



TOLLAND COUNTY MUTUAL AID FIRE SERVICE INC.

56 TOLLAND GREEN P.O. BOX 6 TOLLAND CT. 06084

Proudly serving since 1950

Dispatch: 860-875-2543 Operations Director: 860-872-2421 Finance Manager: 860-871-8684 Fax: 860-872-0382

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OCTOBER 2011 STORM REVIEW COMMITTEE Report March 07, 2012

**To: Board of Directors, TCMAFS
Member Emergency Services Organizations
Municipal Representatives**

At the November 16 2011 county meeting President Eaton appointed a committee to investigate events surrounding the October 28 Winter Storm and make recommendations for changes involving equipment failures, planning and preparation for future events.

It should be noted before beginning our investigation and recommendations for change, that no known death, injury or failure to respond occurred as a result of operations during the storm and that all 911 calls received were answered to the best of our ability to determine. This report is prepared to address identifiable failures in equipment and operations as well as a need for future preparedness.

Members of the committee include;

David Eaton, President-TCMAFS, Fire Chief Union FD
Christopher Hammick Secretary-TCMAFS, Safety Officer Vernon Fire / EMS
Joseph Lorenzetti, TCMAFS County Coordinator, Chief-West Stafford FD
James Preuss, Former President-TCMAFS, Former Chief Bolton FD
Tyler Millix, Director of Operations TCMAFS, Chief Willington No.1 FD
John Turner, Finance Manager TCMAFS, Dep. Chief Ellington FD
Scott Haddad, Ass't Chief Dispatcher TCMAFS, Ass't Chief Colombia FD

Committee members convened on Nov 29th to organize and review material and issues known up to that date. On Dec 13 the committee held a special meeting with member organizations to hear complaints and suggestions relating to the storm. Operations Director Millix also heard complaints and suggestions from our dispatch staff. By the end of December the Committee had determined that failures and suggestions were categorized into three major areas;

- **Hardware and Utility Systems**
- **Planning and Preparation**
- **Roles and Responsibilities**

HARDWARE and SYSTEMS

SYSTEM	PROBLEM	SOLUTION
Bald Hill Tower	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low fuel, limited capacity• No fuel• Generator shut down.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Install remote fuel gauge monitor at Troop C and TN.2. Install larger capacity propane storage if feasible.3. Initiate pre storm and regular interval readiness check.

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		4. Verbal agreements with propane suppliers for priority service.
Box Mountain Tower	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Privately ownedNo reliable power generation.Inadequate fuel reserves.Mission critical location to southern county agencies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Working with private property owner.Worst case scenario, TCMFAS prepared to install larger fuel storage capacity.Power generation
Internet service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete failure,Mission critical for alpha paging, cell texting, information services, weather and interagency communications.Mission critical to notification and alerting systems.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Verbal agreements secured for energizing the local cable node with portable generator.Install internet service monitor-Fail over to wireless back up.3 wireless cards avail on laptops from TN officials.
AT&T 911 service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete failureNo generatorsSlow AT&T response to re-establish service	<ol style="list-style-type: none">AT&T will store power generators in CT to provide emergency power to 911 systems.AT&T committed to priority response in event of shutdown.Public Safety Data Network (Fiber) will soon eliminate this need to power generation.
Position #4 Dispatch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Not completely built out.Only functions as 911 telephone point.No radio communication or dispatch capability.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Too expensive at this time.Will be included in TN remodel plan.Still functions as a 911 answering point for a call taker
WiFi	Limited communication for county coordinators or liaisons working with TN	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3 independent Wi-Fi networks installed and running.Several Wi-Fi capable laptops on hand as well.
Boardroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No area for use by County Coordinators and staff to manage TN operationsInsufficient Communications radios-telephones-monitors.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">The boardroom may be used for managing TN.Sufficient supplies and instruction in emergency kit.Communications and monitoring equipment to be installed.
Housing	Lodging of employees in an emergency.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Recent bathroom upgrades will allow some staff to stay in 3rd FL offices on temp bedding or cots in an emergency.2nd fl kitchen is functional.Having them on scene ready to work would be beneficial.
Situational awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Limited situational awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Install additional monitoring screens to include, news

