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IMR GROUP

Publisher's Message

By Martin (Marty) Masiuk, Publisher

In 1998, when the IMR Group, Inc. gave formal approval to the creation of a new publication dedicated to raising public awareness about the need for massive improvements in U.S. homeland-security and preparedness capabilities, the possibility of terrorist attacks against American citizens on their own soil was taken seriously by only a relative handful of the nation's elected officials – at any level of government.

Today, the situation is far different from what it was less than one decade ago. Despite deep and divisive differences over the war in Iraq and about what should be done to resolve "the immigration problem," the Democratic and Republican parties are in virtually unanimous agreement that the nation's domestic-preparedness posture will need continued reinforcement for many years to come. The American people agree, and seem to be even more willing than their elected leaders are to provide the additional funding needed to close current capabilities gaps as quickly as possible.

This monthly printable issue of DomPrep Journal – which focuses well deserved attention on some of the innovative ways in which various states and communities, as well as the federal government, are improving their capabilities to provide for the common defense – features a report by U.S. Representative Tom Davis (R-Va.) on the need for a much-expanded telework program for federal employees, particularly those working in or near the nation's capital. Davis, a highly respected senior member of the House Homeland Security Committee, makes a cogent case for his argument that permitting (or requiring) a higher percentage of government employees to work from home would be the best and perhaps only way to ensure continuity of the government in the event of a mass-casualty attack on (or natural disaster affecting) the National Capital Region.

Two interviews conducted by Managing Editor John Morton look at other important sectors of homeland defense. Craig P. Coy, president and CEO of the L-3 Communications Homeland Security Group, points out several ways to improve the security of U.S. seaports and the nation's intermodal and mass-transport systems. And John F. Clark, director of the U.S. Marshals Service, tells how his organization is providing much-needed support for state and local agencies.

Other distinguished contributors provide helpful insights in their special fields of expertise. Gary Simpson, director of emergency management for the City of Annapolis, discusses a hardy perennial – funding problems – and offers a few suggestions on how they can be overcome (but not always, and not completely). Lt. Cmdr. Mathew "Jason" Thomas, officer in charge of the new CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) District of Columbia quarantine station, reports on the station's successes to date in stopping the "infiltration" (intentional or accidental) of infectious diseases from overseas. And Glen Rudner, hazardous-materials response officer for the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, provides a chilling analysis of the growing use by U.S. "domestic" terrorists of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) loaded with lethal chemical agents.

The common denominator of all of these articles, and of the several others included in the issue, is the need for ever increasing cooperation, coordination, and collaboration between and among law-enforcement, hazmat, other first-responder agencies, and public health authorities at all levels of government. Also, the need for closely detailed planning – now, not later – to meet all reasonably foreseeable emergencies. And for multi-agency training, and frequent exercises, that involve senior managers and decision-makers – and volunteer groups and individuals – as well as the frontline first responders themselves.

In short, the United States is much better prepared today than it was just ten years ago to cope with mass-casualty incidents, natural or manmade. But there is still much to do, and not much time left in which to do it.

About the Cover: SWAT Team members using the Avon C50 CBRN mask prepare for entry into a potentially hostile environment during training drills. SWAT trainees using the NIOSH-approved Avon C50 CBRN mask, fitted with a distortion-free panoramic visor and an improved sighting system, enter a "potentially dangerous environment." (Avon Protection photo)

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Learning to Cope

Lethal New Ingredients In the IED Inventory

By Glen Rudner, Fire/HazMat

As incidents of domestic and international terrorism occur with greater frequency, U.S. first responders have another important problem to contend with – they are encountering certain unfamiliar types of explosives that are now being used by terrorists. The most common of these "new" explosives – which have been in the terrorist inventory since at least the early 1990s, but were not a principal "weapon of choice" until recently – are Triacetone Triperoxide (TATP) and Hexamethylene Triperoxide Diamine (HMTD). Both use peroxide as a key ingredient.

U.S. law-enforcement (LE) and public-safety response agencies have found both during what appears to have been investigations of non-emergency incidents. Typically, such incident investigations start out as an effort to identify an "unclassified" substance, but then escalate in intensity as additional information becomes available about the product. In some cases, the suspects seem to have been experimenting with chemical-explosive "recipes" found on the internet.

As the incident investigation continues, yet more information may be developed from simple clues such as emails found on computers and/or books or other documents carelessly left at the scene. The problem has grown so dramatically in such a short period of time that both TATP and HMTD have been found during recent investigations carried out in college dorms, home basements, and illicit laboratories.

The dimensions of the problem have resulted in a number of changes in the tactical objectives of U.S. hazardous materials response teams (HMRTs), and have led to revisions in their safety precautions as well. Team members have learned from previous incidents involving peroxide-based explosives, for example, that some very hazardous reactions can occur during the responses to such incidents. Because both TATP and HMTD are extremely sensitive materials, an action as simple as opening the container holding the explosive can set them off immediately.

> ***Incident investigations start out as an effort to identify an "unclassified" substance, but escalate in intensity as additional information becomes available***

The "Near Vicinity" May Be Too Close

It is not absolutely necessary, in fact, to actually touch the IED (improvised explosive device) container to cause a violent explosion – the production of shock, friction, or heat *near* the container could produce the same reaction. Here the lesson to be learned is that HMRT members and other emergency first responders should not handle the IED or pre-cursor chemicals in any way, or walk through chemical residue, until a site-safety plan has been implemented and the IED not only has been fully evaluated but also rendered safe. With that precaution in mind, it also should be noted that *any* response to incidents involving peroxide-based explosives must include participation by law-enforcement and bomb-squad personnel as well as a chemist possessing considerable expertise in the handling of explosives.

Another important prerequisite to be noted, and included in contingency plans, is that, because so many agencies and political jurisdictions are likely to be involved, a Unified Command must be established as soon as

possible. Doing so will ensure the investigation will be better organized and that all important priorities are given proper consideration.

