

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR RESPONDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES:  
ARE WE READY?**

**EXECUTIVE ANALYSIS OF FIRE SERVICE OPERATIONS IN EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT**

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## ABSTRACT

The problem was that since the terrorist attacks on 9-11-01 the likelihood of large-scale incidents involving multi-day deployment has increased significantly. These incidents no longer face only metropolitan areas: any fire department in the nation could be first-in to a large scale incident. Being one of the responders deployed to ground zero, my department and I faced the problems associated with family preparedness and communications during a multi-day deployment. Through discussions of lessons learned, the Portage Fire Department discovered that emergency responders and their families are often ill prepared to deal with the issues involved in these type events. The purpose of this research is to identify the criteria for developing a guide for emergency responders and their families in the event of a multi-day deployment. This was a combination of descriptive and action research methodology. The research questions were:

1. What, if any, are the national and industry criteria, related to emergency preparedness, for emergency responders and their families in the event of a multi-day deployment?
2. What, if any, are the state criteria, related to emergency preparedness, for emergency responders and their families in the event of a multi-day deployment?
3. What, if any, are the criteria that departments of similar size use or used to develop an emergency preparedness guide for emergency responders and their families in the event of a multi-day deployment?

4. What are the criteria for the development of a Portage Fire Department's Emergency Responder Family Preparedness Guide in the event of a multi-day deployment?

The author reviewed past Applied Research Projects (ARP), fire service periodicals, texts, journals, and Internet resources. Additionally, two feedback instruments were developed to poll fire service agencies and emergency responders within the United States.

As a result of this research the author found that the Portage Fire Department, like most agencies had not contemplated how a multi-day, large-scale event would affect it's personnel, families of the personnel, and the department. The recommendation, based on this study, was for the Portage Fire Department to develop additional Standard Operating Guidelines to enhance departmental readiness to respond to large-scale incidents and support the families of deployed members.

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## INTRODUCTION

Since the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, the potential for long-term deployment of fire service personnel has become more likely. “[T]here are people out there who continue to wish to do us harm, and the conventional wisdom says that until we defeat our enemies and win the Global War on Terrorism, we can reasonably expect 9/11 will not be an isolated incident” (Marghella, 2004, p. 10).

Previously only Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) task forces, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) personnel, or departments with large-scale wildfire responsibilities would face the possibility of rapid deployment to a disaster scene. These scenes could be a multi-day local event with an all-hands response, or could require a regional, state or national deployment hundreds or perhaps thousands of miles from home. How prepared are we in the fire service, and how prepared are the families of emergency service personnel for a call up of responders? What impacts would a multi-day deployment of personnel have on the family unit and departmental infrastructure?

Having been one of the responders deployed to ground zero following the September 11, 2001 attacks, the author and his department faced the problems associated with family preparedness and communications during a multi-day deployment. Through discussions of lessons learned, the Portage Fire Department discovered that many departments, the emergency responders within those departments and their families are often ill-prepared to deal with the issues involved in these type events. The purpose of this research is to identify the criteria for developing a guide for emergency responders and their families in the event of a multi-day deployment. This was a combination of descriptive and action research methodology. The research questions were:

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3. What, if any, are the criteria that departments of similar size use or used to develop an emergency preparedness guide for emergency responders and their families in the event of a multi-day deployment?
4. What are the criteria for the development of a Portage Fire Department Emergency Responder Family Preparedness Guide in the event of a multi-day deployment?

### **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The City of Portage is a 35 square mile suburban community in southwest Michigan. The community is well planned with a blend of industrial, commercial, and retail businesses including a regional shopping mall. The city has a large percentage of single-family homes along with apartments and condominiums, many parks, ponds and six lakes.

A regional airport sits immediately adjacent to the city. Portage shares a boundary with the City of Kalamazoo and together make up the major portion of the population base in the metropolitan area. Portage has a population of 45,000, while the metropolitan region has a total population of 318,706 (State of Michigan, 2003).

The Portage Fire Department is a small combination department of 36 career personnel and 24 paid on-call firefighters operating out of three fire stations. Twenty-nine personnel are assigned to the PFD Fire Suppression Division, twenty-seven working a 24-hour shift on a 54-hour workweek, and two working 8-hour shifts on a 40-hour workweek, providing fire suppression, technical, heavy rescue, fire inspections and first responder emergency medical services to our citizens. The Suppression Division has three Battalion Chiefs, nine Captains, and 15 Firefighters. Daily staffing minimums require 7 personnel on-duty with a Captain and firefighter assigned to each station, and a Battalion Chief assigned to Station 1. Seven personnel are assigned to administration on a 40-hour workweek; the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief (operations), Deputy Fire Chief (administration), Fire Marshal, and Training Captain. Completing the personnel roster are two department secretaries who are civilian employees assigned to administration.

Consider the impact on the emergency responder and his/her family when the responder is sent out of the local response area to aid another community, especially when the responder may be gone for several days or longer. The responder's family is left behind, often to fend for themselves, yet they are still on the minds of the responder while working at the emergency scene. Their attention and concentration is split between concerns for the welfare of the family they love and the responsibilities of the profession and people they chose to serve and protect.

As one of the responder's deployed to New York City following the attacks on September 11, 2001, the author and a team deployed by his department were confronted with many issues the agency had never faced before.

Within hours of the aircraft striking the twin towers, plans were in place to assist with the rescue and recovery effort. Quickly, decisions were made as to which team members would be deployed to New York. Those members hastily packed essential items, notified family members of the deployment, readied equipment and packed vehicles for the trip.

Many questions were unanswered. How would communications occur from a disaster site where large areas were without power? How would the families fare without us, knowing the team would be working at what was the most significant disaster site that the United States had ever faced? The media was reporting on the collapse of the twin towers and how unsafe the buildings and area surrounding “ground zero” was. These reports weighed heavily on the minds of our families as we left for New York City.

Interestingly, before September 11, 2001 most emergency service agencies had never seriously considered response to a disaster the magnitude of such as those that occurred at the World Trade Centers, the Pentagon, and in rural Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, the results of this research indicate that few agencies have done much regarding preparing for multi-day incident deployments or support of member’s families.

Prior to deployment to New York, we obtained a two-way alphanumeric pager; we also had cell phones from two different cellular carriers. We worked in unison with another Michigan agency that had cellular communications capabilities from a third cellular carrier. Once on-scene, we found communications out of ground zero to be spotty and problematic at best. Interestingly, the most consistently reliable means of communication was the two-way alphanumeric pager. It worked when none of the cellular phones would obtain a signal.

As a result, giving updates and just making sure that the department and family members knew we were all right when the media reported that additional problems were occurring at the site was challenging. Not much thought had been put into on-going updates to family members since it had never been required before. As a result, no standard operating guideline or policy had ever been developed.

### **Relevancy to the Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency**

#### **Management Class**

This Applied Research Project (ARP) relates to Unit 4: Developing Resources and the Emergency Operations Center taught in the *Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management* course of the Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). During an emergency it is the executive fire officer's job to ensure that the fire department remain true to the priority system established in the plan (FEMA, 2004, p. SM 4-12).

### **Relevancy to the United States Fire Administration Operational Objectives**

The fourth USFA Operational Objective is to promote within communities a comprehensive, multi-hazard risk-reduction plan led by the fire service. Aiding emergency responders and their families to be prepared for major incidents that require mutual assistance deployments, is a portion of multi-hazard planning within the fire service.

The fifth USFA Operational Objective is to respond appropriately in a timely manner to emerging issues. The need for first responder and family preparedness in an emerging issue that few departments have considered or planned for. Yet, the families of responders will be affected upon any multi-day deployment.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Former FEMA Director, Joe Allbaugh said:

We live in a different world than we did before September 11, 2001. We are more aware of our vulnerabilities, more appreciative of our freedoms and more understanding that we have a personal responsibility for the safety of our families, our neighbors and our nation.

(FEMA, 2002, p. i)

“Disasters disrupt hundreds of thousands of lives each year. Each disaster has lasting effects -- people are seriously injured, some are killed, and property damage runs into the billions of dollars” (FEMA, 2002, p. 1). “We cannot stop these disasters from occurring, but we can limit their impact on us, and those we love” (State of Washington, p. 1). “Being prepared and understanding what to do can reduce fear, anxiety and losses that accompany disasters” (FEMA, 2002, p. 1).

In the October 2004 issue of *Homeland Defense Journal*, Dr. Pietro Marghella stated:

If the events of September 11, 2001, forcibly awakened us to the fact that there are bad people out there who wish to do us great harm...and that we were as a nation extremely vulnerable and ill-prepared for a major terrorist attack, then the recent revelations of that al-Quaida planned to do

significantly more than what they ended up accomplishing should be causing us insomnia. It appears that, at least at the federal government level, we finally recognize that the potential exists for a historically unprecedented attack- one in which is entirely plausible that we may see casualties and fatalities that run into the tens of thousands or, perhaps, beyond. (Marghella, 2004, p. 8)

Dr. Marghella continues stating, “[t]he homeland is now the battlefield. What we previously thought of as absurd -- in terms of threats -- are now entirely possible. The next attack could occur at any time, anywhere in the United States” (Marghella, 2004, p. 9).

### **America Prepared?**

Prior to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, emergency management personnel had been advising the American public to prepare themselves for disaster situations. “There is no hard and fast definition of what constitutes a disaster. Sometimes a disaster develops quickly, hitting you full-force with little or no warning. Other times, a disaster looms on the horizon for weeks until it becomes large enough to be a threat” (Griffith, 1999).

The major focus was on being able to weather natural disasters as the United States has a propensity for mother nature to show her power on a regular basis. The push had been for citizens to prepare a Disaster Supplies Kit and a family disaster plan. The intent of such a kit was to have enough supplies for an emergency, readily available, and packed in some form of a bag to be self-sufficient for up to 72 hours. Recommendations include six basics you should stock in your kit: water, food, first aid supplies, clothing

and bedding, tools and emergency supplies, and special items. Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy-to carry container. Possible containers include a large, covered trash container, a camping backpack, or a duffle bag (American Red Cross, 2004). The plan would include where family members would meet if separated at the time of the disaster, and a communications plan to identify a family member or friend out of the immediate disaster area to use as a communications hub for family members to report in to. The message from emergency response officials has always been consistent regarding disaster preparedness. “The primary responsibility to prepare for and respond to emergencies rests with individual members and families” (Provident Living, 2004). In short, be prepared by developing a family disaster plan and when a disaster occurs, work your plan. “[B]e prepared to make changes as necessary to provide protection and care for your family” (International Pentecostal Holiness Church, 2004).

While we were putting this message out to the general population, how seriously did emergency response agencies and their personnel take it? As indicated previously, the author’s agency had never before considered the need for such preparedness; after all, we were an emergency response organization. We were prepared...or were we?

### **The World Post 9-11**

Certainly the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> have brought us all to the realization that terrorist attacks can happen in the United States. “Terrorist goals are to destabilize governments and panic citizens. Being prepared ahead of time can reassure you and your children that you can have a measure of control even in the face of such events”

(Michigan State Police, 2004). “Any community in the country could become a target. We know this now” (Grow, 2001).

“When the attacks happened, we were shocked but not surprised. The Army and others have told us that those things were out there,” said Paul Christian, Chief of the Boston Fire Department (Grow, 2001).

Captain Doug Mummert of the Phoenix Fire Department said, “I think nationwide and worldwide that the incident of September 11, 2001, took a lot of people by surprise. The events of September 11 have changed us all, and Americans must adapt to the times” (Grow, 2001).

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the Emergency Management Division of the Michigan State Police developed a Family Preparedness Guide to help Michigan residents become better prepared. In its opening comments, Captain John Ort states:

Since the horrific events of September 11th, there are certain steps we must take to protect Michigan families from the known and unknown threats that may confront us. This Emergency and Family Preparedness Guide has been created to help you develop an emergency plan.

Working with neighbors in an emergency can save lives and property. Meet with your community members to plan how you could work together until help arrives. We all have a responsibility to be ready.

(Michigan State Police, 2004)

While we have focused on civilian family preparedness planning, the results have been less than inspiring in many communities. Most civilians have a belief that

emergency services are provided as a community service. How necessary is it for them to be prepared to take care of things on their own for several days? John Eversole, recently retired chief of special functions for the Chicago Fire Department, stated:

If anything happens to your family, you know you can pick up the phone, call 911, and you expect that in three-to-five minutes, there's going to be a Rhodes scholar decathlon team that is going to roll up...That doesn't just happen. That only happens because there are a lot of people who had planned and trained and fought for budgets. (Grow, 2001)

Following the recovery effort of September 11, 2001, the federal government renewed the push for citizen preparedness. In 2002, President Bush, during his State of the Union address, urged people to join the new Citizen Corp and to help strengthen American homes and communities: “My call tonight is for every American to commit at least two years - 4,000 hours over the rest of your lifetime - to the service of your neighbors and your nation” (Chin, 2004, p. 15).

