AFTER ACTION REPORT
January 8, 2007
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On November 9, 2006, the County of Los Angeles conducted an Operational Area (OA)-wide functional exercise known as Operation Double Header. During this 12-hour exercise, the County Emergency Operations Center (CEOC) simulated a “Full” activation and exercised its Teams from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Thirty-one cities and 27 county departments also participated in the exercise.

The scenario consisted of two separate events. First, a 6.5 magnitude earthquake on the Verdugo fault with an epicenter near the City of Burbank. This created damage along the Foothill Freeway and northwest towards the junction of the Golden State and Simi Valley Freeways. The quake resulted in widespread damage, particularly to underground infrastructure.

Second, the CEOC received reports of mysterious explosions targeting ports, transportation hubs, and utilities in New York, Atlanta, Houston, and Chicago. Terrorism was suspected. For approximately twenty minutes, a series of explosions impacted critical facilities within Los Angeles County, with a final explosion approximately three hours later. These two events provided a myriad of challenges for the CEOC.

A press conference was held at 10:00 AM during the exercise featuring the following Los Angeles County officials: Mayor Michael Antonovich, Sheriff Leroy Baca, Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman, Public Health Officer Dr. Jonathan Fielding, Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Acting-Administrator Michael Brooks, and representatives from key agencies involved in the exercise. The press conference was covered by local media and ran successfully.

The County Emergency Management Council (EMC) participated in a workshop during the exercise that addressed issues raised by the exercise scenario. EMC members were also invited to attend a special executive-level course in the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The overall exercise goals were:

- Effectively and harmoniously implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Plan (NRP), the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and the Incident Command System (ICS) in response to a natural disaster and terrorist attack.

- Share critical information to enable each level of participation to accomplish its missions as expected in accordance with NIMS, the NRP, and SEMS. This included using information technology systems where appropriate.
• Determine the need for Mutual Aid and make and process appropriate requests for assistance in accordance with the State of California’s Emergency Services Act and the Master Mutual Aid Agreement.

• Employ Public Information staff to gather information from CEOC sections/branches and issue appropriate press releases in a timely manner.

**Strengths:**

• All exercise objectives were met.
  
  ➢ Exercise players were able to effectively use the principles of SEMS, NIMS, and ICS to perform their duties in the CEOC.
  
  ➢ CEOC Sections participated in the production of an Initial Action Plan (IAP), Event Action Plans (EAPs), Situation Reports, and general communication between CEOC sections and/or branches, per SEMS recommendations.
  
  ➢ CEOC personnel were able to identify the need for mutual aid and process mutual aid requests through the proper channels per SEMS recommendations.
  
  ➢ The Public Information Branch of the Management Section was consistently well staffed and able to produce press releases, conduct news conferences, and address emergency public information concerns in a time manner.

• All CEOC section/branch personnel worked well together.
  
  ➢ CEOC personnel that participated in the exercise appeared to interact well with each other and exhibited positive problem solving skills.

• Sheriff’s Emergency Operations Bureau (EOB) personnel filled positions not staffed by assigned Sheriff personnel.

**Areas of Improvement:**

• The Emergency Management Information System (EMIS) ran slowly at times during the exercise.
  
  ➢ This was observed in most CEOC sections, as well as the Exercise Simulation Center.
  
  ➢ OEM is currently conducting a study of the EMIS and will be forwarding improvement recommendations and suggested actions to the County’s Emergency Management Council in April 2007.

• Low staffing levels were observed in some CEOC Sections.
Two of the three CEOC Managers, as well as key Operations and Plans/Intel Section staff, were unable to participate in the exercise.

There was some initial confusion when staffing gaps became apparent. However, Sheriff Emergency Operations Bureau personnel stepped in and filled vacant positions to maintain the flow of the exercise.

- Management Section meetings did not always follow the SEMS prescribed time frames.
- Future training in SEMS Action Planning procedures and practices should address this issue.
- Although the CEOC workrooms contain many tools for staff to use during an activation, some room configurations did not allow for the easy use of these tools.
- Minor reorganizing of workroom furniture and equipment by OEM staff should address this issue.

