

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the  
Louisiana Emergency Response Commission (LERC)**

**Meeting Title** Louisiana Emergency Response Commission Meeting  
**Date of Meeting** September 14, 2016  
**Where** Louisiana State Police Headquarters  
7919 Independence Blvd.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806  
**Start Time** 10:00 a.m.

1. Lt. Col. David Staton called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.
2. Tara Guidry, LSP/Right-to-Know Unit, called roll as follows:

Lt. Col. David Staton, Department of Public Safety, PRESENT  
Dr. Chuck Brown, Department of Environmental Quality, PRESENT  
Dr. Brent Robbins, Designee for Department of Agriculture and Forestry, PRESENT  
William Rachal, On behalf of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security, PRESENT  
Command Technician (CT) Taylor Moss, Department of Public Safety, PRESENT  
James "Jim" Polk, Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Association, PRESENT  
Cecil "Keith" Bennett, Carroll L. Herring Fire and Emergency Training Institute, PRESENT  
Brian Wynne, Representative of Environmental Interest, PRESENT  
Edward Flynn, Louisiana Chemical Association, NOT PRESENT  
Chief Bobby Black, PRESENT  
Hiram Copeland, NOT PRESENT  
Paul Naquin, PRESENT  
Capt. Chris Rushing, PRESENT  
Chris Guilbeaux, PRESENT  
Senator Mike Walsworth, NOT PRESENT  
Senator Mack "Bodi" White, NOT PRESENT

The records reflect that the following visitors were present:

Todd Hollenbaugh, GOHSEP  
Travis Perrilloux, St. John the Baptist Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness  
Bryan Riche, DEQ  
Major Duane Schexnayder, Department of Public Safety

The records also reflect that the following LSP/Emergency Services Unit personnel were present:

Gene Dunegan  
Tara Guidry  
Paul Schexnayder, Louisiana State Police Legal Counsel

3. Lt. Col. David Staton welcomed everyone and asked members to review their contact information and to advise of any changes.

4. Lt. Col. Staton asked the commission to approve the minutes from the September 9, 2015 LERC meeting. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. James Polk to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and passed without opposition.

## 5. Committee Reports:

Long Range Planning: Lt. Col. Staton passed the floor to Chief Bobby Black for a report from the Long Range Planning Committee. Chief Black made presentations about LERC at both the Louisiana Fire Chiefs Association conference in March and at the Louisiana State Firemen's Association in August, along with Mr. Gene Dunegan of the Emergency Services Unit. Chief Black stated that at the Firemen's Association conference, both he and Mr. Dunegan were stunned that not many people were involved in the local planning committees. Chief Black hopes that the information gets out beyond the first responders about the resources offered by LERC. He also commended Mr. Dunegan for his work on the presentations.

To clarify for the new commission members, Lt. Col. Staton said that emergency preparedness is truly a community concern. He gave an example of an incident that occurred in Texas, when a member of the media interviewed the mayor who was not familiar with the LEPC, even though he was supposedly its head. Lt. Col. Staton commended Chief Black on his efforts to educate first responders, industry, municipal leaders, and citizens about LERC and LEPCs.

Emergency Plans Review: Lt. Col. Staton passed the floor to Mr. Chris Guilbeaux to discuss Emergency Plans. Since the previous LERC meeting last year, the Emergency Plans Review committee has kept to schedule and completed reviews of the hazardous materials response plans (ESF-10s) for the following parishes: Acadia, Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Evangeline, Jefferson Davis, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Landry, St. Tammany, and Terrebonne. For the most part, these response plans met all requirements of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (SARA Title III).

Lt. Col. Staton asked about a training component to the plans review. Mr. Guilbeaux said that an annual statewide exercise every year that many parishes participate in, as well as unplanned events throughout the year such as natural disasters, add to the experience of LEPCs and prompt them to update and improve their plans where needed. CT Taylor Moss asked what happens if a parish plan does not meet requirements. Mr. Guilbeaux answered that they follow up with a parish by making a technical visit to advise them of any deficiencies in their plan and to make recommendations.

Training and Resources: Lt. Col. Staton passed the floor to Mr. Keith Bennett for the report from the Training and Resources Committee. Mr. Bennett stated that training centers at LSU and JESTC are now training over two thousand people per year. At the end of 2015, the total was close to 2700 people. To date in 2016, over 1700 students have gone through training at the two facilities. The LSU facility was affected by the August flooding, with their two main classrooms taking on water. Despite the damage, they are juggling rooms around and continuing training as they wait for contractors to repair the classrooms.

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Service: Lt. Col. Staton passed the floor to Mr. Jim Polk, who began his discussion with LEPC notifications. Mr. Polk noticed when reviewing plans that LEPCs are usually at the bottom of the list of agencies to be contacted about incidents. There has been some debate about electronic notifications and what it means. Some local agencies prefer to have a phone call and are concerned that electronic notification would replace their internal systems. CT Taylor Moss stated that he had met with a company that provides an electronic notification system after the previous LERC meeting and told them to reach out to the LEPCs who would be expecting free equipment offered by this company for the electronic notifications. CT Moss asked if the company had met with any of the LEPCs, and Mr. Polk answered not to his knowledge. Concerns over whether the state was endorsing one particular company over others could be solved with multiple vendors making multiple presentations to the LEPCs, as suggested by Lt. Col. Staton.

