



**VERDUGO FIRE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER
TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 14th, 2009**

Attendees:

Agency	Primary	Alternate
Alhambra - ALH	Chief Tom Phelps	
Arcadia - ARC	Chief Dave Haney	Firefighter Bob Gattas
Burbank - BRK	Chief Tom Lenahan	
Glendale - GLN		
Monrovia - MRV	Chief Dave Dennis	
Montebello - MTB		
Monterey Park - MPK		Firefighter Ryan Weddle
Pasadena - PAS		
San Gabriel - SGB		
San Marino - SNM		
Sierra Madre - SMD		
South Pasadena - SPS	Firefighter Eric Zanteson	
Verdugo Fire Comm.	Interim FCA Don Wise	I.S. Specialist Jason Pfau

I. New Business:

A. Data System Replacement Needs & Wishes –

Task: The Mobile Data Working Group is looking into options and alternatives for the future of the Verdugo Fire mobile data system. We are seeking input from the field users to gain a better understanding of the preferences and desires for the next system that will be used for the next 10-15 years. **Background:** The current mobile data system that was upgraded in 2003 has reached the end of the manufacturer's support lifecycle, so a replacement infrastructure will be researched, procured, and installed in a reasonable time frame. **Options:** A number of platforms are available, and each has its benefits and drawbacks. The Working Group is asking the Task Force to discuss it within their departments and come up with a list of items that they would like to see in the next generation of the data network, by next month. The Task Force will then prioritize the list from "necessary" to "nice-to-have," then the Working Group will review the list and determine feasibility versus costs.

Discussion:

All agencies in attendance agreed the following list was good as is and should be used as point of reference to assist with design/RFI for new system. Most expressed additional interest in having the system support Internet access for Brush Strike Team efforts where information can be emailed and then read in the field.

Additionally, it should be user-friendly with system topology being transparent to the user – i.e., the system should be scalable to handle type of data/traffic on priority and upon location/attachment to the type of system; Example – If responding locally, being able to have access to Pre-Fire/Brush Fire Plans as PDF or some other type of file format – larger pipe for data needed, whereas system detects user is transmitting MCT messages only – uses smaller pipe for data and/or adjusts speed of transfer and network needs accordingly. System should also be user-friendly in being able to manage data/files by individual agencies for any upload/change of agency related information.

List as follows:

Mandatory

1. Must be able to pass dispatch-related text and status updates
2. Must be able to access the Verdugo CAD/RMS system
3. Must support automatic vehicle location (AVL) capability with frequent location updates

Nice to Have

1. Able to access pre-fire plans in PDF or related format from shared server
2. Able to access the Emergency Response Guidebook remotely
3. Able to access FireHouse (et. Al) for remote form completion
4. Able to access EMS forms for form completion/submission to ER ahead of transport
5. Able to display GPS locations of other Verdugo System units on the map
6. NFIRS/FireHouse/SunPro applications uses

Low Priority

1. Must be able to receive wide-band video from remote command posts
2. Must be able to access the internet
3. Etc...

B. Emergency Mode / Earthquake Procedures –

Discussion:

The subject of what happens when an event occurs in the area; it doesn't need to be an Earthquake, but could be something of similar size/impact to the system/area/agency. Technological complexities of the various and inter-connected Radio/Data/CAD systems were discussed and the issue of identifying whether an outage of one system has a cascading effect on other systems and accordingly how Verdugo will respond as will each agency as an operational area (if needed).

The Verdugo Fire Policy/Procedures Section 13 – Emergency Preparedness is currently under rewrite and in semi-completed draft form. Radio Communications fallback measures were discussed; dependent upon what areas/systems were functionally sound for continued operations.

Example: If there were an Earthquake, and the Trunked Radio System remained operational, each agency would be assigned a Tactical Channel for their use (some agencies would be combined based on area/size to one Talkgroup). Should it be identified that the Trunked Radio System was non-operational then all users would fallback to the Simulcast System of VF ACCESS (Talkgroup 16) – this action would require strict radio discipline with only the I.C.'s utilizing VF ACCESS as a Command Channel to speak with each other for inter-agency coordination and for communications with Verdugo – field users would remain on a direct channel or utilize Green frequencies if available. Tertiary concepts were discussed from there.

Additionally, should Verdugo be incapacitated to a point of non-operation (Level D), all agencies should be prepared to respond to their local Police Department PSAP (Public-Safety Answering Point) with the Battalion Chief and any needed support personnel to receive Fire/EMS related calls; in this event the Police Department PSAP will be directed to not attempt to transfer calls to Verdugo – the calls and information will remain with the Police Department.

