



# The Beacon

## BY AND FOR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

### WORKSHOP CANCELLED

Texas A&M, Texas Engineering Extension Service, has cancelled the National workshop on Domestic Preparedness and counterterrorism scheduled for March 19-22 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

For more information, please contact Mary Einhorn at 866-878-8900 or 979-458-4009.

### WORKSHOP ANNOUNCED

The International Conference on Disaster Management is scheduled for August 6 - 10, 2001 at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, Florida. The conference will seek to bring together all disciplines involved in emergency response.

For more information, please contact David Tait at 850-906-9221, or [mail@disastermeeting.com](mailto:mail@disastermeeting.com), or visit the website at [www.disastermeeting.com](http://www.disastermeeting.com).

### THE ILLINOIS MOBILE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (IMERT)

By Leslee Stein-Spencer, R.N., M.S.

#### Background

In June 1995, President Clinton signed Presidential Decision Directive (PDD 39) --United States Policy on Counterterrorism -- that outlined the administration's policies regarding the Federal response to threats or acts of terrorism using "nuclear, biological, and/or chemical materials, and/or weapons of mass destruction (NBC/WMD)."

Subsequently, The Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 1996, or Nunn-Lugar-

Domenici amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for FY97, was adopted. This Act directs the president to develop federal programs that will coordinate and support regional preparedness for WMD and provide direct support for local and state Counterterrorism efforts.

Early in 1999, in response to the increased national focus on terrorist threats and concern about the deployment of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), a small group of emergency physicians and toxicologists began meeting with the Division of Emergency Medical Services of the Illinois Department of Public Health. The initial intent of this group was to assess the level of awareness and preparedness of emergency department personnel in Illinois to respond to a large-scale WMD incident that might overwhelm hospitals and surrounding communities.

Although planning to enhance preparedness for a major incident was underway in many large cities, the Illinois group realized that the state as a whole needed a network of coordinated mutual support and a more systematic approach to responding to a large-scale catastrophe. They realized that it was important to develop organized protocols, formalize communication systems, and recognize a core of specially prepared responders to assist in case of a mass casualty event, including WMD.

In the summer of 1999, the Illinois Department of Public Health, along with this group of physicians, applied for and received a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for seed funding for the Illinois Mobile Emergency Response Team (IMERT) to develop educational and infrastructure to formalize their ability to respond to mass casualty events.

The IMERT Executive Council (IMERTEC) was created to oversee the development of IMERT. Members include emergency physicians, emergency nurses and paramedics with leadership experience in EMS and disaster planning, as well as selected individuals with relevant military and technical expertise. Advisors from governmental agencies, such as the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) also sit on the IMERTEC.

### **IMERT Mission Statement**

The Executive Committee developed the following mission statement:

“The Illinois Mobile Emergency Response Team (IMERT) will respond to and assist with emergency medical treatment at mass casualty incidents, including, but not limited to, chemical, biological, and radiological incidents, when a need is identified. The team will respond when activated by the Director of Public Health or designee.

In addition, members of IMERT will coordinate and participate in educational programs throughout Illinois to EMS system participants.”

### **Activities**

IMERTEC members developed a curriculum for a half-day seminar entitled *Domestic Preparedness: Improving Hospital and Provider Response to a Bioterrorist Event*. The course is designed to meet the needs of emergency physicians, EMS medical directors and coordinators, public safety officers, trauma nurse coordinators, and pre-hospital care providers, and covers terrorism from the perspective of emergency medical staff. Topics discussed at the seminar include: hazardous materials and terrorist acts and the differences between them; identification of typical community locations where hazardous materials are manufactured, stored, transported, and disposed; a description of the signs and symptoms of exposure to a variety of chemical agents; bomb blast injuries; antidotes, treatments, and decontamination methods; the purpose and activation criteria for the Illinois Emergency Disaster Plan, and the Department of Defense hospital system; and information to develop a mobile emergency response team to serve individual communities. The course was presented this year in five different locations in Illinois. Over 400 participants from around the state

attended the seminars and included physicians, medical residents, nurses, emergency medical personnel, law enforcement and fire personnel, emergency management personnel, health department officials and staff, and a variety of hospital departments including safety, security, laboratory, infection control and even pastoral care. At least four seminars are scheduled in 2001 in numerous locations around the State.

IMERT created a website -- [www.imert.org](http://www.imert.org) -- that provides news and information about team activities. In addition, copies of the slides from IMERT educational seminars are available for downloading.

