

UASI Update



A quarterly newsletter of the Metro-Boston Homeland Security Region.

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The mission of the Metro-Boston Homeland Security Region (MBHSR) is to build and sustain region-wide enhanced capabilities in order to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the Region from all-hazards, including acts of terrorism, natural and manmade disasters.

MOMENT OF TRUTH

Urban Shield is Coming to Boston

Urban Shield is an emerging model for large-scale crisis management training exercises. This model allows first responders to test their emergency response capabilities and equipment, identify issues and gaps, and adjust response tactics accordingly, while also creating the arena for multi-agency collaboration.

response to large-scale incidents. Intended to be a “come as you are”



Urban Shield emphasizes a collaborative approach to crisis management.

The Boston Police Department competed in Alameda County Urban Shield exercises in October of 2008, and 2009. The MBHSR Jurisdictional Points of Contact (JPOC) recognized the need to validate recent homeland security investments— by testing the effectiveness of purchased equipment and skills of first responders in using these items. Therefore on May 20-22, 2011, MBHSR will execute Urban Shield 2011, training exercises at various sites across the region.

event, Urban Shield will include scenarios testing Bomb Squad, K-9, SWAT, Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), Emergency Medical (EMS) and Combined Responder capabilities. Scenario specifics will not be released in advance, nor will participants be encouraged to “train to” a particular set of conditions.— this helps to simulate the unpredictability of an actual incident and fairly test each teams’ response.

The overarching goal of the MBHSR Urban Shield is to provide a multi-layered training exercise to enhance the skills and abilities of regional first responders, as well as, those responsible for coordinating and managing the

This training event is marked with the 10th anniversary of the September 11th tragedy, which stresses the importance of displaying how we have enhanced our security capabilities.

CONTACT US

For article submissions, feedback about this newsletter, or general questions about the Metro-Boston Homeland Security Region feel free to contact us:

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Boston • Brookline • Cambridge • Chelsea • Everett • Quincy • Revere • Somerville • Winthrop

Mutual Aid

A late morning three-alarm fire on February 15, left one house destroyed and forty-five people homeless.

The initial blaze broke out on Marlborough Street and later spread to a larger house on Library Street. Chelsea firefighters battled the two blazes tirelessly. In addition, temperatures were near freezing, and a snowstorm, the week prior left over one foot of snow in the area.

Firefighters from Boston, Revere, Everett, Cambridge and Winthrop provided mutual aid in battling the blaze throughout the night.

Soon after safely evacuating all residents, Chelsea Emergency Management Director Allan Alpert began to work on securing food and shelter. Without hesitation, Revere Fire Chief Eugene Doherty offered the use of their shelter trailer.

Given the large number of displaced residents, there were a limited number of spaces big enough to house

everyone. However, Director Alpert was able to secure shelter at the Williams School and YMCA for residents. In addition, the City of Boston and Town of Brookline sent Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers to provide secondary support to responders. While the Red Cross did not have shelter space available, they were able to offer relief assistance by providing food and volunteer services.

Despite the circumstances, residents were greatly appreciative of everyone who assisted. With the help of family and friends, Health and Human Services, and Chelsea Neighborhood Housing Services, residents were able to secure longer-term housing by the weekend.

Mutual support is not uncommon in this region, but with the large number of displaced residents it helped ease the stress of an otherwise unfortunate situation.

UPCOMING EVENTS

TRAININGS

VMS Board Training

April 22, 2011

For more info contact:

Brenda Jones (OEM): 617-635-1400

USAR Training

Structural Collapse Awareness, Tactical Rope Operations & FEMA Medical Team Training
April 25-30 2011

For more info contact:

Superintendent Dianne Cavaleri (EMS):
617-343-2367

EXERCISES

Urban Shield 2011

May 20-22, 2011

For more info contact:

Rene Fielding (OEM): 617-635-1400

EVENTS

Boston EMS Week

May 15-21, 2011

For event info contact:

Adrienne Gerlach: 617-343-6913

Asset Tracking

In recent months, many police and fire stations within the MBHSR have received equipment location requests and visits from OEM regional planners to 'tag' the equipment. This is a part of implementing asset tracking for MBHSR record-keeping.

Detailed record-keeping of regional equipment procurements is required under our grant guidelines. In an effort to properly track our assets and ensure that equipment investments are accounted for, OEM has invested in AssetTrax software.

