

STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMISSION
MINUTES
September 18, 2008
Fairbanks, Alaska

I. Call to order - Chairperson

Chair Cramer called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

A. Roll Call was taken.

Members Present:

John Cramer (Chair)	Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs
Alan Wien (Co-Chair)	Dept. of Environmental Conservation
Jeremy Johnson	Dept. of Commerce, Community & Economic Development
Grey Mitchell	Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development
Capt. Ron Wall	Dept. of Public Safety
Doug Vincent-Lang	Dept. of Fish and Game
Jim Mackin	Dept. of Health & Social Services
Dean Brown	Dept. of Natural Resources
Dianne Keller	Local Government
Jamie Sunderland	Local Government
George Vakalis	Urban LEPC
James Maltby	Urban LEPC
Brian Templin	Rural LEPC

Members Absent:

Mike Coffey	Dept. of Tran. & Public Facilities
Tom Vaden	Rural LEPC
James Butler	Public Member at Large
Mary Goolie	EPA

Ex Officio Members Present:

LTC Lori Stender	Alaskan Command
Robert Forgit	FEMA
LCDR Shane Montoya	USCG
Jim Kohler	Department of Administration
Jon Paden	Department of Education & Early Dev.

Guests Present:

Bea Adler, Citizen Corps Committee
Merry Carlson, DHS&EM
Capt. Mike Cerne, U.S. Coast Guard
Wanice Cowles, SERC Coordinator
John Downes, LEPC Co-Chair
Bryan Fisher, Interoperable Communications Committee and DHS&EM

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David Kang All Hazards Plan Review Committee & DHS&EM
John Madden, DHS&EM
Mike O'Hare, DHS&EM
Liza Sanden, Environmental Protection Agency
Major Pete Veselelli, ALCOM
Jennifer Rhoten, DHS&EM
Jamie Littrell, DH&SS
Rosie Habeich, North Slope Borough
Genevieve Maurits, Municipality of Anchorage
Andy Jones, DHS&EM
Tonya Miller, City of Unalaska
Ladonna Lindey, EA Tribes
Jeff Tucker, North Star Fire Dept.
Wanda Clark, Valdez LEPC
Ellen Sovalik, North Slope Borough
Beth Ipsen, Alaska State Troopers
Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM
Chuck Fezatte, Steese Fire Dept.
Tracy Brand, Steese Board of Directors
Steve Adams, University Fire Service
Skyler Gallien, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Leon Walker, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Brenda Covey, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Nicole Walker, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Ray Hollinroter, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Mitch Flynn, Chief, Steese Volunteer Fire Dept.
Christine Hill, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Andrew Rosson, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Dick Ritchie, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Kevin Karella, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Dawn-Marie Karella, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Craig London, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Willard Vintone, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Matt Tavolt, Steese Vol. Fire Dept.
Clint Brooks, FMH/DE, Fairbanks LEPC
Donald S. Wenke, Alaska Air National Guard
Michelle Heun, DHS&EM
Thomas Katkus AK ARNG
Adrian Avey, DHS&EM
Bryan Fisher, DHS&EM
Jacqueline Fowler, DH&SS
Diane Hutchison, Senator Ted Stevens' Office
Althea St. Martin, Senator Lisa Murkowski's Office
Lineen Livingston, Congressman Don Young's Office
Jim Whittiker, Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough

- B. It was concluded that a quorum was present.
- C. Administrative Announcements - SERC Coordinator Wanice Cowles announced that there are currently two SERC openings. One is the rural seat Mr. Tom Vaden used to fill. The other is the local

government seat filled by Ms. Diane Keller. Those interested should contact the Division of Boards and Commissions. She reminded people that when they speak that they turn their microphone on and state their name and who they represent. There is a public comment sign-up sheet at the back table. She also gave a safety briefing.

II. Welcome and Introductions.

- A. Opening Comments by Chairperson and Co-Chairperson - Mr. John Cramer, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, and Mr. Alan Wien, Division of Spill Prevention and Response.

Chair Cramer welcomed everyone to the meeting. He gave General Campbell's regrets that he was unable to attend. He stated that the partnerships that have been developed are important in making SERC the value that it is. They would not be able to do it without the communities, without the federal and state partners, and all of the local people who are involved. They are an integral part in finding solutions to the problems that come up.

Co-Chair Wien welcomed everyone to the meeting. He has been attending the conference that has been going all week. It has been very well attended. They look forward to future conferences.

- B. Member Introductions and Opening Comments

Chair Cramer asked those at the table to introduce themselves.

III. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes - May 15, 2008

Mr. George Vakalis MOVED to accept the minutes of May 15, 2008 as presented. Ms. Deane Brown seconded the motion. There were no corrections. There were no objections.

IV. Public Comment

There was no one signed up for public comment.

V. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of and Changes to the Agenda - Chair Cramer added under Tab 6 Brig. General Tom Katkus with the Army National Guard and Col. Scott Wenke.

Mr. George Vakalis MOVED approval of the agenda as amended. Mr. James Maltby seconded the motion. There were no objections.

- B. LEPC Appointments

Ms. Dean Brown MOVED to accept the LEPC appointments found at tab 5. Mr. George Vakalis seconded the motion. There were no objections.

C. SERC Appointments

Ms. Dianne Keller MOVED to accept the SERC appointments found at tab 5. Mr. George Vakalis seconded the motion. There were no objections.

