



RIEMA NEWS



Volume I, Issue VI

Director- Major General Robert T. Bray

January 2, 2008

RIEMA Moves Forward

*By Major General Robert T. Bray
The Adjunct General and Director
of the Rhode Island Emergency
Management Agency*

I want to assure our stakeholders and the people of Rhode Island that the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency remains technically, tactically, and administratively as prepared as ever to continue to provide support for all hazards incidents.

As the Adjutant General of the State of Rhode Island and the Director of the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency, I have assumed the responsibilities of the Executive Director while the position is being filled. Due to the medical leave of Deputy Director Diana Arcand, I have tapped Tom Kilday, RIEMA Homeland Security Program Manager, to handle the day to day operations of the organization in addition to his normal daily duties. Furthermore, I have tasked Paul Lupoli, as the Operations Officer, to focus primarily on

the development of a winter emergency plan in coordination with RIDOT and RISP. He will also work toward ensuring the 24/7 capabilities of the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for all hazards by developing a common operating picture of statewide capabilities through the situational awareness gained from a daily status report.

To assist with the 24/7 capabilities of the State EOC, we have instituted a new situational reporting requirement with the local communities using WebEOC. This is an evolving process that will involve the input and feedback of our stakeholders. The new situation reports will allow us to have a clear picture of potential issues developing within the 39 cities and towns providing for the opportunity to be pro-active as well as reactive to local needs. Most importantly, it will ensure that the state is able to focus its assets on critical needs for an all hazards approach to emergency management.

Recent circumstances have caused us to re-evaluate our relationship with a loyal and devoted public servant whose selfless 29 year career in emergency management was terminated. During a 27-year career which culminated as Chief of the Cranston Fire Department, and his 2 ½ year tenure as Executive Director of the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA), Mr. Robert Warren's devotion to duty is unquestioned.

Finally, we will work quickly to fill the position of Executive Director. The position will be posted shortly and interviews will begin as soon as it closes. I will be looking for strong leadership skills, administrative experience, and technical credentials. I will be making a conscious effort to ensure that RIEMA has a new Executive Director as soon as is administratively possible.

Any questions regarding any ongoing RIEMA programs should be directed to Tom Kilday at Tom.Kilday@us.army.mil.

RIEMA to Host Dam Planning Seminar

RIEMA will host a Dam Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Informational Seminar on January 23, 2007, from 8:30 a.m. until Noon, at the Airport Radisson Hotel in Warwick, Rhode Island. The purpose of this seminar is to discuss actions that need to be taken by cities and towns based on Rhode Island General Law 46-19-9 which requires an

EAP to "be prepared for each significant or high hazard dam by the city or town wherein the dam lies," by July 1, 2008.

The seminar will consist of presentations by dam safety experts, discuss the EAP template developed by RIEMA in conjunction with DEM and the League of Cities and Towns, and provide information on

funding that is available for dam safety. Invitations are forthcoming for all municipal CEOs and EMA Directors.

Please contact Robert Pesapane from RIEMA at Robert.pesapane@us.army.mil or (401) 462-7187 with any questions or to RSVP to the Dam EAP Informational Seminar.

Winter Storm Affects Rhode Island

On December 13, 2007, Rhode Island experienced a quick hitting winter storm that dropped between 3 and 13 inches of snow in various locations around the State. At times, snow fall rates exceeded 2 inches per hour and driving visibility was negligible. Gridlock was experienced along many of Rhode Island's highways and throughout the City of Providence. Many Rhode Islanders expressed deep concern over various issues that arose throughout the duration of the storm.

To address the concerns of Rhode Islanders, RIEMA has undertaken an aggressive planning effort to develop a Winter Storm Response Appendix for inclusion into the State's Emergency Operations Plan. This annex will provide a response framework to ensure that services are rendered in an expedient and coordinated manner. We are also working with other state

Weather Alert List Updates

RIEMA is currently updating its Weather Alert (WX) List to ensure that it is current and inclusive of individuals and groups who may require weather notification. The purpose of the Weather Alert List is to redistribute weather alert information so that individuals and groups within the response community are kept apprised of potential natural hazards. Information is gleaned from National Weather Service Alerts and only Rhode Island specific alerts are forwarded out. This list is open to anyone within the Rhode Island response community who would like the information. Please contact Rick Andreato at Rick.Andreato@us.army.mil to be added to the list.

agencies to quickly and thoroughly provide a comprehensive plan that will address any winter storm response. Additionally, legislation will be reviewed to ensure that RIEMA and other state agencies have the statutory authority to ensure public safety. The mission of RIEMA has been to provide support to local agencies and governments upon request. The future mission of RIEMA will include a pre-event operational posture to be more re-

sponsive than reactive.

