DIV 113 TO COMMAND: THIS IS YOUR 300-MINUTE BENCHMARK
BY DENIS FELLOWS, FIRE CHIEF, PLYMOUTH FIRE DEPARTMENT

It was 6:03am, Thursday November 9, 2017 when Dispatch alerted Command of the 300-minute benchmark. The Plymouth Fire Department along with numerous other agencies had been on scene for over five hours! About half of those responders had spent time at another Division 113 (Sheboygan County) MABAS Box that occurred just prior to this incident. That was for a structure fire in Elkhart Lake, just 10 miles north of Plymouth.

At 12:53am, a fire was reported in a two-story downtown structure that had buildings adjoining it on both sides. The red brick building, located at 408 East Mill Street, contained five apartments.

Upon arrival, there were varying reports of fire in the ceiling, fire in the floor, and smoke in different apartments. At 1:01am, a Plymouth Police officer told me that a 46-year-old female was missing. She reportedly went back into the building looking for her kids.

I observed heavy smoke showing from the second story. Initial companies advanced two hose lines upstairs and one line to the first floor. Upon going around to the rear of the building and seeing heavy smoke there also, I requested a box alarm from MABAS Division 113 using Card 16-1-1.

Crews were knocking down fires in the first-floor apartments, but were unable to advance on the second story due to heat and flame conditions. We made an aggressive attack that went on for an hour that did not seem like an hour before calling for an evacuation due to possible flashover and went defensive (attacking from the outside).

We could not fight the fire from the east or west sides of the fire building due to the adjoining structures. At 1:51am, we upgraded card 16-1-1 to the second alarm.

The fire building was built over 120 years ago. In the early 1900’s, it was a movie theatre. In the 1960’s, the building became a dentist office with two apartments above. It was then converted to all apartments in the seventies.

Later, we discovered that the remodeling over the years created a 4.5-foot void space between the first and second floor. Fire started in a lower unit and got into the void space.

In downtown Plymouth, many structures abut each other. The fire building had floor trusses built into walls of exposure buildings, which had apartments and storefronts.

In total, upstairs were 4 separate buildings and the lower levels contained 3 separate buildings due to expansions over the years.

Our main concern was preventing spread to the other buildings.

At 2:09am, we activated a 3rd alarm. We still had one civilian unaccounted for.

Fourth and fifth alarms boxes were sounded for additional manpower at 3:36am.

(Continued on page 3)
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE  BY KEVIN BIERCE, CHIEF, PEWAUKEE FIRE DEPARTMENT, AND PRESIDENT, MABAS WISCONSIN

Good Day!

Hope this finds each of you doing well as we march into the New Year! As I write this, the first MABAS Division Presidents Weekend is only a few days away.

Although we fell short of our goal of 100% participation, I am excited to see us, as an organization, moving forward.

Hopefully we can build off this weekend and have some strong points to take home to share within our Divisions.

The objective of the weekend is to continue to foster our commitment to make MABAS a reliable resource to serve the Incident Commander when needed.

No doubt, the world of MABAS continues to strengthen, with more calls, more divisions, more people. It will take an increase in commitment from each of us to meet the demands in front of us.

I know, each of us, already feel that we are 110%. Unfortunately those of us who have chosen to be leaders (or have had it thrust upon us) have to keep strengthening those bonds between us. If we share the load the challenges become clearer and the mission a little easier!

We look forward to seeing you this weekend, if not you, your representative. Our Next Division Call will be at the Conference, please make sure to jot it down!

As always, if you need assistance within your Division or just need some clarification on what or how MOTHER MABAS works, feel free to give me a call. ‘Till the Next Box...

MABAS WISCONSIN CORPORATE SPONSORS

As a 501(c)(3) organization, MABAS Wisconsin relies on donations and sponsors to further its mission of mutual aid, associated systems and training. We thank the following organizations for their sponsorship:

**Mutual Aid Labs** provides world-class software to emergency services agencies without regard to their size. For too long size and budget has dictated the quality of technology available to these agencies, Mutual Aid Labs will provide software that revolutionizes processes and procedures, in such a way that it does not place undue burden on an agency’s budget.

Mutual Aid Labs is the provider of **EMABAS** full electronic implementation of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS).

**EMABAS** converts box cards from static data to dynamic documents that change as departments and agencies change; EMABAS transforms the manner in which you plan and respond.

The desktop version of **EMABAS** provides the main interface for creating and using box cards. It also provides interfaces into resources, contacts, dispatch and reporting. Additionally the system has the ability to aid agencies in the use of MABAS during actual Calls.