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	<p>capability, weather, news, GPS, security.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizations didn't know how badly other areas were affected.	<p>access, internet weather, tower and building security, Fleet eyes, other.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Future use options.3. SIT / STAT Report (see county coordinator section)
County Communications Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased call volume during emergencies.• Limited access to frequencies• Organizations using County frequencies for routine operations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Regional parceling of main operating frequencies to limit volume2. Use local frequencies for routine operations.3. Build out the UHF county frequencies for more emergency capacity.4. Use of talk around or fire ground operations frequencies currently available.5. Policy development to tie everything together. Radio usage.(Radio Committee)
Equipment readiness	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No structured system of equipment readiness and preparation.2. No documentation3. Limited routine servicing and monitoring ability of critical systems via trouble alarms or monitoring devices.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop a system of pre-season and pre-storm readiness check lists for equipment, fuel, power generation and communications systems.2. Explore technology that will monitor critical systems for failures
Readiness and warnings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No warning or notification system for notifying organizations of possible approaching weather incidents.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Policy development for levels of operational response at the center. (Lev I-II-III)2. Early warning and notification to TCMAFS personnel and organization of storms, preplanned events, or expanding emergencies.3. Agency cooperation with Readiness and warnings and warnings increased levels of operations.4. Refine the plan for emergency call in, notification and staffing of the center in emergencies.

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PLANNING and PREPARATION

The committee recommends taking several steps towards planning and preparation for future events. Many times we have pre-warning of impending storms or events but however a solid foundation in preparation can assist greatly in our reaction to sudden events where little or no warning was possible.

The committee also recommends a greater emphasis on the TN Emergency Plan. This manual and collection of documents and contacts has been in existence for many years. It contains many of the pre-planned services that the County Coordinators' have developed and fine-tuned over the years.

We believe it should be the source for direction and coordination of service.

The officials and responsibilities within the plan should be more tightly defined and exercised.

PROBLEM	SUGGESTED SOLUTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">No communication plan for operations during severe storms or incidents of high call volume.	Develop and addendum to the TN E-Plan (chapter 11) titled Communications Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Develop contingencies most likely to be encountered from time to time during the year.b. Defines roles and responsibilities of major players.c. Escalates and de-escalates operations in an orderly manner providing emergency service to everyone equally.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhance the ability of the TN Board Room to be an effective place to manage emergencies.	Boardroom Emergency kit and usage <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Develop a pre-positioned kit in the Board Room for use during emergencies. Supplies, instructions, equipment.b. Install information monitoring equipment, radios, and telephones.c. Use the Board Room to manage larger emergencies when needed.d. Invite liaisons from utility companies, CL&P or other high level representatives to attend briefings, and coordination meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Weak notification policy for storm preparation.	Alerting & Notification <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Provide early warnings and updates of approaching storms or other emergencies.b. Develop, train and greater usage of the Everbridge Statewide Notification System (Free)<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Build groupsii. Coordinate and update lists periodicallyiii. Capable of multiple types of

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	<p>notification, phone, email, text etc.</p> <p>iv. Very versatile in constructing multiple types and numbers of group for notification.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Weakness in the Dispatch Center of storm preparation and readiness checks of equipment and remote communications sites.Weakness in the Organizations to prepare, and update the county on operational status.	<p>Greater expectation of the organization on preparedness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">c. Inspection and readiness forms for hardware, facilities and remote locations to be performed at predetermined intervals and for pre-storm warnings.d. Verbal and contractual agreements with vendors for fuel and mission critical supplies reviewed periodically.e. Member services agree to staff their firehouses when necessary and prepare when notified of pre-storm warnings.f. Member organizations willingness to provide point of contact and person with authority to act when notified of storm warnings.g. Organizations agree to provide regular Situational Status and update information in order that everyone is kept informed of situational awareness in the county.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Need for greater involvement by County Coordinators	<p>Greater expectation of the County Coordinators role</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives early warnings and weather related updates.2. Is involved in preplanned event coordination and its effects on operations within the county.3. Coordinates the TCMFAS response with local communities or IC's4. Maintains situational awareness and status updates through the service area5. Maintains a staff of people willing to assume roles and assist in emergencies when necessary.6. Holds periodic meetings with Deputy Coordinators and Staff to better plan contingencies.7. LIAISONS8. Dedicated CL&P presence at our facility.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. Forward outage and damage reports directly to the CL&P liaison.10. Receive firsthand knowledge and reports back from CL&P Rep.11. Consider delegating to volunteer staff members, the development of Resource Lists* of apparatus, equipment and services offered by the member organizations. (<i>Resource Coordinators</i>)<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. <i>*(There currently is no official means by which TN gathers information about what apparatus, specialized equipment and services are available from the differing organizations.)</i>
	Staffing <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Extra staffing available and used when appropriate during times of need.2. Job assignments and functions predetermined to help provide the best service.

POLICY & PROCEDURE

POLICY

1. TCMAFS will monitor all weather related warnings and advisories reasonably predicted to impact our area of operation and provide sufficient warnings to officials, coordinators and affected parties, using established communications methods, alpha, texting and email.
2. TCMAFS will staff the communications center as determined by the Operations Director and Board determines to be reasonable for the event
3. The dispatch center will use three response levels above normal day to day operations when preparing for or reacting to increased service demands from preplanned events or sudden weather related emergencies.

{THE BOXED DOCUMENT BELOW IS PART OF AN ADENDUM TITLED CHAPTER 11 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN TO THE TN E-PLAN}

NORMAL OPERATIONS

- No warnings or advisories posted. No planned events effecting normal operations.

LEVEL III Operations

- In effect any time the Director feels it is necessary to call in extra staff because of anticipated call volume increase. Storms, pre-planned events, Large fires, emergencies or other situations requiring more than the normal amount of dispatchers to handle increased volume.

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- The director will notify all organization leaders, coordinators and municipal representatives of all weather related WARNINGS and important news releases from State OEM effecting operations.

LEVEL II OPERATIONS

- Shall include all Level III criteria PLUS;
- Some member organizations may activate to staff their firehouses to handle increased call volume in their jurisdiction.
- Affected organizations agree to provide a contact point and person with decision making authority to TN.
- The Director or his representative will notify organization leaders, coordinators and municipal representatives of any Level II activation in the county.
- If necessary, the TN Boardroom may be activated and staffed with personnel necessary to coordinate services.
- Each Agency will provide a Situational Awareness and Status Update Form (SIT / STAT) to the County Coordinator twice per day during any event.
- USE OF COUNTY WIDE, FREQUENCIES WILL BE RESERVED FOR EMERGENCIES. LOCAL COMMUNICATIONS FREQUENCIES ARE ENCOURAGED FOR ROUTINE OR PROLONGED OPERATIONS THAT ARE CONTROLLABLE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND DO NOT REQUIRE MUTUAL AID.

LEVEL I OPERATIONS

- Shall be in effect anytime the full resources of TCMFAS are called to respond to any emergency, disaster or weather related event that causes all or many member organizations to mobilize.
- Level I activation may require all or many organizations to staff their stations.
- Affected organizations agree to provide a contact point and person with decision making authority to TN.
- The Board room may be used and staffed with those persons deemed necessary to manage communications and coordinate with our member organizations.
- A Level I activation will be communicated to all Organization leaders, Coordinators and municipal representatives
- Each Agency will provide a Situational Awareness and Status Update Form (SIT / STAT) to the County Coordinator twice per day during any event.

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4. In any Level II or III contingency, the TN Boardroom is available for use by coordinators and staff of TCMAFS to manage operations as determined to best achieve our goals.
5. It is imperative that everyone cooperate with the County Coordinators and staff to produce and update "Situational Status" and other requests for information necessary to keep everyone advised of area situational awareness.
6. The County Coordinators will update each department through established communications channels on the progress of operations regularly.
7. All Task Force Groups, Strike Teams or Special Details should understand that deployment may be for extended periods during emergency operations. (Bring supply bag of personal items)
8. MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS
 - i. Agree to staff their firehouses / headquarters in times of increased calls when requested to do so to receive less than emergency calls for service.
 - ii. Establish and operate radio communications on a local level.
 - iii. Provide situational and status updates twice per day to keep the county coordinators updated on operational readiness and needs.
 - iv. Cooperate with a recovery plan established for the benefit of all members in TCMAFS including;
 1. Strike Team formations
 2. Task Force Groups
 3. Ambulance Strike Teams
 4. Mutual aid
 - v. Agree to provide TCMAFS with periodic updates to their list of information about their resources and special services they provide or are trained in.
9. A after action review shall be completed for presentation to the County after any Level I or II event

TRAINING, IMPLEMENTATION, EXERCISE

I. TRAINING

1. Each department or organization should commit to the training of their officers and members either through train the trainer type instruction or direct instruction one time per year through TN on policy and procedural matters affecting county wide operations including this plan but not limited to use of radios, mutual aid and the use of the TN Emergency Plan.

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2. The Director of Operations for TN shall see that each employee is familiar with this plan and the use of the TN E-Plan each year prior to August 01.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

1. Each department or organization should commit to implementing provisions of this plan in times of emergency and/or cooperation within the plan to achieve county wide goals. Each department agrees that staffing of their firehouses and response to less than emergency calls through a local emergency plan is vital to everyone.
2. Each department should prepare a plan for local operations in less than emergency calls for service.
3. The Director shall see that each year before August 01 those provisions on this plan detailing the inspection, operation and readiness are checked and / or exercised in preparation for storm season.
4. Any memorandum or policy changes necessary within TN staff to accomplish the goals and objectives of this plan are to be issued by the Operations Director.
5. **A READINESS REPORT SHALL BE A PART OF THE DIRECTORS NORMAL MONTHLY REPORT TO THE BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS.**

III. EXERCISE

1. The County Coordinator is responsible for exercise of this plan periodically. Exercise may be in conjunction with or separate from other statewide or local drill schedules inclusive of all county organizations or separately. Priority should be placed on SIT /STAT forms, CL&P outage reports and review of local response plans.
2. TN will cooperate with testing and exercise of the regional and local radio networks and infrastructure.
3. The County Coordinators office shall see that the Resource Availability List is periodically updated and distributed to the membership unless security concerns dictate otherwise.

CONCLUSION

This final report is largely the summation of several months' work involving discussions on a wide range of ideas and suggestions from the October storm.

The report recommends addressing several key areas'

1. Hardware and systems improvements through purchasing of additional back up capabilities to critical systems and additional technology to assist in managing emergencies.

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2. Development of plan to prepare for approaching storms by checking all systems & technology and verifying their operational status both prior to known emergencies and periodically throughout the year.
3. Better coordination of emergencies by utilizing the TN Boardroom, County Coordinators, Staff and Liaisons to manage large scale events.
4. Cooperation with all of our member organizations during storms by staffing your firehouses for response and providing contact numbers of persons with the authority to act for the agency.
5. Cooperation with County Coordinators to provide current and reliable situational awareness during storms by providing information.
6. An after action review will be provided to the County after any Level I or II events.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee

For the Committee


Christopher Hammick
Secretary
TCMAFS

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Tolland County Mutual Aid

Major Situation/Status Update (SIT/STAT)

AGENCY

REPORT TYPE

AGENCY CAN PROVIDE MUTUAL AID

☐ YES ☐ Partial ☐ Totally Committed in 1st Due

☐ INITIAL ☐ UPDATE ☐ FINAL

Incident Name/Type

Date Time

Operational Period From: To:

EOC Location

EOC Contact Numbers

Local Operational Radio Frequencies

Stations Manned

Contact Telephone #

MAJOR CONCERNS & OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Officer in Charge

Contact Telephone

Units OUT OF SERVICE

STATIONS OUT OF SERVICE

MAJOR ROAD CLOSURES

OTHER COMMUNITY ISSUES- SHELTERS ETC

RESOURCES NEEDED

Apparatus

Type

Personnel

Support Equipment/Type

Food/Water/Cots/Etc

Operational Period Summary

[illegible]