Mr. Polk then mentioned that the new year had brought about changes in administrations and local governments. Incoming personnel now have access to tools to inform them about how LEPCs operate, such as the LEPC handbook and the LEPA and Louisiana State Police websites. This is an example of how the committee provides service by helping LEPC chairs be successful with plans and procedures.

Dr. Chuck Brown of the Department of Environmental Quality asked if the LERC had taken a position on electronic notification. CT Moss answered that at the previous LERC meeting, the superintendent of Louisiana State Police, Colonel Edmonson, spoke in favor of it. Dr. Brown would like to see the LERC promote the policy, and then the LEPCs could choose whatever vendor they wished. Lt. Col. Staton noted that electronic notification seems to be the way of the future, but any such system needs to satisfy concerns that it is reliable, workable, and can perform in the field under critical conditions, while also calming the hesitation of agencies unfamiliar and uncomfortable with electronic notification.

Public Information – Lt. Col. Staton passed the floor to CT Taylor Moss for a report from the Public Information Committee. The LERC has distributed over 28,000 copies statewide of the 2016 Emergency Response Guidebook from the U. S. Department of Transportation. All 64 parishes received the updated guidebooks within three months of the date they were delivered to LERC.

Emergency Notification – There was no report submitted by the Emergency Notification Committee.

## **6. Old Business**

The first item of old business concerned filling vacancies on the Commission. LERC had previously discussed reaching out to people who would be qualified and interested in serving, then recommending those individuals to the Governor's Office. Mr. Gene Dunegan presented the only submittal received thus far, which was from Mark Stewart, the President of the Louisiana Fire Chiefs Association. Mr. Stewart wrote a letter recommending Fire Chief Guy Bonin of Iberia Parish as an at-large member to the Commission. Lt. Col. Staton explained for

new members that recommendations should have information that illustrate the qualifications of the candidates, including what would make them well-suited to serve on the Commission. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Jim Polk to approve submitting Fire Chief Bonin to Boards and Commissions in the Governor's Office for consideration. The motion was seconded and passed without opposition.

Capt. Chris Rushing asked what became of the nominations of Mr. Obie Cambre and Mr. Joey Dugas, which had been suggested at the previous LERC meeting. Lt. Col. Staton replied that LERC would like something in writing about the candidates that could be presented to Boards and Commissions. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Jim Polk to tentatively accept the nominations of Mr. Cambre and Mr. Dugas for the Commission. The motion was seconded and passed without opposition. Capt. Rushing agreed to submit a written recommendation for Mr. Cambre that could be presented to Boards and Commissions, and Mr. Keith Bennett agreed to submit a recommendation for Mr. Dugas.

## 7. New Business

The first item of new business concerned the 2015 Annual Report. An electronic copy was sent to members for review. Mr. Gene Dunegan stated that the report will be sent to the Governor and other representatives, albeit late. He added that the report includes statistics in reference to emergency responses throughout the year, and a brief history of why the LERC exists and what the duties of LERC are. A **MOTION** was made by Chief Bobby Black to approve the report as submitted. The motion was seconded and passed without opposition.

The next item was a request for regional access to Tier II information from multiple parishes via E-Plan. The request was made by Ms. Pam Roussel, the Region 3 Coordinator of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP). Mr. Dunegan stated that while he grants individual parish access, he prefers to bring before LERC any requests for multi-parish or statewide access. Ms. Roussel requested access to the six parishes under Region 3: Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and Terrebonne. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Chris Guilbeaux to grant access to the parishes to Ms. Roussel. The motion was seconded and passed without opposition.

The third item was the Region 6 LEPC Workshop Summary, which was reviewed by Mr. Dunegan. In the last couple of years, EPA, GOHSEP and Louisiana State Police have put on annual workshops throughout the state. This year there were four workshops in Louisiana which were very successful. Attendance at the workshops has doubled with each year. Mr. Dunegan noted that a lot of people don't know what an LEPC is and what it should be doing regarding parish emergency plans, as well as the role of the LERC. Mr. Chris Guilbeaux added that the workshops are also shedding light on the importance of parish emergency planning. Lt. Col. Staton found that in 2015 Louisiana had the second highest percentage of LEPC representation at the Region 6 workshops, which also took place in New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas.

The next item concerned the new Executive Order in reference to the Emergency Response Commission. Mr. Dunegan has spoken with Ms. Ellen Palmintier, the director of Boards and Commissions, who advised that no one at this time has been reappointed to LERC, but the entire board needs to be reappointed before the end of the 2017 regular session because of R.S. 24:14K. The decision on whether to reappoint current members to the board or appoint brand new members is for the Governor to make.

The final item of new business concerned LEPC membership updates for the following parishes: Beauregard, Bossier, DeSoto, East Feliciana, Lafayette LaSalle, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Landry, Tangipahoa, and Webster. **A MOTION** was made by Mr. Chris Guilbeaux to approve all of the updates. The motion was seconded and passed without opposition.

9. Lt. Col. Staton asked if there were any questions or announcements from the audience. He also introduced two new members of the Commission: Dr. Chuck Brown of the Department of Environmental Quality, and Mr. William Rachal, the proposed designee of Mr. James Waskom of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security.

Lt. Col. Staton also announced the scheduling of the LERC's next quarterly meeting which normally occurs on the 2nd Wednesday of the 3rd month of the quarter. The next LERC meeting suggestion date was Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to be held at the Louisiana State Police Headquarters.

10. **A MOTION** was made by Mr. Jim Polk to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed without opposition. The meeting adjourned at 11:16 a.m.