



# Team Matters

FEMA MASSACHUSETTS TASK FORCE 1 URBAN SEARCH & RESCUE

Volume 1 Number 3 Spring 2003

## Task Force Leader's Corner

The President recently signed into law the Omnibus Appropriations Bill. This bill provides FEMA with FY2003 budget funding. Through this funding the Urban Search & Rescue program will receive adequate funding for the next twelve months. It is anticipated that this funding will provide us with first class ground transportation as well as significant funding for equipment acquisition and training. We are currently inventorying our entire cache and we should be able to fund all shortfalls by the end of the spring.

We have already begun to receive our WMD cache. The bulk of it is scheduled to arrive during March, and we will begin to deliver training at the April 19th drill. At this time it appears that all members will be required to attend two training sessions. The first session will be a classroom session and the second will be a hands-on session. We will deliver these sessions multiple times in order to insure everyone is trained. The HazMat Specialists and Medical Specialists will attend a third session. Our entry into the WMD field will also require a base line physical and personal respirators/face-pieces with associated fit testing.

During the February exercise we used our new classroom for the first time. The classroom now allows us to deliver training with the appropriate atmosphere as well as desks for all students. The old classroom will be converted into office space with a small meeting room.

We were also fortunate to obtain another Western Star box truck. This will now allow us to put our cache in commercial over the road, highway speed vehicles. In addition to being all wheel drive, the trucks have on-board 2,5 KW generators for interior lighting and 120 VAC outlets. These trucks also have 8 speed overdrive Fuller Roadranger manual transmission and are tricky to shift if you're not familiar with them (3/4 and 7/8 are reversed). Stop by on cache day and we can arrange to familiarize you with the transmission.

Finally, I would like to mention what an excellent job Gail McCarthy and Mark Aliberti did on the recent deployment to Texas. This is a new type of deployment for us which was handled very well. While it is impossible to predict the future, I think it's appropriate to plan for similar deployments.

## Planning Team News

FEMA's National US&R System has several working groups which provide input to the system as a whole. MATF1 is represented on a few of them. One of these is the Technical Working Group which provides input on issues involving the Planning Team Manager, Technical Information Specialist, Rigging Specialist, Structural Specialist and Haz-Mat Specialist. This working group has nine members, one each from Florida, Missouri, Arizona, Nevada, Virginia, Massachusetts, and three from California. This group is chaired by David Hammond of CATF3. As the MATF1 representative to this group, I have had the opportunity to see some of the behind the scenes activity that continues to adjust the US&R system. The need to adjust the system arises from past deployments and from trying to take advantage of new technologies, in order to use them at future deployments.

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## Communications Training Big Success

MATF1 offered a communications training class this February. This class was instructed by Bill Yee and Charlie Dunne, both instructors combined with over twenty years of experience in the radio communications field.

Students received basic orientation and awareness of the role of teams Communications Specialist. This training provided basic cross-training to Task Force members in other disciplines to assist the Communications Specialist during team exercises and deployments. Students became familiar with many types of equipment in the Communications cache and the basic operation of the radio equipment. Students also learned valuable first-hand lessons on the use of the team's satellite phones during the field exercise portion by setting up and locating the orbiting satellite and establishing a successful communication link. Once the link was established the students placed calls to each other and experienced the delay inherent with using this type of communication.

The lab exercise was another great success. The students received more hands-on training and became

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(Planning News continued)

The group has been very active since its inception in 1997. It has been involved in deploying cache needs of the represented specialists, both on teams and on the IST. It has initiated training programs for Rigging Specialists, Tech Info Specialists, Planning Specialists and portions of the Structural Collapse Technician training. It has attempted to bring to FEMA US&R teams new technologies and refine existing ones.

This year will be no exception from the past. It appears that the Rigging Specialist Training, currently a California only program, will be adopted as a FEMA system course. The Tech Info Specialist and Planning Team Manager courses will be rolled out later this year. A new major project is the development of a new advanced course for Structural Specialists that will attempt to transfer the experience of actual deployment to the students. This course is being promoted by the US Army Corps of Engineers as a way to better train their people to work with teams such as MATF1. The leaders of the USACE Earthquake Preparedness program are very sincere in their desire to be able to support the FEMA US&R system, both at the team and IST levels.

2003 will be a year of many changes and growth for MATF1. The various working groups are striving to insure that this process continues in the future and that lessons that are learned at the team level are fed back into the system at a national level. MATF1 is actively involved in supporting this process.

Alan Fisher, Planning Team Manager

### **Hazmat/WMD Specialists**

Anyone interested in coming over to the dark side and becoming a Hazmat WMD Specialist should complete the questionnaire before the March drill. If you don't have a questionnaire please call or email Mike Polidaro. Our goal is to get 26 Hazmat WMD Specialists for the team. Team members may not need to give up their current specialty, cross-training is acceptable. There is enough talent already on the Task Force to fill these positions from within rather than recruiting new members. An additional eight hours of training on the WMD cache will be required.

