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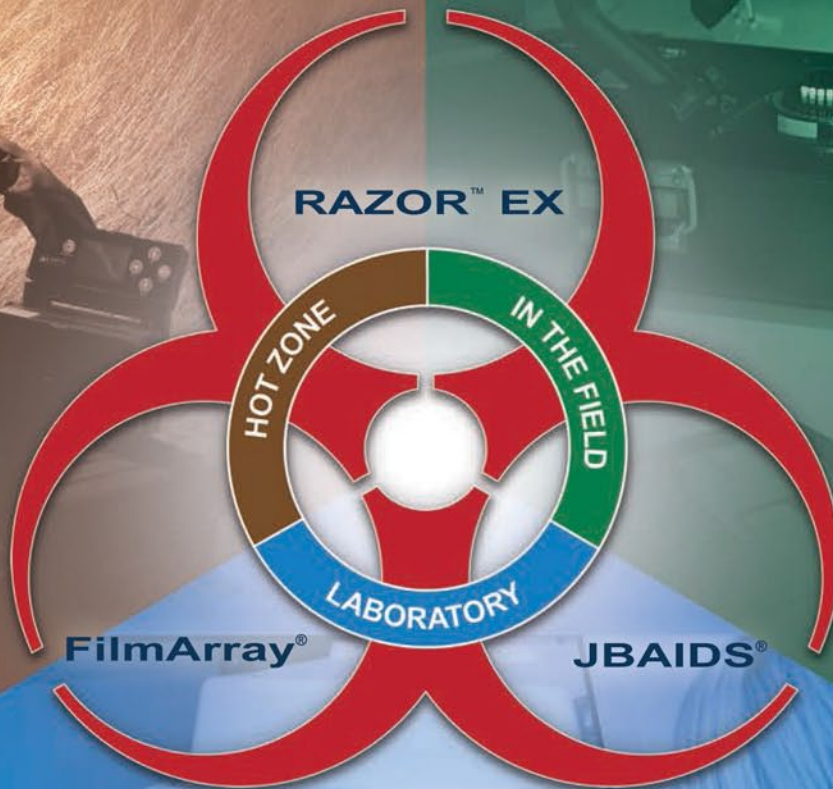
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# Editor's Notes

By James D. Hessman, Editorial Remarks



Locally and nationally, the best “weather” news is usually no news at all. The same is true, to some extent, of U.S. politics – especially during a presidential election year. In sports, particularly major international events such as the 2012 Olympic Games in London, records will be broken and most, if not all, of the news will be interesting, exciting, and in some cases inspiring. However, as happened twice in previous Games – in Atlanta, Georgia, and Munich, Germany – the headlines and human memories can occasionally focus on an unanticipated, calamitous, and nerve-shattering disaster.

During the London Olympics, a disaster is more likely to be manmade, rather than an earthquake or tsunami, a series of tornadoes, and/or a volcanic eruption. There will be an additional half-million or so passengers riding “the Tube” (London’s subway system) each day during the Games. There also will be many different sports venues, not only in London itself but also in the far-flung suburbs of one of the largest cities in the world, in which a terrorist attack might easily be launched. For this reason, as Richard Schoeberl points out in his comprehensive article about the 2012 Games, the UK Home Office and the Olympic Committee have been planning and preparing for several years to address any type of threat or attack.

How likely is such an attack or, perhaps, a well-timed “Occupy” type of political protest? No one knows, of course. So the only logical way to plan and prepare, and if necessary to respond, is to follow an “any and all” approach that takes into account every possible contingency. Kay Goss, one of this nation’s most knowledgeable authorities in the field of emergency management, provides an encyclopedic checklist of potential contingencies that must be considered. Her article – one of nine in this intentionally “eventful” issue – is a “must read” for emergency planners at all levels of government, in the United States and abroad.

Accompanying and complementing Kay’s article are three related and more tightly focused reports by: (a) Glen Rudner, who points out the dangers and difficulties involved in planning for potential CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiation, Nuclear, Explosives) incidents; (b) Raphael Barishansky, who analyzes the good-news/bad-news aspects for public health in the U.S. government’s latest National Preparedness Report; and (c) Joseph Cahill, who focuses much-needed attention on the mandatory but oft-neglected medical aspects of a mass-casualty incident – whether manmade or a surprise attack by Mother Nature.

Rounding out this monthly printable issue are four encouraging articles on events that actually happened and that, combined, show incremental but very real progress in the field of domestic preparedness: (a) David G. Squires reports on the astounding success of the Virginia Beach Police Department in planning for and executing a highly successful memorial ceremony in honor of Naval Special Warfare SEALs who had been killed in combat overseas. (b) Megan Clifford and William Meyer discuss the particulars of a high-level panel discussion focused on the need for a whole-community approach to building and/or improving state and local disaster preparedness capabilities. (c) Blair Heusdens comments on how the acquisition and staffing of a new state-of-the-art Mobile Emergency Operations Center has upgraded the effectiveness of the Florida Air National Guard. (d) Rodrigo Moscoso tells the behind-the-scenes story of how the D.C. Police Department used closed-circuit television (CCTV) and social media to respond to and counter Occupy protesters who had set up camp in Washington’s McPherson Square.

*About the Cover: Participants in the Twin Cities Marathon gather themselves mentally and physically at the starting line (in Minneapolis, Minnesota) as they prepare themselves for the grueling 26.2-mile run, which takes place each October. The Twin Cities run is similar to the marathon that will be featured in August at the 2012 London Olympics; special event planning is now underway. (October 2008 iStock Photo)*

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# Special Events: Pre-Event Planning Checklists

By Kay C. Goss, *Special Events*



In the summer months, there are a huge number of celebrations, festivals, concerts, fairs, outdoor sporting activities, and numerous other events that draw large crowds – and, largely for that reason, present difficult challenges. Under normal conditions, these events generally proceed smoothly, and with few problems. However, local emergency managers must be ready when something does go wrong, which can happen as a result of either a natural, a technological, or a human-caused hazard.

Many deaths and a large number of injuries at major public events will continue to occur around the world and across a wide spectrum of activities. Highly competitive sporting events such as soccer matches, as well as rock concerts and festivals, tend to produce spectator-generated incidents, whereas air shows and auto races are more likely to produce participant-generated disasters. Mitigating and coping strategies are needed when advance assessments fail to accurately identify the potential for disaster at such events.

Large national or international gatherings (e.g., National Special Security Events, or NSSEs, which are designated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to be potential targets for terrorist/criminal activity) require additional considerations that are normally handled at the national level. As such, local and state jurisdictions place a greater focus on pre-event planning problems – e.g., physical layouts, spectator management, public safety, public health, and medical care – for small- to medium-sized events such as parades, fairs, concerts, and air shows. By having a pre-event plan in place, jurisdictions can reduce response times, discuss contingencies, and develop trust before something suddenly “goes wrong.”

## NIMS, ICS & Special Events

One of the key sets of guidelines for special events is the “Management of Domestic Incidents,” spelled out in Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5 – which stipulates that the National Incident Management System (NIMS) be used in such events, just as it would during any other national-emergency situation. NIMS provides a set of standardized organizational structures – such as the Incident Command System (ICS), multi-agency coordination systems, and public information systems – as well as the requirements mandated for the specific processes, procedures, and systems designed to improve interoperability among jurisdictions and disciplines in various areas, including but not necessarily limited to the following: training; resource management; personnel qualifications and certification; equipment certification; communications and information management; technology support; and continuous system improvement.