### **The Team**

A standard IMERT response will consist of four medical personnel comprised of a Medical Doctor (MD), Registered Nurse (RN), Emergency Medical Technician – Paramedic (EMT-P), and one other member, with the minimum of an Emergency Medical Technician – Basic (EMT-B) qualification.

IMERTEC is in the process of finalizing written team response protocols and call-down trees. Teams will be organized throughout the state, based on 3 IEMA regions. Team members will be supported with appropriate equipment (medical and communications) as well as provided with educational opportunities in return for their willingness to support the effort.

For more information about IMERT or to request an application packet, please contact:

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(Ginny Kennedy-Palys, JD, Executive Director, ICEP)

Mail: IMERT  
C/o Leslee Stein-Spencer, MS, RN  
IDPH, Chief of EMS and Highway Safety  
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Chicago, IL 60601

FAX: 312-814-1503 (Attn: IMERT, c/o Leslee Stein-Spencer, MS, RN)

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be reached at [lstein@IDPH.state.il.us](mailto:lstein@IDPH.state.il.us), or (217) 785-2080.

**A copy of the IMERT resource materials (application and position descriptions) can also be downloaded from the NDPO's Common Communications Link.**

## **CRITICAL INCIDENT PROTOCOL A PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP**

By Radford W. Jones, Academic Specialist  
School of Criminal Justice  
Michigan State University

In June, 2000 a Critical Incident Protocol - A Public and Private Partnership was published containing processes when the public and private sector partner in the assessment, planning, response and recovery from manmade or natural disasters. The Protocol concept originated in 1998 when Rad Jones, an Academic Specialist with the School of Criminal Justice, Michigan State University gathered a small focus group from the public and private sector in Michigan to discuss how well both entities jointly prepared for disasters. Rad recently retired from Ford Motor Company after managing their global fire and security operations for fourteen years and previously retired after a twenty-one year career with the Secret Service. In these roles he believed and had experienced that critical incidents are managed and resolved through the sharing of community resources and expertise. The focus groups agreed there was a need for a written protocol on the best practices when communities share, coordinate and manage resources and expertise to resolve a critical incident, including weapons of mass destruction.

In 1999 the Office for State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support, Office of Justice Programs, awarded a grant to Michigan State University to develop such a protocol. Five regional meetings were held throughout Michigan and over 150 representatives from emergency services, police, fire, schools, business, government, insurance, emergency support services, and elected offices provided their best practices and lessons learned in the critical incident partnership process. Public and private sector partners from the region hosted the meetings and invited representatives from their local area. Meetings started in the morning and ended mid afternoon with

the private sector partner hosting lunch. Meetings were true "town hall" style where participants from all areas of the community discussed what they believed was important in the critical incident partnership process. Input was also received from the Private Sector Liaison Committee of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, professional associations, and the Michigan Police and Fire Chiefs' associations.

Regional meeting participant's consensus indicated:

- Denial must be eliminated, since it is not if but when an incident will happen.
- A lot has been written on the need to partner, but little is actually occurring.
- Leadership must begin at the top and it does not matter who initiates the first contact.
- Regardless of the disaster, critical incident planning and response processes are similar.
- Public and private sectors have the same objective – save lives and protect property.

The Protocol provides a process for public and private sector partnering in conducting risk assessments, emergency planning, response, and recovery. Mitigation of risk is incorporated throughout the Protocol process. Guidelines for conducting joint tabletop exercises are also included.

The following processes are discussed in the Protocol.

**Risk Assessment:**

*Self-Assessment* - The process begins when the private sector entity identifies its critical business functions, previous incidents and potential risks to those functions, and available internal and external resources to mitigate the risks. Emphasis is on those critical business functions, which would devastate a business. At one regional meeting a fire chief indicated that he had just been informed by his city manager not to buy a planned fire truck since a local business was moving from the city. He stated that the same situation would arise if a business were destroyed in a disaster.

*Joint Assessment* - The process involves the private sector sharing their individual self-assessments with the public sector. The community is then able to develop their total risks and available response resources (public/private). Shortfall is identified and plans developed to meet the shortfall.

#### Critical Incident Planning:

Involves the advance understanding of joint resources and responses to risks identified during the assessment process. The community's resources, expertise, and shortfalls are identified. Joint plans are developed to meet the shortfalls. All plans must be exercised and the Protocol provides an example of a tabletop partnership exercise. Understanding of each other's "jargon" will occur in the planning stage.

#### Emergency Response:

The joint emergency response involves an understanding of the incident command system and the importance of the private sector being involved in a unified command systems concept to maximize utilization of resources needed to resolve a disaster. Prior understanding on how the public and private sector will respond to a disaster addresses many concerns and enables concentration on resolving the incident. During one meeting a fire chief indicated that he may "wear the gold badge" but when he arrived he wanted someone who had knowledge on the facility.