**CONCLUSION**

The Operation Doubleheader exercise was successful, it met its objectives and pointed out areas of improvement that can be addressed by future training, system upgrades and continued participation of all lead departments. The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is already working with county departments to address many of these issues by conducting a thorough study of the effectiveness of EMIS, and developing a continuous training schedule for 2007 to address training needs for the CEOC staff and other Operational Area partners (cities, special districts, etc.).
CHAPTER 1: EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name
Operation Double Header

Duration
Twelve (12) hours

Exercise Date
November 9, 2006

Sponsor
U. S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) / Office for Domestic Preparedness

Type of Exercise
Functional

Funding Source (Agency Receiving Funding)
Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management

Program
Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program, State 05 Funding

Focus

Response  
Recovery
Prevention
Other

Classification

Unclassified
For Official Use Only (FOUO)
By Invitation Only

Scenario

Chemical release or threat (C)
Biological release or threat (B)
Radiological release or threat (R)
Nuclear detonation or threat (N)
Explosive detonation or threat (E)
Natural Disaster
Location
Los Angeles County, CA.

Participating Organizations

Cosponsors

Contract Support
- Robert Garrott
- Robert Gillis
- Constance Perett

Federal Agencies
- None

State Agencies
- Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (OES), Southern Region
- California Highway Patrol
- California Transportation Department

Local Agencies (County Departments, cities, non-government organizations)

Los Angeles County Departments:
- Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS)
- Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH)
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW)
- Los Angeles County Department of the Coroner
- Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD)
- Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD)
- Los Angeles County Internal Services Department (ISD)
- Los Angeles County Chief Administrative Office/Office of Emergency Management (CAO/OEM)
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS)
- Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
- Los Angeles County Department of Probation
- Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors
- Los Angeles County Department of Child Support Services
- Los Angeles County Department of Community and Senior Services (CSS)
- Los Angeles County Public Library
- Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation
• Los Angeles County Department of Community Development Commission (CDC)
• Los Angeles County Office of Education (COE)
• Los Angeles County Police
• Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors, County of Los Angeles
• Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control
• Los Angeles County Department of the Assessor
• Los Angeles County Department of Auditor Controller
• Los Angeles County Counsel
• Los Angeles County Public Defender
• Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning
• Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
• Los Angeles County Disaster Communications Service

Cities:
• ALHAMBRA
• BEVERLY HILLS
• BURBANK
• CALABASAS
• CARSON
• CLAREMONT
• COMMERCE
• COMPTON
• DOWNEY
• GLENDALE
• GLENDORA
• HERMOSA BEACH
• INGLEWOOD
• LAKEWOOD
• LOMITA
• LOS ANGELES
• MALIBU
• MANHATTAN BEACH
• MAYWOOD
• MONTEREY PARK
• PALMDALE
• PALOS VERDES ESTATES
• PASADENA
• RANCHO PALOS VERDES
• SAN FERNANDO
• SAN GABRIEL
• SAN MARINO
• SANTA FE SPRINGS
• SIERRA MADRE
• SOUTH PASADENA
Exercise Overview

This exercise program targeted coordination and management elements for emergency management resources only, not field forces. This program was designed to exercise emergency management staff in the County's Emergency Operations Center (CEOC), County Department Operations Centers (DOCs), city Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), selected Special District EOCs, members of the Business and Industry Council for Emergency Planning and Preparedness (BICEPP) and Emergency Network Los Angeles (ENLA) only. First-response agencies were encouraged to run their own discipline-specific drills and/or exercises in conjunction with this program, but under the direction of their own agency or jurisdiction.

The exercise used a Simulation Center to represent field assets (law enforcement, fire, public works, etc.) for participating cities, special districts, and County departments. The Simulation Center sent telephone messages with situational information to the participating cities, special districts, and county departments so those jurisdictions and agencies could develop appropriate reports to send to the CEOC and provided simulated communication from their field assets. The same Simulation Center represented non-participating cities and County departments and sent appropriate messages (primarily using the Emergency Management Information System - EMIS) to the CEOC.

The exercise was considered a “no-fault” learning environment where participants could rehearse effective procedures that are essential in event of a real disaster. To that end,
exercise staff (except Evaluators) were expected to assist players in following established operating procedures.

