Governor's Office of Homeland Security And Emergency Preparedness
State of Louisiana

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First Responder Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 11th, 2025 at 10:00 AM

GOHSEP Overwatch

7667 Independence Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA

ATTENDEES

The following First Responder Subcommittee members or their designees and others were present: Louisiana Sheriffs Association- Sheriff Steven McCain, Louisiana State Police- Col. Robert Hodges, GOHSEP- Brig. Gen. Jason Mahfouz, Fire Marshall-Rusty Edwards, Lt. Jonathan Kemp, Kevin Cobb, Chuck Hurst, and GOHSEP Staff.

WELCOME

Mr. Steven McCain called the meeting to order. After a roll call it was determined a quorum of the statutory members of the subcommittee was present.
Mr. McCain welcomed everyone.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Steven McCain made a motion to approve the minutes for June 13, 2024. There was no opposition. Hodges motioned, Edwards seconded. The June 2024 minutes were approved.

LOUISIANA STATE POLICE/GOHSEP UPDATES

LA-SAFE – Lt. Jonathan Kemp discusses four threats facing Louisiana

1. Critical infrastructure
    a. Louisiana's biggest concern is Chinese corporate espionage. The perpetrators gain access to infrastructure networks by knocking out fiber optic cables. An example is the March 2004 incident that disrupted service in New Orleans believed to be conducted by the Chinese government.
2. School Safety
    a. In partnership with GOHSEP, there were over 327 school related threats last year. Threats reported have increased in the last year.
    b. The biggest issue is in reporting. Local law enforcement is not mandated to report to threats to LA-SAFE even though schools are mandated to report to local law enforcement. Therefore, reported data does not accurately reflect all school safety issues in Louisiana.
    c. Suggestions noted are to address the issue in future legislation, put a one-pager out to Louisiana Sheriff's Association or to speak at local conferences in order to increase reporting.
3. Drones
    a. Only the federal government can electronically mitigate drones. Anticipating future federal authorization to do so, Louisiana HB 261/Act 170 would allow Louisiana State Police to mitigate drones. The bill also addresses the prohibition of drones being flown over parade routes (14.337.1).
    b. During Super Bowl LIX and Mardi Gras there were over 400 drones detected during the Temporary Flight Restriction in New Orleans. 59% were successfully mitigated during Super Bowl LIX and 64% during Mardi Gras.
    c. LSP has obtained four counter UAS systems: UAS Sentry. Dedrone, AirSight and AirGuard.
4. Domestic and International Terrorism
    a. Following the January 1st attack, there has been a push for more proactive research. LA-SAFE has bought software to search for social media threats and several analyst have received dark web training.
    b. LA-SAFE is monitoring the forthcoming June 14th National Day of Protest in LA

GOHSEP Critical Infrastructure – Noel Bellas discusses Louisiana's Relative Risk Profile

- The state risk profile is usually received in February and finalized in March; however, the 2025 profile has not been released yet. It affects State Homeland Security Program grant funding.
- The profile is derived from threat, vulnerability and consequence. And these items might affect Louisiana's 2025 profile positively:
    o January 1st attack

- The increase in special events submitted to DHS last year and their corresponding Special Event Assessment Ratings.
  - During the next data call beginning August 1st, GOHSEP will focus on quality over quantity with special attention to daily attendance numbers, which as noted by attendees is a difficult number to calculate.
- A critical infrastructure entity added to the national critical infrastructure list.
  - Usually, the National Critical Infrastructure Protection Plan data call opens in May for submissions, but has not been announced yet this year.