In the last three years, citizen preparedness groups have sprung up across the United States seeking to motivate the public to take responsibility for their own welfare. Organized initiatives like Citizen Corps and Ready, under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and campaigns such as America Prepared, a nonprofit organization, are trying to spark citizen readiness in Americans before the next disaster or terrorist event (Chin, 2004, p. 14).

One of the most prominent ventures in citizen preparedness is CERT, founded in 1985 by Frank Borden, then an assistant fire chief with the Los Angeles City Fire Department. The program trained volunteers in basic skills, including fire suppression,

hazard control, medical operations, and search and rescue. Volunteers were trained on the premise that, in the event of a major disaster, they were the “first, first responders,” able to organize relief efforts and aid the injured until professional response agencies arrived on scene. In 1993, FEMA, which became part of the DHS in March 2003, sponsored a nationwide CERT initiative and created a standardized set of courses to promote consistency in all CERT students and instructors (Chin, 2004, p. 15).

Even long-standing crime prevention groups such as Neighborhood Watch were jump-started. Eric Schultz, project director of USAonWatch, a national program created by the National Sheriffs' Association to invigorate Neighborhood Watch groups, says his organization works closely with Citizen Core Councils and supports CERT Training. In January 2002, USAonWatch began operating as a Web site program, with its main goal of doubling the existing 7,500 Neighborhood Watch groups by December, 2003. “Meet the Challenge” and by mid-December 2003, the organization had signed up another 8,200 new Neighborhood Watch programs across country (Chin, 2004, p. 17).

“In the winter of 2003, DHS launched its Ready campaign, which provides Web based guidelines for dealing with CBRNE terrorist attacks. At *www.ready.gov*, individuals can learn how to make a kit, get a communications plan and get informed about preparedness” (Chin, 2004, p. 17).

The Ready campaign also has a component that focuses on emergency preparedness for business. Ready Business outlines commonsense measures business owners and managers can take to start getting ready. America's businesses formed the backbone of the nation's economy; small businesses alone account for more than 99 percent of all companies with employees, employ 50 percent of all private sector workers

and provide nearly 45 percent of the nation's payroll. How quickly your company can get back to business after a terrorist attack or a tornado, a fire or flood often depends on emergency planning done today. Though each situation is unique, any organization can be better prepared if it plans carefully, puts emergency procedures in place, and practices for emergencies of all kinds” (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2004).

The America Prepared campaign began in October, 2003, a nonprofit organization harnessing the energy and talent of national leaders in emergency preparedness, government, media, marketing and business. In September, the campaign distributed preparedness brochures to 10 million school children, and is initiating a Ready Deputy Contest where schools nominate the most “ready” families in the community (Chin, 2004, p. 17).

Preparedness outreach extends to Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, whose members can earn an “Emergency Preparedness, the First 72 Hours” merit badge (Wagman, 2003, p. 39). The basic aims of Scouting include teaching youth to take care of themselves, to be helpful to others, and to develop courage, self-reliance, and the will to be ready to serve in an emergency. The Emergency Preparedness BSA program is planned to inspire the desire and foster the skills to meet this challenge in our youth and adult members so that they can participate effectively in this crucial service to their families, communities, and nation. “The emergencies of today's world demand more than ever that our young people and adults be trained as individuals and as units to meet emergency situations” (Boy Scouts of America, 2004).

In spite of this huge push for civilian preparedness, it appears we are still not making a significant impact. Scott Baltic, Editor of *Homeland Protection Professional Magazine* states:

The Harvard School of Public Health Project on the Public and Biological Security released a study reporting the although most Americans (73 percent) knew the alert level the nation was under, few had made evacuation plans or arrangements for “sheltering in place” as government officials have been recommending. The study also found that few respondents (out of just over 1,000) had recently visited websites offering preparedness information.

Although about one in four of those surveyed said they given some thought to drawing up an evacuation plan for themselves and their families, fewer than half of those had actually done so, and only 4 percent overall said they'd practiced such a plan. (Baltic, 2004, p. 6)

Natasha Chin wrote in *Homeland First Response Magazine*:

On July 21st, a survey conducted by the American Red Cross and Wirthlin Worldwide reported that only one in 10 American households has a family emergency plan, a disaster kit, and training in first-aid and CPR. Citizen complacency becomes an issue in recruitment. What does it take to get people motivated to commit to a training program like CERT? (Chin, 2004, p. 16)

"September is the culmination of all our efforts with National Preparedness Month," said Steven Brill, author of *After: How America Confronted The September 12th Era* (Chin, 2004, p. 17). The calendar listed various ideas to help prepare your family. It included websites that could be visited to assist in preparedness planning. “The goal is to

renew America's preparedness efforts by educating lay public about emergency planning, encouraging them to join preparedness groups and get first-aid training”

(Chin, 2004, p. 19).

Rocky Lopes, Ph.D. manager of the Community Disaster Education division of the National Red Cross, said:

Awareness campaigns used to change people's behavior, such as smoking and seat belts, have largely been successful because they were hand-in-hand with legislative efforts. Readiness behavior, however, cannot be legislated, and it is up to the individual to take the initiative to get prepared, he says. People can believe that terrorism, or any disaster for that matter is going to happen someday, somewhere, to someone, but that's not enough to motivate most to act. They have to believe it can happen to them and their family where they live.

(Chin, 2004, p. 19)

Although Americans are losing interest in preparedness efforts sparked by September 11, 2001 just three years ago, in Israel - where violence is a daily occurrence - civilians are integral to emergency response.

A volunteer preparedness group called Zaka is active in Israel. Zaka's main responsibility is to respond to suicide bomb attacks, which include aiding victims, collecting and organizing body parts for appropriate religious burial and mopping up the blood after the event. “Just in police alone, Zaka has over 700,000 volunteers; it starts in youth, and goes on for their lifetime. It's amazing the things that they do, and they're just volunteers,” says Ed Reed, program manager at the Terrorism Research Center in Washington D.C.

Although Israel has paid first responders in police, fire and EMS, Reed says, “Most of the nation's EMS service is provided by Hatzolah, a volunteer EMS organization with a 72 -second average response time in the city of Jerusalem, a population of over one million”.

“While Israel preparedness programs far surpass their American counterparts in training and drive, Reed is hopeful that the American people can learn from their example” (Chin, 2004, p. 19).

### **The Standards**

The fire service has numerous laws, regulations, and standards covering almost every aspect of fire suppression, hazardous materials, and emergency medical response. Other than a requirement for utilizing the new National Incident Management System (NIMS) there are no current requirements that mandate minimum preparedness standards for emergency response agencies, or any requirement for developing a family support organization within those agencies.

Are national standards really needed for local programs? In the National Strategy for Homeland Security it states:

Preparedness efforts are key to providing an effective response to major terrorist incidents and natural disasters. Therefore, we need a comprehensive national system to bring together and command all necessary response assets quickly and effectively. Americans respond with great skill and courage to emergencies. There are, however, too many seams in our current response plans and capabilities.

The newly proposed National Incident Management System (NIMS) will give some guidance regarding readiness to respond. Under the President's proposal, [t]he Department of Homeland Security will establish national standards for emergency response training and preparedness. Working with federal, state, local, and nongovernmental public safety organizations, it will build a comprehensive national incident management system to respond to terrorist incidents and natural disasters.

It would continue FEMA's efforts to reduce the loss of life and property and to protect our nation's institutions from all types of hazards through a comprehensive, risk-based, all-hazards emergency management program of preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. And it will continue to change the emergency management culture from one that reacts to terrorism and other disasters, to one that proactively helps communities and citizens avoid becoming victims.

The Department would develop and manage a national training and evaluation system to design curriculums, set standards, evaluate, and reward performance in local, state, and federal training efforts. These standards would also require certain coursework for individuals to receive and maintain certification as first responders and for state and local governments to receive federal grants. (White House, 2004a, p. 45)

Large portions of the National Incident Management System are yet unpublished, as they are currently under development.

### **Emergency Responder Preparedness**

“The fire department is a consequence management team. That means when a terrorist hits, the fire department is going to have to do something about it,” said John Eversole, recently retired chief of special functions for the Chicago Fire Department. “Each consequence the responders manage is a learning experience -- they continually take lessons away from each disaster, be it natural or manmade. They then apply those lessons to preparedness plans for future catastrophes” (Grow, 2001).

After all, as Gary Tokle, assistant vice president for public fire protection for the National Fire Protection Association explained, “responses to large-scale incidents typically are expansions of responses to incidents that responders see everyday” (Grow, 2001).

“The lessons of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks demonstrate the importance of being prepared” (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2004). “On September 10, the world believed that the United States had a world-class emergency response system. We had been talking the talk, but we hadn’t been walking the walk” (Gillies, 2002).

In the article, *Protecting Emergency Responders*, NIOSH writes:

Every day across the nation, emergencies occur that threaten our lives, well-being, property, peace, and security. Every day, we rely upon our local police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, public health professionals, and others to arrive quickly and do what needs to be done to restore the safety, the security, the peace, and the routine to our lives. These emergency responders are trained to handle such emergencies that occur day by day in our

cities, towns, villages, and countryside's. On rare occasions, emergencies occur that are so large in scale and so severe that local responders may not have the resources -- people, equipment, expertise, funds -- to effectively and safely respond. Even in such cases, local responders do not hesitate to do what they have been trained to do -- go to the site prepared to save lives, protect property, and remove the threat. (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, May, 2004)

“The disaster sites in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001 presented new challenges to responders. They were large in scale, long in duration, and complex in terms of the range of hazards presented. As a result of these characteristics, these events thrust responders into new roles for which they may not have been properly prepared or equipped” (Bartis, 2002, p. x).

“When a disaster, whether natural or manmade, overwhelms the resources and capabilities of local organizations, responders come in from other cities, counties, and states -- jurisdictions near and far -- as well as from federal agencies, to assist those with local responsibility” (NIOSH, 2004).

“One characteristic of these large, rare, dynamic events is the rapidly evolving complexity that faces individuals trying to effectively manage all of the organizations and people, operations and tasks, equipment and supplies, communications, and the safety and health of all involved” (NIOSH, 2004).

“Today, many geographic areas have little or no capability to respond to a terrorist attack using weapons of mass destruction. Many do not yet have in place mutual aid agreements to facilitate cooperation with their neighbors in time of emergency” (White House, 2004a).

Those departments that are prepared have generally learned from experience. Miami-Dade Fire Rescue has developed a hurricane policy and procedure as well as a family support system for their staff. Natalie Duran, Fire Communications Officer and CISM Coordinator (personal communication, November 22, 2004) discussing their family support activities stated:

After Hurricane Andrew, twelve years ago, the department established the family wellness unit that is responsible for accountability of employees. This includes working with the union to help a firefighter's family who may have been impacted by the hurricane.

Families know that they can contact the USAR Office for any assistance they may need. We also call them to give them updates on their loved ones. When they return, we provide Crisis Management Briefings, and if applicable we conduct debriefings to include family members.

Our department is proactive in providing this type of assistance to our employees in helping them cope with personal issues that will, in the long run, provide us with an employee that can focus on their job responsibilities when called to respond to any large-scale event.

Our USAR Task Force 1, when deployed on missions, responds knowing that their families will be taken care of while they are gone.

The Miami-Dade Hurricane Policy includes requirements as part of their Pre-Impact Preparation that employees, including non 24-hour personnel bring appropriate personal supplies to enable them to effectively perform their duties. All personnel reporting for duty under a Hurricane Warning will report as directed and will have in

their possession the following items, packed in one bag with their name marked on outside:

- 3 sets each uniforms, T-shirts and one jacket
- 5 each, pairs stocks, undershirt, underwear
- 1 extra pair of work shoes
- 2 bath towels, sheets, pillow, and blanket
- Toilet articles for four-day stay:
  - Toothbrush and toothpaste
  - Deodorant
  - Soap
  - Shampoo
  - Razor and cream
  - Other personal items
- Rain gear
- Bunker gear
- Flashlight with good batteries
- Prescribed medications
- Mosquito repellent
- 3 day supply food (that would not require refrigeration or cooking)

(Miami-Dade FD, 2004).

### **Family Support**

One of the areas that few fire departments have put much thought or effort into is family preparedness. This lack of family preparedness focuses on two main areas. The first is how much effort agencies have put into departmental preparedness for long duration complex incidents. The second area of concern is a general lack of preparedness within fire fighter families to be ready for, and self-sufficient during these deployments.

In the document, *What You Can Do*, developed by the Ohio Air National Guard, it states:

Too often, family members deny the possibility of duty separation, and pretend it is not going to happen. Sometimes families avoid talking about things that bother or worry them. They are afraid that talking about things will make matters worse. In reality, open discussion provides family members the

opportunity to clarify potential misunderstandings, get a better idea of what is expected, work out solutions to problems, and to better prepare themselves for the coming separation.

