

REGION 2 BI-WEEKLY

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REP ADDS ATTACKS TO DRILL SCENARIOS

By Brian Hasemann

The Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) Program is adding Hostile Action Based Drills (HABD) to its six year cycle of exercises, which already include three full-scale exercises – one every two years – at each commercial nuclear power plant.

Although still in the pilot stage, HABDs are designed to practice an integrated response to a land, water or airborne attack. Ultimately, HABDs will replace the force-on-force tabletop exercise that now is a requirement for these utilities. By adding off-site emergency responders to the exercise scenarios, HABDs will provide a more comprehensive and realistic drill.

The HABD pilot exercise program has two phases and is being tested at every nuclear power plant site in the country. The first phase is a tabletop exercise where the main benefit is for the players to become familiar with the responding agencies with a role in this type of event, and to determine the best way to communicate and coordinate with them. The second phase is a functional exercise at both off-site and on-site fixed locations and operations out in the field.

Region II sites that have completed both phases are Oyster Creek, Nine Mile Point/Fitzpatrick, and Salem/Hope Creek. Ginna completed their tabletop exercise last week, and will conduct the functional exercise in October. The Indian Point Site will have their tabletop exercise in September, with the functional exercise in November. This will complete R-II's pilot program.



Ginna nuclear power plant, left, was the site of REP's Hostile Action Drill last week.

LESSONS LEARNED



Last week's No Notice/Communications drill was designed to test Region II's ability to function in a COOP or pandemic emergency. If exercises are evaluated by 'Lessons Learned,' it was a huge success.

The exercise was organized by Preparedness, Continuity and the Disaster Operations Division. One hundred twenty employees were called at home and instructed to log-in via their laptops. Of the 97 employees that have been issued laptops, 73 responded (75%). Of these, 46 (63%) were able to log onto the FEMA system and complete the online survey as instructed. The balance had trouble logging in, or did not respond to the drill at all.

Of the 27 employees unable to log in, 17 failed due to computer error. The problem was tracked to the fact that their VPN connection was not configured correctly for logging on at home. Also, since many users apparently had not logged on in months, they had not downloaded the latest anti-virus software. They had to install these updates before being able to log in.

IT Chief Yen Pan advises that all laptop users **must** logon to their laptops **at least once every two weeks** to ensure their computers receive these vital updates. The full logon procedure consists of logging into the FEMA VPN **and** mapping to the G: and H: drives via the R2 Logon script.

"Operator error" is another reason seven staffers (26%) were unable to log on. Apparently they left their laptops in the office, undermining the Region's continuity/telecommuting capabilities.

VAL-entines



Leaders of United Community Services of Borough Park met with the American Red Cross's Partner Services chief, David Dunn and FEMA's Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL) Ken Curtin on June 8th. UCS's leaders asked about post-disaster coordination of relief services, observing religious dietary restrictions in emergency shelters, FEMA's Emergency Food and Shelter Program, the Red Cross and NYC-OEM's Ready New York citizens' education program, and CERT training. Arrangements were made for Red Cross Community Education presence at an upcoming neighborhood event. UCS will be included in future VOAD communications. UCS serves the poorest of a population of over 100,000 in Borough Park, Brooklyn.



VAL DAE Kevin Malone (right) at monthly meeting of NYC Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters. The group reviewed the results of its 27-agency hurricane drill held earlier this month.

FACES OF REGION II



AMIR BLOT

Prior to joining FEMA's reserve workforce, I was an Assistant Project Manager for a small design construction firm, which catapulted me into the realm of construction and construction management.

I grew up in Haiti and New York City and attended Syracuse University, receiving a B.A. in International Relations in 2001. I went on to pursue a Master's degree in Public Administration (MPA) from John Jay College (2008), with the hopes of working for a non-governmental organization dedicated to social issues, such as addressing global poverty.

After graduating, and accepting a provisional offer from the construction design firm, I shifted my focus to construction management and economic development. I am currently pursuing a Construction Management Certificate at the New York City College of Technology, in hopes of gaining the necessary knowledge to pursue my long-term career goals.

I am looking forward to working at Region II, and hope to gain a better understanding of FEMA, its mission, and the people and communities that it serves.

When not working a 12 hour shift at The Watch, I enjoy spending time with my four year old nephew. I also enjoy traveling, and am planning to backpack across Africa in two years.



FEMA 'FIRST' IN R2



JULIA ROBERTS

Nearly two months ago I transitioned from Hazard Mitigation Assistance Specialist to Management Analyst in Disaster Assistance to begin building Region II's capability for Long Term Community Recovery (LTCR), becoming FEMA's first, full time LTCR regional point of contact for ESF-15.

LTCR is a relatively new ESF, authorized in the National Response Framework to focus Federal, State and local initiative to help disaster-affected communities identify opportunities for a more effective recovery. I

In trying to build regional capacity and discover lessons learned and best practices, I've visited the LTCR branch at HQ to learn from past deployments, and I've reached out to Brad Gair of NYC-OEM to learn ESF-14's beginnings.

In the past six weeks, I've spent time in Missouri on DR-1773 with Region VII's Steve Castaner and his LTCR team. I learned of their experiences, and toured two small communities – Foley and Winfield – that have received technical assistance in long term community recovery plans. I also observed Foley's (pop 120) first self-run meeting where they discussed recovery projects, focusing on the steps needed to build a community playground. Missouri provided a great opportunity to see LTCR in action at the community level.

During the recent ESF-6 (Mass Care, Housing and Human Services)/IA conference in Albuquerque, I learned about ways that LTCR and ESF-6 could collaborate to address both the community's immediate and long term needs.

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BEFORE

While commonly referred to as "FEMA buy-outs," FEMA does not directly purchase property. These mitigation projects actually consist of a community purchasing flood-prone structures from willing sellers, and either demolishing the structures or relocating the structures to a new site outside of the floodplain.



A subdivision of Schuyler Falls, NY (above and below) that had 19 homes damaged by flood waters and ice floes during a major flood event in January 1996.



AFTER

The land returns to its natural state (right) which increases its ability to absorb potential flood waters.

