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**INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION CHALLENGES
AMONG HOMELAND SECURITY DISCIPLINES IN
URBAN AREAS**

by

Jerome D. Hagen

March 2006

Thesis Advisor:
Second Reader:

Jeff Knopf
Glen Woodbury

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SECURITY DISCIPLINES IN URBAN AREAS**

Jerome D. Hagen
Civilian, Captain, Seattle Fire Department
B.A., University of Montana, 2002

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March 2006**

Author: Jerome D. Hagen

Approved by: Jeff Knopf, Ph.D.
Thesis Advisor

Glen Woodbury, M.A.
Second Reader

Professor Douglas Porch
Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs

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ABSTRACT

First responders have struggled to incorporate strategic direction provided by the federal government into their existing plans. An urgent call for teamwork and cooperation has changed the landscape for America's first responders. They have been required to shoulder new responsibilities and become more networked and interactive with their peer disciplines to achieve higher levels of performance and response capability. This thesis examines interactions among four key homeland security disciplines in the Seattle, Washington urban area. It evaluates how municipal fire service, law enforcement, emergency management, and public health organizations have used federal government guidance and programs to prepare for catastrophic terrorism response.

Specifically, it describes how the homeland security roles, organizational cultures, and collaboration challenges currently facing local public safety agencies have impacted the urban area environment. Based on findings from local and national inquiries, it explains how the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Planning Scenarios (NPS) have impacted interagency collaboration. This study provides a detailed description of the homeland security environment from the inside by identifying challenges facing first responders and the strengths and gaps in their relationships. Finally, it offers positive policy recommendations to Seattle area public safety executives for increasing interagency cooperation in the urban area.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|--|
| ALS | Advanced Life Support |
| BFD | Bellingham, Washington Fire Department |
| BLM | Bureau of Land Management |
| CBRNE | Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive |
| CDC | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention |
| CHDS | Center for Homeland Defense and Security |
| CRS | Congressional Research Service |
| DHS | Department of Homeland Security |
| DMC | Disaster Management Committee |
| DNR | Department of Natural Resources |
| DOE | Department of Ecology |
| DOJ | Department of Justice |
| ECC | Emergency Coordination Center |
| EM | Emergency Management |
| EMA | Emergency Management Agency |
| EMAC | Emergency Management Assistance Compact |
| EMS | Emergency Medical Services |
| EOC | Emergency Operations Center |
| ESF | Emergency Support Function |
| FBI | Federal Bureau of Investigation |
| FDNY | Fire Department of New York |
| FOUO | For Official Use Only |
| FSE | Full-Scale Exercise |
| FTE | Full Time Equivalency |
| GAO | Government Accountability Office |
| HSOC | Homeland Security Operations Center |
| HSPD | Homeland Security Presidential Directive |
| IAP | Incident Action Plan |

| | |
|--------|--------------------------------------|
| IC | Incident Command |
| ICS | Incident Command System |
| IED | Improvised Explosive Device |
| IMT | Incident Management Team |
| JHAT | Joint Hazards Assessment Team |
| JTTF | Joint Terrorism Task Force |
| LE | Law Enforcement |
| MMRS | Metro Medical Response Team |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MTR | Marine Terrorism Response |
| NBC | Nuclear Biological Chemical |
| NFL | National Football League |
| NIMS | National Incident Management System |
| NPS | National Planning Scenarios |
| NRP | National Response Plan |
| ODP | Office for Domestic Preparedness |
| OEM | Office of Emergency Management |
| PIO | Public Information Officer |
| POD | Point of Dispensing |
| POSPD | Port of Seattle Police Department |
| PPE | Personal Protective Equipment |
| RDD | Radiological Dispersal Device |
| SEATAC | Seattle Tacoma International Airport |
| SDOT | Seattle Department of Transportation |
| SFD | Seattle Fire Department |
| SME | Subject Matter Expert |
| SNS | Strategic National Stockpile |
| SPD | Seattle Police Department |
| SPOC | Seattle Police Operations Center |
| SWAT | Special Weapons and Tactics |

| | |
|----------|---|
| TCL | Target Capabilities List |
| TOPOFF 2 | Top Officials 2 |
| TTX | Table Top Exercise |
| UASI | Urban Area Security Initiative |
| UAWG | Urban Area Working Group |
| USFA | United States Fire Administration |
| UTL | Universal Task List |
| VBIED | Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device |
| WMD | Weapons of Mass Destruction |
| WSP | Washington State Patrol |
| WSDOT | Washington State Department of Transportation |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Federal Government has identified fire departments, law enforcement and emergency management agencies, and public health departments in major U.S. population centers as central components of the homeland security enterprise. These agencies represent key homeland security disciplines at the local level. Collectively, they are not yet prepared to respond to catastrophic terrorism using nationally prescribed plans, tools, and resources. The level of interagency, interdisciplinary, and intergovernmental cooperation necessary to meet the needed capability forecast by experts has not been attained.

Several national reports have found that local first responders are less than fully prepared to respond to catastrophic terrorism incidents. Both the Hart-Rudman¹ and 9/11 Commission² reports have described coordination problems between levels of government. The Gilmore Commission's fifth report describes a future vision that the country has not yet attained in which state and local responders have been adequately funded, equipped, and trained to meet nationally defined and accepted terrorism preparedness standards.³ Retired United States Coast Guard Officer and terrorism expert Stephen Flynn stated that "America is dangerously unprepared to respond to another attack on American soil."⁴ The RAND Corporation, Government Accountability Office (GAO), Congressional Research Service (CRS), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have all issued reports that highlight the need for better coordination.

The threat of additional terrorist attacks has resulted in the distribution by the Federal Government of financial resources, plans, and preparedness standards for first responders and support agencies. First responders are struggling to incorporate the

¹ Gary Hart and Warren B. Rudman, *America Still Unprepared - America Still in Danger* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2002), 9.

² *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003), 567.

³ *Forging America's New Normalcy: Securing Our Homeland, Preserving Our Liberty* (Arlington, VA: RAND Corporation, 2003).

⁴ Stephen Flynn, *America the Vulnerable* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2004), 1.

unified strategic direction being provided by the Federal Government into existing plans. A universal call for teamwork and increased cooperation has changed the landscape for America's first responders, requiring them to shoulder new responsibilities and become more networked and interactive with other disciplines to achieve higher levels of performance and response capability. We must assume that our silent partner, the terrorist adversary, is also engaged in planning and preparation.

An identified gap exists between desired response capabilities and current abilities. Regarding our ability to treat potential victims, nationally prescribed plans and goals have described necessary capabilities numbered in terms of treating tens of thousands while current capabilities are measured in the hundreds.⁵ First responders have varying levels of understanding about existing plans, and a lack of clarity about how those plans should be executed. The majority of existing plans have not been "stressed" or field tested.⁶ Often times, the benefits gained from exercising plans do not penetrate all organizational levels.

The goal of this study was to generate a detailed description of current interagency challenges facing first responders and to identify the strengths and gaps in the relationships between key disciplines by examining their interactions. This study assessed the perspectives of key homeland security disciplines in Seattle, Washington. Seattle was identified by the Department of Homeland Security for special funding as one of the first seven Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) cities.⁷

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

At the time of this writing, the National Preparedness System is under development within the DHS. It holds significant implications for the operations and priorities of homeland security officials, emergency managers, and first responders. The National Preparedness System documents and the procedures they contain will guide

⁵ *National Planning Scenarios* (Washington, D.C.: Homeland Security Council, 2004).

⁶ Bryan Hastings (Battalion Chief, Seattle Fire Department, USAR), in discussion with the author, March 2005.

⁷ Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives, *Effective Regional Coordination can Enhance Emergency Preparedness*, September, 2004 (GAO-04-1009), Washington, DC: GPO, 2004, 1.

federal funding allocation decisions, direct federal and non-federal efforts to build emergency response capabilities, and establish the means by which homeland security priorities will be set.

Six basic documents comprise the National Preparedness System. These are the National Preparedness Goal (NPG) (in draft at the time of this writing), the National Planning Scenarios (NPS), the Universal Task List (UTL), the Target Capabilities List (TCL), the National Response Plan (NRP), and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).⁸

This thesis addresses the following major question: At the ground level, how well is the National Preparedness System understood and how well are the components that require local interagency collaboration being implemented in practice? To answer this question, the thesis focuses on determining the homeland security interagency challenges, impeding collaboration and cooperation, which can be identified by examining the approaches and perspectives of key disciplines in the Seattle urban area.

To determine these challenges, subsequent chapters address the following subsidiary questions:

- How do public safety agencies from a variety of disciplines central to homeland security perceive their roles and responsibilities with regard to terrorist incident response?
- How well do these various entities currently collaborate to increase readiness to respond together and achieve successful incident resolution?
- How do these entities perceive the organization and effectiveness of their peer elements?
- What processes are in place within each discipline to further develop and refine existing collaborative efforts?
- How successfully will these entities use Federal Government resources such as the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS) to increase performance in a team environment (such as unified command)?
- How do these various entities rate the usefulness of the National Planning Scenarios (NPS)?

⁸ Keith Bea, *The National Preparedness System: Issues in the 109th Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2005), 2. In addition, the (interim) National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) should also be considered closely associated with the National Preparedness System. To view the NIPP, see www.educase.edu/ir/library/pdf/CSD3754.pdf (accessed February 2006).

C. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Homeland security literature sources focused on interagency cooperation have increased since September 11, 2001. The literature can be divided into historical lessons and perspectives, interagency cooperation, preparedness, and roles and responsibilities.

The 9/11 Committee, Hart-Rudman Commission, and Select Homeland Security Committee have attempted to determine which lessons, learned from past tragedies, can provide valuable insight for present and future incidents. The 9/11 attacks on New York have been examined extensively by McKinsey who determined that the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) did not have effective interagency arrangements in place.⁹ By comparison, the incident managers in Washington, D.C. relied on the use of the Incident Command System (ICS) and existing mutual aid agreements and realized benefits not apparent at the New York site.

A noteworthy study was conducted on the space shuttle Columbia recovery operation. The case is instructive because the size and scope of the recovery operation is comparable to a potential terrorist incident, and because the timing roughly coincided with the formation of the new Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Donahue asked, “What lessons about major incident management can be offered to the leaders of the new DHS regarding Incident Management Teams (IMT)?”¹⁰ A major finding of this report was that the ICS can be used to organize and unify multiple disciplines under one functional organization.¹¹

Another common central question is how cooperation and collaboration can be used effectively. The essence of the question being asked is how can meaningful cooperation that furthers homeland security goals be achieved? This question applies in three contexts: between local governments in a regional setting, between levels of government (local, state, and federal), and between disciplines. Disincentives to collaboration have been identified in all three contexts.

⁹ McKinsey and Company, “Report for F.D.N.Y.,” [online reference], http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/pdf/mck_report/introduction.pdf, (accessed May 12, 2005)

¹⁰ Amy K. Donahue, *Incident Management Team All-Risk Operations and Management Study*, United States Forest Service, Region 8, FEMA, August, 2003, 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 5.

A third important question is related to preparedness. The Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP) has released several new plans, tools, and resources related to preparedness. These include the National Response Plan (NRP), NIMS, NPS, National Preparedness Goal, etc. Lipowicz has questioned whether or not these resources will serve their intended purposes.¹² My personal observations lead me to conclude that these tools are not being embraced or utilized in their intended fashion in the Seattle area. Findings of this thesis help explain why these tools are deemed more or less valuable or useful by different homeland security disciplines.

A fourth key question is related to roles and responsibilities. The United States Fire Administration (USFA) and the GAO have questioned whether or not different types of first responder agencies and levels of government have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of their counterparts.¹³ Again, this question is best examined in the three contexts mentioned above. Are roles and responsibilities between levels of government, jurisdictions, and disciplines adequately understood, clarified, and reflected in plans? A clear delineation of role and responsibility assignment is critical to achieving successful incident outcomes.

Research findings are divided into three distinct groups or “camps” for the general purpose of examining their intended messages. The first grouping is represented by the “alarmists.” The alarmists demonstrate the existence and importance of homeland security problems and vulnerabilities. The second grouping of sources represents “tools, plans, and resources,” and is largely composed of government documents, reports, and monographs. The third group advocates collaboration and cooperation as the primary method for solving homeland security problems. This group has offered that “purple approaches” are the key. The term “purple approach” is derived from military lexicon and indicates a blending of the colors of different military service uniforms.¹⁴ The military has had collaborative success by emphasizing service “jointness.”

¹² Alice Lipowicz, “Homeland Security Local Response,” *Congressional Quarterly* (November 2004), 2.

¹³ United States Fire Administration, *Responding to Incidents of National Consequence – Recommendations for America’s Fire and Emergency Services Based on the Events of 9/11/2001, and Other Similar Incidents* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2004), 66.

¹⁴ Melissa Czarnecki, *Executive Education Seminar for Major Urban Areas* (Policy Seminar), Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, January 8, 2005, seminar notes.

Perhaps the most alarming source referred to a senior level bioterrorism exercise called “dark winter.” The exercise simulated a covert smallpox attack on the U.S. O’Toole concluded that senior-level decision makers were largely unfamiliar with the sequence of events that would follow a bioterrorist attack, available policy options, and their consequences.¹⁵ National security and defense communities have not typically analyzed these issues in the past. Other recent studies that paint an alarmist portrait include “When Terrorism Hits Home: How Prepared Are State and Local Law Enforcement?”¹⁶ “Are We Prepared for Terrorism Using Weapons of Mass Destruction? Government’s Half Measures,”¹⁷ and “Intergovernmental Coordination and Partnership Will Be Critical to Success.”¹⁸ Findings from the “alarmist” group highlight the need for increased preparedness activity on the state and local level.

The second group of sources is comprised of “tools and resources” offered to state and local homeland security agencies. Published mostly by the Federal Government, these sources offer solutions to apparent problems. The resources provide a roadmap for progress, based on goals, plans, and objectives. Examples of these resources include the NRP, NIMS, NPS, Target Capabilities List (TCL), and the National Preparedness Goal and Guidance.¹⁹ These sources are a direct response to Homeland Security Presidential Directive eight (HSPD 8) which requires the implementation of national preparedness standards and plans for first responders.

The third group of sources offers “purple approaches” centered on cooperation, collaboration, and a need to re-examine traditional roles and responsibilities. Increased inter-agency and inter-jurisdictional cooperation are a necessary part of any lasting

¹⁵ Tara O’Toole, “Shining Light on Dark Winter,” *Clinical Infectious Diseases* 34 (2002): 980.

¹⁶ Lois M. Davis et al., *When Terrorism Hits Home: How Prepared are State and Local Law Enforcement?* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2004).

¹⁷ Eric R. Taylor, “Are We Prepared for Terrorism Using Weapons of Mass Destruction? Government’s Half Measures,” *Policy Analysis* 1, no. 387 (2000): 7.

¹⁸ JayEtta Hecker, Director of Physical Infrastructure, *Homeland Security - Intergovernmental Coordination and Partnership Will Be Critical to Success* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2002).

¹⁹ The National Preparedness Goal and Guidance currently exist as draft documents. If they are finalized and distributed prior to the completion of this project, the author hopes to subject them to analysis in the third round of the Delphi process.

solution. Bruner (1992) detailed the positive collaborative effects of the welfare/family services field and how their solutions could be applied to other situations.²⁰

Regarding the groups of sources, there are several examples where authors have disagreed or drawn distinctly separate conclusions. The most prominent examples are the utility of the NIMS, the NPS, and the TCL and performance measures for first responders. The assumption that the NIMS and the ICS will be useful and productive for all agencies has been challenged. Public health, public works, and information technology agencies have been identified as potential first responders and are obligated to use NIMS. Their eligibility to receive federal funding is predicated on their adoption and use of the system. Eilbert has expressed doubt about the utility of the ICS system for these identified groups.²¹ Public health agencies view the adoption of NIMS/ICS as reflecting a “different language and approach” to problem solving that does not necessarily enhance their existing efforts. Another related issue is whether or not ICS has limitations for certain types of public agencies limited by size, finances, or geographical characteristics.

Both broad and specific homeland security questions remain unanswered. It is unclear what collective actions our nation should take to enhance safety while keeping attention focused on homeland security. We must determine how to increase the capacity of our emergency medical facilities to meet the “surge potential” forecast by the NPS. Public safety agencies should develop plans that will enhance their ability to manage incidents with victims numbering in the tens or hundreds of thousands, because their existing capacity is numbered in the hundreds. Public safety executives should foster meaningful interagency collaboration between homeland security disciplines and create mutual understanding and agreement on the roles and responsibilities of different agencies. The identified disincentives to collaboration – legal, geographical, cultural, and structural - need to be addressed. Timely and useful intelligence should be produced and shared with all first responders, not just law enforcement officers.

Closer interagency coordination will be required to successfully manage future incidents of national significance. Effective interdisciplinary collaborative relationships

²⁰ C. Bruner, *What Does Research Say About Interagency Collaboration?* North Central Regional Educational Laboratory [online article] Oak Brook, Illinois, 1992 http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/stw_esys/8agcycol.htm , (accessed March 11, 2005), 6.

²¹ Kay Eilbert, *Examining Collaborative Public Health Practice and Emergency Preparedness – Can it Work? Turning Point Partnerships Share Their Experience*, N.A.C.C.H.O., April, 2004, 7.

have not been incentivized and integrated in the Seattle urban area. Federal requirements for local interagency collaboration have been spelled out in HSPD 5 and 8 including NIMS, the ICS language it contains, and the concept of unified command. These tools have been recognized, but not formally adopted, accepted or internalized among all key disciplines. Government and political structures have not tangibly enhanced regional coordination. An existing lack of understanding about others' roles and specific operational responsibilities will have negative effects on future incident outcomes if left uncorrected. These issues, drawn from the literature, have guided my research into the relationships among the key disciplines.

D. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this research is to examine the relationships between fire, police, public health and emergency management organizations in the Seattle area. Specifically, I investigated the perceived quality, value, and necessity of the relationships of these key disciplines to determine current collaboration challenges, barriers, and successes. The central goal of this process was to identify where future efforts and resources should be concentrated.

My specific intention was to question the experts representing each discipline about the usefulness of the elements of HSPD 5 and 8 including NIMS and the ICS to determine if they are the best management tools to achieve interdisciplinary cooperation and coordination for terrorism response. My original suspicion, that organizational culture plays a role in its poor acceptance, was validated by subject matter experts from various disciplines. I also wanted to examine the perceptions of each discipline with regard to roles and responsibilities. I have observed firsthand an existing lack of clarity about leadership and supportive role assignments. Gone uncorrected, this confusion could result in duplication of effort and poor performance at future incidents. My final goal, to produce positive policy recommendations that will increase the level of cooperation among the key disciplines, was challenging. Hopefully, the recommendations included in Chapter VI will be accepted by decision makers and result in increased collaborative preparedness activities that will strengthen terrorism-related response capabilities in the Seattle urban area.

E. METHOD

This study used the Delphi Method which has been described by Linstone and Turoff (1975) as “a method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem.”²² Developed by the RAND Corporation in the late 1960s as a forecasting methodology, the technique is used today to elicit expert opinion in a systematic manner for useful results. The tool works informally, with a small number of respondents, and reaps the benefits of group decision making while insulating the process from overly-dominant group members and political lobbying. The process allows anonymity for respondents, who receive measured feedback from the controller. The controller modifies the scope and content of questions with successive rounds of questioning, working towards consensus and identifying areas of disagreement. As Delphi controller, I explored public safety executives’ perceptions of interagency collaboration and certain elements of the National Preparedness System through personal interviews and an iterative process of short, electronic surveys. From the research process, I derived recommendations on how to improve preparedness for terrorism response in the Seattle area. The research process was:

Phase 1:

Review of the literature and lessons learned on the “models” available or in use in “collaboration” for Homeland Security. Many of these models were extracted from Federal Government documents such as the NIMS, NRP, National Strategies, and monographs from commissions. Others are inferred from texts and articles.

Phase 2:

Following classic strategic planning, the questions addressed what, how, and who. The goal was to describe what disciplines at what levels are involved in preparedness collaboration and what obstacles they face. I also sought to identify what elements,

²² The author recommends the following four sources for background information on the use of the Delphi Method and its advantages: Harold A. Linstone and Murray Turoff, *The Delphi Method: Techniques and Applications*, 1ed. (Newark, N.J.: Addison Wesley Publishing Company, 1975), 265. Randall B. Dunham, Ph. D., *The Delphi Technique* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin School of Business, 1998); “The Delphi Technique,” London, U.K. Available from <http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-innovation-awards-delphi>.; “Prioritization Process Using Delphi Method,” in Carolla Development [database online]. 2005 . Available from <http://www.carolla.com/wp-delphi.htm>. (accessed March 20, 2005).

processes, objectives and strategies are at work. In addition, I identified how interagency/interdisciplinary collaborative processes have been implemented or institutionalized. These topics were addressed through structured interviews with knowledgeable representatives from the following disciplines within the Seattle urban area:

- Fire Department/ Hazardous Materials
- Police/ Law Enforcement
- Public Health and Health Services
- Emergency Management/ Emergency Operations Center

Phase 3:

This phase organized these processes and subjected them to a Delphi panel to validate the descriptions of collaborative problem solving as articulated by those interviewed. This process was brief where consensus was achieved, and lengthy where significant differences arose among subject matter. In total, eight subject matter experts representing four disciplines were interviewed resulting in approximately 26 hours of taped transcripts.

Phase 4:

Based on the literature, the resulting discipline-specific models were developed and critiqued. These critiques address the structure of the models, the components of the models, and the consistencies or inconsistencies of the models with those in the literature.

Phase 5:

This phase synthesized the discipline-specific models into a jurisdictional summary that incorporates the elements and processes consistent with the discipline-specific models and with the literature. Clearly, some compromises were necessary. Some elements were completely incompatible. Those will not be deleted but retained for possible inclusion in other emerging models.

F. CONCLUSION

This thesis seeks to address the imbalance between current and necessary terrorism response capabilities in the Seattle urban area. By examining the perspectives of each key discipline in the context of a complex, interrelated system, strengths and gaps

in relationships emerged. Chapter II introduces the perspectives of Seattle area law enforcement agencies. Subsequent chapters examine the perspectives of public health, emergency management, and municipal fire service agencies. Chapter VI lays out the summary argument and offers conclusions and recommendations to strengthen interagency collaboration in the Seattle urban area.

Potential solutions to identified collaboration challenges that emerged from the research process include recommended best practices, policy recommendations for Seattle area agencies, and recommended changes to the Seattle urban area strategy. The author's operational experience, including recent participation in several multi-agency projects and exercises in the Seattle area, has led to the conclusion that the Seattle urban area has been successfully and effectively practicing and demonstrating readiness. However, increasing future collaborative efforts among public safety agencies is an essential ingredient for maintaining the Seattle urban area's leadership role in homeland security preparedness. Insights, explanations, and potential solutions identified from this process should be applicable to other urban areas.

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II. LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSPECTIVES

This chapter examines homeland security collaboration in the Seattle, Washington area from the perspective of local, municipal law enforcement agencies. It begins with an assessment of the public's expectations of law enforcement activities following a terrorist attack. A description of law enforcement's homeland security role and organizational culture follows. The nature of law enforcement interagency relationships is examined, including the collaborative strengths and challenges of policing agencies' relationships with other disciplines. The chapter concludes with analyses of selected elements of the National Preparedness System, community oriented policing, and recommendations for increased future cooperation between law enforcement agencies and their homeland security peers.

An understanding of how law enforcement interacts with other disciplines in the Seattle area homeland security environment is a prerequisite to understanding how to enhance preparedness. Our terrorist adversaries, recently described as "malignant" by a local police chief, are trained as soldiers, but they fight by violating criminal laws. The new enemy expects to encounter American law enforcement; indeed, it has been trained to do so. America's enemies will bring the battle to police officers whether the officers have prepared for it or not.²³ The remainder of this chapter provides the reader with analysis of local law enforcement as a discipline and demonstrates that cooperation with other related disciplines is crucial to continued success and increased preparedness. Three key findings emerge:

- Seattle area law enforcement agencies' history with the ICS has helped them operate in the interagency environment.
- Seattle area law enforcement agencies have an opportunity to strengthen their relationships with other disciplines by including them in information sharing and intelligence operations.
- Seattle area law enforcement agencies can adapt their traditional community oriented policing strategies to assist them with preparedness.

²³ Jonathon R. White, *Defending the Homeland*, ed. Sabra Horne, 1ed. (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth Learning, 2004), 117.

A. PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS

Law enforcement Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) from the Seattle area stated that following a terrorist attack, the public expects local law enforcement agencies to engage in several important activities. These activities comprise three broad categories: providing for the security of citizens and first responders, transmitting public information, and coordinating with other agencies and levels of government. Many of the public's post-attack expectations flow from the overarching principles of life safety and incident stabilization. The public assumes that law enforcement officers are trained and prepared to respond to terrorism incidents. They also expect law enforcement officers to be actively engaged in the mechanisms of first response closely related to life safety and public protection activities. Following closely after the primary expectation (response), the public expects to receive information about the overall "return to normalcy." The public expects law enforcement leaders to communicate with them as soon as possible and provide assessment, guidance, and reassurance. Regarding the issuance of post-attack public messages, law enforcement leadership representatives felt that:

The public doesn't want the news sugar coated. They expect to see their leaders on camera pretty quickly after the event – and what they say will be very important. The public is not concerned with the "architecture of the response." They don't necessarily care which jurisdictions are involved. That coordinated information should remain "behind the scenes." It is superfluous and irrelevant to the public. They have the desire to see unity of effort and commitment among disciplines and levels of government.²⁴

Following life safety, incident stabilization, and public communication activities, the public expects law enforcement agencies to be engaged in activities that will minimize the effects of the attack on individuals, prevent further damage, and restore government services as quickly as possible. Providing for basic human needs (shelter, safety, and critical supplies), protecting critical infrastructure, and conserving property are additional expectations. In addition, the public expects law enforcement agencies to conduct investigations, perform any necessary apprehensions, and collaborate with other disciplines and levels of government while engaged in these efforts.

