

	Utah Task Force 1		
	Date: March 19, 2026	Time: 1000-1100	Meeting: E-BOARD
	Location: ECC Policy Room, w/ Teams mtg option		

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

1. **Call to Order** – AC Russell
2. **Public Comment** – AC Russell
3. **Minutes – Approval from December 18, 2025**
 Spelling Chief Burchett's last name
 Nomination for Nate Kay to be TFR. That is not correct; he was just added to the Board as a voting member.
Motion: Chief Burchett
2nd Motion: AC Dern
All in Favor

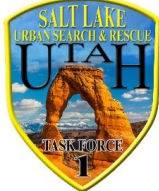
4. **Affiliate Reimbursement: DC Fossum**

DC Fossum: I understand this topic has been brought up with Chief Case in the past. I would like to revisit this topic and confirm the board's thoughts on Affiliate pay after deployment. One of our gaps is that our affiliates are not getting paid out in a timely fashion. The two program managers can speak on how things were handled in the past. As of right now, with the government shut down, there is a gap of around \$188k owed to the affiliates from 2024 Helene and Milton. We have completed the SF270 reimbursement modification form to obtain funding for those deployments. It is difficult to ask doctors, structural engineers, and canine handlers to be ready for upcoming deployments when they have not been paid for past deployments. If we could utilize the UFA to help make the affiliate whole and then reimburse the Unified Fire Authority. FEMA has streamlined the MPP so that, once mobilization takes place, we can submit for a partial payment of up to 75%. Historically, this has also taken some time, and with the new process, that should be done quickly. The new process can be accomplished within the first few weeks of deployment. My goal as the Program Manager is to have the entire package submitted within 60 days, or, if needed, 90 days from deployment. Currently, we are 18-24 months behind for our affiliates' deployment of Helene/Milton, which took place in 2024. So, my question is, could we make the affiliate whole and reimburse the UFA for that support?

Chief Burchett: How is that being relayed to the affiliates? Is it that the Task Force is not paying them, that the UFA is not paying them, or that FEMA is holding the funding?

DC Fossum: They know that the shutdown has delayed payment. I am currently drafting a letter to send to those affected that should address any information gaps they may have at this point. My understanding is that they expect the Task Force to pay them more promptly, but they recognize that the government has been delaying the process.

I currently feel like the current standard is a bad practice; yes, it is solely the Task Force, coupled with the challenges of the Federal Government, with this reimbursement. We still face challenges with the basic drawdowns. I have been told by Shauna, Tua, and Keith that the Affiliates have

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been informed that the government is the holdup on the funds. There has been no communication that includes the UFA as part of the nonpayment.

AC Dern: I tried to reach out to Kuhnly, who seemed to be making noise about the nonpayment. I never heard back from him.

Captain Bevan: In the last conversation, DC Case was supposed to provide you with details for those Affiliates to remedy the situation. It has a looming impact when they don't get paid and are asking additional members to join as Affiliates, even though we can't pay them for their services. Historically, up until Chief Peterson, we always paid the Affiliates and reimbursed the UFA. To lose doctors and structural engineers over this would be difficult.

Chief Burchett: Keith, do they understand this when they sign the MOU? They understand the contract they are entering.

AC Dern: My review of the MOU is that they are informed they will not be paid until the Task Force receives the funds.

Captain Bevan: I know that the MOU needs to be corrected and updated. They have completed the work they were assigned.

Chief Burchett: My point, Keith, is this an isolated situation? I understand that the delay in submitting the package created problems. Is that correct?

DC Fossum: Yes, that is correct.

Chief Burchett: Will this be the problem moving forward if we get the package done on time and correct? If it is done on time and correctly, we won't face this challenge. If I say yes, then as we move forward, we always pay them out.

DC Fossum: This is a reimbursement package. We will correct getting them submitted on time and correct to help with the process. Historically, most strong sponsoring agencies pay the Affiliates and are reimbursed once the package is completed. I know this situation is a storm, with the government shutdowns and changes that have taken place during this deployment. The MOU Contact language needs to be reviewed and revisited. My concern is that we will have issues filling the positions. If we can take care of this deployment and our Affiliates, with the understanding that we will reimburse the UFA, we can work on a plan moving forward to avoid issues like the government shutdown and audit timing of those packages. My intent is for us to complete those packages in a timely manner so we can reimburse the UFA more promptly.