ICS is an effective management system that provides sufficient flexibility for local adaptations. One “best practice” in this field was demonstrated at the University of Missouri’s Summer Fire School, where Bruce Peringer, Director of the Missouri Fire and Rescue Training Institute, used ICS to manage many of the school’s most

important events and activities. By doing so, he was able not only to manage those events and activities but also, and at the same time, give the school's firefighters an opportunity to learn much more about the ICS structure and its many uses.

More often than not, though, those in charge of special events at the local level have not previously managed an event using ICS. In addition, some participants may have a general awareness of their own roles, but do not have previous experience or extensive knowledge of special events per se. Special event planning may not, for example, be a routine or recurring responsibility for: (a) relatively new emergency managers; (b) personnel from emergency operations organizations such as police, fire, medical services, and public works agencies and organizations; and/or (c) representatives of other community organizations – both public and private.

## Pre-Event Planning

Depending on the location, some form of legislation usually governs, restricts, and/or postulates the guidelines mandated for public events, or at least some aspect of such events. Some events, particularly larger or high-impact events, may even require special state or local legislation. Local ordinances usually (but not always) provide the health and medical guidelines that must be followed. The promoters of an event should in any case consider obtaining legal advice early in the planning stage, particularly as related to the following: (a) liabilities; (b) permits; (c) inspections; (d) fees/charges; and (e) insurance.

## Planning Leader Responsibilities

The leader of the planning team is responsible for monitoring the progress and satisfying all legal requirements throughout the planning process. Pre-event planning is probably the best time to research the statutory authorities needed as well as the emergency powers that might be required – e.g., isolation/quarantine, emergency evacuations – by the various parties involved.

Political considerations are always important in the local community. One way to help persuade elected political officials to support an event is to show the financial and quality-of-life impact that a successful event would have on their communities (and/or personal careers). Explaining the likely positive impact would also encourage the same officials to support the public-safety coordinators assigned by providing adequate local resources and funding.

## Critical Crowd Densities

Preventing the build-up of large accumulations of crowds, particularly within short time periods, is critical when planning an event in confined spaces – especially when spectators may be frustrated by their inability to see what is happening.

John J. Fruin, Ph.D., P.E., of the Metropolitan Association of Urban Designers and Environmental Planners Inc., identified critical crowd densities as a common characteristic of crowd disasters in a 1981 study titled “Causes and Prevention of Crowd Disasters.” He found that critical crowd densities are approached when the floor space per person standing is reduced to about 5.38 square feet.

## Spectator Management/Crowd Control Spectrum

Crowd control guidance and information is available: in literature and press reports; from the promoter, private security organizations, and police, fire, and emergency medical authorities; and, for visiting dignitaries, from personal security services and government agencies. All of this information would be helpful in predicting potential problems that must be addressed during the planning process.

Major crowd issues to address include: (a) *Size* – Maximum number of people permitted are often established by regulation for safety reasons; and (b) *Demographics* – The composition of the audience, including the age and gender mix, should be determined during the planning process.

If young children are likely to constitute a relatively high proportion of the audience, additional facilities might be needed – e.g., nurseries or family bathrooms. The need for rental strollers also must be considered. Audiences made up of young children or elderly people – who are more susceptible to crush injuries than teens or younger adults – also might require additional medical facilities. Certain types of events may attract various groups of spectators who sometimes require special attention – e.g., rock concerts, sports events, religious gatherings, cultural events, and outdoor concerts.

## All Hazards Considerations

Special events also present several additional hazards, including: (a) propane gas cylinders (for cooking); (b) pyrotechnics (for lighting and special effects); and (c) oxygen tanks (for emergency medical services).

In most communities, the fire department is the agency that responds to calls involving hazardous materials. The best way to plan for the handling of hazardous materials, in most areas and situations, is to inform the fire department ahead of time about potential hazards and their probable locations. Providing fire service a grid map with a description of the possible hazards reduces the response time and enhances preparedness.

Depending on the locality, planners need to consider how to handle all relevant hazards that may occur. The risk at each event needs to be evaluated for hazards from abandoned vehicles to wildfires – and everything in between.

## Contingency Plans

Important questions related to ICS and contingency planning include the following:

- What weather conditions may require cancellation of the event?
- What weather conditions may lead to postponement of the event?
- How will storm warnings be monitored?
- What plans are in place to cope with sudden and severe weather conditions – tornadoes, for example?
- Will shelters be available?
- Who has the authority to make emergency decisions, and at what point does he or she exercise that authority?
- How will notification be made of a cancellation or postponement?
- Are additional security personnel, including police, on standby or on call if there is an immediate/unexpected increase in security needs?
- Have ambulance services and local hospitals been advised of the timeline and nature of the event, the expected spectator profile, and any potential medical problems?
- Have fire and rescue services been notified of the nature of the event and identified the services that might be required?
- Has the jurisdiction considered how to respond to an intentional – i.e., man-made CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive) incident?
- Has the need for and/or method of mass decontamination been considered?



## Credentialing Planning

If credentialing is to be used, event planners tasked with jurisdictional responsibility may want to consider, well beforehand, the following questions:

- Who and/or what groups of people, specifically, will be credentialed?
- Will credentialed personnel require a check of their police records?
- Who will conduct the record checks?
- What criteria will be used for various levels of access?
- Who will make the final decisions on who will or will not be credentialed?
- Who will be responsible for credential production?
- Who will authorize credential production?
- What is the format to be used for receipt of the information necessary to produce the credential (e.g., electronic, paper)?
- Will photographs of those credentialed be needed?
- Where will the credentialing center be located? (The credentialing center should be located outside the secure zone and accessible to those requiring credentials.)
- Who will secure this location and provide the security needed for credentialing personnel and their equipment?
- How will the security of the credentialing database be maintained?
- How, and to whom, will credentials be distributed?

## Public Health/Medical Care Planning

Questions related to medical logistics planning for important events include the following:

- How many medical stations will be required onsite?
- Will medical personnel operate in a facility to which injured persons must make their way?
- Will clearly identified medical teams patrol the spectator areas?
- How will spectators identify the medical personnel onsite (uniforms, vests, badges, etc.)?
- Will vehicles be available to transport spectators to the medical facility?
- Will medical vehicles be appropriate to the terrain?
- Will four-wheel-drive vehicles be required for off-road areas (or golf carts for high-density spectator areas)?
- If an ambulance is not required, will a “chauffeur” system be available to transport persons from the onsite medical facility to their own vehicles or other transportation?
- How will medical personnel be notified that there are spectators requiring assistance?
- What means of communication will be available to permit attending medical personnel to communicate with offsite medical personnel, event organizers, security, and other support personnel?
- Are there any sponsorship conflicts between the event sponsor(s) and medical service operators?
- What level of onsite medical care, if any, is required?
- What mix of medical personnel (first aid providers, paramedics, nurses, doctors) is required onsite?
- Who or what agencies or healthcare facilities will provide these personnel?
- How will the cost for their services be funded?
- Are the health service providers from the local area? If not, how will their services be integrated with those provided by local medical services?
- How will security concerns for healthcare personnel onsite be addressed?
- Are the personnel credentialed required to respond to anticipated medical problems? And/or to go through additional training?
- Will medical personnel or vehicles need special credentials to allow them access to all areas of the venue?
- Will medical personnel assigned for public safety workers be available at the event?
- Are aero-medical services and landing zones available?
- Where is the closest trauma center?
- Have primary and secondary receiving hospitals been identified in advance?
- Do area hospitals have adequate beds and enough personnel capacity to respond to the potential emergency requirements of the planned event?

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## Communications Systems Planning

Communicating with the crowd is essential at all special events. Ideally, several communications systems should be established to enable messaging to different sections of the crowd – both inside and outside the event venue. The Incident Command Post should have access to the central communications system, interoperability, and communications with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC – if a center is activated). If emergency personnel use a separate sound system, they need some means of muting or silencing the stage sound system. Signboards, strategically spaced throughout the venue, should be available to enhance the public-address system.



