

MEMORANDUM

To: Traffic Incident Management Group and Interested Parties

From: Tom Reinauer, Transportation Director

Date: April 17, 2008

RE: Meeting Notes from Traffic Incident Management Group-Communications Interoperability Task Force on April 8, 2008

Those in attendance included: Gary Eaton – Kittery Police; Gil Emery – Portsmouth Police; Patrick Moulton – York Police; Tom Reinauer – SMRPC; Gregory J. Stone – Maine Turnpike Authority; Charles Czeniawsky– York Police.

The meeting was held at the York Library.

- 1. Welcome and Introductions**
- 2. Discussion of the State of Maine's Communications Operations Plan (CONOPS) for Incident Communications Interoperability**

The group spent most of the meeting discussing the CONOPS procedures, and how this could work during incidents in the southern Maine/seacoast New Hampshire region. Another major focus was how the procedure could assist in incidents involving departments and agencies from both states. The following were the major questions, concerns and general comments discussed. The group also decided that perhaps a meeting with the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is called for, in order to address some of the questions and perhaps discuss some modifications to the CONOPS procedure. Tom said he would contact Bob Bohlman from York County EMA and Robert Gardner from MEMA to discuss a meeting.

- Ø It seemed that the order in which the frequencies would be defined based on CONOPS levels should be reevaluated. Many thought that the Statewide Car to Car (SWCC), Statewide Fire (SF) and Nationwide Car to Car (NWCC) should be the first frequencies -- in that order.
- Ø Many police and fire agencies are unaware of the CONOPS procedure. There needs to be more information and training before it could become effective.
- Ø The policy assumes that radios will be reprogrammed to include all six frequencies, but there are very few agencies/departments that have programmed them (and probably none that have all six).
- Ø Reprogramming of radios (both in-vehicle and mobile) is an issue for some departments, primarily due to cost, but also due to available equipment and technology. For example, departments within the Town of York have the software to reprogram radios, but others do not.
- Ø There is a concern that many of the CONOPS frequencies do not work off of a repeater, and thus may not have the effective range needed in some incidents.

The group discussed the possibility of dedicating one frequency that both Maine and New Hampshire could utilize for cross-border incidents in the southern area. One option is the

Regional Car to Car frequency, which had been in place for some time, but it was unclear whether these were still available.

One other basic model that was suggested is to use one frequency as the primary for the Bi-State area, and also utilize 4 to 6 of the Federal VTAC channels that are available.

Another option was to utilize the frequency applied for when the joint incident command locations were being established in Newington, NH and at the York Turnpike maintenance facility. It was unclear whether any of the agencies involved received permission to utilize this frequency. Greg Stone said he would look into this and see if any information is available.

3. Call List

Tom Reinauer passed out the latest information regarding the Call Tree, and several people gave correct phone numbers for some of the Departments/Agencies on the list. Tom explained that the plan is to conduct a few tests of the process within the next month. The dispatch centers are on board with the process, and also gave feedback on the letter that went out to various departments explaining the purpose and plan for the Call Tree.

Discussion followed regarding the notification, and that some departments may still not be aware that they are supposed to be participating. Tom said that they had included a date by which people should respond, and that staff will be following up with phone calls prior to any test.