

**Verdugo Fire Communications Center**  
**TASK FORCE MEETING**  
**January 9, 2007**  
**MINUTES**

**Persons Present:** Tom Phelps (ALH); Martin Johnson (PAS); Mark Khail (MPK); Steve Heydorff (SMD); Gerry Malais (LAFD); Ray Krakowski (BRK); Rich Garstang (SGB); Dave Haney (ARC); Don Wise (VFCC); Don Wright, Lenia Scanlon (GLN)

**1. ISO Evaluations**

SGB's was completed, MPK's is in progress. SNM's visit will be on 1/29/07. Don Wise is drafting revised information for the Verdugo section, based on information gleaned at a recent meeting with the ISO evaluators that clarified what they're looking for.

**2. Hospital ED Status on Handheld Devices for RA's**

ReddiNet 4 upgrade throughout LA County is expected to occur in March. After that, Emergency Department status will be available on handheld devices if Verdugo purchases a \$20 license for each. Each agency will configure their handheld devices to receive emailed updates on the hospitals of interest to their agency. Every time there is a status change (ED saturation, closed to STEMI, etc.), a new email will be sent to the device including the current status of all hospitals on their list. Viewing a real-time display of an agency's hospitals via Internet is not practical because the browser is so slow on most devices (according to Edwin Evans of ReddiNet). Lenia is looking into the possibility of having a ReddiNet person visit here to talk to Area C EMS Coordinators about this new feature.

**3. Emergency Trigger Policy**

A new policy adopted by Beverly Hills Fire related to emergency triggers on radios was discussed. The Task Force did not see a need to adopt a similar policy at this time. A RIC policy that is being developed for Area C cities may cover aspects of this issue.

**4. Unified Response Web Site**

Please remind your Operations Battalion Chiefs to sign up with their strike team availability by 8:30 a.m. daily. Some agencies are still not consistent with this.

**5. Verdugo Air > Ground Channel**

Current recommendation is for any arriving aircraft to look for a first-onscene Incident Commander on the LA County Tac 19 channel (154.400 VHF). If this frequency is not appropriate for the incident, the pilot and IC can agree on another channel. (To be formalized with LA County and LAFD in the near future.)

**6. Recording of RED9 (direct)**

Chief Wright will look into the status of this issue and see that any necessary testing is conducted by Radio Shop staff. It's possible that we'll need to add receivers at Mt Thom to specifically record this channel.

**7. Use of Tactical Channels – Repeat vs. Direct**

Suggested policy is that the tactical channel first assigned to an incident (usually RED2) automatically be considered the command channel. As units arrive at the incident, they can be assigned on Simplex/direct channels instead of requesting an additional repeated channel because repeated channels are such a limited resource. For incidents that cover a large geographic area like brush fires, repeated channels will still be necessary for most units/responders. Don Wright will develop a draft to be presented at the next TF meeting.

**8. Verdugo Staffing**

Fire Communications Operator:

4 candidates are in backgrounds now; Linda Coogan and Cindy Williamson will be returning on part-time basis soon; Jennifer Speed will be returning as a full-time FCO on Jan. 16.

Fire Communications Administrator:

Finalizing job bulletin and recruitment strategy now (open recruitment).

**9. Upcoming Purchases**

- Rear screen projection system upgrade (the three screens on the wall in front of the dispatchers)
- Replacement of uninterruptible power supply (UPS) system that supports Verdugo’s power in the event of a power failure until the backup generator or the secondary generators kick in, or in place of the generators if for some reason their power can’t reach Verdugo.

**10. Equipment Recommended on Specialized Assignments**

a. Proposed initial assignment for incidents that include USAR’s:

Code	Incident Description	Engines	Trucks	RA's	BC's	USAR's	Other
<b>BUILD</b>	Building Collapse Rescue	1	1	1	1	2	
<b>DERAIL</b>	Train Derailment	3	2	2	2	2	
<b>MTNRES</b>	Mountain Rescue	1	1	1	1	2	
<b>PLANE</b>	Plane Accident, Down or Fire	3	2	2	2	2	+ copter
<b>SWR</b>	Swift Water Rescue	3	0	1	1	2	+ copter
<b>TRENCH</b>	Trench Rescue	1	1	1	1	2	
<b>USAR</b>	Collapse/Extrication/Rescue	1	1	1	1	2	
<b>WMD</b>	Weapons of Mass Destruction	3	2	1	1	1	+ hazmat

