

OHIO AMBER ALERT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**Live In-Person Meeting
2855 W. Dublin-Granville Road
Columbus, Ohio 43235
January 18, 2024**

Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee member, Brent Currence, called to order the January 18, 2024, meeting of the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee at approximately 10:10 am. The first order of business was the roll call taken by Captain Ron Raines.

I. ROLL CALL - PRESENT

IN-PERSON

Ohio AG's Office/Ohio Missing Persons' Clearinghouse	Brent Currence
Ohio Association of Broadcasters	Christine Merritt
Local/Regional AMBER Plan	Clark Donley
Community Member	Harry Trombitas
Victim's Advocate	Kathryn (Ryn) Farmer
Buckeye State Sheriffs Association	Sheriff Jim Crawford
Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police	Chief Clayton Harris
State Emergency Communications Committee	Paul Jellison
Ohio Department of Transportation	Leslie Prater
Ohio State Highway Patrol	Captain Ron Raines

ROLL CALL – ABSENT

Ohio Emergency Management Agency	Brian Castner
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OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ohio State Highway Patrol	S/Lieutenant Kristin Wickman
Ohio State Highway Patrol	Pam Walker
Ohio State Highway Patrol Legal Dept.	Samantha Scherger
Ohio State Highway Patrol	Jeff Grayson
Ohio State Highway Patrol	Jonah Young
Ohio State Highway Patrol	Matt Stegner
Federal Bureau of Investigation	Sandra Burchtold
DAS 911 Program Office	Patrick Brandt
DAS 911 & MARCS	Angie Canera
Ohio EMA	Andrew Elder
Ohio DODD	Russell Blank

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE (via Bridge Call)

Marion County Sheriff's Office	Lydia Frey
Ohio Department of Aging	Erin Pettegrew
CECOMS	Jackie Costa
Ashland County	Brook Massie
Geauga County	Lt. Brandon Reed
Geauga County	Austin Rice

II. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 19, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Brent Currence asked the Ohio Amber Alert Advisory Committee to review the minutes from the October 19, 2023, meeting. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Ryn Farmer. Harry Trombitas seconded. Motion carried by all. Minutes approved.

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. Review of AMBER Alerts:

Staff Lieutenant Wickman gave a recap of the 2023 alerts: there were thirteen (13) alerts in 2023, with seventeen (17) children involved. Sixteen (16) of the children were recovered safely, with one (1) still missing. This investigation is still active. Of the thirteen (13) activations, eight (8) were activated by OSHP Watch Desk and five (5) by CECOMS. Three (3) of the activations were issued statewide, the remaining ten (10) were issued regionally.

Jackie Costa of CECOMS advised:

1. On October 19, 2023, CECOMS was advised by the Cleveland Police Department of the intent to issue an AMBER Alert for 3 y/o female who was abducted by her father. When the investigation revealed the suspect was in the Toledo area, the NCMEC activated the alert in the Northwest Region. At 0041 hours on October 20, 2023, Swanton PD officers located the suspect vehicle and apprehended the suspect after a short pursuit. The child was recovered unharmed.
2. On Sunday, December 24, 2023, CECOMS received a phone call from Lakewood Police advising of their intent to issue an AMBER Alert. The missing child was a 1 y/o black female. The suspect was the biological/custodial mother, a 29 y/o black female. The suspect reportedly used a ride share service to flee with the child following the domestic incident at the residence. This made it difficult to determine the type of vehicle or the license plate for the vehicle. On December 29, the child was brought in to the Lakewood Police Department. The child appeared to be healthy and was turned over to Child and Family Services. The mother turned herself in to Lakewood Police.

Notes: Matt Stegner advised Lakewood PD contracted LEADS Control for and AMBER Alert activation, and LEADS advised it did not meet the criteria due to it being a biological parent. This resulted in a delayed activation, and the issue was addressed with LEADS. Christine Merrick asked if there could be an agreement with the ride sharing companies. Jackie Costa advised they were working on it.

WEA message update:

S/Lt. Wickman advised that the 360-character message section in WEA has updated from 90-characters and is active. She explained the difference and why they asked to increase it.

B. Review of Blue Alerts:

Capt. Raines advised there were no Blue Alerts for this quarter.

C. Review of Endangered/Missing Child Alerts:

1. On October 30, 2023, the Willard Police Department requested an Endangered Missing Child Alert for a 15 y/o female, last seen leaving her home. She is a diabetic and had a limited amount of medication with her. The child was recovered safely on November 2, 2023, in Dayton, Ohio.
2. On January 2, 2024, the Lima Police Department requested an Alert for a missing 16 y/o female who suffers from extreme Scoliosis. Further investigation showed there was evidence of internet enticement from a 31 y/o adult male. The two had made arrangements for him to pick her up. She was recovered safely at the suspect's home in Florida.

D. Review of Endangered/Missing Adult Alerts:

Mr. Currence advised there were forty-nine (49) Endangered/Missing Adult Alerts this quarter. Forty-six (46) were found safe, three (3) were not.

E. Alerts Training Update:

Captain Raines advised there were three (3) Regional Training Sessions in the fourth quarter of 2023, bringing the total for the year to twelve (12), eight (8) were proactive sessions around the state and four (4) were requested by other agencies. These trainings resulted in 308 officers and dispatchers trained.

F. 2024 Alerts Conference Review:

Clark Donley has been selected for the 2024 Alerts Conference Subcommittee Chairperson. Captain Raines is asking for volunteers to contact Clark to serve on this committee. Those volunteers include: Brent Currence, Capt. Raines, Christine Merritt, Ryn Farmer, Russell Blank and Matt Stegner.

G. Governor's Appointment Update:

The appointment of Erin Pettegrew is the only appointment still pending as per Captain Raines. New applications for reappointment will need completed for all appointees in the fall of 2024.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Russell Blank, Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD):

Russell Blank from the department of developmental disabilities was introduced as a stakeholder who will be attending future committee meetings. He discussed training for law-enforcement regarding police contacts with individuals with disabilities, as well as House Bill 321, which would create an electronic special needs database.

Amber Alert Video Update:

Jeff Grayson introduced Jonah Young to the committee. Jonah will also be working on the scripts for the video(s). Scripts for the AMBER Alert videos are in production. The phases of production for other videos were detailed.

Ohio EMA advised they have a job posting for a Technical Service Administrator, who would become a participant in these committee meetings to assist with technical difficulties pertaining to IPAWS.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Christine Merritt and seconded by Paul Jellison. Meeting was adjourned.


Brent Currence, Chairperson


Date