Chief Burchett: I won't speak for what Chief Peterson did when he changed this. I am of the same mindset, though, because this is a cost to the UFA for something the Federal Government should be responsible for with respect to these Affiliates. We pay the funds, and we are not earning interest on the funds sitting in our account until the reimbursement takes place. We lose the opportunity for that interest on the \$188k for who knows how long. I think we could pay them this time and then resume waiting to pay them until the reimbursement takes place. If the

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packages are completed on time, this should not be an issue in the future.

AC Russell: I have a little different view on this. The delay in the funds, due to the Federal Government and to mismanagement at the Task Force level, has created the issue. It is nice of you to say that you will pay these individuals. I don't view it as a Sponsoring Agency problem. If the reimbursement packages are done correctly and on time, plus the government does not shut down, this should not be an issue.

Captain Bevan: There is a new framework in place for the process. If you are falling behind on submitting those documents, the TFR and the Program Manager will be notified of missed deadlines. The Federal Government can de-obligate the funding. Meeting these deadlines is critical.

AC Russell: As the MOU language is discussed, could we clarify that the agreement is that the UFA is not held responsible for any delays in payment for deployments.

DC Fossum: Regardless of the government issues or delays, the UFA employees are made whole upfront. I see these as critical assets of the Task Force. They are employees of the Task Force/UFA; I understand that it doesn't meet the same guidelines. The positions these Affiliates hold are important. If we can make them whole and then reimburse the UFA moving forward as a consideration.

AC Dern: After reviewing the MOU, that is not what it states. It states what they should expect. I understand the delay in this deployment is on us.

Chief Burchett: I would rather pay this out and take care of these members due to our mistake. The package was not completed on time, delaying payment for these members.

AC Dern: I would like to see the process run more smoothly. The government environment, with constant shutdowns threatening every other week, is a problem.

DC Fossum: Government shutdowns have occurred almost every year since 2010. My concern is looking forward to taking care of our obligations. I understand the taxpayer burden. If we lose any of these elements, we can recover. The doctors and structural engineers are in the positions needed.

Shauna Roberts: Just a comment on some of the Affiliates. We now have an MOU with the U of U, which reduces the number of affiliates who may need payment going forward. The U of U will be like the other participating agencies and will pay the member and submit payment to the Task Force when the remaining reimbursement becomes available.

Tony Hill: Can you help me understand where the half-million is in these documents? Before we make a decision, we need to know the final reimbursement numbers. It is a big swing of numbers that are not adding up. The swing from \$361 and \$565 is a concern.

DC Fossum: I have been in contact with the branch. I have gone through the totals, and they do

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not show the \$565k. I have no idea where Lin is getting those numbers. I don't understand what she is calculating. I am working with Branch to better understand what has happened with the partial payments and what remains outstanding. I have no idea where the \$565 came from.

AC Russell: Did we lose \$565?

DC Fossum: Either we have lost it, or it has been shuffled to something else. I cannot currently answer that question. I am working through it.

AC Russell: There are two items we need to decide on from this discussion. Does the UFA pay the \$188,243.00 to the affiliates and wait for the reimbursement? Then does the UFA pay the Affiliates moving forward?

DC Fossum: I have been told by the branch to expect the \$361. They were missing the SF274; it was submitted on our end, then they misplaced it. Now it has been found again. Now that it is fixed, we should be anticipating the \$325 in the next few weeks. Honestly, the \$188 is the priority to get the Affiliates paid out, which should be doable with the funds coming in. If the UFA can wait until we get the remaining reimbursement balance.

We would have been paid the correct amount with the rehab hours if they had had the correct SF270 form. Due to errors that required correction, the funds were delayed. I still don't know where the \$565k.

Tony Hill: What happens if you get the \$361 and don't get the \$428k? Who and where do you go if you do not get those funds?

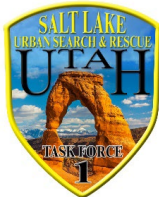
DC Fossum: I am trying to get my eyes around the books and make things look right. I still need you and Kate's assistance to see why things are so off and what has happened with the books. I have walked into things a little bit of a mess. I am working through it to make it right and accurate. This process has been a problem for a while.

Chief Burchett: So let me understand, you owe \$428, and they are expecting to pay out \$361. You are roughly \$66-70k short. At this point, you would pay everyone but the UFA, do I understand that correctly? Then, hope that the UFA will get reimbursed?