Public announcements are an essential part of a safety plan for any major event. Some questions to consider in this area include the following: (a) audible volume and content of announcements; (b) multi-lingual requirements; and (c) public-address system placement and back-up.

Lessons learned from past special events indicate that contingencies in communications routes also are needed. Here are some of the more important guidelines to follow: (a) Do not rely solely on cellular telephones; (b) Ensure that there is an integrated, multi-agency frequency available for communications; (c) Consider laying landlines that can be used for telephone service; and (d) Include the use of amateur radio operators for communications.

## The Event, Post-Event Hot Wash & After-Action Report

After the special event begins, responsibility for the preplanning process is transferred to the Planning Section Chief under ICS guidelines. After the event, a quick “hot wash” – to focus on what went right and what went wrong – puts a jurisdiction in the strongest possible position to handle the next event even more effectively. In any case, an after-action report based on post-event discussions should be written and promulgated for use by future leaders and managers. The compilation of such a report would at the same time provide a permanent record of the lessons learned, best practices, and possible solutions, as well as potential pitfalls and problems that should be incorporated in the planning efforts for the next event.

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Pre-event checklists for special event planning are available for download and print, click [http://www.domesticpreparedness.com/userfiles/factsheets/PreEvent\\_Checklist.pdf](http://www.domesticpreparedness.com/userfiles/factsheets/PreEvent_Checklist.pdf).

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## The Medical Component Of Mass Gatherings

By Joseph Cahill, EMS



There are a number of variables, each one affecting the number and type of medical units needed, that must be accounted for to adequately plan for a mass gathering – of any type occurring anywhere in the United States. This is particularly true in a large city, which – because of its population and the greater probability for attracting crowds – obviously needs more EMS (Emergency Medical System) resources than does a small town.

In addition, as the size of the anticipated crowd grows, so does the need for additional medical support. Today, the Sanitary Code of New York State, to cite but one example, specifies that medical support is required for all mass gatherings, which are defined by the Code as any that are “likely to attract 5,000 people or more and continue for 24 hours or more.” Even though the state uses “anticipated population” to determine the minimum “Emergency Health Care Requirements” needed for various events, those requirements can also fluctuate from town to town – and from event to event – because of such variables as the assumed health of the population likely to be present.

## The Good Health and Geographic Factors Involved

Unfortunately, there is considerable room for error when trying to determine the health level of a population that will “probably” be present at a particular event. Planners cannot simply assume that the risk will be relatively low because an event is either not likely to be very taxing and/or will probably attract relatively fit participants who are generally in good health. Some participants in sporting events, for example, will attempt activities that go beyond their current level of health – and may later find themselves in trouble, requiring medical assistance. For that and other reasons, the generally accepted rule is that, the more taxing an event is, the more likely it is that medical support will be needed.

An additional factor that must be considered when planning medical needs for a specific event is the geography involved. For example, a long “narrow” event area – such as those usually used for a marathon or other long-distance races – is somewhat like a sprawling community that will likely require greater resources such as additional EMS stations. In these circumstances, the travel time needed to reach injured or sick patients should be a key factor in planning. It also should be remembered that, in any mass gathering, travel times can be significantly affected, and complicated, by pedestrian traffic, which – particularly in “panic” situations – can be both erratic and unpredictable.

In addition to the linear distances involved, landforms and other topographical concerns may also affect response times. A ridge of land or a body of water that separates one area from another may necessitate the assignment of a second EMS unit to reduce the additional time it would take to travel around the obstacle. Of course, some of these obstacles can be overcome by acquiring specialized resources. For example, when a large lake divides an event area, waterborne or airborne resources can be used to approach the emergency scene from either side of the lake with sufficient speed.

## Fireworks, Firearms & Other Hazards

Some mass gatherings – even those that do not meet the numerical definition – may require special consideration if and when they introduce additional hazards. Fireworks shows, and even concerts and/or other events that incorporate pyrotechnics, are good examples of the hazardous materials currently being used to entertain the crowds at mass gatherings. A significant increase in security also is needed, obviously, for potential firearms and/or other weapons during campaign visits from presidential or other political candidates, and in today’s fast-traveling world those visits can occur in almost any jurisdiction.

Although the actual security should be left to those – i.e., the Secret Service or police – tasked with the responsibility for providing it, the presence of these protection units may form another physical barrier between EMS support and potential patients. One of the more obvious ways to keep a dignitary safe is to separate him or her from the unknown intentions of the crowds or bystanders. However, responding to a potential threat by putting more distance between the crowd and a visiting dignitary also has the potential of leaving EMS resources a greater distance outside the security cordon – and perhaps unable to reach those who might, urgently and without warning, require their services.

*Although no two medical response efforts are the same, events that draw large crowds introduce numerous variables and obstacles – e.g., geography, health levels and other demographics of the population, and hazardous materials.*

In some circumstances, it is effective to assign an EMS unit to the dignitary protection team itself – but that decision should be dictated by the time of the event, the health of the dignitary, and the likelihood, all factors considered, of an actual threat. In any event, the dignitary and his or her security team will have the final say on the course of action needed and the overall level of security screening required, while still permitting the quick presence of medical responders if and when needed.

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For additional information on:

New York State’s Sanitary Code Part 18,

visit <http://www.health.ny.gov/nysdoh/ems/part18.htm>

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*Joseph Cahill is a medicolegal investigator for the Massachusetts Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. He previously served as exercise and training coordinator for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and as emergency planner in the Westchester County (N.Y.) Office of Emergency Management. He also served for five years as the citywide advanced life support (ALS) coordinator for the FDNY – Bureau of EMS. Prior to that, he was the department’s Division 6 ALS coordinator, covering the South Bronx and Harlem. He also served on the faculty of the Westchester County Community College’s Paramedic Program and has been a frequent guest lecturer for the U.S. Secret Service, the FDNY EMS Academy, and Montefiore Hospital.*



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# All-Hazards Planning for Special Events

By Glen Rudner, Fire/HazMat



In general, emergency management agencies are assigned the leading role in public safety planning for a special event. However, if there is an increased risk or probability of a CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive)

incident, the dynamics change and the planning effort must be much more closely coordinated with the local, state, and federal agencies usually tasked with hazmat responsibilities.

When planning for events that have a significant CBRNE risk, all of the operational contingencies imaginable should be taken into account. Many weeks or months of planning among numerous organizations and jurisdictions are required to meet a multitude of contingencies – e.g., perimeter security, standoff detection, and monitoring, to name just a few. During the planning process, moreover, all of the possible problems and scenarios that *may* occur must be fully documented and evaluated. Of course, such planning for *all* possible scenarios also requires a significant degree of flexibility.

Experience has shown that, when developing an effective as well as comprehensive CBRNE plan for special events, a fixed amount of time usually should be built in to prepare for each such event. One method that has been successfully, and efficiently, used by many agencies in allocating the planning time likely to be needed is to break down the process into a two-thirds/one-third ratio that uses two-thirds of the allotted time to planning *per se* and the remaining one-third to execution of the plan that has been created (and approved by the senior authorities involved).

In communities that not only possess high-profile targets but also host high-profile events, many already have CBRNE planning systems in place. By using existing plans that have already proved to be successful, these communities do not have to start from scratch each and every time – they simply modify existing plans where, when, and as needed.

## The Best Approach: Planning for the Worst

Today, most of the nation's public safety emergency response agencies, particularly those in larger cities, should already have

their local CBRNE response protocols in place. As part of the planning process for each future event, these already existing procedures and protocols should be thoroughly reviewed – and, if necessary, updated and/or modified to meet new or altered circumstances. Then, if or when a CBRNE incident occurs during a future special event, the updated local response-agency protocols should be followed.

