

OHIO AMBER ALERT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 26, 2016

Ohio Department of Transportation
1980 West Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43223

Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee Chairman, Captain Kenneth Kocab, called to order the January 26, 2016 meeting of the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee at approximately 10:05 a.m. The first order of business was the roll call taken by Lindy Davis, OSHP.

I. ROLL CALL - PRESENT

Dept. of Public Safety, Ohio State Highway Patrol	Captain Kenneth Kocab
Ohio Attorney General's Office, Missing Persons Unit	Brent Currence
Ohio Association of Broadcasters	Christine Merritt
Local/Regional AMBER Plan, Mid-Ohio Amber Alert	Clark Donley
Community Member	Harry Trombitas
Federal Bureau of Investigation	Special Agent Kristin Cadieux
Victim's Advocate	Maggie Maloy
Buckeye State Sheriff's Association	Sheriff Ronald Myers
Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police	Chief Clayton Harris
State Emergency Communications Committee	Paul Jellison
Ohio Department of Transportation	Leslie Bricker

ROLL CALL – ABSENT

Ohio Emergency Management Agency	Ronald (Dave) Ford
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OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ohio State Highway Patrol	Lindy Davis
BCI – CART	Larry McCoy

A QUORUM WAS DECLARED

II. APPROVAL OF THE JULY 22, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

Captain Kocab asked the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee to review the minutes. Sheriff Myers made the motion to adopt the July 22, 2015 minutes, Chief Harris seconded. Motion carried by all.

Captain Kocab introduced Leslie Bricker as the newest committee member.

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. Review of AMBER Alerts

Captain Kocab indicated there were eight (8) AMBER alerts for this reporting period, with two not meeting criteria. He gave a brief overview of each and all children were recovered safely.

Christine Merritt asked if statistics are kept on the alert activations. Captain Kocab indicated Lindy Davis maintains the information. Lindy Davis shared a summary is kept on each alert that includes the area of activation, the use of EAS, if the child was recovered safely, etc. Christine Merritt inquired on the alert activity in 2015 and how it compared to prior years. Lindy Davis shared there were 12 alerts in 2015, 13 alerts in 2014 and back in prior years as low as 8 or 9. She indicated the alerts are consistently within these ranges.

B. Review of Blue Alerts

Captain Kocab indicated there was one (1) Blue Alert for the reporting period. He shared the alert did not meet the criteria and was reissued as a Cop Alert.

C. Review of Endangered Missing Child Alerts

Brent Currence indicated there were eight (8) Endangered Missing Child Alerts for this reporting period and gave a brief overview of each. All children were recovered safely. He indicated in one of the alerts, a two year wondered away from home and had been missing for several days, but safely recovered. He recognized the new CART program and the agencies that came together to locate her.

D. Review of Endangered Missing Adult Alerts

Brent Currence gave an overview of the Endangered Missing Adult Alerts issued for the reporting period. All were recovered safely, with the exception of two (2) individual who were found deceased. He provided a brief overview of the alerts and Sheriff Myers elaborated on the case involving the individual found deceased out of Jefferson County.

E. Airport Update

Captain Kocab shared the airport status has not changed since last reported and they are still in the process of updating their systems. He said if an alert is required it is possible, but would be a manual process. Sheriff Myers inquired about reaching out to other airports in the area to see if they have a similar announcement. Brent Currence said to his knowledge, what the committee is attempting to do with the Port Columbus airport is the first of its kind nationally. He said the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children does notify TSA, but doesn't have the ability to notify the commuters in the airport. Clark Donley suggested with Port Columbus under construction for the next few years, an attempt be made to locate another airport willing to participate in the pilot program. Chief Harris, Sheriff Myers, and Kristin Cadieux will follow up with the airports in their areas.

F. AMBER Website Update

Captain Kocab shared the issues with the character limit and the posting of more than one picture during an alert have been resolved. In addition, the 2016 Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee quarterly meeting schedule was posted.

Brent Currence indicated the Attorney General's Office has updated their alert software. He said the previous software only sent text and the new software now sends a poster. He inquired if the PDF poster could be updated to the AMBER website like a photo. Captain Kocab will follow up on the inquiry. Clark Donley inquired with Brent Currence if they plan to send a photo with their tweets. Brent Currence replied it is not currently set up to send a photo. He said it could be modified, but it is currently preset to save time.

