



PREMIER • PROFESSIONAL • PROACTIVE

July 10, 2017

IMT TAC Conference Report

The IMT TAC did not meet since last conference. There were several attempts made over the last year to get the IMT TAC and the State All Hazards IMT Type III Team back on track, but this was to no avail. There was a conference call held on September 1, 2016 with Andrew Elder from the Ohio EMA, Andrew Powers Ohio IMT TAC co-chair and myself to find out the status of the TAC and the plans of the Ohio EMA to move forward. In that conference call Andrew Elder stated that the department was evaluating all TACs and he would have a better idea of what the status of the TAC would be in the next six to eight weeks. I am still awaiting a reply to that conversation.

I had approached Marshal Larry Flowers to consider taking the oversight of the AHIMT Team back and he had convinced the Director of Commerce that it was a valuable asset of the State of Ohio and should be maintained.

On January 31, 2017, a meeting was held at the Ohio EMA to discuss the TAC and the State AHIMT Team, (the team had been rendered unavailable for response since May 2015). In that meeting it was confirmed that a meeting had occurred between the Ohio Department of Public Safety and the Ohio Department of Commerce, in that meeting it was decided that the State AHIMT would stay under the umbrella of the Ohio EMA, although the Department of Commerce and the Division of State Fire Marshal was willing to take it over. In that meeting that was attended by members of the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association, Emergency Management Association of Ohio and Ohio EMA it was discussed about the possibility of creating three State teams. One in the Northern region, one in the Central region and one in the Southern region of the state. There was no commitment to funding, training, staffing, and/or equipment.

I have not heard anything further on this plan, although in talking with previous members of the State Type III AHIMT Team, it was felt that if the state couldn't support one team, how would the State of Ohio be able to support three teams.

The State IMT TAC has not met since November 9, 2015 and it is felt that the efforts that were made for over a decade to protect the residents of Ohio and support the first responders in the state has all but been eliminated. It is disappointing as a lot of qualified and dedicated individuals spent countless hours working to make Ohio ready for a Major Incident or Disaster should they occur.

It was evident to this writer that when no legislative corrections were sought in the latest budget bill that would have resolved any issues raised by the legal counsel for the OHIO EMA in order to give the TAC and Team the ability to function and respond, that this was not a priority or on the radar of the leaders of the Department of Public Safety.

It is therefore, my recommendation that the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association begin to explore other ways to accomplish the tasks needed in a major incident or disaster by an AHIMT Team. Maybe it could become part of the Emergency Response Plan and regional efforts be made to keep Ohio Safe.

Respectfully,



George D. Brown, OFE
Co-Chair Ohio IMT TAC