

MABAS-WISCONSIN *in ACTION*

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

FALL-WINTER 2011
DOUBLE ISSUE

A quarterly report of MABAS WISCONSIN activities to underscore its value to the community and to foster growth and improvement through the sharing of actual experience

MABAS REACTS WHEN WATER SUPPLY IS EXHAUSTED

BY GARY SCHMIDT AND RANDY WICHLACZ, CHIEF-PULASKI TRI-CO FIRE DEPARTMENT

It was the “call of a lifetime” as Chief Wichlacz described the fire “that could have consumed the whole downtown of Pulaski if not for all the efforts of everyone involved”. Pulaski is located 14 miles northwest of Green Bay.

With temperatures just below freezing the night of December 2, 2011, a call came in for smoke and flames emanating from the Wood Lanes Bowling Alley / Party Hall. The Pulaski Tri-County Fire Department (corner of Brown, Shawano, and Oconto counties) responded with 2 engines, a ladder truck, and a rescue



(Photo reprinted by permission, Green Bay Press-Gazette)

van, arriving within minutes of the 11:31pm call and upgraded to a full first alarm assignment (working still) at 11:38pm bringing in 2 additional engines and a ladder from neighboring communities.

By midnight, the second floor of Wood Lanes was fully engulfed and spreading into the bowling alley extending to the rear. MABAS Division 112 Box 11-11 (Structure Fire - Hydranted Area) was activated. Despite flowing water from 3 ladders, 3 master streams from engines, and 4 hand lines, by 12:32am, fire broke through the roof of the Wood Lanes and all interior crews were evacuated.

Water curtains attempted to shield a 2-story apartment building 3 feet to the west, however, flames shooting from the windows caught that building on fire. With the Pulaski Water Utility having difficulty keeping up with the demand, MABAS Box 11-11 was upgraded to a 2nd alarm around 1am.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER *BY ED JANKE*

We are proud to announce that MABAS Wisconsin has now achieved 40 divisions. Communities are continuing to develop their capability to access the MABAS system. Currently there are 16 Counties working on establishing their division status. We continue to work towards the ultimate goal of statewide mutual aid allowing communities to access resources in their greatest time of need.

Across the State, established Division Officers, our Regional Directors and MABAS Officers continue to assist aspiring Divisions develop their Divisions, so that everyone will have access to all the resources the system

has to offer. We are continuing to work at enhancing the backbone of our system, which is the **Wisconsin Fire Service Emergency Response Plan**. Our efforts are focused on developing our communications system as well as supporting the credentialing process. Part of this process includes the development of a “**Red Center**” as an initial communications point.

In this issue we will highlight some of the large events that have occurred in Wisconsin MABAS Divisions. These events are proof that the system works in the State of Wisconsin both in urban and rural areas.



Why did 297 Fire & EMS rigs respond to Chicago from four states? See page 9.

(Photo by Mark Stampfl)

As we prepare for our Second Annual Command and Dispatch Conference, Keith Tveit and the Conference Committee have committed hours and hours to provide an exceptional program.

Mark your calendars and make reservations for this outstanding conference on August 24-26, 2012.

MABAS-WISCONSIN IN ACTION

MABAS REACTS WHEN WATER SUPPLY IS EXHAUSTED — CONTINUED

(Continued from page 1)

By 1:30am, the Water tower level dropped 11 feet. Incident Command decided that they had to switch to a tender operation. MABAS Box 11-12 was struck for tenders only to the 3rd alarm level.



With no water available from hydrants, 10 Port-a-Tanks were set up with jet siphons from tank to tank. The tenders would refill at a 12-acre pond four blocks away (using 5 engines) or a 10-acre pond 5 miles away (1 engine).

By 2:19am, MABAS Box 11-12 was upgraded to the 5th alarm level. The Brown County EOC was utilized to arrange for interdivisional Strike Teams of Tenders. At 2:51am, a Southern Brown County strike team was dispatched. Another Strike Team of 5 tenders from Calumet County Division 122 was called for at 2:55am (ETA of 60 minutes).

More water was needed and at 3:52am, a 5-tender Strike Team from Outagamie County Division 127 was sent.

By 4am, 2 additional Port-a-Tanks were set up. At 4:49am,



fire began showing from the roof and second floor of building #3, a commercial store with apartments on the second floor, with a fourth building (1-story insurance agency) threatened. The interior of building #4 was coated with Class A foam, however, the building suffered extensive smoke and water damage.

After more than 5 hours of firefighting, additional manpower was needed. MABAS Box 11-11 was struck for Engines only to the 3rd and 4th level. At this point, this incident had 2 Box Cards in use, 11-11 (hydranted) and 11-12 (non-hydranted). Two departments had to decline on Box 11-11 as they had resources already on scene on Box 11-12.

By this time, 9,000 gallons of water per minute was being used by 4 ladders, 8 Monitor Deck Guns, and 4 hand lines. At 5:52am, a second Strike Team of Tenders from Outagamie County was sent.