D. 2009 SERC Meeting Schedule

Mr. George Vakalis MOVED to approve the 2009 SERC meeting schedule. Mr. James Maltby seconded the motion. There were no objections.

VI. Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Report

- A. DHS&EM Updates - Mr. John Madden stated that key to the responses that have been going on in the states affected by floods and hurricanes in the Lower 48 has been the National Guard. He stated that he has briefed the SERC previously on the organization within the division as they work day-to-day in the same fashion and organization as when they have to operate during a disaster. This came to fruition during the floods in July and August in the Interior and the North Slope. They had a fully functioning emergency operations center within an hour of being contacted by the North Star Borough. People were on-site within 12 hours and augmentation for the borough at their request within 24 hours. IT worked well. It also used the systems they have been putting in place over the years, for example, the communication systems we have been working on for years worked and worked well. The training and exercises all helped in the betterment of their service. They also are working at what is the next thing that can happen, i.e. if there is a disruption of the rail, what are the effects and let's start getting ready for that. Half the division was sent to Fairbanks and Nenana with a smaller contingent to the North Slope Borough to identify people who are in need, immediate need of housing, immediate need of shelter, etc.

Mr. Madden stated that another example of preparedness and planning for things to go wrong is the conference that is going on this week.

This has been the first preparedness conference. There have been 100 participants from 25 communities from Ketchikan to Kivalina, five boroughs, 14 hospital, and 14 federal and state agencies. One track looked at how do we improve our capability when the disaster hits? A second looked at before during and after an emergency. A third looked at public health planning and a fourth track looked at public information. All of these ran not only concurrently, but also complementary. He stated that at the second preparedness conference, which will occur in January in conjunction with the LEPCA and SERC meetings, we will focus on vigilant, prepared and resilient communities.

- B. Alaska Army National Guard - Brig. General Tom Katkus. General Katkus, Alaska Army National Guard, felt the National Guard is one of the best resources the State of Alaska has to address some of these emergencies, unpredicted or predicted. They can be quickly mobilized and put towards whatever the issue is and escalated easily through the cooperative efforts they now have with other states. He stated that they should feel confident that at least on the ground forces side they will always have reserves available to address issues. He went over their state and national authorities. He stated that what the National Guard needs to be doing is prevention from losses of life among others. He stated that with any issue/disaster they always have 45 to 60 soldiers that can deploy in a very short timeframe. They would deploy with wheeled vehicles, have self-sustaining capabilities, food, water, etc. They also bring technology and equipment. They assess the situation which opens the door for the entire National Guard across the nation. Some of the technologies they bring are the communication platforms, the weapons of mass destruction team, etc.

They have equipment for communications and assessment of any type of threat environment, whether it be nuclear, biological or whatever. They also have aviation support. With the relationship they now have with FEMA and the states of Oregon, Idaho and Washington, they are constantly communicating with those states and have ready packages they can respond within support of one another's requirements. He touched on some of the equipment they have in various areas of Alaska. The civil support team provides an ability to assess the situation, to see what assets are required, and have the ability to communicate that as well as the ability to coordinate follow-on federal assets. General Katkus also touched on some of their programs. One is the Counter Drug Support Program. It has direct support to law enforcement entities. They are also a ready resource in times of natural disasters. He stated that initially the National Guard was organized around a Cold War threat. They have moved from the infantry scout group to the battlefield surveillance brigade which is focused on intelligence, technology and communications which brings much better and faster radios. The 38th Troop Command has a military police battalion added to it. This will also lend itself towards law enforcement requirements in the State of Alaska. With respect to aviation, he stated that there are 20 Blackhawks still stationed in Alaska and 10 in Hawaii. They also have fixed wing assets.

Alaska Air National Guard - Col. Scott Wenke stated that the Air National Guard is postured very similarly to the Army National Guard, and many of the capabilities that General Katkus briefed also apply to the Alaska Air National Guard. They also have a state mission and role which rolls into a federal mission and role. At Clear Air Force Station and at Elmendorf they have radar sites, one looks into space and the other looks lower out across the Bering

Sea. Both are tied directly to homeland defense. They also have flying missions. One of their most important missions is high speed, long range air medical evacuation. At Kulis and soon at Elmendorf they have the 176th Wing which brings C-130, which is light cargo off of normal airfield, and has a prepared field type landing capability. They also have the search and rescue squadron.

He stated that the National Guard as a whole is postured to support state and federal. The pledge of the Nation Guard is that 50 percent of those forces will remain in place for homeland security at any given time. Twenty-five percent of their forces are in preparedness training and 25 percent are actually performing duties outside of the states, usually in a federal role. He touched on the missions of the Air National Guard. He stated that the Alaska Air National Guard and the Alaska Army National Guard rely on each other for a lot of the technology, connectivity and communications, but they also bring their own piece of it through their different capabilities. He added that they support both military and civil rescue year round. He stated that bottom line they are ready, reliable, essential and operational. They are your home town air force.

Col. Wenke stated that bringing all the agencies together to work in an emergency, a disaster or homeland defense is more an art than a science. The unity of effort can only be achieved through close continuous interagency and interdepartmental coordination and cooperation which are necessary to overcome discord, inadequate structure and procedures, compatible communications, cultural differences, and bureaucratic and personal limitations.