G. Training Update

Captain Kocab provided an update on the alert training completed since the last quarterly meeting, which included two classes for the Portage County Sheriff's Office. There are four classes on the calendar in February for the Marion County Sheriff's Office.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. AMBER Alert Advisory Committee Appointments

Captain Kocab welcomed Leslie Bricker and presented her appointment letter. In addition, he shared appointment confirmation letters were received for himself and Dave Ford.

B. 2015 Ohio Alerts Conference

Captain Kocab provided a recap of the 2016 Ohio Alerts Conference. He shared 153 individuals registered to attend with 128 in attendance. The conference surveys rated the event a 4.5 out of 5.0, with the FBI Case Study and Profiling training receiving a 4.6. The survey comments included easy of registration, well organized, professional, and positive remarks were received reference the Pipes and Drums performance. Suggestions for the next conference includes more case studies. Captain Kocab thanked Lindy Davis and Vicki Germann for their work in organizing the event.

C. Uber

Captain Kocab shared Uber is now an AMBER Alert secondary distributor. Uber drivers will receive information pertaining to any AMBER alert within their geographic region.

D. Front License Plates

Captain Kocab shared House Bill 159 and Senate Bill 202 is going through the legislation process and the recommendation is to maintain the front license plate. Clark Donley shared he was contacted reference conducting interviews or writing op-eds supporting the front license plate. He asked Captain Kocab how he felt about a member of the committee taking a position on a piece of legislation. Captain Kocab replied if a member of the committee, representing their agency, takes a position, he did not feel it was an issue. Christine Merritt shared if it's within the context of the committee member's professional responsibilities, she feels it is acceptable, but if done on behalf of the committee it could be an issue. Brent Currence posed the scenario in which a committee member may have a different position than the rest of the committee. He indicated if the member is speaking on behalf of their agency's point of view he felt they have the right to do so. Harry Trombitas shared he was also contacted and offered to assist as a retired FBI agent, but felt the AMBER Chairperson was the best contact for the committee. He also indicated the committee is in the business of protecting children and leading the charge on doing what's right for finding them. If the front license plate doubles the chances of finding the child, why wouldn't the committee support it? Christine Merritt said it seemed like when either the Endangered Missing Adult or Blue Alert legislation went through, there was some question on whether the committee could take an official position on a piece of legislation. She indicated in terms of testifying or advocating in support of a bill there was some questions raised. Harry Trombitas suggested as a committee we should address this issue now and determine what the committee/committee members can and can't do. Captain Kocab said he would seek guidance from DPS Legal.

E. Boards & Commissions Attendance Requirement

Captain Kocab reminded committee members they are required to attend 3/5 of the quarterly meetings scheduled over a 2 year period. He indicated the committee attendance will be reviewed again in October 2016.

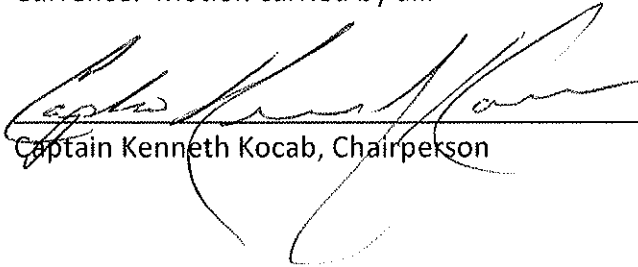
F. 2016 AMBER Alert Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule

Captain Kocab shared the 2016 AMBER Alert Advisory Committee meeting schedule is included in the committee packets and on the website. He indicated in 2017 we would be changing our meeting venue to Department of Public Safety, as we can no longer reserve the current space a year in advance.

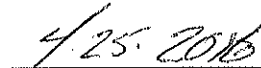
In closing, Captain Kocab asked the committee if they had anything they would like to add. Special Agent Larry McCoy, BCI CART Coordinator, provided a brief overview of the Rainn Peterson Endangered Missing Child case. He indicated this case is a good example of how multiple agencies worked together to locate the child. He said after two days of searching, the two year was found safe in a tree line near her home.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:06 a.m. was made by Christine Merritt, seconded by Brent Currence. Motion carried by all.



Captain Kenneth Kocab, Chairperson



Date