

## Addison County Emergency Planning Committee Minutes–December 13, 2017, 5pm

### **Presentation:**

Matt Fraley: Review of recent UTAS explosion

At the request of members, Matt gave a brief review of the explosion that had occurred at UTAS. Matt was the first firefighter on scene and as a Deputy Chief, took command. The explosion was caused by ignition in an external aluminum dust container. The container is ducted direct from where it is created through the wall and into this enclosed container. Somehow an ignition source/spark was drawn through the ductwork and into the dust bin where it burned rapidly resulting in an explosion. The explosion blew out an exterior wall and burned 2 workers, 1 seriously.

Matts initial actions were to assist and make sure all workers were evacuated from the building. When additional resources began to arrive, he stepped into the role of Incident Commander.

On scene were Vergennes Fire, with mutual aid from Addison and Ferrisburgh Fire departments. Vergennes Rescue was the primary response agency with mutual aid from Middlebury Regional. Vergennes Police and VT State Police assisted. A unified command was not formed and agencies were familiar with what needed to be done and just did it.

Police was used to create a perimeter and direct traffic away from the scene. Fire was used to reduce the likelihood of additional fires and to assist in evacuation of the building which is quite large and broken up as members saw when the LEPC toured the building in 2016. Rescue stabilized the injured and transported them to Porter.

Matt indicated that he thought things went pretty smoothly even without activating some of the tools in his ICS toolbox. In retrospect he would have called for a unified command structure given the multiple agencies involved. He also observed that the gathering point for employees following evacuation is quite exposed and should probably be moved to a different location.

Mike Leyden gave his account from the perspective of UVMHN-Porter Medical Center. He was following the incident via EMS radio communications and based on speaking with the EMS crews and patients as they arrived at Porter. Mike mentioned that the number of injured did not require operating under the mass-casualty plan but was very close and it might have been useful to activate some of the components of ICS to better coordinate rescue response. He pointed out that it would have been nice to have a “Transportation officer” as identified in the District MCI plan. Other early considerations related to whether or not the patients had experienced any chemical contamination, and if so, what level of decon was required. Mike made the decision to not fully/formally activate Porter’s emergency plans, including setting up hospital-based decon, but nearly did so because of the somewhat limited communication between the scene and the hospital. As the response unfolded, the hospital was able to make direct contact with a member of the UTAS emergency response leadership team, which allowed for exchange of additional information.

Teena followed the incident via radio as well and related that MREMS was not utilized as effectively as could have been. Given the distance between the scene and Porter, both Teena and Mike wondered if it may have been better to transport the more injured person directly to the trauma center at UVMHC in Burlington. He was transported there eventually but could have received that treatment quicker had he gone direct.

All-in-all the consensus of those there was that everything turned out well but that there was room for improvement.

### **Local Emergency Planning Committee Meeting:**

#### **1. Call to Order at 5:30PM**

**2. October Minutes** Motion to accept by Erik, seconded by Tom S. Motion passed.

**3. Treasurer's Report** Due to the mid-month timing of the meeting there was no current treasurer's report available.

- **Reimbursements**—Tom requested approval to reimburse Tim for the food. Motion by Erik, second by Bob. Motion passed.

**4. Budget/Grant Update:** The LEPC has still not received its grant for the year. We currently have a bill outstanding which we cannot pay because the grant has not come in yet. Fortunately, the Commissioner has agreed to award a little more than the minimum \$4,000 to a few LEPCs who requested more. LEPC #8 will be receiving \$6,000 this year. Tim and Josh informed the members that because the executive board had wanted considerable changes to the grant wording, the process was slowed. Our request has apparently been sent to the Agency of Administration for their read on the wanted changes.

**5. VEM Report** – Josh let members know that VEM was changing VTAAlert vendors and that the service would be down December 1<sup>st</sup> for the changeover. It should not last long but will be inoperable until it gets back working.

**6. SERC Report** Tim gave a brief report on the last SERC meeting he had attended. They seem to be getting it pulled together and have started up a couple of new subcommittees. The finance subcommittee is tasked with developing a better grant process than this years so LEPCs can request more than the \$4,000 required by statute. An LEPC/SERC Liaison subcommittee was also created to increase connections between the SERC and LEPCs.

**Tier II Workshop Report-** Because of time limitations Tim only reported that it was a good workshop and, though not attended particularly well, the feed back was positive.

#### **7. Other Business-**

- Tim was asked if he could get a presenter to come to the next meeting to present the commodity flow study which was completed earlier this year.

Meeting adjourned at 6:04

### **Upcoming Events:**

- ACEPC next meeting—January 31, 5:00pm. VSP Barracks

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