²⁴ Deputy Chief Clark Kimerer, Seattle Police Department, in discussion with the author, August, 2005.

B. DEFINING LAW ENFORCEMENT'S HOMELAND SECURITY ROLE

Although there are more than 600,000 law enforcement officers in the United States and thousands of state and local police departments, their formal homeland security role is unclear. In other countries, law or tradition codifies the role of police, but in the United States, law enforcement's role in times of national crisis is not readily defined.²⁵ Although complete role clarity has yet to be achieved, law enforcement agencies have been identified most closely with the following activities: protection of the public and other first responders, terrorism prevention and intelligence, terrorism investigations and apprehensions, maintaining incident scene security, and the restoration of order.²⁶ The observation that law enforcement's roles and the public's expectations of them are closely aligned suggests that police agencies perform a vital mission based on perceived community needs.

The National Strategy for Homeland Security requires all first responder disciplines to engage in terrorism prevention.²⁷ Yet compared with other disciplines, law enforcement agencies are perhaps the most qualified to accept and fulfill this role, followed by public health. Research from the International Association of Chiefs of Police suggests that police officers are struggling to embrace their new terrorism prevention role. Law enforcement agencies are differentiated from other emergency responders because of their role in the prevention of incidents, but police officers feel much more prepared to respond to, rather than prevent a terrorist attack.²⁸ Chris Bellavita, who teaches introductory homeland security at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, has observed that preventing terrorism is a new role for public safety agencies. First responders are used to responding to daily emergencies, not

²⁵ White, *Defending the Homeland*, 5.

²⁶ Online survey conducted August 1-September 15, 2005 by the author. Survey respondents are participants in the Office for Domestic Preparedness Secure Portal Website, <https://odp.esportals.com>. Approximately sixty homeland security professionals representing thirty states and four disciplines responded. (accessed August 1, 2005)

²⁷ Office of Homeland Security, *National Strategy for Homeland Security* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002), 2.

²⁸ *Homeland Security Preparedness Survey* (Washington, D.C.: The International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2004), 2.

stopping acts of war. As a generalization, one can say they tend to avoid prevention because they already know how to do response.²⁹

Law enforcement's historical involvement with criminal intelligence should provide transitional experience that lends itself readily to terrorism prevention. Intelligence fusion and terrorism prevention are linked through daily police activities like detecting, investigating, and responding to acts of crime.³⁰ Graham Allison of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government describes the importance of the local law enforcement intelligence role as follows: "In the war on terrorism, the long pole in the tent is fine-grained, local intelligence, the same kinds of tips from the same kinds of sources that lead to drug busts and other law enforcement successes."³¹ Because of their investigative and intelligence capabilities, law enforcement agencies have the unique opportunity to strike terrorists before they can attack.³² The specific homeland security role of local law enforcement agencies will likely differ in the future from their historic and more traditional role of crime-fighting and the maintenance of order. Increased awareness of the need for compiling essential information on those who threaten the safety of all Americans has changed the profession's role from solely fighting crime and disorder to include combating terrorism.³³

C. LAW ENFORCEMENT'S ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

An understanding of law enforcement culture is necessary to best examine its interaction and collaboration with other disciplines. The way police officers view themselves, their organizations, and the way they are perceived by other disciplines provides insight into interagency collaboration successes and challenges. Law

²⁹ Christopher Bellavita, "What is Preventing Homeland Security?" *Homeland Security Affairs* 1, no. 1 (2005): 4.

³⁰ The goal is to produce "all-source" or "fusion" intelligence, which is based on as many collection sources as possible in order to compensate for the shortcomings of each and to profit from their combined strength. Fusion intelligence reflects collection in depth. Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy* 2 ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2003), 55.

³¹ Graham Allison, *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe*, 1ed. (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 2004), 181.

³² White, *Defending the Homeland*, 59.

³³ David L. Carter, *The Law Enforcement Intelligence Function: State, Local, and Tribal Agencies*, June, 2005ed. (Washington, D.C.: FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, 2005), 8-14.

enforcement culture relies heavily on organizational structure and “lines of accountability.” Officers tend to value hierarchical aspects of supervision and personal discipline. Police officers view chain of command structures as necessary and effective elements of organizational functioning. They are accustomed to working alone in distributed and decentralized patrol networks.

This “solo” characteristic exists in stark contrast to firefighters who work in teams or in groups of teams. The often solitary nature of police work is further highlighted by the duties of Washington State Patrol (WSP) officers, where a single officer may patrol an entire county by him or herself. Law enforcement officers exercise considerable individual discretion when operating on emergency calls. Terrorism, like special events, changes the equation bringing hundreds of officers together in a single function.³⁴

A Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) Master’s thesis by Douglas Templeton has examined homeland security disciplines including the law enforcement culture. The following is a brief summary of his findings:

- Law enforcement officers view themselves as the ultimately responsible party (to the exclusion of other emergency service partners) at major incidents.
- Law enforcement officers tend to view most major incidents as crime scenes.
- Law enforcement officers work primarily and routinely as individuals (one riot, one Ranger.)
- Law enforcement culture reinforces independent action over coordinated teamwork.³⁵

Law enforcement culture is significantly different from the cultures of other homeland security disciplines. Public health, the fire service, and emergency management cultures are different because they perform different tasks and are evaluated on different criteria. Understanding and appreciating the differences in organizational cultures is key to formulating positive policy recommendations.

³⁴ Carter, *Law Enforcement Intelligence Function*), 111.

³⁵ Douglas R. Templeton, “Assessing the Utility of Work Team Theory in a Unified Command Environment at Catastrophic Incidents” (Master’s Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2005), 30.

D. LAW ENFORCEMENT RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER HOMELAND SECURITY DISCIPLINES

Local law enforcement agencies in the Seattle area have both formally and informally demonstrated a willingness to cooperate with other disciplines and levels of government. Formal interagency cooperation goals are reflected in the Seattle Disaster Readiness and Response Plan, mutual aid agreements, and various other regional and Washington state plans. Mayor Gregory Nickels, who provides public safety oversight in Seattle, recently codified his commitment towards interagency cooperation by formally adopting the NIMS in June, 2005.³⁶

Kayyem et al. urge joint planning among agencies in law enforcement, public health, emergency services, and private industry on the local level. They believe general plans designed by local officials will serve as a guide during a crisis. Planning is a general response to a local problem and it is a local responsibility.³⁷

Although interagency cooperation is practiced, reflected in written plans, and reinforced through regular meetings, cooperation problems still exist. Commitment is defined by the quality of the participation, not necessarily the quantity. Law enforcement officials reported difficulty in obtaining the meaningful participation of other agencies they deemed necessary and valuable to the process of preparedness. A 2003 Century Foundation report on homeland security progress in the state of Washington found that:

Region based implementation of cooperative efforts may be problematic because of resistance by locally elected officials, lack of trust between officials in different jurisdictions or disciplines, and competition over resources. The report also indicated that mutual aid agreements are still predominantly based on single disciplines (that is, law enforcement agencies in different jurisdictions) coordinating their activities and are not yet multidisciplinary (that is, law enforcement, public health, emergency management agencies both within and between jurisdictions) in their approach.³⁸

³⁶ Gregory J. Nickels, *Executive Order: 02-05 National Incident Management System* (Seattle, WA: City of Seattle, Office of the Mayor, 2005), 1.

³⁷ White, *Defending the Homeland*, 8.

³⁸ Steven D. Stehr, "Homeland Security in the State of Washington: A Baseline Report on the Activities of State and Local Governments," The Century Foundation (2003), 26.

1. Law Enforcement Coordination with Public Health

Law enforcement officials are concerned about interactions with public health agencies and health-related terrorism issues. Interestingly, police and public health organizations depend on each other and therefore have a mutually necessary relationship. Police officials need specialized guidance from health experts, and public health organizations need enforcement “muscle” provided by the police. The Seattle Police Department (SPD) rates public health among the top three priorities surrounding terrorism prevention and response. These issues include patient isolation and quarantine, patient and facility decontamination, and the potential under-capacity of hospitals. The ability of hospitals to manage an influx of patients following an attack is called “surge capacity.” Representatives from both law enforcement and public health organizations stated that they will need to increase future collaborative efforts to achieve successful incident outcomes.

Although both public health and law enforcement disciplines protect the public, their work is quite different. The similarities and differences in public health and law enforcement investigations have to be understood and coordinated so that both can be most effective.³⁹ While law enforcement values the quasi-military decision making model that their hierarchy provides, the public health culture values decision making by consensus. The aim of public health is to collect data that will satisfy the scientific and medical communities, while law enforcement aims to collect evidence that will meet legal standards and result in successful prosecutions. The differing nature of their work and the standards to which that work is held can pose difficulties, on occasion, when public health and law enforcement officials conduct joint investigations. These difficulties can be addressed within the public health and law enforcement communities by understanding each other’s approaches, communicating effectively, and making thoughtful preparations, including testing the system through exercises.

Seattle area law enforcement agencies have taken action by increasing contact through federally-funded training exercises. Public health representatives in the Seattle

³⁹ Jay C. Butler et al., “Collaboration between Public Health and Law Enforcement: New Paradigms and Partnerships for Bioterrorism Planning and Response,” *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 8, no. 10 (2002): 1153-1154.

area reported a significant increase in law enforcement cooperation over the last several years, which will improve collaboration during crises.⁴⁰ The most important aspect of the law enforcement role in health-related terrorism issues is to support the public health system. Local chiefs and sheriffs should have regular contact with public health officials to ensure realistic responses from law enforcement. Quarantine policy is of prime importance in the event of contagious disease.⁴¹

2. Law Enforcement Coordination with the Fire Service

The law enforcement and fire service communities share many aspects of organizational culture. The optimal relationship between the two is best described as a “healthy and competitive sibling rivalry.” Organizational and rank structure, disciplinary procedures, and accoutrements of uniform convey the civil authority vested in personnel. Civil service laws serve to insulate them from political winds. Fire and police share the quasi-military culture.⁴²

Law enforcement agencies and fire departments have a long history of working closely together in the Seattle area. Their shared history has provided benefits resulting from inter-agency familiarity, and role and organizational cultural similarities. Providing capable chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) response to the community depends on police and fire departments working together. Fire departments are closely associated with scene control and incident stabilization, while police departments are closely associated with scene security and the restoration of order. During a Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD) response, both disciplines will share responsibility for life safety and incident stabilization. Determining and dividing the exact domains of law enforcement and the fire service is difficult because of these shared roles.

Peter Manning, in his analysis of the police mandate, defines an occupational mandate as “the professional right to claim expertise in a certain area.”⁴³ Regarding

⁴⁰ Jay C. Butler et al., “Collaboration between Public Health and Law Enforcement: New Paradigms and Partnerships for Bioterrorism Planning and Response,” *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 8, no. 10 (2002): 1154.

⁴¹ White, *Defending the Homeland*, 97.

⁴² Templeton, *Assessing the Utility of Work Team Theory*, 33.

⁴³ Templeton, *Assessing the Utility of Work Team Theory*, 57.

terrorism response, law enforcement's occupational mandate is overall scene security, explosives remediation, and incident investigation. Criminologist Jonathon White offered his assessment of the appropriate role of law enforcement in responding to a WMD attack:

WMDs represent a massive challenge to state and local infrastructures. In addition, the role of law enforcement on every level changes in the event of a WMD attack. Law enforcement is not equipped to manage the results of WMD attacks, and it does not have the expertise to recognize the nature of the event. It is counterproductive to try to develop these skills in the law enforcement community because they are highly specialized – and the knowledge for responding exists in other bureaucracies. Law enforcement has two critical roles in a WMD attack. The police should support agencies responding to a WMD attack and investigate the attack.⁴⁴

Law enforcement agencies in the Seattle area have recently taken a more active role in WMD response preparations. Approximately two hundred SPD officers have been trained and equipped to function in a hazardous atmosphere, called the hot zone. SPD has plans to train and equip two hundred additional officers. By directing both the fire and police department to concentrate on WMD response, the city of Seattle has added depth to its response system. Complementary skill sets are being developed by both disciplines. The City of Seattle's newly established Joint Hazard Assessment Team (JHAT) consists of members from SFDs hazardous materials response team and SPDs SWAT team and bomb/arson unit. Also, the SFDs hazardous material team provides decontamination services for police officers exiting hot zones, and law enforcement officers support firefighters during certain monitoring situations.⁴⁵ These supportive, not duplicative, arrangements provide extra capacity and safeguards. This is known as the "belt and suspenders" approach.⁴⁶

3. Law Enforcement Coordination with Emergency Management

Emergency management agencies are defined as organizations, both local and state, directed to coordinate the reduction and mitigation of the loss of life and property due to disasters and emergencies. They protect critical infrastructure from all types of

⁴⁴ Templeton, *Assessing the Utility of Work Team Theory*, 92.

⁴⁵ Hazardous materials response, which has many physical similarities to WMD response, has traditionally been a fire department activity.

⁴⁶ Allison, *Nuclear Terrorism*, 55.

hazards through a comprehensive, risk-based, emergency management program of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.⁴⁷ In Seattle, the emergency management agency is contained within the police department structure. In King County, emergency management is a stand-alone agency and serves a more regional function, providing services to thirty-nine cities. In both jurisdictions, the emergency management function serves as the coordinating body for the elected official, and the hub for inter-jurisdictional coordination. Law enforcement agencies coordinate with emergency management as one of many Emergency Support Functions (ESF).

E. LAW ENFORCEMENT’S PERCEPTION OF COLLABORATION BARRIERS

Law enforcement agencies in the Seattle area reported overall success with their interagency and interdisciplinary collaborative relationships. However, they also reported certain instances of difficulty in maintaining collaborative relationships. The general barriers to collaboration were described as incompatible technological systems, parochialism, and “jurisdictional creep.” For example, during the second Top Officials (TOPOFF 2) training exercise, certain aspects of the law enforcement interaction between the Seattle Police Department and the King County Sheriff’s Office were described as problematic. A “lack of clarity” related to jurisdictional authority was reported. The specific criticism was that certain jurisdictions represented in the exercise did not participate as productively as anticipated or required.

This complaint is not specific to law enforcement in the Seattle area. A national homeland security audience was questioned about collaboration barriers, and they reported similar results. When asked about collaboration barriers in their jurisdictions, the national audience reported that “city-county turf wars” and “a lack of meaningful participation in drills, exercises, training sessions, and long term planning” was a problem in their jurisdictions. In addition, the national survey results showed that a “lack of trust and recognition related to security clearances” and “muscle flexing by federal

⁴⁷ William V. Pelfrey, “Appendix to “Homeland Security Disciplines and the Cycle of Preparedness,”” *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* 2, no. 1 (2005): 2.

agencies” are problems associated with law enforcement; however, these problems were not reported from the Seattle area.⁴⁸

F. LAW ENFORCEMENT’S PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS SYSTEM

At the time of this writing, the National Preparedness System is under development within the DHS. It holds significant implications for the operations and priorities of homeland security officials, emergency managers, and first responders. The National Preparedness System documents and the procedures they contain will guide federal funding allocation decisions, direct federal and non-federal efforts to build emergency response capabilities, and establish the means by which homeland security priorities will be set.

Six basic documents comprise the National Preparedness System. These are the National Preparedness Goal (NPG) (in draft at the time of this writing), the NPS, the Universal Task List (UTL), the TCL, the NRP, and the NIMS.⁴⁹ Law enforcement agencies in the Seattle area were asked to comment on selected portions of the National Preparedness System, including the NPS, the NIMS and the ICS language it contains. Law enforcement and local governments from around the Seattle area have actively participated in federal government preparedness programs from the onset. The International Association of Chiefs of Police has stated that it is critical for America’s law enforcement community to be prepared to help prevent another terrorist attack. It needs the appropriate funding, equipment, training, and interagency communication mechanisms to secure our nation’s communities effectively.⁵⁰

Historically, Seattle area law enforcement agencies have willingly engaged the ODP grant requirements to benefit from the financial assistance and guidance commensurate with participation. However, strong debate is currently occurring locally

⁴⁸ Online survey conducted August 1-September 15, 2005 by the author. Survey respondents are participants in the Office for Domestic Preparedness Secure Portal Website, <https://odp.esportals.com>. Approximately sixty homeland security professionals representing thirty states and four disciplines responded. (accessed August 1, 2005)

⁴⁹ Keith Bea, *The National Preparedness System: Issues in the 109th Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2005) 2.

⁵⁰ *Homeland Security Preparedness Survey*, 1.

and nationally over the relevance, credibility, and applicability of the components of the National Preparedness System. Consideration of the grant requirements and funding benefits are “on the scales.” Urban areas, including Seattle, are questioning whether the benefits are worth the costs of participation. Bellavita describes the current debate:

The executive branch of the national government is embarking on a multi-year effort to convince states and cities to obey the expanding dictates of HSPD 8 if they want to continue to receive homeland security funding. More than one city is quietly doing the benefit cost analysis to determine whether getting homeland security money is worth the organizational and other costs to satisfy grant requirements.⁵¹

This suggests that the National Preparedness System has not fully addressed the issues currently facing law enforcement agencies. First, the NIMS is examined. Next, law enforcement agencies’ perceptions of the NPS follow.

1. Law Enforcement and NIMS/ICS

The ICS originated in the Western U.S. in the wildfire arena in the 1970’s, and it took the state of California twenty years to fully embrace it, so it is logical to expect that nationwide acceptance of NIMS/ICS will take significantly longer. Seattle area law enforcement agencies have a relatively long history of using the ICS when compared to other U.S. cities. They rate it as a highly useful tool and claim to have been using it since 1994. Its use is mandated in organizational policies and is citywide policy in Seattle’s case. SPD leadership described the ICS as “gospel” and stated that its use is embraced by the membership. They also claim patrol officers make value judgments about superior officers based on their ability to use NIMS/ICS effectively.⁵²

The familiarity and acceptance of the NIMS/ICS wanes as you move east across the country. As a broad generalization, there are three zones of NIMS acceptance. These zones roughly extend from the West Coast to the Rocky Mountains, from the mountains

⁵¹ Christopher Bellavita, “Changing Homeland Security: The Issue-Attention Cycle,” *Homeland Security Affairs* 1, no. 1 (2005), 2.

⁵² The Incident Command System (ICS) language is contained in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and can be considered its predecessor. NIMS/ICS can be viewed as one system for the purposes of this discussion.

to the Mississippi river, and from the river to the east coast. Regarding NIMS/ICS, these “zones of acceptance” moving east can be described as fully accepting, somewhat accepting, and suspicious.

2. Law Enforcement and the National Planning Scenarios

The federal government has developed and released fifteen planning scenarios for use in state and local homeland security preparedness activities. The scenarios are described as all-hazards, but the majority of them are related to terror attacks. The scenarios are designed as a planning tool for state and local governments and have been offered as representative of the range of potential terrorist attacks and natural disasters that face our nation. Law enforcement officials from the Seattle area were asked to comment on their usefulness, value, realism, and collaboration-generating potential.

Their responses indicated that while they value the scenario based training process, the value of the NPS is severely limited because the scenarios lack realism and credibility. Officials also indicated that only selected scenario elements have been used or will be used for planning and training purposes. SPD leaders stated that the process of conducting a scenario that agencies can use to work together and reasonably manage is a very worthwhile, educational, and instructive experience. However, they also indicated that the scenarios in their current format are neither predictive of real events nor contributive to the preparedness process:

They are not realistic predictions. They are overblown, overboard, and not applicable. They are not as scalable as they need to be. The theory and concept of scenario based training is good, but the application needs work. The scenario authors didn't know much about what is needed at the local level. The authors, while all certified experts, were federal or federally contracted people – there wasn't nearly enough local representation. I question the plausibility of some of the larger scenarios. Smaller jurisdictions should have put forth two or three of the scenarios at a minimum.⁵³

The Seattle area law enforcement community was more concerned with local maritime, communications, and transportation vulnerabilities than with the existing package of national scenarios. They rated the Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive

⁵³ Delphi panel member and law enforcement subject matter expert, in discussion with the author, August 2005.

Device (VBIED) and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) scenarios as the most useful and plausible. They did see potential value in using the scenarios as templates for adaptation to meet local needs. Overall, the scenarios were described as monumental, notional, and of limited value. The scenario based training process was validated, but the NPS as they currently exist were not. There is no evidence that law enforcement agencies view them as a “driver” of collaboration.

G. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) has defined community policing as a philosophy that focuses on crime and social disorder through the delivery of police services that include the aspects of traditional law enforcement as well as prevention, problem-solving, community engagement, and partnerships. Community oriented policing is not in itself a tactic or strategy, but instead a philosophical approach to how policing is conducted.⁵⁴

In Seattle, community oriented policing is a philosophy that designates the police precincts as the center of deployment, not headquarters. The precincts are closely connected with the neighborhoods they serve, and the precinct captains have the authority to act as the “Chiefs of Police” for their neighborhoods. This empowers the captains to solve community problems, provide tailored police services, and remain closely connected to the community. Using that model, each precinct captain can delegate authority and create community partnerships, being fully supported by headquarters.

The precise recipe for adapting existing community oriented policing strategies to meet homeland security challenges is unclear. In the face of unknown future terrorist threats, local law enforcement organizations will have to adapt existing policing strategies to fulfill homeland security requirements. The claim that community policing enhances terrorism prevention has not been proven. In fact, little research specifically identifies community policing strategies and their direct application to the national

⁵⁴ Jose Docobo, “Community Policing as the Primary Prevention Strategy for Homeland Security at the Local Law Enforcement Level,” *Homeland Security Affairs* 1, no. 1 (2005), 2.

strategy for homeland security. However, Ronald Timmons, a public safety official from Plano, Texas, believes there are opportunities to integrate community policing concepts with homeland security initiatives:

The best opportunity to disrupt an attack will be twofold: deterrence by providing such a close watch that would-be perpetrators will be dissuaded or go elsewhere.

–Or–

People with prior knowledge of a terror plot, living within closed communities, will feel comfortable enough to report what they know to a trusted official.

Timmons continues with an additional explanation of community policing benefits:

Community policing helps to establish rapport, by facilitating communication through trust. A casual conversation can lead to what I would call “inadvertent intelligence,” whereby someone alludes to something of seemingly minor insignificance, but when collected in its entirety, it points to something very useful. Unless officers are present at that community forum or neighborhood event, the opportunities to learn such things are limited.⁵⁵

Arguably, monitoring potential terrorist activity in a community can be compared to shooting at a moving target, because terrorist groups change tactics. Community policing strategies should give law enforcement agencies the best chance to stay abreast of any important developments. We know that terrorists systematically search for weaknesses and vulnerabilities, seeking out “chinks in the armor” of society. Adaptations that terrorist groups make in their operations can render indicators used by intelligence and law enforcement to track and gauge the terrorists’ activities obsolete.⁵⁶

There is also a connection between community policing and interagency collaboration. The city of Seattle is moving beyond community oriented policing and looking towards community oriented government. For example, Seattle combined the police, fire, licensing, and building departments with a group of community activists to tackle escalating violence associated with nightclubs in the Pioneer Square district. A

⁵⁵ Ronald P. Timmons, *Community Policing*, Online Discussion. (Monterey, CA: Center for Homeland Defense and Security, 2005), <http://www.chds.us>. (accessed August 30, 2005), 2.

⁵⁶ Brian A. Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction: Organizational Learning in Terrorist Groups and Its Implications for Combating Terrorism* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2005), 50.

task force, comprised of community members and government officials was formed to resolve the problem. The community's concern about street violence at nightclubs required action from several city departments, including the alcohol control board and the mayor's office. Although this issue has not been completely resolved yet, the community has benefited from the process. Pairing government agency representatives with community residents in this inclusive and cooperative process has proven useful.

H. HOMELAND SECURITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Law enforcement agencies in the Seattle area are already engaged in the kind of activities conducive to productive inter-agency relationships. No glaring problems or omissions related to law enforcement agencies' collaborative efforts were identified. However, there are things they can do to enhance relationships with other disciplines and increase overall preparedness. The following recommendations include strengthening existing relationships, increasing participation in multi-agency drills, becoming more inclusive regarding intelligence, and adapting community oriented policing principles to meet homeland security goals.

1. Strengthening Existing Linkages with other Disciplines

Law enforcement officers are ultimately charged with protecting the public. Their effectiveness at being "preventers" of terrorism, first responders, and investigators will only be as effective as their relationships with other elements of the homeland security system and members of the public. Few law enforcement goals are achievable in isolation. Law enforcement agencies should strengthen their existing linkages with other disciplines to enhance their own effectiveness and the overall preparedness of the homeland security system. This effort can best be accomplished along three fronts: continued interagency dialogue at the upper management level, increased participation in multi-agency exercises, and by working to include other disciplines in intelligence and information-sharing activities.