GOHSEP Cyber – Stephen Durrell discusses two grants and cyber threats

- There are two main grants GOHSEP Cyber utilizes:
  - State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP)- $550,000 to fund the salaries of the first incident response team
  - State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP) used to fund endpoint detection software.
    - SHSP will fund $3.2 million for the endpoint detection software next year
    - The Cybersecurity Assurance Subcommittee has not met this year to determine how SLCGP FY 23 and FY24 (total $14 million) will be spent. FY 25 ($2 million) will be the last year of the infrastructure grant. GOHSEP is still waiting on FEMA on how to proceed with grants.
- Cyber Threat Analytics Center (Security Operations Center) is being established to gather and analyze intel to protect state agencies from cyber attacks.
- Intel Brief given by Robert Dyess
  - Top nation-state actors and trends discussed.
  - Security tips suggested: utilizing multi-factor authentication, keeping systems updated and patched, training users on phishing emails, installing end point detection software, and segregating the network and implementing least privileged user accounts.
  - Dyess discusses new services offered through the Security Operations Center

GOHSEP Louisiana Center for Safe Schools – Jackie Manton

- Manton discusses LCSS restructure in early 2025 with attention made to regional coordinators across the state and to a new behavioral health manager.
- Systems offered to Louisiana schools:
  - Rave Panic Button offered for free to all Louisiana schools. A data call has gone out to Louisiana schools to ask what system each is using for panic button. Around 500 schools have responded so far.

- o Crime Stoppers contract has been extended as an anonymous reporting system for schools. It is currently in over 700 schools statewide.
  - o Go Safe LA is working concurrently with Crime Stoppers to implement anonymous reporting for K-5 schools.
  - o SDMI has helped create COP (Common Operating Picture) to track what schools have SROs and map bleed kit locations.
  - o The LCSS Grant Portal assists with all information related to the Louisiana School and Nonprofit Security Grant Program. The goal is to make sure every school has had an opportunity to receive grant money.
- Louisiana School and Nonprofit Security Grant Program Updates
  - o FY 24: 126 grants were awarded; current payout is $4.3 million with $700,000 remaining to be expended.
  - o FY 25: schools were issued over $5 million with a deadline of December to spend the funds; $1.3 million in reimbursements have been collected so far.
  - o FY 26: another $5 million is coming out at the end of June; there have been 242 application so far, including 190 new applicants.
- Goals going forward
  - o LCSS is working with SDMI and Pointe Coupee to apply for a COP grant to start a pilot program to map every school in each parish, tie in the local law enforcement and office of emergency preparedness, and create emergency operation plans.
  - o Continue to look at areas that there is a lot of schools and personnel in order to provide appropriate support.
  - o Assisting in whatever way LCSS can in regard to SRO training and funding in schools.

GOHSEP 2025 Preparedness Grant Programs – Shera Adams

- Adams discusses the latest restructuring with attention made to the implementation of regional personnel to better assist local OHSEPs
- Grants GOHSEP manages:
  - o Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) –
    - funds OHSEPs salaries, office expenses and keeps the local Emergency Operations Centers operating
    - Has been decreasing the last few years
  - o State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) –
    - is an anti-Terrorism nexus grant and helps with the THIRA and state preparedness report
    - has decreased slightly the last few years.
  - o Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) –
    - similar to SHSP but for urban areas within states. New Orleans is the only area which has been awarded in recent years.
    - Has decreased slightly between FY23 and FY24
  - o Operation Stonegarden –
    - a competitive grant awarded directly to sheriff's offices

- increased in FY 23 then slightly decreased in FY24
  - o Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NPSG) –
    - awarded to nonprofits for physical security enhancements to mitigate potential terrorist attacks
    - funding has increased due to more applicants being awarded
  - o Emergency Operations Center Grant Program –
    - helps fund emergency operations centers; entities must go through their state representatives for letters of support.
    - Funding is based on who has been awarded
- Recommendations were made on what to focus SHSP funding on for FY 25 and noted a 15% decrease in grant funding across the board is expected.

OPEN DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE MEETING

- Due to the delay in grant funding being released, the First Responders Subcommittee cannot vote on how to allocate funds yet.
- The subcommittee cannot schedule the next meeting due to the uncertainty of when funding will become available.
- Next meeting will be announced by GOHSEP post funding availability.

A motion to adjourn was made by Steven McCain and was confirmed. Meeting adjourned at 11:17 PM