**Exercise Evaluation**

The Exercise Evaluation team documented the accomplishment of exercise objectives and scenario issues. They also reviewed the exercise design and made comments on how well the design provided a learning and rehearsal experience for exercise players. Evaluators had a passive role in the exercise and only noted the actions of players; they did not interfere with the flow of the exercise.

Evaluators worked as a team with controllers. Evaluators recorded events and ensured documentation was submitted for review and included in the After Action Report (AAR)/Improvement Plan (IP).

Evaluators did not interfere with the integrity of the exercise nor interact with players. All questions raised during the exercise were addressed by the Controllers onsite.

**Exercise Evaluation Staffing**

Senior Evaluator- The Senior Evaluator was appointed by the Design Team and reported to the Exercise Director. The Senior Evaluator was responsible for coordinating the selection and training of the Evaluators; assisting in the development of the Controller/Evaluator Handbook; designing the evaluation instruments; managing the evaluation process during the exercise; reviewing and organizing the evaluation instruments after the exercise; and assisting in the development of the exercise After Action Report/Improvement Plan.

Staff Evaluators- Staff Evaluators were stationed in various CEOC sections and/or branches and coordinated with the Senior Evaluator during the exercise. They observed player actions during the exercise and provide documentation of player activities as they related to the exercise Goals and Objectives.
CHAPTER 2: EXERCISE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following Goals were developed for the exercise by the County Exercise Design Team during a three-day conference in February 2006. These general goals encompassed the entire exercise. More specific Objectives were used to measure the goals during the exercise. These goals are referenced later in this report in chapters three, four, and five.

Goal 1:
Effectively and harmoniously implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Plan (NRP), the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and the Incident Command System (ICS) in response to a natural disaster and terrorist attack.

Objective 1-1:
The first CEOC shift creates an Initial Action Plan (IAP) at the beginning of their shift.

Objective 1-2:
Each CEOC shift creates an Event Action Plan (EAP) during their shift.

Objective 1-3:
Each CEOC shift creates a Situation Report during their shift.

Objective 1-4:
Each CEOC shift maintains a workable Span of Control (4-7 subordinates to one Supervisor) during their shift.

Goal 2:
Share critical information that will enable each level of participation to accomplish its mission as expected in accordance with NIMS, NRP, and SEMS. This includes using information technology systems where appropriate.

Objective 2-1:
Each CEOC shift will effectively use the EMIS.

Objective 2-2:
Each CEOC shift will effectively use the EMIS GIS.

Objective 2-3:
Each CEOC shift will effectively use the new CEOC computer network profiles and Outlook e-mail system.
Goal 3:
Determine the need for mutual aid, and make and process appropriate requests for assistance in accordance with the State’s Emergency Services Act and the Master Mutual Aid agreement.

Objective 3-1:
CEOC sections and branches will create Resource Requests as necessary in the EMIS in a timely manner.

Objective 3-2:
CEOC sections and branches will identify Resource Requests from County Departments and process them in a timely manner.

Objective 3-3:
CEOC sections and branches will identify Resource Requests from Cities in the Operational Area and process them in a timely manner.

Goal 4:
Employ Public Information staff to gather information from CEOC sections/branches and issue appropriate press releases in a timely manner.

Objective 4-1:
Each CEOC shift will produce at least one Press Release that is approved for release by the CEOC Manager.

Objective 4-2:
Each CEOC shift will coordinate and conduct at least one simulated press conference.
CHAPTER 3: EXERCISE EVENTS SYNOPSIS

Scenario
The scenario was based on a 6.5 magnitude earthquake in the vicinity of the Verdugo fault. The epicenter was near the Bob Hope airport and the rupture zone was approximately 18 miles long extending from the end of the Pasadena Freeway to the junction of the Golden State and Simi Valley freeways. The initial quake was followed by numerous aftershocks including magnitude 6.0 aftershock with an epicenter near the City of Bradbury, and a rupture zone running from Altadena to San Dimas.

In addition to the earthquake, the Operational Area was struck by a series of terrorist attacks aimed at damaging utility infrastructure (water and power systems). The terrorist attacks were part of a series of terror attacks in approximately five major U.S. cities that were planned by terrorists to occur on a date that, by coincidence, coincided with the date of the earthquake.

