

**OFFICER'S MEETING**  
**Thursday, May 3, 2018**  
**Station 61 – Blaine**

Attendees: Chiefs Noonchester and Hollander; Captains Ahrenholz, Davidson, and Schmidt; Lieutenants Biery, Esser, Hofstad, Nelson, Nielsen, Paige, Riehl, LSmith, Van der Veen and Zylstra.

**PROMOTIONS**

Congratulations to Captain Ahrenholz and Lieutenant Hofstad on their recent promotions.

**SAFETY**

**Exposure Precautions**

The group discussed a couple of near exposures including an incident where no gloves were worn and a severe bleed that sprayed blood on an EMT. Chief Noonchester reiterated the importance of always wearing proper personal protective equipment to avoid being infected.

Members pointed out that the current goggles issued by the district are scratched and not good quality. It was requested that quality goggles with cases be dispersed.

It was also noted that if additional information was dispatched to crews on the way to the call, extra precautions could be taken if needed.

The group discussed the exposure process chain of command:

- Supervising officer
- Health and Wellness Coordinator
- Battalion Chief

Members are to use Care Medical (*during business hours*) for exposures, otherwise you will be directed to the emergency room.

**Ballistic Gear**

Cpt. Davidson suggested forming a committee to discuss the pros and cons of forming a tactical team and utilizing ballistic gear district wide. To this date, the district has participated in very limited training.

Chief Noonchester noted that Management and Labor are currently discussing pros and cons as well as concerns. Currently both parties expressed an interest in being part of a district committee to develop a policy and research gear. Other departments who already have a program in place may be contacted. The district is committed to developing a safe and effective program that best fits the department and its members.

Lt LSmith commented that her previous ballistic training with City of Blaine law enforcement specified that firefighter EMTs would not be expected to enter the hot zone during an active

shooting, but would be held back, out of harm's way in a triage area. Once the area was cleared law enforcement would be able to retrieve any viable patients. In contrast, training with Bellingham Fire Department had firefighters entering a hot zone surrounded by law enforcement.

Some members think purchasing ballistic gear may be a waste of district funds. Lt LSmith went on to say that the district has other training priorities such as purchasing a second set of bunker gear or water rescue equipment.

The NFPA recently published their recommendations for review on "Standard for an Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response" (NFPA 3000).

Chief Noonchester reiterated that the district will continue to work with Labor to explore a ballistic gear program.

## LOGISTICS

### **Semiahmoo Station 62**

Updates to Semiahmoo Station 62 include carpet cleaning, replacing recliners, installing a new stove and adding a paging radio system. It is anticipated that volunteers will staff the station in the near future.

### **Mobile Data Computers (MDCs)**

The three first out engines are expected to be equipped with new MDCs by the end of the week. In the next couple of weeks L63, A13 and A6302 will be equipped with Sierra (antenna, mount and gateway). L63 will also be equipped with a tablet.

### **Image Trend Software – Electronic Patient Care Reporting (EPCR) Program**

The entire county will be replacing their data collection software and utilizing Image Trend for EPCR and pre fire planning. It is expected that Image Trend will streamline inventory, scheduling in the near future. Once Image Trend is functioning, FireHouse will be archived and available for public records requests and district use when needed. There are no additional updates at this time.

A tablet will be utilized for patient reporting in the field. The information gathered can be shared with medics as well as the hospital and passed between the engine and aid unit. The tablet can be utilized without the internet and will sync when available. Past history about a patient may also be accessible in the future.

It was reported that medics are already utilizing the tablets.

### **Ambulance Committee**

An ambulance committee (CShipp, Sward, JVein, WSanders and KJorgensen) will be reviewing a demo unit on Monday, May 14. Following the review, they will make a recommendation to Chief Pernet. Any suggestions regarding a new ambulance can be made to any of the committee members. A window on the passenger side has already been requested. If a demo unit is purchased it could be delivered by the end of the year. The district is contemplating remounts to the existing aid boxes in the future.

Chief Noonchester noted that a district apparatus replacement plan is in place and part of the current strategic plan.

### **Peer Support Group**

Our new County EMS director Mike Hilley, is interested in starting a county wide Peer Support Group. If anyone is interested in participating please contact him directly. An email with his contact information was sent out on Wednesday, May 2.

