



# Emergency Management Issues Special Interest Group Annual Meeting

## Using Hostile Action Scenarios in EPI Training

Lessons  
from the EPI Subcommittee  
Tabletop Exercise

May 2-5, 2011 Charleston Marriott • Charleston, South Carolina



# Background

- 2010 EPI Subcommittee Objective to develop selection of HAB scenarios for EPI training
- 8 descriptive scenarios prepared for EMI SIG website
- Monday EPI workshop on how to use scenarios and tabletop exercise
- Challenges of HAB scenario for EPI Team

# Knowledge needed

- Understanding HAB terminology
- Information sources for EPI Team
- Understanding command structure for a security emergency
- Communication about a crime scene

# Coordination Challenges

- Liaison with FBI media unit within the JOC
- New chain of command in the JIC
- Interface with site security
- Protocols of other agencies
- Coordination on response to public/media questions

# Decision Making Challenges

- JIC activation
- What information is “need to know”
- Selection of spokesperson
- Communication priorities

# Tabletop Objectives

- Communication with Headquarters PIO and Congressional Affairs representatives
- Communication with appropriate Federal, State, and local agency PIOs
- Select emergency spokesperson about the event.
- Make decision on activation and staffing a JIC
- Communicate with the EOC on communication priorities and strategies

# Tabletop Objectives

- Prepare ongoing emergency information for dissemination
- Coordinate the approval process for release of information
- Decide responsibilities for conduct of press briefings
- Rumors detection and control
- Anticipate questions and stories of emphasis

# Tabletop Scenario Used

- Private vehicle runs gate at Nevada National Security Site, plows through crowd of Israeli visitors and crashes into dormitory, exploding on impact
- Small plane crashes into Device Assembly Facility at Nevada Site
- Middle East terrorist group takes credit for attack

# Tabletop Lessons in Coordination

- Good idea to involve these organizations in tabletop discussion of information needs in advance.
- Discussion Point: The City/State PIO critical information requirements may include: Offsite impact, perimeter control and resource coordination

# Lessons in Coordination

- Need for advance protocols between the site EPI and other agencies involved in security scenario response
- Chain of command for the JIC
- Liaison with FBI's News Media unit

# Lessons: Informational Challenges

**Emergency information we deal with in a hostile action scenario will differ from usual Operational Emergency**

- Terminology may be unique
- Hazards and source of hazards
- Protective actions—onsite and offsite
- Command of emergency

# Lesson: Information Priorities

- What constitutes “need to know” for public safety
- PIOs may be challenged to explain need to know issues to emergency management, security, FBI – convincingly.
- First news release pre-approved information-- simply states an incident has occurred & where.
- Critical to clearly, quickly and often explain the hazards, protective actions and emergency command to media/public.

# Lessons: Social Media Impact

- Rapid, unbridled social media impacts ability to control information released
- Visuals of site (i.e. satellite images of secure facilities) will be posted on internet
- Employees or visitors may take phone photos/videos of initial event scene—and post to internet.
- Cannot contain information due to real-time access to information

# Lesson: Coordination with DOE Headquarters

- Experienced PIOs observed that Headquarters typically takes a more directional role about information to be released.
- Headquarters PIO info priorities may differ from the site focus on life safety.
- Discussion Point: HQ info void can be filled via WebEOC

# Lessons in Decision Making

## **Spokesperson selection**

- Discussion Point: Senior DOE executive is chosen as spokesperson and then the DOE/NNSA Public Affairs Office Spokesperson provides public information

## **Approval process for release of info**

- Discussion Point: All information would flow through the FBI and acts as a conduit with DC
- The Site Office Spokesperson provides site-specific information to the FBI agent in the JIC
- The JIC Manager and FBI agent in JIC coordinate EPI

# Lesson: Employee Communications

- Employee notifications need to be a communication goal of the JIC
- Email/text blast methods used
- Information you must tell employees after initial incident
  - Protective Actions
  - Site status/operational status
  - Offsite impact?
  - Rumor control

# Other Take Home Messages

- Use training scenarios to develop:
  - pre-approved messages
  - pre-approved visuals
  - visuals should support talking points -- ask “is the visual going to support our information goals?”
- Preplan coordination of information flow with DOE HQ
- Preplan coordination of information flow with other Federal agencies, i.e., State Dept., FBI, DHS, etc.