2. Increasing Participation in Multi-Agency Exercises

Law enforcement agencies should increase their participation in multi-agency drills and exercises. Law enforcement leadership reported that joining with other disciplines for periodic drills and exercises was the best way to increase preparedness and represented the best investment of time and money. Also, these exercises benefit the most members at the most organizational levels. Periodic, high level interaction meetings are quite effective for department leaders but they provide benefits to only a few individuals. Law enforcement leadership was asked to describe the best mechanisms for integrating disciplines and about the desired frequency of interactions. They reported that “everyday” cooperation would likely be too much. They warned of danger in focusing too much on one challenge to the exclusion of others, or of creating a “continual focus” on terrorism. Participation in multi-agency exercises achieves the best results for the time, staffing, and financial expenditures. These activities should be increased because, by all accounts, they are the most effective method for gaining results.

3. Including Other Disciplines in Intelligence and Information Sharing

Law enforcement agencies should work to increase information sharing within the law enforcement discipline and, also, work to include other disciplines in the process. Despite the police fetish for secrecy, the reasons for not sharing intelligence crashed into the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.⁵⁷ The prevention challenge facing police agencies is critical. Detecting a terror plot or plan ahead of time and preventing it from occurring, although difficult, is not impossible. This immensity of the challenge has been described as “looking for a needle in a haystack of needles.”⁵⁸ White describes the value of focusing on prevention through intelligence, as compared with having to provide a response after the attack:

If law enforcement intelligence capabilities were increased; if cooperation among law enforcement agencies increased; if law enforcement agencies developed systems to share information; if national intelligence agencies could establish secure links with law enforcement agencies; if law enforcement’s role in national defense was recognized; it might be possible

⁵⁷ White, *Defending the Homeland*, 81.

⁵⁸ Allison, *Nuclear Terrorism*, 119.

to strike at organizations that would use WMD prior to their employment. Such an approach would require a shift in the way Americans viewed police officers and the way police officers viewed their jobs.⁵⁹

Brannon describes the challenge of maintaining the integrity of intelligence channels while also trying to provide police officers with the information they need to perform their prevention jobs:

Local and state law enforcement departments have been responsible for preventing and stopping many terrorist attacks. This is not surprising given the fact that local police are constantly in contact with the public. Local law enforcement could provide an even greater service in this realm, but the classification of sensitive information often excludes the very people who come in contact with the terrorists from knowing whom they are dealing with.⁶⁰

Firefighters and public health workers, like police officers, are in frequent contact with the public. Law enforcement agencies should include these disciplines in their intelligence process. There are tangible barriers to accomplishing this goal, but the goal is worth pursuing. Other disciplines tend to lack security clearances, methods for storing and disseminating intelligence, and the necessary training to safely manage intelligence. Arguably, the other disciplines have not demonstrated the required readiness to be included in intelligence operations. Law enforcement agencies should provide the leadership to reach out and integrate these disciplines as valued partners in the process.

4. Adapting Community Oriented Policing Strategies to Meet Homeland Security Goals

Law enforcement agencies should take the knowledge and experiences gained from previous community oriented policing strategies and adapt them to meet future homeland security challenges. Although a causal link between community policing and terrorism prevention has not yet been established, police agencies have been encouraged to apply similar principles to terrorism prevention by the federal government. Specifically, law enforcement agencies should use community policing initiatives, strategies, and tactics as a basis to identify suspicious activities related to terrorism. In

⁵⁹ White, *Defending the Homeland*, 25.

⁶⁰ David W. Brannon, *Beyond International Terrorism: Thinking About the "Domestic" Versus "International" Divide* (Oklahoma City, OK: Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, 2004), 21.

addition, officers should ensure that community members are aware of the means and processes for relaying observed data to them.⁶¹

Under community policing, police agencies are expected not only to cooperate with citizens and communities but also to actively solicit input and participation.⁶² A recently published training guide, directed at combating suicide terrorism, also stresses the importance of developing close ties between officers and community members: “Law enforcement officers should actively encourage and cultivate cooperation by building strong ties with community leaders – elected officials, civil servants, clerics, businessmen and teachers among others – and thereby enlist their assistance and support.”⁶³ The same community policing philosophy that stresses relationships, responsiveness, and a strong connection to the community will provide homeland security dividends just as it has for more traditional law enforcement goals.

I. CONCLUSION

Law enforcement agencies in the Seattle area have the advantage of pre-existing, regional relationships with each other, with other disciplines and with other levels of government. They should increase the frequency and complexity of interagency exercises to capitalize on that advantage.

Their prior experience with the ICS will help them transition to using the NIMS effectively with other disciplines. Strengthening the ability to provide policing services in hazardous atmospheres will add depth to regional systems by providing complementary skills. However, law enforcement cannot shoulder the entire burden alone. Homeland security challenges require them to increase interagency participation and cooperation to even greater levels.

The role of law enforcement organizations is changing from crime-fighting and maintenance of order to the prevention of terrorism and information sharing with other

⁶¹ *The Office for Domestic Preparedness Guidelines for Homeland Security: Prevention and Deterrence* (Washington, D.C.: Office for Domestic Preparedness, 2003), 7.

⁶² Gary W. Corder, “Community Policing: Elements and Effects,” in *Critical Issues in Policing* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 2001), 501.

⁶³ Bruce Hoffman et al., *Preparing for Suicide Terrorism: A Primer for American Law Enforcement Agencies and Officers* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004), 19.

agencies. As law enforcement agencies adapt to their new role, other disciplines have an opportunity to support them. This support and the experience it provides will benefit the entire Seattle area homeland security system.

By adapting community oriented policing successes and applying them to current homeland security challenges, law enforcement agencies can become more engaged in prevention. By developing non-traditional intelligence partnerships, law enforcement agencies can gain and share more information. Transitioning from a “need to know” to a “need to share” attitude will enhance overall preparedness.

III. PUBLIC HEALTH PERSPECTIVES

The purpose of this chapter is to examine homeland security collaboration from the perspective of the public health discipline. Seattle-King County Public Health serves the Seattle urban area and is located in geographic King County, Washington, which is the twelfth largest county in the United States. In addition to serving Seattle, the department provides health services to 39 cities, the remainder of unincorporated King County, and 127 special purpose districts. Public health's responsibilities include preventing epidemics and the spread of disease, protecting against environmental hazards, preventing injuries, promoting and encouraging healthy behaviors, responding to disasters and assisting communities in recovery, and assuring the quality and accessibility of health services.⁶⁴

The remainder of this chapter describes why public health interactions with other homeland security disciplines are critically important for increasing preparedness and response capabilities. Additionally, it explains how public health agencies have been challenged in adapting to the new homeland security environment and their role as "lead agency" for health-related incidents. It examines why organizational and cultural differences between public health and other disciplines act as barriers to achieving progress, and it concludes with recommendations for increasing future collaboration with other disciplines.

This chapter shows that the public health discipline is an "outlier" in comparison with its peers. Examining why leads to a detailed explanation of challenges facing public health organizations and positive policy recommendations. The public health discipline is best described as the "new kid on the block" when viewing the Seattle area homeland security environment as a neighborhood. They have experienced "growing pains" because their role, interagency work history, and organizational culture are significantly different from those of their peer agencies. Important findings include:

64. Pelfrey, "Appendix to 'Homeland Security Disciplines and the Cycle of Preparedness'," 1-2.

- Public health organizations have not yet internalized or accepted the NIMS/ICS to the necessary degree.
- The homeland security disciplines examined here have different expectations about the practical requirements of being “lead agency” for health related incident response.
- The challenge of managing a rapid influx of patients, known as “medical surge,” urgently needs a solution. Certainly, the solution should be built on a foundation of teamwork. The active support of public health from fire, police, and emergency management is necessary.

A. DEFINING PUBLIC HEALTH’S HOMELAND SECURITY ROLE

Findings from interviews conducted with Seattle area public safety executives representing multiple disciplines revealed confusion surrounding public health’s new homeland security role. Should public health personnel be considered first responders? Public safety experts representing law enforcement, emergency management, the fire service and public health were asked this question and they each offered different answers that can be summarized as yes, no, and sometimes.

Seattle’s Director of Emergency Management, Barb Graff, felt strongly that public health employees are and should be considered first responders. She indicated that they should be viewed as traditional first responders for a health epidemic. Key homeland security policy documents that define the term “first responder” have been amended in recent years to include public health personnel because, if not included, then nobody remains to respond to and manage an epidemic that affects fire and police departments, hospitals, etc. Regardless of what public health personnel are called, clearly defining their homeland security role across disciplines is important.

A police chief described first responders as those in “suits and boots.” He described public health as “almost” first responders. A public health SME indicated that public health personnel are first responders in certain situations, including when public health personnel respond to a communicable disease situation and assess the scope and nature of the event. Another health expert defined public health personnel as “second tier” responders, engaged in assessing the impact of events on populations, participating at an Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and offering health-related expertise to other agencies.

The new homeland security role facing public health clearly represents a change from their more traditional role. Historically, public health's role encompassed the full range of the medical field. Any kind of illness that affects individuals can be studied by persons in public health to detect trends and take measures to decrease illness in populations. Its mission of "prevention rather than cure" is universally compelling, saving money and reducing human suffering. Their new homeland security mission now includes the need for early detection of a bioterrorism release and rapid mobilization for investigation and response.⁶⁵ Carus documented a growing interest in the use of bioterrorism by criminals and terrorists that places additional pressure on public health agencies:

The available evidence indicates that there is an explosion of interest by criminals in biological agents. Forty of the 56 confirmed cases occurred in the 1990s. Similarly, 19 of 27 confirmed terrorist cases also occurred in the 1990s. This suggests a growing interest in biological agents.⁶⁶

James Henriksen, from Seattle-King County Public Health, described two phases of public health activity, preventative and reactive. The preventative phase encompasses proactive activities that occur pre-incident, while the reactive role, during and after the event, is more challenging for public health for several reasons. The more traditional preventative role for public health included vaccination programs, regulatory functions, disease prevention, site inspections, and educational activities. The newer homeland security role, which primarily involves reaction, is less clear because of a lack of practical experience. Public health's peer disciplines have questioned their ability to effectively respond to catastrophic terrorism and perform the "lead agency" role for incident response.

Public health has been tasked with "lead agency status" for health-related incidents by state and national response plans.⁶⁷ These incidents, whether terrorist-related or naturally occurring, are potentially the kind of events for which the general public is least prepared. Stein describes the unique challenges posed by bioterrorism:

⁶⁵ Dr. Marion Warwick, *Public Health in America: A Primer* (St. Louis, Missouri: Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, 2002), 10.

⁶⁶ W. Seth Carus, *Bioterrorism and Biocrimes: The Illicit Use of Biological Agents since 1900* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Counterproliferation Research, 2001), 10.

⁶⁷ The National Response Plan (NRP), National Incident Management System (NIMS), and Washington state statutes task public health as lead agency for health-related incidents.

A bioterrorist event differs in important ways from the crisis events for which communities are typically prepared. The level of fear and anxiety in the event of a bioterrorism attack may be increased by the novelty of biological weapons, the uncertainty in determining whether an attack has occurred and identifying the boundaries and scope of the attack, the possibility that oneself or one's family may unknowingly have been a victim of the attack, and the possibility of contagion.⁶⁸

Public health organizations are generally inexperienced at emergency response. Health-related events may be more difficult to identify, define, and control than obvious events like explosions. This compounds the challenges facing public health organizations.

Seattle area public health experts described their homeland security role as preparing for the health consequences of all incidents, determining and leading the health response, and providing advice and expertise to members of the unified command team. Peer public safety agencies want to see public health embrace their "lead agency status" more aggressively by demonstrating readiness to lead a multi-agency response and successfully manage a large incident. Public health's peer agencies want a more thorough explanation about how they can be supportive and assist in enacting response plans. They want Seattle-King County Public Health to demonstrate their leadership capabilities more vigorously in terms of planning and exercising in a multi-disciplinary capacity. This key finding highlights three important considerations for public health organizations. First, better coordination with their peer agencies is required to clarify specific responsibilities. Second, public health organizations need to confirm that the other disciplines' expectations are reasonable and achievable. Third, PH needs to continually educate first response agencies and other peers on public health legal authorities, responsibilities, and capabilities available during emergencies.

Interview findings reveal that the source of disagreement among disciplines surrounds the meaning of the term "lead agency." Public health leaders are comfortable limiting their role to leading "the health response" while the other disciplines expect public health to lead "the entire response." This incongruity can be addressed by increasing cooperation and contact among disciplines at the highest organizational levels.

⁶⁸ Bradley D. Stein et al., "The Role of Schools in Meeting Community Needs During Bioterrorism," *Biosecurity and Bioterrorism: Biodefense Strategy, Practice, and Science* 1, no. 4 (2003): 273-274.

Michael Loehr from Seattle King County Public Health offered his contrary analysis that further demonstrates the importance of clarifying roles. Regarding leading responses, Loehr stated:

I have had the exact opposite reaction from first responders in King County. In fact, I have never heard a first responder say that they expected PH to serve as the Incident Commander for events that include major roles for fire, police, or other non-health agencies. For events that are primarily a PH response with limited support from fire and police, like establishing a mass dispensing center, we have led the entire response as the incident commander.

Even when public health is not in the lead role, it has another responsibility: to be ready to communicate about risk. These communications must be transmitted not only to members of the public, but to their physicians and the larger medical services community as well. RAND researcher Terri Tanelian found that when it comes to making a personal decision about prophylaxis use in the wake of a bioterrorism event, people consult multiple sources. The majority of people will consult with their private physician prior to making a decision. She found that “non-adherent participants were commonly following the advice of private physicians, whereas adherent participants commonly described ongoing support from multiple sources when discussing their decisions.” Her findings highlight the need for better integration between the public and private health care systems during public health crises and the importance of equipping private physicians for their key role in aiding decision-making during a public health crisis.⁶⁹

B. EXAMINING PUBLIC HEALTH’S ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The difficulties public health has in taking a lead role may be traced in part to differences in organizational culture. There are striking differences in organizational culture that distinguish the public health discipline from their homeland security peers like police and fire. Strong consensus emerged from the interviews conducted with public health executives about these differences and why they pose challenges for public health in the current homeland security environment. The public health discipline is very community-focused and consensus based. Historically, they have been tasked with

⁶⁹ Bradley D. Stein et al., “A Bitter Pill to Swallow: Nonadherence with Prophylactic Antibiotics During the Anthrax Attacks and the Role of Private Physicians,” *Biosecurity and Biodefense: Biodefense Strategy, Practice, and Science* 2, no. 3 (2004): 1.

population-based health problems that often have complex and long-term solutions. This type of work activity is the antithesis of emergency response, which tends to be fast paced and where decisions are based on less than complete information.

Adapting to this new “emergency response” homeland security environment has proved challenging for Seattle-King County Public Health. They have attempted to create an internal “cultural shift” by moving from a community and consensus based organizational model to an ICS-driven model where input and tactical analysis can yield rapid decisions. They have reported some success, but claim additional education, training, and practical experience for their staff is necessary.

Compared with traditional first responders, the public health organizational hierarchy is less defined. They exhibit a culture founded in “science based questioning” that matches poorly with the “command and control” culture of their peer disciplines. Public health has grown comfortable interpreting health trends over longer periods of time, analyzing the results of surveillance, and determining health effects on populations. They are less comfortable making immediate decisions with incomplete information. Because of these differences in organizational culture, emergency scenarios present a new challenge for public health.

When public health experts were asked to describe the organizational cultures of their more traditional first responder peers (police and fire), they described them as command and control focused, orderly, consistent, and “driven by standards.” Police officers and firefighters perform routine emergency response work daily. While responding to a terrorism incident represents a natural increase and extension of daily activity for traditional responders, any form of emergency response activity is vastly different from the kinds of activity performed daily by public health workers. The response experience, ongoing training, and command framework that is embedded with traditional first responders has not been a part of public health culture or experience. This represents a collaboration challenge for public health to consider when addressing interagency issues.

C. PUBLIC HEALTH'S COLLABORATION CHALLENGES

Public health experts described “relationship building” with peer homeland security agencies as an evolutionary process. The linkages between fire, police, and emergency management are more established, are more regularly exercised, and have more historical experience than those involving public health. Experts representing the other three disciplines unanimously reported that public health has made significant advances in recent years in terms of interagency cooperation and participation, communication, and overall performance. Whether they like it or not, current homeland security challenges have created somewhat of a “strange bedfellows” situation between public health and their uniformed public safety agency counterparts. Deputy Chief Kimerer from the Seattle Police Department (SPD) explained that:

Much to their chagrin, public health has had to think like cops and firefighters. Hospital security shutdowns, decontamination issues, and quarantines have required them to operate in a new way.⁷⁰

Public health reported that increasing day-to-day exposure with other agencies is one area where relationship-building is working. Responding to illegal drug labs together with law enforcement has served as the kind of activity that has strengthened relationships. Partnering with law enforcement, public health ensures that contaminated properties have been adequately cleaned prior to re-occupancy.

For many public health officials, responding to the rising threat of bioterrorism and recent attacks has necessitated a steep learning curve.⁷¹ Seattle-King County Public Health, like public health departments nationwide, has experienced a host of challenges and barriers in adapting to the threat of terrorism and naturally occurring disease outbreaks. Competition for scarce resources, managing surge capacity, the mass distribution of prophylactics, an industry wide lack of performance standards, difficulties experienced implementing legal authorities, and managing numerous jurisdictions are the most prominent collaboration challenges facing public health in the Seattle area.

⁷⁰ Deputy Chief Clark Kimerer, Seattle Police Department, in discussion with the author, August 2005.

⁷¹ Jay C. Butler et al., “Collaboration between Public Health and Law Enforcement: New Paradigms and Partnerships for Bioterrorism Planning and Response,” *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 8, no. 10 (2002): 1153-1154.

1. Competing for Scarce Resources

Seattle area public health leaders reported that funding problems are a major obstacle to achieving progress and increased capability.⁷² One Seattle area public health SME indicated that the Seattle area has done well compared with other regions, but also described frustrations associated with the financial allocation process:

Inherently, the process becomes reduced to a competition between jurisdictions and agencies to become prepared. All homeland security agencies should be participating equally in developing and guiding funding decisions, but that is not happening in our region, to the detriment of public health. Every time new funding becomes available, a “feeding frenzy” among competing agencies ensues. The Seattle urban area strategy has not been effectively used to guide funding decisions.

When asked which agencies are currently winning and losing in funding competition, he reported that:

Police and fire are winners primarily because of extensive equipment purchases. The vast majority of the money has gone to purchasing equipment. Although the DHS guidelines have been followed, we have operated in a manner that is not conducive to us becoming more prepared as a community.

When asked what public health would do with a larger share of the resources, he indicated that he would address the needs of vulnerable populations, like limited English speakers, the poor, and the handicapped. Instead of buying equipment, public health has worked to build capabilities within their department, not by adding people, but by training and building knowledge and skills to conduct isolation and quarantine response, to conduct mass vaccination response, to learn the ICS, and to be able to coordinate the health response system.

2. Providing for Medical Surge Capacity and Capability

Public health also faces challenges coordinating with hospitals and other health care facilities to develop and exercise plans to manage potentially overwhelming

⁷² Public Health funding challenges are not unique to the Seattle area. As a result of chronic under spending, the public health infrastructure is badly deteriorated. Public health agencies lack the capacity to conduct essential public health services at a level of performance that matches the constantly evolving threats to the health of the public. Lawrence O. Gostin, “Public Health Law in an Age of Terrorism: Rethinking Individual Rights and Common Goods,” *Health Affairs* 21 (2002), 80.

numbers of patients following an event. Surge capacity is simply defined as the ability of the medical system to manage a large and unexpected influx of patients. Managing a surge of patients means being able to “lighten the load” on the system by spreading patients out, creating vacancies by moving stable patients to outlying hospitals, and by using existing hospital space more creatively.⁷³ A Seattle area public health SME considered it more advantageous and easier to create vacancies in existing hospitals by moving stable patients out than by re-creating hospitals in makeshift settings. It is important to note the distinction between public health and hospitals. Public health does not equate to or represent hospitals. Although they both share health-related goals, they manage different programs and face different challenges.

A random query of the available number of hospital beds revealed that the Seattle area hospital system maintains “just in time” inventory like any other business.⁷⁴ On an average day, King County hospitals are at 80-90 percent patient capacity.⁷⁵ Tight financial margins are an unfortunate reality for the health care industry, both locally and nationally. Neither government nor private industry can afford to build empty hospitals. The Seattle region has approximately 3,500 staffed hospital beds. Any sizeable influx of patients results in stress to the hospital network. When this occurs, the challenge of providing adequate patient care becomes an immediate logistical concern.

How fast can the Seattle area medical system absorb an overload of patients? The answer depends on multiple factors including the number, condition, and location of the patients and other factors like the existence of an aggressive flu season. When asked how many seriously injured or sick patients our system could absorb before apparent failure, a public health SME indicated “the real number is about two hundred.” That observation is critical because the patient loads forecasted by the National Planning Scenarios are dramatically larger. The pandemic influenza scenario predicts 87,000 fatalities and the

⁷³ *Medical Surge Capacity and Capability: A Management System for Integrating Medical and Health Resources during Large-Scale Emergencies* (Washington, D.C.: CNA Corporation, under contract to the Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2004), 7.

⁷⁴ “Washington Hospital Capacity Web Site,” Seattle, WA August 30, 2005. Available from https://capacity.medical.washington.edu/hospital_capacity/hosp_view_BedCensus.asp. (accessed October 10, 2005)

⁷⁵ *Harborview Medical Center: Report to the Community*, ed. David E. Jaffe (Seattle, WA: Harborview Medical Center, 2004), 39. There is an important distinction between “beds” and “staffed and equipped” beds.

aerosol anthrax scenario predicts 13,000.⁷⁶ Very quickly after an incident, all the television news cameras will be focused on public health and the under-capacity of hospitals.

3. Challenges with Mass Prophylactic Distribution

Another challenge facing the Seattle area public health system is dispensing medications to large numbers of residents quickly. Mass prophylactic dispensing is an action that will surely require collaboration between disciplines, jurisdictions, and levels of government. Existing public health plans to provide antibiotics to large numbers of people include multiple strategies such as establishing Points of Dispensing (POD) managed and operated by a PH incident commander with support from police and fire, pre-deploying medications to first responders and certain critical facilities, and developing a residential distribution plan for catastrophic events in conjunction with the U.S. Postal Service.

While mass prophylactic dispensing plans are led by PH and aimed at biologicals, a distinctly different program called Chempak© is more reactive and addresses patients with chemical and nerve agent exposures. This collaborative dispensing plan relies on medical expertise provided by the CDC and the Washington State Department of Health and Hospitals and delivery logistics provided by the SFD. The specifics of the program are a closely held secret. Although the plan's existence is promising, it remains untested at the time of this writing. An SFD chief involved in the plan's development described the process as "giving birth to a gray whale."⁷⁷ The national outlook and capability for mass prophylactic distribution is questionable as well:

A year ago, the Health and Human Services Department launched a \$27 million, twenty-one city program called the "Cities Readiness Initiative" to encourage local officials to develop plans for distributing the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). But nearly four years after the anthrax attacks

⁷⁶ *Planning Scenarios: Executive Summaries* (Washington, D.C.: Homeland Security Council, 2004).

⁷⁷ Assistant Chief Bill Hepburn, Seattle Fire Department, in discussion with the author, August, 2005. The process to develop and implement the Chempak program was difficult, intensive, and lengthy.

in October 2001 killed five people and put the nation on edge, not a single city has a workable plan to get supplies to the public in time to save lives.⁷⁸

4. A Lack of Public Health Performance Standards

Public health lacks emergency response performance standards to guide their efforts. In King County, public health preparedness didn't exist until May, 2002. Before then, public health was minimally involved in emergency management and response. A written standard that adequately describes "what a prepared public health agency looks like" does not exist on a state or federal level. King County Public Health has since written a standard for their use. The newly developed preparedness strategy helps guide PH efforts, organize personnel, and divide work projects into manageable portions. It also helps them define priorities within specific work boundaries and deflect work projects imposed on them by others that fall outside the strategy.⁷⁹

The apparent lack of standards for public health extends to resources as well. How will public health resources be standardized across the country? While standardizing a fire apparatus nationally is easy, who will standardize an epidemiologist?⁸⁰

5. Challenges Implementing Legal Authorities

Determining and implementing legal authority for health-related emergencies is a major policy issue for Seattle-King County Public Health. Local health officers have the ultimate authority to issue and enforce isolation and quarantine orders, but their ability to garner the necessary support for actions they must undertake has been, at times, difficult. Their ability to implement directives is clouded by overlapping jurisdictional authorities, the actions of elected officials, and disagreement about the best way to package and deliver public messages. These overlapping authorities pose challenges which further

⁷⁸ Mimi Hall, "Cities Fret Over How to Quickly Deliver Vaccines," *USA Today*, 2005, sec. U.S. News, 3. Public health SME Michael Loehr criticized this passage as not applicable in King County. He stated that the King County plan is workable and has been suitably tested.

⁷⁹ Seattle King County Public Health, Preparedness Section, Office of the Director, *Public Health Preparedness Strategy, Goal 8: Anticipate and Respond to the Public Health Consequences of Local Emergencies* (Seattle, 2005), 1-2.

