

State Emergency Response Commission Meeting  
Friday, April 28, 2023  
New Jersey Forensic Science Technology Center  
1200 Negron Drive  
Hamilton, NJ 08691

Minutes

The New Jersey State Emergency Response Commission was called to order on Friday, April 28, 2023, at 10:00 AM EDT, at the New Jersey Forensic Science Technology Center 1200 Negron Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08691. The meeting was held in accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws Act of 1975. Notice of the meeting was sent to news media outlets via a press release on November 2, 2022, and posted on the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJ OEM) and NJSERC Websites (<https://nj.gov/njoem/serc/index.shtml>).

**Call to Order by Director Van Fossen**

The meeting commenced promptly at 10:00 AM EDT.

**SERC Members in Attendance: DR: Designated Representative    ALT DR: Alternate DR**

**Roll Call:**

The Secretary called the roll.

Present in the room:

- Jim Bruncati, DR for Joseph L. Fiordaliso, President, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJ BPU);
- Bruce Tynan, DR for Lt. Governor Sheila Y. Oliver, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Commissioner, (NJCA/DFS);
- Robert Van Fossen, DR for Commissioner Shawn LaTourette, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) SERC Co-Chairperson;
- Colonel Yvonne Mays, DR for Brigadier General, The Adjutant General, Lisa J. Hou, New Jersey Department of Military & Veterans Affairs (NJDMVA)
- Karen Fox, ALT DR for Commissioner Judith M. Persichilli, RN, BSN, MA, New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH);
- Major Christopher DeMaise, NJ OEM, DR for Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, State Director of Emergency Management and Superintendent, New Jersey State Police (NJSP), SERC Co-Chairperson;
- Christina Brandt-Young, Senior Counsel to AG, DR for Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin, Office Attorney General (OAG);
- Charles Ambio DR for Laurie Doran, Director, New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJOHSP).

Not present:

- No SERC Member present for New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT)  
\*[Note: 8 of the 9 voting members were present in the room for a quorum]

Members of the Public in Attendance:

- None

**SERC Member Roll Call Confirms Quorum (As listed above)**

Quorum confirmed by Director Van Fossen.

**Other Attendees:**

- Please refer to sign-in sheets
- NJOEM/NJSP/Enlisted – Christopher Boyle, Gregory Godish, Mario Pepler, Chris Gesualdo, James Boland, Steve Tansey, William Gaul, Monica Nuhfer, Brian Stanker, Joseph DeMauro, Evan Visone, Keven Townsend, Michael Kyle, Daniel Nate, Daniel Cuning, Min Ngo
- NJOEM/NJSP/Civilians – Lynn Amari, Sean KIELTY, Cynthia Flagg, Alex Ruffalo, Alexandru Libby, Robert Cooper, Daniel Wollerman
- NJDEP – Chris Mechan, Mitzi Kaiura
- NJBPU – James Macedo, Adam Timari
- Ocean County Sheriff's Office – Michael Edes
- Mercer County OEM – Rana Terzian
- Camden County OEM – Mitchel Baron
- Gloucester County OEM – Charles Murtaugh
- US EPA – Carl Pellegrino

**Consideration of Minutes of November 18, 2022**

Consideration of minutes from the last meeting were provided to SERC in advance of this meeting on April 20, 2023.

- Director Van Fossen inquired as to whether any changes or questions regarding these notes.
- Hearing none, Director Van Fossen made a motion to approve minutes.
- Eight (8) members of the SERC approved the minutes, with none opposed.
- With 8 votes the minutes were approved.

**Co-Chair Reports:**

Director Van Fossen, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Emergency Management (EM) Program indicated that the SERC has been very active over the last 6 months.

- At the last meeting of NJOEM and NJDEP with US EPA, EPA stated that they can support EPRCA in NJ by facilitating a large-scale/regional exercise at an EPRCA facility. The Training Working Group will be tasked with follow-up; NJDEP will schedule a meeting with NJOEM and US EPA.
- NJDOH and NJDEP continue to work toward streamlining the consolidation of reporting on EPRCA facilities. Currently, the information is published on two

different platforms – private entities are on the DEP website, and public entities are on the DOH website. DEP is working with the State contractor regarding update of the software and the combination of both reporting platforms into a single system. No projected completion date is available yet.

- Director Van Fossen acknowledged the contributions of Chuck Murtaugh of Gloucester County and the Division of Fire Safety (DFS) personnel who ascertained that the existing State fire codes provide a mechanism for enforcing completion of On-site ERPs for EPRCA facilities. DFS will be advising and instructing inspectors to request On-site ERPs and perform any necessary follow-up.
- The SERC presented at the NJ Emergency Preparedness Association Conference in Atlantic as part of a panel discussion. Representatives from the Gloucester, Burlington, and Camden County LEPCs participated on the panel to share best practices and successes regarding the implementation of EPRCA. It was a very informative session and worthy of repetition.

Major DeMaise commented on the remarkable progress of the SERC during the prior year.