- C. DHS&EM Updates Continued - Mr. Madden stated that Alaska has made several decisions in recent years that we were leaders in the nation on. One is that the state chose to combine homeland security and emergency management into a single division. The other was to make sure that element is tightly related to and integrated with the National Guard. Within FEMA Region X, Alaska was the first state to do that, but now all four states have done so. General Katkus and Col. Wenke spoke about our ability to work together. Mr. Madden stated this not just words, this is action. The National Guard Joint Operation Center is adjacent to the State Emergency Coordination Center. They share information, training, and communications. He stated that the division is building a communications command center which will be completely compatible with the National Guard capabilities. They are procuring five interoperable communications in a box that will be sent forward and aligned with the National Guard so that if there is a disaster in a remote area, they will bring interoperability with them. The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is a means by which states help states. As the hurricanes were in the Gulf and approaching land and it was uncertain where they were going to land, Mr. Madden's counterpart in one of those states said if it looks like it is coming to his state, he wanted two things from Alaska.

One was rescue from the Alaska National Guard and the other was emergency management from DHS&EM. We are recognized as being the best. Mr. Madden stated that the National Guard is an essential element in the opening hours of an emergency or disaster through their preparedness, their experience, their training and their capabilities to come in and stabilize a disaster. They can do it swiftly and heroically. He felt that they are directly and irrefutably the best asset that the division has when the people and economy of Alaska are at threat.

Chair Cramer stated that something that was not mentioned is that we have approximately 4,000 men and women in the Alaska Army and Air National Guard. The first two lives saved with respect to the hurricanes that took place were done by the Alaska Air National Guard. Through the course of that event a total of 22 people's lives were saved by the Alaska Air National Guard. He stated that we all are very proud of what they do and how they do it. He then asked the staff from DHS&EM who were present to stand and be recognized. When the call for help comes in, these folks stand up and deliver. Through Governor Palin and General Campbell's direction, they are constantly looking at ways to improve. The SERC member agencies, LEPCs and other partnerships are a part of this.

Ms. Keller also expressed her thanks to the National Guard. She asked that General Katkus and Col. Wenke take the message of appreciation back to their people and their families. She stated that she serves on the Alaska Moose Federation Board, and she asked General Katkus when they are doing their exercising in the winter time with their track rigs that they make paths which will help keep the moose off the highways.

VII. Local Emergency Planning Committee Association

Mr. George Vakalis, LEPCA Chairperson, reported that they had fantastic turnout at the LEPC Association meeting September 17th. He felt some of this was due to the conference which many attended. There were some great briefings and a lot of discussions. There were a few concerns expressed, some on funding.

VIII. Local Emergency Planning Committee Status Reports -

(None)

IX Old Business

A. Committee Reports

1. Finance Committee - Mr. George Vakalis, Chairperson, reported that he was very optimistic that this year the LEPCs will spend all of their money on time, and if not they will in a timely fashion turn it back so it can be allocated some place else.

2. Citizen Corps Committees - Ms. Bea Adler, Chairperson, stated that they have heard a lot about a culture of preparedness. If you start with them when they are young we can have a real effect on creating a culture of preparedness. She added that fortunately they are realizing this at the federal level. There has been a lot of emphasis on CERT training and other programs for younger people. She reported that Alaska ranks number 4 in volunteerism per capita in the country. She reported that NOAA, the Department of Education and FEMA have partnered to do the second round of giving NOAA weather radios to schools and school district offices within communities that are within reach of a NOAA weather radio broadcast. They are distributing 183,000 radios nationwide. They have asked the Citizen Corps programs around the country to contact school districts and to go onto the website and make sure that they can facilitate the local schools having the NOAA weather radios properly installed, and also to ask the local ham radio community to assist with it if necessary. Ms. Adler gave some updates on communities around the state that are working in Citizen Corps programs. Anchorage is working radio public service announcements with a general preparedness message and then a weather-specific message. This will come out later this winter. The Kenai Peninsula Borough is doing what they call "Caring for the Kenai" which involves school-age children learning what it takes to care for people in the community and prepare for disasters. In Fairbanks the program started in the police department. They are working closely with the University of Alaska-Fairbanks in their Campus CERT program. There are several teens in the Volunteers in Police Service who work in the neighborhoods doing bicycle safety and graffiti abatement. They are providing training support, working in an active shooter response training to assist law enforcement and other emergency response agencies in Fairbanks. In August, Lorna Weise, the Fairbanks Citizen Corps coordinator with the Volunteers in Police Service Program, attended the National Citizen Corps Leadership Forum where she had a chance to meet and interact with program managers from around the country. What we are doing locally and in the state mirrors what is going on on the national level. In Valdez they are working on getting their CERT training back on track. The same is true for Copper Center and Cordova. In the Mat-Su Borough they now have over 700 people trained. They are working close with the high schools and will be bringing the Teen CERT program from Eastern Michigan University to Alaska. It is a national program that works with school districts to show them how to place a CERT training program within the school district curriculum. Currently they are teaching CERT to students at the Career and Technical High School in Wasilla. She reported they will be finishing up their training at the Mat-Su College campus and they will be having their disaster drill on Halloween. It will be a campus-wide event. Neighborhood Watch is part of the Citizen Corps group of programs. The Mat-Su Borough has been

experiencing a lot of home invasions and break-ins over the summer and they have been inundated with requests for Neighborhood Watch programs. She stated they are working closely with the police departments in Wasilla and Houston as well as with the Alaska State Troopers. They are finding that the Neighborhood Watch Program is the best way into a neighborhood. Once they start talking then you can start into the "Map Your Neighborhood Program." It brings neighbors together to talk about the golden hour. After a disaster occurs that golden hour is when you can save the most lives. If you have people in the neighborhood ready to react, knowing each other, knowing who has the tools, the knowledge, the training and the needs, you can affect something very positive neighborhood by neighborhood.