When a response has been requested and the HMRT arrives on the scene, the first priorities to be considered must be the saving of lives and the evacuation of the incident area. The evacuation should be carried out in accordance with guidelines set forth in the Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG) – tempered and/or modified by recommendations made by the bomb squad as well as such factors as the topography in the area surrounding the incident and the size of the population most likely to be affected.

The next important task in the HMRT response usually will be to conduct a hazard-risk assessment. This will start in most if not all situations by examination of and research on the product(s) involved. As noted earlier, the two most widely used peroxide-family explosives are TATP and HMTD, which use different precursors. TATP is prepared by combining precisely measured amounts of hydrogen peroxide, acetone, and a strong acid. The most common strong acids now used are sulfuric acid, hydrochloric acid, and nitric acid. HMTD is similarly prepared – from such commonly used chemicals as hydrogen peroxide, hexamine, and citric acid.

HMRT members and other emergency first responders should not handle the IED or pre-cursor chemicals in any way until a site-safety plan has been implemented

Of course, in order to know exactly what to research, and in what depth, intelligence found or developed by the LE agencies participating should be provided to the HMRT, the members of which must keep in mind that, when referencing these materials, they must give serious consideration to the potential reactions that may occur. As noted previously, peroxide-based explosives are highly reactive and potentially explosive. If any of these substances are suspected to be present, the bomb squad should take the lead role in the investigation.

The Essential Prerequisites: Plans, Precautions, and Professional Expertise

Once the product(s) have been identified and the initial precautionary actions taken (evacuation, research, and isolation), the HMRT should assist the LE/Bomb Squad with continued reference and by providing its own technical expertise – including, to cite one important example, the development of an Incident Action Plan (IAP). The latter not only should set forth site-safety considerations and tactical objectives but also incorporate product information, the guidelines needed for contacting and working with chemists and other technical professionals, and suggestions on ways to assist the LE/Bomb Squad with presumptive on-scene testing and sampling – as and when needed.

To summarize: The mitigation of incidents involving peroxide-based explosives is a major and increasingly difficult problem for the nation's hazardous materials response teams. Such incidents must not be handled alone, but in close cooperation with other agencies – which means there is an urgent need for pre-incident interactions and planning with LE agencies. Not just team leaders, but *all* HMRT members should remember that there are many subject-matter experts who are willing to assist at any time – this is particularly true, of course, if close working relationships have previously been established with those experts.

They are relatively common today in Iraq, Israel, and elsewhere in the Mideast, but still rare in the United States – for the present. But when an IED attack or any similar high-risk/low-frequency incident does occur, those responding must ask themselves if they are as fully prepared as they should and must be to work with the many other agencies that undoubtedly will be involved.

Glen D. Rudner is the Hazardous Materials Response Officer for the Virginia Department of Emergency Management; he has been assigned to the Northern Virginia Region for the last nine years. During the past 25 years he has been closely involved in the development, management, and delivery of numerous local, state, federal, and international programs in his areas of expertise for several organizations and public agencies.

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Special Report: The Last Resort

Interdicting a Suspected Suicide-Homicide Bomber

By Joseph Steger, Law Enforcement

In the war on terrorism at home, facing a suspected suicide/homicide bomber is one of the greatest street challenges facing U.S. law-enforcement officers today. Police officers have to swiftly and effectively evaluate physical and behavioral characteristics that *may* (or may not) indicate a suspect's possession of an improvised explosive device (IED) and/or his intention to use it to kill himself and as many other people as possible. Effective interdiction actions against a would-be martyr carrying or wearing an IED present unique challenges.

As the proliferation of homicide/suicide martyrdom incidents has evolved from rare occurrences in the 1980s to the almost daily attacks in Iraq today, police officers in the United States recognize that they are increasingly likely to face similar threats in the nation's homeland in the very near future. In fact, some U.S. police officers already have encountered and effectively interdicted suspected suicide/homicide bombers.

Western law-enforcement agencies continue to wrestle with issues of identifying potential suicide/homicide bombers while avoiding demographic-based profiling and applying previously approved use-of-force criteria. In 2005, the International Association of Chief of Police (IACP) helped by issuing two training keys focused on dealing with suicide/homicide bombers. Training Key 581 presents an overview of suicide/homicide bombing tactics, and provides some useful tips to help officers recognize a possible suicide/homicide bomber. Training Key 582 provides valuable additional information that can be used in interdiction operations against a suspected bomber.

Both of the IACP training keys offer additional references for training and further study on the subject. Training Key 582 suggests, for example, that deadly force may be justified based upon an officer's *reasonable belief* that a suspect represents a *significant* threat of death or serious injury to the officer himself, or to others, because of the suspect's capability to detonate the bomb he apparently is wearing or carrying. This interpretation of legal justification in the application of deadly force represents an understanding that the IED is an omni-directional weapon that for practical purposes virtually eliminates what is described as a "reactionary" gap. The IACP position on this matter does not represent a legal opinion, however, and officers should consult with their jurisdictions' legal counsels for clarification – not at the time such an incident occurs, of course, but just as soon as possible.

> ***Despite the lack of bomber-interdiction training, the responding officers instantly realized that controlling the bomber's hands was critical to their own survival***

The PERF and Legal Counsel Positions

In a recent position paper released by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), the application of lethal force against a suspected suicide/homicide bomber was justified as a last resort against an "inevitable" threat of death or serious injury. The variance between PERF's opinion and the more tentative position of the IACP illustrates the extent to which U.S. law-enforcement personnel need greater and more consistent training in their preparations to identify and interdict suspected suicide/homicide bombers.

In July 2005, just two weeks after the release of the IACP training keys, British police-service officers mistakenly shot and killed Jean Charles de Menezes under the belief that he was a participant in the London subway bombings – and, at the time he was shot, in possession of an IED. In December 2005, U.S. air marshals shot and killed Rigoberto Alpizar in Miami after he declared, in the immediate proximity of a crowded aircraft, that he had an IED fitted with what could have contained an explosive device; he also refused to comply with the verbal commands given him by the air marshals. The air marshals later found that Alpizar was *not* in possession of an IED but, rather, was suffering from a mental illness.

