



FEMA

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## LESSON LEARNED

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### Emergency Management: Establishing Emergency Operations Center Management Teams

#### SUMMARY

Emergency operations centers (EOC) should consider establishing defined management teams that train and exercise together. These teams should consist of emergency support function (ESF) representatives and should participate in quarterly training and semi-annual exercises.

#### DESCRIPTION

The US Northern Command (NORTHCOM) and Joint Forces Command co-sponsored the Ardent Sentry exercise from May 7 to 18, 2007, in the US and Canada. Ardent Sentry consisted of five exercise components: the National Guard full-scale exercise (FSE) Vigilant Guard, the Northern Edge FSE in Canada, the Hoosier Sentry combined functional and full-scale exercise in Indiana, the Alaska Shield combined functional and full-scale exercise in Alaska, and the HURREX tabletop exercise in Rhode Island. The main goal of Ardent Sentry was to demonstrate multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional unity of effort in support of a civilian-led response to a national crisis. Ardent Sentry simulated a Category 3 hurricane making landfall in New England, a nuclear detonation in Indiana, and several terrorist attacks on critical infrastructure in Alaska and waters along the western US-Canadian border. Ardent Sentry required the coordination of over 3,000 federal, state, and local responders and more than 2,000 active-duty personnel.

Canada served as a full partner in the Ardent Sentry exercise through the coordination of Canada Command and US military resources. Canada Command oversees the operations of Canadian forces and coordinates with NORTHCOM.

NORTHCOM, the National Guard, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, the Indiana National Guard, and the Indianapolis-Marion County Emergency Management Division co-sponsored the Hoosier Sentry combined functional and full-scale exercise from May 10 to 13, 2007, at 6 locations in south-central Indiana. Hoosier Sentry simulated the detonation of a 10-kiloton nuclear device by a terrorist cell in northeastern Indianapolis. Exercise objectives focused on integrating National Guard and active-duty military resources with emergency response operations. The combined exercise also evaluated federal and state abilities to support local responders during a weapon of mass destruction/hazardous materials incident. The exercise required emergency response and military teams to provide sheltering operations for over 77,000 notional civilians and to treat over 500 role-playing victims. Over 100 federal, state, and local agencies and 1,000 response personnel participated in the Hoosier Sentry exercise.

Prior to the FSE, EOC personnel had received training on reporting procedures in the event of an activation, including parking, gaining entry, and checking in to the EOC. This enabled the EOC to initiate operations promptly during the FSE. The EOC quickly staffed the ESFs, which enabled personnel to begin capturing vital information regarding the incident. EOC

staff members knew who to contact to fill additional ESF positions as the need arose. The FSE after-action report (AAR) notes that these trained and prepared personnel allowed the EOC to activate successfully, to expand rapidly, and to operate in the dynamic environment of the exercise. The AAR recommends that the EOC “should take this level of efficiency to a new level by establishing defined EOC management teams that train and exercise together.”

EOCs should consider establishing defined EOC management teams that train and exercise together. These teams should consist of ESF representatives and should participate in quarterly training and semi-annual exercises.

#### **CITATION**

Indianapolis - Marion County Emergency Management Division. *2007 Ardent Sentry, Indiana Homeland Security District 5 After Action Report*. 16 Aug 2007.

<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=26593>

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