⁸⁰ Guide for NIMS Resource Typing System, [Draft Document], 2005, Document NIC-GDL-009, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, NIMS Integration Center, Washington, D.C.

require PH to closely coordinate with an even broader scope of partners including the prosecuting attorney, superior courts, city managers and mayors, the King County executive, and others. Taking significant action like closing businesses, schools, or stadiums, or limiting access to public areas presents challenges for public health, other public safety agencies, and elected officials. Specifically, the legal, political, and enforcement ramifications of these decisions, as well as media implications, pose challenges for public health organizations. Voluntary compliance with orders, while desirable, is not always possible.⁸¹ A comprehensive plan to present an appropriate and unified message to the public is needed.

6. Ineffective Span of Control

Public health reported difficulty managing the large number of government clients in King County. They struggle to manage the 39 cities, plus the unincorporated county, and 127 special purpose districts. This amounts to a major coordination challenge. They have, however, managed to place a representative at every homeland security committee operating in their overall jurisdiction. Developing processes and systems that are truly representative is a collaboration barrier.

7. Participation in Multi-Agency Training and Activities

Public health SMEs reported that internal funding issues are preventing them from increasing multi-agency collaboration. They use a “fee for service” business model. The majority of their daily activities are fee generating, so dedicating time for participation in multi-agency drills is problematic because of the lack of non-dedicated staff time. This represents a unique challenge for public health to overcome and is behind their persistent claim of being under-funded. Alternately, another Delphi panel member observed that other agencies have had to perform their primary functions in addition to participating in multi-agency exercises and training. Therefore, this feature of the PH model should not necessarily negatively impact their participation.

⁸¹ When voluntary compliance has been unsuccessful in the past, local health officers have taken decisive action that included ordering infectious patients into mandatory involuntary isolation and ordering medical providers to apply limited flu vaccine in a manner consistent with local public health directives.

Public health employees currently have to justify their work schedules in sync with the fee-based business model, which is more closely associated with a private sector model than those of their peer public safety agencies. Public health staff time dedicated to multi-agency drills affects permit fees for other activities. This impacts their ability to cultivate strong working relationships and to develop a core multi-disciplinary response group.

D. HOW OTHER DISCIPLINES PERCEIVE PUBLIC HEALTH

While the peer homeland security disciplines freely admit that Seattle King County Public Health has made significant strides in recent years, questions about their ability to be an effective “lead agency” for incident response remain. The Seattle area fire service leadership has specifically questioned what responsibilities accompany the title of “lead agency” for a health-related terrorism event. Fire officials indicated that they have been dismissed as taking the lead for a large epidemiological response, although they will be relied on to treat patients. A fire service SME stated that:

Traditional first responders will surely see the volume of sick people initially. Public health staff are not first responders. They are the surveyors and collators of information that solve the puzzle. During a mass inoculation situation, public health would organize and be in the lead agency role, but would not perform the bulk of the work. The police and fire departments would have equally substantial roles. In this instance, public health has a major role in unified command. My observation is that public health is accustomed to working by themselves on specific health issues. We have not seen much evidence that they understand the degree of teamwork required. In a dynamic situation, how can you do things “medically correct” and still meet the needs of an anxious mother and her three kids?⁸²

The Port of Seattle Chief of Police, Tim Kimsey, works closely with public health personnel at Seattle Tacoma International Airport (SeaTac), cruise ship terminals, and other locations in the Seattle area. He indicated that public health tends to focus on smaller and more contained issues. He indicated that public health should “expand their thinking” to include WMD and biological issues. Because SeaTac has been designated as a national quarantine point, it is a logical place to focus public health resources and expertise.

⁸² Assistant Chief Bill Hepburn, Seattle Fire Department, in discussion with the author, August 2005.

E. PUBLIC HEALTH AND NIMS/ICS

Other agencies view the ability of public health organizations to use the NIMS and the ICS language it contains as a major determinant of future collaborative success.⁸³ This section explains why the NIMS/ICS has not been internalized by public health agencies to the degree it has been by the other disciplines. Public health has accepted NIMS/ICS by incorporating it into their existing response plans, but they have yet to fully integrate its use. Colonel Sharon Stanley from the U.S. Army War College described public health's relationship with ICS in her Master's thesis as follows:

The public health system has the healthcare expertise related to biological agents, but it lacks the ability to take command and control of consequence management operations. Public health has a lack of understanding of ICS beyond familiarization, an established leadership style involving consensus building and group decision-making, and an unproven track record in leading mass casualty response teams.⁸⁴

Although not relied on for everyday department activities, Seattle King County Public Health views the ICS as being very effective because it provides the structure and consistency needed during emergency incidents. This is instructive because they operate in such a different manner on a daily basis. Public health officials describe NIMS/ICS as a valuable concept, but they caution that it has not yet been fully implemented, and that they are waiting to determine its overall usefulness. Peer disciplines, when asked about public health's transition to NIMS/ICS, expressed frustration. A fire service SME commented that "public health is struggling with the ability to do anything more than plan. They have been very slow to adopt NIMS and ICS." A Seattle area public health SME explained why public health has experienced difficulty in adopting NIMS/ICS:

I'm disappointed that the development of NIMS has excluded public health. I don't see a multi-discipline approach or public health fingerprints on any part of the NIMS. It is really geared to fire and police, and that's where it stops. Public health and public works are not visible in the NIMS concept.

⁸³ For more detailed information on NIMS/ICS see the following online resources: <http://www.fema.gov/nims/>, <http://www.nimsonline.com/>, and <http://www.fema.gov/nimcast/index.jsp>.

⁸⁴ Col. Sharon A. Stanley, *Operational Art and the Incident Command System: Public Health's Bridge in Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response* (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: U.S. Army War College, 2003): 3.

He also indicated that a template or a model is necessary for public health agencies to use to adapt to the NIMS/ICS system. He continued by describing that not surprisingly, NIMS/ICS is more readily useable by the other disciplines because they developed it and use it daily:

The NIMS/ICS is not a language that public health agencies understand. When the fire department comes in and provides training they do a great job, but they come in and speak 'fire language.' Public health doesn't have an Air Operations section. Public health personnel struggle to understand the militaristic terminology. Public health activities are so contrary to the ICS way of doing things, they are literally opposite. Public health is consensus based, long term, and community focused. We are really swimming upstream to adapt. Public health personnel are not getting the NIMS/ICS training in a language they can readily understand.

Consider the following three examples offered by another public health expert that highlight the difficulties they face in adapting to NIMS/ICS. Consensus based decision-making differs from the rigid command and control model used in NIMS/ICS. Also consider the differing time frames attached to work projects, such as long term smoking cessation and community obesity reduction plans contrasted with a four, six, or twelve hour Incident Action Plan (IAP). The operational modes also differ. Traditional public health activities are ongoing and predictable while NIMS/ICS is used in the crisis mode.

Michael Loehr from Seattle-King County Public Health described his frustration with unified command response plans:

I have yet to see a single plan in King County that clearly defines and states that we are going to operate under unified command. I question whether or not it will actually be implemented. I honestly think we are going to get into a situation, and it's going to be incident command and not unified command. Regardless of which city (in King County) it happens in, the incident is going to be driven by one discipline. They are going to see their priorities immediately, and they are not going to acknowledge the priorities of other agencies and things may not be done as efficiently as they could be.

I think there is a consistent role for fire and police and they are going to be pushing themselves into command. In some cases that's great, in other cases there clearly needs to be expertise from other agencies involved in decision-making. A white powder hazardous materials incident in a building provides a great example. There are decisions that need to be made by the health department. King County does not have a specific plan

to coordinate between fire, police, and public health. I don't think it exists. Unified command is not ready to be used for public health emergencies.⁸⁵

Public health has had some success using the unified command approach, albeit on a small scale. James Henriksen from Seattle-King County public health described an incident at Alki Beach where he used it successfully:

Seattle-King County public health was notified of an incident where hundreds of hypodermic syringes washed up on a Seattle swimming beach. We are responsible for sanitation at swimming beaches. Fire and police responded initially. The firefighters swept the beach, picking up the hypodermics. The initial incident commander from the fire department notified us through the EOC. As part of our response, we set up the NIMS/ICS structure. We established an operations section, a communications person, and a Public Information Officer (PIO) because we anticipated media requests.

The Seattle Parks Department responded as well and joined the operations section. We established a command post at a table in the park. We placed barriers, installed signage, and issued a public safety message. We developed and implemented an IAP using the unified command approach. We closed the beach for two tide changes. We also had a liaison from the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE). He supported the incident with information about tides, currents, and the predicted trajectory of the hypodermics that remained in Elliott Bay. For public health, this was a growth experience. The Alki Beach incident involved interfacing with other disciplines, as well as the Washington State EOC and DOE. It proved to be a great exercise in communication.⁸⁶

F. PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE NATIONAL PLANNING SCENARIOS

The Seattle area public health experts described the impacts that the NPS have had on their planning and preparedness efforts, and they offered their perspectives about the value and usefulness of the scenarios. Regarding the scenarios' realism, they felt that it varied by scenario. Overall, they rated them as both valuable and useful for planning purposes. The scenarios have helped them to "expect the unexpected", and they provide a clear indication of the necessary scope and level of preparedness.

⁸⁵ Preparedness Section Manager Michael Loehr, Seattle King County Public Health, in discussion with the author, August 2005.

⁸⁶ James Henriksen, Environmental Health Division, Seattle King County Public Health, in discussion with the author, August 2005.

Health experts acknowledged that by preparing for the suite of scenarios, they would also become better prepared for other events, just as a rising tide lifts all boats. The scenarios have helped them to “gear up” for emergency response. They indicated that they had used the pandemic influenza scenario the most and that they had committed a large amount of resources to preparing for it. Unfortunately, the large numbers of patients predicted by the scenarios far exceeds the numbers they have seen in a real event. Preparing to treat the vast number of casualties forecasted presents a huge challenge to our health system.

While discussing the scenarios and their meaning for public health, Henriksen commented:

To become fully prepared for something on the order of magnitude presented by these scenarios is way off our chart. Look at the resources necessary to care for just one person with a communicable disease. It is very resource intensive and expensive. In situations like those presented in the scenarios our resource needs exponentially multiply. However, we realize that and have made great progress in preparedness. As a region, we are light-years ahead of where we were even two or three years ago.

Health experts agreed that the scenarios are driving catastrophic planning, but perhaps at the expense of all-hazards planning. Loehr discussed the misguided efforts of the federal government in catastrophic planning and how our collective efforts have avoided updating plans for more likely events:

Planning for catastrophic disasters is necessary and a good idea, but that is not what we are going to see all the time. We also have to plan for the kinds of things we know are going to happen. There has been lots of talk about catastrophic [major earthquake] planning after hurricane Katrina. Health agencies at the federal level are telling us to prepare for the big one. As an example, consider catastrophic bioterrorism relief funding that has been distributed to the twenty-one largest cities in the country, including King County. They want us to be prepared to respond to treat 560,000 people in thirty hours. It becomes a logistics operation, moving pills and people. The mechanisms to do that are already in place, it has nothing to do with the health system. It is more closely connected to the U.S. Post Office and staging medicines around the county.

The federal government equates buying supplies with preparedness. Public health thinks it is a waste of money. Consider a meningitis or hepatitis A outbreak, or an aerosol dispersal at city hall. Nothing in the scenarios fits

with these incidents. Which is more realistic, the doomsday scenario or a predictable local event? We should be prepared for the events that are more likely to happen. For public health, capability means developing skills at the responder level, not purchasing equipment. Focusing on decision-making, coordinating with partners, and ensuring the viability of the health system is what we should be doing.

G. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Homeland security issues related to public health are of major concern to the Seattle urban area. This chapter has shown that the new homeland security role for public health is faster paced, more complex, and more challenging for them than their traditional role. Their traditional role primarily involved observing and mitigating community health hazards. This new role has not been clearly defined for the Seattle area homeland security community, nor is it readily identifiable in guiding policy documents, including the Seattle urban area strategy.

Public health's homeland security relationships with other public safety disciplines have required them to adopt the NIMS/ICS management style. NIMS/ICS is nationally recognized as a unifying incident management tool, yet learning it, practicing with it, and internalizing it has presented a significant challenge for them. Unlike their peers, they do not use it on a daily basis. Although they have incorporated it into their organizational framework, and used it successfully on a small scale, their peer agencies are not convinced they are ready to use it at a major incident.

Although the peer agencies (police, fire, and emergency management) have reported significant growth in public health's capabilities in recent years, collaboration obstacles remain. A disparity between their current and needed capability becomes apparent when examining the challenges presented by the NPS. Public health experts from Seattle indicated that preparing to respond to terrorism and catastrophic incidents, while valuable, may be distracting them from preparing for smaller-scale, more predictable naturally-occurring events that are judged more likely to happen.

Seattle-King County Public Health has had mixed success in managing their professional relationships with traditional first responder agencies. Many factors make public health unique. When comparing public health with the other disciplines,

differences in their organizational history, culture, and doctrine emerge that highlight the interagency challenges they face. Their traditional consensus-based decision-making methodology and propensity for evaluating community health trends and effects over time have ill-prepared them for the new homeland security environment. The new environment is characterized by fast-paced decisions, often made with incomplete information in a heavy command and control framework. Public health's organizational interpretation of how the Seattle urban area should be preparing the community differs from that of their peer disciplines. Gaining an understanding of these differences is necessary to increasing future collaboration among disciplines.

Alarming, public health's peer public safety agencies have questioned their ability and readiness to successfully perform as lead agency at a major health-related emergency incident. Public health has claimed they are ready to lead the "health portion" of a response, and to advise and provide medical and health-related expertise to other agencies. The specific role and duties associated with the title "lead agency" have not been clarified. Alternately, public health has questioned the other disciplines (police and fire) and their willingness to include them in a meaningful way at unified command events.

Public health has demonstrated a legitimate need for additional funding to support their homeland security preparedness efforts. There is a specific need related to developing "interagency training and exercising" as a new line of business. Their current business model is not conducive to developing and maintaining productive interagency relationships because of the "fee for service" structure. A new model, supported by new funding, is necessary to produce collaborative growth that will allow them to meet the performance levels required by the NPS. The CRS also determined that nationally, we should commit more funding to bolster public health response capabilities. CRS found that:

Increasing funding to the public health system, in order to provide greater hospital capacity, trained medical and mental health personnel, increased screening and surveillance, and sufficient equipment in the case of a chemical, biological, or toxin terrorist attack is necessary. Spending on the order of \$10 to \$30 billion per year would provide sufficient depth of response to reduce a chemical, biological, or toxin attack's effectiveness.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Dana A. Shea, *Terrorism: Background on Chemical, Biological, and Toxin Weapons and Options for Lessening Their Impact* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2004), 10.

The Seattle area should direct future public health preparedness efforts towards the following six objectives:

- Public health should develop an “isolation and quarantine” plan for distribution to the peer agencies for inclusion in their internal policy documents. This plan should indicate the responsibilities of each agency, and how they can support public health in this area. It should also include a mechanism for creating and issuing unified public messages.
- Public health’s peer disciplines should work with public health personnel to package and deliver NIMS/ICS in training in a format that they can understand. Public health officials, when operating as Incident Commanders, should focus on policy and decision-making. Until their incident response experience base grows, they should be provided with a deputy assistant from another discipline that is well-versed in NIMS/ICS.⁸⁸ This will allow PH officials to focus on outcomes and not become overburdened with the mechanics of the NIMS/ICS structure.
- Public health should re-prioritize activities or find additional funding to increase meaningful interagency participation related to planning, training, and exercising.
- Public health should inform their peer agencies specifically how those agencies can support them in meeting the medical surge challenge.
- Peer agencies should each provide a dedicated liaison or point of contact that public health can use for all interagency issues.
- Peer agencies should conduct “awareness level training” on public health’s and the other agencies’ skill-sets and how those skills support incident management when health has the lead role.

Since 9/11, the initial focus on equipment and supply purchases as a remedy for lackluster emergency preparedness has not benefited public health as much as it has traditional “first tier” responders. A re-examination of spending priorities is necessary to determine how altering fund allocation could support public health’s efforts to develop skills and capabilities for managing health-related catastrophic terror incidents. A federal health expert described the frustration felt by public health agencies during the initial rounds of fund allocation:

⁸⁸ Delphi panel member Barb Graff also pointed out that during the massive planning undertaken for the 1994 World Cup soccer tournament organizers specifically appointed a new “ICS advisor” staff position to the command staff for the purpose of helping the organizing committee (of thousands) use the ICS to its highest potential.

Initially, the goal has been to reach into the pot, grab the money, and walk away from the table without collaboration. This had led to a duplication of effort and equipment purchases. Everybody wanted the special response vehicles, equipped with all the bells and whistles.⁸⁹

Encouraging meaningful participation by public health in Seattle area multi-agency exercises is vitally important to increasing overall preparedness in the urban area. Shugarman echoed these concerns in her findings: “Participation by public health in preparedness exercises is critical to achieving the long-term goal of mitigating the morbidity, mortality, psychosocial stress, and social consequences of a terrorist attack or other public health emergency.”⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Czarnecki, *Homeland Security Executive Education Seminar*, 3.

⁹⁰ Lisa R. Shugarman et al., *Enhancing Public Health Preparedness: Exercises, Exemplary Practices, and Lessons Learned* (Arlington, VA: RAND Corporation, 2005), 5.

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IV. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES

The purpose of this chapter is to examine homeland security collaboration from the perspective of the emergency management discipline. Emergency management is a relatively new field that supports and coordinates other emergency response activities and, as such, emergency managers might be located within police or fire departments or in a separate agency. Emergency Management Agencies (EMA) are organizations, both local and state, directed to coordinate the reduction and mitigation of the loss of life and property due to disasters and emergencies, and to protect critical infrastructure from all types of hazards through a comprehensive, risk-based, emergency management program of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.⁹¹ Emergency managers are best viewed as *coordinators* of emergency services engaged in prevention, mitigation, response, preparedness, and recovery.

Seattle's Director of Emergency Management, Barb Graff, explained that public expectations regarding emergency services remain constant while the load placed on public safety agencies fluctuates according to demand. A lack of available first responders or associated resources is usually the factor that makes any particular event a "disaster" for citizens.⁹² Emergency management's job is to prevent "disasters" by coordinating resources, supporting first responders, and providing logistical assistance to other response agencies. The public has clearly and repeatedly reaffirmed through feedback to government officials that public safety is their top priority, regardless of economic conditions. Despite serving a critical function, emergency management agencies face challenges in providing more comprehensive services with fewer staff. Local and state budgets have decreased while performance expectations have been maintained or increased. These challenges have impacted emergency management organizations' ability to effectively collaborate with other related agencies.

The remainder of this chapter examines the emergency management discipline in the Seattle area. The chapter discusses historical perspectives, current conflicts about

⁹¹ Pelfrey, "Appendix," 1-2.

⁹² Seattle Director of Emergency Management, Barb Graff, Seattle Police Department, in discussion with the author, August 2005.

federal guidance, and recommendations for the future improvement of emergency management. The chapter finds that the emergency management system in the Seattle area is particularly robust.⁹³ Its strength stems from an early voluntary commitment to regional cooperation among jurisdictions and levels of government. Also, the emergency management function is increasingly supported by higher levels of government.⁹⁴ The chapter also identifies one significant area of concern. The recent overriding focus on terrorism, mandated by the federal government, may be benefiting the region's homeland security preparedness at the expense of more traditional "all-hazards" planning.⁹⁵

A. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT'S HOMELAND SECURITY ROLE

In a national query of homeland security professionals conducted by the author on a DHS computer network, respondents identified emergency management agencies most closely with the following activities: coordination and planning, ICS training and adoption, preparedness activities, requesting help from other jurisdictions and levels of government, public information and communications, conducting training and exercises, and supporting other responders.⁹⁶

The location of the emergency management function in government structures varies by jurisdiction in the Seattle area. The City of Seattle's Director of Emergency Management, Barb Graff, explained that if a program is well-managed and supported by the community, it can exist anywhere. In the City of Seattle, the emergency management function is contained within the SPD. Chief Vickery from the SFD stated that "in Seattle, the EM function is perceived as police-centric due to its location in the SPD organizational structure. It should be located in the mayor's office." In King County, a

⁹³ Steven D. Stehr, *Homeland Security in the State of Washington: A Baseline Report on the Activities of State and Local Governments* (New York, NY: The Century Foundation, 2003), 26.

⁹⁴ Elizabeth B. Bazan, *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act: Legal Requirements for Federal and State Roles in Declarations of an Emergency or Major Disaster* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2005), 14.

⁹⁵ Under "all-hazards" planning, response and preparedness needs common to all disasters are developed, regardless of the cause of the disaster.

⁹⁶ Online survey conducted August 1 - September 15, 2005 by the author. Survey respondents are participants in the Office for Domestic Preparedness Secure Portal Website, <https://odp.esportals.com>. Approximately sixty homeland security professionals representing thirty states and four disciplines responded. (accessed August 1, 2005)

larger and more regional organization, emergency management exists as its own department. In other Seattle-area cities, the emergency management function is located in public works, public safety, and planning departments. In Washington state government, emergency management function is located in the Military Department.

1. Emergency Management’s Perception of Their Homeland Security Role

Emergency managers from the Seattle area explained their homeland security role includes prevention, mitigation, and ancillary support activities. These activities include coordinating responses among varying agencies and post-event short and long term recovery. Emergency managers described their primary homeland security mission as supporting Incident Command (IC) at the local level. This supportive and coordinating process is reflected by increasingly higher levels of government when necessary. By mitigating the effects of known hazards and, therefore, lessening their impacts, they actively prevent unnecessary damage. They also respond, but unlike police officers and firefighters, when an incident occurs they typically respond to an EOC. EOCs are secure facilities, usually housing representatives from each department with a response role.⁹⁷ Emergency managers perform coordination and ancillary support duties at the EOC.

It is instructive to view the emergency management discipline as the hub of a multi-spoked wheel to best understand its function. The spokes of the wheel, extending out from the hub, represent organizational connections between emergency management and other entities with whom they coordinate and communicate. Figure 1 shows the relationship between emergency management organizations and those they support.

⁹⁷ Emergency Operation Centers (EOC) are secure, meaning that they are provided with physical site security, emergency power supply, and redundant communication systems.

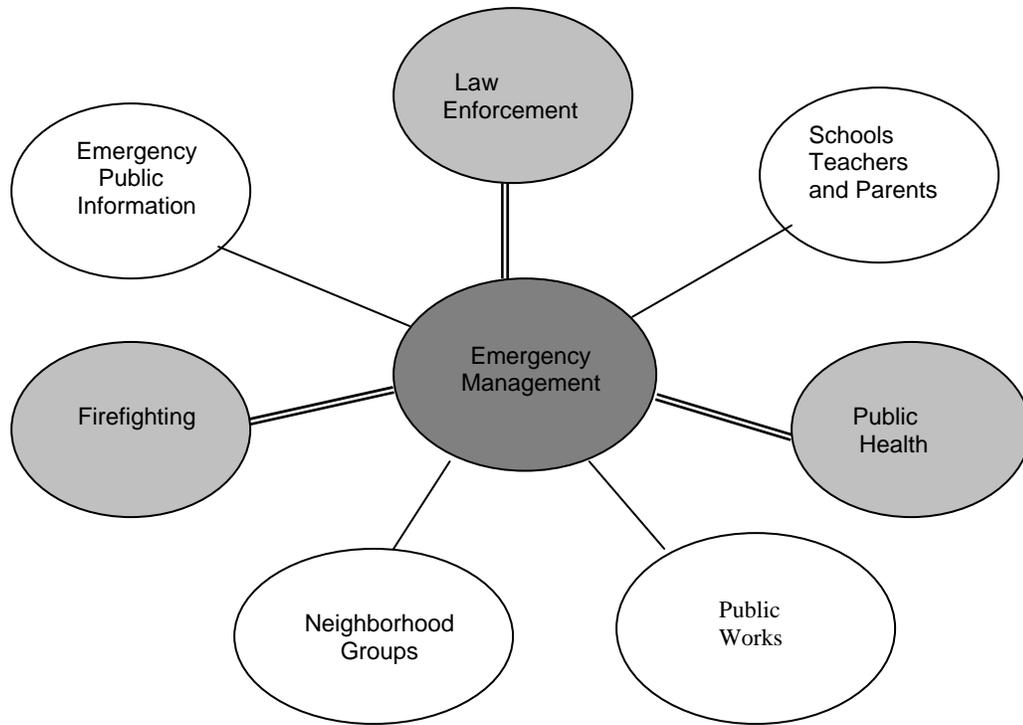


Figure 1. Emergency Management Organizational Relationships.

Emergency management agencies thrive on organizational interdependencies created by homeland security preparation and planning activities.⁹⁸ In addition to police, fire, and public health departments, the spokes also represent connections to the public sector, elected officials, school systems, and neighborhood groups. As emergency management organizations become increasingly effective, more spokes representing new relationships will appear on the wheel.

When local governments activate their EOCs, both King County and the State of Washington activate their own, “leaning forward, preparing to engage.” Their activation signifies their readiness to help. Local emergency managers quickly clarified this point by indicating that command, control, and incident management responsibilities always rest with local entities. Any activity by a higher level of government (County, State, and

⁹⁸ John R. Schermerhorn, “Determinants of Interorganizational Cooperation,” *The Academy of Management Journal* 18, no. 4 (1975): 844-848.

