

Fire and Emergency Incident Information System Technical Advisory Panel
Tallahassee, FL
April 17, 2007

Vice-Chairman Shayne Stewart called the meeting to order at 10:36 a.m.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT:

NAME

James Angle, Palm Harbor Special Fire Control Dist.
William Bryson, Miami Fire Department
Mike Coker, Division of Forestry
Julie Downey, Davie Fire Rescue
Scott McDermid, Bureau of EMS
Dr. Ron Nutter
Shayne Stewart, Okaloosa Island Fire District
Ron Williams, Lake County Vo-Tech

REPRESENTING:

Fl Assoc. of Special Districts
Fl Fire Chiefs' Assoc.
Division of Forestry
State Fire Marshal
Bureau of EMS
State Fire Marshal
State Fire Marshal
State Fire Marshal

ABSENT:

John Drago, City of Longwood
Greg Gay
Jon Pasqualone, FL Fire Marshals & Inspectors Assoc.
Stockton Reeves, VI
Laurie Sweeney, Orange County Fire-Rescue Dept.
Charles "Scotty" Taylor Jr., Gainesville Fire Rescue

FL League of Cities
State Fire Marshal
FL Fire Marshals & Inspectors Assoc.
Insight, Orlando State Fire Marshal
Fl Professional Firefighters
FL Professional Firefighters

As Vice-Chairman, Shayne Stewart ran the meeting in place of former Chairman, Les Hallman and will act as temporary Chairman until another election for Chairman can be held.

Vice-Chairman Stewart requested a moment of silence in honor of the victims at the Virginia Tech Campus along with any of our brothers and sisters in the fire service and our military that we have lost.

On a motion duly made, the minutes from the Fire and Emergency Incident Information System Technical Advisory Panel held on January 25, 2007 were approved with a note of addendum for the Firefighters Employment, Standards and Training Council January 25, 2007 minutes.

Motion carried.

REPORT FROM DIVISION:

Director Hallman gave an update on the legislature process. There are several bills being monitored by the State Fire Marshal's office. The following bills are being tracked:

House Bill #45 – Worker's Compensation. This bill would allow small pox vaccinations to be covered by worker's compensation.

House Bill #133 – Malcolm Thomas Act. This bill relates to high risk retirement.

House Bill #219 – Firefighter Training. Looking for a form of funding. The legislature will allow "pilot programs" that are considered a one time expense. This bill may not move forward without a funding package to go along with it.

There is no new money, no new programs, no new employees. Any of the bills that require any type of funding are not getting a favorable response in the legislature right now.

There are several bills related to the Department of Financial Services that try to re-create the "Insurance Commissioner". These bills have "dropped back", one of them is growing and rather than removing that responsibility from the CFO it actually adds more responsibility.

Several of the other bills that are being tracked deal with community associations and condominium associations. These bills are being watched for amendments.

House Bill #483 – Janelle's Law. This bill would require all new residential structures to have smoke detectors and carbon monoxide protectors.

Bills relating to building codes, inspectors and plans review and being monitored.

House Bill #1303 – New bill requiring carbon monoxide detectors in public lodging. This bill is gaining a lot of support. This bill will more likely pass than #483 due to jurisdiction issues.

House Bill #1372 and House Bill #651 – Were originally agriculture bills. Amendment talks about consumer fire works. It instructs the legislature to form a consumer fireworks task force. Another amendment attached to this bill pre-empts the local jurisdictions ability to write ordinances that deal with fire works.

This is an important bill. If it passes, the ability to regulate at a local level will be lost. The governor is against this bill. If it does pass, Director Hallman will be on the task force but he will be outnumbered.

Further discussion was held on this bill and what it will mean to the fire service.

A new bill that would definitely affect state agencies is a bill that is looking at how we use the rule making process. This bill is being watched very closely. Legal is looking at it.

