

Bloomfield RED Plan TTX

October 2, 2008

AFTER ACTION REPORT

October 24, 2008

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HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

1. The title of this document is Bloomfield RED Plan TTX AAR.
2. The information gathered in this AAR is unclassified. Reproduction of this document, in whole or in part, is authorized to further understanding and training or the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee Regional Emergency Deployment (RED) Plan.
3. This AAR should be disseminated only to individuals involved in emergency management and response operations of the Town of Bloomfield and DEMHS Region 3.
4. Points of Contact:

CREPC

Daniel R. Scace
Training Coordinator
CRCOG
241 Main Street
Hartford, Ct 06105
860-522-2217, ext 23 (office)
860-912-5344 (cell)
daniel.scace@sbcglobal.net

Town of Bloomfield

Lt. Mark Samsel
Bloomfield Police Department
785 Park Avenue
Bloomfield, CT 06002
860-242-5501, ext 410 (office)
860-966-6873 (cell)
m.samsel@bloomfieldpolice.org

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Bloomfield RED Plan TTX was held at the Bloomfield Emergency Operations Center and was attended by 20 people from the Town of Bloomfield representing Emergency Management, Public Works, Police, Fire, EMS, Social and Youth Services, Public Health, and other local officials. Also attending were Gordon Harris DEMHS Region 3 Trainer, George Dunn and Jay Gonzalez, CREPC Duty Officers. The exercise included the DEMHS Region 3 RED Plan training program and associated objectives, as well as the Bloomfield specific objectives listed below.

The scenario presented a hurricane season situation with numerous wet weather related problems and a forecast with the potential for additional wet weather and possible snow. The Town was required to verify shelter availability and report problems to the State EOC. Freezing rain then caused several small accidents and power outages. The power outages caused the Seabury Retirement Community to evacuate some residents, but the poor driving conditions required Town assistance to accomplish the evacuation. As Seabury and the Town prepared to evacuate residents from Seabury, a hazardous waste incident occurred requiring activation of the RED Plan.

The Region 3 Table Top Exercise was developed to test the following Town of Bloomfield capabilities at the policy/decision making level rather than the actual response process and mechanisms:

1. Emergency Operations Center Management
2. WMD/HazMat Response and Decontamination
3. Citizen Protection: Evacuation and/or In-Place Protection

The exercise planning team was composed of the Capitol Region Council of Government (CRCOG) Training Coordinator and representatives from Bloomfield Police Department and Bloomfield Fire Departments. Based on the exercise planning team's deliberations, the following objectives were developed for the Bloomfield RED Plan TTX:

- Objective 1: Validate the effectiveness of the Bloomfield Emergency Operating Procedure, Emergency Operations Center and the EOC Staff from a policy/procedure perspective.
- Objective 2: Reinforce NIMS/ICS Concepts.
- Objective 3: Build RED Plan awareness and understanding for emergency management officials in the Town of Bloomfield.

The purpose of this report is to analyze exercise results, identify strengths to be maintained and built upon, identify potential areas for further improvement, and support development of corrective actions.

The exercise was effective in meeting the objectives and participation in discussions was very active across disciplines.

Major Strengths

The major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows:

- Participation across Town agencies.
- Local understanding and application of the Bloomfield EOP.

Primary Areas for Improvement

During the exercise opportunities for improvement in the Town of Bloomfield's ability to respond to the incident were identified. The primary areas for improvement, including recommendations, are as follows:

- Train EOC users on operation of communication systems and exercise use of installed equipment.

The TTX was successful in meeting the objectives. Subsequent exercises and training should focus on use of the EOP and EOC during hazard specific events to ensure each department is fully capable of implementing their respective annexes. Mechanisms for training EOC personnel on use of communication systems should be put in place and routine drills conducted to ensure communication capability when needed.

