

**Verdugo Fire Communications Center**  
**TASK FORCE MEETING**  
**August 12, 2008 Agenda**

*Persons Present: John Kabala, Dave Haney, Robert Gattas, Ray Krakowski, Manuel Soto, Don Wise, Don Wright, Ryan Weddle, Randy Harper, Brent Bartlett, Jim Anderson, Jim Frawley, Ryan Phillips, Lenia Scanlon*

**I. New Business**

- A. Bendix/King Issue** – A SAFENET warning was issued after USFS experienced speaker-mic failure with seven of eight new digital Bendix/King radios. Verdugo spoke with Wayne Stephenson at RELM Wireless Corp. and he said those radios were the DPHX5102X model issued last year. The defective radios were part of a 4,100-piece lot where the first 25 radios off the line were bad. Ten of those radios were inadvertently sold, but all ten have been recaptured. Seven of those were the ones from USFS mentioned in the SAFENET. So he said there are no worries about any other B/K model, nor are there any worries about other radios of the DPHX5102X model line.
- B. Unnamed Streets** – Lenia distributed a map to each representative for their city with the request that they review the yellow street segments and supply a street name wherever possible. Members were also asked to circle the highlighted segments that are alleys, private drives, pedestrian paths, fire or dirt roads so those segments can be moved to a different layer of the map and not be included in routing calculations. The due date for these changes is our next TF meeting, Sept. 9.
- C. Records Destruction** – Verdugo has a variety of recordings that date back more than 10 years. Council approval must be received to discard or destroy these records. We can destroy 911 and related audio (radio) transmissions legally after 100 days but plan to keep them for a maximum of 1.5 years. Letters were sent to the Fire Chiefs August 5 with notification of intent to destroy existing records for anything prior to July 1, 2006. The letter requested an authorization letter be signed by each Fire Chief and City Attorney authorizing Verdugo to handle this procedure in perpetuity, barring any ongoing legal action or police investigations or objection by the individual agency.
- D. Station 21 Security Access Changed** – Verdugo recently changed the access code for entering the parking area and fire station. If you have an assigned personal code that you use to reach Verdugo, it should still work to enter the parking area and the station. For those on move-ups, the frequencies for the gates are still the same, so the Area C “clickers” should still work just fine. Please consult Don Wise if your personnel need the revised “generic” code for Station 21 keypads.
- E. Suggestion to Revise Nomenclature of Reserves** – It was suggested that, when units are away on a strike team, frontline designations like Engine 11 and Truck 71 continue to be used for units remaining in the home jurisdiction, for the sake of consistency. Units on the strike team would bear the 700-series designations we currently use for reserves. However, the Task Force opted to keep the current system because of the extra work this would create for Verdugo in the process of dispatching one or more strike teams. They would have to log off units, personnel and MCTs with one designation and re-log them with the other designation before departure, and there would also be complex ramifications in ROSS if the system was changed.
- F. Suggestion to Put EMS Calls on RED2** - Burbank Fire suggested that Verdugo consider reorganizing the dispatch channel, putting EMS calls on RED2 or an alternate channel, similar to the way LA City has a dedicated EMS frequency. Following discussion around the table, the decision was made not to pursue this at the present time since RED1 is able to handle current traffic the vast majority of the time, and hospital-status queries will soon be gone with addition of ReddiNet on the MCTs.

**G. Interim Fire Communications Administrator** – Don Wise will be appointed to this position in an acting capacity until the position is officially filled on a permanent basis. A new recruitment process will occur this Fall and Don plans to apply for the permanent position.

#### **H. Verdugo Publications In Progress**

- a. **Unified Response Newsletter, Summer 2008 issue** – Lenia distributed copies and asked that Task Force members inform their departments that this and all past issues may be found at [www.unified-response.org](http://www.unified-response.org).
- b. **Verdugo FY 2007-8 Annual Report** – In progress now, due out in late September.
- c. **Verdugo Manual** – Lenia will now be coordinating this effort. Goal is Dec. 2008.
- d. **Verdugo Technology Plan** – A first draft has been completed and a committee from the tri-cities will be meeting to review and revise it.