## **OPERATIONS**

### **Crewsense and BIAS Payroll**

The district continues to transition to a new accounting software which will also work with Crewsense. It is anticipated that the change will make timesheets more accurate. Crewsense will take over as the district's main scheduler and will ultimately be utilized for managing sick time, vacation, overtime callbacks and payroll. The captains and the district are currently testing the overtime module with the hopes of going live June 1. Cpt Davidson provided information on how each member can choose how and when to be notified for overtime through Crewsense (phone call, text, email). Members can also choose not to be notified if they are out of the area or on vacation.

Crewsense will notify members based on who is on a 24 hour shift, 48 hour shift, sandwich day and even by position. Captains can set parameters on when Crewsense will begin notifying for overtime (0900) and how often Crewsense will wait between each member notification (5 min.). The position will remain open until a submit button is activated accepting the overtime.

The Captains will continue to manage the long and short overtime list as far as moving members as they accept overtimes. In addition, Captains will need to make notes in Crewsense alerting the overtime member which station to report to and at what time. Concern was expressed regarding how members could check where they are on the overtime list.

A Crewsense app is available for phones even if the internet is not available. Officers were asked to pass the information on to their crews.

It was also noted any structure fire call backs utilize Alert Sense which is requested through Prospect.

### **Fire Ground Operations V-Fire 3**

Switching to V Fire-3 on the fire grounds continues to work well. It was also noted that units a long way from the scene may miss crucial information if it is not repeated by dispatch.

### **Station Orders and Fire Blocks**

Most of the fire block issues have been resolved with the exception of a dead zone on H St. that will need to be addressed. The chiefs will review.

Ferndale Station 42 is being utilized on aid and fire calls for mutual aid.

## **Hose Testing 2018**

Lt Esser reviewed lessons learned that will be utilized during the upcoming 2018 hose testing:

- Hose, appliances, ladders and pump testing will be tested separately (*too labor intensive*)
- Testing will occur during the summer months
- A cart with tools and inventory list will be available at each station (*future*)
- Specific station and crews will be assigned particular volunteer apparatus
- To eliminate redundancy, one crew will be in charge of one apparatus
- Record keeping will continue to be done on an excel spreadsheet
- The hope is to limit training requirements during hose testing

Any comments or suggestions can be forwarded to Lt Esser.

Kudos to FF Comp for developing the spreadsheet and inputting the information into Firehouse.

## **Firefighter Openings**

The district is in the process of establishing a firefighter hiring list. The announcement has been posted on the district's website, social media site and in the Bellingham Herald. The written exam and CPAT will be conducted by Public Safety Testing. Interviews will be conducted sometime in June. It is unsure how many firefighters will ultimately be hired however, the district has three placeholders for the North Bend Academy in August.

## **Probationary Firefighters**

The probationary firefighters will complete their probationary year in August. Chief Noonchester thanked those company officers who worked with the new firefighters. Crew scheduling adjustments can be expected in the near future.

## **Response Plan Update**

As a result of the March 1 exercise regarding which apparatus is to be taken to specific calls, Chief Noonchester has completed a draft response plan which will be presented during the next meeting.

## **Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) – SCBA Regional**

The regional grant submitted by South Whatcom Fire Authority, NWFR, Bellingham Fire Department, District 7 and District 8 has been rejected. The district is attempting to contact AFG for information on why the grant was turned down. Regardless, the district will be moving forward with purchasing new self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs).

A committee possibly including other agencies are expected to make recommendations regarding the type and style of SCBA. Any joint purchase will aid in cross department operability and better buying power.

## **Captain Ward Returns**

Cpt Ward will return to his regular duties beginning May 6. Welcome Back!

## NEW TOOLS IN TOOL BOX

### **Rope Rescue Program**

Cpt Jorgensen will be providing adverse terrain rope training. Cpt Davidson continues to work on a rope policy and procedure.