Finally, at 8:24am the incident was downgraded. Green Bay Chief Goplin, Howard Chief Janke, and Howard Chief Phillips handled the demobilization. IMT duties were being handled by Bob Conrad from Green Bay Fire. Most units cleared at 4:04pm on December 3rd.

A total of 4 buildings were affected and will have to be demolished, the 5th had minor smoke and water damage. Water usage consisted of 1.75 million gallons from the village's water system and another 1.426 million being shuttled in with Tenders (all in 7 hours). 85 gallons of Class A foam was used in suppression and overhaul.



There were only 2 injuries to firefighters with both being treated and released.

“This was a small town coming together - during the entire fire, the firefighters were assisted at the scene by the Red Cross, First Responders from NEW Rescue, Firefighter friends, wives, and girlfriends, and an enormous amount of businesses and people who came down and supplied food, beverages and other items in assistance”.

Chief Wichlacz's final thoughts: “Although you can always plan for ‘THE BIG ONE’, you are always hoping it will never happen. This incident is a testament to MABAS for its preplanning and ease of implementing the system.”



(Photos reprinted by permission, Green Bay Press-Gazette.)

MABAS: WHATEVER IT TAKES BY GARY SCHMIDT

Whether it is a small town or a large city, whether it is a small incident or a large disaster, whether the event lasts a few hours or multiple days, your community can count on MABAS for as many resources as necessary to enact rescues or prevent a conflagration.

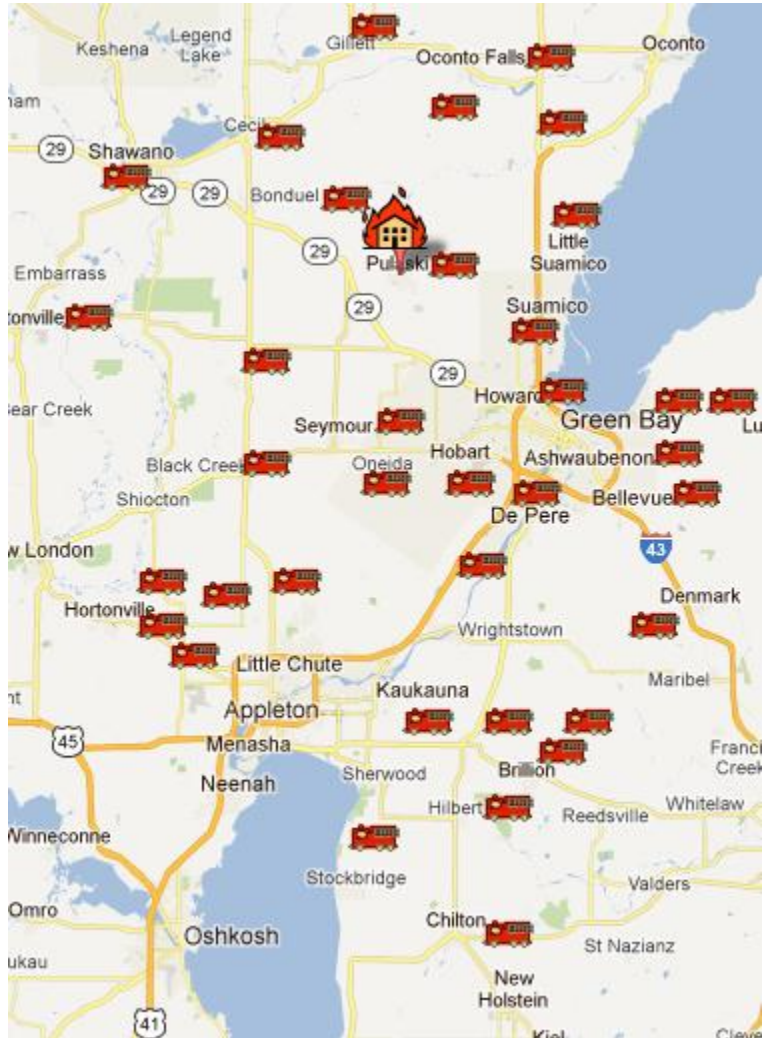
At the Pulaski fire of December, 2011, due to escalating conditions and an exhaustion of the municipal water supply, 20 engines, 4 ladder trucks, 42 water tenders, 2 rescue vans, 2 light towers, 16 chief officers, and over 180 firefighters responded to the scene. MABAS brought help from over 60 miles with some travel times exceeding 60 minutes.

Whatever it takes to save lives and prevent economic devastation, MABAS is ready, willing, and able. In doing so, the careful pre-planning of responses ensures that the entire region retains adequate fire and EMS protection.

“your community can count on MABAS for as many resources as necessary ...”

The map at right depicts the locations that resources responded from. In addition to Fire Departments, Law Enforcement, EMS, Public Works, Sewer & Water, and the Red Cross came to the aid of Pulaski, totaling over 45 agencies.

