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LESSON LEARNED

Emergency Operations Center Management: Providing Staff Members with Information on Specialized Teams and Resources

SUMMARY

Emergency managers should consider providing emergency operations center (EOC) staff members with information on the capabilities and resources of all available specialized emergency response teams. This can help ensure that EOC staff members are aware of the capabilities of specialized emergency response teams during activations.

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.

Prior to the TTX, some EOC staff members were not aware of the capabilities and resources of the various specialized response teams available to the county. Throughout the TTX, team representatives provided EOC staff members with informational briefs on their specific

capabilities and resources. These teams included the Infrastructure Protection Team/Marine Patrol, the Office of the Sheriff's Special Weapons and Tactics team, and the Walnut Creek Bomb Squad. The informational briefs helped EOC staff members become aware of the available resources that could be utilized during an activation. The after-action report (AAR) notes that many EOC staff members found this to be a beneficial part of the TTX. The AAR recommends that EOC staff members receive similar briefs during future exercises and trainings. This can help ensure that EOC staff members are knowledgeable about available resources within the county.

Emergency managers should consider providing EOC staff members with information on the capabilities and resources of all available specialized emergency response teams. This can help ensure that EOC staff members are aware of the capabilities of specialized emergency response teams during activations.

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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