

## RELATED TERMS

- Tabletop Exercise
- Train Derailment
- Hazardous Areas



## Lessons Learned Information Sharing

www.LLIS.gov

# LESSON LEARNED

## PRIMARY DISCIPLINES

- Emergency Management
- Search and Rescue
- Fire

## Emergency Operations Centers: Primary and Secondary Locations

### SUMMARY

Following a large-scale incident, the primary Emergency Operations Center (EOC) may be unusable because of its proximity to the incident scene. Emergency Disaster Plans (EDP) should pre-designate a secondary EOC so that response personnel can quickly establish operations in an alternate, lower-risk area. Emergency management personnel should be aware of the precise locations of both EOCs.

### DESCRIPTION

On January 21, 2004, the city of Escalon in San Joaquin County, California conducted a tabletop exercise that simulated a terrorist attack causing the derailment and explosion of a train loaded with propane gas. The exercise's objective was to test the adequacy of the city's EDP. In response to the incident, the city's director of emergency services requested the activation of the EOC.

Emergency management personnel did not know the designated location of the primary EOC and wasted valuable time reviewing the EDP for guidance. Upon pinpointing the primary EOC location, they realized that the site was hazardous and unusable due to its close proximity to the terrorist incident. Further, the EDP had not pre-designated a secondary EOC location. Response personnel were forced to spend additional time finding a place for an alternate EOC. Following the tabletop exercise, emergency management personnel recommended that the EDP clearly specify primary and alternate EOC locations and that such information be made known to all key response personnel.

EDPs should pre-designate primary and secondary EOC locations so that an alternate EOC can be established quickly if the main location is in a hazardous area. Emergency management personnel should be informed ahead of time of the precise location of both the primary and secondary EOC.

### CITATION

The City of Escalon, San Joaquin County, CA. *After-Action Report (AAR): Train Derailment Tabletop Exercise*. 21 Jan 2004.

### DISCLAIMER

*Lessons Learned Information Sharing (LLIS.gov)* is the US Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency's national online network of lessons learned, best practices, and innovative ideas for the emergency response and homeland security communities. The Web site and its contents are provided for informational purposes only, without warranty or guarantee of any kind, and do not represent the official

positions of the US Department of Homeland Security. For more information on *LLIS.gov*, please email [Feedback@llis.dhs.gov](mailto:Feedback@llis.dhs.gov) or visit [www.llis.gov](http://www.llis.gov).