Functional Component
The functional component exercised three CEOC shifts (A, B, and C), with each shift lasting four hours. The shifts ran as follows; B, C and then A shift. The shifts ran for four hours each to allow all three shifts to participate in one 12-hour period. The exercise ran in real time over the 12 hours, with the artificiality of each shift working four hours instead of their usual 12 hours.

During the exercise, each shift responded to simulated information transmitted from an exercise Simulation Center located in the Los Angeles City EOC via the EMIS, telephone, fax, and Controller injects in the CEOC. Simulated information was also sent to participating city EOCs and County DOCs in the County, which in turn forwarded pertinent information to the CEOC for follow-up.

Emergency Management Council Component
In a separate workshop, the County’s Emergency Management Council (EMC) was presented with policy issues they would likely face following a significant disaster. During the discussion they were asked to develop both proactive and reactive policy recommendations for the CAO or Board of Supervisors’ adoption. The workshop presented realistic problems and policy questions that were outside the purview of field operations and CEOC management, and that needed direction from the EMC. This workshop provided the EMC an opportunity to consider and formulate potential solutions to difficult policy issues in a non-stressful environment.
CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF MISSION OUTCOMES

This section of the After Action Report (AAR) analyzes how well the participating agencies and jurisdictions addressed the mission outcomes. Mission outcomes are those broad outcomes of functions that the public expects from its public officials and agencies. As defined in the Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) *Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program, Volume II: Exercise Evaluation and Improvement*, mission outcomes include prevention and deterrence, emergency assessment, emergency management, hazard mitigation, public protection, victim care, investigation and apprehension, and recovery and remediation. The exercise goals and objectives defined the mission outcomes that were addressed by the exercise and will be analyzed in this section of the AAR.

The mission outcomes examined in the *Operation Double Header* exercise were Emergency Management, and Protection. Since this was an EOC-centric and response focused exercise; mission outcomes at the preparatory and field level (Prevention and Deterrence, Victim Care, Investigation and Apprehension) and as well as recovery operations (Recovery and Mediation) were not designed into the exercise. Thus, those mission outcomes are not addressed in this report.

Specific recommendations on mission outcomes and critical tasks will be covered in Chapter 5.

**Emergency Management**

**Goal 1:**
*Effectively and harmoniously implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Plan (NRP), the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and the Incident Command System (ICS) in response to a natural disaster and terrorist attack.*

Goal 1 was achieved during the exercise. Los Angeles County designates nine of its county departments as “lead” emergency departments; each of these departments is responsible for communicating preparedness, response, and recovery information to their various “support” departments. These nine lead departments are the Sheriff’s Department (LASD), Fire Department (LACoFD), Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Department of Health Services (DHS), Department of Mental Health (DMH), Internal Services Department (ISD), Department of the Coroner, Department of Public Works (DPW), and Chief Administrative Office (CAO). These nine lead departments send pre-identified teams to the CEOC during a County/Operational Area emergency.

During the exercise, these pre-identified teams were able to staff and operate within their SEMS prescribed sections (Management, Operations, Logistics, Finance / Administration / Recovery and Planning / Intelligence). All CEOC sections and branches participated in the successful development of a CEOC Initial Action Plan (IAP), Situation Report, and Event Action Plan (EAP).
The only significant deviation from the regular CEOC staffing pattern was observed during the second shift (C shift during the exercise). All departments were able to staff their respective CEOC sections/branches with their regularly assigned personnel, except for the Sheriff's Department. A majority of the Sheriff personnel assigned to shift C were unable to attend the exercise due to an urgent real-world event that required their immediate attention. Although the prior shift, shift B, understood that they normally would remain on shift until properly replaced, they had to leave to attend previously scheduled events. These personnel would have stayed had this been an actual disaster situation.

According to Los Angeles County Code, the Sheriff is the Director of Emergency Operations during the response phase of a County emergency. Thus, this lack of assigned Sheriff personnel meant lower ranking personnel were forced to fill key CEOC positions such as CEOC Manager, CEOC Assistant Manager, Operations Section Officer in Charge (OIC), and Plans/Intel Section OIC on the C shift.

