

JECC User Advisory Committee Meeting
Tuesday, August 16, 2011
Joint Emergency Communications Center

MINUTES - Redacted

I. Call to Order

A. Meeting was called to order by Chief Barry Bedford at 8:58 a.m.

Attendees: UAC Members and Alternates

Barry Bedford, Coralville Police Department; Charles Green, David Visin, University of Iowa DPS; Sam Hargadine, Rick Wyss, Jim Baker, Iowa City Police Department; Steve Dolezal, Johnson County Sheriff's Office; Andy Rocca, Roger Jensen, Iowa City Fire Department; Dave Stannard, Coralville Fire Department; Steve Spenler, Johnson County Ambulance Service, Dan Smith, Johnson County Mutual Aid Association.

Staff and Guests

Gary Albrecht, Todd Evans, JECC; Randy Johnson, RACOM; Mark Wooderson, TAC-10; Eugene Beard, Jefferson-Monroe Fire Department.

II. Review minutes of the July 19, 2011 meeting (see attachment)

A. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Hargadine; seconded by Stannard. Motion carried.

III. Changes/additions to the agenda.

Bedford added JECC Budget under Executive Director's Update. Bedford added a discussion on the staffing of Kinnick Stadium during game days under Fire\EMS and Law. Chief Rocca asked for an update on the coverage issues along Melrose Ave, progress on the phantom talk-groups and coverage issues in West Branch. These were added under "Other" under Fire\EMS and Law.

IV. Executive Director's Update – Albrecht

A. Discuss Harris' letter re: system outage

Albrecht informed the UAC about the system outage of July 24th. He explained that there still was not an actual answer as to what happened that day. He said an investigation continues and right now it is believed there was some type of electrical surge or electrical brown out.

Albrecht stated that 7 backup radios at a cost of almost \$34,000.00 were damaged along with 5 mux cards. He further stated that Harris would pick up the bill for the mux cards, but not the radios. Albrecht said that cost would be covered by insurance. Albrecht also said there was other minor damage throughout the building including two switches that ran the internal phone system, the power supply for the dispatch door and the switch that allows remote entry into the building.

Albrecht explained that the equipment put in place to protect the building from this type of situation, in particular the surge suppressors and uninterruptable power supplies, worked like they were supposed to. It was asked if Elert and Associates was involved and Albrecht stated yes. Albrecht said the microwave link between JECC and the Stutzman Tower was also knocked out of alignment. He stated that has since been corrected and that Harris would be paying for that repair.

In conclusion Albrecht said it is possible we may never know what happened that day because of the unpredictability of electrical current, especially electrical current caused by lightning.

Chief Rocca asked if all users of the system were notified of the issues the day of the outage. Albrecht stated that an e-mail went to all UAC members as well as all Policy Board members. Rocca asked that in the future a simple text message to all user agencies would be in order. All agreed.

B. Update on Emergency Communications Supervisor position.

Albrecht said there has been no progress in this area. He stated that Todd Evans remains as the interim Emergency Communications Coordinator. He did state that he was contemplating reconvening the interview committee to get their thoughts on how to proceed.

C. JECSA Budget considerations for Fiscal Year 2013

Albrecht advised all in attendance that October 1st was the deadline to get requests to the UAC for additional equipment for the 2013 Fiscal Year. Those requests would be considered by the UAC on October 18th and go before the JECC Policy Board on October 28th.

D. Other.

The use of Department prefixes (Coralville, Iowa City, North Liberty) by both JECC staff and User Agencies was again discussed. Albrecht stated he believed 85% of JECC staff were doing it correctly. All agreed and stated the major problem appears to be the field users. All Chiefs stated they would reinforce the use of the City Name before the Badge Number to all officers.

Albrecht led a discussion on splitting calls by agency to different channels during specific busy times during the week. All members came to agreement on what that would entail and how it might be modified to address needs at the time.

Albrecht discussed staffing issues. He said that currently 1 full time dispatcher and two part time dispatchers were being trained. He added that another full time dispatcher resigned last Thursday. Albrecht further stated that one dispatcher who has been off on pregnancy leave would be back on the 15th of September and another who has been off on an extended illness returned to work in late July.