In contrast to that situation, another use of suicide/homicide tactics, also in December 2005, shocked the quiet town of Brockport, N.Y., when William Fragner used a fake suicide/homicide bomber belt to carry off a robbery of a Chase Manhattan Bank branch in that community. Responding to the bank's hold-up alarm, two of the Brockport Police Department's finest confronted Fragner as he was walking out of the bank. Fragner opened his coat, displaying the fake bomber belt, while he was standing only a few feet from the officers.

Not intimidated by the "IED," the two officers immediately grabbed Fragner's hands and arms, slamming him backward and off balance against the wall of the bank building, then applied handcuffs behind Fragner's back and secured them through a metal railing attached to the wall. At that point, the Brockport Police quickly established "distance and containment" boundaries and evacuated the surrounding area while awaiting an EOD (explosive ordnance disposal) team to disarm the device, still attached to Fragner's body.

Different Circumstances, But Similar Training

Each of the examples cited above represents different circumstances, and resulted in somewhat different outcomes, in dealing with what the officers involved reasonably believed to be a suicide/homicide bomber. The totality of each situation must be evaluated on its own circumstances, of course, before drawing

any general conclusions. However, the key point to be recognized is that, in each of the instances cited, the responses taken by the officers involved were based on their own previous training and experience.

In the Brockport case, despite the lack of bomber-interdiction training, the responding officers instantly realized that controlling the bomber's hands was critical to their own survival (and, probably, the survival of others) at such a close distance. This concept is reinforced in training for responding in extremely close quarters to threats posed not only by IEDs but other weapons as well. The federal air marshals used verbal commands as a measure of lesser force before they shifted to the last resort – applying deadly force.

The key lesson to be learned from these and similar incidents is that police officers at all levels of government – national, state, and local – throughout the United States will be better prepared to effectively interdict suspected suicide/homicide bombers through focused training that builds upon the skills acquired by domestic law-enforcement officers in sessions dealing with the weapons systems used by any category of assailants. When the reactionary gap is close and less than split-second decisions have to be made, there is no substitute for thorough, focused training that leverages and strengthens the officer survival skill sets that already have been acquired.

Knowledge of the realities of suicide-homicide bomber terrorist tactics, coupled with repetitious practical application in training, is essential to instilling greater understanding of how to counter those tactics – and enhance not only the safety of the U.S. homeland but also the survival of many innocent citizens who just happen to be at or near the scene of an attempted terrorist attack.

Joseph Steger is the pseudonym of a senior law-enforcement commander whose undergraduate background in a pre-medical program led to initial certification as an EMT in 1981. He retained that level of certification for eight years and across three states while serving as a federal law-enforcement officer. Over the years, Steger has worked closely with CONTOMS-trained tactical medics and physicians in numerous situations.

Resources in Waiting: EMS Task Forces

By Joseph Cahill, EMS

Many states have worked with the concept of establishing EMS (emergency medical services) task forces as a way to answer the glaring problem of insufficient medical staffing during large-scale disasters. Nonetheless, the unanswered question is in many communities still the same: "How will the system provide enough people to care for the ill or injured?"

The grim reality facing many emergency managers is that there is no good answer to this question – in large part because the health care industry has become so competitive and does not carry care providers on the payroll for "just in case" needs. In fact, staffing has become a "just-in-time" commodity in much the way that inventory has, and usually for the same reasons.

Many programs have been put forward to attempt to address this issue: the Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP), for example; the medical reserve corps (MCR); and Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) – to name just a few.

ESAR-VHP is basically a registry of medical professionals who are willing to assist during a disaster; many ESAR-VHP programs provide some training to their registrants. An MRC is a locally organized team of medical professionals and support staff who train and practice as a team; MRC staff can deploy as individuals or as a team, under either local or state control. (The citizen's reserve corps, a similar program, provides staff for non-medical tasks that do not require a highly trained responder such as a paramedic, a firefighter, or a police officer.)

A DMAT is a state or regionally organized team of emergency and medical professionals who train, practice, and deploy as a team. DMATs usually deploy under either federal or state control. There are veterinary, search-and-rescue, and mortuary equivalents of the DMAT under the federal National Disaster Medical System program.

California Makes Good Use Of Wildfire Experience

A consistent issue of concern to emergency managers is the movement of affected patients to a hospital for treatment. HRSA (Health Resources and Services Administration) grant program deliverables address the issue of a state's ability to meet minimum transportation targets – one of which is the capacity to transport 500 patients per million of population.

Many states – e.g., California, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania – have developed special EMS resources to address the staffing issue. Most of these are made up of EMS professionals who are organized into strike teams or task forces that can be deployed to a region within the state where a disaster requires more resources than the local community can call out and still continue to provide the customary 9-1-1 services.

It is important to realize that, if a jurisdiction uses all of its resources to manage a disaster and there are no ambulances available to respond to routine emergency requests, the community is not being adequately served and the emergency-response system has therefore failed to discharge its responsibilities.

The California strike teams are typically composed of five paramedic ambulances and one supervisor, and are part of a larger system that integrates medical volunteers from the medical reserve corps, ESAR-VHP, and other sources. Because of its long history in fighting wildfires, California has considerable experience both in inter-jurisdictional cooperation and in the management, deployment, and state-level coordination of resources.

Although there are some disasters that could overwhelm even this system, the setting up of a unified management system is still the best way to ensure that the resources available will go further and save the lives of more victims than would be possible without such a system.