DC Fossum: We need to figure this out. We already have the invoices from the participating agencies for the remaining balances. Once I can get my arms around where the additional funds are, then I will come back and have a conversation with the UFA. I am working through balancing the ledgers to determine where the funds are and how things have been handled. Part of that is also finding out where and why Lin is showing the \$565, and FEMA is not.

Chief Burchett: I understand that none of this is your fault. Yours inherently received this problem; we will support you while you figure this out. This needs to be figured out. It is a problem that we could be short \$66-70k. You may never be able to figure this out? Is this an internal number from us?

DC Fossum: Yes this is an internal number that Lin has had. I just don't have the answers from

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FEMA on where it is at. The document is correct, based on what FEMA has given me.

Captain Bevan: FEMA will never let you go short. If you find errors in your books, you may submit them for correction. They will allow you to correct that. I have witnessed this over the last few weeks. She is using response funds to pay Cooperative Agreement obligations. So this number is currently growing as funds are used to pay bills.

DC Fossum: I have spent hours with Lin going over things. I have spent hours with Kate going through the ledgers, trying to understand what has taken place regarding the use of funds to pay for things and the use of response funds to pay bills. The staff has spent hours trying to keep things moving forward and understanding where to help. This is not a fast or quick process.

Tony Hill: So let's make a motion to take the \$361 to pay the Affiliates and the Participating Agencies and wait for reimbursement from the UFA until the funds are finalized. The UFA will take the risk.

Motion to pay as referenced above from Tony Hill.

Motion: Tony Hill

2nd Motion: Chief Burchett

All in Favor

Tony Hill: After we get through this, we can discuss how we handle the Affiliates in the future.

Chief Burchett: We can't add more of a mess on top of a mess. Let's view this in a month or two and see where things land with the finances.

Training Report: Captain Bevan

AC Russell: Moving Forward Training Report from Captain Bevan.

Captain Bevan: After our last meeting, we have held our annual Member Readiness Event. Our numbers went well this year. We had only around 20 members who were unable to attend for various reasons, or for no reason. Hosting this naturally brings up our deployable members' meeting requirements, along with their fit tests and records.

We have opened sign-ups for the prerequisites for SCS (Structural Collapse Specialist) training, which is scheduled for 2027. We can use SUSAR funds to support these courses, including Ropes, Confined Space, Trench, and Extrication. These courses will support members' participation and qualifications to attend SCS.

During our annual MRE, we spent some time discussing training in general and how members can use the EMOS app to sign up for training. Along with encouraging each member to participate in at least 8 hours of annual training, like we did last year. We have a focus on discipline training, along with training that will cover logistics for each section to come and become familiar with their available cache. We are one of the 28 Federal Teams. Utah has some

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of the lowest recorded required training hours. We only require 8 hours, whereas some other teams require a minimum of 24 hours. We hope to build that up over time.

Captain Bevan: Unless there are any questions, that is all I have currently.

Logistics:

AC Russell: Captain Tho will deliver the Logistics Report. Just a preface: we will have a standing Purchase Order section on the agenda for this group to review and approve. Unless there is an emergency, the purchase will be approved at this meeting rather than via email.

Captain Tho: First PO26-001 is for a logistics support vehicle. The funds are acquired from the sale of other items, in accordance with PD-28-003. This is through a state vendor. The second is PO26-003 for the replacement of the RAD monitors in the cache. We need to replace 40 outdated radiation monitors for hazmat. The total comes to \$57,464 tied to the FY24 Recapitalization funds. We will not submit this for purchase until FEMA.gov is working and allowing us to draw down the funds in a timely fashion. We will wait for this purchase until that has been resolved.

The mulls and forklift will be submitted to UFA for listing as surplus. We hope to have this accomplished by early summer. The funds to come back to the task force. We anticipate roughly \$12k for those items.

When Lin returns from her vacation, we should be working on closing out the SUSARFY23. We should be able to provide the board with a closeout report on SUSARFY23, since the \$100k has been fully spent. We are using the SUSARFY24 budget for the State of Utah.

Captain Tho: Unless there are any questions, that is all I have currently.

AC Russell: Considering the POs were not included in today's document packet, DC Fossum will send them over, and we will approve them that way this time.

Finance Report:

AC Russell: DC Fossum will report.