Federal) is supportive of the local government entity.⁹⁹ Washington, as a “home rule” state, allows for the continuous local control of local resources. A fire incident in Washington state always belongs to the fire department; crime always belongs to the police department, etc.

2. Perceptions of the Emergency Management Role

Emergency managers are viewed by their peers as generalists, supporting first response and recovery operations by connecting resources and services with needs. Interestingly, SMEs representing multiple disciplines agreed that “emergency management” should be renamed “emergency coordination.” King County, Washington calls their center an Emergency Coordination Center (ECC), while the City of Seattle and the State of Washington call theirs EOCs. Naming varies similarly across the state and country.¹⁰⁰

Emergency management’s (EM) peer homeland security disciplines in the Seattle area described the EM role much as emergency managers described it themselves. The other disciplines confirmed EMAs are responsible for support, coordination, and facilitation activities. Interestingly, they reported one significant difference. Both police and fire disciplines cautioned that emergency management should remain focused on supporting incidents, and not mistakenly drift into commanding them. They clearly stated that emergency management’s appropriate role is incident support, not incident management or command. They also noted that emergency managers are most effective when supporting and coordinating others’ activities.

During EOC activations, emergency managers operate at EOCs where the emergency support functions are located, where information is synthesized, and where resources are distributed. Emergency managers can make important things happen for Incident Commanders. The temptation facing emergency managers, making decisions for Incident Commanders, instead of supporting the decisions they make, is inevitable. Consider the relationship between a coach and a quarterback at a football game. One

⁹⁹ JayEtta Hecker, Director, Physical Infrastructure, *Homeland Security - Intergovernmental Coordination and Partnership Will Be Critical to Success* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2002), 14.

¹⁰⁰ Glen Woodbury, former Washington State Emergency Manager, in discussion with the author, December 2005.

manages the team on the field, while the other provides support and coordination from the sidelines. The key to their mutual success is agreement and understanding about appropriate roles and functions.

Both the police and fire disciplines offered criticism of emergency management in this area. They found that keeping emergency management contained to a supportive role has been challenging. A police expert thought it was important that emergency management not “move in a direction of usurping the prerogatives of command.” A fire service expert commented that:

Emergency management sometimes fails to understand their role. They tend to think along the lines of incident management, when in fact they should be incident support. Sometimes they tend to get over-involved. They should concentrate on their support, logistical, and coordination functions more. Sometimes their role wanders. Emergency management has an important policy and decision-making role. If the fire and utilities departments each needed ten front-loaders, but only 15 were available, emergency management would decide where the priority existed in the City. They dole out the resources accordingly. This activity promotes the best use of scarce resources, and reduces duplication of effort.

The perceptions expressed by police and fire representatives, that EM sometimes “drifts into command”, instead of supporting and coordinating incidents, can be explained by the tendency that elected officials have to look to the EOC for leadership and information during significant emergencies. Therefore, emergency managers become impacted by higher levels of supervision, getting “pushed” to act from above.

Emergency management’s peer disciplines view them primarily as supervisors of the EOC function and as the “guardians” of preparedness and response plans. A fire service SME described emergency management in Seattle as the “mayor’s representative” in the emergency process, although their chain of command follows SPD rank structure:

Their function highlights the value of having all the Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) co-located.¹⁰¹ Together, an inventory of each specialty is available, which results in high levels of situational awareness for the mayor and the policy makers to use when making overall policy decisions.

¹⁰¹ See <http://www.fema.gov/about/esf.shtm> for a more complete description of the emergency support functions. (accessed November 16, 2005), 1.

Emergency management has the strategic advantage of interacting with all city departments, neighboring jurisdictions, and levels of government. This allows them to visualize how the response “puzzle pieces” best fit together.¹⁰² Although other disciplines also interact with other agencies, this process is centralized through the emergency management function.¹⁰³ EM’s peer disciplines also described emergency managers as information management experts, providers of logistical support, and as coordinators of government functions and services. Emergency managers were also described by their peers as “gatekeepers” to the National Guard and other levels of government. One emergency manager expressed discomfort with the term “gatekeeper” because it sounded too restrictive.

A public health expert described the role of emergency management as ensuring that first and second tier responders work together effectively. He viewed emergency managers as facilitators responsible for orchestrating the overall response. He also observed that emergency management is a relatively new field compared with the other disciplines.¹⁰⁴ Kirschenbaum echoed his observation. He found that:

Disaster management organizations are a relatively new form of public sector human organization, and only after World War II did these organizations take hold in the public sector. As pressure from consumers for better public services, fiscal concerns, and the threat of terror increase, there is likely to be greater demand on disaster management agencies to improve their effectiveness.¹⁰⁵

Most organizations concurred that the most appropriate role for EM is support and coordination. Only the police and fire disciplines in the Seattle area reported some difficulty keeping EM contained to the support and coordination role. This frustration was best explained by Chief Hepburn from the SFD. He stated that “we have to make sure we are doing our jobs and adequately managing incidents. If we don’t, and voids are

¹⁰² Harold G. Campbell, “Logic Models in Support of Homeland Security Strategy Development,” *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* 2, no. 2 (2005): 2-7.

¹⁰³ Public health, for example, interacts with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Police and fire organizations also communicate on state, regional, and national levels. The coordination function, however, is centralized through the EM function.

¹⁰⁴ James Henriksen, Seattle King County Public Health, in discussion with the author, August, 2005.

¹⁰⁵ Alan Kirschenbaum, “Measuring the Effectiveness of Disaster Management Organizations,” *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 22, no. 1 (2004): 75-76.

created, someone will surely step in and try to do our job for us.” The author’s conclusion is that effective incident management is the best way for other agencies to support EM in their coordination role. A well-managed incident is easier for them to support.

B. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT’S ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Considering the four disciplines examined in this thesis, emergency management’s organizational culture was the most difficult to define. As a discipline, emergency management thrives on networks, coordination, and organizational ties. Emergency managers rely on their overall knowledge of emergency plans, strategies, and systems. Their tradecraft is characterized by weaving response agencies together, matching agency needs with capabilities.¹⁰⁶ The Seattle area has benefited from an emergency management culture of regional cooperation, extending back many years.

Specifically, EMAs in the Seattle area coordinated with each other before they were required by federal guidance to do so. This voluntary commitment to regional cooperation benefited the Seattle area homeland security system through better integration of services, more preparedness activity, and more federal assistance coming to the Seattle area.¹⁰⁷ This early and voluntary effort does not seem to have been prompted by a specific triggering event, but rather by foresight on the part of city, county, and state emergency management officials. Graff described the kinds of people drawn to the emergency management field:

People who are good general managers are drawn to the field and tend to be successful. Thorough knowledge of the areas of impact and expertise covered by the jurisdiction is required. As an emergency manager, the more of a generalist you are, the more effective you will be.

She continued by discussing the origins of regional collaboration in the Seattle area:

Emergency management has no loyalties. It’s our job to collaborate with all entities and that is collectively what defines us. In the King County area, since 1998, there have been voluntary efforts to do many of the

¹⁰⁶ Keith Bea, *The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC): An Overview* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2005), 6.

¹⁰⁷ For example, the Seattle urban area was chosen as the first urban area to receive a Mobile Education Training (MET) seminar. MET seminars are designed to guide top level local officials through scenario-based terrorism training. MET seminars are provided to jurisdictions at no cost by the federal government.

things that we are now mandated to do. Planning assumptions were shared, and that process resulted in a regional disaster plan for public and private organizations. The plan served as a template for collaboration long before there were homeland security dollars to invest in the area.

According to a fire service expert, emergency management has had to fight hard to maintain their existence. Regardless of the apparent need for emergency management services, as evidenced by regularly occurring emergency declarations, the Seattle area has not suffered an abundance of major disasters. Emergency management's constant struggle to justify their existence and maintain their budget may be associated with the "job creep" perceived by the other disciplines.

C. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS SYSTEM

The national preparedness system under development within DHS holds significant implications for the operations and priorities of homeland security officials, emergency managers, and first responders.¹⁰⁸ While six basic documents comprise the national preparedness system, two are examined here because they identify the standard operating procedures that first response agencies will use and situations where they will be necessary: the NIMS/ICS and the NPS.

1. Emergency Management and the NIMS/ICS

The Seattle area emergency management discipline has fully embraced the NIMS/ICS system.¹⁰⁹ They have incorporated it into their plans and policies. Emergency managers heavily rely on it to perform their duties. Seattle area emergency managers rated the NIMS/ICS language and concepts as "extremely useful", describing it as "the single most useful response tool." NIMS' predecessor, the ICS, was accepted by Northwest emergency managers many years ago. The emergency management discipline had been a strong proponent of its adoption and proliferation in the Northwest. Emergency managers

¹⁰⁸ Keith Bea, *The National Preparedness System: Issues in the 109th Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2005), 29.

¹⁰⁹ *City of Seattle National Incident Management System (NIMS) Implementation Plan* (Seattle, WA: City of Seattle, 2005).

were teaching the ICS to school districts, private sector corporations, transportation departments, and utilities long before it was mandated by NIMS.

Emergency managers rely on the NIMS/ICS concepts for everyday activities but they only actually implement the system during EOC activations. This contrasts with firefighters who use the system daily to manage incidents. The majority of emergency management agencies' routine activities are related to planning or logistics. During EOC activations, their use of NIMS/ICS is more classically observable, because their operations are reflective of incident-based ICS. Graff described how emergency managers use NIMS/ICS during an EOC activation:

When we activate our EOC in Seattle, and at many EOCs, you will find something that is reflective of the ICS. There is someone clearly in charge, someone clearly gathering and analyzing information, and someone providing logistical support. On a daily basis, we adhere to the principles of management by objectives, clear communications, and delegation of authority.

While the Seattle area had willingly embraced NIMS/ICS and voluntarily adopted it, other cities are currently being “coerced” into accepting it. Technically, NIMS/ICS adoption is voluntary. However, local governments that fail to adopt NIMS/ICS, formulate an implementation plan, and train their employees disqualify themselves from federal grant consideration. Emergency managers have described the “carrot and stick” approach used by the federal government as effective, primarily because of the financial incentives.

Seattle area emergency managers described their experiences with the federal government requirements to adopt NIMS/ICS as “preaching to the choir.” Other cities, sized comparably to Seattle, have questioned whether the requirements impose costs that outweigh the funding benefits. Seattle and other cities that voluntarily met the requirements before the mandate are thrilled that financial resources now accompany NIMS/ICS. The Seattle area has largely bypassed the burdens of adoption because of their previous proactive efforts. The practical implication for the Seattle area is that they do not have to “start from scratch,” unlike other comparably sized cities.

Seattle area emergency managers also acknowledged that not all cities have been as receptive regarding NIMS/ICS adoption. Some areas are actively resisting.¹¹⁰ While discussing other regions' reluctance, Graff was reminded of a sign posted at a Chicago firehouse. The sign, featured in the Hollywood movie *Backdraft*, read: "150 years of history, unimpeded by progress." Emergency managers from the Northwest, when participating at national group conferences held at the National Fire Academy or the Emergency Management Institute, were alarmed by the attitude of those attending from other regions that have not accepted NIMS/ICS.

2. Emergency Management and the National Planning Scenarios

Emergency managers from the Seattle area described the NPS as realistic, useful, and valuable, but expressed concerns about the associated guidance and funding from the federal government. They described the scenarios as realistic forecasts of potential actual events. Seattle Emergency Management has used the scenarios for planning and training purposes, although not extensively. Seattle Emergency Management reported having used three of the 15 scenarios. Emergency management officials described the NPS as useful because different areas of the country can use them to provide a similar challenge. Whether the planning event is an IED, chemical release, or a biological event, the scenarios are useful because different jurisdictions from across the country can similarly focus on the challenges they present and can share and compare training methods, equipment solutions, and lessons learned. All-hazards planning activities are comparable to shooting at a moving target. The NPS represent a more fixed target.

Concerns about the federal requirements that accompany the scenarios were described by Graff:

The requirements to use the scenarios to qualify for money, or exercise support, or things like that have not been in the least bit useful because local emergency management agencies have had hazard vulnerability analysis in place for decades. Based on federal government guidance, we went into great detail developing the analysis. The guidance dictated that

¹¹⁰ Keith Bea, *Emergency Management Preparedness Standards: Overview and Options for Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2005), 23.

local governments should be spending a proportionate amount of time training, planning, and equipping for things that will have the biggest community impacts.

In Seattle, earthquakes are going to have the biggest impact. Winter storms, in general, are going to happen with the most frequency. And yet, when in the last four years have we had one of those types of exercises? Those types of exercises have been eclipsed by terrorism. Currently, nobody is paying for natural hazard drills. The planning scenarios, in my mind, have squeezed out the ability of local EMAs to focus appropriately. The current focus on terrorism has squeezed out natural hazards. The intended focus is obviously on CBRNE events.

Similar concerns have been voiced by the CRS on a national level:

Some have questioned whether the emphasis by DHS on terrorist attacks indicates that the National Preparedness Goal is disproportionately oriented toward enemy attacks and away from the most frequently occurring catastrophes which are natural disasters. Some might argue that the terrorism focus is a shift from the “all-hazards” approach that has developed for years.¹¹¹

Emergency managers from the Seattle area noted that the scenarios were developed exclusively by federal or “federally-contracted” people.¹¹² The apparent lack of state and local representation was described as “absolutely unbalanced” and reflective of the federal government’s focus on terrorism. An emergency management expert described the reversal in federal strategy regarding preparedness:

For years, we followed the federal guidance philosophy that indicated we should be engaged in “all-hazards” emergency preparedness. Hazards can be subdivided into natural, technological, and man-made. Only one subset of them is terrorism-related events. Logic indicates that looking at all potential hazards and then committing time and resources accordingly is a good investment. Over the last four years, that reasoning has become inverted. Now the federal guidance is to focus on terrorism events, and that focus will provide benefits for all the other things we respond to. That is not the case at all.

The scenarios are not uniformly useful by jurisdiction. The Seattle area has a large marine presence that is not reflected. However, in interviews, when I raised the possibility

¹¹¹ Bea, *The National Preparedness System: Issues in the 109th Congress*, 9.

¹¹² Chief Vickery from the SFD observed that perhaps the most important aspect of this particular issue is that federal agencies set the scope for what the exercises must cover, not the origin of the authors.

of disregarding the NPS and using locally-crafted scenarios, emergency management officials explained why that is neither advisable nor supported. According to Graff:

As a defined urban area, we will not be given the latitude to decide what we want to do. The guidelines affiliated with being an urban area promote a strong focus on terrorism. To some extent, we would disqualify ourselves from tens of millions of dollars in federal assistance if we did that. We need to refocus and find an appropriate balance.

Northwest emergency managers were questioned about the scenarios and collaboration among agencies. The results indicate both positive and negative features. The financial resources that accompanied the scenarios have enhanced collaboration. Agencies seeking financial support have actively participated in planning, developed organizational relationships, and practiced skills. The process has resulted in agencies becoming more collaborative at actual events. On October 15, 2005 multiple agencies including the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and the WSP participated in a training exercise with Seattle fire, police, and EM. The “hands-on” exercise simulated the explosion and collapse of the Alaskan Way viaduct, a major Seattle roadway. Without federal funding, the exercise would not have happened. This particular exercise was conducted as a result of a directive from Seattle Mayor Nickels. In this rare instance, first and second tier responders practiced together. The future challenge will be maintaining the collaborative relationships if the federal funding subsides.

Emergency managers also questioned if the funding associated with the scenarios created collaboration, or instead, created additional competition among agencies. The arrival of the NPS and associated funding has prompted a discussion of where the most threat, risk, and vulnerability exists in the Seattle urban area.

D. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT’S PERCEPTIONS OF COLLABORATION CHALLENGES

The emergency management discipline is closely involved in interagency collaboration because of their overall coordination and support duties. The emergency manager’s goal is to consider all available resources and capabilities that may be compartmentalized by agency. Then they ascertain the best resource combination and apply

it to the problem. Interagency coordination is central to the emergency management function. The emergency manager's job is to consider which agencies should be represented at a particular situation, and which agencies are missing. They seek to determine all possible impacts of a particular operation and get the right agencies involved.

In the past, however, emergency managers have had to referee disputes among agencies. Emergency management experts were not forthcoming in describing collaboration barriers in the Seattle area. This suggests either that collaboration barriers are not a prominent part of the emergency management landscape or that the experts were unwilling to discuss them. Reluctantly, emergency management experts identified information-sharing and interagency communication as barriers to collaboration.

The first barrier identified in the Seattle area was described as an "unwillingness to share information" related to intelligence.¹¹³ Graff described the criticism in greater detail:

There are certain parts of terrorism prevention that have to do with intelligence analysis and that type of thing. There are some necessary constraints over what happens with the information. That could be a barrier if the right thing doesn't happen with the information after its analyzed. Unless the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) shares information at the local level, there isn't much that the City of Seattle can do by itself on certain vulnerabilities. Agencies that deal with intelligence on a daily basis are interested in making sure others with similar qualifications and backgrounds, and the appropriate "need to know," participate in agency to agency sharing.

The place for success is deciding what to do with information once you have gotten it. If typical intelligence gathering, analyzing, and planning agencies would be more willing to bring others in at the appropriate moment, then the criticism "shouldn't we have been at the table in the first place" isn't such a big issue.

Despite the admission of information sharing as a collaboration barrier in the Seattle area, interagency communications from the July 7, 2005 London bombing were offered as an effective example. Graff described Seattle's reaction that day:

Seattle's Chief of Police invited the fire department leadership for an early morning briefing. Three hours later, a conference call with all city

¹¹³ Problems associated with "unity of effort" and intelligence distributions are certainly not limited to the Seattle area. The 9/11 Commission devoted Chapter 13, Section 2 of their report (pages 407-419) to describing similar challenges on a national level. *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 407.

department heads was conducted. The police and fire departments, emergency management, transportation, and the public information office met together in the EOC. As long as those types of actions are happening, I'm not concerned with representation on the analysis part. If the appropriate outcomes are happening, that is what is important.

Although Seattle's reaction to the London bombing on July 7th, 2005 was timely, decisive, and inclusive, it hardly represented an intelligence victory. The author found no evidence that anything discussed in the briefing, or distributed in the memorandum that followed, contained any information not readily available from mainstream news media sources.¹¹⁴

Emergency management officials also described another collaboration barrier. Historically, interagency communications have challenged relationships and decision-making among departments. Graff described the problem as more prevalent in the mid-level ranks:

Let's use the police and fire departments as an example. These are two of the most classic first response agencies. They have learned over the years how to collaborate at the unit level. The department chiefs are clearly committed and philosophically on-board. The gap exists somewhere in between.

This barrier was further explained by agencies' tendency to use a "department-centric" view. While departments might support interagency coordination with written plans and policies, they seldom actively implement it to its full potential. Sometimes, agencies simply forget to reach out and form partnerships with the members of other departments. Apparently, this tendency is not unique to police and fire departments.

E. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Emergency Management System in the Seattle area is robust and has achieved great progress in homeland security preparedness. Its strength is primarily attributable to an early and voluntary commitment to regional cooperation and use of the

¹¹⁴ *Lessons Learned from the London Terror Attacks of July 7, 2005* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Homeland Security, 2005), 1-6.

ICS.¹¹⁵ Planning assumptions shared among governments, effective interagency communications, and supportive and complementary emergency management relationships have resulted in an effective “head-start” over other regions.¹¹⁶ Voluntary adoption and use of the ICS has provided a mechanism to enhance mutual aid agreements. Its use at interagency exercises has also provided preparedness benefits.

Although NIMS/ICS purists still see ample room for improvement in the Northwest, historical comparisons show that the early adoption and use of the system has provided interagency benefits for the region. A Northwest emergency manager commented on the importance of regional cooperation:

On 9/11, our experiences on the west coast reflected the fact that we already had regional partnerships in place, and that we were concerned about being able to respond adequately to any type of event. There were many of us in first response agencies that were horrified to see how police and fire agencies from the same city did not cooperate. There are two images I can never forget. One is the image of the towers themselves falling, and the other is, months after, firefighters trying to work at the rubble pile, and getting arrested by police officers. I can't get that out of my head.

Despite emergency management's strength in the Seattle area, there are specific things local public safety agencies can do to further support it. The following list contains recommendations for strengthening emergency management and cooperative relationships:

- The Seattle area should create a single website where local, regional, and state emergency management plans and electronic resources are located. While several comprehensive websites and plans are available, locating and navigating among them is cumbersome and confusing. Providing easy access and a “single source” for emergency management information will result in “customer service” improvements.
- The Seattle area should seek inclusion and participation, through EM channels, in any future effort to further develop or revise the NPS.
- The Seattle area should develop a long range emergency management strategic plan inclusive of local, regional, state, and national goals and

¹¹⁵ Kathy George, “A Moment with Eric Holdeman, Director of Emergency Management,” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 2005, sec. Local News, 2.

¹¹⁶ Because of early and voluntary commitments to the use of the ICS, cooperative regional planning, and networked relationships, EMAs in the Seattle area have an advantage compared to other urban areas. However, interagency collaboration challenges still exist in the Seattle urban area.

objectives. This plan will assist local governments and the region in capitalizing on future “windows of opportunity.”¹¹⁷

- The Seattle area should conduct training for all homeland security disciplines about the emergency management function and processes. Currently, only a small percentage of homeland security professionals have been provided with the necessary training.
- Seattle area fire service, law enforcement, public health, and utilities agencies should commit additional personnel and resources to the emergency management function. Doing so will strengthen and enhance regional capability by developing interagency partnerships, further each agency’s understanding of other agencies’ specific agency skill sets, and promote a more regional, team approach.¹¹⁸ Additionally, it will increase the likelihood that existing collaborative relationships will survive in the event that federal funding streams subside.

Northwest emergency managers explained that classic emergency management has always been about all-hazards preparedness. The relatively narrow focus on terrorism, advocated recently by the federal government, has provided benefits to the Northwest region at the expense of all-hazards planning. Although terrorism and all-hazards planning are not mutually exclusive, emergency managers reported that the singular focus on terrorism had created an “unbalanced approach.” Northwest natural hazards like earthquakes and weather-related events have been under-represented in preparedness activities and drills. An alternate view, advanced by Chief Vickery from the SFD is “the ‘all-hazards’ argument is frequently touted by EM. The truth is that if you can successfully respond to a terrorist incident, you can successfully respond to all hazards.”

The conflicting guidance sent to localities by the federal government has resulted in confusion at the local level. Should local governments conduct all-hazards vulnerability analysis and then commit their resources accordingly? Or, as current federal guidance suggests, should they prepare for terrorism, hoping that those preparations will benefit their all-hazards capabilities?

Northwest EMAs have capitalized on financial “windows of opportunity” created by DHS and should continue to do so. They should use the opportunities to create all-

¹¹⁷ *Effective Regional Coordination Can Enhance Emergency Preparedness* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2004), 29.

¹¹⁸ William R. Dodge, *Regional Emergency Preparedness Compacts: Safeguarding the Nation’s Communities* (Washington, D.C.: Alliance for Regional Stewardship, 2002), 41.

hazards benefits wherever possible. Re-balancing priorities and paying increased attention to more likely occurring and higher impact events is a more logical and defensible approach.

Preparedness dollars flowing into the Seattle area from federal government funding streams have been earmarked for specific outcomes like terrorism training, first responder equipment purchases, and NIMS/ICS adoption. In their haste to capitalize on federal grants and other financial assistance, local governments and emergency management agencies have learned how expensive free money becomes. The federal grants come with “strings attached”, namely specific performance requirements and deadlines. Local EMAs have been required to shift resources to manage these new opportunities. The physical limitations of staff time and energy and the singular focus on terrorism have resulted in skewed overall strategy. Emergency managers uniformly echoed this concern.¹¹⁹ The best way emergency managers can adapt to the terrorism-heavy focus of the strategy is by including all-hazards components into training exercises, equipment purchases, and plans whenever possible.

¹¹⁹ *DHS’ Efforts to Enhance First Responders’ All-Hazards Capabilities Continue to Evolve* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2005), 9.

V. FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSPECTIVES

The purpose of this chapter is to examine homeland security collaboration from the perspective of local, municipal fire service organizations in the Seattle area. While several different fire department sources were examined, those from the SFD are featured prominently in this chapter. The SFD is the author's sponsoring organization.¹²⁰

This chapter also describes firefighters' homeland security role and their organizational culture. It explains how fire departments have an opportunity to play a pivotal role in the adoption and expansion of the NIMS/ICS across homeland security disciplines. It continues with analysis of the NPS, the TOPOFF 2 exercise, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial summit meeting. Recommendations for the fire service regarding information sharing and intelligence conclude the chapter. This chapter's important conclusions are:

- Because of SFD's comparably long history using the ICS, they are the agency (and discipline) best positioned to assist their peer agencies with NIMS/ICS integration across the urban area. Seattle area firefighters use it daily. It works well for them in the terrorism-response role because it is a natural extension of their current activity. Hazardous materials response with law enforcement agencies serves as an effective example of NIMS/ICS interagency integration.
- However, municipal fire departments, like Seattle's, are inexperienced using NIMS/ICS in its expanded format and they struggle to adequately manage "large-scale" incident logistics. The WTO incident and TOPOFF 2 exercise illustrate this finding. Municipal fire departments are not "tuned" to dealing with long-term incidents. They need training to improve and can only get this through wildland experience. The wildland community has not allowed municipal firefighter's access to the deployments necessary to get credentials.
- Seattle area fire departments have not engaged terrorism prevention in a meaningful way as mandated by federal guidance. Seeking inclusion and partnership with law enforcement (LE) agencies in intelligence and information-sharing operations provides a possible remedy.

