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LESSON LEARNED

Emergency Operations Center Management: Providing Training on Section Roles and Operations

SUMMARY

Emergency operations center (EOC) managers should consider incorporating information about section roles and responsibilities into training and exercises. This can help ensure that section staff members are aware of the response activities of other sections, thus facilitating the development of a common operating picture within the EOC.

DESCRIPTION

The California Governor's Office of Homeland Security Exercise Branch conducted the California Golden Guardian 2010 Statewide Full-Scale Exercise (FSE) in May 2010. This FSE was part of the statewide homeland security and disaster preparedness exercise in the Governor's annual Golden Guardian Exercise Series. The exercise was conducted at 7 different venues and involved more than 3,000 federal, state, local, and private sector participants. The FSE scenario included terrorist attacks in the ports of San Diego, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Oakland, Redwood City, and Sacramento as well as at the California State University San Marcos campus.

The Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff, Emergency Services Division, Office of Emergency Services, sponsored and conducted the Contra Costa County Golden Guardian 2010 tabletop exercise (TTX) on May 17, 2010. Participants included 67 representatives from Contra Costa County; police departments from the cities of Danville, Orinda, Richmond, and Walnut Creek; the California Emergency Management Agency; and the Air Force, Army, and Coast Guard. The TTX tested public information dissemination procedures, EOC roles and activation procedures, and maritime tactical operations. One of the primary activities of the TTX was to ensure that exercise participants continued sectional training to better understand the roles of other participants during an incident.

Contra Costa County, California, is located in the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Area. The county has a population of approximately 1.05 million, the ninth largest population in the state.

The exercise scenario simulated three different terrorist incidents throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. During the first incident, port security officers discovered improvised explosive devices in a utility van near the port entrance. The second event simulated a vessel overloaded with explosives sinking near the Port of Richmond. The last attack simulated a vessel-borne improvised explosive device explosion that caused a shipboard fire and an oil spill at one of the port terminals.

Throughout the TTX, the facilitator had the staff of each EOC section describe their section's activities. The staff members described the processes and support operations that their section would be undertaking as a result of operations in the field or within the EOC. The

after-action report observes that having staff members from each section explain their activities throughout the TTX allowed the other sections to become knowledgeable about the entirety of EOC operations as well as their contribution to the activation. The AAR notes that many participants found this to be a very beneficial part of the TTX.

EOC managers should consider incorporating information about section roles and responsibilities into training and exercises. This can help ensure that section staff members are aware of the response activities of other sections, thus facilitating the development of a common operating picture within the EOC.

CITATION

Contra Costa County, Office of the Sheriff, Emergency Services Division. *Contra Costa County Golden Guardian 2010 After Action Report/Improvement Plan*. 21 May 2010.
<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=45191>

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