REPORT FROM FFIRS:

Keith McCarthy distributed several handouts; Non-Reporting Contact Information, Reporting and Non-Reporting Departments, NFIRS: State Reporting Status, and a copy of the letter sent out by Keith McCarthy and Vice Chairman Stewart informing departments that April 30, 2007 is the deadline for reporting.

In 2009, the National Fire Incident Reporting System will no longer support the old reporting process which is the old 4.1 program.

Keith reviewed the numbers on the Reporting and Non-Reporting Departments handout.

Miami-Dade is working toward electronically reporting. The biggest challenge will be getting the volunteer fire departments reporting. 70% of volunteer departments are not reporting at this time. The software is available to them free of charge, the challenge will be getting their personnel to utilize it.

Electronic submission, if submitted into the federal software, is immediate. If a third party vendor software is used, the data has to be extracted and sent to the State Fire Marshal's office and then it is uploaded into the national data base.

Scott McDermid stated that one of the challenges that would be beneficial to overcome would be to have the mechanisms match. To be able to have the reports be able to decipher if the report is EMS or fire since a lot of the fire departments do both. One of the biggest challenges currently is the departments have to fill out two separate reports, one for FFIRS and one for EMS.

Discussion was held on the common elements of incident reporting shared by FFIRS and EMS.

Scott McDermid agreed to take the lead on this and meet with Keith McCarthy to discuss further. An update will be given at the next meeting.

Director Hallman suggested they check with E-Pro. They may be able to share information that would be of great help in this endeavor. Another possibility would be to host a meeting of all the big vendors.

Sherm Sasser reminded the panel that we do not have the authority to change the federal program.

Scott McDermid stated that M-Stars program goes live July 2008. The pilots are beginning now. The data definitions were created by the feds. There are a lot of things that can still be improved upon. There is going to be a growing and learning curve for the next 5 – 10 years so this is a good time for this panel to be together and to make these changes. It needs to be done now while the programs are still being written.

Everyone will be required to submit data. Every effort is being made to make M-Stars the more appealing option. A grant has been put in to fund the rural counties. They are trying to get everyone on the same page. Good participation on the volunteer side. They are setting up a Q-A committee to review data. They will put out quarterly reports to every department. They want to make sure that everybody understands that this information is important and how it is important to everybody. Reporting is required, how you report is a choice.

Keith McCarthy stated that he feels we are headed in the right direction. Once something can be put out to the large departments, it's going to make their job of incident reporting easier, the process will get smoother.

Discussion was held on the benefits of reporting and global analysis.

Scott McDermid advised the panel that the EMS Advisory Council Meetings are next week. He will be presenting the Emergency Medical Review Committee plan which includes membership and at least 50 different measurements. Will be looking at public information and trends and that will be a primary function of the M-Stars program, to feed this Q-A committee. Will bring update to next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Vice-Chairman Stewart encouraged panel members to keep working on department list, researching which departments have merged etc.,

Mike Coker stated that the Department of Forestry is not currently included in the Annual Report.

A brief discussion was held on Forestry reporting.

Vice-Chairman Stewart advised that the Forestry statistics, for informational purposes, should be included in the Annual Report.

Director Hallman stated that our primary objective is to have 100% of Florida reporting then we can start looking globally.

James Angle agreed that the goal is to have 100% reporting or have an end date so resources and knowledge can be used in other areas of incident reporting.

Scott McDermid included that if 60 – 60.5% are reporting, you are still getting good, usable information.

NEW BUSINESS:

Need to elect a new Chairman. Will be done at next meeting when new member Chief Rick Talbert is in attendance.

Chief Bryson will contact Chief Talbert and discuss getting information out to volunteers through the Florida Fire Chief's Association.

It was suggested that the Report from the Division be given in the Firefighters Employment, Standards and Training Council meeting unless applicable to this panel. This will avoid repeated material.

AUDIENCE: None

NEXT MEETING: July 20, 2007, 8:30 a.m. Sanibel, FL

ADJOURN