Rhode Islanders are reminded that Mother Nature is always unpredictable and always has the upper hand. "Use common sense during winter weather. Ensure your food supplies are adequate and your vehicles are fueled. Heed winter weather alerts. Stay at home if you don't need to be on the roads so that RIDOT crews and RISP can do their jobs for your safety," advises Major General Robert Bray.

Pam Pogue Leaves RIEMA

National Floodplain Insurance Program (NFIP) State Coordinator Pam Pogue will be leaving RIEMA on January 11, 2008 after ten years with the agency.

Pogue was responsible for overseeing the NFIP program within the state and regulating all floodplain development. Rhode Island is unique within this program because all of our 39 municipalities are involved with the NFIP.

During her tenure, Pogue created the first ever statewide geo-referenced digital Hurricane Evacuation Maps in conjunction with Steve Cutt from the

Department of Transportation. She also authored the first Rhode Island State Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Pogue is also a nationally recognized floodplain manager. She served as the Chair of the Association of State Floodplain Managers during the time of Hurricane Katrina testifying eight times before Congress. She is also the founding Chair of the Rhode Island Chapter of the Flood Mitigation Association.

RIEMA would like to wish Pam all the best in her future endeavors. In the interim, please contact Larry Macedo at 401-642-7126 with any questions regarding the NFIP Program.



Pam Pogue

NIMS Training Available Bi-Monthly

In an ongoing effort to provide updated NIMS required training and ICS training, RIEMA will be conducting Technical Assistance training for the On-line courses (IS-100 and IS-700). Also an overview brief will be provided for ICS 100. The training will be scheduled the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month

from 9 a.m. through 12 p.m. and will be located in the State EOC at 645 New London Ave. Cranston, R.I. 02920. Seats will be limited due to computer resources.

Please contact Ken Baker to reserve your seat at:

Kenneth.l.baker1@us.army.mil

Woonsocket Water Emergency

The City of Woonsocket recently experienced a water emergency on December 26, 2007. A water main break threatened both the delivery of water and the fire protection of the East Side of Woonsocket and a small section of the Town of Cumberland including both a nursing home and dialysis center. Woonsocket EMA activated their Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and notified RIEMA that assistance may be required.

RIEMA dispatched three liaisons to monitor situation and assist Woonsocket EMA as necessary. Additionally, the State EOC was activated at Level II (Partial Activation) to serve in a standby capacity and begin to identify resources to support the City, if needed.

The Department of Health, Drinking Water Quality Division was notified by the water supplier of the water emergency. Health, in conjunction with officials from Woonsocket Water issued a voluntary boil water order and informed the public of the break. RIEMA also worked with Health and the Rhode Island State Police to coordinate a state response to the incident.

Overall, Woonsocket EMA was able to handle the situation using mostly City resources and private contractors. RIEMA was able to provide valuable advice and support to the incident. While Woonsocket EMA set up the EOC, RIEMA Liaisons were able to get WebEOC up and running to monitor the situation and post important information on the behalf of Woonsocket EMA. Crews worked through the night and water service was restored on the 27th. The voluntary boil order was lifted on 28th after tests proved the system had not been contaminated.

RIEMA Focuses on Sheltering

RIEMA and the Rhode Island Chapter of the Red Cross have teamed up to strengthen the state's sheltering capabilities and present a comprehensive statewide shelter plan prior to the start of Hurricane Season on June 1. This partnership focuses on the training of shelter workers and supervisors, increasing the shelter capacity throughout the state, and re-engaging the local communities to address this local issue.

Sheltering of residents is one of the main focuses for RIEMA in planning for the 2008 Hurricane Season. RIEMA is working to increase the level of preparedness within the local communities and support local initiatives within these areas. We have developed a local shelter planning report for all

communities to better understand local strategies.

Currently, the RI-Red Cross is working with the local EMA Directors to re-sign their updated Statements of Understandings. During these meetings, a time line set up to ensure successful completion of all required actions by both parties. From there, the RI-Red Cross is currently offering training courses at an aggressive pace. RIEMA has stepped forth to assist in funding this effort through the FY05 Citizen Corps Grant Program.

For more information about this statewide effort please contact Nick Logothets at [lo-
gothetsn@riredcross.org](mailto:logothetsn@riredcross.org) or Norm Menard at RIEMA at norm.menard@us.army.mil.

RIEMA Responds to Incident at T.F. Green Airport

At approximately 5:00PM on December 16th, a US Airways Express Flight 3758 skidded off the runway at T.F. Green Airport. Emergency crews responded, notifications were made and the airport's Incident Command Center (ICC) was activated. The State EOC was already activated in watch status to monitor a winter storm and provide coordination for municipalities and state agencies. But that "watch status" quickly changed shortly after 5PM when the EOC received a call regarding an incident at the airport. Information and details were still vague, however RIEMA quickly sprung into action and began to make additional notifications and activated RIEMA's airport incident response, as requested by the Incident Commander at the airport. RIEMA staff quickly responded to the incident and pro-

vided on-scene support in both the ICC and through the deployment of RIEMA's Mobile Command Center. RIEMA's Public Information Officer (PIO) also arrived and assumed the primary responsibility for public information until the PIO of the Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC) arrived on-scene. RIEMA was able to assist in the coordination of a multi-agency response including local, state, federal and non-governmental agencies including RIAC, Transportation Security Administration, FBI, Federal Aviation Agency, Rhode Island State Police, Red Cross, Warwick Fire Department and Warwick Police Department.