The event began de-escalating after 9 hours, however, it was not until 35 hours after the initial call that the Pulaski Tri-Co Fire Department was fully back in service.



PULASKI POST INCIDENT REVIEW BY RANDY WICHLACZ AND ED JANKE

Issues:

Ice on the Pulaski relay tower caused the Brown County dispatch tones to not be transmitted. Chief Wichlacz toned from the Pulaski Station and then Shawano County took over for a short period of time, demonstrating the value of interoperability between MABAS Divisions.

Predictable of a large defensive fire, accountability was a challenge. Safety and operations were managed by a Chief Officer which ran smoothly with no concerns.

Value add of MABAS:

Without MABAS, there would have been a lack of apparatus resources. Water movement would have suffered; fire would have extended into more buildings.

Communication:

The Brown County EOC, staffed by the Brown County IMT, is opened at the 3rd Box on all events and manages the incoming TF/ST based on geography and functional need as the Division has decided not to pre-designate strike teams / task forces. Only one call was needed for each Strike Team and those Divisions initiated their responses.



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MABAS-WISCONSIN IN ACTION

DIVISION 112 FIGHTS A FEED MILL FIRE

BY DAVE BIELINSKI, CHIEF, DENMARK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Pulaski fire was not the only large fire for Division 112. Just two weeks earlier, another MABAS incident occurred.

At 9:26am, on November 18, 2011, the **Denmark Volunteer Fire Department** was called to the Shirley Feed Mill at 3809 Shirley Rd for the report of a grain dryer on fire. It was a cool Friday morning, with brisk winds. Upon arrival, my immediate concern was fire spreading to the other bins, which were connected by pipes on the top of the bins, so I called for a Working Still assignment.

The wind was fueling the fire and some of the panels on the corn dryer were popping loose. Bellevue's Ladder 521 was special called to the scene to access the scene to access the dryer at 9:50am.



It became apparent that a substantial water supply would be needed, so we called box alarm 1452 to the 5th box for tenders only. This enabled us to utilize three fill sites with 20 tenders to haul water. We had to use extreme care in case the structure would collapse.

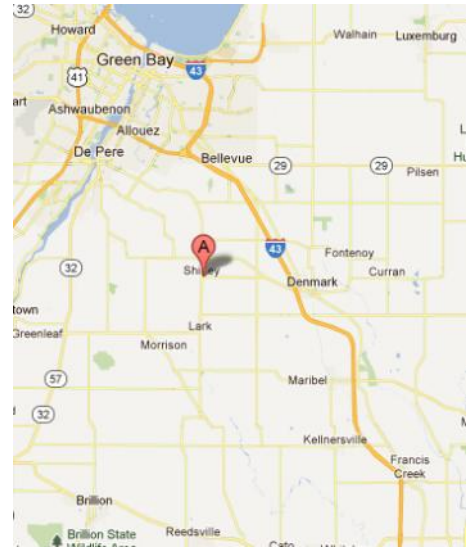


The MABAS system saved a lot of time in getting all the resources to the scene. In hindsight, I would have contacted the Wisconsin Feed Mill Association earlier. As it was, we contacted them after about an hour into the fire.

They were able to assist us with a crane and also a Dynalift, arriving on the scene around 12:30pm. They also had previous experience with corn dryer fires which proved helpful. With their assistance, we were able to take apart many of the pipes and get open panels so we could extinguish and empty the bins without anything collapsing.

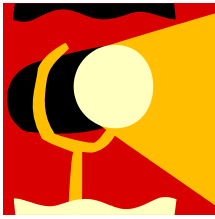
By 2pm, we were able to let all the assisting departments leave. Our last engine left the scene at 6:45pm that evening.

Departments on scene included: Denmark, New Franken, Menchalville, Maribel, Carlton, Kellnersville, Ledgeview, Bellevue, Greenleaf, Morrison, Wayside, Wrightstown, Lawrence, Luxemburg, and Green Bay. The feed mill was eventually able to resume normal operations



(All Photos by Drew Spielman: secondalarmimages.com)

MABAS DIVISION SPOTLIGHT - DIVISION 109 CITY OF MILWAUKEE BY GARY SCHMIDT



Self Sufficiency Was a Necessity

MABAS Division 109 consists solely of one department, the City of Milwaukee Fire Department. This is similar to MABAS Illinois Division 9, which consists only of the City of Chicago.

The Milwaukee Fire Department was established in 1871 to protect a city that at times was the manufacturing leader of the United States and the brewing capital of the country. Today, the city contains numerous high-rise commercial and residential buildings. Until a post-war expansion of the suburbs (Division 107)

“As we navigate the economy and (with) increased demands for service coupled with increasingly scarce resources, MABAS will show itself to be absolutely necessary” - Aaron Lipski

that ring the city, the Milwaukee Fire Department was pretty much on its own to protect the numerous mills, packing plants, tanneries, and other old warehouse structures.

