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LESSON LEARNED

Special Event Planning: Using Existing Collaborative Tools to Coordinate Regional Planning Efforts

SUMMARY

Emergency managers within a region should identify opportunities for using collaborative tools to share calendars, taskings, documents, and plans. This will enable regional partners to better coordinate their planning efforts for special events.

DESCRIPTION

After the historic 2008 election of Barack Obama as the first African-American president, planners anticipated that the 56th Presidential Inauguration would draw record crowds to the District of Columbia for the 3-day program of events. Early projections of Inauguration Day attendees ranged from 2 million to as high as 5 million. The extraordinary scope of the Inauguration required multiple agencies and jurisdictions to coordinate their planning, response, and support efforts. The Department of Homeland Security designated the Inauguration as a National Special Security Event (NSSE), which made the US Secret Service the lead federal agency for planning, coordinating, and implementing security operations. The District's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency served as the lead District agency for planning and coordinating District resources for the Inauguration.

Recent NSSEs include President Gerald Ford's state funeral in 2007 and the 2008 Republican and Democratic national conventions.

Planners across the National Capital Region (NCR) recognized that the entire region would have to contribute more heavily to this Inauguration than had been necessary for previous NSSEs. Consequently, emergency managers for the various NCR jurisdictions, agencies, and localities collaborated to coordinate their operations. They utilized committees to inform each other of their planning and preparedness activities prior to the Inauguration.

For more information on coordination among NCR partners during the Inauguration, please refer to the *Lessons Learned Information Sharing Lesson Learned*, [Emergency Operations Centers: Establishing Standard Operation Procedures for Coordinating Regional Activations and Deactivations](#).

NCR partners developed comprehensive plans that addressed communications, mass care, public health, sheltering, transportation, and other functions. However, no NCR-wide Inauguration plan was developed for the entire region. Therefore, activation times, daily operational periods, and deactivation times varied for each NCR emergency operations center (EOC).

The NCR's *2009 Presidential Inauguration Regional After-Action Report (AAR) Summary* observed that EOC operations across the region illustrated opportunities for further

integration and coordination. The AAR recommends that NCR partners explore additional opportunities to expand and apply collaborative initiatives to short- and no-notice regional events.

Emergency managers within a region should identify opportunities for using collaborative tools to share calendars, taskings, documents, and plans. This will enable regional partners to better coordinate their planning efforts for special events.

CITATIONS

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