*Joseph Cahill has served as a line paramedic for over ten years in The South Bronx and North Philadelphia. He was awarded the distinguished service medal and seven pre-hospital "saves" ribbons from NYC*EMS and FDNY and a unit citation from the Philadelphia Fire Department, and has received both the 100-Year Association's award for "Outstanding Service to New York City" as well as the World Trade Center Survivor's Ribbon (two bronze stars).*

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CDC in D.C. Area

Expanding the Quarantine System at the Nation's Borders

By Mathew "Jason" Thomas, Public Health

Since 1921, the federal government has had responsibility for preventing the introduction, transmission, and spread of infectious disease from foreign countries into the United States. The U.S. quarantine program reached its zenith in the latter half of the 20th century during the global smallpox-eradication campaign. By the 1970s, as the eradication of smallpox became a reality and the threat that infectious diseases in general posed for the human population was perceived to be significantly lower than in the past, the number of quarantine stations standing sentry at the nation's borders had declined sharply to a mere seven. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) added an eighth station in Atlanta just before the start of the Olympic Games in 1996.

Further expansion of public health assets at the ports of entry into the United States was prompted both by the threat posed by bioterrorism and by the global spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). The first station added as part of this recent expansion was in the greater Washington, D.C., area, where CDC opened a station at Dulles International Airport at the beginning of fiscal year 2005. Among the more important priorities assigned to the station were to create effective working partnerships within its jurisdiction and to develop a communicable-disease response plan for Dulles itself.

The support provided by state and local health departments, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, and other agencies and jurisdictions led to the successful achievement of these goals. The Dulles communicable-disease response plan – the first modern plan to include an option for the large-scale on-site quarantine of a large number of people – has been used as a template by other CDC stations as well as by several other U.S. airports that lack the benefit of an on-site CDC presence.

The Three Keys To Operational Success

The success of any such endeavor is dependent primarily, of course, on the willingness of those involved in the process to support public health efforts. In addition, several working principles gained from the experiences at Dulles can be used in almost *any* situation in which disparate parties and agencies must work closely with one another to achieve a common goal. Among the most important of those principles are the following:

> ***The experiences at Dulles can be used in almost any situation in which disparate agencies must work closely with one another to achieve a common goal***

- *Authority:* The possession of regulatory authority by any one agency does not immediately translate into the willingness of other agencies to comply with the regulations postulated. It is, rather, a collaborative approach to developing effective working relationships with the regulated partners that fosters compliance.

- *Communications:* There is no such thing as "too much" communication. In this area, the regulatory authority usually must build redundant protocols, in fact, to ensure that all parties and/or agencies involved possess the situational awareness required, independently of who or what agency receives the initial report of an incident.

- *Expertise:* Success is dependent on collaboration. Here, the regulatory authority must take advantage of the expertise provided by many others, individuals as well as organizations, specifically including those who are working in seemingly unrelated fields. In many situations, a different perspective may be the key needed to unlock the door to the success of any cooperative effort.

These three considerations, all of which were critical to the early successes of the Washington Quarantine Station, may be overlooked by programs faced with short deadlines and high expectations. It still must be remembered, though, that the goal of preventing the introduction, transmission, and spread of infectious disease from foreign countries into the United States is and probably always will be a joint effort. Achievement of this multifaceted goal relies primarily, therefore, on the contributions of numerous federal agencies as well as state and local governments, private industry, and both nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations. These and other collaborations have significantly strengthened the overall U.S. quarantine system, making the 20 current CDC stations an interdependent web of coordinating points for the protection of public health at the nation's ports of entry.

Lieutenant Commander Jason Thomas is the officer in charge of the Washington [D.C.] Quarantine Station of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which protects the health of the public by preventing the introduction, transmission, and spread of communicable diseases from foreign countries into the United States. His station's jurisdiction includes U.S. ports in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. Thomas also serves as regional officer-in-charge of the CDC quarantine stations throughout the Northeast region of the United States. A graduate of the Colorado State University's College of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences, Thomas originally was commissioned into the U.S. Navy's Medical Service Corps and, among other assignments, served as the Preventive Medicine Division Officer at Naval Hospital Newport.

MCCs and the Financing of Interoperability Solutions

By Gary Simpson, Law Enforcement

It is no secret that U.S. communications capabilities during recent times of disaster have ranged from unsatisfactory to poor to, at best, marginally acceptable. One need only look at the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States and the numerous communications failures during and in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to understand that a major problem exists and that the need for adequate disaster communications must be addressed as a high priority at all levels of government – state and local as well as federal. It also should be recognized, however, providing technical solutions to improve communications interoperability is not an important issue for most jurisdictions. There are many companies that can provide a broad spectrum of solutions or at least partial solutions. The real problem, though, is obtaining the funding needed to finance those solutions.

Mobile command and communications (MCC) vehicles are one of the more important items in the overall homeland-security response equipment inventory that have been receiving more attention since Katrina devastated Mississippi, Louisiana, and other areas of the Gulf Coast. These vehicles can enhance public safety significantly because of the ability they provide to manage incidents on-site or very close to the scene of an incident. They also extend the reach of communications during an incident. Many jurisdictions are purchasing or seeking to purchase these vehicles because of their ability to provide communications interoperability solutions that can be managed from the front lines.

The broad use of interoperability solutions, therefore, is more an issue of funding. Public safety budgets at all levels of government are being stressed both by routine operating costs and by a major increase in fuel costs – as well as by the decisions made, on some occasions, by government officials who do not always fully understand the need for, or the "return on investment" provided by, interoperability solutions.

Mobile command and communications vehicles, although extremely productive and for that reason alone usually cost-effective as well, are relatively expensive. They can cost anywhere from $200,000 to $1 million or more, particularly when the high-tech systems and equipment needed for on-site solutions are installed. At those prices, most of these vehicles are the property of state- or county-level public-safety agencies that can afford the cost – usually with the help of DHS (Department of Homeland Security) grants.

However, very few of the DHS grants are allocated to *local* public-safety agencies – unless the jurisdiction is a major city and/or is considered to be a very high-value target for terrorists or other criminal groups.