- The contractor support with ERPs has led to new emergency planning districts, and the contractors have completed work with 19 counties.
  - As will be addressed during the Voting Session, there are 8 counties ready to be designated as emergency planning districts at today's meeting.
- The previously designated districts continue to take the steps necessary to perform their primary responsibilities as LEPCs. Gloucester County, which was approved earlier in 2022, held its first LEPC meeting.
- Outreach to local OEMs about SERC included a TEAMS virtual meeting on March 1, 2023 (presentation by Colonel Callahan) with several hundred participants. Members of the SERC also presented at the NJEPA Conference on April 19, 2023.
- Members of NJOEM will be assisting the contractors with preparing tools/references/job aides and documenting the steps needed to prepare and update the ERPs going forward.
  - These tools also include the FEMA Resilience and Planning Tool (RAPT), which will be presented at the next SERC meeting. A demonstration was given at the NJ Emergency Management County Coordinators meeting on April 5, 2023.
- It is important to remain vigilant, given the recent events in East Palestine, OH, as well as the chemical barrels found at an abandoned site in Howell.

There were no initial questions from the other SERC members after the completion of the co-chair reports.

**Old Business:**

1. Report from Planning Working Group (PWG) - Lieutenant Christopher Boyle, Emergency Response Bureau (*See Notes*)

2. Report from Training Working Group (TWG) – Lieutenant Daniel Cunning, Training and Exercise Unit Head, NJOEM (*See Notes*)
3. Litigation Update – no current update.

**Closed Session:**

No Closed Session Required

**Return to Open Session:**

N/A

**New Business:**

- Major DeMaise: Tasking for the Planning Working Group (to report back at the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting)
  - Continue to help prepare counties for designation as emergency planning districts and oversee the contractors.
  - Continue to work with DEP and DOH on CRTK database functionality.
  - Develop FAQs and other job tools for the LEPCs to assist with plans and planning.
  - Provide technical assistance and tracking of review of ERPs (NJOEM-ERB).
  - Assist and provide guidance to any existing or new planning districts for compliance purposes.
  - The Planning and Training Working Groups will report back during the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, continue to develop guidelines and tools, plan and execute three (3) exercises in 2023, and continue to develop EPCRA training for emergency managers, continue to coordinate with regional exercises with US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Director Van Fossen – Tasking for the Training Working Group (to report back at the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting)
  - Develop exercise guidance/tools and deploy grant funding to facilitate exercise planning.
  - Deliver 3 exercises during 2023.
  - Continue to deliver training to emergency managers that satisfies the EPCRA requirements.
  - Coordinate with US EPA to develop a regional exercise for 2024.

None of the SERC members had any additional comments/questions for new business.

**Items Scheduled for Voting and Vote:**

Major DeMaise discussed the approval process for the county-based emergency planning districts which has been done in collaboration with county and local stakeholders. He noted that

a separate vote would be held for each of the eight (8) counties ready to be designated as county-based districts:

- Atlantic
- Camden
- Cumberland
- Hunterdon
- Mercer
- Monmouth
- Ocean
- Salem

An opportunity for open discussion and debate was provided to the SERC members; no further questions or comments were made. Accordingly, the SERC proceeded with the voting.

- ATLANTIC
  - Motion - Bob Van Fossen, NJDEP
  - Seconded – Christina Brandt-Young, NJOAG
  - None Opposed
  - Motion Carried Unanimously
- CAMDEN
  - Motion – Jim Bruncati, BPU
  - Seconded – Bruce Tynan, NJDCA
  - None Opposed
  - Motion Carried Unanimously
- CUMBERLAND
  - Motion - Bruce Tynan, NJDCA
  - Seconded – Christina Brandt-Young, NJOAG
  - None Opposed
  - Motion Carried Unanimously
- HUNTERDON
  - Motion – Karen Fox, NJDOH
  - Seconded – Christina Brandt-Young, NJOAG
  - None Opposed
  - Motion Carried Unanimously
- MERCER
  - Motion - Karen Fox, NJDOH
  - Seconded – Christina Brandt-Young, NJOAG
  - None Opposed

- Motion Carried Unanimously
- MONMOUTH
  - Motion – Jim Bruncati, BPU
  - Seconded – Christina Brandt-Young, NJOAG
  - None Opposed
  - Motion Carried Unanimously
- OCEAN
  - Motion – Charles Ambio, NJOHSP
  - Seconded – Christina Brandt-Young, NJOAG
  - None Opposed
  - Motion Carried Unanimously
- SALEM
  - Motion - Christina Brandt-Young, NJOAG
  - Seconded – Colonel Yvonne Gates, NJDMVA
  - None Opposed
  - Motion Carried Unanimously

**Public Comment:**

None

**Next Meeting:**

The SERC meeting is scheduled Friday, October 27, 2023, 10 AM EST, at New Jersey Forensic Technology Center, 1200 Negron Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08691.

**Adjournment:**

- Bob Van Fossen requested motion for Adjournment
  - Motion – Christina Brandt-Young, NJOAG
  - Seconded – Colonel Yvonne Gates, NJDMVA
  - None Opposed
  - Motion Carried Unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 AM EDT.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sean Kielty  
Acting Recording Secretary