

**PIKE COUNTY**  
**Office of Emergency Management**  
**“PROTECTING THROUGH PREPAREDNESS”**

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**TIMOTHY KNAPP**  
Director

To:      Pennsylvania Veterans Affairs and Emergency Service Committee

Fr:      Tim Knapp Emergency Management Director on Behalf of Pike County Department of Public Safety and  
         Pike County Corrections.

Re:      Impact of the Pike County Department of Public Safety and Corrections as a result of the Eric Frein  
         manhunt that took place in Pike and Monroe County In the Fall of 2014

**Introductions and Objections**

Dear Mr. Chairman Senator Vulakovich and Co-Chair Senator Costa and the rest of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Service Committee I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify of the manhunt that occurred in the Fall of 2014. While it was a struggle and strain for everyone involved the end result was a great success. We would like to take a few minutes of your time today to go over some observations we noticed during and after the event and offer some suggestions for your consideration.

**The Role of Pike County During the Manhunt in the Fall of 2014**

While we were tasked with many things our biggest role was facilitating and building security. From the moment the first 911 call was received until the final agency demobilized from our facility we were involved with day to day operations. To understand some of the different struggles we faced let me explain our normal staffing here at the center. On a normal day we have 3- dispatchers, 1- Director of Public Safety 1-EMA Director 1-Training and Operations Manager and a secretary. One thing we also had going for us was the fact we have 7 part time employees that work classes at the fire training center which is on-site. We knew from the start this would be a State and Federal lead operation but we did in fact use some of our emergency operation plans and also our Coop plan for re-locating to other County facilities some of the Fire and EMS classes we had scheduled. We also utilized some of the assets of the Northeast Counter Terrorism Task Force of which we are a member of.

## **Tasks Handled by Pike County Department of Public Safety and Corrections**

- 1) Radio and telephone communication at the Blooming Grove Church.
- 2) Traffic control and road closures handled by local fire.
- 3) GIS mapping (non-stop).
- 4) Building security and road entry security of Pike County Blvd.
- 5) Food coordination by Dept. of Corrections with the Red Cross.
- 6) Numerous computer projects handled by our IT Director.
- 7) Emergency medical duties dispatched through Pike County 911
- 8) Use of our 800 MHz Radio to PSP.
- 9) Transporting of officers to the "Hot Zone" by both Pike County Public Safety and Corrections using Corrections vans.
- 10) Set up for all the Media and Press Conferences here at the Training Center.
- 11) First month of janitorial duty until turned over to outside agency.
- 12) Garbage duty on an everyday basis.

## **Challenges Found During the Event**

- 1) Loss of use of facility for planned event.
- 2) Lack of completing daily everyday duties to do handling higher priority issues and limited manpower.
- 3) Switching garbage pickup to an every other day process.
- 4) Hard keeping up with janitorial duties until we out sourced it.
- 5) Lack of trust in the beginning when making maps etc. was hard to work through.
- 6) Making the same map over and over.

## **Changes We Have Made Post Event.**

- 1) We have reviewed all our Emergency Action Plans and Coop plans and corrected them as needed.
- 2) Changed the colors of our Media Room to make it TV friendly.
- 3) Created resource books in all manager positions in the County EOC
- 4) Added electric outside to supply command units in the future if needed.

## **Recommended Changes for Large Scale Events.**

- 1) A simplified lease agreement for reimbursement during a major event.
- 2) Utilize Sheriff Dept. or Dept. of Corrections for road closures instead of unarmed emergency responders in a hostile event such as this.
- 3) Make funding available for command post as this was used as to purchase bullet proof vests for the normal staff that are working alongside the Officers.
- 4) More use of the Incident Command System.
- 5) Make more EMPG funding available for smaller counties to increase their staff. As of right now Pike County has 1- EMPG funded position. This event and the 16 Mile Fire last year proved LARGE scale events happen in small counties.
- 6) Title 61 of the Prisons and Parole Board under Section 1734, Powers of Peace Officers, should be shown to reflect assisting other Law Enforcement Agencies and EMS. This would help solve the traffic control point problem by making sure armed peace officers are manning them and not unarmed emergency service personnel or Penn-Dot.

- 7) Section 4571-Title 75- Vehicle Code. Under the cross references, Section B should be shown to include correction vehicles to support my recommended change to Title 61 above.

#### **Northeast Counter Terrorism Task Force Items Used.**

- 1) EMA Truck 523
- 2) EMA Trailer 5207
- 3) Interoperability Trailer 5208
- 4) Balloon Lighting
- 5) Jersey Barriers
- 6) 15- GPS Units
- 7) Pike County Bomb Truck
- 8) Pocono Mountain Police Bearcat

#### **Advantages of a Small County Identified During this Large Scale Event**

While most would think that the bigger the county is that an event like this would take place would be an advantage. We actually found being a smaller county we were able to expedite task because the people needed to complete these task live in our small county. Verizon and Blue Ridge Cable are great examples. We were in need of increasing the band width in the building and correcting a Wi-Fi issue we had in the downstairs classroom Both of these tasks were handled within hours and not days due to the fact being the relationships we have formed living and working in a small county.

In closing on behalf of the Pike County Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections I would just like to thank the members of the Emergency Services and Veterans Affairs Committee for this opportunity to testify at this Hearing and while we hope the need never arises again, we will support you in whatever capacity possible.