Chief Johnson will be meeting with the USAR task force 1-10-07 and will report back to Verdugo’s Task Force regarding their recommendations.

b. Logging in the 29 USAR positions on a daily basis: Lenia will assist with developing a log-in feature on the Unified Response web site as soon as the USAR task force has clarified exactly what is needed.

c. The State mandates that USARs must be typed by particular standards. The USAR task force recommends that Verdugo remove any non-typed USARs from its INFO INDEX list and only dispatch those units that are typed. It is likely that by next month most or all of the new USARs will be finished with the typing process.

d. Regarding the LUI function in CAD, revising it to allow login of additional employees (five are currently allowed and the question pertained to adding two additional slots). Lenia contacted the CAD vendor and they said it would cost about \$30K because such a change would impact so many tables in CAD. The Task Force did not feel the new functionality was worth this cost.

**11. Cross-Staffing Units**

All Verdugo agencies are asked to provide a list of which units are taken out of service or co-dispatched under special circumstances like USAR, Hazmat, rescue cushion, etc. situations. Details would be helpful too, like “*When the incident is outside Area C, we ...*” versus “*When the incident is in our own city, we ...*” or whatever conditions revise your response configuration. Please include OES and strike team units where applicable. It would be helpful to have these lists by Feb. 8 so we can put them into a single document prior to the next Task Force meeting. NOTE: Please remind Captains to be clear on their phrasing over the radio when their unit is out of service as an Engine or Truck due to cross-staffing of a specialized rig.

**12. Premise History Cleanup**

A sample list of premise histories for one Area C city was distributed, showing three columns: address, premise history information like Knox box location or pool access, and date that information was entered. Consensus was that if Verdugo can provide a hard copy and/or pdf version of each agency’s premise history list, each agency could decide for itself whether to enter updates/corrections. Instructions on how to enter these changes will be provided with the lists. One comment is that first responders probably ignore most premise history information, knowing it’s often out of date or inaccurate. The hope is that if this information

is updated, the premise history information provided upon dispatch will be read by those responding to the address.

### **13. Unified Response Orientation for Newer B.C.'s**

Verdugo is preparing an orientation manual for newly promoted Battalion Chiefs (and those studying to be one) to provide basic information about how the Unified Response system works. It will also include a section for new Verdugo Task Force representatives.

Please remind all Operations B.C.'s that when additional resources are requested beyond the first alarm, it is often better to request a second alarm than to add additional units one by one or "piecemeal." Units not needed can be cancelled before going enroute. When a structure fire is in progress and the IC asks for additional units and later elevates to a second alarm, CAD will recommend only the *balance* of a second alarm, not a full alarm complement of units. For example, if the first alarm supplied two Trucks and a third Truck was added later, going to a second alarm is only going to add one more Truck, not two.

### **14. Sending RA's With Three-Person Trucks**

In the cities that have three-person Trucks, sometimes the RA automatically goes with the Truck to supply manpower. During one incident in October, three RA's were on the incident because two were supplying manpower to Trucks, even though only one RA was needed. Unified Response does not include taking RA's out of their jurisdiction, so an alternative may be needed. Task Force representatives are asked to include these situations in their "cross-staffing units" list for 10c. above, along with any specifics about the circumstances when their RA needs to accompany another unit for manpower (not EMS) reasons.

### **15. Helicopter Water Source Directories**

Fire Communications Shift Supervisor Lynda Sims is the contact for obtaining more of these, along with updates. She can be reached at [Lsims@ci.glendale.ca.us](mailto:Lsims@ci.glendale.ca.us). She is attempting to obtain additional copies for Glendale, San Gabriel, and Arcadia, along with new tabs and contacts for Battalion 21 (La Habra).

### **16. CAD Replacement Update**

In the past two months, a number of issues related to Verdugo's new geofile have been tested and refined as needed. Only a few more tests are necessary before going live with the new geofile and map application on the dispatch workstations. In November, all five Shift Supervisors and Jason underwent training for the CommandPoint map application, and Sean O'Connor worked with the consultant to finish developing the incident icons for Verdugo's new map displays. NGIT (the CAD vendor) will be meeting with Verdugo staff on 1/10/07 to discuss upcoming steps of the CAD upgrade and a more detailed update will be available at the next Task Force meeting.