¹²⁰ "Seattle Fire Department," in Seattle Fire Department [database online]. Seattle, WA November 17, 2005. Available from <http://www.cityofseattle.net/fire/>. (accessed December 28, 2005) The Seattle Fire Department is nationally recognized for its fire, Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and special operations response capability. Approximately 200 firefighters are on duty each day. They are assigned to 33 fire stations located strategically throughout the city. (Seattle Disaster Readiness and Response Plan, Volume 2, ESF 4 Annex, 3.

- Operating in “unified command” situations is not a particular problem for fire service agencies. Fire service interagency collaboration is effective at top and bottom organizational levels. It is best reinforced through periodic, multi-agency exercises. Exercise realism enhances overall value. Both effective (Olympic Pipeline incident) and ineffective (WTO event response) unified command examples are explored.

A. DEFINING FIREFIGHTERS’ HOMELAND SECURITY ROLE

Fire service SMEs explained that their primary homeland security role is providing initial fire, rescue, hazardous materials, and medical response to homeland security incidents and events. The fire department role descriptions provided to the author by fire service SMEs, their peer disciplines, and guiding policy documents matched closely. Fire service experts also explained that because of their consequence management activities, fire departments are historically and inherently reactionary. The homeland security role of fire service organizations is generally both clearly defined by policy documents and accepted by other disciplines, with one notable exception. Firefighters’ role in the prevention of terrorism incidents is unclear.

Firefighters are most closely associated with the following homeland security activities by their peers:

- Life safety
- Incident stabilization
- Implementing and using the NIMS/ICS
- Fire suppression
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Hazardous materials management, to include mass decontamination and rapid agent detection
- Search and rescue
- Property conservation

The Seattle Disaster Readiness and Response Plan designates the SFD as the lead agency for major fires, hazardous materials incidents, air crashes, floods, structural

collapses, and earthquakes. The SPD is designated as the lead agency for terrorism.¹²¹ The City of Seattle's designation of LE as the lead agency for terrorism events is consistent with federal guidance. The plan's annex (appendix) also includes the fire department's specific responsibilities. They are similar to the above-listed duties, which suggest that firefighters are performing the kinds of duties expected of them by their peers.

Interestingly, firefighters' homeland security role differs little from their daily role. In either case, they are engaged in similar physical activities, such as fire suppression, rescue, or medical aid work. This contrasts with the other disciplines, especially public health officials, whose daily role in the community is quite different from their homeland security role. Chief Tim Kimsey, from the Port of Seattle Police Department (POSPD), explained that firefighters also have an important role in planning, preparing, and coordinating their efforts with other public safety entities. James Henriksen from Seattle King County Public Health described his perception of the fire service homeland security role:

Fire departments provide the initial response to the acute incident. They are first at the site, and responsible for life safety and rescue. They provide an initial assessment of what has happened and they provide the parameters. Framing what has happened is important for public health to prepare their response.

While fire departments' terrorism response role is clear, their role in the prevention of terrorism incidents is ambiguous. Arguably, the fire service is currently engaged in prevention through pre-fire planning, fire and life safety code enforcement, and general occupancy safety programs. The degree to which these kinds of traditional fire prevention activities appreciably impact terrorism prevention is unclear. The National Strategy for Homeland Security lists terrorism prevention as the primary objective for all first responders.¹²² The ODP Prevention and Deterrence Guidelines exist as a template

¹²¹ *Seattle Disaster Readiness & Response Plan* (Seattle, WA: Seattle Police Department, 2003), 56. The Seattle Disaster Readiness and Response Plan lists the following specific responsibilities for the Seattle Fire Department: suppression of structural fires, marine vessel and related facility fires, and chemical and brush fires, fire protection, high angle, confined space, and heavy rescues, hazardous materials releases, mass casualty incidents, terrorist attacks with Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical (NBC) weapons, and emergency medical triage, treatment, and transport. During recovery operations this may include support for fire investigations, decontamination of personnel and equipment.

¹²² *National Strategy for Homeland Security* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2002), 2.

that first response agencies should use to engage in prevention.¹²³ Yet, fire service SMEs reported that fire departments have a minimal role in terrorism prevention. This perception was validated locally and nationally.¹²⁴

Terrorism prevention is a new and unfamiliar concept for the fire service. Terrorism prevention metrics are lacking, and it has not been a funded activity.¹²⁵ Besides the DHS, no government entities have actively encouraged or required fire departments to engage in terrorism prevention activity.

The case for terrorism prevention has been poorly received by the fire service. The logic supporting the argument is that if all terror attacks were preventable then fire department response would be unnecessary. This is precisely the same logic fire departments use to support their traditional fire prevention activities. Yet, when this argument was applied to terrorism prevention, it was rejected by firefighters. Fire service leaders explained that the case for prevention negatively impacts their true mission which is incident response and consequence management. Arguably, preventing all attacks, a wholly worthwhile goal, is impossible. Therefore, firefighters explained, “we had better be prepared to respond.” Another fire service SME, when questioned about the fire department’s role in prevention said, “If we were involved in prevention, we probably wouldn’t want to advertise it. The fire department doesn’t have a big role.” Currently, Seattle area fire departments have made a hollow commitment, at best, towards terrorism prevention. Prevention goals and objectives exist in plans, but have not been implemented in practice. Seattle area municipal fire departments have yet to discover a realistic way to engage in terrorism prevention.

Firefighters’ general homeland security role can be further examined by comparing it with the LE discipline. The homeland security roles of police and fire departments have converged at the edge of the hot zone. This is primarily because police

¹²³ *The Office for Domestic Preparedness Guidelines for Homeland Security: Prevention and Deterrence* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2003), 4.

¹²⁴ Online survey conducted August 1- September 15, 2005 by the author. Survey respondents are participants in the Office for Domestic Preparedness Secure Portal Website, <https://odp.esportals.com>. Approximately sixty homeland security professionals representing thirty states and four disciplines responded. (accessed August 1, 2005)

¹²⁵ Glen Woodbury, “Measuring Prevention,” *Homeland Security Affairs* 1, no. 1 (2005), 4.

officers have had to adapt to performing their duties in hazardous atmospheres. Although each discipline has distinctly different responsibilities, the necessity to perform supportive functions in hazardous atmospheres has clouded the distinction between the two. Role crossover occurs when one agency supports the other. Firefighters, for example, need scene security provided for them while they extract patients. Police bomb technicians need to be decontaminated after they exit hazardous areas. Assistant Chief Bill Hepburn from the SFD explained how this interdependency has impacted the two disciplines' roles:

We need to further clarify what our homeland security roles are for terrorism response. Doing so will make it easier to find gaps and support each other. Is the SPD prepared to work in a hazardous atmosphere? They are farther ahead than most police agencies. Their bomb guys and Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) guys are prepared. They have units that would work well in a hazardous atmosphere. We have to support law enforcement in their duties. We have a role in supporting them with air monitoring and decontamination. We need to better understand their needs in order to support them. We haven't done that in the past.

How do we decide which agency should lead? That is why we need to pound on the unified command concept. We need unified command to help us make those distinctions. Fire and police each have a distinct role. There is some crossover in support. The roles should run concurrently. Having both the police and fire departments at the command post organizing each other's activities is critical.

B. DEFINING THE FIRE SERVICE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Firefighters, as a general rule, enjoy solving problems aggressively. Whether the request for help is a fire, rescue, or medical aid emergency, they are eager to put their skills to work. Each new alarm presents a new opportunity. Typically, firefighters are received warmly and trusted by the public. Firefighters hold the public's trust in the highest regard. Fire departments are tradition-oriented and firefighters are change-resistant. A prevalent distrust of the non-familiar abounds. Also, firefighters have a tendency to view themselves as the owners and keepers of the ICS. Collectively, they are heavily team-oriented. This orientation creates a stigmatizing effect on "freelancing" activities at incident scenes.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ Templeton, "Assessing the Utility of Work Team Theory," 30.

Assistant Chief Hepburn from the SFD described firefighters' affinity for engaging their tasks and their tendency towards overzealousness:

We tend to “laser in” on our job. We do okay with other agencies, but we tend to want to do too much. Let's use a fatality car accident as an example. Our primary job is to extricate and care for the patients. There will be a firefighter there that wants to take all the debris and blood and wash it away, not realizing that it is important evidence, needed by the police for the accident investigation. We need to do a better job of recognizing that there are other agencies that can come and help us out.

Firefighters' peer agencies described fire department culture slightly differently. SMEs from Seattle King County Public Health described the fire service culture as orderly and consistent, hierarchical, and focused on command and control. They described firefighters' work as specific and defined and observed that firefighters are highly trained to mitigate specific hazards. The LE SMEs described firefighters as highly respected and trustworthy. They characterized firefighters as those first responders that engage in life safety and rescue activity. They also described firefighters as the “resident experts” on the ICS.

Contrasting the fire and police cultures helps highlight interesting differences between them and provides clues for improving their future interactions. Unlike firefighters, police officers are not always welcomed by the public; neither do they always have their trust. Police officers typically work solo and are self reliant for street survival. These cultural differences can create incident management implications. For example, eight firefighters working at one incident scene will likely be sharing one operational plan, conversely, eight police officers working at the same scene may be utilizing up to eight different operational plans.¹²⁷

Chief Hepburn related a story he heard from an experienced Public Safety Civil Service employee who had conducted promotional exams for both the Seattle Police and Fire Departments for many years which highlights another nuance between the two cultures:

Before a fire department lieutenants' exam, the firefighter candidates wait solemnly in the lobby. They enter the testing room single file when instructed and sit with a desk spaced between them. They don't touch the test booklets sitting on the desks in front of them because they are

¹²⁷ Sergeant Deanna Nolette, Seattle Police Department, in discussion with the author, November 2005.

instructed not to. By comparison, a police department sergeants' exam is a completely different atmosphere. The police candidates wander all over the place, they sit wherever they want to, and they fidget with the test booklets, tapping their pencils. Police officers and firefighters have different mindsets and outlooks and they exhibit different behaviors. The illustration of differences in behavior between firefighters and police officers is not negative, but merely an observation of the differing mindsets needed for these jobs.

C. FIRE SERVICE PERCEPTIONS OF NIMS/ICS

Seattle area fire departments have integrated NIMS/ICS into their policies, procedures, and plans. Firefighters described NIMS/ICS as an essential tool for managing incidents. Seattle area firefighters rely on NIMS/ICS exclusively to resolve daily emergencies. The fire service leadership described NIMS/ICS as useful, effective, and necessary. Although fire departments reported a long history of extensive internal ICS usage, challenges using it with other disciplines remain. Using NIMS/ICS in its expanded form and using it cooperatively with other agencies in the unified command setting has proven challenging.¹²⁸ Firefighter's daily use of the system tends to be routine and repetitive. The distinction between the system's routine and expanded use is important. Future catastrophic terrorism response will necessitate the system's expanded use by multiple agencies, disciplines, and levels of government.

Chief Hepburn explained why municipal fire departments should practice using NIMS/ICS in its expanded format:

Using NIMS/ICS is our core competency. We know it inside and out. What we need to learn is how to expand it. Fire Departments tend to be incident specific. We suffer from a "room fire mentality" in that regard. The Othello, Washington fire department, for example, knows how to "fill in all the boxes" of the ICS better than we do in Seattle because of their wildland firefighting experience. Municipal fire departments are typically not good at expanding the ICS to its full potential. When we get into multi-operational periods, we fall flat. We don't do logistics well, because often times we don't need to. Requesting a Metro bus to shelter victims is not logistics. Most of the time that is all we need for a successful incident outcome.

¹²⁸ Lt John Kane, *The Incident Command System and the Concept of Unified Command at a Terrorist Incident* (Fairfax, VA: Public Entity Risk Institute, 2005), 2.

Representatives from multiple disciplines explained that Seattle lives in a “charmed world” in terms of NIMS/ICS acceptance. The west coast has an advantage over other regions of the country regarding NIMS/ICS implementation. Because of their long history of wildfire interagency cooperation, west coast departments have more experience using the system. DHS Secretary Chertoff recently described firefighters’ role in the development of the system as critical.¹²⁹ Yet, even in California, where Firescope and ICS originated, it has taken fire departments twenty years to fully embrace the concept.¹³⁰

Currently, Seattle area fire departments are practicing unified command with their homeland security agency partners by periodically drilling, exercising, and participating at actual events. They have experienced both successes and failures as one element of a multi-part response system. Chief Hepburn explained the importance of continued training, practicing, and experience gathering:

Unified command is working. It is used successfully every summer in this country. Wildland firefighting organizations are using it effectively in the federal realm. Local, state, and federal agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), are using it to manage incidents with up to two thousand people lasting two or three weeks. The wildfire model is a proven success. Municipal fire departments don’t have to reinvent the wheel. We really don’t have to think up anything new, we just need to follow their example.

City of Seattle Director of Emergency Management, Barb Graff, offered the 1999 Olympic Pipeline explosion incident as a successful example of unified command at the municipal level.¹³¹ Four agencies combined and formed a unified command in Whatcom County, Washington to manage a major pipeline rupture and subsequent explosion. The Bellingham, Washington Fire Department (BFD), the Whatcom County Office of Emergency Management (OEM), the Washington State DOE, and the Olympic Pipeline

¹²⁹ *Remarks by Secretary Chertoff at the International Association of Fire Chiefs Leadership Summit*, Washington, D.C. (Washington, D.C.: International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2005), 5-6.

¹³⁰ “Firescope,” in California State Fire Service [database online]. Los Angeles, CA Sept 14, 2005. Available from <http://www.firescope.org>. (accessed September 12, 2005) FIRESCOPE was organized after the disastrous 1970 wildland fires in southern California. The goal of this group was to create and implement new applications in fire service management, technology and coordination, with an emphasis on incident command and multi-agency coordination. This dynamic statewide program continues to serve the needs of the California fire service today.

¹³¹ For a detailed account of the Olympic Pipeline Explosion, see the complete accident report compiled by the National Transportation Safety Board. *Pipeline Rupture and Subsequent Fire in Bellingham, Washington June 10, 1999* (Washington, D.C.: National Transportation Safety Board, 2002).

Company© formed a unified command team and successfully managed a regionally significant incident with life safety, fire, and environmental hazards. The unified command team shifted the leadership role among themselves when necessary, and completed their prioritized incident objectives accordingly. Rescue, fire suppression, incident stabilization, and property conservation objectives were addressed successively. Seattle’s annual “Seafair” public celebration also serves as a repeatedly successful example of unified command execution in the urban environment.

Unified command is not always easy, successful, or achievable. The City of Seattle Fire and Police Departments attempted to establish a unified command to manage the city’s July 4, 2005 public celebration. The event consisted of multiple venues, several hundred thousand spectators and spanned eight hours. The SPD established a command post at their Seattle Police Operations Center (SPOC) and not at the incident site. The SPOC is a secure police facility and its choice as a command post location effectively pre-empted the unified participation of other agencies. SPD did invite and accept a SFD liaison inside, but not their command-level representative. The July 4th example highlights a fundamental disagreement about NIMS/ICS that has hampered interagency progress.

Typically in an emergency, the most pressing needs readily lend themselves to the leadership of a particular agency, but not always. Consider a simultaneous hazardous materials release, an active fire, and a bomb threat combined at one incident scene. Which public safety agency should lead? Is the SFD hazardous material team (Unit 77) or the SPD bomb squad more immediately necessary? The unified command concept should be routinely used for deciding these types of issues. Chief Hepburn described how the unified command team structure can assist public safety officials with decision-making during ambiguous situations:

We should look to the unified command team to decide these issues. The appropriate question is “how can the unified command team handle this”, not, “how can my agency handle this?” The only benefit that lead agency status gets you is the ability to name the Operations Section Chief. In a unified command setting, you shouldn’t think in terms of who is in charge, you should think it terms of how the team can work together to mitigate the situation. It has to be a collaborative effort. The authority and responsibility is spread out across a team of people. If the unified

command team finds it advantageous to do so, they can name one person to lead, and then support that designated leader.

D. FIRE SERVICE PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATIONAL PLANNING SCENARIOS

Fire service SMEs described the NPS as realistic and useful tools, but also explained that, because they are new, they have not been used extensively. At the time of this writing, the City of Seattle had collectively exercised three of the fifteen scenarios. The degree of interest and usage was consistent across disciplines. Fire service leaders explained that although they found limited value in using the scenarios as templates, they were more interested in creating their own Seattle-specific scenarios. The SFD has an extensive history with scenario-based training including the TOPOFF 2 exercise, the Marine Terrorism Response (MTR) series, and drills with the University of Washington and other organizations. Fire department officials explained their plans to continue using scenario-based training, but pointed out that the NPS were not readily adaptable to their specific needs. Chief Hepburn personally felt that concentrating on WMD incidents exclusively was a mistake because of their low likelihood of occurrence. Instead, he thought that focusing on locally-developed scenarios was a more effective plan:

Let's get better at the things we will most likely do and our command support skills will grow. We haven't used the NPS extensively yet. Realistically, we will probably do our own planning and training and then look backwards and see if we hit them. I don't see the NPS driving interagency collaboration. They certainly haven't been advertised as the "bible for how to prepare."

E. THE FIRE SERVICE AND HOMELAND SECURITY COLLABORATION

The Seattle Disaster Readiness and Response Plan hints at the degree of interagency cooperation necessary to manage a major terrorism event but it fails to stress the importance of city agencies working together to produce a successful outcome. The plan states that "a Nuclear, Biological, or Chemical (NBC) incident will be an overwhelming event, challenging the resources of the city. Virtually all city agencies will

be involved. Fire, police, health, utilities, educational, communications, and a host of other disciplines will be employed to address the event.”¹³²

Chief A.D. Vickery from the SFD reported that real events, rather than agreements or plans, have enhanced interagency collaboration in the Seattle area. The most useful training and exercise programs have been those that have required the active investment and participation of multiple agencies, including the MTR and Metro Medical Response Team (MMRS) projects.^{133, 134}

SFD officials described their linkage with LE as most successful because of interagency familiarity and a lengthy history of common daily interaction. Alternately, they described their linkage with public health as more challenging because of a lack of shared work history and interagency familiarity. They also described two processes that had enhanced interagency collaboration.

The City of Seattle’s formal NIMS/ICS adoption process and the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funding program were listed as processes that supported collaboration.¹³⁵ Seattle Mayor Greg Nickel’s June, 2005 executive order, formally adopting NIMS/ICS in Seattle, was welcomed by the SFD.¹³⁶ Fire service SMEs expressed hope that the mayor’s support of NIMS/ICS would hasten the system’s adoption and use in the Seattle area. Because of their history and experience with ICS, fire departments should take a leadership role in expanding the system’s use by other disciplines. UASI funding has also enhanced collaboration, particularly with the police department. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) worn and used in hazardous situations by members of both departments has required them to train together and to provide support for each other. Because fire

¹³² *Seattle Disaster Readiness & Response Plan*, 216.

¹³³ “Port of Seattle Marine Terrorism Response Project Web Site,” in Port of Seattle [database online]. Seattle, WA November 17, 2005. Available from <http://www.marineresponse.org>. (accessed July 10, 2005), 1.

¹³⁴ “Metropolitan Medical Response System,” in Department of Homeland Security [database online]. Washington, D.C. August 10, 2005. Available from <http://www.mmrs.fema.gov/Main/Success.aspx>. (accessed September 14, 2005), 1.

¹³⁵ “Securing our Homeland: Protecting Our Urban Areas,” in Department of Homeland Security [database online]. Washington, D.C. August 10, 2005. Available from <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?content=4097>. (Accessed November 7, 2005), 1.

¹³⁶ Gregory J. Nickels, *Executive Order: 02-05 National Incident Management System*, City of Seattle, Office of the Mayor, (Seattle, WA: City of Seattle, 2005), 1.

departments already have air monitoring, decontamination, and hazardous materials infrastructure and systems in place, they also have an opportunity to assist law enforcement as they expand their capabilities in these areas.

Fire service leaders were questioned about where in their organizations (at what organizational levels) collaboration was necessary, unnecessary, and effective. They reported that connectivity between departments and interagency cooperation was strong and effective at top organizational levels. Connectivity at the top organizational level includes: EOC activity, the monthly Disaster Management Committee (DMC) meetings, and frequent informal meetings between public safety executives. They were not concerned about fostering collaboration at the unit level. Chief Hepburn explained why:

Collaboration is occurring at task level, but that is not where it is needed most. Firefighters never turn down help. They will collaborate with anyone that will help them do their jobs. The coordination problems will occur at management level. Having a public health nurse ride around on a fire truck is not going to help; because the fire truck is not going to be her issue. Her issue is going to be the fire battalion chief who will be trying to organize the overall effort.

The fire service experts were also questioned about the necessity of collocating with other disciplines and conducting joint operations. They judged the concepts unnecessary. Notably, all four disciplines examined, in this thesis, offered similar analysis. The author had originally and incorrectly assumed that the disciplines would agree that by increasing contact among agencies at more organizational levels enhanced collaboration would result. The suggestion and recommendation were soundly rejected. A need for daily and formal integration of the homeland security disciplines in the Seattle area was not validated. Instead, each discipline reported that practicing and cooperating around periodic multi-agency exercises was more effective and was a better investment of their time and money.

An alternate and minority position, advocated by the FD and EM disciplines supports the perceived value of collocation. Graff stated:

Personally, I'm a big fan of limited term internships among disciplines. Have a fire captain, police captain, emergency planner, and public health outreach specialist each spend two months in another's domain - and they

will bring home to their agencies a greater understanding and empathy for what will be necessary in the unified command structure on the day of the event.

Chief Vickery from the SFD described a limitation of focusing solely on collaboration at periodic exercises:

I disagree that collocation is “unnecessary.” Working together and understanding our common problems and the different challenges facing other disciplines is a key element of success. We absolutely need to collaborate, collocate, and work together on a daily basis. It is about relationships - and you cannot develop these at periodic multi-agency drills.

Not surprisingly, multi-agency exercises are a cornerstone of the National Preparedness System.¹³⁷ A fire service SME explained why the concept of “joint-ness” has worked well for the military but is perhaps unnecessary in this situation. Several military service branches routinely perform similar tasks. For example, multiple service branches have aircraft. Therefore, it follows that all pilots should communicate. Crossovers that would necessitate that degree of collocation typically do not exist in municipal emergency services.

Fire service leaders from the Seattle area reported encountering the following interagency collaboration barriers:

- Difficult egos
- Ignorance
- Adherence to traditional mindsets
- Competition for money
- A lack of opportunity to field-test plans
- Difficulty funding equipment and training

The collaboration barriers listed above convey perceived difficulties with organizational relationships and funding. Fire service leaders reported that discovering how to implement collaboration is more difficult than deciding what to do. Fire service leaders indicated that the groundwork and processes necessary to further collaboration are in place. They also expressed that collaboration is often a more difficult path, but necessary and worthwhile.

¹³⁷ Bea, *National Preparedness System*, 7.

F. THE SEATTLE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE TOPOFF 2 EXERCISE

TOPOFF 2 was a Congressionally-mandated, national terrorism exercise that was designed to identify vulnerabilities in the nation's domestic incident management capability. At the time, TOPOFF 2 was the largest and most comprehensive terrorism exercise ever conducted in the United States. The exercise scenario, which was played out from May 12-16, 2003, depicted a fictitious, foreign terrorist organization that detonated a simulated Radiological Dispersal Device (RDD) in Seattle.¹³⁸ SFD's TOPOFF 2 experience is an important part of the interagency collaboration story in Seattle because the interaction it required among disciplines and levels of government exposed capability strengths and gaps.¹³⁹ It also presented a rare opportunity for the SFD to exercise their major incident response plans. Chief Hepburn of the SFD summarized the successes, failures, and regrets:

In many ways, our TOPOFF 2 experience was successful. The majority of the exercise went well, and we benefited from the experience. We demonstrated that cooperation with other city departments, state, and federal agencies was achievable. I was in charge of the medical branch. We had four Advanced Life Support (ALS) agencies, three ambulance companies, and multiple hospitals working together. There were also some huge failures, including our own. We had a small, hastily thrown together logistics section. The realization that TOPOFF 2 was a logistically-driven incident escaped us.

For the SFD, the big takeaway lesson was that we need to get better at managing logistics. Our comprehensive advanced planning efforts were sabotaged by poor logistics. I learned that you can have the best strategic and tactical plans in the world, but if the troops are hungry and thirsty, you are an idiot. At TOPOFF 2, we relied on an outside agency to provide food and they didn't come through. A lot of the food we had prearranged went to the media, other observers, and exercise guests. To me, our reliance on the outside agency for food support was an opportunity lost. We need to learn how to do that for ourselves.

¹³⁸ *Top Officials Exercise Series: TOPOFF 2 The After Action Summary Report For Public Release* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Homeland Security, 2003).

¹³⁹ Clark S. Kimerer, *Practice Makes Perfect: Strengthening Homeland Security by Exercising Terrorism Scenarios*, trans. United States House of Representatives, Select Committee on Homeland Security (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2004), 2.