During the planning of special events, planners and organizers obviously *cannot* plan for or anticipate the specific particulars for any and every crisis imaginable. However, certain measures can be taken that would help both to ensure the safety of responders and to reduce the risk to participants. For example, when a propane tank leaks, fire departments routinely use previously established and practiced procedures – as well as the detection and monitoring equipment needed – to establish the hot, warm, and cold zones in the areas in close proximity to the tank. This previously tested, and successful, procedure will not change simply because the container leaks at a planned high-profile event.

Many such contingency plans, modeled on established procedures, can and should be used to cope with demonstrations, protests,

picketing, or other confrontations that may occur and/or escalate during a planned event. During special-event planning, the brainstorming of a potentially long list of possible occurrences – combined with the designation of specific incident resources in advance – will help provide an effective response to disruptive incidents as and when they occur. In short, by planning and training for worst-case scenarios, even unexpected events can be handled in an effective and orderly manner.

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*Glen Rudner is the project manager for CRA-USA, where he works with senior management executives on major corporate issues; he is currently assigned to project management of State and Local Training Programs. A recently retired Northern Virginia Regional Hazardous Materials Officer, he has been heavily involved during the past 35 years in the development, management, and delivery of numerous local, state, federal, and international programs for such organizations as the National Fire Academy, the FBI, and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency.*



# Securing the Torch – 2012 London Olympics

By Richard Schoeberl, Special Events



When the flame is ignited on 27 July 2012, London will become the first city to host the modern Olympic Games three times. The Olympics present unique security concerns – ranging from potential terrorist threats to the inevitable protestors – that leave the host city and nation vulnerable in a number of ways. According to officials of this year’s Games, there will be 26 Olympic sports and 20 Paralympic sports scheduled to take place in venues – throughout London and across the United Kingdom – that are expected to draw crowds of approximately 450,000 spectators. An estimated 11 million tickets to various events have already been sold. Ensuring the security of spectators and competitors alike during the Games will therefore be a daunting, and sometimes dangerous, task for the metropolitan police and private-security personnel involved, and even more so in some ways for the United Kingdom’s own uniformed services.

Organizers of the Olympics initially projected the number of security guards needed to protect the numerous venues and Olympic areas at approximately 10,000 personnel. Later, though, new assessments – conducted by the UK government and the Olympic Committee – factored in the possibility of emerging terrorist threats and the potential for riots and protests. To meet those added challenges, they more than doubled the initial estimate to at least 23,700 and, possibly, as many as 49,000 full- and part-time personnel. In fact, largely because of the unique and varied security requirements involved, it is now anticipated that the 2012 London Olympics will require the largest mobilization of military and civilian security forces seen in the United Kingdom since the end of World War II.

## Tunnels of Truth, Atlanta & the Munich Massacre

Terrorist attacks have tarnished two past Olympics – in Munich, Germany, and Atlanta, Georgia – and the 2012 Olympics will present an even greater challenge: protecting the United Kingdom’s largest metropolitan area and one of

the world’s busiest airports from an even broader spectrum of potential threats by sea, air, or land. Despite many unforgettable moments provided by the athletes participating, the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, will be remembered mostly for two deaths and 111 injured after Eric Rudolph, who was religiously motivated, planted three bombs that exploded near a stage in Centennial Olympic Park. To avoid similar security concerns, such as those posed by huge open areas and tens of thousands of wandering spectators, foot traffic and venue access at the London Olympic Park will be limited – confined within a 16-foot high fence and including, in some areas, a four-foot electric fence. Tactical operation centers will maintain constant and continuous surveillance using live feeds from closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras and real-time communications with personnel throughout the site.

*Security planning for the 2012 Olympic Games has involved years of behind-the-scene efforts and will require the deployment of thousands of people and an abundance of equipment. Close to 50,000 well-trained personnel now stand ready to face any and all potential security threats.*

In addition to the CCTV coverage and contained areas, the entrances to this year’s Olympic venues will funnel attendees through several security-controlled access gates or choke points – (nicknamed by the UK Home Office as “Tunnels of Truth”). These points will incorporate a broad spectrum of computerized equipment systems to: (a) detect explosives and weapons; (b) match images of suspected or known terrorists (through the use of facial-recognition systems); (c) trace and validate tickets and travel documents; and (d) identify CBRNE (chemical, biological,

radiological, nuclear, or explosive) agents. In order for support employees to access the stadiums, venues, or Olympic Park, workers at the Games will be required to pass through a biometric scanner that takes hand and iris readings, thus eradicating the requirement for individual passes or keys – which have the potential to be lost, duplicated, or stolen.

Augmenting the mechanisms used for detecting and preparing for a CBRNE event, security must also prepare for an openly hostile incident such as the “Munich Massacre.” Similar in several ways to Atlanta’s Olympic Park bombing, the 1972 Olympics in Munich, Germany, were largely overshadowed



by the killing of 11 Israeli athletes and coaches, and a German police officer, by members of the Palestinian “Black September” terrorist group. Security experts in London have thoroughly analyzed the Munich Massacre to determine how it happened and, more importantly, how a similar attack, at the London Olympics, can be prevented. In addition to the inadequate physical security in Munich, it was determined that mistakes were also made in the follow-up plan to rescue the Israeli athletes from the hostage takers.

The quintessential factor was twofold – the inadequate preparedness of the security personnel involved, and the lack of proper equipment. With the British SAS (Special Air Service) heavily involved – including participation in numerous training exercises – in the 2012 security preparations, it is doubtful that a similar situation will occur as a result of any lack of preparedness. Moreover, and in contrast to Munich, the actual physical security within the Olympic Village in London will include more concrete barriers, rather than the portable chain-link fences used in Munich.

### **Protection by Land, Air, and Sea**

Enhancing security at the Olympics will be only half the battle for the United Kingdom. With close to 500,000 tourists staying in London itself, several supplementary levels of security will be employed throughout the *entire* city – and during the *entire* event. Tourists will be encouraged to travel by public transport, for example, because many of the roads near the Olympic venues will be closed to traffic – other than official vehicles. From a security perspective, the city also must ensure not only the

safety of the Olympics but the safety of the city as well. To improve overall security coverage, therefore: (a) CCTV cameras will be used in and around high-traffic public transit centers; (b) crucial transport hubs will be staffed with supplemental police officers; (c) new number-plate and facial-recognition software will be used to identify potential suspects and/or suspicious vehicles; and (d) several additional measures, such as state-of-the-art weapon-detection devices and other systems – many of them highly classified – will be introduced. The traditional quick and easy access to London’s aging underground subway system, which anticipates an additional 400,000 passengers daily during the Olympics, adds to the potential for problems.

Since the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001, and well before the 2012 Olympic preparations started, being able to prevent a similar attack on London has been a top priority for the United Kingdom. London must protect not only the ground area, but the air above it as well. To do so, the UK Home Office has developed a multidimensional Air Security Plan for the Olympics, which augments measures already in place to ensure that the city’s airspace is protected. The positioning of radar systems and use of surveillance aircraft stationed in areas close to London, and elsewhere throughout the country, will provide a real-time depiction of airspace that should be particularly helpful.