Innovative Solutions, And Inescapable Facts

Because the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) cannot fund interoperability solutions across the board, it has created a National Public Safety Planning Action Committee (NPSPAC),

which uses a series of radio channels in the 800 mhz range (which has been set aside for public-safety use during major national emergencies). Because these are national channels they must of course be used with great care. On the other hand, because the assigned frequencies also are national they are helpful for very large incidents but much less useful for smaller and/or more localized incidents.

A number of public-safety radio manufacturers – e.g., Motorola and M/A-COM – have developed several innovative interoperability solutions, and there are a number of other solutions available from vendors such as ARINC (Aeronautical Research Incorporated) that have focused on products that, because of the greater versatility they provide for local agencies, have broader appeal than the NPSPAC systems have for daily use.

The average MCC costs approximately $650,000 when fitted with high-tech interoperability systems and some other "bells and whistles." Financing often needs to be very creative, therefore. Some jurisdictions seeking to purchase one or more MCC vehicles have resolved this problem by purchasing the truck or bus with funds provided by one budget account and paying for the technology needed to fully equip the MCC from another account. This approach also can be used in obtaining funding assistance from a combination of grants provided under: (a) the federal Urban Area Security Initiatives (UASI) program; and (b) other technology grants or funds that may be available to the same jurisdiction or community.

The Department of Homeland Security has established several avenues for public-safety agencies to purchase at least some of the equipment they need to increase their ability to defend their jurisdictions from and/or respond to terrorist threats. These funding sources include, but are not limited to, the State Homeland Security Grant Program; the Urban Area Security Initiative; the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program; the Citizen Corps Program; the Emergency Management Performance Grants program; and the Metropolitan Medical Response System.

Maintenance, Operations, And Other Cost Factors

Financing the vehicle purchase is only the first and not always the most important factor to be considered when local officials look into the possibility of purchasing a mobile command-and-communications vehicle. Another major cost consideration is how to obtain the funds needed to sustain the operation. Jurisdictions can come up short if they do not accurately estimate the potential operational costs in advance. Those costs can easily reach $50,000 a year or more, particularly when one considers the fact that a purchasing agency will have to cover the recurring cost of such components as basic radio systems, the interoperability systems needed, a satellite downlink (for internet access and telephone connections), satellite TV connections, microwave downlinks, vehicle maintenance costs, hardware and software maintenance agreements for computers and servers, and other recurring costs. Some of the larger MCCs carry considerably more equipment onboard.

Public safety budgets at all levels of government are being stressed both by routine operating costs and by a major increase in fuel costs

Contacting other jurisdictions that already have purchased similar, and similarly equipped, MCCs of about the same size as those being considered for purchase may be the best way to obtain helpful insights into the actual operating costs of these vehicles.

Consideration also must be given as to how many people it will take to move, set up, and operate the vehicle for any specific type of incident or event. An extremely accurate count is needed, in other words, of the number of personnel who will have to be trained both to accomplish these seemingly simple tasks and then to sustain the operation. This could be, in fact, the largest per-event cost associated with the purchase of a mobile command-and-communications vehicle.

Another cost factor that is of concern to at least some agencies is the need for someone to constantly be working with the vehicle to maintain training levels and equipment readiness. This requirement has persuaded some agencies to opt for assigning a full-time staff member to the vehicle. Many jurisdictions prefer interoperability solutions that can cross jurisdictions, and thus, as an ancillary benefit, provide greater capability in the local agency's home area.

Building Strength By Reducing Vulnerability

The Urban Area Security Initiative already provides funding to a number of major regions around the country. The selection of what are considered "key regions" is based on several criteria, including vulnerability. The jurisdictions selected as UASI sites are given the ability to expand their own jurisdictional boundaries to better protect a larger area.

One reason for expanding the UASI perimeters is that this would give surrounding jurisdictions the ability to come to the aid of the primary jurisdiction – usually through memoranda of understanding and the sharing of not only equipment but also both training and personnel. For example: If the primary jurisdiction expands its area to six additional jurisdictions and the UASI provides each of those jurisdictions with equipment and training funds, the regional jurisdiction's equipment can be pre-positioned throughout seven locations, thus making the equipment not only much more available but also less vulnerable.

In homeland defense as in so many other matters it has become abundantly clear that in unity – in the form of cooperation – there is strength. That eternal truth should be kept in mind when local planners are formulating the plans needed to increase local preparedness capabilities without spending more than the always limited financial resources available.

Gary Simpson retired as a 32-year veteran with the Annapolis Police Department. When he retired he was hired back as the Emergency Management Director for the City of Annapolis. Two years later, he shifted back to the police side as Director of Domestic Preparedness. While with the Annapolis Police Department he rose to the rank of Captain. He has served in CID, the Arson & Explosives Unit, Public Affairs Unit, Patrol Operations, Special Operations, SWAT, White Collar/Fraud Crimes Unit, and Communications Unit. His current mission includes anti-terrorism planning, technology management, and intelligence operations for the police department.

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The Well-Planned Use of Citizen Volunteers

By Joseph Cahill, EMS

The keys to success during any kind of crisis are coordination and resources. Emergency managers are learning again and again that there will be events that *will* overtake resources. That is particularly true when success is measured, as it should be, by the system's ability both to respond to the crisis and to maintain normal operations at the same time. One important result of this two-ply requirement is that alternative sources of resources have become an essential part of emergency planning.

To cite but one example: The standard ambulance is ill-suited for off-road areas; consequently, those emergency medical services (EMS) agencies that cannot purchase and maintain a specialized 4x4 vehicle often rely on volunteers to assist with finding, reaching, and transporting – to an improved road and a standard ambulance – people who are seriously ill or have been injured in an accident or, perhaps, a natural disaster such as a hurricane.

In addition, these same "4x4 volunteers" may be pressed into service during a snow storm or other climatic event that renders streets and roads impassable to ambulances. Many cities and towns already use volunteer 4x4 vehicles and drivers not only to drive critical staff to their jobs at hospitals and other emergency/healthcare locations but also to assist EMS personnel in answering emergency calls.