Luckily, all 31 passengers and 3 crew members walked away from the plane without injury. An investigation is underway regarding the incident.

Rhode Island Resources: Rhode Island Urban Search and Rescue



In the event of a terrorism incident involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive

incident or any natural or man-made disasters which causes a structural collapse requiring Search & Rescue the Rhode Island Urban Search & Rescue Team (RITF-1) will be deployed through activation by the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA). The USAR Team may be deployed for in-state missions or through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) for out of state missions upon approval by the Governor.

Conceived in 2004 by Chief Curt Varone of the Providence Fire Department, RITF-1 begins the New Year with 115 Task Force Members. RITF-1 members are volunteers from various Fire & Police Departments from around the state. In addition RITF-1 maintains a cadre of volunteers from other specialty areas outside of the traditional first responder environment such as Engineers and Dog Handlers.

RITF-1 has become an important state resource designed to provide specialized collapse search and rescue support local or interstate partners through Emergency Manage-



ment Assistance Compact (EMAC). Dedicated professionals provide hours of volunteer time to plan, train, exercise and equip the team for response missions that may require duty in hostile conditions to provide specialized collapse rescue support to trapped individuals within local communities and throughout the country.

RITF-1 is working on creating a dynamic, flexible, structure designed to support their operational



mission. The team is capable of deploying in one of three configurations: TYPE I which consists of a team of 70 personnel, a TYPE II which consists of a team of 38, or a TYPE III which consists of a team of 23 personnel. Each team configuration comes with its own Logistics Section to support the mission and provide for the responders needs. Each team configuration is capable of supporting the citizens of the state in structural collapse rescue, flood rescue, and to support TF-2 in wilderness search & rescue.

Any question about the Rhode Island Urban Search & Rescue Program:

John Washburn RITF-1 Program Manager:

john.washburn4@us.army.mil

Chief Bill McKenna RITF-1 Task

Force Leader: fhfd2@cox.net

Rhode Island Urban Search & Rescue (RITF-1) Website at:

<http://riusar.com>

RI Participates in “Area A” Pandemic Flu Exercise

On December 12, 2007, representatives from various state and federal agencies participated in an “Area A” pandemic influenza tabletop exercise. For purposes of planning for and responding to a pandemic influenza event, the federal government has divided the country into five “Areas”. Area A includes FEMA Regions I & II (RI is located in Region I together with the other five New England states and Region II includes NY, NJ, and the US Virgin Islands).

Representatives from the following agencies participated in this tabletop exercise: RIEMA, HEALTH, DEM, MHRH, RISP, RIDOT and the RING. In addition, representatives from the regional FEMA office and various military branches also participated.

The exercise scenario focused on the introduction of a strain of pandemic influenza into Area A by drug smugglers traveling from Thailand and then into the continental United States by various modes of transportation.

The exercise highlighted key areas of preparedness and challenges in preventing the spread of a pandemic influenza strain here in the United States. Policies and procedures for the early activation of the Incident Command System and the critical role of well-coordinated risk communication strategies were identified during the exercise.

Rhode Island will also be participating in a two-day Pandemic Influenza tabletop exercise being sponsored by the National Governor’s Association in Boston, MA on January 10th & 11th to further exercise our region’s response.

2007 RIEMA Accomplishments

At the start of 2008, RIEMA thought it would be valuable to reflect on our year's accomplishments. The following is our abbreviated list of 2007 accomplishments:

Events Hosted:

- Debris Management Workshop
- Statewide Hurricane Conference
- Hurricane Hunter visit and tours
- International Emergency Management Group Conference

Exercises:

- Flood Exercise with Region 1
- Ardent Sentry 07 - Hurricane Yvette exercise with Region 1, DoD and FEMA
- Port of Providence Evacuation Drill
- Tall Ships Command Structure and Response TTX
- MEDS PODS exercises with 7 municipalities
- Numerous HSEEP multi-jurisdictional exercises
- TF Green IED/Hijacking full scale exercise
- Points of Distribution System (PODS) 2 day emergency commodities training and exercise
- PanEX07 - Pandemic Influenza exercise with all of Region A including DHHS and FEMA
- USAR/CST exercise on Block Island

