

Verdugo Fire Communications Center
TASK FORCE MEETING
March 11, 2008 Minutes

Persons present: Robert Gattas, David Odell, Ryan Phillips, Rich Garstang, Tom Phelps, Ray Krakowski, Harold Scoggins, Don Wise, Steve Page, Steve Heydorff, Brent Bartlett, Ryan Weddle

I. New Business

- A. Trucks on Residential Fires** – Discussion about dispatching one versus two Trucks to residential fires. The addition of a second Truck on some types of incidents apparently originated during a past ISO audit. Since the advent of Unified Response, Verdugo has been sending two Trucks on the following incident types: ALERT3, PLANE, DERAILED, EXPLO, WMD, APT, GARAGE, GMAIN, HOUSE, STR, VEHSTR, ALARMF, APPL1, ELECF, FLOW, FULL, GASI, RAIL, SMOKEI, UNKF. Some agencies favor having the second Truck on residential fires. A second Truck can also be beneficial for RIC purposes. More discussion on this next month.
- B. ISO Information on CD** – Don Wise distributed CDs with the Verdugo-related information agencies will need for their ISO surveys, along with a handout that summarizes some of the statistics Verdugo is now able to calculate. With the new data Don recently managed to acquire, Verdugo's ISO audits qualify for a less stringent staffing model and will likely result in a higher ISO score than would otherwise have been possible. The development of the report for the ISO was a key issue for the survey and it now also serves as a benchmark from which to evaluate performance. Quarterly reports will be produced at the request of the Task Force.

II. Updates on Continued Issues

A. ICIS Update

- 1. Station Alerting** – Jason has written and tested a new script for the station alerting computers that resolves the printer issues that led to alerting disruptions when the printer ran out of ink or paper. The new script will be distributed to the Verdugo Tech radio group at their meeting next Wednesday.
- 2. New Alert Tone** – MRV does not always hear the new tone. They were asked to contact Verdugo immediately when they believe it should have sounded but did not. Others stated they like the new tone. Please inform Verdugo immediately if you believe you should have heard the full-assignment tone but did not so we can track whether there issues with this tone.
- 3. BC Alerting** – It is recommended that the spare portable radio in the Operations BC's cache should have the same ID as the BC's assigned portable to prevent the alerting delay that comes from the system searching for ID's of radios not powered on. However, users are cautioned to make sure that when two radios have the same ID only one is in use at a time, otherwise one radio could stop receiving transmissions. This will be discussed at next week's Radio Tech meeting.
- 4. Tertiary Alerting** – We plan to switch to StatAlert soon and retire the existing 5/6 tone board.
- 5. Phantom Tones** – Reports came from several agencies that phantom tones are still occurring. Don Wise is keeping a close eye on this issue. Please report phantom tones by calling him at (818) 548-3313 and leaving a voicemail.
- 6. Coverage Issues** – Steve Page has offered to assist with analyzing MRV's coverage issues when Chief Dennis has time.
- 7. Audio Levels** – No complaints this month except for 7:15 tones in ALH. Steve Page will explain to Tom which setting needs to be revised for this.
- 8. LAFD Trunking Capability** – Programming and testing of radios is ongoing.
- 9. LA County** – Verdugo is still working with them on MDC ID coding. LACO fire responses into Verdugo are now being "patched" between VF Access and the assigned trunked channel for the incident. Please contact Don Wise on any issues found during an incident where both parties are patched together – reliability of the patch with good fire-ground communications is the concern here.

- B. Radio Procedure Policy Feedback** – Received from ALH, ARC, MPK, PAS, SGB so far. Please circulate it in your department and forward input/comments to dwise@ci.glendale.ca.us. It is expected that this policy will be published no later than May 31.
- C. Fire Station Access** – Please confirm that every fire station (not just key stations) has at least one door that opens with the “universal code.” The frequency is 310 MHz and the dipswitch settings are 13578. Or if none of the doors opens with a remote, provide instructions to Verdugo about station access. If there are any special instructions for entering the station from the apparatus bay (for example if the interior door is sometimes locked), please make sure Verdugo has the information where to find the key or code so firefighters on move-ups can enter the station house. Access code information is also available in the INFO files in CAD for each individual city’s fire station and these should be checked for accuracy.
- D. Target Hazard Programming in CAD** – A Truck will be dispatched along with an Engine for ALARM incidents at target hazard addresses such as high-rise buildings and large medical complexes. These addresses must be manually entered in CAD. Verdugo does not have a list of high rises or other target hazards, so if there are places in your city where you would like this supplemented response, please email the addresses to dwise@ci.glendale.ca.us.
- E. AVL/Mobile Mapping** – Mobile map is being tested on E21, RA21, T21, E25 in Glendale; E11, RA11, E13, E15 in Burbank; and E34, E36, E37, BC3 in Pasadena. The feedback so far has been inconsistent so we’re still trying to identify what the issues are – in some units it seems to work just fine and in others it seems to run slowly or malfunction until further changes are made on the MCT.
- F. Verdugo Staffing** – A person has been selected for our final Fire Communications Operator vacancy and we hope to start her training April 1.
- G. ReddiNet Update** – Waiting for the official quote from the vendor, then we’ll request the funds in the next fiscal year budget.
- H. Air to Ground Channel** – Still researching options.

III. Roundtable

BRK: Issue at airport regarding flight ETA’s when Fire’s assistance has been requested – discussion pending. Many provisional appointments coming up, staffing-wise. Hoping to have seven recruits in the April 28 tri-cities academy. Firefighter bulletin for the September academy will post Mar. 10 – Apr. 25 at www.burbankusa.com/burbankHR.

ALH: Three recruits in training. July 1, will be going to four people on T71 and Paramedic Engine 72. American LaFrance will be phasing out its ambulance division. ALH has funding for one RA.

SGB: 20 new handheld radios. Having a BC test in-house in the next couple of months. Chief Garstang retiring by end of 2008, Chief Terry by mid-2009.

MRV: New Paramedic Squad to replace SQ101. Adding a second Squad (102) on July 1. Hired a new Firefighter. Three promotional tests in progress.

ARC: Long ER waits. Engineer exam later this week. Budget issue related to station alerting in next fiscal year.

MPK: Promotional tests for Captain & Engineer.

SNM: Division Chief job bulletin available now – Chief Anderson can email it to you. Testing will be in April. One Firefighter opening.

SMD: Currently have shift Firefighters Monday through Friday on 24-hour shifts and two paramedics on 24/7. An 18-week academy is in progress weekends and will generate sufficient Firefighters for 24-hour coverage seven days a week upon completion. Long waits at Arcadia Methodist Hospital. This is Chief Heydorff's last meeting on the Task Force; Chief Bartlett will be taking over as representative.

GLN: Recruiting for April FF academy. Fire Chief exam last week, results coming soon.

Reminder: Minutes from previous Task Force meetings may be found at www.verdugofire.org

Next Task Force Meeting: Tuesday, April 8, 9 a.m. at Verdugo