Fire service leaders also explained that interacting with LE officials at the exercise was difficult. The SFD and SPD command posts were at separate locations. Chief Hepburn expressed some regrets:

If we could repeat the exercise, I would like to see one command post where the fire department, police department, and the FBI would be together making joint decisions. I would establish a logistics section that covered the entire incident, not just the fire department. Also, there were problems that may have gone unrecognized. Information flow from the incident scene to the EOC was handled poorly. We need to improve the connectivity between the Seattle EOC, King County EOC, and the Washington state EOC. We need to determine who needs to know what outside the incident perimeter.

G. THE SEATTLE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE WTO

The third WTO ministerial conference was held in Seattle in early December, 1999.¹⁴⁰ The subsequent rioting and civil disturbances, described by the media as “the battle in Seattle,” resulted in a large and reactionary public safety response that lasted approximately a week. During the incident, intense media attention was focused on Seattle as protests gave way to escalating riots. Although the incident involved primarily LE agencies, the SFD provided EMS, extinguished small fires associated with the riots, and provided senior staff to assist with incident management. Because the WTO incident involved an emergency declaration, the activation of local and state emergency plans, and required the coordination of multiple levels of government, it is comparable to a terrorism incident in terms of logistical support. The SFD had “preloaded” the mutual aid request that ultimately allowed the Washington State Fire Mobilization to occur. Regarding the subsequent mobilization, Chief Hepburn related a discovery he made about the value and necessity of logistical support at large incidents:

I had a humbling experience at the WTO. We invoked the Washington State Mobilization Act and requested task forces.¹⁴¹ When you get task forces, you also get a state overhead team. I was the SFD liaison to the team, which was located at Boeing Field. The Incident Commander (IC)

¹⁴⁰ “The Third WTO Ministerial Conference,” New York, NY September 26, 2005. Available from http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/min99_e/min99_e.htm. (accessed October 29, 2005), 1.

¹⁴¹ “Washington Fire Services Resource Mobilization Plan,” in Washington State Patrol [database online]. Olympia, WA August 1, 2005. Available from <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/fire/mobeplan>. (accessed October 9, 2005), 1.

of the state overhead team was the fire chief from Benton County, Washington, Fire District #1. Immediately, I asked myself “what does this guy know, coming into the big city?” I’m glad I didn’t open my mouth, because he knew plenty. He knew the expanded ICS well because he had used it regularly on wildfires.

When WTO escalated, there was a 2 p.m. meeting held to determine how to provide logistical support for the 1,100 cops at the incident. The logistics section chief was from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). We decided to use the Kingdome. We planned to use Kingdome vendor food and cots from the Red Cross. To accomplish this, we had to get permission from the King County Executive, Ron Sims, the Seattle Seahawks football organization, and the National Football League (NFL). The necessary contracts were cut, and by 6:30 p.m. dinner for 1,100 cops was served. The plan was devised and executed in four hours. The task was simple for the Benton County chief because of his operational experience. That’s an example of “big picture logistics.” If we have a major incident, we are going to have to think about things we don’t normally think about, such as housing, showering, and feeding an extraordinarily large number of people.

H. INFORMATION SHARING AND INTELLIGENCE

Since 9/11, terror attacks at home and abroad have forced the realization throughout the first responder community that no single discipline is capable of successfully managing a significant terror attack single handedly. Recent attacks (New York, Madrid, and London) have prompted collective planning and preparedness activities among disciplines that had previously only had acquaintance relationships. This nascent collaboration between disciplines and levels of government, in the name of preparedness, has also highlighted the need for information sharing and a re-examination of intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination.

Chief Tim Kimsey from the POSPD summarized why fire departments should continue developing collaborative relationships with their interagency partners:

Where does fire end and police begin for terrorism response? It is impossible to draw an exact line. There has to be coordination. Before 9/11, most of the thinking was compartmentalized. This is ours, that is yours, and never the two will mix. Today, there is a realization that we will have to work together. Generally speaking, one of the positives that resulted from 9/11 is the realization and understanding that none of us can do it alone and that we have to cooperate.

Seattle area fire departments rely heavily on sharing core information with other public safety agencies to perform their crisis and consequence management duties. Yet, fire department policies do not address intelligence and firefighters have only recently become peripherally involved with it. Fire department operating guidelines lack instructions for discreetly reporting terrorism-related information that they may receive to their LE counterparts. As fire departments seek inclusion in intelligence operations they should be careful not to violate the trust of the public.

The SFD's first experience with collaborative intelligence sharing was in 1999 during the WTO meeting preparations. Currently, one lieutenant performs the intelligence liaison function one-quarter time as a collateral duty. Other than the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that SFD has maintained with the FBI, their intelligence involvement has been minimal. Only one SFD representative has the ability to visit the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) at will, access information, process it for mission relevance, and share it with fire department leadership. Other JTTF representatives, typically from LE agencies, are represented full-time, co-located, and have the opportunity to share information in real time. The SFD's existing arrangement is functional, but not optimal.

Seattle area fire departments should increase their intelligence activity and involvement in two ways. First, they should get more involved to ensure that intelligence reports are received and acted upon, enhancing both their preparedness and consequence management activities. Second, firefighters should capitalize on their existing level of training and community presence. Firefighters have the unique opportunity to discreetly detect and pass along potentially valuable information to LE agencies.

Why should fire departments concern themselves with intelligence operations? Any information received about intended targets, dissemination devices, or methods of attack could result in a valuable head start for planning an effective response. Currently, information flows across pathways built on personal relationships. It should be systemic. Firefighters need generic information, gleaned from intelligence, about the nature of credible threats. They can manage only a limited amount of sensitive information because the logistical infrastructure necessary to responsibly store and utilize classified materials

is not in place. Intelligence must be “sanitized” prior to its dispersal because only a few fire department members have the necessary security clearances. Most of the few existing fire department security clearances were issued to fire department members during their prior military service.

Fire departments must exercise caution as they become more involved with intelligence. Over-sharing intelligence is dangerous because other connected elements of the system could be damaged. Only a few department leaders meet the “need to know” criterion. Also, fire department leaders should recognize that useful intelligence might be obtained from existing relationships not traditionally associated with intelligence. Public health, seismological, and agricultural agencies could provide actionable intelligence to fire department first responders. Materials received and shared department-wide should be considered “Law Enforcement Sensitive” or “For Official Use Only (FOUO).” These materials could be used in an IAP or NIMS/ICS planning document and should be protected.

Following are six recommendations for integrating fire departments with the information sharing and intelligence enterprise:

- Fire departments should review their policies and procedures related to the physical storage, organization, safeguarding, and dissemination of information. They should build on existing best practices related to the storage of patient medical information.
- Fire departments should create, package, and store information so that it is readily sharable with other agencies. Pre-incident surveys, maps, hazardous materials plume-models, and target folders may be valuable to other partner agencies.
- Fire departments should acquire “awareness level” training about the different levels of security attached to information and what responsibilities are inherently included in accessing it.
- Fire departments should define and articulate their information requirements to information sharing partners and intelligence producers. Fire departments should proactively teach their interagency partners what kind of information is valuable to them and why. By clearly articulating their information needs, fire departments can increase the likelihood of receiving useful information. Terrorism intelligence, however, is largely viewed as being outside of the traditional fire service mission.

- Fire departments should investigate the security clearance process and attempt to get more of their members cleared. Collectively, the fire service should also seek representation at the Homeland Security Operations Center (HSOC).¹⁴²
- Fire departments should practice using the intelligence support function included in NIMS/ICS and incorporate it more fully in functional and full scale exercises. Doing so will illuminate the ongoing need fire departments have for pertinent consequence management information.

Fire service officials confirmed that they have experienced difficulties entering the intelligence and information sharing arena. Specifically, they reported difficulty obtaining security clearances for their members and developing trust with intelligence entities. They acknowledged that they lack the ability to store and process any intelligence they might receive. Chief Hepburn explained the current intelligence situation:

LE agencies are going to have to trust the fire department. They are holding all the intelligence cards, and they might give us some cryptic information once in a while. It has to be a better partnership. Also, we need representation at the JTTF. Not full-time, but we do need to be invited in periodically. We don't need to know everything. There are cultural issues hampering that effort. They have only accepted our ex-military people that had existing clearances. The bottom line is that we need to be included.

I. CONCLUSION

This chapter examined firefighters' homeland security role, organizational culture, and collaborative relationships. These combined factors have created both opportunities and challenges for fire departments in the Seattle area homeland security environment. The analysis of firefighters' homeland security role produced three interesting conclusions. First, their homeland security role is a seemingly natural extension of their traditional role. Terrorism incident response is similar to what firefighters have always done. Their current challenge is to respond collectively as part of a complex interrelated system. Second, fire departments have not meaningfully engaged themselves in terrorism prevention, which is a clear national priority. Third, fire service

¹⁴² The Homeland Security Operations Center (HSOC) serves as the nation's nerve center for information sharing and domestic incident management. Its goal is to collect and fuse information from a variety of sources everyday to help deter, detect, and prevent terrorist acts. For more detailed information on the HSOC, see <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?content=3814>. (accessed July 1, 2005), 1.

organizations have an opportunity to support their law enforcement counterparts with information, training, and physical “hot zone” experience.

The fire service organizational culture is distinctly different from the cultures of their peer disciplines. It is characterized by teamwork, problem solving, and public trust. These factors, combined with firefighters’ strong community presence, provide opportunities to advance the public health and law enforcement agendas as well as their own.

Fire service organizations have extensive history and experience with the ICS. This provides them with an opportunity to promote the system’s use across disciplines and ultimately increase the effectiveness of multi-agency incident responses. However, their use of the system is routine and repetitive and has not prepared them well for a major incident. The current challenge facing fire departments is learning to use the system in its expanded format with other jurisdictions, disciplines, and levels of government. Regarding unified command, fire departments should continue to practice with their agency partners to learn more about them and their skill sets, to increase their overall preparedness, and to manage challenging incidents.

Fire department officials reported a continued interest and benefit in conducting scenario-based training. However, the scenarios were criticized by public safety officials as not being specific or adaptable enough to rate more than mild interest. Analysis of fire department collaboration with other disciplines produced three key findings:

- Real events, whether exercises or actual emergencies, involving the active participation of multiple organizations have enhanced collaboration and preparedness. The impact that plans, agreements, and other administrative arrangements have had on collaboration is inconclusive.¹⁴³
- Fire service officials reported that interagency collaboration is effective at both the top and bottom organizational levels. An opportunity exists to improve collaborative relationships at the mid-management level.
- The “interagency experience,” characterized by interaction with disciplines, jurisdictions, and levels of government, including knowledge of their processes, should be created for mid-ranking fire department officers.

The majority of panelists argued that collocation with other disciplines in order to increase contact was unnecessary. Instead, focusing on periodic multi-agency drills and exercise was judged more practical and valuable for preparedness. The minority argued

¹⁴³ *Seattle All-Hazards Mitigation Plan* (Seattle, WA: Seattle Police Department, 2004), 3-15.

the alternate position that collocation was necessary. Other than the EM function, the author discovered no evidence of existing permanent collocation of multiple disciplines in the Seattle urban area at the time of this writing.

Because of their community presence and frequent public interaction, firefighters should develop information sharing and intelligence capabilities. In addition to receiving information that would enhance their response, fire departments can assist law enforcement by discreetly passing on information they might detect or receive from the public. However, the trust of the public is a valuable fire department resource that could be endangered by entering into intelligence operations. Municipal fire departments should proceed with caution.

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VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Routine emergencies, the kind of garden-variety incidents that local public safety agencies have experience with and regularly engage, have not necessarily prepared them to successfully respond to and manage catastrophic terrorism. In most American cities, including Seattle's urban area, homeland security incident response systems are better equipped to handle routinely-occurring emergencies than major terrorist incidents. Public safety resources are rapidly engaged and depleted, even during predictable emergencies, leaving jurisdictions exposed and lacking necessary coverage for resource-intensive terrorism events.

The majority of preparedness activity currently underway in America's fifty urban areas is geared toward terrorism incident response and is federally supported.¹⁴⁴ Will the capabilities resulting from these preparedness activities "fall away" when and if federal assistance ceases? The challenge now facing urban areas is internalizing and benefiting from current collaborative experiences and opportunities while they exist.

Collectively, from the first responder perspective, we are better prepared today than we were on 9/11. But with the absence of any new U.S. terror attacks, compliance with federal homeland security guidance has become a "check the box, hit the feeder bar, and get a pellet" sort of operation.¹⁴⁵ The collective realization that interagency collaboration is a necessary and key component of a lasting solution is apparent. However, the will to follow through by creating true integration of disciplines, amazingly, is absent. The overwhelming sense of urgency, felt so strongly by first responders after 9/11, has receded and been replaced by a more methodical commitment to work together.

Have American cities effectively utilized federal guidance, assistance, and programs to develop and expand lasting capabilities? Are federal homeland security programs and support causing interagency collaboration to flourish in urban areas? Have they stimulated interagency cooperation at the local level? Public safety officials

¹⁴⁴ *Urban Area Security Initiative Seattle-King County Urban Area Strategy: Goals and Objectives*, (Seattle, Washington: King County Metro, 2004), 1-12.

¹⁴⁵ Acting Assistant Chief of Special Operations, SFD, in discussion with the author, March 3, 2005.

representing multiple homeland security disciplines reported that federal guidance has stimulated meaningful collaboration among public safety agencies. Yet they unanimously reported that much work remains to become “fully prepared.” The NPS clearly demonstrate necessary performance requirements. Casualty estimates, ranging from several hundred to several hundred thousand, suggest that terrorism incident performance capabilities should be residing at the top of public safety officials’ agendas.¹⁴⁶

The original and central motivation for this thesis was to address the apparent gap between current and necessary response performance levels. Observing the interaction among key homeland security disciplines in the Seattle urban area has produced valuable insight into the homeland security environment that hopefully will benefit other urban areas.

The remainder of this chapter offers general summary and conclusions. First, it provides an assessment of discipline roles and responsibilities. Next, it summarizes analysis of the NIMS/ICS and the NPS. It continues with a discussion of collaboration successes and challenges among disciplines. Six major findings emerge:¹⁴⁷

- The public health discipline faces the greatest challenges adapting its organizational culture to homeland security requirements.
- The National Planning Scenarios have not been fully embraced due to a perceived lack of realism.
- Emphasis on preparing for catastrophic terrorism may be coming at the price of “all hazards” preparedness for more likely emergencies.
- There is a need for greater clarity about the “lead agency” role.
- The NIMS/ICS has been an effective model where it has been embraced.
- Some of the most challenging collaboration issues concern sharing information and intelligence.

The chapter concludes with positive policy recommendations for public safety officials and decision-makers.

¹⁴⁶ *National Planning Scenarios: Executive Summaries* (Washington, D.C.: Homeland Security Council, 2004).

¹⁴⁷ These conclusions support recent analysis of approximately fifty Mobile Education Team (MET) sessions conducted over a three year period in states, cities, and with issue interest groups. MET seminars are conducted by teams comprised of nationally recognized experts in various areas related to homeland security. Additional information about the METS program can be located at <https://www.chds.us/public.php?met>. Christopher Bellavita, online class forum discussion with the author, January, 2006, <https://www.chds.us/courses/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=1700>. (accessed February, 2006).

A. HOMELAND SECURITY DISCIPLINES

This thesis examines the interaction between four key homeland security disciplines (fire, police, emergency management, and public health) in the Seattle, Washington urban area. The focus of this study was to generate a detailed description of the homeland security environment, to identify challenges facing first response agencies, and to describe the strengths and gaps in their relationships. Based on assessments from key public safety officials, a national survey, and the author's analysis, this thesis describes the urban area homeland security environment and landscape from the inside. It explains where and why agencies have collaborated and offers recommendations detailing how they can be further supported in their cooperative efforts.

The central argument presented here is that increased collaboration between homeland security disciplines, jurisdictions, and levels of government is necessary to meet the performance challenges forecasted by the NPS and other federal guidance. Local interagency cooperation should be further supported in specific ways, by specific key personnel, at specific organizational levels.

The evidence offered to support the claim is the existence of a performance gap between actual and necessary incident response capabilities. This gap, or the difference between the casualty estimates contained in the NPS and performance estimates derived from Seattle area public safety officials' statements, is significant. Urban areas' ability to effectively treat and manage terror victims post-attack is suspect. Even optimistic performance estimates from the Seattle area, which is a well-prepared urban area, fall far short of needed capabilities. The overall outlook is grim and suggests that first response agencies still have much preparedness work left to accomplish in order to adequately protect their communities from catastrophic terrorism. However, positive first steps have resulted in tangible performance benefits. In certain areas, federal guidance and programs have stimulated cooperation among disciplines and enhanced preparedness.

The Seattle urban area, closely examined in this study, has benefited through practice, experience, and compliance with federal programs and guidance. The Seattle area has been recognized as a model for "how to prepare."¹⁴⁸ Their success stems from:

¹⁴⁸ Kathy George, "A Moment with Eric Holdeman, Director of Emergency Management," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 2005, sec. Local News, 1-2.

- An early and voluntary commitment to regional cooperation evidenced by multi-jurisdictional response plans and multi-agency public health structures.
- The existence of mutual aid agreements that are supported by interagency plans.
- A regional acceptance of and experience with the Incident Command System (ICS).
- A cross-discipline commitment to scenario-based training and exercising.

The development and refinement of integrated disaster plans that are increasingly supported by higher levels of government has also aided this effort. City, county, regional, state, and federal plans mesh well. They are supportive of each other and are consistently aimed at similar outcomes.

The Seattle urban area, like others nationally, must meet the basic expectations of the public in their preparedness, response, and recovery activities. Understanding public expectations is an important prerequisite to meeting their needs in the event of an attack.

B. ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOLLOWING AN ATTACK

Public safety officials were asked to describe what the public would identify as the essential responsibilities and functions of local governments in the event of a disaster or major terrorist event.¹⁴⁹ The summary of responses contains three distinct components: providing for basic human needs, providing emergency responses, and providing public information.

The first component addresses the expectation that following an attack, citizens may become dependent on local governments to meet their most basic human needs if they cannot otherwise provide for themselves. These needs include emergency sheltering

¹⁴⁹ This study used two separate groups of respondents. The first group, called the “Delphi Panel,” consisted of subject matter experts representing law enforcement, fire service, emergency management, and public health experts from the Seattle area. The second group consists of homeland security professionals representing the same disciplines, but from thirty states across the country. The national group participated in an electronic survey conducted on the Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP) secure portal website in July-September, 2005. For the purposes of this paper, results are referred to by the author as local, national, or combined.

and the distribution of necessary supplies including food, water, and medicine. The public also expects local governments to coordinate their efforts with humanitarian organizations when necessary.

The second component describes an expectation for coordinated emergency response. The public expects local governments to take immediate coordinated actions to minimize the effects of an attack on individuals. They expect local governments to prevent further damages and to restore government services and commerce as quickly as possible. Citizens expect first response agencies to “put communities back together” after an attack and minimize the impacts of an attack through their actions.

The third component details the immediate need for information by citizens. The public expects local governments, through the media if necessary, to keep them informed as events transpire. Specifically, people need information they can use to help themselves. They want information that addresses their “return to normalcy.” National survey respondents and Delphi panel members both related experiences that confirmed the public attaches a high degree of importance to communication regarding events.

Public safety officials, both locally and nationally, agreed in this assessment of public expectations post-attack. A clear delineation and understanding of homeland security roles among disciplines will be required to meet the public’s expectations.

C. DEFINING HOMELAND SECURITY ROLES

Table 1 lists the primary homeland security roles of each of the four disciplines examined here. At the beginning of this process, I originally concluded that homeland security roles were not clearly delineated and were misunderstood by first responders, resulting in performance problems. At the conclusion of the process, a different picture emerged. With three notable exceptions, results show that homeland security roles are distinctive in purpose, well-understood by public safety officials, and agreed on by service providers and consumers. These findings emerged from the combined results.

First, law enforcement agencies and public health organizations were associated with terrorism prevention, while fire departments and EMAs were not. Fire departments did not report prevention as a homeland security role, nor was it reported for them by

their peers. EMAs reported prevention as a central homeland security role, but this was not validated by the other disciplines who viewed emergency managers primarily as coordinators and supporters of others' activities.

Second, public health and EMAs were associated with emergency public communications. However, fire and police departments were not. Fire and police agencies were more closely associated with the physical aspects of first response than the other disciplines were. This finding is noteworthy because all four disciplines have public communication responsibilities, but only two of them were recognized by the group as having public communication as a central homeland security role.

Third, both fire and police agencies were closely associated with initial incident scene control activity, while public health and EMAs were not. At emergency scenes, during the initial incident phase, fire and police roles are similar and distinguishing distinct features between them is difficult. This finding was self-reported by police and fire departments and validated by their peer agencies. Regarding central homeland security roles, fire departments reported responsibility for *incident stabilization and scene control*, while law enforcement agencies reported responsibility for *scene security and the preservation of order*. Although subtly different, these roles have narrowed, specifically during the initial incident stages. One explanation for this is both disciplines have become more experienced with NIMS/ICS and their roles have become more interdependent in terms of PPE. Preparing for terrorism response has drawn fire and police roles more closely together.

| Primary Homeland Security Roles by Discipline | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| Fire Departments | Law Enforcement Agencies | Public Health Agencies | Emergency Management |
| Fire Suppression | Protection of the Public | Prophylaxis Distribution | Coordination & Support |
| Incident Command System (ICS) (Usage of the) | Prevention (Deterring, planning, preparing) | Prevention (Health prevention programs) | Incident Command System (ICS) (Adoption of the) |
| Emergency Medical Services | Apprehension | Health Monitoring (surveillance) | Planning/Preparing |
| Rescue (Search and Rescue) | Criminal/Terror Investigations | Public Communication: Warning | Public Communication: Information |
| Scene Control: Incident Stabilization | Scene Security: Restoration of Order | Health Investigations | Requesting Help (From other jurisdictions, levels of government) |
| Hazardous Materials/ Rapid Agent Detection | | | Training and Exercising ¹⁵⁰ |

Table 1. Primary Homeland Security Roles:

D. THE NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

HSPD 5 required the Secretary of the DHS to develop and implement a National Response Plan (NRP).¹⁵¹ The NRP, formally released on January 5, 2005 was designed for use by all federal, state, and local response agencies. It provides them with an overarching template for domestic incident response. The NRP also integrates prevention, preparedness, and response guidelines into a single “all-discipline” and “all-hazards” plan.¹⁵² The NIMS

¹⁵⁰ Table 1 lists the primary homeland security roles of the FD, LE, PH, and EM disciplines as reported by homeland security professionals representing the four disciplines. The results in Table 1 are a combination of the Delphi panel members and national survey respondents. Shaded areas indicate instances where similar roles were reported for two disciplines.

¹⁵¹ *Homeland Security Presidential Directive/ HSPD -5* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2003).

¹⁵² *National Response Plan* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2005).

and the ICS language it contains should be serving as a catalyst for interagency cooperation and as the single “sheet of music” that all public safety agencies follow.¹⁵³

It should also be the primary tool that first response agencies use to enact the plan. Simply stated, the meaning of the new federal policy is “many different agencies, one Incident Management System (IMS) and one response plan”. NIMS/ICS is sweeping in its inclusiveness, seemingly simple in its unity of effort, and well supported by government structures and guidance. NIMS/ICS was implemented to assist public safety agencies in achieving preparedness and integration, and to some degree, it has. Yet public safety officials, both locally and nationally, reported that its level of acceptance, its perceived usefulness, and its implementation varied greatly by discipline and region.

1. NIMS: National Analysis

The analysis in this section is based on the national survey and therefore offers more general conclusions than those provided by the Delphi panel members who focused on the Seattle area. Homeland security professionals, representing state and local agencies from multiple disciplines across the country, were questioned about NIMS/ICS and its usefulness, degree of acceptance, and frequency of use.

The national survey respondents described the NIMS/ICS as a highly useful tool that has been formally adopted by state and local governments. Its adoption has been reflected in policies and plans, yet it has only been marginally accepted in certain regions, and is not frequently used.¹⁵⁴ Respondents recognized that its formal adoption would have the effect of forcing all disciplines into a common incident management structure which was described as positive.

Currently, its acceptance varies greatly by region. Greatest along the U.S. west coast, its acceptance and subsequent implementation wanes moving eastward. Survey respondents reported the perception that NIMS/ICS is more appropriate for use at large, multi-agency events and less appropriate for use as an everyday tool.

¹⁵³ *National Incident Management System* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2004).

¹⁵⁴ The distinction between NIMS/ICS adoption, acceptance, and implementation is noteworthy. Adoption means “reflected in plans and policies,” accepted means “believed in” by personnel, and implemented means “actually being used regularly.”

This perception is important for two reasons. First, the scalability and flexibility of NIMS/ICS should allow its equally beneficial use at incidents of all sizes and levels of complexity. Agencies that fail to use it routinely cannot expect to get more value from it without additional practice. The misperception that NIMS/ICS is only useful for large or complex incidents should be addressed through additional training and practice. This will be more challenging for public health agencies to accomplish because it does not fit as well with their routine daily activities. They have fewer opportunities to put the system to practical use.

The reported variance on NIMS/ICS acceptance is subdivided into three categories for closer examination: fully accepted, working towards acceptance, and encountering resistance. Respondents (combined) that reported full acceptance of NIMS/ICS also unanimously reported some degree of pre-existing acceptance or experience using the system which supports the notion that additional practice and experience leads to greater acceptance.