DC Fossum: Firefighters Credit Union will close that account. We have roughly \$36k in those accounts. Lin assumed that Bryan Case needed to close that account. I have called them. Wade Russell is still a signer on the account from when he was in the office, and he can accomplish the task of assisting in closing that account. Once that is closed, the funds will be moved over to Wells Fargo. This should be accomplished in the next week or two.

As previously stated, the deployment and funds are still a mess, and we are working through it. FEMA is showing that 2025 deployments are closed out and paid. Including the New Mexico Flooding funds. As of this time, we should only be waiting for the 2024 deployment reimbursements.

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We discussed the Affiliate piece that needed attention.

According to Lin, roughly 99.7% of FY23 was spent on that grant. The period of performance will end on September 30, 2026, with roughly \$ 4,200.00 remaining to be spent, if the numbers are correct. The funds should be spent, and this grant should be closed on time.

Lin shows that FY24 has been spent at around 98.65% overall. The period of performance for this grant is September 20, 2027. We will also be on track to spend and close this grant on time.

FY25 is currently only 20%. The period of performance for this grant is September 30, 2028.

As mentioned before, the finances are a challenge at best. I am working with Tony on how to get this reined in and make it look correct.

Tony Hill: Once we complete our budget period, I can devote additional time to helping him work through the mess.

DC Fossum: We have an audit coming up in April. Marcus and his group did not submit an RFP this last round. So, the award went to a firm called Squire. Right now, understanding where the money lives and how things are handled is a little sticky. As we move forward, I hope to deliver better information by the next board meeting, providing transparency and the information you would want to see delivered to this board.

DC Fossum: Are there any additional questions on the financial report that I can try to answer? We will get this cleaned up.

No additional questions.

DC Fossum: Check signer recap: we will still have Bryan Case and Mike Watson on the accounts as check signers. We now have me, Bevan, Tho, Russell, and Dern who can be check signers. This will allow us to have multiple signers in case we need them moving forward. In addition, we are cleaning up the credit cards. Shauna is helping with cleaning that up. This includes removing people who are no longer part of the Task Force or the UFA from credit card access. Along with destroying old, expired credit cards on hand.

Any questions on this portion?

No additional Questions.

DC Fossum: Texas ORE with the Staff: Shauna, Corina, Tho, and Bevan. This is a huge lift for the staff. They accomplished that again this year. It is a huge benefit to exercise the team and partner with Texas to accomplish this event. Our relationship with Texas over the last 10 years has allowed us to accomplish this. We accomplished all 5 models for the ORE. Our drive team had some challenges, including snow on the outgoing portion of the drive. This created some challenges. On Friday, 47 members, 11 evaluators, and 3 State DEM folks met up with the team in Texas to accomplish the exercise. This is a huge benefit to our team, and we have appreciated

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the opportunity and support. TEEX offers great exercise areas and opportunities to put skills to work. There are lessons learned and areas for improvement for the future.

DC Fossum: The FEMA Review Council Review Report was leaked last week. It is not finalized. I sent that to AC Dern and Russell. This review council was established last year. They were supposed to deliver the report on December 11, 2025. The date came and went. Following changes with Kristi Noam, President Trump extended the deadline for delivering the report to March 25, 2026. The leaked review shows the FEMA USAR system in a favorable position; it should also be doubled down for support. There is approval for the \$56 million, which they are trying to get signed. As of today, it looks like we are in a good place for that to be approved. The additional funding will be focused on and restricted to logistics for the upcoming grant cycle. There is a discussion to change some languages to encompass training, wages, and other items. We will see how that plays out.

There is no obvious timeline for the government to reopen FEMA/DHS. They are still working through that. Due to the lapse in drawdown abilities, the S420 has been postponed. Along with the IST CE. It is too big a lift when we do not know if drawdown capabilities will continue to be impacted.

DC Fossum: Any questions about that?

Chief Burchett: I want to say thank you. Fossum, you have a lot to wrap your arms around, and we will give you some patience and grace while you figure this out.

DC Fossum: I really appreciate the staff and the support that they have shown over the last little bit in keeping things going. They have really dug in and kept things floating while we figure this out.

Captain Bevan: I would like to see if we can get the support to do a plaque for Jeff Saunders, as he will be leaving. We should do even a small plaque to appreciate the relationship and support that Texas/Jeff has built with Utah Task Force 1. I know it would be appreciated by Texas.

AC Russell: I support that for Jeff.

AC Russell: No need for closed session.

Motion to end meeting: AC Dern

2nd Motion: Chief Burchett

All in Favor: