

***128 Central Corridor Emergency Planning Forum  
Meeting Notes  
April 6th, 2017***

**Summary:**

A meeting was convened on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 by the **128 Corporate Alliance** with the support of the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Emergency Planning Unit (MassDOT). The objective was to assemble state and local emergency responders in a room with the corporate community and engage in a conversation regarding area incident management both on and off the highway. Emergency responders in Waltham, Lincoln, Lexington, and Weston attended.

The participants agreed that the business community and the local responders, with support from the Commonwealth, should work together to develop contingency plans for emergency response. These plans should build on existing communication protocols and other successful programs like the Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC). The participants proposed four next steps: (1) compile an inventory of communications resources currently available; (2) pursue further engagement with the Local Emergency Planning Council (LEPC); (3) develop an incident communication chain and employer coordinated response team; and (4) develop internal employer response teams.

**Background:**

The meeting was held at Raytheon Global Headquarters, 870 Winter St, Waltham, Massachusetts. Greg Ferrick, Director of Operations at Raytheon welcomed the 55 attendees present. Those present included community leaders and emergency responders, area employers, and representatives of the real estate development and management companies along the corridor.

Jack Troast provided some background regarding the **128 Corporate Alliance** whose mission is focused on improving the quality of the workplace along the Central 128 Corridor (Route 2 south to the Mass Pike). This mission has been pursued since the formation of the group 9 years ago by promoting dialogue between public and private stakeholder interests in the area. The Alliance has been an advocate on behalf of local area employers for improved infrastructure along the corridor working with MassDOT, utility providers, and other state and local interests. Jack proposed that the goal of the morning's meeting would be:

*Goal- To build a set of next step actions taken by state and local responders together with the business community.*

**Presentations:**

The program included background presentations by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Emergency Planning Unit (MassDOT), and the 128 Corporate Alliance.

*Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency-* Mike Main, Director of Region 1 of the (MEMA) provided some background concerning the mission and role of MEMA. Highlights included:

1. Region 1, staffed by 5 people, is based in Tewksbury and represents 93 communities including all of those along the 128 Central Corridor. Region 1 colleagues Heather Tecce and Kevin Prior joined Mike at the meeting. The office is responsible for Information management and resource coordination during an emergency incident that could be the result of a natural or technological hazard.
2. MEMA also coordinates grant management, preparedness planning and can assist communities in developing contingency plans. They conduct training, render damage assessment and provide resource support.
3. The Agency maintains equipment including Mobile Emergency operation centers, satellite communication units and mobile field trailers.

*MassDOT-* Jack Troast shared some slides prepared by MassDOT and based on his visit to the Operations Center in South Boston. Highlights included:

1. Jack provided a brief description of the operations center in South Boston which enables MassDOT to monitor all major highways through cameras.
2. MassDOT coordinates regular planning communications with state level organizations including the MA State Police, the Fire Chiefs Association of MA, the MA DEP, the Federal Highway Administration, and MA Chiefs of Police Association, among others. This statewide group has also compiled a Unified Response Manual that is a key part of the local training.
3. MassDOT also conducts local emergency responder training programs for incident management and assists in developing roadway diversion and other contingency plans.
4. The group then reviewed a MassDOT incident that occurred on Friday May 19, 2006, resulting in the closure of the Mass Pike in the proximity of exit 11A. A stretch of 22 miles of the road was closed for 10 hours. The traffic was diverted off the Turnpike onto local roads. The emergency gates were opened to divert traffic onto local roads in communities along the impacted 22-mile stretch.

*128 Central Corridor- Areas of Regional Concern-* The conversation then considered several regional areas of concern including:

1. Waltham/ Lincoln at Winter Street and Old County Road along the Cambridge Reservoir;
2. Weston/ Waltham at Exit 26 and along Route 117;
3. Waltham/ Lexington at Route 2.