Risk-Based Indoctrination Recommended

Volunteers who are factored into the regular response system typically receive enough indoctrination and training to understand what is expected of them and, a somewhat different category, what is allowed. Whenever possible, it is important, in the planning of training and practice exercises, to include those volunteers who may be involved in a real-life emergency situation.

One of the risks in including ad hoc volunteers – e.g., private citizens who own and drive their own 4x4 vehicles – in a community's, or agency's, response plans is that, although well meaning, these public-spirited individuals may have little or no understanding of the emergency plans, operating conventions, and safety procedures not only recommended but usually required. Emergency plans frequently involve complicated processes with many variable and moving parts that require not only initial (and thorough) training but also almost constant practice if they are to be used effectively. In short, it is unrealistic to assume that "occasional" volunteers will remember how the plan works.

In order for outside volunteer resources to effectively "plug into" an existing plan, therefore, a number of procedural steps have to be taken ahead of time. The first is to ensure that the regular staff itself is thoroughly trained in the plan – to the point that they can carry out their normal duties not only within the plan, when volunteers are not involved, but also when volunteers *are* present and actively participating.

Friendly Oversight, And the Worst-Case Scenario

It is important to recognize that, when ad hoc volunteers are included in a response plan, new responsibilities emerge for almost all existing staff. Some of them undoubtedly will be asked, for example, to directly supervise and/or partner with the volunteers; and *all* will have to maintain a friendly oversight so that the principles of safe operations are adhered to and appropriate control of the response scenario is maintained at all times.

The worst-case scenario here is not chasing away and/or discouraging a certain number of the ad hoc volunteers because of too much oversight; it is, rather, causing an increase in casualties – among the responders as well as among the victims – because of too little oversight, a situation that leads to a failure to follow safety precautions, a loss of procedural control, and/or poor coordination of response activities in general.

A final consideration – as with so many other aspects of the homeland-defense picture – is the financial cost involved. More specifically, it must be determined ahead of time precisely who or what agency pays for fuel, or for possible damage to a volunteer's vehicle, or – a more difficult situation to cope with – damage caused by the same

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vehicle. All of these issues, and others, can and should be worked out in advance, and covered in a standard release agreement. If left unaddressed, though, they have the potential to cause some major problems.

All levels of government and all political jurisdictions are open to the potential of a disaster that cannot be handled, even when additional resources are provided through local mutual-aid agreements and/or state/federal interventions. The key point to remember, nonetheless, is the same: It is only through the safe integration of all possible resources available that a truly complete emergency preparedness plan can be developed.

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*Joseph Cahill has served as a line paramedic for over ten years in The South Bronx and North Philadelphia. He was awarded the distinguished service medal and seven pre-hospital "saves" ribbons from NYC*EMS and FDNY and a unit citation from the Philadelphia Fire Department, and has received both the 100-Year Association's award for "Outstanding Service to New York City" as well as the World Trade Center Survivor's Ribbon (two bronze stars).*

The Homeland-Security Advantages of Telework

By Tom Davis, Viewpoint

Wouldn't it be nice if you could work from home? My job doesn't allow it, but yours might. And if it does, you and your superiors should look into it.

It would be more convenient, of course. It also would save the energy we use to commute and would ease traffic – a huge concern in the National Capital Region and lots of other places around the country. And, as an employee "perk," it has been shown to have significant positive impact on employee retention and job satisfaction. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, whose telework program recently celebrated its 10th anniversary, reports that 99 percent of its employees indicated increased job satisfaction because of telework, 75 percent reported "significant" gains in job satisfaction, and 90 percent say telework has influenced them to stay at USPTO. Patent Office officials have asked Congress to waive the rule that employees report to the office even once a week.

But none of this is why I authored legislation in 2000 to require federal agencies to promote telework. And it is not why I and three other members of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee – Representatives Danny Davis (D-Ill.), Kenny Marchant (R-Texas), and Chairman Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) – have begun a survey of agencies to find out to what degree those agencies are complying with the law and what Congress might be able to do to increase participation.

The purpose of the survey is to improve homeland security and, at the same time, to keep the federal government running. If a major mass-casualty incident happened in Washington, D.C. – a chemical or biological

attack, for example, or a dirty bomb, a natural disaster, an outbreak of a contagious disease, or any other event that threatened to shut down the city and the federal government – federal employees who could work from home instantaneously would become the bulwark of the government.

Moreover, anyone who was in Washington on September 11, 2001, knows the value of measures that significantly reduce traffic on area roads. On that day, local leaders and others called for an evacuation of the city. All over D.C., workers were sent home about 10:00 a.m. Many of them did not make it until early evening because of the crush of traffic, the inability of Metro to handle the surge in passengers, and the general confusion that gripped the city, and the nation, after the attack. If another attack had occurred on Washington that day, tens of thousands of citizens, if not more, could have died while waiting in traffic.

Despite a law that has been in effect since 2004 that calls for federal agencies to establish policies so that "eligible employees may participate in telecommuting to the maximum extent possible without diminished performance," only 19 percent of eligible employees have participated in a federal telework program. Our survey seeks to find out how agencies define telework, who they deem to be "eligible," and why and how they go about notifying those employees that they are eligible for telework. The survey also seeks to identify roadblocks – including management resistance – to determine what can be done to overcome those barriers.

We are not looking to punish anyone or single out anyone or any agency. We are trying to determine why fewer than one fifth of eligible employees are doing telework. We are trying to find out why managers resist and what can be done either to overcome that resistance or, more accurately, to identify which employees can indeed participate in telework programs without disrupting office business.