If a scenario similar to the 9/11 or other terrorist attacks were to develop, a Royal Air Force (RAF) Typhoon aircraft (a single-seat fighter jet) and RAF helicopters deployed with snipers will be immediately available to intercept and impede any posed threat. In February 2012, an exercise codenamed “Taurus Mountain 2” tested this planned response with considerable success. The airspace around London and the Olympic Park will in fact have not one but two overlapping levels of restrictions in place. The outer ring – encompassing the Luton, Stansted, and Gatwick airports – will be designated *restricted* airspace, with only limited flyovers allowed. The inner ring – encompassing the Heathrow airport and most if not quite all of the Olympic venues – will be considered *prohibited* airspace – i.e., a no-fly zone. In an effort to bolster defenses and air support, the government is ready and willing – for the first time since World War II – to use surface-to-air missiles in the defense plan.

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Coupled with security challenges by both land and air, officials are also concerned with those threats that could potentially come via water – more specifically, the River Thames, which runs through the heart of London and connects the Olympic Village at Stratford with the Olympic venues located in North Greenwich. Security on the Thames is a crucial component of the comprehensive security plan. Similar to the exercises conducted on land and in the air, the United Kingdom’s elite military and police teams joined forces in a combined exercise called “Operation Woolwich Arsenal Pier.” That exercise – comprising various scenarios, including the potential hijacking of a ferry carrying athletes or spectators – demonstrated how the Royal Marines and Scotland Yard would (and must) work together to use offshore landing craft, rigid inflatable boats, and a Lynx helicopter, to cope with and defeat a security breach by water. In addition to the massive presence of naval/military personnel, HMS *Ocean*, the Royal Navy’s largest vessel – designed primarily to support amphibious landing operations – will be positioned on the Thames to provide logistics support and personnel accommodations and, not incidentally, to serve as a landing site for the helicopters providing tactical air support for the Olympics.

### **Planning, Exercises & New Legislation**

Supplementing the individual sea, air, and land exercises, security personnel enacted a two-day live full-scale exercise (FSE) – nicknamed “Forward Defensive” – in central London. Drawing on the lessons learned from the 7 July 2005 subway bombings in London, approximately 2,500 first responders, security, and emergency-services personnel were faced with a scenario of a terror attack on the underground subway during the Olympics. The exercise tested how senior decision makers would manage: (a) the impact of the incident; (b) the investigation needed to apprehend those responsible; and (c) several other political and management issues – e.g., intentional travel disruptions and protests – that might adversely affect the smooth running of this year’s Olympic Games. By bringing together such planning and training, and exercising numerous contingencies, deficiencies and weaknesses can be exposed before an actual event occurs.

In addition to the full-field exercises carried out and the enhanced security measures put in place to combat a possible terrorist attack or hostage situation, the UK government has enacted some innovative legislation tailor-made for the 2012

Games. New and aggressive disciplinary laws are now in force. One example: The London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act of 2006 empowers not only the army and police, but also the private security agencies involved, to use physical force to deal with “security issues” or “Occupy-style protests.”

On 27 July 2012, an estimated global audience of five billion viewers will be watching as London experiences its largest-ever security operation. As the target of terrorist attacks in 2005 and the scene of widespread rioting in 2011, London has reached for and attained a higher level of security. Acts of terrorism, crime, and anti-social behavior have been planned for, exercised, safeguarded against, and exercised yet again. London also has been wired with a new range of scanners, biometric identification systems, number-plate and facial-recognition CCTV devices, disease-tracking systems, and the designation of a broad spectrum of new police control centers and random security checkpoints. In short, extensive contingency planning has prepared London for protests and public-order issues – which now seem more likely than an international terrorism incident per se. However, should some unfortunate and/or dangerous incident unravel despite all of these preparations, the security personnel onsite will already be in place, well trained and ready to respond.

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*For additional information on:*

*The 2012 London Olympics, visit <http://www.london2012.com>*

*London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Safety and Security Strategy, visit <http://www.parliament.uk/deposits/depositedpapers/2011/DEP2011-0422.pdf>*

*London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act 2006, visit <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/12/contents>*

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*Richard Schoeberl has over 17 years of counterintelligence, terrorism, and security management experience, most of it developed during his career with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, where his duties ranged from service as a field agent to leadership responsibilities in executive positions both at FBI Headquarters and at the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center. During most of his FBI career he served in the Bureau’s Counterterrorism Division, providing oversight to the agency’s international counterterrorism effort. Schoeberl also was assigned a number of collateral duties – serving, for example, as an FBI Certified Instructor and as a member of the agency’s SWAT program. He also has extensive lecture experience worldwide and is currently a terrorism and law-enforcement media contributor to Fox News, Sky News, al-Jazeera Television, and al-Arabiya.*



# Honoring Fallen Heroes: Special Security Requirements

By David G. Squires, State Homeland News



The City of Virginia Beach has had considerable experience in dealing with special events. As a tourist destination, the city hosts many of those events – including outdoor concerts, marathons, and visits by U.S. and foreign dignitaries. The

Virginia Beach Police Department (VBPD) and the other members of a special group of agencies dedicated to providing security services during such events fully understand the unique challenges associated with preparing for and providing a security environment adequate to the task. They also help facilitate the creation and sustainment of an environment conducive to each planned activity.

Nonetheless, and despite all of its past experience, in the summer of 2011, the VBPD was faced with one of its most difficult special-event challenges. More specifically, the VBPD was tasked in early August 2011 with coordinating the security and traffic management plan for hosting an invitation-only memorial service honoring members of the Naval Special Warfare (NSW) community. NSW members comprised the majority of the 38 American and Afghan personnel who were killed earlier that month when a military helicopter was shot down in the Wardak province of Afghanistan.

## Three Major Challenges

As the home base for nearly half of the U.S. Navy's SEAL (Sea, Air, and Land) teams, the city donated its Convention Center, special events staff, and numerous public safety professionals to provide both a fitting venue and a secure environment to help ensure there would be a dignified service honoring the NSW personnel killed in one of the deadliest single-day incidents in the Afghan war to date. That laudable goal could be achieved, though, only by overcoming three major challenges, as follows:

*Challenge 1 – Security.* The group's first planning session focused on the complex and unique nature of the event. Every active and former member of the NSW – and the members of their families – would be invited to attend. The Governor of Virginia, the Chief of Naval Operations, and a long list of other state and national leaders – as well as numerous NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) dignitaries – would be among the invited guests. Moreover, although the number of SEALs, family members, and dignitaries so closely concentrated were an obvious and attractive target for any possible terrorist threat, intelligence provided by the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) indicated that



members of the Westboro Baptist Church (WBC) presented an even higher likelihood of protest activity. Because the Westboro group – a relatively small congregation (an estimated 40 members) in Topeka, Kansas – has gained a certain infamy for inflammatory and offensive conduct during military funerals, JTTF intelligence also warned of WBC protesters who might arrive and attempt to disrupt the memorial service. [The WBC, which in recent years has frequently staged protests at military funerals, is not affiliated with – and, in fact, has been denounced by – the Baptist World Alliance and the Southern Baptist Convention.]

*Challenge 2 – Traffic Management.* In addition to the security challenge, there was also a complex traffic-management challenge that had to be addressed because: (a) So many active-duty attendees would have to be ferried by bus from two different bases in the area; (b) Safe passage would be required for the Patriot Guard escort and the dignitary motorcades; and (c) Protection would be needed for the 1,000 sailors from the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* who would be “manning the rails” during the ceremony. All of these moving parts had to be planned for and managed. An additional complication was the fact that the security professionals assigned would at the same time be busy facilitating ingress and egress throughout the day to an entirely unrelated and previously planned convention on the other side of the Convention Center. In addition to the obvious security and traffic challenges, there was also an obligation to take whatever steps would be needed to ensure the proper reverence and respect that is expected by attendees at any event honoring those who have died for their country.

