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LESSON LEARNED

Incident Site Security: Developing and Maintaining an Identity Management System

SUMMARY

Public safety agencies should consider developing and maintaining an identification management system to control access at incident sites. This system should include common identification badges for all personnel.

DESCRIPTION

On February 17, 2010, a twin engine Cessna took off from the Palo Alto Municipal Airport, California, hit a high power tension line and crashed, killing three people onboard. The plane broke into several pieces on impact, started structure fires, damaged vehicles, and spilled aviation fluid. This resulted in four separate incident sites spanning several city blocks. Following the crash, the San Mateo Public Safety Communication Center dispatched Menlo Park Fire Protection District (MPFPD), East Palo Alto Police Department (EPAPD), American Medical Response, and several volunteer organizations. EPAPD officers immediately established a controlled perimeter around the incident area to prevent unauthorized people from accessing the area. In addition, the San Mateo Office of Emergency Services established the responder check-in area inside of the controlled perimeter.

The City of East Palo Alto, California, has a population of 28,155 and is located on the San Francisco Peninsula between San Francisco and San Jose.

During the incident, EPAPD lacked a system to identify and track personnel accessing the controlled perimeter. Further, EPAPD failed to assign personnel to track the movement of responders and volunteers from the controlled perimeter to the check-in area. In addition, response personnel lacked a common form of identification. As a result, several unauthorized personnel accessed the controlled perimeter during the response. Further, a volunteer accessed the controlled perimeter, took unauthorized photographs of the damage, and posted them to a social networking Web site.

The *City of East Palo Alto Aviation Crash on Beech Street After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR)* recommends that the city's public safety agencies develop an on-scene personnel identification management system. This system should include common identification badges for response personnel and credential checkpoints at designated perimeter locations. The AAR states that all personnel should wear the identification badges at all times and

For more information on identification badges at secure sites, please see *Lessons Learned Information Sharing's* Lesson Learned, [Facility Security: Access Badges for Secure Areas](#).

present identification at the designated perimeter checkpoints before accessing the incident sites. This can help ensure that public safety personnel can control the flow of response personnel at incident site perimeters and prevent the entry of unauthorized personnel.

Public safety agencies should consider developing and maintaining an identification management system to control access at incident sites. This system should include common identification badges for all personnel.

CITATION

Menlo Park Fire Protection District. *The City of East Palo Alto Aviation Crash on Beech Street After-Action Report/Improvement Plan*. 17 Feb 2011.

<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=49567>

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