21-23 June 2005, at US Military Academy, West Point, NY

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**Lesson Learned: Interagency Coordination is Critical**

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**SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES**
Lesson Learned: Interagency Coordination is Critical

Presented at
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June 21-23, 2005
Interagency Coordination Outline

• Background:
  – NIMS (National Incident Management System) requirements.
  – Exercise typologies.
  – Exercise descriptions.

• The Good:
  – Tools.
  – Positive results.

• The Bad:
  – Cultural discrepancies.
  – Hierarchical rather than cooperative perspectives.
  – Negative attitudes.

• The Lessons:
  – Let the Lead Agency Lead.
  – Communications Will Be Problematic.
  – Plan For Contingencies.
  – Record Key Activities.
  – Adopt An Attitude That Training And Exercises Are Regular Duty.
National Incident Management System (NIMS)
Emergency Services Change in Focus

Pre-ICS

FBI
STATE
LAW ENFORCEMENT
FEDERAL STATE
FIRE/HAZMAT
CDC
STATE
MEDICAL SERVICES
FEMA
STATE
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Post-ICS

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
MEDICAL SERVICES
FIRE/HAZMAT
LAW ENFORCEMENT
Exercise Types

• Discussion
• Seminar
• Table Top
• Computer-aided Simulation
• Computer-modeled Simulation
• Full Scale
M&S Stimulation Strategy and Benefits

• Provide ground truth information represented in a computer simulation.

• Reduce training and exercise costs by modeling an incident and the on-scene response to that incident (personnel and equipment).

• Provide robust and realistic conditions for participant consideration during an exercise (i.e., traffic, spectators, weather conditions, etc.).

• Identify and correct problems in an exercise setting.

• Test adjustments in plans and procedures almost instantaneously.

• Provides cooperative, multi-disciplinary environment.

• Recording and playback capabilities for further analysis.

• Training products can be derived from exercises.

• Provides data sets for Post-Exercise Improvement Planning.
Interagency Coordination Outline

• **Background:**

• **The Good:**
  – Tools available and advantages.
  – Positive exercise results.
  – Improvements in communication.

• **The Bad:**
  – Cultural discrepancies.
  – Hierarchical rather than cooperative perspectives.
  – Stove piping.

• **The Lessons:**
  – Let the Lead Agency Lead.
  – Communications Will Be Problematic.
  – Plan For Contingencies.
  – Record Key Activities.
  – Adopt An Attitude That Training And Exercises Are Regular Duty.
Exercises Under Review

• Six exercises.

• Locations:
  – Federal Courthouse – Alexandria, VA.
  – Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, Washington, DC.
  – Suitland Federal Center, Suitland, MD.

• Objectives:
  – Exercise communications across disciplines.
  – Implement ICS.
  – Exercise common language.
  – Exercise operations plans.
  – Involve local, state, and federal resources.
Interagency Coordination Successes

• Tools available and advantages:
  – Capability to test revised plans, procedures and protocols.
  – Capability to test new communication systems and common operational picture tools.
  – Training tools development across disciplines.

• Positive exercise results:
  – Joint emergency response planning.
  – Developing/Reinforcing collaboration and connectivity.
  – Protocols for force protection.
  – State standards modeled after exercise activities.
  – Development of trust across disciplines/government levels.
Pitfalls Encountered

• Identifying & inviting agencies to participate.
• Insuring that objectives meet needs of all agencies.
• Cross-purpose missions.
• Creating universal buy-in of evaluation criteria.
• Unproductive attitudes:
  – Lack of trust across disciplines & government levels.
  – Fear of exposure (internal and external).
  – “War of the worlds” attitude.
  – Plans in place are satisfactory (without testing or practice)
• Post-X collaboration to develop improvement plan.
Lessons

• Let the Lead Agency Lead:
  – Lead agency must have event essential competencies and capabilities.

• Communications Will Be Problematic:
  – Technology will fail.
  – Technology across disciplines will be not be compatible.
  – Language across disciplines will vary.

• Plan For Contingencies.

• Record Key Activities.

• Adopt An Attitude That Training And Exercises Are Considered Part Of Regular Duties.
For More Information

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