The Department of Homeland Security simply is not an agency where poor morale and widespread turnover can be tolerated. Our safety as a nation depends on all of its 170,000 employees being willing to go above and beyond, if necessary. However, recent news reports suggest that executives' claims of improved morale and order at the sprawling agency may be wishful thinking – this despite numerous efforts to create results-oriented rewards components and to fill the new positions authorized this year for the Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agency.

Telework won't solve all of DHS's problems. And, certainly, not every employee would be eligible. But it is a sensible, inexpensive, innovative way to start.

U.S. Representative Tom Davis (R-Va.) is former chairman of both the House Government Reform Committee and of the National Republican Congressional Committee and a member of the House Homeland Security Committee. Prior to his election to Congress he was chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County, Va. He is author of, among many bills enacted into law, the Digital Tech Corps Act, the E-Gov Act of 2002, the Federal Information Security Act, and the Critical Infrastructure Information Act; he also was the leading voice in Congress supporting the creation of a National Security Personnel System for Department of Defense civilian employees.

Port Security Exercises & Training: A Formidable Curriculum

By Christopher Doane and Joseph DiRenzo III, Coast Guard

As explained on the U.S. Transportation Security Agency's website, PortSTEP (the Port Security and Training Program) was established as a partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard to improve "the intermodal transportation industry's ability to prepare for and contend with a Transportation Security Incident." The program is in that context a response to the requirements set forth in the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002, which set a goal of conducting of at least 40 port-security training exercises between August 2005 and October 2007. As the program nears its end, it is time to look at not only the past but also the future of PortSTEP and other port-security exercise programs.

By most accounts, the PortSTEP exercises already completed were successful in meeting their objectives of increasing awareness, improving processes, creating partnerships, and providing the port-incident training needed to improve preparedness for responding to a Transportation Security Incident in a U.S. port. At least part of this success comes from combining PortSTEP with the U.S. Coast Guard's Area Maritime Security Training and Exercise program, or AMStep.

The latter program was created to exercise the Area Maritime Security Plans developed for U.S. ports to meet mandates postulated in the Maritime Transportation Security Act. Combining the two exercise programs helped port Area Maritime Security Committees look beyond the maritime transportation system and consider its interdependence with surface transportation systems such as railroad and highway networks.

PREP, STEPs, And Major Concepts

In addition to PortSTEP and AMStep, the longstanding national Preparedness and Response Exercise Program (PREP) has offered port-area first responders a means for jointly exercising their plans for responding to oil spills and releases of hazardous materials. The PREP exercises, developed in conjunction with other steps postulated by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 and the subsequent National Contingency Plan, introduced port responders to the Incident Command System and to the concept of unified command (both of which are incorporated into the National Incident Management System, or NIMS).

> ***All three types of exercises have been conducted simultaneously to provide a comprehensive view of a transportation security incident that would involve decision makers as well as on-site operating personnel***

PREP not only laid the groundwork but also served as the model for both PortSTEP and AMStep. Not surprisingly, all three types of exercises have been conducted simultaneously in a few ports to provide a more comprehensive view of a transportation security incident that would involve decision makers as well as on-site operating personnel in all phases of a simulated incident ranging from initial response to and through the consequence-mitigation and recovery phases.

The 2006 Security and Accountability For Every Port Act – better known as the SAFE Port Act – has added significantly to the exercise requirements mandated by the Maritime Transportation Act. The SAFE Port Act includes requirements for both a Port Security *Training* Program and a Port Security *Exercise* Program. Both programs are tied to preparedness for response to and recovery from accidental, natural, or intentional incidents at facilities regulated under the Maritime Transportation Security Act. A notable element of the training program is the requirement to educate and train individual citizens living and/or working in neighborhoods around the facilities.

Realism + Consistency = Enhanced Preparedness

Perhaps the most significant component of the overall exercise program is its stated purpose of "testing and evaluating the capabilities of" public and private-sector responders. This is a significant change from previous exercise programs, which were designed primarily to evaluate the supported plans, but not necessarily the responders themselves. Other significant requirements for the exercise program include: the need for realism, the use of clear and consistent performance measures, periodic assessments to learn and share best practices, and a formal remedial action program (to promote and ensure the adoption of best practices).

The SAFE Port Act goes on to make the conduct of (a) port-wide exercises, (b) exercises to strengthen terrorism preparedness, and (c) the conduct of preparedness training all eligible for funding under the Port Security Grant Program. The Coast Guard recognized the need to strengthen its exercise program in its own fiscal year 2007 budget statement, which called for establishing a new Area Maritime Security Exercise program.

The provision of sufficient funding, combined with the issuance of new regulatory requirements, should significantly improve upon current exercise programs, enhancing not only preparedness per se, but also the ability to *measure* preparedness in the post-PortSTEP era.

Christopher Doane (pictured) and Joseph DiRenzo III are retired U.S. Coast Guard officers, visiting fellows at the Joint Forces Staff College, and frequent contributors to DOMPREP Journal.

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Colorado, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin

By Adam McLaughlin, State Homeland News

Colorado
Biological Disaster Drill Plans for Worst-Case Scenarios

Rescue crews from a number of Colorado state departments prepared for the worst during a mock biological-disaster training exercise on Sunday, 29 April, during which firefighters from several metro area jurisdictions received hands-on training provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Emergency crews tried to decontaminate people as quickly as possible during the mock biological disaster. Organizers said that, although it was "only a drill," they wanted the exercise to be as realistic as possible. The purpose of the drills was to train rescue crews to respond as quickly and efficiently as possible during a biological crisis when time is critical.

Stripped down to almost nothing, men, women, and children filed into a decontamination tent during the mock scenario, which postulated a chemical or biological attack on the city of Denver, with the volunteers serving as the supposed victims. "We have ideas on how it is going to play out," said volunteer Gregory Bogdan, " ... but I think that, until you come out here and start getting people wet, you [don't really] find out … [if] it is … working as expected."