*Challenge 3 – Time.* Although planning for most major special events generally begins many months – and sometimes years – in advance, the planning cycle for this particular event was less than 10 days. In consultation with Chief of Police James Cervera, Deputy Chief Tony Zucaro (head of the Operations Division) determined that a unified command structure was to be employed. Captain Michael J. Glendon (Commanding Officer of Special Operations) was identified as the VBPD Incident Commander (IC) and worked in close cooperation with all of the many groups and organizations involved. The VBPD IC also would serve as the lead official for decisions on perimeter security, protection of protestors, flow of traffic, and enforcement of both local and Virginia laws.

### **The Coordinating Task: National Agencies, Bomb Squads & K9 Units**

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) collaborated with the VBPD motorcycle unit to coordinate planning for the protective details escorting the visiting dignitaries. The JTTF provided intelligence and situational awareness throughout the planning cycle – and would assume jurisdictional authority if it was determined that there might be a threat to national-security interests. In addition: (a) The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the NCIS, and the VBPD all provided plain-clothes personnel experienced in and dedicated to real-time intelligence gathering and the provision of inner-perimeter security; and (b) Local fire and emergency medical services (EMS) agencies collaborated during the planning phase to ensure that there would be an adequate response capability in place to deal with heat emergencies, fire alarms, actual fires, or medical needs.

In addition to planning the catering, the seating, and numerous other details associated with any major and relatively large event, the staff at the Convention Center collaborated with Virginia Beach public school officials to ensure that magnetometers would be in place to scan all attendees for weapons. The Bomb and K9 squads of several regional agencies collaborated on a plan to scan and secure the very large perimeter of ground surrounding the event. Virginia Beach City Attorney Mark D. Stiles supported the declaration of a security perimeter that extended around the venue and even into a neighboring park. The same declaration authorized the exclusion of vagrants and kept pedestrians from remaining in or accessing the park or surrounding sidewalks during the ceremonies.

In addition: (a) The VBPD Special Weapons And Tactics (SWAT) team collaborated with FBI tactical resources to provide a critical-incident response capability; (b) A VBPD Mounted Team was assigned to and planned for various perimeter-security and crowd-management contingencies; (c) The VBPD air unit created and managed an overhead surveillance and security plan; and (d) The Naval Region Mid-Atlantic command assigned a significant number of security personnel to the planning phase so that various perimeter and traffic posts could be manned, thus facilitating the ingress and egress of attendees.

### **The End Result: No Bad News Is Very Good News**

All of these various and disparate elements were closely coordinated, under the ICS umbrella, with the senior officials in charge – who remained in daily contact with one another prior to the event to ensure that the plan was well understood and that all of the numerous units and hundreds of personnel involved were well prepared for anticipated contingencies.

On 25 August 2011, more than 5,000 persons attended the memorial service – and no major problems were experienced. In short, the largest security/exclusion zone operation ever associated with a Virginia Beach special event was planned for and managed successfully. Neither the WBC nor any other group bent on disruption showed up. No suspicious devices were discovered. The only medical emergencies that occurred were relatively minor and all, or almost all, were heat-related. Finally, the anticipated heavy traffic flow was effectively managed, with very few and only minimal delays experienced.

There was also another significant benefit: The lessons learned during the planning and execution phases of the memorial ceremonies will lay the groundwork for future special events of similar or even greater magnitude. The high level of dedication, professionalism, and cooperation demonstrated by all of the agencies participating, and by all members of the NSW, contributed immensely to the successful implementation of a “new and improved” plan for special events in Virginia Beach.

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# Leveraging the Expanding Social Network

By Rodrigo (Roddy) Moscoso, Law Enforcement



Ever since the first social media app appeared on “smartphones,” the U.S. public safety community has sought to tap into, and effectively use, the real-time feed of localized, first-person inputs to improve their own ability to monitor and respond to incidents, both large and small. Indeed, the concept of operations for “NexGen 911” portrays a future in which calls to Public Safety Answer Points (PSAPs) will result in “live links” between dispatch centers and callers’ devices. Live links would not only enable audio communications, but also provide precise location information, digital images, and even live video – that can then be captured by dispatch centers and used both to aid response efforts and to support the ongoing monitoring of events.

This capability already has been piloted in many jurisdictions across the United States, with some solutions already in service. In addition to the direct lines used to dispatch centers created by 911 calls to PSAPs, the vast Internet-accessible universe of social networking can provide an even richer source of information to emergency managers.

## “Occupying” the Internet – A Two-Way Tool

A good example of the value of this real-time information occurred in January 2012 during the so-called “Occupy” demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and other major cities. After the United States Park Police (USPP) faced criticism for not enforcing its “no camping” rule, National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis initially affirmed the protesters’ First Amendment rights to assemble, but ultimately notified occupiers that, as of 30 January 2012, the Park Police would be removing tents found to be in violation of the no-camping rule. In addition, the Occupy participants in Washington’s McPherson Square were notified by USPP officials exactly when the enforcement action would begin.

One result of the advance warning was that Occupy participants carefully planned for comprehensive coverage of the evacuation by using their own handheld devices – connecting to Twitter, Facebook, Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS), Ustream, and other outlets – to thoroughly

document the USPP actions. However, although the Park Police had their own monitoring resources on site, including closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras positioned on buildings surrounding the square, the value of the content provided by the USPP’s own monitors was dwarfed by the constant stream of information coming from dozens of Occupy “protester dispatchers,” who were (unintentionally, in all likelihood) providing incident commanders with rich, real-time information in unprecedented ways.

Emergency managers tasked with carefully observing any disturbances taking place during the evacuation were able to watch the live Ustream videos broadcast from numerous

Occupy monitors. The result was a stream of videos, Twitter updates, Facebook images, and other information that provided the USPP incident commanders and other authorities with an unprecedented view of the evacuation process as it unfolded.

In addition to helping in the response efforts themselves, the live updates also enhanced officer safety. In fact, after one officer was struck in the face with a brick, the suspect was quickly apprehended with images and videos provided by the protesters

themselves documenting the event. In the end, the event was comprehensively documented in a way that only the Internet can do. The evacuation actions also were electronically preserved for later analysis by anyone, including the general public and the press, to use for their own lessons-learned analyses.

## Humans Vs. Machines: The Humans Sometimes Win

The challenge for any large National Special Security Event (NSSE), such as the January 2013 Presidential Inauguration, is to find a legally and operationally effective way to filter and harness the flow of information available into a digestible set of actionable operational options that can be used by incident commanders. However, although real-time analytical solutions on social media feeds have been piloted, the technology is still in its infancy. Moreover, recognition by the general public that their Twitter and

*Social media are proving to be an invaluable source of information for incident commanders. However, there is still no viable replacement for human analysts.*

Facebook feeds are being monitored could lead to a mechanism that criminal elements will be able to use to intentionally publish disinformation. By creating plausible distractions for incident commanders and/or causing resources to be deployed or transferred unnecessarily, such disinformation could help create exposed areas where security could be compromised.

Today, the best analyses continue to come from human beings who can discern, associate, and mentally cross-reference information in ways unmatched by automated solutions, particularly visual information such as live video. Because computers still struggle with analyzing visual information, a number of programs – CAPTCHA, for example – have been developed to “protect websites against bots” by creating and analyzing tests “that humans can pass but current computer programs cannot.”

In addition, newly integrated CCTV systems that allow for the creation of “on-the-fly” video walls made up of multiple streams – including CCTV, Ustream, and other outlets – of information are something that only a human can quickly turn into actionable “intelligence.” Fortunately, the ability to quickly republish such intelligence (including a specific set of video feeds) to multiple consumers has also become easier.