#### Recovery:

The recovery process begins during and after the response phase and focuses on repair of damage and quick return to normal operations. However the process must not conflict with emergency response or possible crime scene processing.

#### Mitigation:

Involves the reduction or elimination of risks and must be involved throughout the entire critical incident process.

In February 2000 the City of Sterling Heights and General Dynamics Land Systems (GDLS) conducted a tabletop exercise by interactive videoconference. The GDLS company interactive conferencing system was used and the exercise was facilitated and evaluated from 150 miles away. One participant indicated this was the first time they had been involved in an exercise with emergency responders from the other side of Michigan. The exercise involved a possible anthrax and workplace violence incident at the GDLS Headquarters in Sterling Heights

and involved participation by local, state, and federal agencies. The tabletop established:

- The processes described in the Protocol are similar regardless of the type of critical incident.
- Public and private sectors need to share plans and information prior to an incident. Individual plans and assumptions made in isolation are not always correct.
- Local resources are limited and other support may not be available for a period of time.
- Possibilities of a biological agent will significantly change the response, evacuation, and rescue process.
- Processes for sharing critical information needed by the public and private sectors to resolve the critical incident must be understood in advance.
- Recovery or crime scene processes may be lengthy and have an impact on the resumption of business by the private sectors.
- Joint exercises enhance team building between the public and private sectors.
- The value of long distance technology in the facilitation of tabletop exercises has value in drawing together expertise from various parts of the state.
- Tabletop exercises can be conducted by long distance technology, resulting in improved utilization of resources.

The value of the tabletop exercise was proven several weeks later when a leaking railroad tank car in the vicinity of GDLS resulted in the efficient evacuation of 1400 visitors and employees.

The processes described in the Protocol are now being implemented into a community wide plan. Michigan State University and Sandia National Laboratories are working with the City of Sterling Heights, Michigan in developing a vulnerability analysis for the community. Working through the Sterling Heights Area Chamber of Commerce businesses are completing a self-assessment on their critical business functions, risks to those functions, and if they have recovery plans in place. The individual input will be developed into a community-based assessment. Shortfall in response and recovery plans developed from the survey process will be identified. The first stage of the project will be complete this summer. The City of Sterling Heights partnership is an example of what can be accomplished when the public and private sector discuss mutual concerns and approaches to critical incident planning and response. As one police chief

indicated, with today's extensive medial coverage during a hostage situation, shooting, or other disaster, out citizens have become "experts" on the way these events should be handled and resolved. This yardstick judges our communities and us.

A copy of the Protocol can be obtained on the Michigan State University School of Criminal Justice website, [www.cj.msu.edu](http://www.cj.msu.edu) under Outreach Programs, Critical Incident Protocol or by contacting Rad Jones at [jonesrad@msu.edu](mailto:jonesrad@msu.edu).

### WHAT'S NEW AT THE NDPO

- ❑ *State and Local Community Pages* – The NDPO is now hosting state and local community pages on the Common Communications Link to provide regional areas with secure pages to share WMD preparedness information. The community pages are reserved for state, local and federal government agencies with WMD preparedness missions, public/private grass roots task forces focusing on WMD terrorism, professional associations, and LEPCs/SERCs. To start your community's page, contact the NDPO at [ndpo@leo.gov](mailto:ndpo@leo.gov), or call us at (202) 324-9025.
- ❑ *Huntsville, Alabama Connectivity Project* - In January 2001, the NDPO launched this new project designed to connect entire public safety communities to the CCL using Virtual Private Network technology. The NDPO and LEO are in the process of connecting all of the emergency responders in the Huntsville area (police, fire, HAZMAT, EMS, health/medical community) to the CCL, using a Virtual Private Network software. This project will enable the entire Huntsville community to connect to LEO/CCL from the Internet (no need for a dial-up, stand-alone computer). The projected timeline for completion in Huntsville is April 2001. The NDPO and LEO are planning to connect emergency responders on a regional basis, beginning with the Southeast, Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Midwest regions, with a target completion date of December 2003.
- ❑ Law Enforcement Online is now using Virtual Private Network (VPN) technology. VPN is a security system that provides secure encrypted channels between LEO users and the data contained within the LEO network. VPN will enable users to access LEO via the Internet,

instead of the current dial-up technology. The VPN will be phased in during the months of February through August 2001.