3. Work Plan Committee - Mr. Alan Wien, Chairperson, stated that at the meeting in May the SERC approved the new work plan which was effective July 1, 2008 and is good for a two-year period. It is posted on the website.
4. All-Hazards Plan Review Committee - Mr. David Kang reported the committee is reviewing two plans, the Nome EOP and the Mat-Su EOP. They anticipate finishing the review by November. He reported that they are working on some planning topics. They are looking at resource management with the time-phased equipment list, and will work with FEMA and ALCOM. They are also assisting with the FEMA GAP analysis with the Municipality of Anchorage. The second planning topic is looking at the new guidance that replaced the state and local guide 101 planning tool which is the comprehensive planning guide as well as the integrated planning system. The committee is reviewing those two templates. The third planning topic is information management. They are taking a more proactive approach in collecting some of the data as well as archiving. The fourth planning topic is to look at the Alaska Incident Management System which Alyeska uses as well as DEC. He reported that they have three new members since the last meeting: Brad Hoffman from Alyeska, Duane Dvorak from Kodiak and Kattaryna Stiles from Anchorage.
5. Interoperable Communications Committee - Mr. Bryan Fisher, Co-Chair, reported that this is a new committee that was just approved. They have 16 representatives on the committee now from all disciplines and all areas of the state. They have a lot of work to do. The committee will start meeting in the near future. One of their goals in the fall is to update the statewide communications interoperability plan. He also talked about the Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant Program. We did receive an award from the Department of Homeland Security and issued sub-recipient grant awards to local jurisdictions. The letters went out in the mail last Friday. They awarded \$6.9 million out of the \$7.25 million Alaska was awarded to 24 agencies or jurisdictions around the state from Hoonah, Thorne Bay to

Bethel to the Interior and Southwest Alaska. He reported that they also received notice of a grant opportunity from FEMA this summer. It had a very short turn-around time to apply. It is called Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program and is purely a planning, training and exercise grant. They received notice that Alaska was awarded \$278,000. They will be using that to conducted meetings and to do planning and training at the direction of the committee. With respect to the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, Mr. Fisher stated that oftentimes Alaska does not get a great opportunity to send personnel or assets out of Alaska mainly because it costs a lot of money for them to travel down to the Gulf Coast and to send equipment there.

He thanked every state representative on the SERC. They were able to immediately provide DHS&EM with a great list of capabilities resident within the departments that were available, ready, willing and able to go. Mr. Fisher reported that on September 11th they activated the Emergency Alert System and the statewide Amber Alert System for a test. Thankfully we have not had a case in Alaska where the thresholds were met to issue a real Amber Alert so it is important that the system is tested end to end, get communities aware that the system does exist and run it through its processes to make sure it is going to work when we need it. The test went extremely well. These tests will occur once a year. There were a few minor glitches, but that was what they were looking for. In spring 2009 they will continue with the tsunami warning testing. It is the hope this year for the tsunami testing and Tsunami Awareness Week that local governments will be involved much more. Chair Cramer stated that the meeting in the May Mayor Keller raised the idea of linking up our new University connection on our website. He wanted to know whether this has been accomplished. The response was, no, it has not been. Chair Cramer requested that this be checked on. He wanted this to happen. Mayor Keller thanked Mr. Fisher for all the work he has done with the division.

No Presentation from the Committee Listed Below

6. Training Committee - Mr. Tom Vaden, Chairperson.
7. Urban Search and Rescue Committee - Ms. Pamela Bergmann, Chairperson.

X New Business

- A. Roles of Comprehensive Planning with the Immediate Action Workgroup - Mr. Andy Jones, DHS&EM, went into the past, present and future for their mission to serve the people of Alaska. On September 14th, 2007, Governor Palin signed Administrative Order Number 238 forming the Alaska Climate Change Subcabinet. The subcabinet was charged with preparing and implementing Alaska's climate change strategy guidebook and developing appropriate measures and policies to

prepare Alaska communities for anticipated impacts related to climate change. The Immediate Actions Workgroup was formed and was tasked to deal with the early assessment and development of the action plan by addressing climate change impacts on coastal and other at-risk communities. They also developed a recommendations report to the subcabinet. It stated short-term projects, 12 to 18 months and how it could minimize and prevent the loss of life and property to the six identified communities in peril. These communities are Kivalina, Koyukuk, Newtok, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, and Unalakleet. The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management were asked to assist the communities in peril to develop a suite of comprehensive plans. The Division decided to adopt an interrelated systematic approach with four phases: mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Training was also added in. This will help the community to execute these plans. Other state and federal agencies are involved in this process. Each phase would build on the accomplishments of the preceding phase by treating each as a comprehensive process. Within a suite of comprehensive emergency plans there are the local hazard mitigation plan, emergency operation plan, emergency evacuation plan, and the continuity of operations plan. Training follows as without training you cannot utilize these plans. Phase I is emergency planning. This is the initial platform and initial phase that will drive the short-term measures and long-term measures for the planning approach. This suite of plans are being developed to better help the community and better minimize that loss of life and property. Concurrent with that is Phase II, community emergency measurement projects. Phase II is more community planning. In this phase they will develop a hazard impact assessment which will better help the state and federal agencies provide recommendations for further actions to the community, state and federal agencies