Companies such as SitScape (headquartered in Tyson’s Corner, Virginia) provide software solutions that allow users to instantly – via a simple browser – see information identified by an analyst in a central environment. In such a scenario, an emergency management analyst may identify a set of images, streaming video, and Twitter feeds that warrant immediate law-enforcement intervention, and then instantly publish the content to a virtually unlimited number of recipients, including field personnel. In short, technological advances are helping to create a “perfect marriage” between

the unique skills of human analysts and the technology that supports them. However, they are not one and the same thing – not yet, at least.

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# The National “Public Health” Preparedness Report

By Raphael Barishansky, Public Health



In May 2012, one of the most comprehensive reports to date on the state of preparedness in the United States was released. As ordered by Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) created a National Preparedness Report (NPR) that focuses on the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk to U.S. security and resilience – including, but not limited to, acts of terrorism, cyber attacks, pandemics, and catastrophic natural disasters.

The NPR identifies areas where the nation has made significant progress and reinforces important principles of national preparedness. This report – created in cooperation with other federal, state, local, and tribal agencies and governments, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and the public – touches on a broad spectrum of preparedness topics.

In the May 2012 report, “Public Health and Medical Services” is described as being delivered by a broad range of partners who contribute to a highly responsive national Public Health and Medical capability. That definition encompasses public health, hospitals, and emergency medical services.

In general, the emergency preparedness elements associated with public health are noted to have improved significantly since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. Four of the key findings address: (a) biosurveillance capabilities; (b) medical countermeasure efforts; (c) surge planning and capabilities; and (d) funding impacts. Following are some relevant notes about each as described in NPR 2012.

## Biosurveillance Capabilities

*Chemical and biological agent detection, confirmation, and characterization capabilities have improved in key laboratories across the nation, contributing to improved biosurveillance capabilities.*

That statement translates directly into the improved U.S. ability to confirm chemical and/or biological incidents. The report points out that, although the overall number of laboratories has decreased since 2007, the performance of the remaining labs has improved. Those labs – comprising federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, and hospital partners – are essential components of a broader effort to develop biosurveillance capabilities nationwide and provide a “front line of defense for public health preparedness” by effectively detecting outbreaks and contributing significantly to other public health events.

One of the better known and robust of the biosurveillance programs is BioWatch, which provides biological agent monitoring and detection capabilities designed to detect and counter the intentional release of aerosolized biological agents in targeted high-risk urban areas across the country. BioWatch coordinators in the field work closely with local, state, and regional planning teams to advise public health, emergency management, and other local agencies and decision-makers on BioWatch operations.

## Medical Countermeasure Efforts

*Federal coordination of medical countermeasure efforts across agencies – from research and development through utilization – has greatly improved since 2001.*

According to the report, The Public Health and Medical Services component ranks highest for average core capability (78 percent). This success is attributed to several factors, including: (a) the creation and buildup of the Strategic National Stockpile of emergency medical countermeasures; (b) the planning efforts of the state and local jurisdictions responsible for dispensing these countermeasures; and (c) the allocation of more than \$4 billion in grants that have been awarded since 2002 to improve the resiliency of U.S. healthcare systems. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continue to evaluate the medical countermeasure mass-dispensing efforts annually through its Technical Assistance Reviews (TARs) for both state and local public health entities.

## Surge Planning and Capabilities

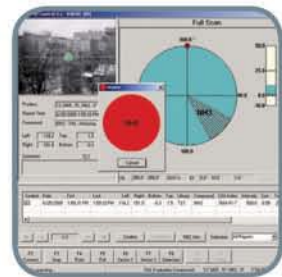
*A focus on hospital medical surge planning and capabilities has improved hospital preparedness nationwide. Greater emphasis is being placed on community approaches that involve healthcare coalitions, which include a variety of healthcare organizations, public health, mental and behavioral health, and emergency management to enhance medical surge.*

The report also highlights the Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which has awarded approximately \$4 billion to states throughout the nation since 2002, and also has strengthened the communications, medical evacuation, and fatality management capabilities of U.S. hospitals. The HPP is currently focused on developing community- and regionally-based coalitions of healthcare organizations and various public health and emergency management agencies with their plans to collaborate in strengthening preparedness efforts.

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## Funding Impacts

*The nation has built a highly responsive public health capability for managing incidents, but recent reductions in public health funding and personnel have impacted these capabilities.*

Since 2001, U.S. public health authorities at all levels of government – federal, state, and local – have had to develop, define, and embrace their emergency preparedness and response roles. Data provided by the CDC in 2009 show that designated state public health personnel with lead incident management roles need only about 66 minutes, on average, to report for duty when responding to a public health emergency with no prior warning. Moreover, 47 states have reported that, in responding to an infectious disease outbreak, they have sufficient staffing capacity to cover five 12-hour days for a period of six to eight weeks.

## Continuing Cutbacks & New Areas of Concern

The preceding metrics highlight the responsiveness of the nation's public health capabilities, but it should be noted as well that the United States also has experienced a reduction in local public health jobs – primarily as a result of funding reductions. The lack of adequate funding for public health preparedness programs already has resulted, for example, in significant staff layoffs across the nation. In addition, many state and local health departments are now faced with unpredictable fluctuations in funding while managing their budgets, hiring and training staff, and conducting long-term strategic planning.

Moreover, from 2007 to 2009, according to the report, the percentage of states that created and promulgated fatality management plans increased from 64 percent to 96 percent. However, it is important to note that any objective assessment of these fatality management plans shows that some of them are not yet adequate or fully “actionable.” Another critical point cited in the report was the reliance on federal assets in a mass-fatality event or incident (e.g., the 2011 Joplin, Missouri, tornado) where the number of deaths overwhelms the typically limited state, local, tribal, and territorial capabilities immediately available.

During large-scale incidents – e.g., pandemics or attacks involving weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) – it is obvious that the larger the number of fatalities, the greater the likelihood of contamination. Although there have been major improvements, hospital preparedness and surge-capacity efforts are constantly being tested by a combination of: (a) structural problems; (b) increased non-emergency patient visits to hospital emergency departments; (c) the occasional (but sometimes frequent) diversion, for various reasons, of emergency medical services; (d) the increased regionalization of surgical care; and (e) overall healthcare workforce shortages.

## Significant Improvements – But Major Problems Remain

To briefly summarize, public health agencies across the United States play a critical role in the nation's overall emergency preparedness and response capabilities. Their role has become even more important since the 2001 anthrax attacks, during numerous natural disasters, food-borne outbreaks, and other major public health emergencies (e.g., SARS and H1N1) that have been in the headlines in recent years. In short, the latest report shows that local and state health departments are, in fact, now better prepared for emergencies than ever before in the nation's history.

Since 2001, state and local preparedness capabilities have improved, both consistently and significantly, in such areas as mass vaccinations and prophylaxis planning, all-hazards preparedness training, implementation of the National Incident Management System and Incident Command System, and the installation and use of new or upgraded communication systems. Over the past 10 years, there have been exceptional increases in various areas of healthcare system readiness, including biosurveillance, hospital preparedness, and communication among FEMA's Emergency Support Function (ESF) #8 – Public Health and Medical Services partners and others.

One of the still looming issues that was minimally highlighted in the report is the possible impact that recent-year (and probable future) funding cuts will have on state and local readiness. Interestingly, only weeks after the latest NPR report was promulgated, a *New York Times* headline on 13 May 2012 proclaimed that “Cutbacks Hurt a State's Response to Whooping Cough.” The article that followed disclosed that, because of the current economic recession, Washington State's Public Health Department was having significant difficulty in responding to an infectious disease outbreak. The bottom line, according to the article, is that, although “state and local health departments [are] on the front lines of defense,” they have been seriously “weakened by years of sustained budget cuts.”