A recent MAPC study determined that Route 128/ Interstate 95 is operating at 130% capacity along the central 128 corridor. With 130,000 employees working in the area and over 130,000 residents, Jack suggested that the Alliance mission on behalf of area employers includes as a priority: commuting to and from work safely and working in an environment that is safe, secure and productive.

Prior to this event the Corporate Alliance members held several planning meetings and raised a number of priorities including:

1. Coordination of traffic communications regarding highway incident management-
  - a. An ideal mechanism to support notification to employers to coordinate with their workforce;
  - b. The employer community wants to work with emergency responders in collaborative way.
2. Local coordination “off highway”-
  - a. Understanding plans for managing road closures/roadway diversions;
  - b. Ideas for sheltering in place/ creating staging areas;
  - c. Identifying secondary evacuation routes.

### **Discussion:**

Following the presentations, a lively dialogue then ensued as local emergency responders provided insights into their communication methods and priorities during an emergency incident. Key points noted:

1. Winter Street- some concerns were raised about the one-way egress from Waltham to Lincoln in the event of an emergency. Lincoln Police Chief Kennedy indicated that emergency vehicles can come east bound and local police can take measures to reroute traffic.
2. Lincoln and Waltham emergency responders coordinate response through their shift commanders and all police and fire officers would be in contact to coordinate as needed. In addition to responding with emergency vehicles, officers would also be tactically talking about appropriate actions in specific emergency situations.

3. One of the roles of MEMA is to be a coordinator of communication acting as a “central office.” They can coordinate information regarding a particular incident. The question was then asked: How does the critical information get pushed out to target audiences?
4. MEMA has developed situational awareness statements through email chains to areas effected, using an “app” called Mass Alerts that push info into a particular geocoded area warning of related incidents.
5. It was noted that Code Red is a communication resource utilized in Waltham. The City has implemented the CodeRED system to act as a high-speed emergency notification service. According to the on- line description CodeRED provides the City with “a reliable, easy-to-use interface to quickly disseminate critical information to our citizens during emergencies.” The city currently uses alert notices to advise registrants/ subscribers of snow emergencies, parking bans, and missing persons, among other notices. The alerts are generated via telephone calls, text messages, emails and social media posts to inform residents and other interested parties.
6. Lincoln has a similar program called Blackboard Connect. The platform is supported by the Lincoln Police and Fire Departments and interested parties can register with the Blackboard Connect Database through an on-line link.
7. Local employers have suggested a willingness to shelter-in-place but raised concerns about the interoperability of communications. Constant Contact representatives indicated that it may be best in case of certain emergencies to advise employees to remain in their location-1601 Trapelo Road- rather than disperse over 1,000 employees out onto the road.
8. According to Mike Main, Emergency Alert Systems (EAS) are built into newer technology systems. The EAS is a national public warning system coordinated by the FCC that “requires broadcasters, cable television systems, wireless cable systems, satellite digital audio radio service (SDARS) providers, and direct broadcast satellite (DBS) providers” to offer communications capability to address the public.
9. John Teller of Boston Properties noted that they have over 1,000 resident employees within their properties along the corridor. BPX has a 24 hour emergency hot-line.
10. Social Media is another medium of communication. The Waltham Police twitter account has been an effective tool to get information out and to offer proactive communications. The City of Waltham has a social media team.
11. The topic of coordinating a “delayed release” of employees to avoid traffic entering into an already overburdened traffic problem was also discussed. The notion of establishing a contact chain within the employer community was reviewed as means to manage a limited list of contact people.
12. It is important to note that the “incident command” with respect to any emergency will have two (2) components: the response team and the traffic and evacuation effort.