Upcoming phases in the CAD upgrade:

Mapping at dispatch (January)

Mobile mapping (Spring)

Automatic Vehicle Location (Spring or Summer)

Automatic Vehicle Routing and Recommendation (after AVL)

### **17. B.C.'s "Self-Dispatching"**

Please keep in mind the example it sets for the other units when B.C.'s "self-dispatch" to assist with incidents. In these situations, instead of asking Verdugo to put them on the call, it would be better for the B.C. to ask the IC for an assignment on the incident and have the IC notify Verdugo of that assignment.

### **18. Roundtable**

ALH: Funding has been approved for replacing all VHF portables. Captain exam coming up in February.  
New B.C. on B shift: Tim Gardner.

ARC: Question on SCBA consortium and spending UASI grant monies.

BRK: Chief Trowbridge will be working with LAFD for two months. During this time, Steve Briggs will be Acting B.C. on A-shift, beginning this week. CICC has finished the 400-level (Section Chief) and there will be no more historical recognition; they are back to the normal process. Firefighter testing

process is about to resume to identify candidates for a planned Sept. 2007 academy. Chiefs Sanders and Starr retired in December, along with Capt. Chulick. Frank Walbert is now Fire Marshal, and Kenet Robertson is B-shift B.C.

- GLN: Dave Woods is new Fire Marshal (was interim, now official). Verdugo Firefighter Academy graduation will be Saturday, 1/13/07, at Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena.
- MPK: After nearly two years with Verdugo, south-end radio coverage remains unreliable and spotty. North of the 60 freeway and south of the hills is bad. This is a firefighter safety issue and will likely be resolved when Verdugo joins ICIS this year. Battalion Chief exam in process.
- SMD: Hiring 30 paramedics. New paramedic program starting in mid-March. Paramedic quarters currently being built. Full-time Paramedic Coordinator was hired. Chief Heydorff has been promoted to Assistant Fire Chief. SMD now has all radios needed for ICIS.
- VFCC: Don Wise expects to have a Verdugo Manual completed within the next 90 days. He is the new Administrative Shift Supervisor and can be reached at (818) 548-3313. Lenia Scanlon is preparing the FY2005-6 annual report. If anyone needs statistics for calendar year 2006, there will be a detailed statistical section for the year in the Winter 2007 issue of Unified Response newsletter that will go out this month. [www.unified-response.org](http://www.unified-response.org)

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 13, 2007 @ 0900 a.m. at Verdugo.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

**All Task Force Representatives:** On or before Feb. 8, prepare a list of cross-staffing units (item #11 above), including situations where the RA must accompany a three-person Engine or Truck for manpower (not EMS) reasons (item #14 above). Please email list to [Lscanlon@ci.glendale.ca.us](mailto:Lscanlon@ci.glendale.ca.us) so it can be included for discussion in Feb.

**Marty Johnson:** Discuss item #10 above at 1/10/07 USAR TF meeting and report back to Verdugo in February, including proposed initial assignments for USAR incidents and web-based log-in for all 29 USAR positions in Area C.

**Don Wise:** Draft revised Verdugo information for ISO evaluations (#1 above). Prepare new Verdugo Manual.

**Lenia Scanlon:** Set up ReddiNet meeting for EMS Coordinators related to receiving ED status on handheld devices (item #2 above). Plan on an April meeting, following the upcoming ReddiNet 4 upgrade. Work with Marty Johnson on designing a web-based log-in function for USAR personnel on the Unified Response web site (item 10b above). Work with Jason Pfau to generate a Premise History list for each Area C agency (item #12 above). Work with Don Wise to develop instructions for entering updated/corrected premise history information.

**Don Wright:** Air to Ground Channel issue - Formalize with LA County and LAFD (item #5 above). Verdugo staffing (FCO and FCA positions). Work with Radio Shop to resolve RED9 recording issue (item #6 above). Prepare update on Verdugo's proposed move to ICIS. Example channel plan using direct frequencies (item #7).