Mr. Jones stated that the six communities were selected to receive this suite of comprehensive plans based on their location and what they face, i.e. massive erosion due to sea storms and being cut off by flooding. Kivalina is affected by coastal sea storms every year. Their in-place sheltering is the school which is less than 80 feet away from the erosion line right now. Koyukuk is affected by flooding. Newtok has accelerated erosion. Each day they are moving their Conex boxes and boardwalks back from the ocean. Newtok is already looking at moving to a new site. Shaktoolik is affected by coastal sea storms. In 2005 a storm cut the community off into an island with no way in or out. Shishmaref is also affected by coastal sea storms and coastal erosion. Their sewage lagoon is being compromised. Unalakleet is being affected by flooding and when flooded the community is cut off from any mode of transportation.

With respect to comprehensive planning through DHS&EM, in June and July they received funding and wrote up a Request for Proposal (RFP) which was put on the street in August. Two weeks ago they selected

a contractor. The first kick-off meeting will be next week with them to start getting the process going. Mr. Jones has been making community visits for the last month to talk to them about what is going on.

Mr. Jones stated that for the future of comprehensive planning, the Division is looking at extending their reach to more of an all hazard comprehensive planning for more Alaska communities. They hope when the project is in its final phases to have a template that communities could use to develop plans for themselves.

- B. Individual Assistance Program Update - Ms. Merry Carlson, DHS&EM, gave some details about the most recent disaster and how the individual assistance process works. Individual assistance consists of two grant programs: Individual & Family Grant Program and the Temporary Housing Program. She added that Alaska is one of only seven states that have a state-run program. Every other state relies on FEMA to provide assistance and FEMA can only do that during a federally-declared disaster. She focused on the Temporary Housing Program which specifically serves individuals who are displaced as a result of a disaster either on a short-term or long-term basis. She went through what happens during that process for an applicant. They work with the applicants in an intensive basis to do case management to say what are their needs, how many are in the household, are there pets that need to go with them, are there special needs, is there anyone in the family with a disability, etc. With respect to the recent flooding in the Interior, to-date they have received approximately 250 applications for either the Individual & Family Grant Program or the Temporary Housing Program or both.

Chair Cramer stated that when there are activities that are close to the water that take place, the Coast Guard people are the ones that go out and assist. He also wanted to recognize the State troopers and fire responders, EMS, EMT type people.

- C. Community Fuel Shortages - Mr. Bryan Fisher. Chair Cramer stated that this is an issue every year. This year it could be an even greater issue. Mr. Bryan Fisher, DHS&EM, stated that the other threat of the season that they are engaged in monitoring now is the fall sea storms. The issue is that it used to be fall sea storms. In late July the City of Kaktovik and the City of Wainwright both experienced damage from a sea storm. The fall sea storms are no longer limited to the fall. Also, the period of time where coastal communities are threatened from sea surge and wind and coastal flooding damage has extended because of the sea ice. There is not the shore-fast ice that there used to be.

Mr. Fisher stated that the other threat of the season that DHS&EM and DCCED wanted to discuss at this meeting was fuel shortages and contingency planning for fuel shortages. There was a great workshop

presentation with the local communities during the conference on fuel shortage contingency planning. The problem is that fuel shortages are not a natural disaster but rather an economic issue and a financial planning issue. In August the legislature passed the bills for the resource rebate, adjustments to the Power Cost Equalization Program, and doubled the amount of funding available for the state's capability to help communities with their fuel issues, i.e. the Bulk Fuel Revolving Loan Fund.

There are a number of funding sources available; however, the disaster relief fund is the fund of last resort. There are a number of programs in DCCED that assist communities with funding shortages in buying bulk fuel. These are loan programs, not grants. There are some serious economic implications and financial planning and community resiliency/survivability issues based around this fuel shortage issue. He stressed that they are not going to let people freeze nor are they going to allow community critical infrastructure freeze. There are a number of things the State Emergency Coordination Center and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs will do which they do routinely everyday all winter to support communities. They work with fuel providers and fuel transporters, and with the state agencies to bring help to communities when they run low on fuel for whatever reason. He stated that one thing they have been stressing since last winter's issues is early notification of indicators and warnings that there is a potential problem in a community. The earlier they know about it, the more rapidly DHS&EM, DCCED, and the Alaska Energy Authority can get involved and start working on trying to help the community.

Mr. Fisher stated that it is going to be worse this year than last. Prices are higher. The Lake Iliamna communities and those on the Kvichak River in Southwest Alaska received notification in the spring from the vendor who used to transport fuel to them that they were not coming and the communities need to find an alternative method to have fuel delivered to their communities. He stated that they know of around a dozen communities that have been denied for the Bulk Fuel Loan Program. The Emergency Coordination Center is committed to working as hard as they can to get people together, find alternative vendors and transporters, and if it got to the point to go to their partners in the military to prevent any deaths or critical infrastructure being destroyed because it freezes this winter. Indications are that this is going to be a tremendously tough year for many of the villages around the state.