#### **I. Recent Earthquake –**

- a. **How did it go for each agency?** Task Force members commented that everything went smoothly, except for a little confusion about being assigned to a tactical channel but needing to continue monitoring RED1 for dispatches. Burbank Fire had had an EQ drill shortly before, so they had no problems at all. The comment was made that it was helpful that the dispatcher kept repeating which channel each agency was assigned to. There were issues with RED11 & RED12; these frequencies probably won't be assigned for EQ Mode in the future.
- b. **Section 13 of the Verdugo Manual** on earthquake procedures will be coming out shortly.
- c. **EQ Drill?** The question was asked whether there was any interest in holding an EQ drill for each shift prior to the Nov. 12-16 Great Shakeout and only SNM expressed a desire for a drill. The web site for the Great Southern California Shakeout is <http://www.shakeout.org/>.
- d. **GETS Calling Cards** – After the recent earthquake, cell sites were overwhelmed with traffic and landlines could have been impacted as well. Verdugo personnel have been issued GETS cards (Government Emergency Telecommunications Service, <http://gets.ncs.gov/faq.html>) so they can receive priority on landlines for outbound calls during an emergency situation.

## **II. Updates on Continued Issues**

- A. **Coverage Testing** – Results were not good enough to utilize RED10, 11 or 12 with LACO in day-to-day operations. However, ARC, MRV, SMD, SGB, SNM and MPK can use these frequencies with LACO in direct/simplex mode once they are onscene. LACO would remain on VF ACCESS through going onscene and then migrate over to RED10, 11 or 12 in direct/simplex mode.
- B. **Radio Procedure Policy** – Now that the coverage testing has been completed, the new policy will be finalized and published at [www.unified-response.org](http://www.unified-response.org) by Sept. 1, in the Authorized Users section. A password will be provided to the Fire agencies, as there is confidential information in this document.
- C. **TICP Pocket Booklets** – Work on these was put on hold during the recent reprogramming and will resume later this week. Steve Page has prepared UHF and VHF template versions and he's adding a fillable form for any city-specific channels that each agency wants to add to their booklets. Then each agency will print and assemble their own UHF and VHF pocket guides that include both the TICP and their city-specific channels.
- D. **UPS Changeover** – Verdugo's transition to the new Uninterruptible Power Supply equipment occurred at 5 a.m. on Tuesday, June 17, without any serious issues. This was an excellent test of our backup systems for the half-hour several key systems were offline. In addition to redundant UPS systems with a six-hour support time and two power generators onsite, Verdugo also has redundant feeder lines on the City grid now.

**E. Montebello** – A proposal from the tri-city Fire Chiefs was sent to Montebello’s Fire Chief regarding the possibility of adding Montebello as a contract dispatch agency, and an answer is expected by the end of August. Planning has begun with the assumption that Verdugo will be adding MTB in early 2009.

**F. Reddinet on MCT’s** – ReddiNet has done their programming and we’re waiting on the CAD vendor to finish their paperwork so they can do their programming. It is hoped that their work can begin sometime in September and that a very brief testing phase will occur in October before we go online.

**G. AVRR** – Verdugo will begin testing the new AVRR system as of Oct. 1. This will require that every unit in Area C has the latest version of the AVL software, the one that provides a color-coded indication of GPS status (see graphic to the right) and automatically retries to connect with CAD after connection is dropped. This includes both front-line and reserve apparatus. Some agencies installed the software when they did their recent radio reprogramming, but virtually every agency has one or more units that are not transmitting their location right now. Lenia will be checking with each TF representative to confirm all front-line and reserve apparatus have the new software – simply look at the mobile computer terminal and if the MAP button is green, yellow or red, the unit has the newest software. The table below shows the status of the front-line units as of Aug. 11:



GPS Location Reporting Status as of 8-11-08

|     | BC    | ENGINES |     |     |     |        |    |     |     |     |     |     | TRUCKS |     |     | RA's |     |     |        |    | Other Units (some don't appear because they're not used often) |    |     |       |  |  |
|-----|-------|---------|-----|-----|-----|--------|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|--------|----|--|----|-----|-------|--|--|
| ALH | BC7   | 71      | 72  | 73  | 74  |        |    |     |     |     |     |     |        | 71  |     |      | 71  | 74  |        |    |  |    |     | USR71 |  |  |
| ARC | BC105 | 105     | 106 | 107 | 706 | BC 705 |    |     |     |     |     |     |        | 105 |     |      | 105 | 106 |        |    |  |    |     |       |  |  |
| BRK | BC1   | 11      | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15     | 16 | 711 | 713 | 715 | 716 |     |        | 11  | 12  |      | 11  | 13  | 15     |    |  |    |     | HM12  |  |  |
| GLN | BC2   | 21      | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25     | 26 | 27  | 28  | 29  | 229 | 722 | 725    | 726 | 21  | 26   | 29  | 21  | 22     | 25 | 26   | 29 |     |       |  |  |
| MRV | BC10  | 101     | 102 | 201 | 701 |        |    |     |     |     |     |     | 721    | 727 | 729 | 101  |     |     | SQ 101 |    |  |    |     |       |  |  |
| MPK | BC6   | 61      | 62  | 63  |     |        |    |     |     |     |     |     |        |     | 61  |      |     | 61  | 62     |    |  |    |     |       |  |  |
| PAS | BC3   | 31      | 32  | 33  | 34  | 36     | 37 | 38  | 39  | 733 | 734 |     |        |     | 31  | 32   |     | 31  | 32     | 33 | 34   | 36 | P38 | USR32 |  |  |
| SGB | BC5   | 51      | 52  |     |     |        |    |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |      |     | 51  |        |    |  |    |     | USR51 |  |  |
| SNM | BC9   | 91      | 791 |     |     |        |    |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |      |     | 91  |        |    |  |    |     |       |  |  |
| SMD | BC4   | 41      |     |     |     |        |    |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |      |     | 41  |        |    |  |    |     |       |  |  |
| SPS | BC8   | 81      |     |     |     |        |    |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |      |     | 81  |        |    |  |    |     | AU81  |  |  |

  AVL software installed and functioning correctly.  
  Unit appears to be logged of - mostly reserves  
  Unit has not reported GPS position in the past few days or much longer. Possible causes: AVL software not yet installed or not functioning correctly (needs work); unit is away on a Strike Team or unit is used rarely and has not been logged on to CAD in several days (no intervention needed).

**H. ICIS Update**

- 1. Station Alerting** – The prototype alerting board built and tested by Burbank’s Radio Shop has been approved and five are now being built for testing at other stations. Every fire station in Area C will eventually have the same board installed. Verdugo is buying the boards; agencies will pay for installation, and we have been assured installation should be brief and simple.
- 2. BC Alerting** – The Radio Tech committee is looking into a solution that might enable users to go back to the Minitor pagers we used to use.

3. **Tertiary Alerting** – Once the new station alerting boards are in place, we will be able to switch to StatAlert, which will give the dispatcher an acknowledgement that the alert was received by the station. This will also eliminate the 5/6 tone phantom alerts.
4. **Phantom Alerts** – We are getting good information on the new problem reporting form. Submitted forms are being passed to the appropriate people for resolution. These should disappear completely when we switch to StatAlert.
5. **Coverage Issues** – Radio alignments have been completed at several Area C agencies, with definite improvement in radio reception. Many thanks to the Pasadena Radio Shop for doing the vast majority of the testing and realignments for several other fire agencies. Wirelines have been extended to the Four Points Marriott and MRV reports the reception is better than ever. MPK will check to see if coverage on the 60 fwy has improved since realignment.
6. **Audio Levels** – No recent reports of problems.
7. **LAFD** – ICIS frequencies have been programmed into all radios around the perimeter of Area C, in our mutual aid areas. Looking into holding a joint exercise with them using ICIS frequencies, and possibly changing our aid agreement so they will use ICIS frequencies for incidents in Area C cities.
8. **LA County** – On July 1, Battalion 6 split and a portion will become Battalion 22. We will be obtaining new, updated pages for your yellow helicopter directories and will distribute them when available.
9. **Progress on Radio Reprogramming/Distribution of 5000's?** – BRK, GLN and SNM are still in progress. ARC, MRV and MPK are finished. ALH and SMD will check. PAS, SPS and SGB unknown.