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*For additional information on:*

*The 30 March 2012 National Preparedness Report (NPR), visit <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=5914>.*

*The 13 May 2012 New York Times article, visit <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/13/health/policy/whooping-cough-epidemic-hits-washington-state.html>*

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# Upgrading Florida Air National Guard's Communications

By Blair Heusdens, National Guard



The ability to communicate effectively is critically important during disaster-response operations. However, it is even more important for all agencies involved – both military and civilian – to be able to communicate across different frequencies and networks. In the spring of 2012, emergency managers from the Florida Air National Guard's 125th Fighter Wing received a Mobile Emergency Operations Center (MEOC) equipped with specialized communications platforms that can deploy rapidly and provide much improved communications support during times of sudden disaster. The vehicle is equipped with communication systems that can: (a) support both military and civilian frequency communications; and (b) if necessary, provide the communications links needed between the different systems.

"If we just need to support the Guard, we have the high-frequency radios that will talk to any other military radio," said Senior Airman Mitchell Snead, an emergency manager with the 125th. Now, "if we need to support civilians, we can also do that."

The MEOC vehicle made its official debut by supporting the 2012 Statewide Hurricane Exercise, which was held 21-24 May 2012. The exercise provided a welcome opportunity to test not only the vehicle's operational capabilities but also its ability to link up with other military communication systems (at the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center in Starke, Florida).



An emergency manager with the Florida Air National Guard's 125th Fighter Wing scans video feed from the MEOC during the 2012 Statewide Hurricane Exercise at the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center.

(Florida Air National Guard photo, May 2012)



The Florida Air National Guard's new MEOC vehicle. (Florida Air National Guard photo, May 2012)

The exercise confirmed that the vehicle can be an important emergency-disaster asset not only to military units but also, if necessary, to civilian responders as well. The MEOC is designed "so that any civilian can come in," Snead commented, "and they can operate out of here as well."

The Air National Guard is fielding 25-30 similar vehicles throughout the country, officials said, so that a varying number of them will be available at any given time for emergency responses throughout the entire nation. For the Air Force's own emergency managers, the MEOC vehicle provides an additional tool that will help them perform more effectively in their multi-functional roles – primarily supporting base emergency management and domestic operations, including responses to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosive (CBRNE) situations and incidents. It is, in short, a new and important asset that will help "[us] to better do our jobs," said Snead. "[Being] an active-duty emergency manager is base-centric, whereas [being in the National Guard] opens us up to all the domestic operations."

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*Sgt. 1st Class Blair Heusdens is a public affairs specialist assigned full-time to the Florida National Guard Public Affairs Office in St. Augustine, Florida, and is a drill status member of the 107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment. Heusdens enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve in 2000 as a public affairs specialist. In 2002, she transferred to the Army National Guard and deployed in 2004 to Mosul, Iraq, with the 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment. She deployed again in 2009 to Guantanamo Bay with the 107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment. In 2010, she began work as a full-time Public Affairs Specialist with the Florida National Guard.*

# Hazard Mitigation: Today's Needs & Recommendations

By Megan Clifford & William Meyer, *Emergency Management*



In the United States today, losses resulting from natural disasters are on the rise, as is the frequency of such events. With state and federal budgets continuing to decline, the nation's emergency management community is constantly challenged to do more with less – while at the same time continuing to improve community resilience. A whole-community approach to mitigation offers a collaborative way forward to improve community resilience to all hazards on federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial levels.

Impressive strides forward in hazard mitigation are in fact being made at the community and federal levels. The Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (Risk MAP) program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is used by many communities to help build a better understanding of local risks. In addition, FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) incentivizes local mitigation actions through, among other things, the use of discounted flood insurance rates.

However, as damages continue to rise, it becomes obvious that there must be a better understanding of precisely what it means to mitigate risks. The answer to that question involves, among other things: (a) improving community and individual risk awareness through persistent and more effective risk communication efforts; and (b) encouraging the "ownership" of risk and responsibility for action. Moreover, there is a compelling need to not only encourage improved building codes, community planning, and building practices, but also to expand mitigation participants to include all components of the whole community. In addition to using citizen groups and local and national businesses for mitigation purposes, the community must also involve the insurance, real estate, building, and lending industries, as well as local planning officials and the media.

## An Insightful Panel Discussion & Viable Plans of Action

Recently, Booz Allen Hamilton gained additional insight and perspectives on the increase in hazard-mitigation

challenges by connecting directly with the hazard mitigation community. More specifically: In March 2012, Booz Allen Hamilton conducted a major, and illuminating, Hazard Mitigation Survey, polling a representative cross section of the nation's hazard mitigation professionals on the status of hazard mitigation today and asking respondents for their opinions on the best approaches to build and improve the disaster resilience capabilities of individual communities. In addition to offering their opinions on emergency preparedness and hazard mitigation issues, many of the survey participants provided concrete views on how to improve community natural hazard resilience. Those views included recommendations urging more accountable development, increased risk awareness at all levels of a specific community, more effective action on known risks, and the building of a more responsible and insured citizenry.

To further this important discussion, the company partnered with industry thought leaders in late April 2012 in Washington, D.C., in sponsoring a panel discussion on "Mitigating Our Nation's Risks: Calling Upon the Whole

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Community.” The discussion provided a much-needed open forum to gain a deeper insight into the critical issues facing the U.S. hazard mitigation industry as a whole. Panelists included David (Dave) Miller, Associate Administrator of the FEMA Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration; Dr. C. J. Huff, Superintendent of Schools in Joplin, Missouri; Lawrence (Larry) Larson, Executive Director of the Association of State Floodplain Managers; Matthew Gannon, Assistant Vice President of the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies; and Admiral Thad Allen, USCG (Ret.), former Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard and now Senior Vice President of Booz Allen Hamilton.

Using the survey results as a starting point, the panelists discussed the need for a sustainable model that engages the whole community at all levels. They also emphasized the importance of: (a) understanding and communicating information related to a broad spectrum of risks; and (b) translating that awareness into appropriate mitigation actions that can be carried out both by the community at large and

by individual citizens. The insights developed in the panel discussion are today being shared to further the dialogue on this vital and compelling national issue.

A complete report on the survey and panel discussion is available at [www.boozallen.com/mitigation](http://www.boozallen.com/mitigation).

*Megan Clifford (pictured), a Principal at Booz Allen Hamilton, is a leader of the firm's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) market team. She also oversees the firm's work with FEMA clients, providing support in such areas as policy analysis, program design and development, stakeholder engagement, grants management, and program management focused on efficiencies and effectiveness. She has more than 14 years of experience serving a variety of clients, including the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, Department of Energy, and Department of Defense. She is a member of the Association of State Floodplain Managers, the National Grants Management Association, and the Project Management Institute.*

*With over 15 years of experience, William Meyer, CFM, PMP, Booz Allen Hamilton, consults with federal, state, and local government agencies, as well as the private sector, on emergency management and homeland security, particularly hazard mitigation, with special focus on improving community disaster resilience. He is a Project Management Professional (PMP) with the Project Management Institute and a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) with the Association of State Floodplain Managers.*

## First Responder Hazmat/CBRN Training Special Report & Webinar



Chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) response requires a collaborative, multi-discipline effort, but gaps still remain in funding, leadership, standards, etc. This webinar focuses on first responder training for hazmat and CBRN incidents. Even in an environment of limited funding, there are solutions that can be explored to coordinate response, train team members, and prepare emergency responders for the next all-hazards event.

On 21 May 2012, DomesticPreparedness.com hosted an Executive Briefing at The National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Brigadier General Stanley H. Lillie, U.S. Army (Retired), led the discussion on First Responder Hazmat/CBRN Training.

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