

2015 YELLOW COMMAND FULL-SCALE EXERCISE (FSE) AFTER ACTION REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2015 Yellow Command Full-Scale Exercise (FSE) was conducted to test the Regional Catastrophic Earthquake Mass Transportation/Evacuation Plan. Nine Bay Area Counties, four cities, and more than 15 local, state, federal, and private agencies including the California Office of Emergency Services, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center chose to exercise and evaluate regional communications, operational coordination, and information management to build capabilities for regional coordination during large special events, such as the upcoming Super Bowl 50.

The overarching goal of the 2015 Yellow Command FSE was to plan and conduct a regional emergency operations center (EOC) functional exercise as part of Urban Shield 2015, including live tactical field play at two locations. The Yellow Command exercise scenario was based on the IED threat scenario identified in the Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Threats and Hazards Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA). The exercise included a three-hour functional exercise conducted on the morning of September 11, 2015 and full-scale components conducted simultaneously in Santa Clara and Marin Counties. Exercise players were presented with an exercise scenario that involved three simulated coordinated attacks using high explosives and domestic terrorist automatic weapons in the City of Santa Clara, and Marin and Monterey counties that simulated an estimated 1,000 deaths and 750 injured.

Both full-scale components leveraged the exercise scenario to establish unified command posts in City of Santa Clara at Levi's Stadium and in Marin County at the Cal Park Hill Tunnel. The City of Santa Clara FSE component included exercise activities focused on unified command post operations in response to a simulated high explosive mortar attack occurring outside Levi's Stadium during a high profile sporting event and the subsequent stadium evacuation and mass casualty response operations. The Marin County FSE component included exercise activities focused on unified command post operations in response to a simulated high explosive attack on a SMART train and a ferry search designed to apprehend the perpetrator of the SMART train attack.

The exercise planning team developed the following overarching objectives for the 2015 Yellow Command Full-Scale Exercise to test the associated core capabilities:

1. **Critical Transportation:** Exercise and evaluate the Regional Catastrophic Earthquake Mass Transportation/Evacuation Plan: Practice roles, responsibilities, and coordination with regional transportation agencies such as MTC and WETA.
2. **Situational Assessment:** Maintain a Common Operating Picture and Situational Awareness: Practice and evaluate the use of an agreed upon regional common operating picture. Evaluate regional information sharing and management processes using WebEOC, Cal EOC, HSIN, and Cal COP technology.
3. **Operational Communications:** Test alternative communication paths and interoperability across operational areas utilizing radio and satellite phone technologies.

4. **Operational Coordination:** Directly connect live tactical exercise to local/operational EOCs through physical on-scene incident commanders: Practice on-scene Unified Command in at least 2 locations throughout the Bay Area.
5. **Public Information and Warning:** Exercise and evaluate a Regional Joint Information System.
6. **Operational Coordination:** Practice the coordinated use of Mass Notification and Warning Systems.

The major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows:

- In accordance with the Bay Area Regional Catastrophic Earthquake Mass Transportation/ Evacuation Plan, Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) personnel successfully supported requests to move emergency response personnel via ferry and evacuate displaced persons in the Cities of Santa Clara and San Jose.
- Exercise participants were able to maintain situational awareness and access a regional common operating picture using regional information sharing systems (WebEOC/CalEOC, Cal COP, HSIN, etc.) during the exercise.
- Participating counties and cities successfully conducted a communications check of CalEOC, WebEOC, Cal COP, and Operational Area Satellite Information System (OASIS) prior to the exercise, which enhanced the Region's ability to share information during the exercise.
- City of Santa Clara Police and Fire personnel who staffed positions within the Levi's Stadium Incident Command Post (ICP) had a thorough working knowledge of their emergency operations plan and information technology systems. Moreover, ICP staff clearly understood their roles and responsibilities, and acted in accordance with stadium emergency response procedures while responding to a simulated attack on Levi's Stadium.
- Central Marin Police Authority and San Rafael Fire personnel have well established working relationships that were demonstrated during response operations to a simulated high explosive attack on a Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) train impacting multiple jurisdictions in Marin County, CA. Collaborative planning, unified command and control operations were evident throughout the exercise.
- Bay Area Public Information Officers (PIOs) successfully activated a regional Joint Information System (JIS) and developed proactive and protective action messages for the general public, emergency personnel, media, response partners and other stakeholders. Moreover, two regional PIO coordination calls were conducted with PIO participation from nine counties and four cities.

During the exercise, several opportunities for improvement were identified. The primary areas for improvement and recommendations are provided below:

- Agency roles and responsibilities of the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) Coastal Region EOC's Transportation Branch were unclear to participants during the exercise.

- Corrective Action: Work with MTC, WETA, and Caltrans to define the current roles and responsibilities for the Coastal Region EOC's Transportation Branch.
- Corrective Action: Revise the Regional Catastrophic Earthquake Mass Transportation/ Evacuation Plan and related agency plans to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Coastal Region EOC's Transportation Branch.
- Corrective Action: Provide training for personnel that staff the Transportation Branch.
- Use of multiple information sharing systems such as WebEOC/CalEOC and Cal COP required duplicate entries of the same information which was time consuming and caused inconsistencies.
 - Corrective Action: Develop an information management plan or policy that codifies consistent and coordinated use of key information management systems such as WebEOC/CalEOC and Cal COP.
 - Corrective Action: Continue development and implementation of the two-way integration of Cal COP and WebEOC systems.
- Participating jurisdictions expressed confusion as to which information should be compiled for sharing to regional partners including Cal OES, MTC, WETA, and other Operational Areas.
 - Corrective Action: RCPT to coordinate with Cal OES to improve information management expectations, coordinate timing for operational meetings, and develop an all hazards essential elements of information (EEI) collection plan.
- The Bay Area does not have an established process for activating and operating a regional Joint Information System.
 - Corrective Action: RCPT regional Joint Information System sub-committee to steer the creation of a regional Joint Information System framework or plan.
- Some public information officers were operating without information on response operations currently underway in other jurisdictions.
 - Corrective Action: Provide PIO training on how to work with Operations Sections and field response teams for situational awareness and message development.
 - Corrective Action: Train PIOs on Emergency Support Function 15 concepts and plans.

The 2015 Yellow Command Full-Scale Exercise was a successful and well-attended, multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency response exercise that challenged field responders, EOC staff, and PIOs throughout the Bay Area to collaborate, coordinate, and support response operations stemming from simulated coordinated terrorist attacks occurring throughout the region. The FSE tested elements of regional, county and city emergency plans, engaged Federal, State, and local resources, and facilitated information sharing and collaboration across multiple response levels.

This FSE builds on the Urban Shield Yellow Command exercise series which is an exercise program designed to evaluate and improve the Bay Area's regional response capabilities. FSE evaluators identified strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations to improve Bay Area capabilities to prevent, protect, mitigate, respond, and recover from coordinated terrorist attacks. The Bay Area UASI can use the results of this exercise to further enhance regional communications, operational coordination, and information management to build capabilities for regional coordination during large special events, such as the upcoming Super Bowl 50. Subsequent exercises should build on these experiences to further explore the Region's abilities to deter, respond to, and recover from both natural and human-caused disasters.