Currently the software program allows regional planners to develop barcodes for asset tagging and tracking. Using this software, if asked to produce equipment, we can track the exact location of materials and use the barcode to verify each item.

This software investment allows us greater accountability with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), who provides the grant funding used in equipment procurements.

Return on Investment

The Region recently invested in camera systems through the Critical Infrastructure Management System Investment. Footage from these cameras provided a big break in a high profile case.

In the early morning hours of August 18, 2009, traffic cameras at the intersection of Beacon and Harvard Streets

this lead investigators to an even bigger break— links to one additional case.



"What the video did for us - it broke the case."

~Officer Scott Wilder, Brookline Police Department

aided the Brookline Police Department in identifying the vehicle allegedly used in the brutal assault, abduction and rape of a young woman at that intersection.

By using this technology, Brookline Police were able to apprehend two suspects and the vehicle, before DNA evidence was destroyed. Ultimately

ger break— links to one additional case.

In addition to enhancing general public safety, these cameras will also allow Brookline and Boston Police to collaborate during upcoming Boston Marathon activities to ensure safety at all times.

Managing Mass Fatalities

Contributed By: S. Atyia Martin
Director, DeValle Institute

On February 15, 2011, the DeValle Institute for Emergency Preparedness at Boston EMS held the Managing Mass Fatalities Seminar, a Metro-Boston Homeland Security Region funded, discussion-based exercise to begin exploring approaches to the implementation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Mass Fatalities Management Plan in the MBHSR.

The seminar participants were welcomed by Chief James Hooley, Boston Emergency Medical Services, Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), and Mary Clark, Director of the Emergency Preparedness Bureau at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Subject matter experts presented on the state's plan, lessons learned, and best practices.

The afternoon sessions engaged participants in six topic-specific discussions: Overall Incident Management, Family Assistance Center Operation, Coordinating Public Information, Resource Coordination, and Psychological First Aid for *All* Receivers. Participants reported out on the outcomes of their discussions while identifying pathways to implementation at the local level in addition to roles and responsibilities in a mass fatality event.

Don McGough, City of Boston Office of Emergency Management (OEM), John Grieb, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Dr. Henry Nields, Massachusetts Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

(OCME), and Michael Philbin, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) closed the seminar with potential next steps to implement the Mass Fatalities Management Plan.

The Managing Mass Fatalities Seminar had over 300 representatives attend from across the MBHSR including first response and public health and healthcare disciplines, funeral directors, and state and federal agencies. A final report on the seminar will be posted on the Institute's website at www.bphc.org/delvalle.

As the new director of the Institute, it was a pleasure to begin supporting the MBHSR with the successful execution of this seminar. I look forward to continuing to work with the MBHSR partners through a comprehensive and collaborative approach to providing high-quality, all-hazards emergency preparedness trainings and exercises that build and enhance capabilities based on the risks we face as a region.



The Incident Management working group during the seminar.

Mental Health in Disaster

Contributed By: Brenda Jones
Project Director, OEM

Disasters affect people in a number of ways. The impact of a disaster on mental health is typically long-term where the effects are often delayed with an unseen toll on survivors and witnesses alike.

On February 15, 2011, the Medical Surge UASI Sub-committee hosted the *Managing Mass Fatalities* seminar. Dr. Anthony Ng participated on a subject-matter expert panel where he discussed the role of mental health treatment in disaster.

During this presentation, over 300 attendees were able to examine and learn about the effects of disaster on mental health. Historically, medical response in disaster preparedness has primarily focused on addressing physical injuries, and exposure-related illnesses. Dr. Ng explained the profound effect of disastrous events on mental health and the importance of post-disaster mental health programs.

We were able to understand that victims are not only people with direct contact or visible injuries; a victim can be a surviving family member, first responder or witness. Helping disaster victims address their trauma is not easy, as the steps are diverse and vary with each situation and level of impact. However, many emergency response professionals recognize the impact of disaster and the need to provide resources for post-disaster treatment.

The consequences after mass fatalities are significant and sometimes insurmountable, affecting social functioning, quality of life, health, which can manifest into Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Overall this presentation helped illustrate the complexity of mental health relating to disastrous events, further stressing the necessity of integrating this concept in future disaster planning and response.

REGIONAL SNAPSHOTS



CERT volunteers take a break while assisting Boston Fire in shoveling hydrants on Feb 6th.



The Public Information workgroup discusses proper information dissemination during the Managing Mass Fatalities Seminar on Feb 15th.