Mr. Mitchell (DOL) stated that with the upcoming winter we're probably going to see a lot more consolidation of public facilities in rural Alaska as it becomes harder and harder to heat their administrative buildings, tribal halls, etc. There will probably also be a lot more coordination between the local governments and the tribal governments working together. He felt that through the local government specialists that are out in the villages on a daily

basis we should have a pretty good idea of what is coming up in terms of not being able to sustain those facilities. Mr. Fisher stated he was pleased to note that there are long terms solutions that are starting to be discussed now. There is an energy conference going on now in Girdwood.

Ms. Dean Brown stated that Forestry has gotten a lot of requests for firewood availability this year. They have also been doing quite a bit on biofuels. The problem with that is that nationwide there is a shortage of the technology as other areas nationwide are looking for the same solutions. It is a long-term solution.

Mr. Fisher stated that with respect to the flooding that happened, the Corps of Engineers activated the flood control project on the Chena River. They ended up with a tremendous amount of wood stacked up against those gates which can be provided to the community.

- D. Grant Award Presentation to Steese Area Volunteer Fire Department - Mr. Robert Forgit, FEMA. (This was moved to after Mr. Forgit's Ex-Officio report) On behalf of FEMA Region X and Susan Rhinertson, Regional Administrator, Mr. Forgit presented the Steese Area Volunteer Fire Department with a check for \$325,140 through FEMA's Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program. The program is part of the Federal Government's Assistance to Firefighter's Grant Program. For fire districts and departments to qualify for these awards, they are required to submit a federal application that outlines the need, the justification, and the benefit to the specific community. Mr. Forgit acknowledged Chief Mitch Flynn's excellent work in writing the grant for his department. They are awarded on a competitive basis. The SAFER funds assist local fire departments in increasing their staffing and deployment capabilities in order to sufficiently reduce response times and to enhance the ability of the grant recipients to achieve and maintain 24-hour readiness capabilities. DHS, FEMA and the Fire Administration are dedicated to ensuring that emergency services and those providers are adequately staffed to meet the fire fighting and emergency response requirements. The grant to the Steese Volunteer Fire Department will be used to hire three additional firefighter/medic positions, each trained and certified at Firefighter II standards and EMT I standards. Mr. Forgit expressed his congratulations for their excellent work and commitment towards strengthening their first response capabilities. He introduced Chief Mitch Flynn. In addition Diane Hutchinson from Senator Stevens' office, Althea St. Martin from Senator Murkowski's office, and Lineen Livingston from Representative Young's office were present.

Chief Flynn stated that he was very proud of his very professional staff, both paid and volunteer. He stated that they receive outstanding support from their fire commissioners and board of directors. He introduced those who were in attendance at the meeting. He stated that the department could not do what they do

without the cooperation of other agencies. He expressed his thanks to them.

Ms. Diane Hutchinson stated she runs Senator Stevens' Fairbanks office. The Senator was unable to be here today and asked her to present these remarks.

"Often when Alaskans call for help, when their lives and property are in peril, our volunteer firefighters are the first to respond. Senator Stevens thanks FEMA for recognizing how important our volunteers are to our safety of our communities with this grant from the SAFER program. FEMA support will help ensure that when there is a call for help, the Steese Area Volunteer Fire Department will be able to respond with the appropriate number of trained volunteers. He congratulates the department on receiving this grant and thanks you for your service. Senator Stevens will continue working in the Senate on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee to make sure FEMA can continue to provide Alaska's first responders with the resources they need to do their jobs and save lives. Thank you very much."

Ms. Althea St. Martin, Senator Lisa Murkowski's Office, read a letter the Senator had addressed to the group. "Dear Chief Flynn and members of the Steese Volunteer Fire Department. Although I cannot join with you in person today, I stand with you in spirit as you accept today's award under the staffing for adequate fire and emergency response, the SAFER grant program. I understand that the proceeds of the grant will be used to put firefighters to work protecting the residents and businesses of the Steese Fire Service Area."

"Shortly after I came to the Senate I was visited by a former FEMA regional director who told me that the Fire Act Programs are among the most effective of all grant programs in the Federal Government. After seeing the numerous good that Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program has done for Alaska's first responders, I'd proudly support the SAFER legislation. It is good to see the SAFER dollars, which are the fruit of this effort, being put to work to protect our people in Alaska. I commend Chief Flynn, the leadership of the Steese Fire Department Service Area and all of the members of the Steese Volunteer Fire Department for their success in this national competition for the limited SAFER grant monies. Keep up the good work. Sincerely, Lisa Murkowski, United States Senator."

Ms. Lineen Livingston, Congressman Don Young's Office, stated that Mr. Young sends his regrets as he is in Washington, D.C. She read a letter from him. "Dear Chief Flynn. Congratulations on receiving the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response, SAFER, grant. This is a great day for the community of Fairbanks, and I am pleased that the SAFER program is working so well and that funds are going to the departments that

really need the assistance. People that live in the Interior are somewhat unique as we know as to their need for adequately staffed fire departments. With high heating costs and no natural gas, many residents in the Interior have to rely more on wood burning stoves to heat their homes during our long, cold winter months. This greatly increases the risk of house fires. During these trying economic times we face a double-edged sword."