### III. Roundtable

**BRK** – FF academy graduation was Aug. 1. Next class in Sept. will have 12, interviews with FC in two weeks. Engr, Capt and BC exams coming up. Thanks for statistics Verdugo has been putting out. Question about whether LA County and City airships will have our frequencies. Not at this point, but air to ground frequencies is on the agenda for this Thursday's meeting with them.

**ARC** – Retirements coming...BC, Capt, FF exams before end of year to fill vacancies. Question about strike team availability lists saying "TBA" so often. Verdugo will change its procedure and list only "Available" or "Unable to Fill" instead of using the TBA terminology. All agencies are reminded to perform their daily strike team sign up even if they have no resources to off. Below is a sample of what Verdugo sees after everyone has signed up – note that Arcadia used N/A for those spots they were unable to fill. This is an effective way to notify Verdugo when there are no available STL's, Engines, etc. available on a given day.

| Green Text = Ready to deploy in 10 mins |               |         |            |            |              |             |         |            |         |                      |              |      |
|---|---------------|---------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|---------|------------|---------|----------------------|--------------|------|
| Agency                                  | Leader1       | Leader2 | BCTrainee1 | BCTrainee2 | CAPTrainee1  | CAPTrainee2 | Engine1 | Engine2    | Engine3 | Date/Time            | Submittor    | CAD# |
| Arcadia                                 | NA            | NA      | NA         | NA         | NA           | NA          | E105    | E106 (ALT) |         | 8/13/2008 7:13:00 AM | Rick Braun   |      |
| Burbank                                 | FRANK WALBERT |         |            |            | DAVE SCHMITT |             | E11     | E13        | E15     | 8/13/2008 8:22:24 AM | STEVE BRIGGS |      |
| Glendale                                | Arellanes     |         |            |            |              |             | E-22    | E-26       | E-21    | 8/13/2008 7:10:43 AM | Muzquiz      |      |
| Monterey Park                           |               |         |            |            |              |             | E61     |            |         | 8/13/2008 7:53:31 AM | Harper       |      |
| Pasadena                                | brett gibson  |         |            |            | Ed Cowan     |             | E-31    | E-34       |         | 8/13/2008 8:10:07 AM | brett gibson |      |
| San Gabriel                             | M Terry       |         |            |            |              |             |         |            |         | 8/13/2008 8:01:45 AM | M Terry      |      |

**ALH** – Major transition and reorganization of the department, promoted a number of people. Chief Kemp will retire at the end of October. Retirement dinner will be Nov. 7.

**MRV** – Promotional tests have been completed. New OES Engine coming in the next two weeks. Recently met with company called Acura Embedded MDC Systems about their MCTs and hope to put one in BC Suburban to try it out.

**SNM** – Jim Frawley started as new Division Chief last Monday, will oversee Support, Grants, Emergency Preparedness, and Verdugo TF. Rick Mayhew will start as second DC Sept. 2, overseeing Operations and Personnel. Jim Anderson will continue as part-time Fire Marshal. New Engine, RA and Firefighter coming soon.

**MPK** – Difficulty with one radio channel last Friday. Don or Lenia will check into it. Phantom tones at Station 61. Question on how long Unit Histories are retained in CAD: usually about six months. Incident histories stay on CAD for about two years, and Verdugo can pull up any incident history from Jan. 1, 2000 to the present. Congratulations to Ryan Weddle on promotion to Engineer. Also had other Engineer and Captain promotions. Several FF openings coming up.

**GLN** – 13 new FF's graduated from the tri-city academy August 1. Department has been reorganized due to severe budget cuts, lost a number of administrative sworn positions and E29 is now 3-person except on days with Red Flag conditions. BC test before end of year. Two new RA's arrived, will soon receive three new Pierce Engines and one Air & Lights Utility.

**VFCC** – 2% improvement in call duration statistic evaluated by ISO. Two recent personnel actions; looking at part-timers to help fill the vacancies in the interim.

**Next Task Force Meeting:** Tuesday, September 9, 9 a.m. at Verdugo