There is a difference between being ready “to go” and ready “to part”. Being ready “to go” means having your bag packed, all shots up to date, and other duty essential preparations completed. Being ready “to part” from your spouse and other family members means being aware of the personal and family issues related to separation, and being prepared to deal as constructively as possible with those issues. (Ohio Air National Guard, 2004)

### **The Military View**

The military takes family support programs seriously. The Department of Defense publishes, *The Help Guide to Guard & Reserve Family Preparedness*. The guide advises that:

Frequent deployments are a reality for some Guard and Reserve Service Members and families. With over 50 percent of the force married, family separation is common and the need for self-reliant families is crucial.

Commanders and service members do not want families just to survive deployments and separations, but want family members to know how to access and utilize military quality of life services and support. Research and history have proven that the quality of life experience by Reserve component members and their families directly impacts on unit readiness, mission accomplishment and the retention of experienced and skilled Reservists.

Defense officials recognize the vital role that that families play in supporting military readiness, and they are enhancing programs, forming partnerships, and resourcing programs to directly support family readiness.

When family members have the information they need, they feel more supported during times of separation and deployment. The link between family readiness and mission readiness is clear. Spouses want information on mobilization preparation, benefits and entitlements, military support services, and a point of contact from their sponsor's military unit or Family Readiness Program office. (Department of Defense, 2004)

While the military has put much effort into family support, they still have a long way to go. In September, 1999, a...survey was sent to all spouses of Guard and Reserve members who were deployed under the three separate presidential Reserve Call ups in Southwest Asia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. The survey results revealed less than 36 percent felt they were well prepared and that they needed timely and accurate information. DoD is accepting the challenge by proactively enhancing family readiness programs and outreach to Guard and Reserve families (Department of Defense, 2004).

In the *Deployment Guide For Families of Deploying Soldiers*, the Department of the Army explains the functions of a Family Readiness Group (FRG). It states:

Exactly what is a family readiness group (FRG)? The basic idea behind a FRG is that soldiers and families benefit from helping one another cope with the rigors of Army life.

During the Revolutionary War, the mutual help was quite obvious. Family members functioned as support troops by cooking, mending, nursing, and

carrying the wartime equipment in exchange for getting half-rations for each adult and quarter-rations for each child.

During World War II, spouses tried to follow their soldiers as often as they could and to remain close at hand. However, when that was not possible, they formed “waiting wives clubs” to provide mutual support and assistance to one another, usually back in the community where the family had its roots.

Today the Army defines an FRG as a company-level or battalion- level organization of officers, enlisted soldiers, civilians, and family members who volunteer to provide mutual social and emotional support, outreach services, and information to their fellow soldiers and family members. In other words, there is a spirit of inclusion here that does not stop with just the spouses of unit soldiers. FRG's welcome those who have an interest in the unit, need its services, and/or are willing to help the FRG meet its goals. The term used to describe the whole collection of individuals eligible to belong to the FRG will be "the unit family".

The Army recognizes that helping families is its moral obligation and in its best interest. The best help for families is frequently that given by peers as they, together, learn how to handle various aspects of Army life. Hence, the Army mandates that each unit commander establish and support an FRG.

The kind of help that FRG's provide is the kind of help that we all need and try to get every day: good information to help us plan, an opportunity to make friends, help with Army bureaucracy, and a chance to have some fun and talk through what may be on your mind. Good information and friends who provide

each other need emotional support and shared labor to meet daily tasks can and should be what FRG's are all about. (Department of the Army, 2004)

### **Military Deployment Readiness**

As part of the ability to enhance response to possible terrorist activities in the United States, National Guard Civil Support Teams have been developed. The Department of Defense explains the role of the WMD Civil Support Teams stating:

The...teams were established to deploy rapidly to assist a local incident commander in determining the nature and extent of an attack or incident; provide expert technical advice on WMD response operations; and help identify and support the arrival of follow-on state and federal military response assets. They are joint units and, as such, can consists of both Army National Guard and Air National Guard personnel, with some of these units commanded by Air National Guard lieutenant colonels.

The WMD Civil Support Teams are able to deploy rapidly, assist local first-responders in determining the nature of an attack, provide medical and technical advice, and pave the way for the identification and arrival of follow-on state and federal military response assets. They provide initial advice on what the agent may be, assist first responders in that detection assessment process, and are the first military responders on the ground, so that if additional federal resources are called into the situation, they can serve as an advance party that can liaise with the Joint Task Force Civil Support.

These National Guard teams provide DoD's unique expertise and capabilities to assist state governors in preparing for and responding to chemical,

biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) incidents as part of a state's emergency response structure. Each team consists of 22 highly skilled, full-time National Guard members who are federally resourced, trained and exercised, and employs federally approved CBRN response doctrine.

On November 15, 2001, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld announced the stationing plan for five additional National Guard Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Teams (WMD-CST) authorized in the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal 2001. These teams were scheduled for establishment and certification in fiscal 2003. The five additional teams are to be stationed in Alabama, Kansas, Michigan, Tennessee, and West Virginia.

On February 5, 2003, the US Department of Defense notified Congress that Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Teams (WMD-CST) from the West Virginia, Tennessee, and Michigan National Guard were now certified. These teams were thus considered fully ready to assist civil authorities to respond to a domestic weapon of mass destruction incident, and possess the requisite skills, training and equipment to be proficient in all mission requirements. (Global Security, 2005)

Rapid deployment is possible because the need for call back of personnel has been planned for. While not practical for every member of a team or agency to be available 24/7, having an operational team prepared to deploy only makes sense.

The 51<sup>st</sup> Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team of the Michigan Army National Guard has broken their 22-member team into two ready teams. The Stand-by Policy, drafted by the commanding officer, Major Clark Hinga, covers stand-by

availability, response time, personal vehicle readiness, uniform and equipment readiness, including both personal and military issued equipment as well as “red bag” requirements.

In the policy, Hinga writes:

All unit personnel may be required to report for duty during otherwise normal "off duty" hours in the event of an emergency situation, or as otherwise determined by the Command. However, given the impracticality of having all members available for response at all times, the following policy will be used to cover unit response obligations.

The unit has been divided into two teams for stand-by purposes, attached as enclosure 1. Stand-by periods will run from Tuesday through Monday. The stand-by schedule will be developed by the Operations section and will be posted monthly for the following 90 days.

Members on stand-by are prohibited from being more than one hour away from the unit armory without Command approval. This applies even if members are on pass or leave during stand-by. Time estimates are to be based on traveling at no more than legal speeds, reasonably expected delays and safe travel conditions. If in doubt, time estimates provided by a commercial program such as Map Quest can be used as a guide.

Personnel wishing to be temporarily relieved from stand-by duties must secure a suitable replacement and coordinate the substitution through the chain of command to the 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant and Commander/Deputy.

Personnel on stand-by are directed to maintain themselves in an appropriate state of readiness at all times. This includes but is not limited to:

- a). Maintaining an amount of fuel in their private vehicle sufficient to enable them to reach the armory without stopping to refuel.
- b). Maintaining in their vehicle or readily available, a sufficient amount of personal necessities (medication, eyeglasses/inserts, hygiene items, etc.) to enable them to immediately deploy and sustain themselves for 72 hours.
- c). Maintain their uniform and equipment (both personal and unit) in a constant state of readiness and readily available.
- d). Deploying with the “red bag” and personal items detailed in the attached enclosure 3 (Appendix G), Individual Equipment Packing List. Deviations must be approved by the Commander.

All personnel, whether on stand-by or not, are directed to monitor their assigned cell phone or home phone at all times unless otherwise relieved. Personnel who may be in an area not covered by the unit cell phone service, are required to keep their supervisor informed of alternate means through which they can be reached at all times.

In the event of an actual or anticipated deployment, unit members will be notified IAW the alert roster.

Unless otherwise directed (i.e. directed to meet the unit in route), once alerted all available personnel will report as soon as possible to the

unit armory, utilizing the most expeditious means available, WITHOUT compromising safety or violating laws or regulations (Hinga, 2004).

This preplanning ensures that the 51<sup>st</sup> WMD Civil Support Team will be ready to deploy in a timely manner when called upon.

### **US&R System**

Another emergency response asset that must be prepared to respond in rapid fashion are the Urban Search & Rescue task forces. “The National Urban Search and Rescue Response System is managed by FEMA within the Department of Homeland Security” (Paulsell, 2003, p. 2).

In his report titled, *Overview and Current Status of FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Task Force System*, Stephen Paulsell states:

The system is built around a core of task forces prepared to deploy immediately and initiate US&R and operations on implementation of Emergency Support Function #9 of the Federal Response Plan. (Department of Homeland Security, 2003). Within the system are 28 urban search and rescue task forces, sponsored by local fire departments.

[A]n urban search and rescue task force deploys 70 highly trained personnel and four search dogs, certified to federal standards by FEMA. The 70 personnel are rescue specialists, logistics specialists, communications specialists, trauma surgeons, emergency physicians, structural engineers, hazardous materials technicians, nurses, management personnel, safety personnel, heavy equipment operators, technical information specialists and planning specialists.

Under the agreement with FEMA, each task force must be staffed three deep in each one of the 70 positions to insure around-the-clock of availability of all specialty positions. In other words, each task force maintains roster strength of 210 specialists to insure that at any given time, 70 can be called upon to respond.

System wide, there are in excess of 5,880 personnel available to the federal government at no direct personnel cost until such time as they are needed.

[A] very special and unique relationship exists between 28 local fire departments and the federal government. This partnership combines the quick strike mentality of local fire departments with the superb support system of the Federal Response Plan.

A task force, upon deployment, is equipped to operate in a self-sustaining mode for 72 hours. Following 72 hours, within the Federal Response Plan, the Department of Defense and U.S. Forest Service is tasked with replenishing supplies to the task force. For the first 72 hours, these task forces come, not only with their technical search and rescue equipment, but they come with tents, sleeping bags, food, water, toilet facilities, medicine and all other support supplies and equipment necessary to function in an austere disaster environment while not creating additional support demands on the community that has been impacted by a disaster. (Paulsell, 2003, p. 5)

If a disaster will require US&R resources...[O]nce the task force accepts the mission, the US&R Program Office or the Emergency Support Team (EST) will issue an Activation Order. Sponsoring agencies...are expected to field all necessary personnel,

equipment, and supplies; and report to their designated Point Of Departure (POD) within six hours of the Activation Order (FEMA, 2000, p. III-3).

A predetermined call-out system must be developed to notify the necessary personnel required to field the task force. A call-down tree or universal paging system may accomplish this. These associated personnel must have agreements in place with their respective employers to allow them to leave with little notice for a mission deployment of up to 10 days (FEMA, 2000, p. IV-3). Part of this equipment includes the standard equipment list for task forces members (Appendix H) which must be packed and available (PA. Task Force 1, 2004).

To assure that teams are ready to respond a rotation system is utilized. The rotation model is based upon a monthly calendar rotation, and divides the task forces into three regions. The task forces are listed in columns labeled 1st rotation, 2nd rotation, 3rd rotation, etc. The first three task forces utilized will be the three geographically closest task forces that are operationally ready (Tamillow, 2004).

The US&R Operations Manual directs that prior to activation:

[A] plan should be established for providing regular situation reports to the family or loved ones of deploying members. This plan should address a time schedule for contact and information for the home jurisdiction. A representative from the sponsoring agency should be assigned for the duration of the mission to act as the liaison between the task force and the families or loved ones.

A tentative schedule of contacts should be established prior to the task force departure and refined as needed on the mission. This schedule should then be passed on to the family member/loved one as soon as possible.

Along with the task force/family liaison, the sponsoring agency may designate personnel to provide assistance to the families of deploying members. This may include home emergency repairs, family transportation necessities, assistance with media interviews, and other emergency assistance the family member/loved one of may require. (FEMA, 2000, p. N-9)

Pennsylvania Task Force 1 has developed a Family Support Section. This section provides current, accurate information to families of deployed members, as well as a peer support network. In addition, the Family Support Section will provide assistance as necessary to families of deployed members in areas such as childcare, emergency home/auto repair, etc. The policy states:

During the deployment notification process, pre-identified members of the Family Support Section shall also be notified (PA. Task Force 1, 2001, p.1). As soon as necessary information is available, the family of each deployed member shall be notified and given the following information: FSS phone number, FSS e-mail address, emergency phone number, operating hours of the FFS, and times to call for up dated information. FSS members shall contact the Task Force Technical Information Section prior to the posted family call in times to receive updated information. (PA. Task Force 1, 2001, p. 2)

Colorado Task Force 1 gives guidance to its team members with a Family Readiness Checklist listing areas that should be covered to provide for a prepared family. It states, “As a deployable member of the COTF1 you should have a tool kit that contains extensive work sheets, which cover personal history, automobile information, insurance,

property ownership and safekeeping as well as financial management. Go over these sections with your spouse and family members. This family readiness checklist targets tasks you should have accomplished before deployment” (CO. Task Force 1, 2004).