"In addition to the high energy costs, volunteer recruitment and retention can often be difficult. I am pleased to hear that this SAFER grant will enable the Steese Fire Department to have four trained personnel to meet the OSHA requirements and adequately respond to calls. Your service area is vast, a 32-square mile area and 2200 square mile EMS service area. I am hopeful that you will continue to receive all of the resources you need from our Federal Government."

"In 2008 only six departments throughout this country have been awarded the SAFER grant so far, and yours is one of them. This is a great opportunity for the Steese Volunteer Fire Department and I wish I could be at the official check presentation, but please know that I am always at your disposal. Do not hesitate to call on me when I am needed. Sincerely, Don Young, Congressman for All Alaska."

Ms. Dean Brown, Deputy State Forester, thanked Mr. Forgit for arranging for this recognition in front of the SERC. It is a tremendous honor to see the representation from our congressional delegation. State Forestry realizes that the Steese Volunteer Fire Department is often the first responder. She requested that the group give them a standing ovation.

Mr. Forgit stated that building positive relationships is very important. Since the Alaska area office for FEMA has been open the relationships grow and he hoped they would continue to grow in a very positive way. The more we work on a local level to bring resources, whether people, equipment or training, the better off we all are.

Mayor Dianne Keller, Wasilla, stated that the City of Wasilla participates in this volunteer recognition program. She stated it was a sad statement that they are the only government in the State of Alaska that participates. You can track the hours of your volunteers and submit that information for a Presidential award. She added that anyone could call her office and they would be happy to share that information with them. Chief Flynn stated that they will follow up on this.

Mr. Forgit presented the check to Chief Flynn.

Chair Cramer stated that the selection of Robert Forgit to man

FEMA's Anchorage office was a good one. He stated we have a tremendous working relationship with FEMA Region X. Their recognition of the need to have an office in Alaska he felt gives tribute to that working relationship. Mr. Forgit has done a tremendous job in reaching out and looking at partnerships and friendships which assists all of us to become better prepared and ready in time of need.

XI Other State Agency and Ex-officio Reports -

FEMA - Mr. Robert Forgit stated that FEMA Region X has been busy in the hurricane season. They are a back-up to FEMA Region IV which is down in the Gulf Coast. Most of the staff in Bothel has been deployed. He stated his office has also been busy. They are going through the process of replacing their planner. They have made their recommendations for hiring a new program analyst which is a primary planner. One of the efforts they are working on is looking at not only working with the state and municipality on the GAP analysis but also to work with the state on developing an Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT). They had to reevaluate how they were going to kick this off because a lot of the federal agencies did not realize that if they were part of the team and give the team a volunteer, that person actually works for FEMA. His goal is to have the first meeting on the IMAT team in December. He reported that FEMA worked closely with the State of Alaska in the last flooding episode in the Interior. FEMA's teams did deploy at the time they were requested to do preliminary damage assessments. The state has submitted for a Presidential disaster declaration. That is in process. Mr. Forgit announced that they are going to host a DHS partnership meeting of their federal partners on October 29th in the Federal Building in Anchorage. The next Advisory Council Alaska meeting will be October 30th at the Campbell Creek Science Center in Anchorage.

Alaskan Command - LTC Lori Stender stated that in November ALCOM will be participating in a national level exercise. Over the next year and a half there will be several mini exercises that will develop partnerships between the state, interagency and private sectors leading up to Arctic Edge in spring of 2010. The Alaska Partnership for Infrastructure Protection, a joint venture between the state and DOD, had its first meeting today after breaking for the summer. This group has identified infrastructure within the state and DOD that is critical for them to do their mission and be prepared. Single points of failure have been identified.

She stated that there are emergency preparedness liaison officers in the state, two with the Air Force, two with the Navy and three with the Army. They are here to assist the state when the state has asked for federal assistance. They work closely with FEMA. Part of their job is to provide to FEMA and the state the capabilities the military can offer in the time of crisis.

USCG - LCDR Shane Montoya stated that over the last couple years we have

seen a drastic change in the Arctic ice shelf and the rising potential for oil and gas operations as well as shipping. As a result the Coast Guard has been trying to figure out what the needs are going to be for the Coast Guard in the Arctic. This summer they had temporary operation in Nome and Barrow as well as sending up several cutters to do search and rescue exercises. With respect to the future, he and other Coast Guard participants have been working with the U.S. Arctic Commission in developing the Arctic Maritime Shipping Assessment which will be out this spring to determine what is expected in the future as well as overall recommendations for all the eight arctic nations.

He stated that exercises they have participated in included District 17 which had a COOP exercise in early September. Valdez and Homer conducted security exercises over the summer. Next week Kenai is doing an oil spill prep exercise. He stated they will provide planning for the Canada/US Dix Oil Spill Exercise in October. They are also involved with the upcoming Homeland Defense Exercise in November. Headquarters is looking at the Spill of National Significance Exercise scheduled for 2010. They are looking at locations for this, one of which that was proposed was up in Alaska's arctic region.