**Goal 2:**
*Share critical information that will enable each level of participation to accomplish its mission as expected in accordance with NIMS, the NRP, and SEMS. This includes using information technology systems where appropriate.*

Goal 2 was also met during the exercise. All CEOC participants were able to share critical information within the CEOC environment and externally as well. Under the guidance of SEMS and NIMS, CEOC personnel were able to relay information amongst themselves and participating cities and the exercise simulation center.

It should be noted that there were a number of occasions where the County Emergency Management Information System (EMIS) ran slowly or stopped during the exercise. This caused CEOC staff to use alternate forms of data gathering. Please refer to Chapter 5 for a more detailed analysis of EMIS in the exercise.

**Goal 3:**
*Determine the need for Mutual Aid and make and process appropriate requests for assistance in accordance with the State’s Emergency Services Act and the Master Mutual Aid agreement.*

The meeting of Goal 3 was observed throughout the CEOC during the exercise. The Operations and Logistics sections for all shifts worked well together to research and process Resource Requests. The Finance-Admin-Recovery (FAR) section kept the County Board of Supervisors and the State of California advised of the event status, including the status of various city emergency proclamations.

Government agencies were also well represented in the CEOC during the exercise. Representatives from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), City of Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Department, Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), Los Angeles County Disaster
Communications Service, Disaster Management Area Coordinators (representing the cities of Los Angeles County), and 31 cities participated in the exercise.

**Protection**

**Goal 4:**
*Employ Public Information staff to gather information from CEOC sections/branches and issue appropriate press releases in a timely manner.*

This goal was met during the exercise. The Public Information group, which is part of the CEOC Management section, was robustly staffed during all three shifts. In past exercises this group was often understaffed, but during this exercise many Public Information Officers (PIOs), from various County departments participated in the exercise.

The PIO group was able to produce press releases in a timely manner for each shift. The Press Releases were reviewed and approved by the CEOC Manager. Press releases were distributed to most CEOC staff and then relayed to simulated media through mock press conferences and interviews.
CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL TASK PERFORMANCE

This section describes in greater detail the specific tasks associated with the various mission outcomes described earlier. These tasks were selected from the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Guides in the HSEEP Volume II. Feedback from exercise evaluators is included in this section as well as a reference to the specific exercise goal to which it is related. Also included are recommendations for improvement actions.

Please refer to Appendix A, Improvement Plan Matrix, for a summation of recommendations, responsible parties, and deadlines.

Emergency Management

Task III-2: Activate, Expand and Operate the EOC

Issue 1: The development of SEMS/ICS specific forms was often confusing.

Reference: Exercise Goal #1
“Effectively and harmoniously implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Plan (NRP), the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and the Incident Command System (ICS) in response to a natural disaster and terrorist attack.”

Summary of Issue:
There was observed confusion by CEOC staff over exactly how to complete or what to include in the Initial Action Plan (IAP), Situation Report, and Event Action Plan (EAPs) forms at the CEOC.

Consequences:
The timely completion of these plans and reports are essential to the success of a CEOC operation. Delay in completing these plans and reports, or completing them incorrectly, impacts not only the efficiency of the immediate shift, but also the following shift.

Analysis:
Although the CEOC has used a SEMS structure for many years, this year a more formalized Action Planning and Situation Report writing process was introduced. During pre-exercise workshops in October 2006, CEOC staff were trained on the use of customized CEOC ICS based Action Plans (IAP and EAP), CEOC Situation Reports and Branch Reports.

Templates for the new Action Plans, CEOC Situation Report, and specific Branch Reports were placed on the desktops of all CEOC computers. All CEOC staff logged on to the CEOC network under their respective Section/Branch. This logon was different than their specific EMIS logon.
**Recommendations and Improvements:**

- The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) should develop an enhanced training curriculum for CEOC staff which emphasizes the proper techniques in completing CEOC specific forms such as Action Plans, Situation Reports, and Resource Requests, as well as the use of any CEOC specific technology.

- OEM should also offer CEOC section specific training that focuses on the unique needs of particular CEOC sections.