It was suggested that greater use of HAM operators be included and Verdugo will actively pursue this concept for their potential inclusion as a method of communications support

C. GeoFile/GIS/Mapping – Agency maps were passed out for review. Please return the maps back to Verdugo by April 28th. For those agencies not in attendance, please come by Verdugo and see Don Wise to pick up your map. We are looking for a response of identifying either “No new streets”, “All streets are displayed”, or “We have new streets, here are the details”. This effort will be used in combination with updated Hydrant, Helispot, and parcel data for a GeoFile conversion in the near future by our GIS expert, Mayee Salgado. This effort will also update Mobile Map displays/data for field personnel in addition the map that Verdugo Fire personnel use.

II. Update on Continued Areas/Issues:

A. Area Code Overlay Change (Reminder) – Beginning April 18, there will be a new overlay in the 818 area code; 747 will be the new code and all phones will need to be programmed within/without the 818 area code with a 1+10-Digit Phone Number.

B. Staffing – Several personnel were interviewed recently for two new Fire Communications Operator (FCO) positions with names certified in order of ranking. Since that interview, one individual was disqualified for failing to return background materials, one has withdrawn/waived, and one was a “no-show” for the interview. New names from the existing list have been received with a new interview panel date of Wed. April 22nd. Additionally, the Fire Communications Shift Supervisor job bulletin has been closed as we have received sufficient names to begin an Oral Panel, which will be scheduled shortly by City of Glendale Human Resources. A new testing method is also being evaluated for the hiring process.

C. ISO – Several agencies continue with their ISO Surveys (SNM, SGB, MPK, ARC, GLN) with Montebello Fire being the latest addition. Verdugo accounts for 10% of the overall process for Communications and we continue to work with these agencies and their surveys. ARC is working closely with Derrick Thomas/Chicago ISO office and Randy Surber/Los Angeles Rep. on their report. Annual Call-Detail Records (CDR) reports will be forthcoming for each agency shortly; these reports support performance levels for reporting/benchmarking purposes.

D. Verdugo Directory – No new changes or requests.

E. Requests for Quote – Continued work goes on with radio/data propagation studies, with West Covina being the newest request. Significant radio/data related infrastructure needs have yet to be fully identified and that effort has begun.

F. Roundtable:

ALH – Has a Fire Mechanic job bulletin open/posted. Fire Service Day is May 9th at Alhambra Fire Headquarters.

ARC – Chief Haney thanked Jason Pfau for an unusual data report request and working so quickly to return the request. Captain Andy Troncale, significant role player in helping to develop local USAR program has a significant illness which will be causing his retirement in May. As a result there will be a Captain’s exam shortly. They have a new Rescue Ambulance with “chevrons”; initially skeptical about the concept of such large chevrons on the back, but now feels they are great due to high visibility from great distances.

ARC has their Annual Pancake Breakfast for Fire Service Day scheduled on May 2nd at Fire Station 106 from

0700-1200. Bob Gattas also reported that the TICP is close to being finalized, likely by end of April with significant changes – should be adopted by LA Area Fire Chief’s sometime in May just in time for Fire Season. Changes reflect using more of available capacity/capabilities in the new radios for both UHF/VHF frequencies; users of older VHF radios may experience some limitations.

BRK – Like other agencies, a 5% budget reduction was requested from the CM and they are working through that request. Three new Fire Engines are very close to being placed into service and have ordered three new Rescue Ambulances (MAVs).

GLN –

MPK –

MRV – Have three new personnel at FS102 as Firefighter/Paramedics – one on each shift.

MTB –

PAS –

SGB –

SMD –

SNM –

SPS – Is up to full staff after 2 years and have ordered a new Rescue Ambulance with delivery by Aug/09.

Verdugo – Please be aware that Lenia Scanlon is on medical leave. It is likely that she will be gone for at least 4-6 weeks, possibly longer. She is integral to the support of Verdugo Fire this will be a significant impact to Verdugo’s operations and she will be missed. As a result, should any agency have requests normally handled by Lenia, please forward them to Don Wise temporarily until Lenia is able to return to work. We ask that everyone think positive thoughts for her during her recovery and all present at today’s meeting expressed their well-wishes.

This week is National Telecommunicator’s Week, April 12th-18th. Please take a moment to recognize the hard work by our dispatchers who perform tirelessly on our communities behalf. They provide important work and truly are the unsung and unseen heroes of our system. Verdugo personnel were presented with a Proclamation at Glendale City Council on April 14th in honor of their efforts on a daily basis and the essential work they provide.

Next Task Force Meeting: Tuesday, May 9, at 9 a.m. – Follow-up on Red Phone Audit