13. A few employers suggested that companies should have an internal emergency action plan on how to deal with potential situations.
14. Several participants asked if there was a means to consolidate the communication? They feel an obligation to get the information but need to know where to best obtain it. It was suggested that they need a single source, but also raised concerns that a single source may not provide all of the information that is desired.
15. MEMA operates a 24 hour operations command center – if they can receive official information from the city of Waltham, MEMA has the ability to push information out to constituents and employer representatives in an official position.
16. MEMA does have a private sector distribution list that it utilizes for major events like tornado warnings, extreme flooding, etc, but it is not targeted for reporting traffic incidents. Perhaps their “situation awareness updates” could be broadened to include other incidents.
17. The Local Emergency Planning Council and its LEPC coordinators provide additional resources. In particular, with regard to building and engineering. Fire Deputy Jim Perry suggested that having access to employer paperwork, “as built plans”, and an emergency/ secure box within the facility are all considerations. The employer floor plan can be loaded into the City’s software. This would include the basic knowledge of the building, location of utility shut offs, location of Tier II hazardous materials, and finally what needs to be accessed quickly to mitigate a situation. Deputy Perry also encouraged the need to pre- plan for incidents. The process is best built around a building tour.
18. Waltham Mayor McCarthy shared an incident involving a water main break that occurred over a weekend. The most difficult challenge was identifying the underground locations of the utilities. Hence, the critical benefit of having these plans on file with the City.
19. The LEPC also conducts regular “table top drills” to assist local employers in developing internal response teams. The contact is Emergency Management Director, Bernie Mullin for companies that seek to work together to develop an emergency plan.

### Next Steps:

A wrap-up and summary of the discussion proposed four (4) next steps:

1. **Compile an inventory of communications resources currently available.** This would include a directory of existing communications tools available as well as the current network resources.
2. **Further engagement with the Local Emergency Planning Council (LEPC).** This local planning committee coordinated by emergency responders in Waltham is a current resource. The “table top conversations” are a regular tool to encourage conversation between responders and employers. The current table top schedule will be distributed. Those expressing interest in an on-

going sub- committee role include: Lisa Quinn at Thermo Fisher, Tom Staab at AstraZeneca, Meredith McCarthy at Carbon Black and Greg Ferrick at Raytheon

3. **Develop an incident communication chain and employer coordinated response.** While there are concerns about managing communication inquiries and balancing the needs of the incident command, it was agreed that a set of protocols could be developed. Those expressing interest in an on-going sub- committee role regarding coordinating communications: Gretchen Barron, Mass Medical, Mary Mills Raytheon, Paul Martin at Constant Contact, and John Teller at BP. This group will also include the social media team in Waltham.
4. **Develop internal employer response teams.** The goal is to plan for an emergency with a system of protocols including communications, emergency routes from the office, shelter- in- place requirements, etc. The emergency responders can assist with a “walk through” specific locations to know the key areas, emergency plans etc.

### **Acknowledgements:**

Thank-you to the emergency responders and community representatives that participated including the City of Waltham, the Waltham Police Department, the Waltham Fire Department, the Lincoln Police Department, the Lincoln Fire Department, and the Weston Town Administrator.

We would also like to thank area employers in attendance including the Massachusetts Medical Society, Fresenius Medical Care, Raytheon, ACI Worldwide, National Grid, Thermo Fisher, Astra Zeneca, Winter Wyman, Constant Contact, Wolters Kluwer Health, Bentley University, People Fluent, Dassault Systemes, MIT Lincoln Lab, Cimpres/ Vistaprint, MEDITECH, Clarks North America, Patient Keeper, Carbon Black, and Brandeis University.

Thank- you to members of the local landlord and development community including Boston Properties, Hobbs Brook Management, Marcus Partners, and King Street Partners.

Finally, thank-you to the 128 Corporate Alliance Member companies that helped plan and support this program and in particular, Raytheon for hosting the event. Special thanks to Mary Mills, Operations Manager at Raytheon, who coordinated the planning activities for the event. Also thanks to Erica Laurenzi, Corporate Event Logistics at Raytheon, who shared her notes of the meeting.

*Disclaimer: The minutes above reflect the author’s understanding of the meeting. All attendees are encouraged to share any corrections and/or additions to these minutes as required.*

Respectfully Submitted,



John G. Troast Jr.  
Executive Director  
128 Corporate Alliance