**Paul Conway Fire** is America’s #1 Helmet Shield Manufacturer and an industry leader in providing the highest quality in protective gear and safety equipment since 1985. We take great pride in supporting the men and women who selflessly protect and serve our communities.

**Paul Conway Safety** division serves individuals and businesses within the industrial safety field. From first aid to hard hats, protective eyewear to fall protection, traffic safety, respiratory to hearing protection, safety apparel and more.

**Paul Conway Law Enforcement/Tactical** division specializes in providing top-level products and services that you can depend on when it matters most. We are also a major U.S. dealer for Oncall® Body Worn Camera and the OnCall® Live Video System.

Our **Custom Shop** specializes in Gold Leaf vehicle graphics, stripping, decals, embroidery, customized command boards, banners, signs and more.

Mission

*MABAS Wisconsin is the organization that promotes the development, implementation, and sustainment of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) within the state of Wisconsin.*
We had teams searching the abutting buildings for fire extension. As additional engines hooked up to nearby hydrants, the ladder truck from the Town of Sheboygan lost water pressure. At 5:23am, we special called for 2 additional engines to draft from the Mullet River Dam site.

The Manitowoc County Sheriff’s Office put drones into operation which enabled us to see areas and check for heat signatures that were not visible from our ladder trucks.

A strike team from MABAS Division 120 was requested to assist in overhaul and victim search.

At the 450-minute benchmark (8:33am), we struck out the box.

The missing person was located under rubble, deceased, around 10am. The last Fire units were released by 12:30pm.

How did MABAS Help?
By Denis Fellows

MABAS make life easier! MABAS is used a lot in the county and response is great. Dispatch has regular drills that makes things go very smoothly. We also use a MABAS Advisor (knows MABAS very well) that goes to dispatch to assist. MABAS helped to get fresh resources - a strike team of engines.

Without MABAS, there would have been slower dispatching with delays deciding who to send. The fire would have spread more, as without MABAS, there wouldn't have been enough resources. The preplanning that comes with MABAS is key.

No changes needed to box cards. We dramatically reduced our box cards the year prior and eliminated box cards by area of city, and just went to one card per type. We now planned for the worst-case scenario. This allows us to know the box card number immediately upon being called out. Dispatch knows it also.
I was notified at 3:07am on November 9th, 2017, that the Plymouth Fire Department was at the 3rd Box Level and was given an update by MABAS Division 113 Communications Center.

I immediately called Fond du Lac County Division 120 Communications Center advising them they may be requested for a Strike Team.

I then relayed the same message to Calumet County Division 122. Being Division President of 122, I notified the Chiefs of the situation as well. I then notified Badger Red and Fire Services Coordinator Tim Haas.

Throughout the morning I was in touch with Division 113 President Steve Dickman on the progress of the scene.

Because some of the firefighters on scene were at the Elkhart Lake structure fire the night before, Plymouth command requested a Strike Team of Engines from Division 120.

At this point, the crews on scene were in overhaul.

A Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) from the New Holstein Fire Department in MABAS Division 122 was requested to stand by.
FEEDBACK FROM THE ANNUAL MABAS CONFERENCE
By Gary Schmidt, Editor, MABAS Wisconsin Newsletter

Throughout the 2017 MABAS Command & Dispatch Conference held in Stevens Point, I asked participants (including some from MABAS-IL) for feedback on their individual experiences with MABAS:

FIRE OFFICERS: WHAT ASPECT OF MABAS HAVE YOU FOUND TO BE MOST VALUABLE?

“It makes the job of a new company officer or incident commander easier as there are less things for them to be worried about”

“Preplanning inherent in the cards”

“You get resources quickly”

“It’s ready to go”

“The abundance of resources that are available”

“Don’t need to think to get help – request it and it shows up”

“Give me this and it’s done”

“Pre-scripted - I know what I am getting”

“Helping other communities in interdivisional requests”

“Knowing you have help coming makes me feel more secure in the management of an incident”

“Preplanned resources by just asking for a box alarm”

DISPATCHERS: WHAT ASPECT OF MABAS HAVE YOU FOUND TO BE MOST VALUABLE?

“Preplanned cards are laid out very well, easy to read, easy to understand, filled out on every box level. Anytime I grab a card, they are ready to go – I never have any questions on things specified on the cards”

“Having the card right there in front of us”

“Request for additional resources is more orderly”

“Not having to guess what they (in the field) need as it is right in front of us”

“The box card”

“Knowing that when the IC calls for a box, we know what is needed”

“Not having to remember each and every resource the fire chief wants – can run with the box card given”

“Ease of having it all ready”

“Makes my life a ton easier – takes a lot less time dispatching apparatus”

“Box cards if filled out completely and consistently”

“Scripted resources – no longer scrambling to find out what did the fire chief say”

MABAS-IL: WHAT ASPECT OF MABAS HAVE YOU FOUND TO BE MOST VALUABLE?