### WMD III EXERCISE SCHEDULED FOR APRIL

April 2-3, 2001  
Dulles Hilton, Herndon, VA

WMD III, which is hosted by the Armed Forces Journal conference and exhibition group and the National is a hands-on, interactive WMD exercise that will deliver a product that state and local officials can take away and use to test and improve their own consequence management plans.

This tabletop exercise will evolve around a disaster scenario involving an unknown biological agent. The consequence management challenge will focus on containment and quarantine issues. The attendees will participate in developing appropriate solutions.

At the end of the conference, attendees will have a disaster response-planning template that will be useful during any major disaster requiring complex consequence management activities.

For more information, visit the conference web site at [www.afji.com](http://www.afji.com) or call Jack Corrado at (703) 848-0496, or e-mail at [jack@afji.com](mailto:jack@afji.com).

### BOMB THREAT CARD RELEASED FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

The Technical Support Working Group has released the Bomb Threat Standoff Card (BTSC) for use by all federal emergency and law enforcement officers, and all state and local fire, law enforcement, HAZMAT, Bomb Squad, EMS, and other emergency/public services organizations who may be involved with the evacuation of areas affected by a terrorist bomb threat.

The BTSC is a two-sided, four color, laminated 3X5 card with a pictorial representation of eight bomb threats and associated explosives capacities, building and outdoor evacuation distances. The cards are available through the Government Printing Office. The BTSC is available for \$3.75 per package of 10 (stock #064-000-00028). For more

information, please visit the US GPO Bookstore at <bookstore.gpo.gov>, or call 202-512-1800.

## **SUPER BOWL EVENT PLANNING**

By Donnie Young, Supervisory Special Agent,  
NDPO

On January 28, 2001, the city of Tampa, Florida hosted Super Bowl XXXV at Raymond James Stadium. With the stadium holding approximately 70,000 people and countless millions more watching on TV, a justifiable concern existed that the game might become an attractive terrorist target. Such an attack might produce mass casualties, and would attract worldwide attention and scrutiny.

Local, state, and federal authorities began planning about a year prior to game day. Although all aspects of security would eventually be addressed, the major areas of concern were the use of a bomb or a chemical/biological device in or around the crowded stadium. The central entity in countering this threat was the Tampa Bay Regional Bomb Squad (TBRBS), a cooperative effort combining bomb technicians and hazmat specialists from the Tampa Bay Police Department, Sarasota Police Department, Hernando County Sheriff's Office, and the Florida State Fire Marshal.

Sergeant Jim Diamond, TPD, and commander of the TBRBS, coordinated response planning with Corporal Lance Conners, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Bomb Squad, to ensure appropriate coverage, not only of the areas in and around the stadium and the accompanying events, but also to the fourteen counties comprising the two squads normal emergency response areas.

Response team, comprised of bomb technicians from TBRBS and Hillsborough County SO, along with FBI Special Agent bomb technicians from around the country, were formed and assigned to strategic areas. With all team members being WMD trained, the teams were equipped with PAN disrupters, SRS5 search suits, Level B hazmat suits, SCBA, bomb suits, robots, and real time x-rays. Due to the number of teams fielded, it was necessary to augment existing inventory with loaner equipment provided by the US Postal Service, the FBI Bomb Data Center, and Andros Manufacturing. Additionally, intelligence assets, both domestically and internationally, were

tasked for information concerning any planned activity relating to the event.

The Tampa Fire Department Hazardous Incident Team (HIT), under the command of Dennis Jones, staged at a location near the stadium, supported by the FBI Hazardous Material Response Unit (HMRU), which provided equipment augmentation and specialized personnel. Since the Tampa HIT was dedicated to the stadium, the Hillsborough County Fire Rescue HIT, under Ron Rogers, staged at a central city location to provide overall city and county response. Response procedures mirrored the NDPO's On-Scene Commanders Guide and the HMRU Field Operations Guide.

The jubilation felt by the winning team's fans was reflected by the feelings of the response groups at the successful conclusion of the game. No unplanned events occurred and no call outs were necessary. Tampa's third Super Bowl was a tremendous success.

***The Beacon is published monthly for members of the emergency response community. Please send articles, comments, feedback, and letters to the Information Sharing Team at the address listed below.***

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Visit us online at [www.ndpo.gov](http://www.ndpo.gov).

### **NDPO ONLINE RESOURCES FOR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS:**

- Helpline – [ndpo@leo.gov](mailto:ndpo@leo.gov)
- Law Enforcement Online Newsgroups
- Common Communication Link
- List Serve for monthly e-mailings

For more information about these resources, e-mail us at [ndpo@leo.gov](mailto:ndpo@leo.gov).