The response window is narrowed ever further for some Federal Emergency Management Agency personnel. FEMA Incident Support Team members must be available on short notice mobilizing within two hours of the request, and be self-sufficient for at least 24 hours, with approved equipment and supplies list (Appendix I) for a response assignment of up to 14 days (FEMA, 2001, p. 4). ESF-9 personnel can expect to be assigned to various facilities for disaster response. Proper personal gear (Appendix I) should be prepared and packed as a tool kit component (FEMA, 2001, p. 7).

As a result of the major US&R deployment to the aftermath of September 11, 2001 attacks FEMA realized the need for expansion of the US&R system. The rotation of multiple teams in and out of the World Trade Center and Pentagon sites began discussion on how best to expand US&R capabilities without creating serious financial implications.

It was determined that establishing a second equipment cache for all Task Forces would provide increased capabilities with reasonable fiscal impact. Under the terms of agreement with FEMA, all tasks forces must be staffed three deep in each position to assure constant availability. In other words, each task force deploys 70 personnel and 140 do not deploy. With the addition of a second cache, each task force could field a second task force using personnel already trained and equipped with personal safety gear, thus doubling system capacity from 28 to 56 task forces without doubling the expense (Paulsell, 2003, p. 10).

The state of readiness of the average emergency response organization was made crystal clear by Leon Dextrateur, Plans Section Chief for the Virginia Task Force 2 Urban Search and Rescue Team (personal communication, January 2, 2005) when he stated, “Looking at past large scale operations, I do not believe the average departments across the country are equipped to manage long term large scale operations”.

How can we change the culture of Emergency Response (Gillies, 2002)? All state and local governments should create and regularly update their own homeland security plans, based on their existing emergency operations plans, to provide guidance for the integration of their response assets in the event of an attack (White House, 2004a).

If you think preparedness is not important, imagine what would have happened to Noah and his family if they had put off building the ark, gathering the animals, and laying in their food and supplies (Koontz, 2004)!

## **PROCEDURES**

The research procedures used in preparing this document focused on two main areas; a literature review, and two feedback instruments, one for personnel of emergency response agencies, and one for agency administrators of agencies throughout the United States. This research project employed a combination of descriptive and action research methodologies.

### **Literature Review**

A literature review was initiated at the National Fire Academy’s Learning Resource Center (LRC), Emmitsburg, Maryland during July of 2004. The focus of the literature review targeted materials on emergency and family preparedness. Sources such

as periodicals, texts, journals, research papers, and Internet sources were utilized. A review of EFO research abstracts was completed to identify papers that pertained directly to the four research questions posed.

The focus of this review was to gather information relevant to preparedness in the fire service and within the family unit of emergency responders.

### **Feedback Instruments**

Two-feedback instruments (Appendix A and B) were developed to gather information regarding the preparedness of fire departments and their personnel in the United States. The first survey (Appendix A) included fourteen questions to gain information on emergency responder and their personal family's preparedness. The convenience survey was distributed to the members of the Executive Deployment, Leading Community Risk Reduction, Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management (EAFSOEM), and Executive Leadership classes at the National Fire Academy in July, 2004. A total of one hundred and three feedback instruments were distributed, of those, eighty-six, or 83.4 percent were returned for interpretation (Appendix C). The second feedback instrument (Appendix B) contained eleven questions aimed at departmental preparedness and family support issues. Fifty-five departments providing service to a population base between 40,000 and 50,000 across the United States were surveyed. A total of forty-six surveys, or 83.6 percent were returned for compilation (Appendix D).

### **Assumptions and Limitations**

An assumption was made that the respondents to the surveys understood each question and possessed the knowledge and ability to answer the survey accurately.

Another assumption is that the respondents answered all questions fairly and accurately. Next, it is assumed that the authors referenced in the literature review performed objective and unbiased research. Lastly, due to the research abilities of the author, research materials related to this topic and this applied research project might have gone undetected which could have changed the results of the research.

### **Definitions**

Al-Quaida- an Islamic terrorist organization.

America Prepared- a nonprofit organization, trying to spark citizen readiness in Americans before the next disaster or terrorist event.

CBRNE- Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive.

CERT- Community Emergency Response Team, a group of volunteers trained to assist professional responders to mitigate the effects of a disaster event.

Citizen Corp.- a group coordinated by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to help coordinate volunteer activities that make our communities, safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to any emergency situation.

Consequence Management- management of the effects after a disaster event.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)- a department within the federal government whose mission is to secure the American homeland from security threats such as terrorism.

Deployment- the distribution of forces in preparation for battle or work.

Disaster- An occurrence causing widespread destruction and distress; a catastrophe.

Disaster Supplies Kit- a kit containing survival supplies to sustain a person or family for a minimum of 72 hours with food, water, and basic necessities.

DoD – Department of Defense.

Emergency Preparedness- the state of having been made ready or prepared for use or action.

Equipment Cache- a store of goods or valuables concealed in a hiding place, in this case equipment part of a rescue task force.

ESF #9- Emergency Support Function, Annex #9 Urban Search and Rescue of the Federal Response Plan.

EST- Emergency Support Team, The EST is the interagency group that provides general coordination support to response activities in the field. Operating from the DHS National Interagency Emergency Operations Center (NIEOC) in Washington, DC.

Family Liaison- a representative from the sponsoring agency assigned for the duration of the mission to act as the liaison between the task force and the families or loved ones.

Family Readiness Checklist- a list of items that families should have prepared for or developed a plan to deal with should a situation arise during a deployment.

Family Readiness Group (FRG)- a company-level or battalion- level organization of officers, enlisted soldiers, civilians, and family members who volunteer to provide mutual social and emotional support, outreach services, and information to their fellow soldiers and family members.

Family Readiness Program- a program to provide mutual social, emotional support, outreach services, and information to their fellow employees and family members.

Federal Response Plan- Provides the mechanism for coordinating delivery of Federal assistance and resources to augment efforts of State and local governments overwhelmed by a major disaster or emergency.

Family Support Section- provides current, accurate information to families of deployed members, as well as a peer support network.

FEMA- Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Go Bag- a prepared bag, immediately available containing personal supplies of an emergency responder to sustain them in continuous operation for up to 72 hours.

Mobilize- to assemble, prepare, or put into operation for or as if for war.

National Preparedness Month- the month of September 2004, designed to draw attention to individual and family preparedness for disasters.

National Response Plan- the new name for the former Federal Response Plan. Provides the mechanism for coordinating delivery of Federal assistance and resources to augment efforts of State and local governments overwhelmed by a major disaster or emergency.

Neighborhood Watch- a local organization or program to discourage crime by relying on the vigilance of the residents.

National Incident Management System (NIMS) - a system developed by FEMA encompassing the Unified Incident Command System, standardized

organizational structures, processes and procedures; personnel qualification standards; and interoperable communications processes.

Ready Bag- a prepared bag, available on a moments notice containing necessary equipment and personal supplies to sustain a military service member for a period of up to 72 hours.

Terrorism- The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons.

US&R- Urban Search & Rescue, specialized rescue situations within an urban setting, such as structural collapse.

USAR Task Force- One of 28 Urban Search and Rescue teams part of a national emergency response group coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency deploying 70 personnel to perform specialized rescue at a disaster site.

WMD- Weapons of Mass Destruction, a weapon that kills or injures civilian as well as military personnel (nuclear and chemical and biological weapons).

## **RESULTS**

### **Answers to Research Questions**

1. What, if any, are the national and industry criteria, related to emergency preparedness, for emergency responders and their families in the event of a multi-day deployment?

The fire service has numerous laws, regulations, and standards covering almost every aspect of fire suppression, hazardous materials, and emergency medical response. However, other than a new requirement for utilizing the proposed National Incident Management System (NIMS) there are no current minimum preparedness standards mandated for emergency response agencies, or any requirement for developing a family support organization within those agencies.

Past experience has shown that preparedness efforts are key to providing an effective response to major terrorist incidents and natural disasters. Lessons learned from disasters such as the United Airlines flight 232 in Sioux City, Iowa, Oklahoma City's Murrah Federal Building, the first World Trade Center attack, and finally the horrific events of September 11, 2001 show the need for preparedness.

Are national standards really needed for local programs? In the National Strategy for Homeland Security it states:

Preparedness efforts are key to providing an effective response to major terrorist incidents and natural disasters. Therefore, we need a comprehensive national system to bring together and command all necessary response assets quickly and effectively. Americans respond with great skill and courage to emergencies. There are, however, too many seams in our current response plans and capabilities.

The newly proposed National incident Management System (NIMS) will give some guidance regarding readiness to respond. Under the President's proposal, [t]he Department of Homeland Security will establish national standards for emergency response training and preparedness. Working with federal, state,

local, and nongovernmental public safety organizations, it will build a comprehensive national incident management system to respond to terrorist incidents and natural disasters.

It would continue FEMA's efforts to reduce the loss of life and property and to protect our nation's institutions from all types of hazards through a comprehensive, risk-based, all-hazards emergency management program of preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. And it will continue to change the emergency management culture from one that reacts to terrorism and other disasters, to one that proactively helps communities and citizens avoid becoming victims.

The Department would develop and manage a national training and evaluation system to design curriculums, set standards, evaluate, and reward performance in local, state, and federal training efforts. These standards would also require certain coursework for individuals to receive and maintain certification as first responders and for state and local governments to receive federal grants. (White House, 2004a, p. 45)

Large portions of the National Incident Management System are yet unpublished, as they are currently under development.

While the federal government is looking at response from a national perspective, it will still be the job of local emergency responders to ensure that they are prepared for local disasters. If emergency service agencies are well prepared to respond to a major event in the local homeland, they will have a solid foundation and framework to expand from when the large-scale, multi-day incidents occur.

2. What, if any, are the state criteria, related to emergency preparedness, for emergency responders and their families in the event of a multi-day deployment?

The literature review did not locate any state standards related specifically to the research questions posed. While most states provide some direction to emergency response agencies through laws, standards and regulations, once again there is limited guidance with regard to preparedness for large-scale incidents and the crucial role of family support systems.

Two groups mentioned in this research project cross over in a federal-state relationship in emergency response. The National Guard's Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Teams, and FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue task forces are state assets that have a federal connection.

The WMD Civil Support Teams were established to deploy rapidly to assist a local incident commander in determining the nature and extent of an attack or incident; provide expert technical advice on WMD response operations; and help identify and support the arrival of follow-on state and federal military response assets. They are joint units and, as such, can consist of both Army National Guard and Air National Guard personnel, with some of these units commanded by Air National Guard lieutenant colonels (Global Security, 2005).

Rapid deployment is possible because the need for call back of personnel has been planned for. While not practical for every member of a team or agency to be available 24/7, having an operational team prepared to deploy only makes sense.

The 51<sup>st</sup> Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team of the Michigan Army National Guard has broken their 22-member team into two ready teams. The Stand-by Policy, drafted by the commanding officer, Major Clark Hinga covers stand-by availability, response time, personal vehicle readiness, uniform and equipment readiness, including both personal and military issued equipment as well as “red bag” requirements. In the policy, Hinga writes:

All unit personnel may be required to report for duty during otherwise normal "off duty" hours in the event of an emergency situation, or as otherwise determined by the Command. However, given the impracticality of having all members available for response at all times, the following policy will be used to cover unit response obligations.

The unit has been divided into two teams for stand-by purposes, attached as enclosure 1. Stand-by periods will run from Tuesday through Monday. The stand-by schedule will be developed by the Operations section and will be posted monthly for the following 90 days.

Members on stand-by are prohibited from being more than one hour away from the unit armory without Command approval. This applies even if members are on pass or leave during stand-by. Time estimates are to be based on traveling at no more than legal speeds, reasonably expected delays and safe travel

conditions. If in doubt, time estimates provided by a commercial program such as Map Quest can be used as a guide.

Personnel wishing to be temporarily relieved from stand-by duties must secure a suitable replacement and coordinate the substitution through the chain of command to the 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant and Commander/Deputy.

Personnel on stand-by are directed to maintain themselves in an appropriate state of readiness at all times. This includes but is not limited to:

- a). Maintaining an amount of fuel in their private vehicle sufficient to enable them to reach the armory without stopping to refuel.
- b). Maintaining in their vehicle or readily available, a sufficient amount of personal necessities (medication, eyeglasses/inserts, hygiene items, etc.) to enable them to immediately deploy and sustain themselves for 72 hours.
- c). Maintain their uniform and equipment (both personal and unit) in a constant state of readiness and readily available.
- d). Deploying with the “red bag” and personal items detailed in the attached enclosure 3, Individual Equipment Packing List. Deviations must be approved by the Commander.

