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# LESSON LEARNED

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## Emergency Management: Assigning a Military Liaison Officer to the State Emergency Operations Center

### SUMMARY

State National Guard units should consider appointing a designated liaison officer to the state emergency operations center (EOC). This individual could provide information regarding military resource capabilities to EOC staff and could participate in joint training, exercises, and operations on a routine basis.

### DESCRIPTION

The US Northern Command (NORTHCOM) and Joint Forces Command co-sponsored the Ardent Sentry exercise from May 7 to 18, 2007, in the US and Canada. Ardent Sentry consisted of five exercise components: the National Guard full-scale exercise (FSE) Vigilant Guard, the Northern Edge FSE in Canada, the Hoosier Sentry combined functional and full-scale exercise in Indiana, the Alaska Shield combined functional and full-scale exercise in Alaska, and the HURREX tabletop

exercise in Rhode Island. The main goal of Ardent Sentry was to demonstrate multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional unity of effort in support of a civilian-led response to a national crisis. Ardent Sentry simulated a Category 3 hurricane making landfall in New England, a nuclear detonation in Indiana, and several terrorist attacks on critical infrastructure in Alaska and waters along the western US – Canadian border. Ardent Sentry required the coordination of over 3,000 federal, state, and local responders and more than 2,000 active-duty personnel.

Canada served as a full partner in the Ardent Sentry exercise through the coordination of Canada Command and US military resources. Canada Command oversees the operations of Canadian forces and coordinates with NORTHCOM.

NORTHCOM, the National Guard, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, the Indiana National Guard, and the Indianapolis-Marion County Emergency Management Division co-sponsored the Hoosier Sentry combined functional and full-scale exercise from May 10 to 13, 2007, at 6 locations in south-central Indiana. Hoosier Sentry simulated the detonation of a 10-kiloton nuclear device by a terrorist cell in northeastern Indianapolis. Exercise objectives focused on integrating National Guard and active-duty military resources with emergency response operations. The combined exercise also evaluated federal and state abilities to support local responders during a weapon of mass destruction/hazardous materials incident. The exercise required emergency response and military teams to provide sheltering operations for over 77,000 notional civilians and to treat over 500 role-playing victims. Over 104 federal, state, and local agencies and 1,000 response personnel participated in the Hoosier Sentry exercise.

During the exercise, the Indiana National Guard assigned a liaison officer to serve at the Indianapolis-Marion County EOC. The liaison officer provided the following services to the EOC:

- Helped explain available military resource capabilities to EOC staff;
- Ensured Indiana National Guard units were tasked with appropriate missions;
- Assisted state authorities in placing requests for use of Indiana National Guard resources;
- Provided officials with information regarding the Indiana National Guard's normal response times for a resource request; and
- Assisted officials when placing Emergency Management Assistance Compact requests involving National Guard resources.

This assistance helped streamline EOC resource requests made to the National Guard and facilitated the timely deployment of National Guard resources to mission areas.

State National Guard units should consider appointing a designated liaison officer to the state EOC. This individual could provide information regarding military resource capabilities to EOC staff and could participate in joint training, exercises, and operations on a routine basis.

#### **CITATION**

Indianapolis-Marion County Emergency Management Division. *2007 Ardent Sentry, Indiana Homeland Security District 5 After Action Report*. 16 Aug 2007.

<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=26593>

Yager, Chuck. Director of Military Support, Indiana Joint Forces Headquarters. Interview with *Lessons Learned Information Sharing*, 27 Aug 2008.

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