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Emergency Responder Rehabilitation: Planning for Extended Rehabilitation

SUMMARY

Jurisdictions should develop formal plans for establishing an extended rehabilitation location during prolonged or mass casualty incidents. Plans need to include sleeping accommodations and transportation between the incident site, rehabilitation location, and responders' home stations.

DESCRIPTION

After the September 11, 2001 attack on the Pentagon, Arlington County established an extended rehabilitation area for emergency responders at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center (TJCC). The area was intended to allow emergency response personnel to leave the incident site and receive food, drink, medical monitoring, sleeping accommodations, and critical incident stress management support. Bus stops were designated, and a schedule was announced to transport personnel between the Pentagon and the TJCC. After receiving rehabilitation at the TJCC, responders were to be transported to their home stations.

Extended rehabilitation at the TJCC proved insufficient due to inadequate on-site resources and poor transportation logistics. The TJCC lacked both clean clothes and comfortable sleeping accommodations for emergency response personnel. In addition, transportation between the Pentagon and TJCC was sporadic. Further, no transportation was offered between the TJCC and responders' home stations. Consequently, extended rehabilitation at the TJCC was not well used and closed after the first night.

Jurisdictions should develop formal plans for establishing an extended rehabilitation location during prolonged or mass casualty incidents. Plans need to include arrangements for sleeping accommodations, as well as transportation between the incident site, extended rehabilitation location, and responders' home stations.

CITATION

Titan Systems Corporation. *Arlington County After-Action Report on the Response to the September 11 Terrorist Attack on the Pentagon*. May 30, 2002.

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