The national survey respondents that reported they are currently working toward acceptance also stated that while they may have conceptually accepted it, their agencies have not yet implemented NIMS/ICS in practice. Specific comments such as “we are getting behind the concept”, “we are 80 percent there”, and “we are working to accept it” typified this group’s responses.

The national survey respondents who reported resistance with NIMS/ICS associated it with overly aggressive implementation timelines, difficulty replacing old habits, and a lack of its implementation as a top priority. The resistance that the respondents encountered, however, was described as passive. Because it is so strongly supported by federal guidance and government structures, there are no other viable alternatives to using NIMS/ICS in the future.

The majority of national survey respondents indicated that although NIMS/ICS is perceived as useful and has been at least conceptually accepted, its frequency of usage remains low. This national finding contrasted with the Delphi panel finding. In the Seattle

area specifically, and the west coast generally, the NIMS/ICS acceptance and usage is much higher because of ties to western wildfire agencies, practical experience, and early and voluntary adoption practices.

2. NIMS: Seattle Area Analysis

The Seattle urban area has recognized, accepted, and formally adopted NIMS/ICS. Therefore, if you believe that “practice makes perfect”, then the Seattle urban area and others that have measurable experience with NIMS/ICS have an effective head start over other urban areas that have not. Americans who watched the hurricane Katrina response unfold on television in late August 2005 would have concluded that the NIMS/ICS had not been accepted, practiced, or implemented by first responders to the degree necessary for use by multiple agencies at major incidents. In the final report on the status of their recommendations, the 9/11 Commission similarly found that “although there is awareness of and some training in the ICS, hurricane Katrina demonstrated the absence of full compliance during a multi-jurisdictional/statewide catastrophe, and its resulting costs.”¹⁵⁵

Although hurricanes and terrorist attacks differ, they are comparable in terms of incident size, impacts, and resource intensiveness. The Katrina example is mentioned not to assign blame, but rather to demonstrate that more teamwork is necessary if agencies from multiple disciplines, jurisdictions, and levels of government plan on using it successfully in the future.

Each of the four Seattle area homeland security disciplines reported unique experiences with, and assessment of, the NIMS/ICS. Fire department personnel were described by their peers as the NIMS/ICS “resident experts” and fire service officials tacitly agreed with that assessment. Of the four disciplines examined, firefighters reported the most practical experience using it. Because of their orientation with western

¹⁵⁵ Thomas H. Kean, *Final Report on 9/11 Commission Recommendations* (Washington, D.C.: 9/11 Public Discourse Project, 2005), 1.

wildfire agencies and their long history with the ICS, fire service organizations claim parentage over the current system. Yet their use of the system, although widespread, tends to be routine and repetitive.¹⁵⁶

Unlike wildfire agencies, municipal fire departments tend to use it roughly the same way each time to manage regularly occurring emergencies. Similar and repetitive types of responses, incident locations, and command structures typify this kind of activity. This is significantly different from the way they would need to implement the system for catastrophic terrorism response. Routine use of NIMS/ICS by municipal fire departments rarely includes multiple disciplines, jurisdictions, or levels of government.

Law enforcement agencies in the Seattle area have also accepted NIMS/ICS, but police officers use of NIMS/ICS has not become instinctive yet, as it has for firefighters. Police officers view NIMS/ICS as a tool for use in major, not minor or routine incidents. Their use of the system does not fit as neatly into their work model as it does for fire departments. Because police officers work in a highly decentralized, mobile, and sometimes solitary environments, NIMS/ICS is not a “natural fit” like it is for firefighters who work in teams or groups of teams at concentrated locations. Police officers associate their use of the NIMS/ICS with incidents where large numbers of officers are grouped together.

Public health agencies have accepted NIMS/ICS and are rapidly gaining experience using it. Public health officials described NIMS/ICS as rarely applicable to their daily duties and associate its use exclusively with incident response. It has not worked as well for them as it has for the uniformed first response agencies. In this regard, NIMS/ICS has been an “uncomfortable fit” for public health agencies. Because of differences in their daily activities, level of training and experience with it, and organizational cultural differences, public health agencies provided distinctly different analysis of NIMS/ICS than their peers did.

The Seattle area emergency management discipline has fully embraced the NIMS/ICS and takes partial credit for its implementation across the local homeland security system. Emergency managers rely on NIMS/ICS concepts to perform their

¹⁵⁶ Municipal fire departments “routine and repetitive” use of NIMS/ICS is further described as typically not involving multiple jurisdictions, disciplines, or levels of government.

routine duties and they actually implement the system during EOC activations. Their peers associated them with the proliferation of the system across disciplines. Emergency managers, similar to firefighters, are uniquely positioned to hasten the implementation of the system because of their practical experience with it and their pre-existing organizational relationships with other agencies. Because emergency managers are viewed by their peers as the “keepers of the plans and protocols” they are positioned to dictate the pace of NIMS/ICS adoption, implementation, and usage system-wide.

E. THE NATIONAL PLANNING SCENARIOS

The NPS were developed by a federal interagency working group and subsequently approved by the Homeland Security Council. These scenarios illustrate the range of threats and hazards facing the nation and outline the potential scope, magnitude, and complexity of these events.¹⁵⁷ The NPS serve as terrorism response performance benchmarks for public safety agencies to achieve together.¹⁵⁸ Analysis of the NPS produced both positive and negative results. The combined results were consistent.

Scenario-based training was validated as an effective and valuable concept for increasing teamwork and enhancing capabilities across disciplines. Yet the NPS themselves were largely dismissed as being a driver of interagency collaboration for three reasons. First, the scenarios are new and have not been fully digested by public safety agencies yet. Second, they were described as unrealistic, especially for smaller and rural areas. Third, according to public safety officials, they do not reflect likely occurrences that urban areas have determined they need to be prepared for. In this regard, they were described as “not scalable or adaptable enough” to meet the specific needs of local governments.

Regarding the scenarios’ realism, a wide range of responses were reported. Respondents agreed that the scenarios are more realistic and useful for urban areas than they are for smaller or rural communities.¹⁵⁹ The majority of respondents described the

¹⁵⁷ “Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program Newsletter, November 2005, Issue 4,” in Office for Domestic Preparedness [database online]. Washington, D.C. November 28, 2005. Available from www.llis.gov. (accessed December 1, 2005), 1.

¹⁵⁸ Barbara Biehn, Office for Domestic Preparedness, Email Communication with the Author, 2005.

¹⁵⁹ Prompting the author to question the applicability of the NPS to rural areas, Chief Hepburn from the SFD asked: is the term “rural terrorism” an oxymoron?

NPS as “unrealistic.” The minority of respondents, who described the scenarios as “realistic,” also stressed the importance of local governments being supportive of national programs and priorities. In this regard, I sensed unwillingness on the participants’ part to “bite the hand that feeds” by being openly critical and therefore jeopardizing future federal financial assistance. Only larger jurisdictions (urban areas) described the NPS as “useful for planning purposes.”

Most respondents also agreed that because the NPS are relatively new, they had only used portions or elements of them. Although they were described as “promising,” the majority of respondents had not yet had time to fully evaluate them. When asked to describe the likelihood that the NPS would drive interagency collaboration, the majority of respondents reported that it was “low” or “unlikely.” Because the respondents did associate real or perceived threats with increased collaboration, the scenarios’ perceived lack of realism could explain this.

Respondents reported that the scenarios’ biggest advantage is their uniformity. Because they provide a relatively fixed target for different disciplines, jurisdictions, and levels of government to aim at, comparisons about planning, preparing, and exercising can be effectively shared.

Criticisms of the NPS were consistent locally and nationally. The three most prominent criticisms were associated with the scenarios’ development, their content, and their lack of realism. Because the NPS were developed exclusively by federal or federally contracted people, they were judged as being “not reflective of local needs.” The lack of local government input in their development was described by public safety officials as “short-sighted.” The scenarios’ content was described as “weighted too heavily towards terrorism.”

Twelve of the total fifteen scenarios are terror-related. Only three of the scenarios, pandemic influenza, hurricane, and earthquake, reflect naturally occurring events.¹⁶⁰ Public health and emergency management representatives strongly suggested that the NPS were developed at the expense of all-hazards planning and preparation. The scenarios, described as “doomsday events” by some public safety officials, were also described as unrealistic and not indicative of hazards facing local communities.

¹⁶⁰ *National Planning Scenarios: Executive Summaries*, 55.

F. COMMITMENT TO INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

Regarding interagency cooperation, respondents were asked about which homeland security goals require most collaboration, how their organization's commitment to collaboration has been reflected, and specifically which plans, programs, or resources had aided them in their efforts. When asked about homeland security goals that could not be achieved alone, public safety officials indicated that the majority of homeland security goals require collaboration between disciplines and cannot be achieved in isolation. During interviews, this line of questioning proved to be of limited value because interagency cooperation is a necessary prerequisite of goal completion. The most frequent responses from the national survey about goals that required collaboration were interoperability, bio-terror response, events involving explosives, cyber-events, managing elements of the private sector, and agricultural events.

The commitment, made by public safety agencies towards interagency cooperation, is typically reflected in written plans and agreements, reinforced through regular meetings, and practiced during exercises and actual emergencies. The specific language most frequently can be located in emergency operations manuals, mutual aid agreements, and individual agency policies. Respondents unanimously agreed and emphasized that commitment defined and demonstrated through participation in training and exercise events was equally as important as the existence of written agreements. Written commitments to cooperate were described as "an important prerequisite" to meaningful cooperation.

Delphi panel members from the Seattle area reported three positive features related to interagency cooperation. The first was the formal commitment to cooperate detailed in the Seattle Disaster Readiness and Response Plan, which is supported by monthly meetings of the DMC. The DMC, chaired by the Director of Emergency Management, has representation from all the ESFs and is the forum where senior leaders focus on interagency communication, goal setting, and plan development.¹⁶¹

The second positive feature was the mayor's formal adoption of the NIMS/ICS. The formal adoption has enhanced collaboration in the Seattle area because it has

¹⁶¹ More complete information about Emergency Support Functions (ESF) can be located at <http://www.fema.gov/about/esf.shtm> (accessed December 1, 2005).

removed alternatives, established a timeline for implementation, and has effectively enforced compliance with the NIMS implementation plan.¹⁶²

The third reported benefit, UASI funding, has also enhanced collaboration in the Seattle area primarily through support of multi-agency exercises, equipment purchases, and associated training.¹⁶³ The most frequently occurring training sessions, called Tabletop Exercises (TTX), have resulted in meaningful interagency networking. TTX are moderate in cost, easy to plan, and create opportunities for first response agencies to “talk through” potential terrorism situations with each other. Alternately, Full Scale Exercises (FSE), where first responders actually engage mock scenarios together, provides the most benefit. However, they are also more expensive, resource intensive, and time consuming to produce. Therefore, they occur with less frequency.

G. COLLABORATION BARRIERS

Table 2 lists the collaboration barriers reported by the Delphi panel members and the national survey respondents. The shaded areas in Table 2 show instances where similar collaboration barriers were reported both locally and nationally, suggestive of the pervasive nature of these problems.

The national survey respondents were more forthcoming with descriptive comments about collaboration barriers than the Delphi panel members. I attribute this to two causes: First, the homeland security system in the Seattle urban area is functioning reasonably well. Second, the Delphi panel members were hesitant to discuss sensitive issues that would cast their peers in negative terms. However, when pressed, the Delphi panel members explained how cooperation challenges and collaboration barriers have impacted their progress in the Seattle area. Notably, similar barriers were reported both locally and nationally. They were:

¹⁶² Nickels, *Executive Order: 02-05 National Incident Management System*, 1.

¹⁶³ “Fact Sheet: Department of Homeland Security Funding for States and Cities,” in Department of Homeland Security [database online]. Washington, D.C. December 8, 2005. Available from <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?content=755>. (accessed December 8, 2005), 1.

- Information-sharing challenges, both technical and non-technical. The technical challenges were related to interoperability and data transfer systems and the non-technical challenges were related to terrorism intelligence and the transfer of protected information such as threats, vulnerabilities, and tips and leads.
- Financial challenges. These challenges were related to competition among agencies for funding (resource allocation), not having enough flexibility to use available funding in the intended manner, and specifically the inability to use funds for Full Time Equivalency (FTE) personnel costs when necessary. Also, the biggest challenge of UASI funded equipment purchases and training programs is the on-going maintenance cost that UASI does not fund. UASI funds the “up-front” initial purchase costs and local jurisdictions pay the “downstream” costs. These subsequently “hidden” costs are problematic for local jurisdictions.
- Meaningful participation challenges. Public safety agencies reported difficulty obtaining the meaningful participation of other agencies they deemed necessary and valuable to the process of preparedness. The mere presence and participation by agencies in the preparedness process, while important, is not deemed valuable without concurrent commitment, investment, and teamwork by the agencies’ representatives.¹⁶⁴ Agencies that do participate, but simply by “going through the motions,” are counterproductive to the process.

¹⁶⁴ C. Bruner, L. G. Kunesh, and R. A. Knuth, *What Does Research say About Interagency Collaboration?* (Oak Brook, Illinois: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1992), 7.

| Reported Homeland Security Interagency Collaboration Challenges | |
|--|---|
| <i>Seattle Urban Area Results:</i> Delphi Panel | <i>National Results:</i> ODP Secure Portal Survey |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incompatible Technological Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interoperability |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parochialism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disagreement about “Discipline-Specific” Agendas |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Jurisdictional Creep” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Meaningful Agency Participation: Long-Term Planning |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition for Financial Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to Use Grant Funds Effectively for their Intended Purposes |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwillingness to Share Information Related to Intelligence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Trust and Recognition Related to Security Clearances |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult Interagency Communications: Mid-rank level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City-County “Turf Wars” and Associated Disagreements |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult Egos | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Necessary Training |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adherence to Traditional Mindset: Failure to Embrace New Concepts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived “Information Withholding” and “Muscle-Flexing” by Federal Agencies |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Opportunity to “Field-Test” Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Proper Equipment |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty Funding Necessary Training and Equipment Purchases | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too Busy with Routine Business |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Meaningful Agency Participation: Drills, Exercises, and Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Meaningful Agency Participation: Drills, Exercises, and Training Sessions |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political and Union Issues |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Perception “It Will Never Happen Here.” |

Table 2. Interagency Collaboration Challenges

H. STRATEGIC PLANNING

A strategic goal of every urban area should be to improve and enhance their ability to respond to terrorism incidents. In order to accomplish this, agencies must function as a complex and interconnected system that requires cooperation from related homeland security disciplines, public safety agencies, jurisdictions, and levels of government. Developing, reaching agreement on, and implementing strategic plans to achieve this goal will be critical to the long term success of urban areas. The Delphi panel members and national survey respondents were asked how their interagency cooperation goals have been reflected in long term strategic plans.

Most agencies reported that their commitments are reflected in MOU, strategic planning documents, interagency agreements, and mutual aid agreements. Regional councils, Urban Area Working Groups (UAWG), and other types of regional government coalitions were reported as organizations that have developed these plans. A state emergency manager explained in the national survey that agreements often exist more as a continuation of past practices than formalized agreements:

Interagency cooperation goals are reflected in the speculative realm. However, I have seen very few written strategic plans. There are verbal goals toward an end. However, most of the folks I deal with do the least amount required due to time constraints and personnel issues. If agencies do complete a strategic plan, it is often bare bones and reflective of the reason for the plan rather than a true reflection of future goals. Specifically, I have seen very few written interagency agreements among fire departments. Most are based on past protocol and sealed with a handshake.

Urban areas are required to maintain updated strategic plans by the ODP. This component of the federal guidance is a requirement that has benefited urban areas more than smaller or rural areas because they have been required to develop, update, and implement these longer-term strategies, whereas smaller or rural jurisdictions have not. Urban area strategies, along with the oversight provided by the ODP, ensure that the urban areas' goals are supportive of national strategies, inclusive of multiple disciplines, and reflect all necessary priorities.

I. INTEGRATING DISCIPLINES

Integrating key homeland security disciplines for the purpose of developing greater terrorism response capability has been a common goal of all urban areas and has been supported by national programs, guidance, and strategies since 9/11. Nationally and locally, public safety experts representing multiple disciplines were asked the following questions: What mechanisms are available for integrating disciplines on a day to day basis? And, is there a need to do so?

The results were consistent and opposite of those I had originally predicted. The original prediction was that increasing the contact among different agencies would result in more collaboration and increased performance. Respondents stated that collocation was unnecessary because each discipline has a unique mission and because focusing exclusively on terrorism to the exclusion of other priorities would be a mistake. The majority of respondents, both locally and nationally, agreed with that assessment.

Most respondents stated that engaging in periodic training and exercising is the best way to integrate disciplines. Opening training sessions to those from other disciplines and inviting them to participate is an easy first step. Organizational leaders and high level supervisors were described as more integrated with other disciplines than their counterparts at middle and lower organizational levels.

The Delphi panel members reported that collaboration is effective at task level. Police officers, firefighters, public health workers, and emergency managers work well together. Also, connectivity among public safety executives at the highest organizational levels was described as “functional and strong.” Opportunity for further integration of homeland security disciplines exists at mid-organizational levels. This level is where the need for greater understanding of other agencies’ skill sets, capabilities, needs, and limitations exists. The “interagency experience” has been effectively created and implemented for only a select few representatives from each agency and discipline, typically at or near the top level. Financial, geographical, and labor issues serve as functional “disincentives” that prevent agencies from pushing the interagency experience down from upper to mid-levels.

A local emergency manager from the Midwest (national survey) explained the importance of integration:

We need more interaction among the disciplines for integrated responses. No one works or succeeds alone. If we do not train for routine incidents together, then we are seldom able to function at disasters together. It is imperative that a grass roots movement take place to foster “face to face” communication between organizations including both leaders and players. A cup of coffee and informal meetings are the best mechanisms available. Leaders should be required to meet, share information, and work together.

J. SEATTLE AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

The Seattle urban area is functioning reasonably well in all areas of homeland security preparedness. However, concerns were reported about clarifying lead agency role, getting funding to the right places, and sharing intelligence. Following are ten recommendations that Seattle area public safety agencies should follow to increase cooperation, preparedness, and response capability throughout the Seattle urban area:

- *Meet and Exceed Public Expectations:* Public safety agencies should demonstrate that they are protecting communities and concurrently use the media forum to challenge citizens to increase their own personal levels of preparedness. The public expects local public safety agencies, governments, and homeland security disciplines to demonstrate teamwork, commitment, and unity of effort in their preparedness and response activities. Widely-reported public safety successes can be used to motivate the public to increase their personal preparedness. A well-prepared public will be easier to manage in crisis.
- *Know your Teammates:* The organizational cultures of fire departments, police departments, EMAs, and public health organizations are distinctly different. Public safety agencies should continue to learn more about each other by increasing contact at training sessions, drills, and exercises. Learning about the other agencies’ skills, needs, and limitations is of particular importance.
- *Conduct Realistic Exercises Frequently:* Formal interagency cooperation goals reflected in plans, strategies, and agreements have supported interagency cooperation, but are best viewed as prerequisites to meaningful cooperation. Integrating the disciplines around periodic, multi-agency exercises has worked best to increase performance capabilities. Realistic exercises requiring the active investment and participation of multiple agencies have proven most valuable and the best investment of scarce resources.

- Clarify the Meaning of “Lead Agency” Status: Public safety agencies should work together to clarify the specific role and duties associated with “lead agency” status. Specifically, all agencies would benefit from having tangible expectations associated with this term. Health-related incidents would be a good starting place, because public health agencies are currently the least integrated in emergency response procedures.
- Find an Appropriate Preparedness Balance: Local public safety officials should be wary of the terrorism-heavy focus and content of current federal guidance. Existing vulnerability analysis, that suggests naturally occurring incidents will occur more frequently than terrorist incidents, should be heeded. Wherever possible, training exercises that provide dual benefits (terrorism and all-hazards response) should be conducted. This can be accomplished by focusing on activities and practicing skills that can be used at both terrorism and all-hazards incidents.
- Conduct Joint Preparedness Activities: The permanent collocation of public safety agencies was rejected as unnecessary because a “continual focus” on terrorism is unwarranted. However, EMAs have a strategic advantage because their pre-existing organizational connections with all departments, neighboring jurisdictions, and levels of government uniquely qualify them to impact all connected elements. EM is a suitable location to increase collaboration through collocation. Fire, police, and public health agencies should increase their commitment to the EM function.
- Embrace NIMS/ICS: The Seattle area homeland security system has implemented and benefited from the NIMS/ICS. Their early commitment to its use and experience with it has increased teamwork and improved their response capability. Yet different disciplines reported varying degrees of success with it. Public safety agencies should promote NIMS/ICS use at drills, exercises, and real emergencies. Specifically, public safety agencies should practice using NIMS/ICS in its expanded format, where multiple agencies, jurisdictions, and levels of government will need to use it together.¹⁶⁵
- Adapt the National Planning Scenarios to Better Meet Local Needs: The NPS provide limited value to the Seattle urban area because they represent catastrophic incidents that were described as unlikely, unrealistic, and not reflective of local needs. However, they are beneficial in their consistency across jurisdictions, and therefore, provide an opportunity to share progress, challenges, and lessons learned with other jurisdictions. They are also supported federally. The Seattle area should engage the scenarios, choosing and engaging the most applicable ones first.
- Include Others in Intelligence and Information-Sharing Operations: LE agencies should include the other disciplines in their intelligence and information sharing operations to the degree practicable. Because fire

¹⁶⁵ Kane, *Incident Command System*, 5.

departments, public health agencies, and EMAs are virtually “brand new” to intelligence operations, their introduction and inclusion will have to follow a carefully measured pace. However, it is an activity worth undertaking. Intelligence fusion centers that have incorporated multiple disciplines exist as templates, and they welcome visitors. Law enforcement agencies should train their peer disciplines about all aspects of intelligence operations and include them in a meaningful way.¹⁶⁶ Because the other disciplines are already connected in their communities, connected to LE agencies through existing systems, and also dependent on effective information sharing for incident outcomes, they have a vested interest. With proper training, they can provide valuable information to LE agencies. For LE agencies, including others in intelligence and information-sharing can be the vehicle that binds them closer to their peers.

- *Implement the Urban Area Strategy*: Public safety agencies in the Seattle area are lacking integrated long term strategic plans. The Seattle area has benefited from the oversight, guidance, and funding provided by the federal government in the development of their urban area strategy, which has filled the void. Key public safety officials, from local governments, have supervised its growth and development. It is inclusive of all disciplines and contains measurable goals that reflect local and national priorities. Public safety agencies should continue to support the further development and implementation of the plan.

¹⁶⁶ Shawn D. Smith, *Inter-Agency Collaboration and Consequence Management: An All-Hazard Approach to Emergency Incident Response* (Fairfax, Virginia: Public Entity Risk Institute, 2004), 3.

APPENDIX

A. DELPHI PANEL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Are there historical lessons to be learned from the relationships between disciplines in the Seattle area? If so, what are they?
2. How did the 9/11 attacks impact the need for cooperation between homeland security disciplines in the Seattle area?
3. How would specific warning information or intelligence regarding the possibility of an attack be shared among the key disciplines in the Seattle area?
4. What role should local elected officials play during the management of a terrorism incident in our area?
5. What are some of the unique policy issues specific to your discipline that will either help or hinder effective interagency cooperation in the future?
6. List a short phrase that describes the primary homeland security role of each of the following:
 - Local fire department
 - Local municipal law enforcement
 - Emergency management
 - Public health
7. What is the primary responsibility of each of the following with regard to homeland security in the Seattle area?
 - Local fire department
 - Local municipal law enforcement
 - Emergency management
 - Public health
8. Regarding the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS) language it contains, please comment on:
 - Your agency's perception of their usefulness.
 - The extent to which they have been accepted by your discipline.
 - The extent to which they are relied on for everyday activities.

- The extent that they have been incorporated into the policies, procedures, and plans or your agency.
9. Regarding the National Planning Scenarios, please comment on:
 - The degree to which you believe them to be realistic forecasts of potential actual events.
 - The degree to which they have been used them for planning and training purposes.
 - The degree to which you think they represent a useful planning tool.
 10. An “*Incident of National Significance*” is an actual or perceived high impact event. If one occurred in the Seattle area, how prepared do you think we are as a region to use the NIMS to manage the incident? What are the challenges? How would personnel accountability from various agencies be accomplished?
 11. With regard to terrorism and preparedness response, what barriers to collaboration and cooperation exist?
 12. Are any processes in place to further develop and refine existing collaborative efforts? If so, what are they?
Which discipline do you collaborate most successfully with?
 13. Are there homeland security goals that your organization cannot achieve alone, that can only be achieved by collaborating with other disciplines? If so, what are they?
 14. How is the commitment to interagency cooperation reflected in your discipline’s local plans and policies?
 15. How are interagency cooperation goals reflected in Seattle area long term strategic plans?
 16. What mechanisms are available for integrating disciplines on a “day to day” basis for training purposes?
 17. How do resource limitations affect your organization’s ability to collaborate with the other disciplines?
 18. To what degree does competition for scarce resources hinder collaboration?
 19. How might closer professional relationships between the disciplines help improve outcomes for terror victims?

20. How ready is your organization to enter into new interagency agreements and relationships? How would you prove or demonstrate that readiness?
21. What would your agency be willing to pay in terms of tangible resources and loss of unilateral control to achieve a higher degree of preparedness?
22. What are the strategic considerations for pre-staging of resources and capabilities in response to a credible, specific threat?

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