Fire protection peaked around 1980 when the Milwaukee Fire Department had 37 engines and 21 ladder trucks staffed full-time. Such a large force was needed. Even today, it is common to have over 5 structure fires in one day. Several times each month there are two working fires occurring simultaneously and a few times each year the city will have 3 working fires at one time. Historically, when a large multiple alarm fire would occur (or simultaneous single alarms), the Milwaukee Fire Department could spread out uncommitted units throughout the city and rarely would a firehouse go empty.

Starting with the 1980's, maturing firefighting and medical protocols resulted in the movement of manpower to specialized Haz Mat, Technical Rescue, Marine/Dive operations, 12 Paramedic units, and Tactical (SWAT) EMS. Just like all area departments, recent economic times brought about the reduction of minimum staffing levels, requiring more equipment/manpower at fires. The City of Milwaukee now empties fire houses at a 3rd alarm level.

Like the City of Chicago, the Milwaukee Fire Department realizes it needs to utilize the regional response offerings of the MABAS system as indicated by Battalion Chief Aaron Lipski: *“As we navigate the economy and (with) increased demands for service coupled with increasingly scarce resources, MABAS will show itself to be absolutely necessary. It provides a 'shared' resource template so that the relatively thin resources can be best deployed to where the emergencies are actually occurring in real-time. I believe that areas in which MABAS has only been used for extraordinarily large or complex incidents will eventually migrate towards employing MABAS for 1st-Alarm assignments to thicken the ranks”.*

The Path to Embracing MABAS

MABAS Division 109 (City of Milwaukee) has common boundaries with Divisions 107 (Milwaukee County), 106 (Waukesha County), 111 (Washington County), and 119 (Ozaukee County). The City actually extends into Waukesha and Washington counties for a few parcels.

Division 109's use of MABAS has been a work in progress for many years. Four fire chiefs, various staff reorganizations, retirements, and a new radio system, over a five year period, slowed the process. On January 19, 2010, Division 109 pulled their first MABAS box. As with most “first-box” experiences, several opportunities for improvement came to light, one of which was acquainting the 1,000 firefighters of the Milwaukee Fire Department with their suburban counterparts.

On October 23, 2010, the first of two MABAS Meet-and-Greet sessions were held on Milwaukee's far northwest side. Besides several firefighting companies from Division 109 (Milwaukee), in attendance were firefighters and chief officers from the 6 departments bordering Milwaukee on the north and west from Divisions 106, 107, 111, and 119. A second session was held a few months later on January 22, 2011, with the departments that border Milwaukee on the south.

At the sessions, each department presented a PowerPoint describing their make-up as well as talking about their own firefighting tactics.



The street in front of Milwaukee's Engine 38 was lined with vehicles from 6 neighboring departments during the north side MABAS Meet-and-Greet.

(Photo by Dan Rode)

MABAS-WISCONSIN IN ACTION

DIVISION 109'S MABAS MEET-AND-GREET *BY AARON LIPSKI AND GARY SCHMIDT*

Milwaukee Fire Department Battalion Chief Aaron Lipski was instrumental in initiating dialog between Division 109 and outlying divisions. Here are some questions posed to Chief Lipski by MABAS Wisconsin In Action:

MABAS Wisconsin In Action: How has MABAS changed the way you interact with other departments?

Lipski: For an extremely long time, the City of Milwaukee Fire Department has operated without support from or support for surrounding communities (where mutual aid responses other than EMS or HazMat responses are concerned). The Milwaukee Fire Department's decision to enter into MABAS has dramatically changed that



landscape. The lines of communication are now being re-established to accommodate the absolutely necessary cross-jurisdictional training that will need to occur (and continue occurring as the years wear on). We feel that for the safety of OUR members, and the safety of THEIR members, AND, of course, for the safety of the CIVILIANS that we all serve, opening up the door was absolutely critical.

MWIA: What do you see as obstacles that need to be overcome with your use of MABAS?

Lipski: We have encountered what can best be described as inter-organizational mistrust (inherent in just about all Fire Service communities with respect to 'outsiders,' but a bit more intense given our historic isolation). Being 'new' to a collection of already-working-together (inside and outside of MABAS) area Fire Departments, this mistrust is just about the largest obstacle. As I emphasized at the North and South Meet-and-Greets, at the end of the day, this is about adequately supporting the Firefighters on the ground, on the ladders, and in the burning buildings so that they can adequately and safely rescue civilians and preserve property. Nothing more, nothing less.

MWIA: What went well with your meetings?

Lipski: We encountered an amazingly positive response from the area Fire Departments. We had a very healthy turnout at both events. I would characterize the drills as 'first steps' towards developing what will need to be a more Strategy & Tactic-intensive training regimen for all of us to take part in. I felt that the honest questions got honest answers in all directions. It was reaffirming to encounter the willingness of the other Fire Departments to simply meet and talk. It means that, in future, they will be willing to meet and sweat in the course of training together. It will never, ever be perfect, but it will certainly go a long way to improve things, and that's always good.

MWIA: What was unexpected or did not go well?