SECTION 1: EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Details

Exercise Name

Bloomfield RED Plan Table Top Exercise

Type of Exercise

Table Top Exercise

Exercise Start Date

October 2, 2008

Exercise End Date

October 2, 2008

Duration

3 hours

Location

Town of Bloomfield Emergency Operations Center

Sponsor

Town of Bloomfield

Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee

Program

Fiscal Year 2005 Homeland Security Grant Program

Mission

Protect, Response

Capabilities

1. Emergency Operations Center Management
2. WMD/HazMat Response and Decontamination
3. Citizen Protection: Evacuation and/or In-Place Protection

Scenario Type

Weather Related Evacuation, Hazardous Material

Number of Participants

- Players - 20
- Controllers - 1
- Evaluators - 1
- Facilitators - 1
- Observers - 3
- Victim Role Players – N/A

SECTION 2: EXERCISE DESIGN SUMMARY

Exercise Purpose and Design

This TTX was designed to continue the outreach and education on the RED Plan in region 3 and provide a venue for the Town of Bloomfield to conduct a low stress exercise to further local emergency planning objectives.

Exercise Objectives, Capabilities, and Activities

Capabilities-based planning allows for exercise planning teams to develop exercise objectives and observe exercise outcomes through a framework of specific action items that were derived from the Target Capabilities List (TCL). The capabilities listed in the Executive Summary form the foundation for the organization of all objectives and observations in this exercise. For purposes of this Table Top Exercise, not additional development is required.

Scenario Summary

See Executive Summary section.

SECTION 3: ANALYSIS OF CAPABILITIES

This section of the report reviews the performance of the exercised capabilities, activities, and tasks. In this section, observations are organized by capability and associated activities. The capabilities linked to the exercise objectives of Bloomfield RED Plan TTX are listed below, followed by corresponding activities. Each activity is followed by related observations, which include references, analysis, and recommendations.

CAPABILITY 1: Emergency Operations Center Management

Capability Summary: Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Management is the capability to provide multi-agency coordination (MAC) for incident management by activating and operating an EOC for a pre-planned or no-notice event. During this TTX the EOC was the setting for the exercise, primarily a policy level/procedural discussion. The EOC phone system was used to activate the RED Plan.

Activity 1.1: Gather and provide information.

Observation 1.1 Area for Improvement. EOC phone system operation was not understood by all participants. Dialing “9” prior to making calls caused confusion. In addition, the number provided to RICS to call back the EOC could not be reached and the CREPC duty officer contacted the facilitator.

Analysis: EOC phone system operation is different than phone operation in Town departments, leading to confusion during the call to activate the RED Plan.

Recommendations: Provide training and reminders on EOC phones to aid in making timely communication during EOC operations.

CAPABILITY 2: WMD/HazMat Response and Decontamination

Capability Summary: Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and Hazardous Materials Response and Decontamination is the capability to assess and manage the consequences of a hazardous materials release, either accidental or as part of a terrorist attack.

There are no observations or recommendations for this capability.

CAPABILITY 3: Citizen Protection: Evacuation and/or In-Place Protection

Capability Summary: Citizen evacuation and shelter-in-place is the capability to prepare for, ensure communication of, and immediately execute the safe and effective sheltering-in-place of an at-risk population (and companion animals), and/or the organized and managed evacuation of the at-risk population (and companion animals) to areas of safe refuge in response to a potentially or actually dangerous environment.

There are no observations or recommendations for this capability.

SECTION 4: CONCLUSION

The RED Plan exam was taken and passed by 15 people (no failures, some people attending had previously taken the exam) during this training session. In addition 15 individuals provided feedback forms. Participant feedback indicated the objectives were achieved and the exercise/training was clearly presented. Participants also identified the need to train on use of the phone system. Additionally they recommend the Town continues to train with more extensive exercises that require a greater response. Regarding the RED Plan itself, a participant recommended that the RICS notification system should be revised to include 2 contact numbers rather than one.

The objectives were met and the Town's capabilities related to EOC operation, hazardous materials and citizen protection were exercised and awareness on roles and responsibilities were heightened. A valuable lesson was learned regarding the need to train and drill on routine things such as use of the EOC phone system to ensure flawless execution of relatively simple tasks during critical operations. This exercise should be recognized as a relatively simple way to ensure the ability of the EOC staff to meet the needs of the community during any situation. It is important to point out that EOC staff identified the need to continue to exercise in more demanding scenarios. The level of participation of the staff was outstanding and exemplifies their desire to perform well. Next steps should include continuing to review and exercise the local EOP, conduct communication drills and engage in opportunities to exercise on a regional basis.