“Box cards – one call does it all”

“Getting equipment & manpower when needed”

HERE ARE THE DIVISIONS THAT WERE SURVEYED:

WHAT IS THIS THAT WAS STATIONED OUTSIDE THE 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE?

Find out in the next newsletter issue
I have been dispatching for 24 years and have been personally involved in approximately 12 MABAS calls. We normally have 2 dispatchers on duty.

My first MABAS call was around September of 2011. I would have to say I had the normal unease anybody has when doing something new for the first time, especially something like MABAS where it seemed like there was a lot to remember and steps to take. MABAS was very new to us back then.

Our dispatch center has always used mutual aid for any large incidents. I am sure like most other dispatch centers, it consisted of somebody from the initial fire department asking for resources based upon what he or she could remember what other departments had to offer.

When we first decided to become a MABAS division, three trainers and the supervisor from our dispatch center attended a training session with the local fire departments. The three trainers then came back and, as time permitted, went over with the rest of us what they had learned in training.

Subsequently, a dispatcher from Walworth county, who had experience in using MABAS, came and did a training session with our dispatch center.

The one thing about my first box that stands out in my mind was confusion over how change of quarters worked (specifically when a unit that was at change of quarters was supposed to go to the incident if they changed box levels; i.e. 2nd to 3rd box).

I remember one of the main points stressed in training was that the MABAS system should help things go smoother, especially at the beginning of a call, due to the pre-planning of resources. I recall some of the dispatchers questioning that.

I hope most of them have come to the realization, like I have, that it is much simpler to have somebody give us a card number and alarm level.

Prior to MABAS, commanders in the field would talk for minutes on the radio requesting equipment from several different departments and hoping we didn’t miss something they asked for.

With over 10 MABAS events under my belt, I use a system (like most dispatchers at my agency) where I keep track right on a copy of the card when each piece of equipment goes enroute, arrives on scene, and clears from the scene. I also keep notes on the card when agencies take a pass and what has replaced them.

It is a general practice of my agency when we have any type of large incident to have one person try to handle anything to do with the call; that person also knows they can ask their partner if they need assistance with anything. We try to do the same thing with a MABAS call.

I would like to advise any county that is not already a MABAS division and is thinking about becoming one to try to have at least one dispatcher who works the desk on a regular basis sit in on the process from the beginning.

It seems a lot of times there is confusion and misunderstanding as to what the fire departments expect from dispatch and vice versa. This opens the lines of communication to everybody involved and will hopefully make the process a smoother one.

Your contributions to the various columns will make this newsletter a success. Let us know about your MABAS response activity at garyschmidt@wi.rr.com. In particular, pictures are needed of actual emergencies or Division-wide training events.
One of the sessions for Dispatchers offered at the 2017 MABAS Conference was “All Dressed Up & Somewhere To Go”.

This session gave dispatchers the opportunity to enhance their knowledge of fire ground operations by receiving hands-on experience with the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) firefighters wear.

The purpose was to gain a better understanding of what may be happening on the fire ground and what type of equipment failures may occur.

Being able to visualize the firefighter experience may assist the dispatcher in interpreting sounds that may be heard over the radio at the next emergency.

Following the classroom session, the dispatchers were actually able to experience part of what the firefighter may be exposed to upon entering a burning structure.

While high heat conditions couldn’t be replicated (although those wearing the gear may dispute that), low visibility due to smoke conditions were simulated by covering the facepiece.

The participants were outfitted with bunker pants, boots, turnout coats, helmets, and self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).

As in a fire, participants entered the course in pairs.

They transitioned their way through a confidence course designed to give a flavor of what it is like for a firefighter to navigate their way though an unfamiliar area.

Note: not all class sessions are presented every year.

If this is something you may be interested in for the 2018 conference, please contact Quentin Popp at qhpfire@gmail.com.

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Encountering obstacles. Remember, the facepiece is obscured; they can only feel their way. (All photos this page by Gary Schmidt)
Thiensville fire calls test response system

A Thiensville home sustained about $150,000 in damage in a blaze that offered a textbook case for the mutual aid emergency response system known as MABAS, Thiensville Fire Chief Brian Reiels said Saturday.

MABAS, the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, calls member departments within a region to assist in larger incidents or cover other calls while firefighters are already out in the field.