Lipski: Time. Time. Time. If only I had an entire week in which ALL of the Fire Departments involved could be dedicated to hands-on interactive, cooperative training, that would have been great. Obviously, given everybody's present time and resource constraints, that's not realistic. I cannot think of any other big negative situations that occurred.



MWIA: What are your plans going forward?

Lipski: At our highest levels, the spirit of cooperation has been instilled and, more importantly, supported in practice. We'd like to take part in more drills, either on our turf or theirs. The recognition of our equipment differences and/or similarities and the increase in communication will enhance everybody's safety. Let the optimism be tempered with the reality that we still have much to learn about each other's operations and many interoperability issues to sort out (think radios, etc.). This calls us all to action to train together.

The Meet and Greet occurred one year ago. For a current update, see the page 8.

SEEING IS BELIEVING BY GARY SCHMIDT

Part of the discussions of suburban departments working seamlessly with the Milwaukee Fire Department were centered on moving water from a Milwaukee rig or hydrant to a suburban rig. The City of Milwaukee has numerous styles and colors, all having specific meaning. Also, some hydrants are equipped with tamper-proof housings that require a special hydrant wrench. The MABAS Meet and Greet went beyond the PowerPoint, with some actual demonstrations.



At left: Lt. Brent Jones demonstrating the use of McGard tamper-proof hydrants.

At right and below: use of a (blue) 5" Storz to 5" NH female adaptor.

(All photos by Dan Rode)



DIVISION 109 SPECIAL TEAMS

BY GARY SCHMIDT

The **Hazardous Materials (HM) Team** operates under an emergency response plan and standard operating guidelines to control, eliminate, or otherwise minimize the hazards to life, property, and the environment from a released hazardous material. They respond to all hazardous materials incidents and spills in the City of Milwaukee, as well as operate as one of seven regional response HAZMAT teams for the State of Wisconsin. Milwaukee's team presently provides level "A" response capability to Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Waukesha, Washington and Jefferson counties. The MFD HM team is recognized as a leader in responding to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) terrorist events in the state.

The **Heavy Urban Rescue Team's** 90 members are equipped and trained to perform: High Angle Rope Rescue, Low Angle Rope Rescue, One-Point Suspension with Litter Tender, Structural Collapse Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, and Trench Rescue. The HURT team also rescues civilians and firefighters in the event of entrapment at a fire scene.

The **Marine Unit** has 60 members and operates out of 2 locations. The **Dive Rescue Team** operates out of Engine 3 located at 100 W. Virginia and the Trident **Fireboat** Pilots operate out of Engine 2 located at 755 N 7th Street. The BC SPEC-OPS responds on all special team assignments as well as all 3rd Alarm fires as the RIT/Safety Chief.

The HURT and Marine teams have responded numerous times out of the Division to assist with Lake Michigan incidents and tornado aftermath/structure collapse in Southeast Wisconsin.



Below, the final proof: a Milwaukee Engine supplying a Butler engine that is pumping water to a Menomonee Falls Aerial Ladder.



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MABAS-WISCONSIN IN ACTION

DIVISION 109 - 2012 AND BEYOND BY TERRY LINTONEN, MILWAUKEE FIRE DEPT SPECIAL OPS BATTALION CHIEF

Editor's Note: Milwaukee Fire Chief Mark Rohlfiing, coming to Milwaukee in 2010 from departments in Nebraska and South Dakota which regularly used mutual aid, has been a proponent of regional use of resources. Terry Lintonen has been tasked to implement Division 109's expanded use of MABAS.

Key to Division 109 being successful in an expanded role in MABAS is:

- Breaking down the barriers caused by the unfamiliarity with the other departments' personnel, equipment, strategy, and tactics.
- Having communications ready for the event of going outside of the City of Milwaukee or bringing suburban resources into the City.
- Getting the firefighters ready to respond.

In 2011, the Milwaukee Fire Department had several joint training sessions with Divisions 106 and 111, focusing on tender operations both inside and outside the City of Milwaukee.

Milwaukee Division 109 now has a Tender Box card for the far northwest side which has areas of limited hydrant coverage.

This will bring in resources from Menomonee Falls (Div 106), including a Water Supply Officer and a Tender Operations Commander, and from Germantown and Richfield (Div 111) at the Box alarm level.

Also, for the first time in history, Milwaukee has begun responding to Box alarms outside of Milwaukee County.

Within Milwaukee County, Division 109 resources are now listed on many Division 107 Box Cards (Divisions 106, 107, and 119 are listed as incoming Box level resources for Structure Fires).

There have been several more visits by Division 107 departments to the Division 109 houses to familiarize themselves with the MABAS kits found in outlying firehouses. These kits include maps of the City, hydrant tools, and Open Sky Radios (an 800 MHz Trunk system used by Division 109).

During a recent regional Haz Mat drill near Milwaukee's downtown, Division 107 resources manned 3 Milwaukee firehouses and were integrated into routine response protocols.