All personnel, whether on stand-by or not, are directed to monitor their assigned cell phone or home phone at all times unless otherwise relieved.

Personnel who may be in an area not covered by the unit cell phone service, are required to keep their supervisor informed of alternate means through which they

can be reached at all times. In the event of an actual or anticipated deployment, unit members will be notified IAW the alert roster.

Unless otherwise directed (i.e., directed to meet the unit in route), once alerted all available personnel will report as soon as possible to the unit armory, utilizing the most expeditious means available, WITHOUT compromising safety or violating laws or regulations. (Hinga, 2004)

This preplanning ensures that the 51<sup>st</sup> WMD Civil Support Team will be ready to deploy in a timely manner when called upon. The capability was not left to chance, a specific policy, and overall attitude has been instilled into the team to take rapid deployment as a condition of preparedness.

The Civil Support Teams are full-time military personnel. Being part of the military the mindset of immediate deployment is easier to maintain. The military in recent years has had the need to be ready to deploy to hot spots across the world quickly.

While many local response organizations may not share the same level of deployment readiness mindset, FEMA US&R task forces are local response assets that take rapid deployment seriously.

“The system is built around a core of task forces prepared to deploy immediately and initiate US&R operations on implementation of ESF #9 of the Federal Response Plan” (Department of Homeland Security, 2003). “Within the system are 28 urban search and rescue task forces, sponsored by local fire departments (Paulsell, 2003, p. 2).

Under the agreement with FEMA, each task force must be staffed three deep in each one of the 70 positions to insure around-the-clock of availability of all specialty

positions. In other words, each task force maintains roster strength of 210 specialists to insure that at any given time, 70 can be called upon to respond” (Paulsell, 2003, p. 4).

If a disaster will require US&R resources...[O]nce the task force accepts the mission, the US&R Program Office or the Emergency Support Team (EST) will issue an Activation Order. Sponsoring agencies...are expected to field all necessary personnel, equipment, and supplies; and report to their designated Point Of Departure (POD) within six hours of the Activation Order (FEMA, 2000, p. III-3).

A predetermined call-out system must be developed to notify the necessary personnel required to field the task force. A call-down tree or universal paging system may accomplish this. These associated personnel must have agreements in place with their respective employers to allow them to leave with little notice for a mission deployment of up to 10 days (FEMA, 2000, p. IV-3). Part of this equipment includes the standard equipment list for task forces members (Appendix H) which must be packed and available (PA. Task Force 1, 2004).

These Para-military procedures provide for a deployable team ready to respond within the window of opportunity required for the Urban Search & Rescue System.

3. What, if any, are the criteria that departments of similar size use or used to develop an emergency preparedness guide for emergency responders and their families in the event of a multi-day deployment?

To determine what other response agencies have done to prepare for deployment to large-scale incidents and family support, two feedback instruments were developed.

The first feedback instrument (Appendix A) polled individual emergency responders with regard to the responder's individual family preparedness as well as actions taken by the respondents department toward preparedness for large-scale events and family support activities. A total of 103 surveys were distributed to the students of the four Executive Fire officer classes in July 2004, including Executive Development, Leading Community Risk Reduction, Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management, and Executive Leadership. Eighty-six completed surveys were returned for review, which is an 83.4 percent return rate. Results of this survey are listed in Appendix C, and depicted in figure 1.

When asked if the responder faces a possible multi-day response, 98 percent indicated that a multi-day deployment was possible. A total of 2 percent indicated they would not face such a deployment. Without question, most emergency responders see the potential of a multi-day incident response.

Responders were asked if during a multi-day deployment would cause concerns for the safety and welfare of their families, 86 percent indicated they would have concerns. A total of 14 percent indicated they would not have concerns for their families while they were deployed. Almost nine out of ten responders would have their family on their mind while serving at a major incident scene.

Asked whether their departments had taken any steps to help staff members' families prepare for a deployment, 34 percent indicated in the affirmative, while 66 percent indicated no actions had been initiated. Some of the activities noted included family shelters, family support groups, and checklists for family preparedness. We see

that nearly two-thirds of agencies have not even considered family preparedness as a responsibility of the agency, yet it quickly comes to mind when employees are polled.

Respondents were asked if a multi-day deployment would cause them any personal hardships. In response, 48 percent indicated yes it would cause hardships while 52 percent indicated that no hardships would be created. Some of the potential hardships included, child or elder care issues at 20 percent, second job conflicts with 9 percent, and 8 percent educational activities. An additional 8 percent noted miscellaneous concerns from animal care to a spouse with a medical condition. This continues to show that without a system to support the family unit our responders will be torn between work and family responsibilities. Responders would be much more focused if a family support plan were in place.

When asked if the department had developed policies regarding individual staff preparedness, 29 percent indicated policies were in place, while 71 percent indicated no such policies existed. Additionally, when asked if policies for family preparedness had been developed, 91 percent indicated no policies were in place, while 9 percent indicated a policy was in force. This again shows areas regarding family preparedness have been left to chance.

Asked if a departmental policy on staff/family preparedness would be beneficial, 72 percent advised it would, while 13 percent indicated it would not and 15 percent were undecided.

In discussing general citizen preparedness, when asked if they had developed a family preparedness plan such as those advocated by the American Red Cross and Ready.gov, only 40 percent of responders had done so. Almost 60 percent had not

prepared their own families with a disaster plan. Interestingly, we attempt to motivate the general public to be prepared with a family preparedness plan, yet 60 percent of the professional responders had not done so.

The concept of departmentally required “go bags” for staff was discussed; only 18 percent of departments required them, while 82 percent did not require them.

Departments requiring bags were generally from areas prone to hurricane or wild fire potential. Asked if they had individually developed a personal bag to be self sufficient for a 72-hour period at work, 47 percent had done so, 17 percent had considered such a bag, and 36 percent had never considered it. These numbers are more encouraging as almost half of the responders had developed a “go bag” on their own without departmental support.

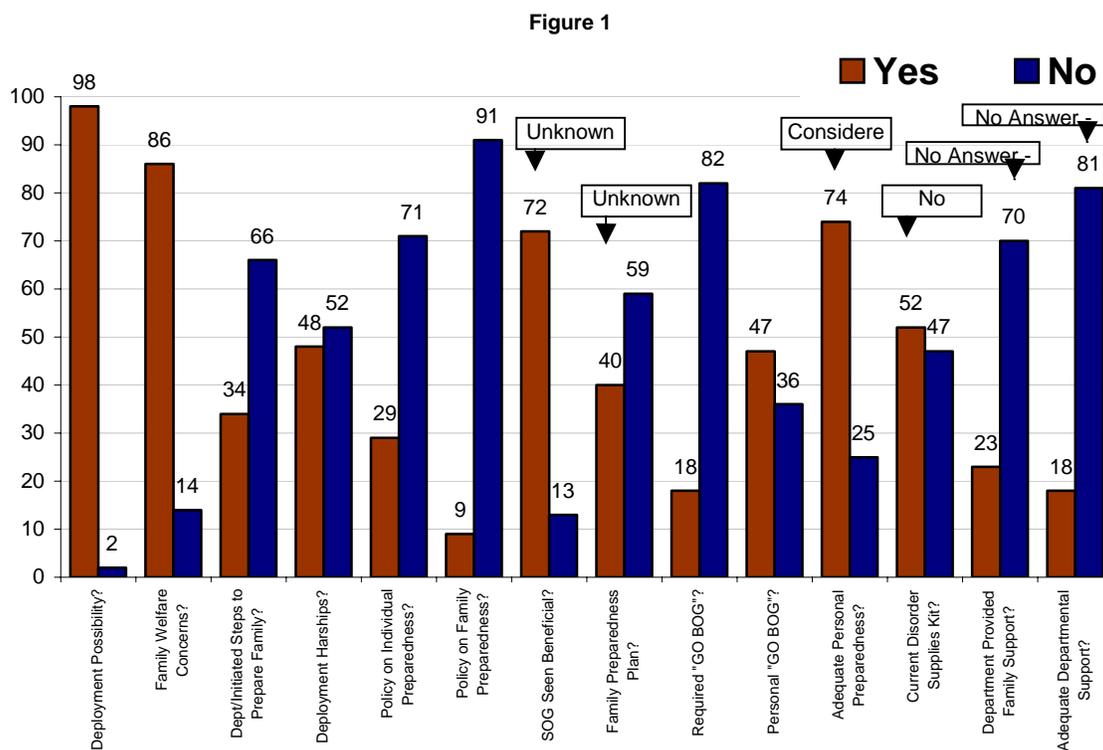
When asked if currently ready for a multi-day deployment, 74 percent felt they were, 25 percent felt they were not, and 1 percent did not answer the question.

Asked if a family disaster supplies kit was on hand at home, the answers were almost evenly split with 52 percent advising yes, while 47 percent indicated they did not have a kit prepared. This again is encouraging as we are making progress in this area.

The concept of family support was discussed by asking if their department provided any form of family support currently. Not surprisingly, 76 percent indicated no family support was provided, while 23 percent had some support mechanism in place. As indicated in earlier responses, family support concerns are a big issue for many responders.

The final question asked if the staff member felt that their department had done all it should do to provide for staff and family preparedness. While 18 percent indicated they

felt the department had done so, a total of 81 percent felt more needed to be done. The responses to this question should be a red flag to agency administrators. It indicates that the average professional responder does not feel their department is doing all it can, or should do to support the staff.



The second feedback instrument (Appendix B) was directed to department administrators in agencies in population bases between 40,000 and 50,000. This population is comparable to the author's community. Fifty-five communities across the country were surveyed via email, with 46 surveys returned for an 83.6 percent return rate. The results of this survey are listed in Appendix D, and depicted in figure 2.

The responses from this questionnaire were very interesting. One chief wrote on the returned survey that the questions made him consider issues he had never thought of

before. Further, he advised that it identified areas within his department where additional policy was needed. The overall results back up the author's initial concerns that most fire departments have not prepared for incidents larger than local small-scale mutual aid responses. It also reinforced that family support is a concept that has not yet penetrated the fire service mindset.

When asked if the agency had developed policies for response to multi-day mutual aid incidents, almost 70 percent indicated they had no policy in effect. Only 30 percent had developed policy for these incidents. Focusing on family support during multi-day incidents, the numbers were even more discouraging with 87 percent indicating no policy had been developed. Only slightly more than one in ten departments had written policies for these incidents. The same negative responses, 87 percent were revealed when asked if any policies had been developed for staff members family preparedness. This indicates the major focus within agencies is on response; yet planning is a crucial part of preparedness.

When given several choices as to what steps the department would take to support family members of those deployed, 78 percent indicated that phone calls to the families would be made, and 51 percent indicated a family liaison would be assigned. Fifty one percent advised that the Chief would visit or meet with families. Home visits would be made by 37 percent, chaplain visits would be arranged by 33 percent, and support meetings would be held by 28 percent. Nine percent indicated that existing employee assistance or support groups would be used and 9% indicated nothing would be done.

While almost 90 percent of the departments polled had no policies for family support or response to major multi-day incidents, 98 percent indicated that they would send their staff out of the immediate area on a multi-day mutual aid request.

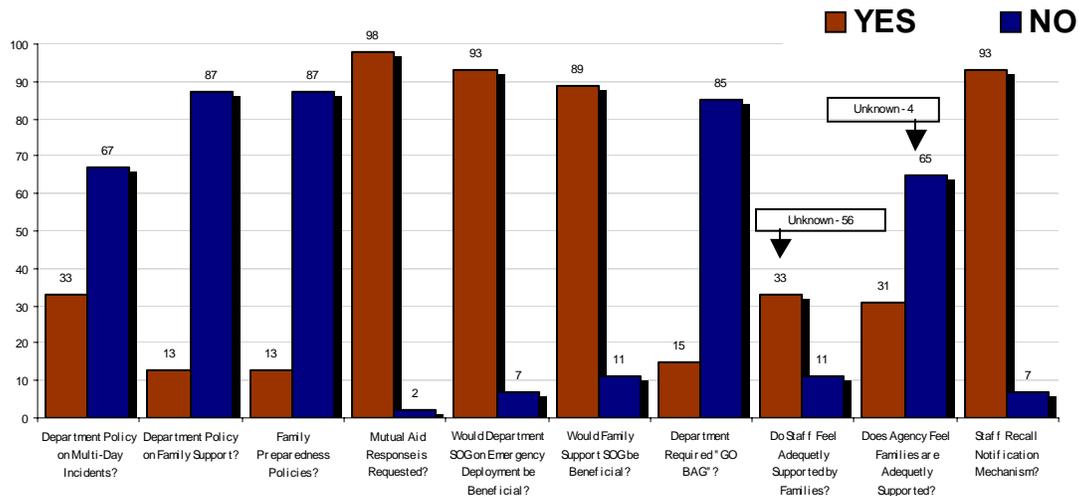
Over 90 percent of the administrators felt that a policy on emergency deployment of staff would be beneficial, while 89 percent felt that a policy on family support would be beneficial. This response was even higher than the 72 percent of employees indicating a policy on family support was needed in survey 1.