208 Training Activities were delivered to 2264 participants

Development of Programs and Plans

- Completed Phase 1 of a new Communications Center at the SEOC
- Replaced CDSTARS with the state of the art EMSTARS – providing a private, dedicated channel between the State EOC and each local EOC
- Expanded capacity of the 800Mhz RISON system
- Coordinated overall response for command of Tall Ships 2007
- DART – working alternative solu-

tions for companion animal sheltering

- Developed a template for Emergency Action plans for Dam failure
- RIEMA/MMRS/Health PPE for EMS program training, medications and equipment purchased and distributed
- Delivered education programs and medications to licensed EMS services throughout the state
- School Safety Steering Committee formed
- Legislation passed for mandatory lockdown and evacuation drills
- School Safety Programs introduced into School Districts.
- Special Needs Registry Launched
- Creation of 3 RIEMA Regional Planners to liaison with municipalities in plan development
- RIEMA News is established and distributed monthly
- Creation of Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP)
- Completed "Communications Capabilities between RIEMA & FEMA Region I" project
- Completed photographing of entire Freight Railroad Tracks in Rhode Island as part of the "The Railroad Environment, Rhode Island Freight Yards Main Line Track Secondary Track" project.
- SERC returns under the purview of RIEMA
- Update the Southern New England Fire Emergency Assistance Plan (Mutual Aid System)
- Sync-Matrix Planning for Port of Providence
- Began statewide standardizing credentials for emergency volunteers
- Reconstituted the state Citizen Corp Council – working with all trained emergency volunteer groups
- Established MOUs with Rhode Island Community Food Bank; Volunteer Center of RI, United

Way

- Assisted VOAD operations plan development
- Started editing the Family Assistance Center state plan in anticipation of an exercise in 2008
- Became an AidMatrix user

NIMS:

- Began resource typing in several functional areas
- Established a bi-monthly training schedule for NIMS
- Aligned the State plan and the municipal plans with the National Response Plan/Framework

Mobile Command Center Use:

Incidents

- Mycoplasma Health Emergency - Greenwood Elementary School, Warwick
- Telephone Outage - Cranston Fire Department
- Fire Incident - Stump Dump, Richmond
- Fire Incident – Pastore Complex, Cranston
- Airplane Crash – T F Green Airport

Events

- 3rd of July Fireworks
- 4th of July Parade
- Governor's Ball -Rhodes-on-the-Pawtuxet
- Tall Ships 2007
- NEDRIX Conference 2007 Northeast Disaster Recovery Information X-Change
- Firefighters Safety Awareness Tour
- RI Aviation Education Expo, T.F. Green Airport

Exercises

- Hurricane Yvette, State EOC
- Department of Corrections - ACI
- SWAT Team Training, at the Charlestown Police Department
- South County Hospital & Union Fire District
- TF Green Airport/RIAC – WMD/MCI

RIEMA Sends Representatives to the Bahamas

On December 4-7, RIEMA sent three staff members to The Bahamas to work with the Bahamian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) on emergency management issues. This trip was part of the National Guard's State Partnership Program, which links US states with a partner country for the purpose of improving bilat-

eral relations with the US.

The trip was centered around a NEMA workshop convened to discuss issues and plans regarding relief supply distribution, emergency communications, and sheltering in both an all-hazards and hurricane response situation. RIEMA staff facilitated discussions during the workshop and presented Rhode

Island's plans in those three areas. Additionally, throughout the workshop, RIEMA staff had the opportunity to learn about the challenges NEMA faces and how they work to address them. Overall, the trip proved to be a rewarding experience for both agencies.

Report to Review RI Preparedness

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency has been diligently working on the State Preparedness Report (SPR). This Report was mandated by Congress in the Post-Katrina Act to ensure that States are accomplishing goals and objectives for all-hazards emergency preparedness with grant funding. The SPR is extremely comprehensive and needs to contain detailed information on projects Rhode Island has spent money on and any projects or initiatives that the State anticipates spending dollars on over the next three years.

The final guidance for the SPR was released in November and since then RIEMA has reached out to the State Stakeholders and the UASI Policy Group to assist in the completion of the project. The SPR, still in draft form, is taking shape with input from these stakeholders and other members of RIEMA who work on particular planning initiatives or are managing a particular project.

The SPR is a challenge in that each initiative must be outlined to include Accomplishments, Current Capabilities, Three-Year Targets, Initiatives, and Resources. The Resources section is an estimate of how much money has been spent on the project and how much the State might need in the next three years. RIEMA and other agencies are as-

sisting to try and define any possible outcome and goal that might require funding for overall state-wide preparedness.

If you have any questions on the SPR, please contact Amy Grzybowski at (401) 462-7335 or amy.grzybowski@us.army.mil.



RIEMA Upcoming Courses & Training

January 9-10
ICS 300**

February 2-3
ICS 300

**Signifies that the class is full

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter or any articles that have appeared in it please contact:

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