VIEW PRIOR NEWSLETTERS ON MABAS WISCONSIN WEBSITE



MABAS In the NEWS

[MABAS WI Newsletter Vol 1 Issue 1](#)

[MABAS WI Newsletter Vol 1 Issue 2](#)

[MABAS WI Newsletter Vol 1 Issue 3](#)

WHAT IS A RED CENTER? BY GARY SCHMIDT

MABAS Wisconsin is in the preliminary stages of creating an Emergency Dispatch Center, similar to the Illinois RED Center. What does the Illinois RED Center do?

The state of Illinois has selected the Regional Emergency Dispatch Center, or "RED Center," to serve as the single dispatch center for any statewide response of fire, EMS, hazardous materials and special rescue teams. At the direction of the Illinois governor's office, RED Center will coordinate the response of these units to any natural or man-made disaster and any incident of domestic terrorism.

Based in Northbrook, Illinois, RED Center is the communications headquarters for MABAS-Illinois. It is also the dispatch center for MABAS Division 3.

The RED Center also coordinates responses to large-scale incidents into the city of Chicago. "If Chicago pulls a MABAS box card, we coordinate the MABAS box cards to any place north of 22nd Street and O'Hare International Airport", said Jim Clausen, RED Center Director. "We have responded to the LaSalle bank fire, train derailments and Chicago marathons, to name a few." (Source: www.mabas-il.org)

MABAS DEMONSTRATES RESPONSE CAPABILITIES TO MASS POPULATION CENTER

BY GARY SCHMIDT

The lead story of this issue was the MABAS response to the Village of Pulaski, population 3,500. MABAS provided units from over 60 miles away. In 2009, the City of Cudahy, population 18,000, required 64 departments at a meat packing plant fire (see Newsletter Issue 1 Volume 1). MABAS performed according to plan. But what would happen if the largest city in the Midwest, Chicago, with a population of 5 million - 9 million for entire metropolitan area - had a major incident? Would MABAS stand up to that challenge?

Each year, the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) holds a Fire-Rescue International (FRI) five-day global forum. In August, 2010, the IAFC event was held in Chicago and organizers were looking to validate the Illinois Fire Service Emergency Response Plan as the Opening Ceremony presentation. **Chief Jay Reardon, CEO of MABAS-Illinois**, was asked to deliver 90 fire service resources in 90 minutes to Chicago.

Reardon knew that moving 90 pieces in 90 minutes was not a challenge to MABAS; he wanted to truly demonstrate the regional response and interoperability capabilities of MABAS. Reardon decided to:

- triple the number of responding resources (270 in 90 minutes)
- incorporate the response from MABAS-Wisconsin, MABAS-Indiana, and MABAS-Michigan
- video feed this feat live to hundreds of attending fire chiefs from all over the world
- provide a live satellite feed to nearly 3,000 fire and emergency service leaders
- have the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security witness this event
- validate the credentials and process all 900 first responders and 270 vehicles from 33 Task Forces at three MABAS's reception sites around Chicago utilizing a NEVER exercised Hollywood high-tech accountability system for all to witness.

On August 26, 2010, the mobilization exercise was a cooperative success of all participating MABAS Divisions from within Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin and Michigan. **Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano**, keynote speaker at FRI's opening session that day, viewed the ground-breaking exercise live on closed-captioned TV from McCormick Place, delaying her planned schedule to see the exercise come to completion.

The MABAS Deployment and Validation Exercise began at 8:30 am, when the call was made for 33 taskforces to report to one of three reception sites, located on the north, west and south sides of the city of Chicago, as part of a multiple tornado scenario. Over the next 90 minutes, a total of 297 engines, trucks, heavy rescues, ambulances and chief officers, involving 924 personnel, made their way toward Chicago to help the city and surrounding communities. MABAS Wisconsin Divisions that participated were 101, 102, 103, 104, 107, and 109.

(Continued on page 10)



Left: Responders await credentialing. A massive response requires this for accountability and security of the disaster zone.

Right: Task Forces from MABAS-Wisconsin and MABAS-Illinois arrive at the Northeastern Illinois Public Safety Training Academy (NIPSTA) at Glenview, Illinois

(Photos by Mark Stampfl)

MABAS-WISCONSIN IN ACTION

MABAS DEMONSTRATES RESPONSE - CONTINUED

(Continued from page 9)

Using helicopters and fixed cameras, footage was transmitted via satellites to the screens in the McCormick Center, and the audience was kept informed as to the progress of units arriving at the reception sites. Over 105 MABAS member departments were represented.

“If my State gets hit and we need help, we’re calling MABAS” - Exercise evaluator

Upon arrival at the reception sites, each member of the taskforce was checked in using the **Tier II credentialing system for MABAS**. This process uses a bar code assigned to each individual and is entered into a handheld scanner and transmitted to a secure off-site verification system for validation and accountability.

Right: NIPSTA staging grounds - note the mix of fire, rescue, command, and EMS units. The 1,100 acre campus was formerly the Glenview Naval Air Station.