Only 15 percent of agencies required “go bags” while 85 percent had no such requirements. On current capability to support families, 33 percent felt the employee’s felt supported, while 56 percent were uncertain, and 11 percent felt staff would not feel supported. When asked if the department was currently adequately prepared to support staff member’s families during a multi-day deployment, 65 percent indicated they were not, 4 percent were uncertain, and 31 percent felt they were prepared.

The final question, asking if the department had a mechanism in place to recall off-duty staff for a major incident, 93 percent indicated they did, while 7 percent did not.

The results of this feedback instrument verify that preparedness of families with the response agency, and support of those families during a deployment has rarely been considered.

Figure 2



4. What are the criteria for the development of a Portage Fire Department's Emergency Responder Family Preparedness Guide in the event of a multi-day deployment?

The results of this paper indicate that a minimum of two specific areas within most departments proves inadequate. The first is responder readiness to deploy to large-scale, multi-day incidents. The second is a mechanism for family support. A framework to ensure families of emergency responders are not left in a void during a deployment needs to be included. These areas need to be addressed by development of Standard Operating Guidelines.

Previously only Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) task forces, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) personnel, or departments with large-scale wildfire responsibilities would face the possibility of rapid deployment to a disaster scene.

The Michigan National Guard, 51<sup>st</sup> WMD Civil Support Team developed a stand-by policy for its staff. In the policy, Major Hinga writes:

All unit personnel may be required to report for duty during otherwise normal "off duty" hours in the event of an emergency situation, or as otherwise determined by the Command. However, given the impracticality of having all members available for response at all times, the following policy will be used to cover unit response obligations.

Personnel on stand-by are directed to maintain themselves in an appropriate state of readiness at all times. This includes but is not limited to:

- a). Maintaining an amount of fuel in their private vehicle sufficient to enable them to reach the armory without stopping to refuel.
- b). Maintaining in their vehicle or readily available, a sufficient amount of personal necessities (medication, eyeglasses/inserts, hygiene items, etc.) to enable them to immediately deploy and sustain themselves for 72 hours.
- c). Maintain their uniform and equipment (both personal and unit) in a constant state of readiness and readily available.
- d). Deploying with the "red bag" and personal items detailed in the attached enclosure 3, Individual Equipment Packing List. Deviations must be approved by the Commander. (Hinga, 2004)

This policy identifies the reason for the policy, and clearly defines the responsibilities of the team's members. It gives direction regarding transportation

readiness for the return to duty as well as the specific equipment issues that team members need to have for an immediate call up.

Local fire service administrators should develop a similar policy for their response personnel. Appendix G and Appendix H list recommended equipment minimums for the civil support teams and urban search and rescue task forces.

Family support is a task that the military understands is crucial to their mission. As a result, family readiness groups are required. In the *Deployment Guide For Families of Deploying Soldiers*, the Department of the Army explains the functions of a Family Readiness Group (FRG). It states:

Today the Army defines an FRG as a company-level or battalion-level organization of officers, enlisted soldiers, civilians, and family members who volunteer to provide mutual social and emotional support, outreach services, and information to their fellow soldiers and family members. In other words, there is a spirit of inclusion here that does not stop with just the spouses of unit soldiers. FRG's welcome those who have an interest in the unit, need its services, and/or are willing to help the FRG meet its goals. The term we will use to describe the whole collection of individuals eligible to belong to the FRG will be "the unit family."

The kind of help that FRG's provide is the kind of help that we all need and try to get every day: good information to help us plan, an opportunity to make friends, help with Army bureaucracy, and a chance to have some fun and talk through what may be on our minds. Good information and friends who provide

each other need emotional support and shared labor to meet daily tasks can and should be what FRG's are all about. (Department of the Army, 2004)

Family support is also considered to be an integral part of the Urban Search and Rescue task forces under the direction of FEMA. The US&R Operations Manual directs that prior to activation:

[A] plan should be established for providing regular situation reports to the family or loved ones of deploying members. This plan should address a time schedule for contact and information for the home jurisdiction. A representative from the sponsoring agency should be assigned for the duration of the mission to act as the liaison between the task force and the families or loved ones.

A tentative schedule of contacts should be established prior to the task force departure and refined as needed on the mission. This schedule should then be passed on to the family member/loved one as soon as possible.

Along with the task force/family liaison, the sponsoring agency may designate personnel to provide assistance to the families of deploying members. This may include home emergency repairs, family transportation necessities, assistance with media interviews, and other emergency assistance the family member/loved one of may require. (FEMA, 2000, p. N-9)

Pennsylvania Task Force 1 has developed a Family Support Section. This section provides current, accurate information to families of deployed members, as well as a peer support network. In addition, the Family Support Section will provide assistance as necessary to families of deployed members in areas such as childcare, emergency home/auto repair, etc. The policy states:

During the deployment notification process, pre-identified members of the Family Support Section shall also be notified. As soon as necessary information is available, the family of each deployed member shall be notified and given the following information: FSS phone number, FSS e-mail address, emergency phone number, operating hours of the FSS, and times to call for up dated information. FSS members shall contact the Task Force Technical Information Section prior to the posted family call in times to receive updated information. (PA. Task Force 1, 2001, p. 2)

Colorado Task Force 1 gives guidance to its team members with a Family Readiness Checklist listing areas that should be covered to provide for a prepared family. It states, “As a deployable member of the COTF1 you should have a tool kit that contains extensive work sheets, which cover personal history, automobile information, insurance, property ownership and safekeeping as well as financial management. Go over these sections with your spouse and family members. This family readiness checklist targets tasks you should have accomplished before deployment” (CO. Task Force 1, 2004).

The fire service always talks about family, but it seems from the results of this research has not taken family support to the level necessary to be successful. The excerpts cited from the US&R Task Forces have been developed from lessons learned as a result of deployments. Any policy developed in the area of family support needs to cover the same principals as the US&R Task Forces.

The proposed Portage Fire Department staff readiness SOG is attached as Appendix E, and the proposed family support SOG is attached as Appendix F.

## DISCUSSION

The data from this research indicate that the topics discussed within this paper are breaking new ground. Little data was found in the literature review that clearly answered the questions posed. The military and USAR teams were the only models for staff readiness and family support that were readily available.

“[T]here are people out there who continue to wish to do us harm, and the conventional wisdom says that until we defeat our enemies and win the Global War on Terrorism, we can reasonably expect 9/11 will not be an isolated incident” (Marghella, 2004, p. 10). Former FEMA Director, Joe Allbaugh said:

We live in a different world than we did before September 11, 2001. We are more aware of our vulnerabilities, more appreciative of our freedoms and more understanding that we have a personal responsibility for the safety of our families, our neighbors and our nation. (FEMA, 2002, p. i)

That personal responsibility should include a Disaster Supplies Kit and a family disaster plan. The six basics include water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools and emergency supplies, and special items. Keep the items in an easy-to carry container (American Red Cross, 2004). President Bush, during his 2002 State of the Union address, urged people to become more prepared: “My call tonight is for every American to commit at least two years - 4,000 hours over the rest of your lifetime - to the service of your neighbors and your nation” (Chin, 2004, p. 15).

In the October 2004 issue of *Homeland Defense Journal*, Dr. Pietro Marghella stated:

If the events of September 11, 2001, forcibly awakened us to the fact that there are bad people out there who wish to do us great harm...and that we were as a nation extremely vulnerable and ill-prepared for a major terrorist attack, then the recent revelations of that al-Quaida planned to do significantly more than what they ended up accomplishing should be causing us insomnia. (Marghella, 2004, p. 8)

“Terrorist goals are to destabilize governments and panic citizens” (Michigan State Police, 2004). “Any community in the country could become a target. We know this now” (Grow, 2001).

Captain Doug Mummert of the Phoenix Fire Department said “I think nationwide and worldwide that the incident of September 11, 2001, took a lot of people by surprise”. “The events of September 11 have changed us all, and Americans must adapt to the times” (Grow, 2001).

All of these fire service and emergency management leaders are saying one thing; we need to be prepared for another large-scale, multi-day event. It is not a matter of if it happens; it is a matter of when and where it happens. While we may be more concerned currently with terrorism preparedness, as Griffith describes, “There is no hard and fast definition of what constitutes a disaster. Sometimes a disaster develops quickly, hitting you full-force with little or no warning. Other times, a disaster looms on the horizon for weeks until it becomes large enough to be a threat” (Griffith, 1999). The recent active hurricane season bears witness to his perspective.

What have we learned from September 11, 2001? “The primary responsibility to prepare for and respond to emergencies rests with individual members and families” (Provident Living, 2004).

In spite of this huge push for civilian preparedness, it appears we are still not making a significant impact. Scott Baltic, Editor of *Homeland Protection Professional Magazine* states,

The Harvard School of Public Health Project on the Public and Biological Security released a study reporting the although most Americans (73 percent) knew the alert level the nation was under, few had made evacuation plans or arrangements for “sheltering in place” as government officials have been recommending. The study also found that few respondents (out of just over 1,000) had recently visited websites offering preparedness information.

(Baltic, 2004, p. 6)

The results of the author’s surveys do not bear out that emergency responders have adequately prepared themselves or their families. A fire chief responding to my survey indicated that it was clear that his agency needed to develop additional policies after considering issues that were raised within the survey!

The fire service has numerous laws, regulations, and standards covering almost every aspect of fire suppression, hazardous materials, and emergency medical response. Other than a requirement for utilizing the new National Incident Management System (NIMS) there are no current requirements that mandate minimum preparedness standards for emergency response agencies, or any requirement for developing a family support organization within those agencies.

The final version of NIMS may have a significant impact on emergency response. As described in the *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, it states:

It would continue FEMA's efforts to reduce the loss of life and property and to protect our nation's institutions from all types of hazards through a comprehensive, risk-based, all-hazards emergency management program of preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. And it will continue to change the emergency management culture from one that reacts to terrorism and other disasters, to one that proactively helps communities and citizens avoid becoming victims. (White House, 2004b)

“When a disaster, whether natural or manmade, overwhelms the resources and capabilities of local organizations, responders come in from other cities, counties, and states -- jurisdictions near and far -- as well as from federal agencies, to assist those with local responsibility” (NIOSH, 2004). In the review of responses from Feedback Survey 2 (Appendix D), 98 percent of department administrators indicated that they would send staff on out-of-area multi-day mutual aid responses if requested.

However, regulations alone will not cause a culture change with the emergency response community. That change must come from within, we must see the need for change and take proactive steps to implement it.

Family support must become an integral part of the fire service. Others have seen the need for decades. “Defense officials recognize the vital role that that families play in supporting military readiness, and they are enhancing programs, forming partnerships, and resourcing programs to directly support family readiness” (Department of Defense, 2004). Many emergency response organizations have learned the importance of family support plans from actual responses. Miami-Dade Fire Rescue has developed a hurricane policy and procedure as well as a family support system for their staff. Natalie Duran,

Fire Communications Officer and CISM Coordinator (personal communication, November 22, 2004) discussing their family support activities stated, “After Hurricane Andrew, twelve years ago, the department established the family wellness unit that is responsible for accountability of employees. This includes working with the union to help a firefighter’s family who may have been impacted by the hurricane”.

In the document, *What You Can Do*, developed by the Ohio Air National Guard, it states:

Too often, family members deny the possibility of duty separation, and pretend it is not going to happen (Ohio Air National Guard, 2004). There is a difference between being ready “to go” and ready “to part”. Being ready “to go” means having your bag packed, all shots up to date, and other duty essential preparations completed. Being ready “to part” from your spouse and other family members means being aware of the personal and family issues related to separation, and being prepared to deal as constructively as possible with those issues. (Ohio Air National Guard, 2004)

The military takes family support programs seriously. “Frequent deployments are a reality for some Guard and Reserve service members and families. With over 50 percent of the force married, family separation is common and the need for self-reliant families is crucial” (Department of Defense, 2004).

“The basic idea behind a family readiness group (FRG) is that soldiers and families benefit from helping one another cope with the rigors of Army life” (Department of the Army, 2004).

We must develop appropriate plans for staff readiness and family support. The recently formed National Guard WMD Civil Support Teams are examples of the rapid deployment capability through preparedness.

The Department of Defense explains the role of the WMD Civil Support Teams stating:

The WMD civil support teams are able to deploy rapidly, assist local first-responders in determining the nature of an attack, provide medical and technical advice, and pave the way for the identification and arrival of follow-on state and federal military response assets. They provide initial advice on what the agent may be, assist first responders in that detection assessment process, and are the first military responders on the ground, so that if additional federal resources are called into the situation, they can serve as an advance party that can liaise with the Joint Task Force Civil Support. (Global Security, 2005)

The commander of the Michigan National Guard's 51<sup>st</sup> WMD Civil Support Team, Major Clark Hinga, drafted a stand-by policy for his team. In the policy, Hinga writes:

All unit personnel may be required to report for duty during otherwise normal "off duty" hours in the event of an emergency situation, or as otherwise determined by the Command. However, given the impracticality of having all members available for response at all times, the following policy will be used to cover unit response obligations.