He reported they have had research and development activities with NOAA, FAA and other agencies as they look for opportunities in which to expand operations with the unmanned aerial aircraft. A year to two years down the road they are looking at their new cutters being able to come up into the remote areas of the Arctic and in the Bering Sea and conducting fisheries as well as security operations using unmanned aerial assets. With respect to living marine resources, they do a lot of patrols along our border as well as fisheries patrols. They have increased their patrols. There has been a decrease in actual maritime boundary line incursions as well as a decrease in enforcement actions on illegal catches. He reported they have minor oil spills all the time. One of the success stories from the summer is the fishing vessel Northern Mariner that was taking on water and went aground near Flemming Island in Prince William Sound. After 13 days they were able to safely refloat the vessel and get it back to Seward without a pollution incident.

In response to Mr. Vincent-Lang, LCDR Montoya stated that they have not seen anything concrete with respect to increased Arctic travel in terms of vessels. They have not seen an increase in commercial shipping yet. They have seen an increase in the likelihood as companies start looking at tracts offshore. They have seen an increase in tourism just below the Arctic Circle.

XII Informational Items

A. Ethics Information for Members of Boards and Commissions

XIII. Public Comment

Ms. Liza Sanden, EPA, stated that EPA is working with DEC on compiling the

2007 Tier II data. They expect to have a report hopefully by the end of October. On September 29th EPA is sponsoring a HAZWOPER refresher course in Fairbanks. There is a flyer in the back on it.

XIV. Commission Member Closing Comments

Mr. Jim Maltby stated that there is going to be an increase in transportation issues going to the oil fields this year with fuel. There will probably be about 200,000 gallons per day going north. This could affect the Steese Volunteer Fire Department. DEC is working on some strategies for spill response. He felt it was good timing to award Steese the grant.

Mr. Jim Mackin expressed appreciation for everybody's hard work in support of the training all week. He felt the one in January will be even better. He added that any help that DMVA and DHS&EM needs they can contact DHSS.

Mr. Forgit thanked everyone on the SERC for allowing the presentation to occur at the meeting.

Mr. Vincent-Lang proposed that the SERC write a letter to the Alaska Army National Guard and the Alaska Air National Guard recognizing their efforts for preparedness and their efforts towards saving lives. Chair Cramer stated this was duly noted.

Mr. Paden stated that there are roughly 10,000 teachers in the State of Alaska, each of whom every year goes through a process for emergency situations that relate to the schools and keeping Alaskan children safe under a variety of potential problems.

Ms. Brown suggested that the January meeting might be a good opportunity for an update on the Governor's Commission on Climate Change. She thanked the chair for running a very good meeting. Chair Cramer stated they will get that on the agenda for January.

Ms. Keller also thanked the Chair for running an efficient and effective meeting. She stated this is her last meeting as a SERC member. She thanked the other SERC members for giving her ample learning opportunities. She also thanked the DHS&EM staff for all they have taught her and especially for the conference this week. She stated that she was very proud of the staff at the City of Wasilla because they have had ICS training. Currently they are dealing with a paperwork disaster and a media disaster and the staff has risen to the challenge. She also thanked the state for the POI training she received back when she worked for Emergency Management as it has helped her deal with the media. Chair Cramer stated that they recognize the value Mayor Keller has brought to the meetings over the years she has served.

Mr. Kohler stated that this is the Department of Administration's first opportunity to actually join the SERC as an ex-officio member. He

expressed their appreciation for being included. They were looking forward to supporting the Interoperation Communications Committee.

Co-Chair Wien stated that with the increased traffic Mr. Maltby was talking about not only is that fuel going to be on the Haul Road but it is also going to be transported on the Alaska Railroad from Anchorage to Fairbanks. With that increase on the Haul Road and the Railroad, there is an increased potential for accidents and spills. DEC is working on some response preparedness planning and strategies now to make sure the state will be prepared to respond. He congratulated the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management for a very good and successful conference this week.

Chair Cramer stated that because of the situation that took place this summer and the success during a disaster that took place, he wanted to recognize several people from the area: Barry Jennings and David Gibbs, Fairbanks North Star Borough; Clint Brooks, Fairbanks Memorial Hospital; Chief Jeff Tucker with the North Star Volunteer Fire Department; Chief Warren Cummings, Fairbanks Fire Department; and Capt. Wall with the Alaska State Troopers D Detachment. He stated that as hard as you plan, as hard as you prepare and as much as you interact with people, when the rubber really hits the road is when you find out whether or not all of what you have done up to that point has made a difference. Working together makes a difference. He felt that we are prepared for just about anything that comes our way, which is very important.

Chair Cramer thanked the hotel and the people who work there for the way they have treated everyone. He also thanked the DHS&EM staff who helped put the conference and the meetings together. He stated that one of the things that struck him was, with the limited personnel in the department and division, is there a way to be able to ramp up, respond, prepare and do the things they might need to do when they know there is imminent threat or emergency going to happen. One of the answers is the members of the SERC, the state and federal agencies, and the LEPC members. There is ability and expertise there with the members and their organizations and entities. He was going to be asking Mr. Madden and his staff to be thinking about this as we go forward, and is there a way for them to augment their staff and resources with people out of the communities and the agencies to assist during times of great need. We have to have people and resources in place in order to effectively respond and do the things we need to. He challenged them to start looking down those paths, and if any of the people present would like to be considered for that they can either get ahold of him or Mr. Madden or any of the staff.

Chair Cramer announced that the next meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2009 in Juneau.

XVI. Adjournment

Chair Cramer adjourned the meeting.