V. Fire/EMS and Law

A. Website access for times.

Spencer asked if we were any closer to ambulance getting it's times via web-access. Mark Wooderson from TAC-10 said they are ready to go and log-ins would be available as of the 16th. It was clarified by Albrecht that this was a network connection only. It was not a web-access feature and those not connected to the JECC network would still have to get their times faxed or e-mailed to them.

B. Radio Procedures for dispatching Fire/EMS units.

Chief Rocca said there appears to be a lack of consistency when dispatching fire and EMS units. He stated that originally the Event channel was to be given when units were enroute, not with the original dispatch. Albrecht stated he agreed with that but found that giving the Event channel at both the initial dispatch and when enroute did not hurt anything and in fact was somewhat helpful to some departments. It was agreed that inconsistencies would be pointed out to JECC personnel and that more consistent dispatch is what is desired.

C. Harris Radio batteries.

Chief Rocca said the Harris batteries supplied with each portable radio have a very short life cycle when used. He stated several batteries used by his department will only last about 2 hours. Randy from RACOM said that appeared to be a bad battery and should be turned into RACOM for replacement under warranty. Randy stated the Harris batteries only have a life of about 8 hours. He encouraged all departments to get bad batteries to RACOM for replacement under warranty.

D. Other.

Dave Visin discussed the communications plan for game day at Kinnick Stadium. Visin said that it would be different this year. He discussed specifics and said that everything outside the stadium that was called into JECC would be handled

normally. For example, a medical call outside would be paged out like usual and an Event channel would be assigned as is current normal practice.

Dolezol brought up the fact that sometimes the Jail isn't notified that an officer is enroute with a prisoner and sometimes the officer has to wait for assistance. It was the consensus that JECC would notify the Jail that an officer or deputy was enroute to the jail with an arrestee. It was also the consensus that once the Jail was notified, notification would be given to the officer of deputy that the Jail had been notified.

Rocca asked for updates on the coverage issue at Emerald and Melrose. Randy from RACOM said no coverage issues have been found lately. He stated there is a strong signal and Harris could find no issues with overlap. Randy asked that when someone experienced this problem, to time and date stamp it so they could investigate further.

Rocca asked about updates on the phantom talk groups. Randy from RACOM said Harris has a computer set up to monitor the control point. He said when a radio does this he needs date, time, location and the channel the radio was on. He says given that information Harris can look at the control point to see what issues are occurring. Everyone agreed this hasn't occurred in a while, but they did want a resolution to the issue.

Rocca asked about coverage issues in West Branch. Randy from RACOM said he has done coverage testing in West Branch and portable coverage is not very good, but mobile coverage is fine except for inside the Fire Department. Albrecht stated that he spoke with the West Branch Chief last month and he wanted nothing less than a b-d-a (bi-directional amplifier). Albrecht said he told the Chief he would take up the issue with the Policy Board at the August meeting but could make no promises.

Charles Green of U of I DPS talked about a project with the Dean of Students who was seeking arrest information on students from local Police Departments. He said it is a project that was being worked on with TAC-10 and wondered if the Departments were interested in sharing the information. It was agreed it was a good idea.

VI. Other Business.

A. Additional comments from TAC-10.

Mark Wooderson of TAC-10 stated they are happy with the progress that has been made with CAD and he believed the users were as well. He stated they have done a lot of work and they were looking for final acceptance of their product from JECC. Stannard said he was looking forward to the release of CAD 3.8 as it would have an upgrade that would allow for some features of "I'm responding" to be used. Wooderson said that 3.8 release was planned for September.

B. Additional comments from Racom

Randy from RACOM just reiterated what was said earlier. He stated that date, time and channel they were on, were needed to help pinpoint the issue with the phantom talkgroups.

C. Other.

Visin asked for instructions on the use of the RACOM EDACS system. Randy said those instructions would be forthcoming.

VII. Next JECC-UAC regular meeting: September 20, 2011, 9:00 a.m. at the JECC

VIII. Adjournment

A. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Stannard and seconded by Spenler. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.