Personnel on stand-by are directed to maintain themselves in an appropriate state of readiness at all times. This includes but is not limited to:

- a). Maintaining an amount of fuel in their private vehicle sufficient to enable them to reach the armory without stopping to refuel.
- b). Maintaining in their vehicle or readily available, a sufficient amount of personal necessities (medication, eyeglasses/inserts, hygiene items, etc.) to enable them to immediately deploy and sustain themselves for 72 hours.
- c). Maintain their uniform and equipment (both personal and unit) in a constant state of readiness and readily available.
- d). Deploying with the “red bag” and personal items detailed in the attached enclosure 3 (Appendix G), Individual Equipment Packing List.

Deviations must be approved by the Commander. (Hinga, 2004)

Local emergency responders must consider developing similar policies to ensure a constant state of readiness for major incidents. The daily staffing of most fire service organizations would be insufficient to handle large-scale events. The recall of off-duty personnel would likely be necessary. Having a policy such as that developed by Hinga would enhance the ability to recall additional staff.

The National Urban Search and Rescue Response System is managed by FEMA within the Department of Homeland Security (Paulsell, 2003, p. 2). US&R task forces also have policies covering stand-by of personnel. Once a US&R team is activated, they must be ready to respond. Sponsoring agencies accepting the mission are expected to

field all necessary personnel, equipment, and supplies; and report to their designated Point Of Departure within six hours of the Activation Order (FEMA, 2000, p. III-3).

The standard equipment list for task forces members (Appendix H) must be packed and available (PA. Task Force 1, 2004). This pre planning allows for a more rapid deployment.

Family support is also a significant part of US&R operations. The US&R Operations Manual directs that prior to activation:

[A] plan should be established for providing regular situation reports to the family or loved ones of deploying members. This plan should address a time schedule for contact and information for the home jurisdiction. A representative from the sponsoring agency should be assigned for the duration of the mission to act as the liaison between the task force and the families or loved ones. (FEMA, 2000, p. N-9)

Colorado Task Force 1 gives guidance to its team members with a Family Readiness Checklist listing areas that should be covered to provide for a prepared family. It states, “As a deployable member of the COTF1 you should have a tool kit that contains extensive work sheets, which cover personal history, automobile information, insurance, property ownership and safekeeping as well as financial management. Go over these sections with your spouse and family members. This family readiness checklist targets tasks you should have accomplished before deployment” (CO. Task Force 1, 2004).

“All state and local governments should create and regularly update their own homeland security plans, based on their existing emergency operations plans, to provide guidance for the integration of their response assets in the event of an attack” (White

House, 2004a). “Everyone needs to be prepared to make changes as necessary to provide protection and care for your family” (International Pentecostal Holiness Church, 2004).

The state of readiness of the average emergency response organization was made clear by Leon Dextrateur, Plans Section Chief for the Virginia Task Force 2, Urban Search and Rescue Team (personal communication, January 2, 2005) when he stated, “Looking at past large scale operations, I do not believe the average departments across the country are equipped to manage long term large scale operations”.

“The disaster sites in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001 presented new challenges to responders. They were large in scale, long in duration, and complex in terms of the range of hazards presented. As a result of these characteristics, these events thrust responders into new roles for which they may not have been properly prepared or equipped” (Bartis, 2002, p. x). These observations would seem to lend support to the comments made by Leon Dextrateur.

“The lessons of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks demonstrate the importance of being prepared” (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2004).

“On September 10, the world believed that the United States had a world-class emergency response system. We had been talking the talk, but we hadn’t been walking the walk” (Gillies, 2002).

How can we change the culture of Emergency Response (Gillies, 2002)? We must see that the threats have changed, and we must face those threats proactively. The fire service is often time mired in tradition, however we cannot let tradition hamper our capability to respond safely and survive an incident.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The preceding pages of this report illustrate that pre-planning how a department and its personnel will respond prior to an event reduces confusion, anxiety, and mistakes. The Portage Fire Department has not yet had the need to respond to a large-scale multi-day emergency scene. Like many departments across the country, no thought had been given to how prepared its personnel were for such a deployment, nor how it could affect the families of those members leaving for several days. The author recommends that fire administration develop Standard Operating Guidelines staff preparedness regarding response to large-scale events (Appendix E) as well as preparation of a policy for support of family members during deployments (Appendix F).

In summary, those departments that have prepared for major events, and developed a system for support of the families of the emergency responders send their personnel into harms way knowing that they can concentrate of the job at hand instead of worrying about loved one's at home. This preparedness benefits not only public safety personnel, by putting their minds at ease, but also the citizens that are looking to the emergency responders for the lifesaving assistance needed during disaster events.

If you think preparedness is not important, imagine what would have happened to Noah and his family if they had put off building the ark, gathering the animals, and laying in their food and supplies (Koontz, 2004)!

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4. If you were assigned to a multi-day response that would preclude you from returning home for several days, would that assignment create issues and hardships for your family unit?

Yes  No

If Yes, what type of issues and/or hardships? Check all that apply.

- Child care/elder care responsibilities  
 Second job schedule conflicts  
 Educational activities  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

5. Does your department have any policies regarding staff individual preparedness for immediate deployment to multi-day responses?

Yes  No

6. Does your department have any policies regarding family preparedness for staff members families during disaster deployments?

Yes  No

7. If your department decided to develop a staff and/or family preparedness SOP/SOG would you see it as a beneficial addition to policy?

Yes  No

8. Have you developed a family preparedness plan for use by your family for times of major emergency/disaster or during your multi-day absence from the home?

Yes  No

9. Does your department require you to have some form of a “go bag” with personal items that would allow you to operate for a several day deployment with you when you are on-duty?

Yes  No

10. Have you personally, or have you considered developing your own “go bag” to be better prepared for possible emergency deployments?

Yes  No  Considered

11. Do you feel that at your current personal preparedness level you would be ready to be assigned to a multiple day response assignment?

Yes  No

12. Have you and your family developed a family disaster kit to be self sufficient for 72 hours following a disaster?

Yes  No

13. Does your department provide support to your family should you be assigned to a multi-day assignment that would keep you away from home for several days?

Yes  No

If Yes, what support is provided?

- Daily telephone welfare checks
- Personal visits
- Housing if necessary
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

14. Do you feel that your department has done all it needs to do to provide for staff and their families disaster preparedness?

Yes  No

If No, what additional actions should be taken to enhance preparedness?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Department City & State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Population Served: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Department Total Strength: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank You,

Robert M. Hudson

**Appendix B**  
**Executive Fire Officer Program**  
**National Fire Academy**

**Emergency Service Agency Preparedness Questionnaire**  
**November, 2004**

To assist in the development of an applied research project as part of the Executive Fire Officer program, I am requesting your assistance in completing a brief questionnaire regarding preparedness within your agency for emergency responder and family preparedness.

The results of this questionnaire will be utilized in an attempt to determine the status of preparedness to deploy to large-scale multi-day incidents.

Please fax the completed questionnaire to my attention at (269) 329-4489 or email to [HUDSONR@PORTAGEMICHIGAN.COM](mailto:HUDSONR@PORTAGEMICHIGAN.COM).

**Completed questionnaires are requested by November 30<sup>th</sup>.**

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (269) 329-4539.  
Thank you for your anticipated assistance and cooperation!

Robert Hudson  
Deputy Chief-Operations  
Portage Fire Department  
Portage, Michigan

1. Has your agency developed any policies or guidelines regarding preparedness to respond to multi-day incidents including mutual aid type incidents?

YES \_\_\_\_\_\*                      NO \_\_\_\_\_

2. Has your agency developed and policies or guidelines regarding support for families of personnel that may be deployed to a multi-day incident response?

YES \_\_\_\_\_\*                      NO \_\_\_\_\_

3. Has your agency developed any policies or guidelines for staff members' family preparedness?

YES \_\_\_\_\_\*                      NO \_\_\_\_\_

4. Would your agency send staff out of your immediate area or region on a multi-day mutual aid incident if requested?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

5. What steps would your agency take to support family members of those deployed to a multi-day incident? (Check all that apply)

Home visits \_\_\_\_\_ Phone calls \_\_\_\_\_

Support Meetings \_\_\_\_\_ Assign a liaison to families \_\_\_\_\_

Chaplain visits \_\_\_\_\_ Visits/meetings with Chief Officer \_\_\_\_\_

None \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you feel that a guideline or policy on emergency deployment of staff would be beneficial to your agency?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you feel that a policy or guideline on family support of staff members would be beneficial to your agency?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

8. Does your agency require staff to have some form of a “go bag” with them while on duty to allow them to operate in a multi-day deployment?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you feel that your staff members believe that their families would be adequately supported by your agency if they were called away for a multi-day deployment?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ Unknown \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you feel that your agency is currently adequately prepared to support staff members' families while they are away on deployment?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do you have a mechanism within your agency to recall off duty staff to fill a response to a multi-day deployment?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

If YES, what methods do you utilize?

Alpha/numeric pager \_\_\_\_\_ Radio pager \_\_\_\_\_

Phone call list \_\_\_\_\_ Computerized telephone recall system \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

\* Copies of any guidelines or policies with regard to questions 1, 2 and 3 would be appreciated. They can be faxed or emailed to the contact information on the page 1 of this form.

Demographic Information:

Name and title of person completing this form: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number and Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State: \_\_\_\_\_

Population Served: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Department Strength: \_\_\_\_\_

Make up of Department: Career: \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_ Civilian: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C**  
**EXECUTIVE FIRE OFFICER PROGRAM**  
**NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY**

**Emergency Responder/Family Preparedness Questionnaire**

July 2004

Members of the July 12-23, 2004 Executive Development, Leading Community Risk Reduction, Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management, and Executive Leadership classes.

To assist in the development of an applied research project for the Executive Fire Officer program, I am requesting that you take a few minutes and complete the following survey.

This information will be used to attempt to determine the current status of emergency responders and their family's preparedness.

**Please return the questionnaire to your instructor by Wednesday, July 21, 2004 so your survey can be included in my project. Thank You! Robert Hudson**

1. As a member of your organization, do you face the possibility of a multi-day response to a major emergency or disaster within your community, state, or region?

Yes 98%

No 2%

2. If you were an on-duty emergency responder assigned to a multi-day response involving a disaster in your community, would you be concerned with the safety and welfare of your family?

Yes 86%

No 14%

3. Has your department taken any steps to help staff members prepare themselves and families for the potential implications of a multi-day disaster response?

Yes 34%

No 66%

If Yes, what steps have your department taken?

Family support group, family shelter, call tree, response bags for 7 days, ladies auxiliary, checklist for families, awareness training, family contact by shift officer, off-duty staff looks out for families, allow time off to check home.

4. If you were assigned to a multi-day response that would preclude you from returning home for several days, would that assignment create issues and hardships for your family unit?

Yes 48%                       No 52%

If Yes, what type of issues and/or hardships? Check all that apply.

20% Child care/elder care responsibilities

9% Second job schedule conflicts

8% Educational activities

9% Other coaching, dogs/animals, spouse w/ medical condition, over all concern for family during emergency, care taker, transport child to school.

5. Does your department have any policies regarding staff individual preparedness for immediate deployment to multi-day responses?

Yes 29%                       No 71%

6. Does your department have any polices regarding family preparedness for staff members families during disaster deployments?

Yes 9%                       No 91%

7. If your department decided to develop a staff and/or family preparedness SOP/SOG would you see it as a beneficial addition to policy?

Yes 72%                       No 13%                       Unknown 15%

8. Have you developed a family preparedness plan for use by your family for times of major emergency/disaster or during your multi-day absence from the home?

Yes 40%                       No 59%                       Unknown 1%

9. Does your department require you to have some form of a “go bag” with personal items that would allow you to operate for a several day deployment with you when you are on-duty?

Yes 18%                       No 82%

10. Have you personally, or have you considered developing your own “go bag” to be better prepared for possible emergency deployments?

Yes 47%                       No 36%                       Considered 17%

11. Do you feel that at your current personal preparedness level you would be ready to be assigned to a multiple day response assignment?

Yes 74%                       No 25%                       No Answer 1%

12. Have you and your family developed a family disaster kit to be self sufficient for 72 hours following a disaster?

Yes 52%                       No 47%                       No Answer 1%

13. Does your department provide support to your family should you be assigned to a multi-day assignment that would keep you away from home for several days?

Yes 23%                       No 76%                       No Answer 1%

If Yes, what support is provided?

