



The InfoGram

Volume 12 – Issue 26

June 28, 2012

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The U.S. Fire Administration maintains the **Emergency Management and Response – Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)**.

For information regarding the EMR-ISAC visit www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac or contact the EMR-ISAC office at: (301) 447-1325 and/or emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov.

Large Event Emergency Management

Sports games, rock concerts, and high-profile speeches are events that can draw crowds in sizes that rival small cities. Groups this size cause problems even in perfect circumstances, but add in bad weather, political agendas, unhappy fans, or even language barriers and the situation can change very rapidly. A [collection of lessons learned](#) about securing and planning for mass gatherings offers some real-life examples of how some emergency managers have planned for some threats and how they dealt with the unexpected.

Events of these proportions often happen at public venues that have their own security and emergency management staff, and one of the prevailing themes of the article is to have a good working relationship existing between public and private security before the event. Having a special operations command center coordinating all emergency services before, during, and after the event will help limit redundancy and miscommunication. Depending on the size and nature of the event, coordination with federal agencies like the FBI and ATF is a good idea.

Enterprise risk management (ERM) is another way to evaluate risk and large events, including business risk. Obviously secondary to life safety, business risk is a consideration for any high-profile company sponsoring a large event. [Risk Management Magazine](#) published a short article discussing ERM's use to manage the Super Bowl this year and what was learned from that event.

(Source: [Emergency Management Magazine](#) and [Risk Management Magazine](#))

Potential Public Safety and Utilities Partnership

The [development of the 700 MHz network for first responders](#) has triggered some interesting topics for discussion, such as who exactly should be grouped into “public safety.” [Urgent Communications has a detailed article](#) discussing the pros and cons of adding utilities to the public safety community.

Policy debates aside, the article gives good examples why regional public safety departments should consider cultivating a better relationship with utility companies. For example, electric and gas companies often have specialty training and tools available enabling them to handle emergencies specific to their field. Good relations with water companies can help ensure critical supply is there during large fires.

The InfoGram is distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures.

Communications utilities can help public safety operations by providing reliable networks during emergencies or making public safety communications a priority during a major disaster. Communications companies also have more resources available to them to “harden” the communications systems against cyber attacks.

In return, public safety departments can give utility employees quicker access to emergency scenes where their skills are immediately needed, such as major gas leaks or water main breaks.

(Source: [Urgent Communications](#))

Updating Facility or Office Emergency Plans

Various Federal agencies suggest, and in some cases require, that offices or facilities have written hazard and emergency response plans. Often these plans can become obsolete as other tasks take precedent and revising plans gets put off.

[An article in Occupational Health & Safety Magazine](#) points out that an old and out-of-date plan can be as dangerous as not having one at all. The article suggests five quick tests to help determine if older plans are still useable:

1. **Do a walk-through** – entire departments could have moved or construction may have changed the physical layout of the building. Walking the areas can quickly show obvious needs for updates in the emergency plan.
2. **Bring in an outside reviewer** – emergency management agencies often will help review emergency plans, turning up things that have been missed.
3. **Check contacts** – call or email people listed as points of contact to be sure they are still current and make necessary changes within the plans.
4. **Test processes** – have employees who are not involved in the plan development test it to make sure it works and makes sense.
5. **Train and drill** – make sure everyone knows their role, answer any questions before an emergency, and make sure the plan meets any necessary federal requirements.

(Source: [Occupational Health & Safety Magazine](#))

National Level Exercise Documents Available

The [tabletop exercise documents from the 2012 National Level Exercise](#) (NLE) are now available on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website. Provided by FEMA’s Private Sector Division Office of External Affairs, the exercises are provided as part of the division’s efforts to “incorporate the private sector across all stages of FEMA’s emergency management mission.”

[2012’s NLE was a simulated cyber event](#) that targeted financial and transportation systems’ network security. The exercise involved departments at all levels of government as well as private organizations.

The tabletop exercise includes videos, PowerPoint presentations, facilitator notes, scripts of the video clips, and technical instructions. There are also tabletop exercises on events like a critical power failure, hurricane, and chemical accident and the 2011 NLE which simulated an earthquake on the New Madrid fault line.

(Source: [FEMA](#))

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