



FEMA

Lessons Learned Information Sharing

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LESSON LEARNED

Information Sharing: Ensuring Public-Private Sector Information Exchange Prior to an Incident

SUMMARY

State, county, and local governments should regularly exchange information and intelligence with private sector entities prior to an incident. This will allow the private sector to better assist the public sector during response and recovery efforts.

DESCRIPTION

The New Jersey Business Force (NJBF) conducted its Looking Glass table-top exercise (TTX) from October 17 to 18, 2007, at the New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark, New Jersey. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) sponsored the Looking Glass initiative, a private sector component of the Top Officials 4 full-scale exercise (T4) to assess private sector preparedness and recovery plans and procedures. The Looking Glass TTX remained completely separate from other T4 venues and events. DHS encouraged Looking Glass TTX participants to monitor T4 exercise play via the Virtual News Network in order to construct similar exercise scenarios.

Fifteen private sector and non-profit organizations participated in the NJBF TTX. Ten public sector representatives from federal, state, and county agencies provided subject-matter expertise on government preparedness and recovery activities. The TTX assessed the ability of participants to execute critical business emergency operations center (BEOC) functions, including alert and warning, data collection and analysis, information sharing, and resource registration and mobilization.

The Looking Glass TTX scenario called for the detonation of a radiological dispersal device (RDD) in the "Gold Coast" financial district of Jersey City, New Jersey, directly across the river from Manhattan, New York. The RDD caused major disruptions to New Jersey's health care, financial services, transportation, and utility sectors. Exercise facilitators raised the Homeland Security Advisory System threat level to "orange" and then "red" and notionally activated the New Jersey Regional Operations Center. The state requested that private

The New Jersey Business Force is a partnership between the state of New Jersey and leading New Jersey companies. It leverages private sector expertise to enhance the state's preparedness and response efforts. For more information, please refer to the [NJBF Web site](#).

T4 was the fourth exercise in the Top Officials (TOPOFF) series, a congressionally mandated exercise program. For more information about the T4 exercise, please refer to the [T4 After-Action Quick Look Report](#).

A BEOC is an emergency operations center that is organized, managed, and staffed by the private sector and designed to promote self-reliance and self-sufficiency during emergencies. For more information on BEOCs, please refer to the [NJBF BEOC Concept Overview](#).

sector entities provide resources to aid response and recovery operations, including water, refrigerator trucks, tyvex suits, respirators, light generators, front-end loaders, dump trucks, and bulldozers.

During the TTX, participants discussed how the emergency response to the RDD explosion would likely exhaust state, county, and local government resources. Private sector resources would be needed to assist these governments. However, participants agreed that the private sector would need public sector intelligence and information in order to provide resources to aid response operations effectively. The Looking Glass TTX after-action report recommends that public-private sector information exchange occur prior to an incident.

State, county, and local governments should regularly exchange information and intelligence with private sector entities prior to an incident. This will allow the private sector to better assist the public sector during response and recovery efforts.

CITATION

New Jersey Business Force. *TOPOFF 4 Looking Glass Exercise After-Action Report*. 21 Nov 2007.

<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=30167>

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