## TRAINING

### **Officer Development – Engine Company Inspection Program (ECIP) / Customer Service**

Due to his recent station relocation, Lt Nelson is once again in charge of ECIPs. Lt Nelson provided information regarding organizing the ECIP files at Odell Station 61:

- Addresses have been split between crews
- Blocks will be rotated on a yearly basis
- Identify high life hazard with red file folders
- Identify schools with orange file folders
- Use green file folders for others
- Use bookmarks to identify year inspection due

Lt Nelson provided information regarding scheduling ECIPs:

- List inspection information and initial under note section on Crewsense
  - The on duty captain can ensure inspection takes place even if regular Lt is absent
- Businesses are not required to complete an ECIP (*Chief Hollander will review code and district liability*)

Lt Nelson provided information regarding completing inspections:

- Use common verbiage
- Be detailed and specific in case you are not the one performing the re-inspection (*usually performed by same crew*)
- Schedule re-inspections in a timely manner (*liability*)
- When performing any re-inspection only check the violation unless obvious life safety issue
- Book two inspections per week until hose testing commences
- Provide business information printout to allow for updates including email addresses (*current form may need to be updated*)
- Take photos of flagrant violations (*liability*)

Lt Nelson continues to work through the errors in Tegriss (*inspection notification*). It is vital that inspection information is uploaded into Firehouse in a timely manner since the information is provided to the fire commissioners monthly.

Lt Nelson discussed the importance of providing good customer service. Typically the district tries to accommodate special requests.

Currently there is no ECIP policy or procedure. Lt Nelson will assist in with the development of and ECIP policy.

### **Pre-Fire Planning**

Chief Noonchester noted that pre-fire planning can be performed concurrently with ECIPs. It is important to note the number of employees, where employees are located, hazardous materials locations and water supplies.

Cpt Ward and Lt Paige are gathering data for a district wide pre-fire planning program.

### **Firefighter II Academy**

The FFII Academy has been cancelled due to lack of interest.

### **Insurance Training**

Cpt Jorgensen thanked all crews for attending the recent insurance trainings. Feedback regarding the training was not positive. Workplace Behavior Training will occur this month with a similar schedule.

### **Volunteer Interest Forms**

Thirty one volunteer interest forms have been received. The training division will begin the recruitment process for the August/September Academy.

### **CPR Program**

The district will continue with the free monthly CPR classes however, the district will be switching from the Red Cross Heartsaver Program to the American Safety Health Institute (ASHI) Program. Classes are currently booked through August.

### **Training Ground Usage**

Please remember that any training ground usage requests must go through Kris Parks as she tracks usage, availability and fees if applicable.

### **First and Fourth Quarter Training**

The Training Division requested that all first and fourth quarter training sheets be turned in as soon as possible.

### **Station 12 Officers**

Please ensure the training grounds are secure at night and on the weekends. Cpt Jorgensen will work with Chief Hollander to ensure the training tower can be secured.

In addition, all officers should be securing their stations in the evening.

### **ROUND THE TABLE**

Chief Noonchester provided information regarding a recent AED save he was involved with. The gentlemen (47) survived and has vowed to change his life.

A Shift – Nothing to report

B Shift – Cpt Davidson noted that with air management on the horizon, he will look into updating / repairing the props at Birch Bay Station 63.

C Shift – Nothing to report

D Shift – With Cpt Ward returning to his regular duties, Lt Paige will be returning to Britton Loop Station 12. Chief Noonchester thanked Lt Paige for stepping up during Cpt Ward's absence.

The group requested information regarding how training requests were approved / denied. It was reported that some members have been denied training requests without much of an explanation. Denials or approvals have not been consistent and follow no set parameter. It was suggested that guidelines need to be developed with clear parameters. Members, especially new firefighters who crave additional training are becoming discouraged which in turn affects morale. Chief Noonchester recommended that those members who have been denied reach out to Cpt Jorgensen for further explanation.

Lt Hofstad suggested submitting training documents well ahead of time so it can be integrated into the upcoming budget process.

Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) Program continues to move forward. Reimbursement for two quarters in 2017 are expected later this year. Money received will be deposited into the general fund. There was a question regarding if the funds will be a stable funding source and if monies could be allocated to specific departments. This government program is not considered a stable funding source since it can be stopped at any time and it will be up to the Fire Chief and the Commissioners as to where the money is allocated.

All dress uniform white gloves need to be turned into FF Ross.

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 7