To those of other disciplines, the standards that will allow MATF1 to become a WMD deployable team require that everyone deployed has some basic courses completed aside from the sixteen hour Task Force WMD program scheduled for this spring. All Task Force members should be trained to the Hazardous Materials Awareness Level under 29 CFR 1910.120 (OSHA). Members should also have completed the Emergency Response to Terrorism: Basic Concepts (ERT:BC) course. The ERT:BC course can be completed online at the FEMA website. If you already have these in place please be sure its in your file. I understand there's a potential for FEMA auditors to randomly pull personnel files to verify that members listed as deployable have the appropriate certifications. Some equipment has already arrived and there is much more to come. US&R wants the Task Force to be WMD ready by September! Please contact Mike Polidaro with any questions. map3811@aol.com

### **Personnel News**

#### Transfers

Chris Silver moved from Medical to Rescue Squad D  
Karen Fleury moved from Logistics to Medical  
Jessica Wyman moved from Logisitics to Medical

#### Additions to Logistics

Vincent Lampley  
Richard Guisti  
James Okolowicz  
Frank Raduazzo  
Glenn Nielsen  
Don McCullough  
Dave McCombe  
Rene Archambault  
Mark Klose

#### SCBA Training (2/7/03)

Sal Brancaleone  
Chad Council  
Alan Fisher  
Lori Gordon  
John Looney  
Timothy Lynch  
Bernie Rouillard  
Ed Stewart  
Scott Tezak  
Bill Yee

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Video tapes of the Liberty Mutual Appreciation Dinner held in August are available at the cache. One tape per member. Please see Anita to sign out.

Any Task Force member that have not already done so, we need a copy of your current resume for your file. Immunizations must be up to date this March. Please get your documentation in ASAP! If you have any questions as to your status, contact Anita via email at snekkevik@aol.com

**Team Matters** is published quarterly. The next issue will be June/July/August. Please direct comments to Paula Galvin at pgalvin@ci.beverly.ma.us or 603-497-9536.

## February Drill Deployment

The MATF1 drill for February, 2003 was a simulated deployment of the Task Force in a Light Task Force configuration. This was a cold-weather, night deployment by ground. The actual objective was to assess an existing abandoned building, currently posted for asbestos and other hazards, as a future training site for the task force. The objective was completed, safely and some valuable lessons were learned and new ideas were brought forward.

The Gaebler Building, an existing abandoned hospital building has been selected as a potential future training site. A mock deployment of a Light Task Force was performed to gain knowledge of the site and to test the task force in several ways. Challenging aspects of this deployment were the Task Force Light configuration, winter weather (12" snowstorm, air temperature 25 degrees F, 16 degree wind chill), night operations and WMD type environmental conditions with known hazardous materials.

Prior to departing the Beverly site, an ICS202 Incident Objectives form was prepared and had attached the Medical Plan, Communications Plan and Organizational Plan. A Recon Report was generated and is attached to this Summary Report. A communications log was maintained and is attached to this Summary report.

An advance triage/recon team was deployed an hour prior to the rest of the force. This advance team included an Ops Manager, a Search Team Manager, a Planning Officer, a Hazmat Specialist and two Structural Specialists. All traveled in two vehicles. The advance team tested travel conditions, reconnoitered the site, and prepared for the arrival of the balance of the team.

The building is a four story reinforced concrete structure. An accurate building plan was developed while on site. Asbestos and other hazards were observed. The building has been used by other government agencies and live ordinance has been used in the building. Booby traps were observed and treated as live even though all were believed to have been deactivated prior to the teams arrival.

The main body of the team traveled in four vehicles. The cache was carried in a single straight truck. Part of this deployment was to test the adequacy of the current equipment pre-staged on this advance truck. The main body arrived just prior to the advance team exiting the building and were able to ready their equipment prior to obtaining their assignments.

An operational plan was agreed to by the Ops Manager, Search Team Leader, Plans Officer and Safety Officer. The two recon teams of the Light Task Force configuration were each assigned a floor to evaluate. After approximately an hour of operations, the basement, first, second, and third floors had been assessed. The fourth floor was avoided based on prior reports of structural problems.

The entire team returned to the Beverly site and operations ceased for the day. On Saturday morning a debriefing of the entire deployed team was held to gather opinions of the prior night's efforts.

Alan Fisher, Planning Team Manager

**Deadline for submissions to Summer issue of Team Matters is May 1, 2003. Preferred submissions are sent within email text rather than attachment to galvin012@aol.com**

(Comm Training cont.)

familiar with programming capabilities and "cloning" of the newer model radios. Thanks to all who attended and kept the training interesting and enjoyable!

Bill Yee

### **Class Roster Communications Training**

Don Gunning  
Anita Arnum  
Emmet Nichols, Jr.  
Charles Roffo  
Chad Council  
Bill Yee (Instructor)  
John Bourgeois, Jr.  
Sal Brancaleone  
John Goggin  
Charlie Williams, III  
John Lightbody  
Glynn Montgomery  
Charles Dunne  
(Ass't Instructor)  
Mark Foster

### **Logistics News**

Logistics is continuing with a total cache re-inventory and review of the FEMA cache list. This takes place every Monday from 8:30 AM to evening and on Thursdays from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. This is a great opportunity to see what's in our cache as well as providing an opportunity for everyone to earn cache hours. The clothing committee continues to review our needs. One area in which we're looking for feedback is the 24-Hour Pack. The ideas we're looking at include:

- 1) Continue using Military Alice pack
  - 2) Use two-piece pack/fanny pack combo
  - 3) Use commando vests with assorted pockets
- Please send feedback to Ed Seligman at edselig13@aol.com

## **Training Schedule**

### **March 12th**

Search Training

### **April 19th & May 16th**

WMD Orientation

### **June 14th**

WMD/HazMat

### **July 19th**

Open

### **August**

Deployment Prep

### **September**

Multi-Day Drill

### **October**

Open

**Team**  
**Matters**  
**SPRING 2003**

**FEMA US&R MATF-01**  
**13 Morningside Drive**  
**Beverly, MA 01915**