- [14%] Daily telephone welfare checks
- [7%] Personal visits
- [5%] Housing if necessary
- [5%] Other family shelter, recorded information line, to be determined.

14. Do you feel that your department has done all it needs to do to provide for staff and their families disaster preparedness?

Yes 18%                       No 81%                       No Answer 1%

If No, what additional actions should be taken to enhance preparedness?

Family support group, develop an SOG/policy, telephone welfare checks, checklist, contingency plan, FD phone list, woefully ill prepared, must start by an SOG, develop a support network, policy and go bag, family shelter, guideline for family preparedness, start the process.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department City & State: \_\_\_\_\_

Population Served: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Total Strength: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank You,

Robert M. Hudson

**Appendix D**  
**Executive Fire Officer Program**  
**National Fire Academy**

**Emergency Service Agency Preparedness Questionnaire**  
**November, 2004**

To assist in the development of an applied research project as part of the Executive Fire Officer program, I am requesting your assistance in completing a brief questionnaire regarding preparedness within your agency for emergency responder and family preparedness.

The results of this questionnaire will be utilized in an attempt to determine the status of preparedness to deploy to large-scale multi-day incidents.

Please fax the completed questionnaire to my attention at (269) 329-4489 or email to [HUDSONR@PORTAGEMICHIGAN.COM](mailto:HUDSONR@PORTAGEMICHIGAN.COM).

**Completed questionnaires are requested by November 30<sup>th</sup>.**

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (269) 329-4539.  
Thank you for your anticipated assistance and cooperation!

Robert Hudson  
Deputy Chief-Operations  
Portage Fire Department  
Portage, Michigan

1. Has your agency developed any policies or guidelines regarding preparedness to respond to multi-day incidents including mutual aid type incidents?  
  
YES 33%                      NO 67%
  
2. Has your agency developed and policies or guidelines regarding support for families of personnel that may be deployed to a multi-day incident response?  
  
YES 13%                      NO 87%
  
3. Has your agency developed any policies or guidelines for staff members' family preparedness?  
  
YES 13%                      NO 87%

4. Would your agency send staff out of your immediate area or region on a multi-day mutual aid incident if requested?

YES 98%                      NO 2%

5. What steps would your agency take to support family members of those deployed to a multi-day incident? (Check all that apply)

Home visits 37%                      Phone calls 78%

Support Meetings 28%                      Assign a liaison to families 51%

Chaplain visits 33%                      Visits/meetings with Chief Officer 51%

None 4%                      Other 9% (Existing support group, EAP)

6. Do you feel that a guideline or policy on emergency deployment of staff would be beneficial to your agency?

YES 93%                      NO 7%

7. Do you feel that a policy or guideline on family support of staff members would be beneficial to your agency?

YES 89%                      NO 11%

8. Does your agency require staff to have some form of a “go bag” with them while on duty to allow them to operate in a multi-day deployment?

YES 15%                      NO 85%

9. Do you feel that your staff members believe that their families would be adequately supported by your agency if they were called away for a multi-day deployment?

YES 33%                      NO 11%                      Unknown 56%

10. Do you feel that your agency is currently adequately prepared to support staff members' families while they are away on deployment?

YES 31%                      NO 65%                      Unknown 4%

11. Do you have a mechanism within your agency to recall off duty staff to fill a response to a multi-day deployment?

YES 93%                      NO 7%

If YES, what methods do you utilize?

Alpha/numeric pager 50%                      Radio pager 30%

Phone call list 74%                      Computerized telephone recall system 7%

Other 2% (Shift Commander Notification)

\* Copies of any guidelines or policies with regard to questions 1, 2 and 3 would be appreciated. They can be faxed or emailed to the contact information on the page 1 of this form.

Demographic Information:

Name and title of person completing this form: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number and Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State: \_\_\_\_\_

Population Served: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Department Strength: \_\_\_\_\_

Make up of Department: Career: \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_ Civilian: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix E**  
**Portage Fire Department**  
**Standard Operating Guideline**  
**Staff Readiness**

**Issued:** January 13, 2005

**Policy No.** R-3.02

Page 1 of 2

**Subject:** Staff Readiness to Deploy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for staff members to be prepared for immediate deployment to major incidents scenes.

Scope: Applies to all fire suppression personnel at the rank of Battalion Chief or below.

1. Personnel may be required to report for duty during otherwise normal "off duty" hours in the event of an emergency situation, or as otherwise determined by the fire administration.
2. Personnel shall provide current contact numbers (phone, pager, cell phone), with fire administration, updating as necessary to remain accurate to provide a mechanism of rapid contact in the event of an emergency personnel recall situation.
3. Personnel reporting for duty shall have in their possession, and immediately available a "go bag" stocked with the following items, packed in one bag with their name marked on outside:

- 3 sets each uniforms, T-shirts and one jacket

- 5 each, pairs stocks, undershirt, underwear

- 1 extra pair of work shoes

- 2 bath towels, sheets, pillow, and blanket

- Toilet articles for four-day stay:

- Toothbrush and toothpaste

- Deodorant

- Soap

- Shampoo

- Razor and cream

- Other personal items

- Rain gear

- Bunker gear

- Flashlight with good batteries

- Prescribed medications

- Insect repellent

- 3 day supply food (non perishable)

**Subject:** Staff Readiness to Deploy

**Policy No.** R-3.02

**Issued:** January 13, 2005

Page 2 of 2

4. Personnel are requested to maintain a basic state of readiness at all times. This includes but is not limited to:

- a). Maintaining an amount of fuel in their private vehicle sufficient to enable them to reach the station without stopping to refuel.
- b). Maintaining their “go bag” and personal items detailed above.

5. Personnel are requested to monitor their cell phone or home phone at all times while within a 2-hour travel distance from the department.

6. In the event of an actual callback, department members will be notified to return to Station 1 as a muster area utilizing the most expeditious means available, without compromising safety or violating laws or regulations.

**Appendix F**  
**Portage Fire Department**  
**Standard Operating Guideline**  
**Family Support**

**Issued:** January 13, 2005

**Policy No.** S-1.01

Page 1 of 1

**Subject:** Family Support Group (FSG) Operations

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for family support group operations when personnel are deployed to major incidents scenes for periods exceeding 48 hours.

Scope: Applies to all fire department personnel.

1. Personnel may be deployed as part of mutual aid to major incident scenes, where the term of assignment may exceed 48 hours. If the personnel assignment exceeds, or is expected to exceed 48 hours this policy shall be implemented.
2. All personnel shall provide fire administration a listing of contact numbers for immediate family for use in emergency situations and as a means of updating family members during long-term deployments. These contact numbers shall be updated as necessary, but no less than annually, during the first week of January.
3. Personnel are requested to maintain information at their residence, which covers issues such as personal history, automobile information, insurance, property ownership and financial data. Members should ensure that spouse and family members know the location of this information should it be needed during a deployment.
4. The on-duty Battalion Chief shall be the point of contact, and act as the liaison between the task force and the family support group (FSG).
5. As soon as necessary information is available, the family of each deployed member shall be notified and given the following information: FSG phone number, FSG e-mail address, emergency phone number, operating hours of the FSG, and times to call for updated information.
6. A tentative schedule of contacts should be established prior to the personnel departure and refined as needed during the assignment. This schedule will be passed on to the family members as soon as practical. As a general policy, updates will be provided no less than twice daily at 0600 and 1800. The team leader can modify this schedule as necessary to fit team needs. Any modifications to this schedule shall immediately be communicated to family members.
7. A designated family support group member shall make contact with the team leader thirty minutes prior to scheduled updates to obtain current information for the family briefing update.
8. These actions shall be maintained until all department members have returned from the incident scene to the department. At that time the Battalion Chief can stand down the FSG.

**Appendix G**  
**51<sup>st</sup> WMD Civil Support Team**  
**Stand-by Equipment List**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 51st WMD CST Ready Bag Inspection

Inspected by: \_\_\_\_\_

Item	Location	Hinga	Awadi	Passini	Kirby
TAC Vest					
Radio, Handheld	TAC Vest				
AN/UDR-13	TAC Vest				
M291 Decon Kit	M40 Carrying Case Pocket				
M40 Protective Mask	TAC Vest M40 Carrying Case				
CamelBak					
Boots, Hazmat (1 pr)	Inside Main Compartment				
Boots, Vinyl	Inside Main Compartment				
Level A Suit	Inside Main Compartment	N/A			N/A
Safety Hat	Inside Main Compartment				
Kevlar	Inside Main Compartment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Accessories, Radio, Handheld	Left Front Pocket				
Level B Suit	Left Side Pocket	N/A			N/A
Pads, Elbow	Left Side Pocket	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pads, Knee	Left Side Pocket	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gloves, Chemical Protective (1 pr)	Right Front Pocket				
Gloves, Insert, Cotton, White (1pr)	Right Front Pocket				
Gloves, Latex (1 pr)	Right Front Pocket				
Headlamp	Right Front Pocket	N/A			N/A
Battle Dress Over garment (Live)	Right Side Pocket				
Red Bag Status					
SCBA Mask					
SCBA System PSI		N/A			N/A
SCBA Function Test		N/A			N/A
Battle Dress Over garment (Trng)	Green Bag				
Gloves, Chemical Protective (Trng)	Green Bag				
Level B Suit (Trng)	Green Bag				
Level A Suit (Trng)	Green Bag				
Boots, Hazmat (Trng)	Green Bag				
Boots, Vinyl (Trng)	Green Bag				

L - Live

T - Training

N/A - Not Applicable

**Appendix H**  
**Pennsylvania Task Force 1**  
**Personal Equipment List**

Uniform Standard must meet PA Task Force 1 standards for identification.

- (2) Two Navy Blue BDU Tops
- (3) Three Navy Blue BDU Pants.
- (4) Four Gray T-shirts with PA-TF 1

Personal Protective Gear must meet PA Task Force 1 requirements.

- (1) One Helmet with Chinstrap
- (1) Safety Glasses with side protection or Safety Goggles
- (2) Two sets Hearing protection
- (1) One pair Leather Work Gloves
- (1) One pair Protective Boots with Steel Toe and Shank
- (2) Quarts of Water (in canteens w/belt)

Additional items

- (6) Pair underwear
- (6) Pair socks (cotton)
- (2) Shorts
- (1) Thongs or sandals
- (2) Sets of MRE's or equivalent
- (1) Collapsible cup
- (1) Sunglasses
- (1) Non-work shoes
- (1) PT clothing
- (1) Pen and notepad
- (1) Toiletry Kit, including Soap, Toothpaste, Razor & extra blades, Deodorant, Toilet paper
- (1) Chap Stick
- (1) Sunscreen
- (1) Bug dope
- (1) Alarm clock
- (1) Personal first aid kit
- (1) Weeks supply of personal prescription medications.
- (1) Sleeping bag
- (1) Pillow
- (2) Sheets
- (3) Bandannas

**Appendix H**  
**Pennsylvania Task Force 1**  
**Personal Equipment List**  
**Page 2**

- (1) Uniform Jumpsuit
- (1) Rain gear
- (1) Ball Cap
- (1) Helmet light w/ Extra bulb batteries
- (1) Flash light w/ Extra bulb & batteries
- (1) Credit card
- (1) Cash
- (1) FOG manual
- (1) Wallet
- (1) Camera w/ film
- (1) Jackknife
- (1) Sweatshirt/ Fleece Jacket
- (1) Sock liner
- (1) Coolmax underwear
- (1) Spare boots (gortex lined)
- (1) gortex socks
- (1) wide brim hat
- (1) mosquito netting
- (1) bug headnet

**Appendix I**  
**Federal Emergency Management Agency**  
**Incident Support Team**  
**Personal Equipment List**

The following minimum recommended personal gear checklist is adopted for the Incident Support Team Operations Manual.

- 6 FEMA US&R polo shirts, short sleeve, navy blue
- 3 pair Pants, kaki or navy blue B.D.U.
- 1 FEMA US&R job shirt, long sleeve, navy blue.
- 1 FEMA ball cap, navy blue
- 1 Jacket, lightweight, navy blue or black
- 1 Jacket, cold weather, navy blue or black
- 1 set Rain gear
- 7 pair Underwear
- 7 pair Socks
- 1 pair Boots, hard toe
- 1 pair Tennis or comfortable shoes
- 1 pair Gloves, work
- 1 pair Gloves, cold weather
- 1 Helmet, safety, with chinstrap
- 1 pair Safety glasses or eye protection
- 1 pair Hearing protection
- 1 Personal hygiene/grooming kit
- 2 week Supply of personal medication
- 1 Bath towel
- 1 Wash cloth
- 1 Picture ID
- 1 pair Eyeglasses
- 1 pair Sunglasses
- 1 Flashlight, with spare batteries and bulbs
- 1 Wristwatch
- 1 Sleeping Bag
- \$300 Cash
- Credit card(s)
- Food and water for 24 hours