

Approved Training List-Consideration of Necessity

Mr. White reported that the IERC has an approved vendor/training list. This list has not been updated in several years. Since the counties do their own vetting of vendors, purchasing and planning, it is a question



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as to whether or not the IERC needs to have an approved vendor list. Mr. White asked Mr. Larmore for his input due to his long-standing membership in the IERC.

Mr. Larmore reported that the list existed when he became a part of the IERC and it was a challenge because many of the listed organizations were already certified by another body or located out of the state, i.e., federal resources. The list became more of a guidance list because it was difficult to keep the list current.

Mr. White stated the state of Indiana has certain requirements, purchases go through the Secretary of State, Department of Workforce Development, etc., so when LEPCs were considered a special state board, they had to meet the same requirements, including having an approved list. Now that LEPCs conduct business at the county level, does the IERC need to have a required approved list for LEPCs or should the IERC allow the counties to vet their own training.

Mr. Larmore commented that it would still be beneficial to have a recommended list of trainers, especially for LEPCs that cannot find vendors around the state.

Commission Vacancies

There are currently three vacancies on the commission. Mr. White stated that two (2) names were submitted to the Governor's Office when IDHS Executive Director Joel Thacker was the State Fire Marshall/IERC Chairman. There will be follow up to discuss the vacancies with the Governor's Office.

SARA TITLE III PROGRAM REPORT

Mr. Kenworthy reported that the 2022 Tier II season ended on March 1, 2023, which the funds are still being calculated for. Mr. Kenworthy reported an issue with combined invoices. A feature exists in the system where if you are company with multiple facilities, you should be allowed to pay in bulk. For physical check payments, Mr. Kenworthy has to manually add them to the system and this was not working. Mr. Kenworthy reported that the developers are aware and are already working with IDHS IT staff to correct the issue. Mr. Kenworthy stated that the remaining payments not entered into the system due to this error will be entered within the next week or two.

As of today's date, \$663,490 is currently entered into Tier II Manager. 6,112 Tier II reports were filed for this year. This is about average compared to previous years. It could be slightly lower due to payments not currently entered as referenced above. A more accurate amount will be available at the next IERC meeting.



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Mr. Kenworthy reported that many issues reported last season have been resolved for this season. In 2015, there was a system glitch that incurred duplicate payments, which caused negative balances for facilities.

Mr. Kenworthy resolved the issue last year with HazConnect. As a measure, last season, Mr. Kenworthy received ten (10) phone calls per day regarding this issue. This season, Mr. Kenworthy only received five to six phone calls the entire season.

Mr. Kenworthy stated that he also works for consultants that submit reports on a facility's behalf. Several consultants have reported that the process for facility reporting is better in Indiana than compared to other states that they have reported in that use Tier II Manager.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

James Lopez, deputy director of Emergency Management for St. Joseph County, commented that he has had trouble with Tier II. He stated that Ms. Miller has spent a lot of time on the phone with him and even visited St. Joseph County to try to resolve his issues. Mr. Lopez stated that he has experienced issues that make Tier II Manager not user friendly nor intuitive.

Mr. White stated every year there is a new maintenance contract with the Tier II Manager developers, who have already received a full-page list of issues from Mr. White and his team. The list of issues was developed from issues reported by LEPCs and from issues that Mr. White's team has found. Mr. White also reported that issues are not standard, and some counties are experiencing issues that others are not. Mr. White's team will be working with HazConnect developers to make sure all issues are addressed, and all counties have the same, correct workflow.

Mr. Kenworthy explained that one reason that accounts could look different is that LEPCs are only allowed one account that can access the LEPC plan. However, LEPC admin accounts, the account that submits reports, can be added to other accounts on the team. For example, many EMAs are on LEPCs, the LEPC admin function can be added to EMA accounts. When created, EMA accounts are identical to fire department accounts. Due to license limitations, each county is only allowed one planner account. Planner accounts access the LEPC plan.

Mr. White stated that the IERC will work with LEPCs who are having software issues and will still make note of issues that LEPCs will report and pass on to the developers.

Ms. Tobey asked what the relationship is between the IERC and HMEP grants. Mr. White reported that the IERC does not have any say in the approval process of grants. The only involvement in grants sits with the IDHS hazmat specialists, who are called in by the grants staff for clarification when they do not understand



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what an item is. Mr. White stated that some grants get denied because “response” is mentioned in the application. HMEP grants cannot be used for response. HMEP grants are used for training or exercise.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

MADE@Plainfield
May 8, 2023

APPROVED: _____
Stephen Jones, Chairman

DATE: _____