Heather Green of the Denver fire department explained that the drill was intended to prepare for "the event that we have a mass chemical release or exposure in a well-populated area." Organizers said that the training has become somewhat of a necessity these days. "The world has changed, and we have to be ready for just about anything – whether it be chemical, biological, or nuclear," said Lieutenant Michael Kadel of the Parker Fire Department.

Firefighters were not the only ones hoping to learn from the drill. Trudy Boulter volunteered her children to participate. "It was … [an opportunity] to bring the kids along and see if they can handle it if they are ever put in that situation," she said. Although the mock biological disaster did not go exactly as planned, organizers said, *no* mass-casualty training event is ever going to be perfect. The first-responder participants hoped to be able to decontaminate 300 people every hour. They did not reach that ambitious goal, but the drill organizers said they were satisfied with the results; however, additional training already is planned that is expected to be "the cornerstone" of building a more effective response in the future.

Massachusetts
Harvard's JFK School to Study Government Response to Crises

Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government has launched a research initiative aimed at helping government leaders better respond to and manage crisis situations. Harvard officials say the program, called "Acting in Time," is expected to generate both research and discussion, and result in ideas to overcome the current incapacity of governments to react quickly to catastrophic events.

The program will not focus on specific solutions to disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina or acts of terrorism, the officials said, but will seek to find out why governments are unable or unwilling to act quickly and effectively when such events occur. "It is important to look beyond the crisis of the moment to the fundamental ability of governments and leaders to take action when they need to do so," said Christopher Stone, faculty chairman of Acting in Time and a professor of the practice of criminal justice at Harvard.

It is not the *solutions* that are missing when governments face critical challenges, Stone emphasized. "What is missing," he continued, "is the ability of governments to act on what we know and to act in time to make a difference. That is the leadership skill set we will be trying to define through this initiative."

Acting in Time will support a series of research projects exploring the reasons why governments fail to act and determining how they can surmount obstacles such as cost restraints and/or political divisions in time to ensure a more positive outcome when disaster strikes. The Kennedy School faculty will lead the projects, working in collaboration with other experts at the school and in other Harvard departments. The Acting in Time initiative was kicked off during a conference last week – in Cambridge, Mass. – on the theme "The Looming Crisis: Can We Act in Time?"

Pennsylvania
Rendell: New Federal Grants To Enhance Port Security

Governor Edward G. Rendell announced last week that Pennsylvania's ports in Erie, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh will soon be receiving $8.6 million in grants to enhance their internal and external security. The grants will be awarded through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's port-security grant program.

"A terrorist attack on any part of Pennsylvania's trade infrastructure could result in the loss of a significant number of human lives and would have a dramatic impact on the continued economic health of our nation," Rendell said. "It is imperative that all necessary steps be taken to reduce the risk of such an attack, while recognizing the need to maintain a proficient and secure transportation network."

A grant to the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) is the only one of the Pennsylvania grants being awarded to a state agency. Other jurisdictions and agencies receiving federal grants include the City of Pittsburgh, the Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority, and the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority.

The $1.66 million grant to the Pennsylvania State Police will be used to:

- Make a Delaware River Virtual Maritime Domain Awareness Center operational within four months. The center will facilitate the sharing of security information on a 24/7 basis among law-enforcement agencies and the companies operating the petrochemical facilities and general cargo terminals in the Port of Philadelphia area.
- Purchase a patrol boat for the PSP that will be used to prevent, detect, and respond

to any threats to critical infrastructure and/or other key resources in the Port of Philadelphia area.

- Increase the frequency of Civil Air Patrol aerial-reconnaissance missions in the Port of Philadelphia area and increase their effectiveness by adding sophisticated sensor equipment to CAP aircraft.

"A terrorist attack on the Port of Philadelphia, with its extensive petrochemical refining capabilities, cargo facilities, and military presence, could result in the loss of lives and critical infrastructure," said State Police Commissioner Jeffrey B. Miller. "This grant will enhance our ability to deal with any potential threat."

Wisconsin Emergency Responders Open New Training Facility

Wisconsin's emergency responders have a new tool that can help them not only save lives but also reduce property losses caused by terrorist attacks or natural disasters. A new training facility for responders was unveiled in mid-May at Volk Field Air National Guard Base, located in central Wisconsin, that state officials say will be available for use 12 months a year.

The state's new Regional Emergency All-Climate Training Center, or R.E.A.C.T., a huge multi-complex facility, is designed to help train emergency responders how to reach victims during a disaster situation and do so in a safe manner.

Major General Albert Wilkening, Wisconsin's homeland security advisor, described the facility as "a natural addition" for training first responders. "In the military," he said, "we say you train as if you're going to fight, and, obviously, this capability gives our first responders the ability to train in a circumstance that maybe they have not faced yet."

The building is designed to look like a bomb had exploded inside the structure, and trainees practice moving inside the building in a safe manner to rescue victims. "Speed is crucial, but doing it correctly and safely is more of an issue," said Lt. Steve Berg of the Angelo Fire Department.

Responders practice stabilizing floors, windows, staircases, and the building's overall support structure to make sure that nothing collapses on them. At the end of 80 hours of training, which is spread over a two-week period, they will apply what they have learned to what is described as a "giant rubble pile." The rubble pile is "the hardest working … [situation] and it is the most fun," Berg said. Training manikins are trapped in the pile and getting to them is extremely difficult work. "You take my shoulder width and go into a 24-inch hole," Berg continued, "with a tool that you have to maneuver around in there, you are laying on your back in water with debris flying back at you, and it is very loud."

Wilkening said he hopes that all of the state's emergency responders will take advantage of the opportunity to use the center, which offers seven different disaster scenarios and is equipped with, among other "targets," a school, office, apartment, motel, bank, tavern, and retail store. The center also offers bomb and weapons training for local bomb squads.

Adam McLaughlin is Preparedness Manager of Training and Exercises, Operations, and Emergency Management for the Port Authority of N.Y. & N.J. He develops and implements agency-wide emergency response and recovery plans, business continuity plans, and training and exercise programs.

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