(Photo by Mark Stampfl)

The communications center in Northbrook, Ill., known as the Regional Emergency Dispatch, or **RED Center**, served as the primary contact for all deployment communications and resource typing and credentialing of units and personnel.

The RED Center also maintained contact with the communication centers from the participating MABAS divisions and the State of Illinois Emergency Operations Center in Springfield.

(Sources: www.iafc.org and www.mabas-il.org)

REACTIONS TO FRI EVENT

BY GARY SCHMIDT

Chief Jack Parow, IAFC President and Chairman of the board:

“The participants from MABAS and their neighboring states should be commended for their years of preparation and accomplishments, which were clearly identifiable during the exercise.”

“The IAFC greatly appreciated the efforts of MABAS to share this experience with the national and international fire service community at FRI. It added an extra layer to an already complex exercise, but they were eager to contribute to the learning opportunity.”

(Continued on page 11)



First time in history that the Chicago and Milwaukee Fire Departments were in a training exercise together, further demonstrating how MABAS has broken down historical barriers and enhances the response capabilities in the Midwest.

(Photo by Mark Stampfl)

REACTIONS TO FRI EVENT - CONTINUED

(Continued from page 10)

Chief Jay Reardon (Retired), CEO, MABAS-Illinois:

As for the results from the Exercise, The International Association of Fire Chiefs Evaluators, about 40 of them, were at five different locations, including, NIPSTA- Glenview- north, Sears-Hoffman Estates-west, Midwest Bank Center-Tinley Park-south, RED Center-Northbrook, and backstage at McCormick Place with myself. The evaluators were briefed the day before and informed of the following exercise objectives;

- 90 units in 90 minutes at three different sites simultaneously (33 task forces with 9 units each and 28 firefighters each = 297 fire and EMS vehicles and 924 firefighters in 90 minutes).
- Accomplish the effort through Task Forces with interstate fire service involvement (Illinois = 28 task forces, Wisconsin = 4 task forces, Indiana = 1 task force ,Michigan = 1 task force)
- All held to the 90 minute performance period without the use of emergency lights and sirens.
- Utilize for the first time ever the electronic conversion of the written flow plan and notification alerting system to the fully automated Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and notification system.

- Utilize for the first time the pre issued tier 2 credentialing MABAS system with all 924 firefighters in processing at one of the three reception sites; also electronically merging their in processing tier 2 cards to track unit / task force assignments and IAP operational period (paper) badging of all processing firefighters.

The Exercise Hot Wash included Fire Chief Evaluators from throughout the Nation including, but not limited to, Florida, Texas, Ohio and California. It was held on Thursday afternoon following the mornings exercise.

The Evaluators, without exception, proclaimed the following remarkable statements about the MABAS Exercise performance:

- √ **You Blew us away**
- √ **MABAS has got it figured out**
- √ **No one can hold a candle to you guys**
- √ **If my State gets hit and we need help, we're calling MABAS!**

To say the least, our Systems performed beyond expectations. The 90/90 performance expectation times three were met with interstate involvement. The Electronic CAD Resource control and notification system worked flawlessly.

The Tier II system allowed us to process 736 firefighters in 45 minutes and all 924 participating firefighters in about one hour total.

The entire MABAS staff were in attendance at the hot wash to hear the comments first hand—they left proud and with a feeling of accomplishment knowing that they were part of setting a new National Benchmark for Mutual Aid Performance and representing our State and the ITTF as Leaders in the field.

As you may recall, the exercise sites were transmitted in real time back to McCormick Place and viewed by thousands at the Opening General Session. DHS Secretary Napolitano was in attendance and spoke to the audience. I was informed on Saturday that when Secretary Napolitano finished her speech she left the stage and then told her staff and Secret Service detail that she didn't want to leave until she heard the outcome of the exercise as reported by IAFC President, Chief Jeff Johnson. He reported the success to the audience and congratulated MABAS-Illinois. Secretary Napolitano then departed to meet with Mayor Daley. I wanted to let you know the outcome of the exercise - the investments we have all made together through the ITTF and IEMA are affirmed through this exercise experience.

We all can be proud! Additionally, this is the first time ever where the Cities of Chicago and Milwaukee Fire Departments exercised and/or trained together.



MABAS Wisconsin units muster before responding to NIPSTA (Photo by Mark Stampfl)

MABAS-WISCONSIN IN ACTION

WHAT IS MABAS (MUTUAL AID BOX ALARM SYSTEM)? *BY GARY SCHMIDT*

MABAS is a system that preplans the resources needed when an incident exhausts local resources. The activation of MABAS may differ depending on the area of the State, but an example could be when an incident escalates beyond a full first alarm/working still assignment. A full first alarm assignment generally consists of 2-3 pumper engines, 1-2 aerial ladder trucks, 1-2 water tenders (tanker trucks), a BLS and/or ALS unit, and 1 or more chiefs. A BLS is basic life support (EMT-staffed ambulance); ALS is advanced life support (a paramedic-staffed ambulance).