According to Reiels, Thiensville police and firefighters were called to the home in the 500 block of Rosedale Drive at 9:42 p.m. Friday for a fire that was quickly updated to a MABAS alarm, according to a news release. Several agencies responded, including Mequon, North Shore, Cedarburg, Saukville and Port Washington fire departments; the Mequon Police Department; State Patrol and Cedarburg Emergency Government.

Ten minutes into that blaze, the Thiensville Fire Department got a call from a senior living complex in the 200 block of Green Bay Road, and MABAS units were sent there to find light smoke conditions.

No one was injured in the house fire, and a minor injury was reported at the senior complex, Reiels said.
WHAT IS MABAS (MUTUAL AID BOX ALARM SYSTEM)?  BY GARY SCHMIDT

Using MABAS, when your Fire Department responds to an incident, they respond with a preplanned set of resources/vehicles appropriate for the situation. This may be augmented further upon confirmation of a working incident.

This first alarm set of resources is often referred to as a Working Still.

When conditions require another “set of resources” or alarm, the Incident Commander (IC) will use MABAS to request resources from other departments ("mutual aid").

By using MABAS, the IC is assured of:
- A specific minimum number of firefighters per unit type
- A specific level of training/certification of responders
- The other departments will have the same radio frequencies
- The other departments will use the same terminology
- All costs and liabilities are borne by the outside departments coming to the stricken community
- Other departments will cover the community having the incident
- As many additional “sets” (alarms) as needed can be called for

This allows the IC to focus on the emergency at hand and the tactics to be deployed.

The inherent standardization by all MABAS departments enables a fast, efficient response to an escalating emergency situation.

This saves lives, minimizes property damage, and can prevent economic devastation to the local community.

In 2009, a meatpacking plant fire in Cudahy WI, had 16 additional alarm sets called for, involving 64 Fire Departments.

At left is the MABAS Box Alarm Card format that lists the preplanned resources.

MABAS is used in Wisconsin, Illinois, and other neighboring States, providing for a regional solution to a local problem.

Since all departments in all States using MABAS listen to the same radio frequency, one transmission will notify numerous departments. Such interoperability is key to the success of MABAS.

Wisconsin is fortunate to have developed a state wide system of Incident Management Teams (IMT). Currently the southeast, southwest, northeast and north central regions have active teams along with teams in the State Patrol, Department of Corrections and Natural Resources.

These teams are comprised of incident command specialists from disciplines such as the fire service, law enforcement, EMS and hospitals and public works. An IMT can be requested through your local emergency manager and are free.

A team does not take command but assists where needed. In a large scale or long duration incident, that may be tracking resources or logistics, running staging or work in an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
Incident Reporting Is Very Important

This newsletter issue is focused on the largest MABAS deployments to date, however, MABAS is used every day to prevent local incidents from becoming large, thereby saving lives and saving money by minimizing property loss. The value of MABAS cannot be understated, yet it is difficult to communicate that message across the State without an effective method to track the MABAS success story.

Incidents Entered May 1, 2017 thru July 31, 2017

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<th>Div.</th>
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<td>Brush Fire</td>
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Enter your email address and name and click “subscribe.”

Each new issue of the newsletter will be delivered to your Inbox along with pertinent MABAS Wisconsin announcements.
Incident Reporting Is Easy To Do

MABAS Wisconsin has a tool in place to log the use of MABAS. The Incident Entry Portal can be accessed via http://incident.mabaswisconsin.org or through http://www.mabaswisconsin.org using the Databases drop down box.

To enter an incident, login with a UserID of mabas and a password of wisconsin. After the initial entry, Departments need their specific credentials to alter the incident information or to alter the other information on the site about their department. Departments should contact their Division President for the login information.

<table>
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<td>Structure - Hydrant</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/9/2017 3:53</td>
<td>S108 W27525 Maple Ave</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>MUKWONAGO FIRE DEPT</td>
<td>Life Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/21/2017 0:35</td>
<td>820 Delaware Ave</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>GRAFTON VOL FIRE DEPT INC</td>
<td>Structure - Hydrant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/28/2017 8:20</td>
<td>E7643 430th Ave</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>MENOMONIE FIRE DEPT</td>
<td>Structure - Hydrant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/30/2017 21:20</td>
<td>1212 W Glen Oaks Lane</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>MEQUON FIRE DEPT</td>
<td>Structure - Non Hydrant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Organized 2004
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157 – Vernon County
158 – Ashland County
159 – Taylor County
160 – Sawyer County

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IFERN MABAS Alerting / intra-Divisional responses
IFERN2 Alternate intra-Divisional responses
MABAS1 (WISCOM) Inter-Divisional Responses
Contact with Wisconsin Red Center
MABAS2 (WISCOM) Regional Coordinators - WEM Coordination* *Future use