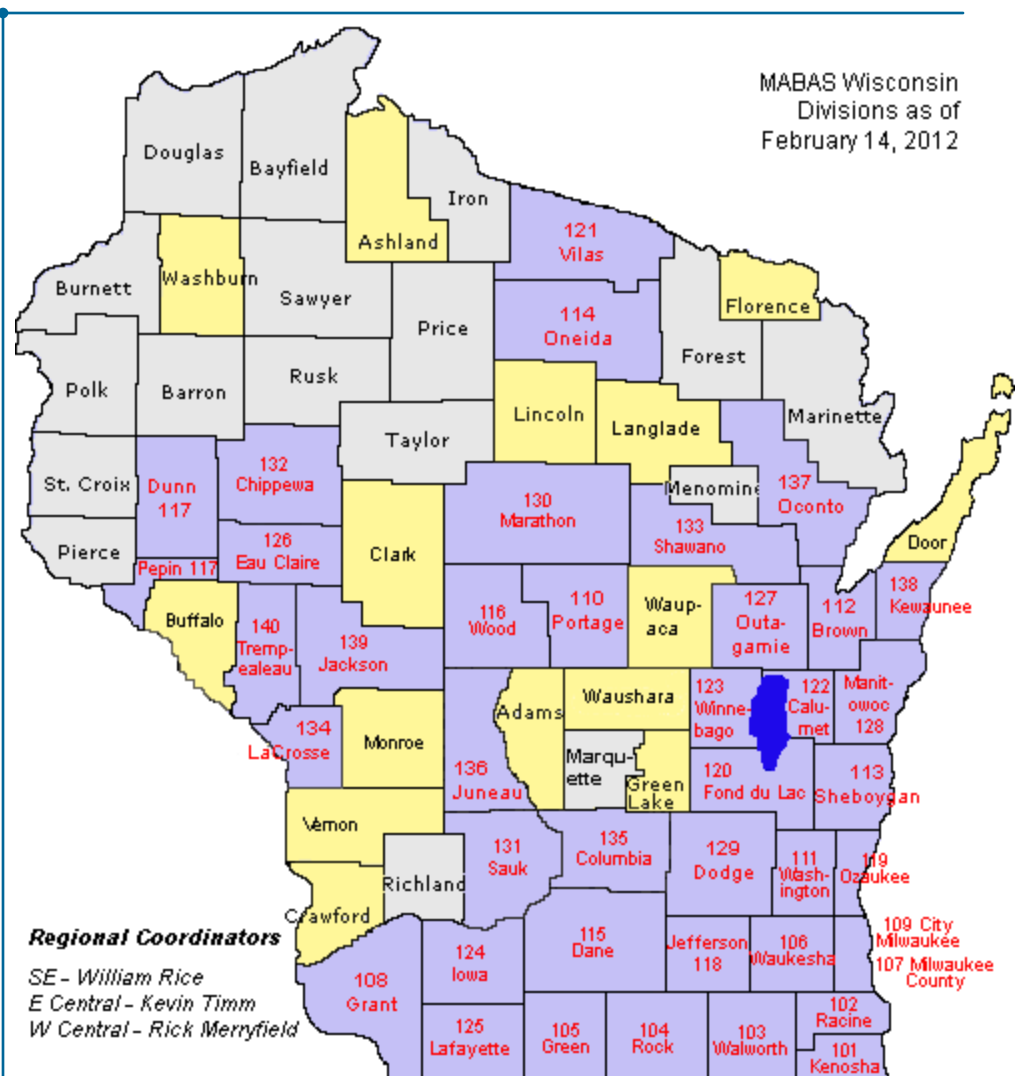
When a MABAS box is requested, special procedures go into effect. In some Divisions, the local Dispatch Center is relieved of the dispatching of additional resources when the MABAS Division's central dispatch center takes over.

In areas that already have a centralized dispatching center, often additional dispatching resources get called in when a MABAS Box occurs. Most importantly, a single radio frequency is used that is common to all Fire Service agencies in the MABAS system. This allows for very quick dispatching of many units from multiple jurisdictions. The MABAS system also handles the staffing of firehouses in the stricken community by outlying departments.

MABAS Wisconsin dictates the minimum staffing and certification of the resources requested so that an Incident Commander always knows that fully staffed, certified resources will be responding to provide aid to the incident. Common terminology and radio frequencies are used throughout the MABAS Wisconsin system, enabling interoperability between agencies.

The preplanning of resources ensures that no community will be depleted of resources should another incident occur. Besides structure fires, MABAS has box cards for grass fires, mass casualty incidents, hazardous materials, trench rescue and other types of emergencies.

MABAS has coordinator positions for regions based on the six Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) regions.



For more information about becoming a member of MABAS-Wisconsin, visit: www.mabaswisconsin.org

MABAS WISCONSIN continues to grow. There are 40 active divisions and other counties are at various stages of formation.