- County departments with CEOC staffing responsibility should fully support staff on their respective CEOC teams in completing all EMC approved training, including regular CEOC site visits and hands-on practice with the CEOC systems.

**Issue 2: Management Section meetings were often longer than recommended by SEMS.**

**Reference:** Exercise Goal #1

“Effectively and harmoniously implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Plan (NRP), the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and the Incident Command System (ICS) in response to a natural disaster and terrorist attack.”

**Summary of Issue:**

Management Section meetings to develop the IAP and EAPs ran longer than the SEMS recommended 15-20 minutes. Although informative, all meetings appeared to include more information than necessary to develop IAPs and EAPs. It was also observed that some meetings included prolonged discussion as opposed to brief reports from Section Officers in Charge (OICs).

**Consequences:**

Prolonged management meetings negatively impact CEOC operations by: 1) pulling qualified managers out of the CEOC environment, thus forcing lower ranking personnel to make immediate management decisions in their absences, and 2) leaving the general CEOC staff without guidance or managerial support while the CEOC operations continue.

**Analysis:**

During the initial phases of any emergency, the need for information is great. However, there must be a balance between information gathering and management by objectives. This is precisely why SEMS recommends that the Plans/Intel Section Chief/OIC facilitate management meetings. The Plans/Intel Section Chief/OIC should focus on running the meetings to gather all necessary information in an orderly fashion and allows the CEOC Manager to make quality decisions. The Plans/Intel OIC must also keep the overall meeting time as short as possible. Prolonged meetings keep key
management staff away from their sections and thus leave them without leadership. Ideally, meetings should be as short as possible to make informed decisions, and each management position in the CEOC should have a designated and qualified assistant to oversee their section while they are in the meeting.

**Recommendations and Improvements:**

- The CEOC Assistant Manager should not attend Management meetings so he/she can be available to manage CEOC operations in the Manager’s absence.

- Each Section OIC should appoint a qualified Deputy OIC to monitor their section in the OICs absence and ensure that all section activities continue.

- The CEOC Manager should designate the Plans/Intel OIC as the meeting moderator to keep meetings on task and ensure that they are completed in a timely manner.

- Future CEOC staff training should include CEOC meeting management, including direction on having pertinent Branch Coordinators come to management meetings only to give their subject matter reports and then return to their respective branches.

**Issue 3:** Critical CEOC positions were left vacant at times during the exercise, especially following the first shift change.

**Reference:** Exercise Goal # 1

“Effectively and harmoniously implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Plan (NRP), the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and the Incident Command System (ICS) in response to a natural disaster and terrorist attack.”

**Summary of Issue:**

A significant number of high-level CEOC personnel in the C shift were unable to attend the exercise due to a real world situation that required their attention. The absent personnel were from the Sheriff’s Department which staffed the CEOC Management Section. Absent personnel included the CEOC Manager and CEOC Assistant Manager. Sheriff personnel who staffed the Operations and Plans/Intel Section OIC positions were also absent for the C shift. This caused confusion with the rest of the CEOC staff until members of the Sheriff’s Emergency Operations Bureau (EOB) stepped in to fill the vacant positions.

There was a low staffing level for the Finance / Administration / Recovery (FAR) section during the exercise.
**Consequences:**
The lack of qualified leadership in the CEOC during an emergency can lead to an unfocused operation and cause the county’s response to be disjointed.

**Analysis:**
The B shift CEOC Manager commented that he and his staff would stay on into the C shift until appropriate replacements were brought in to relieve them if this were a real disaster situation. However, due to prior commitments he was unable to cover the vacant shift during the exercise.

The decreased staffing levels in the FAR Section were directly related to the current staffing levels of the CAO/OEM. This coupled with the fact that many OEM staff were also directly involved with the execution of the exercise itself accounts for the low FAR staffing levels. Available OEM staff worked doubled shifts to ensure that FAR operations continued through the exercise.

**Recommendations and Improvements:**
- The Sheriff Department should examine the practice of assigning CEOC management personnel from the same division or bureau. The C shift personnel were mostly from the Custody Division, and thus needed to address a real-world crisis situation in the County Jails on the day of the exercise. It is recommended that the CEOC Management team include high-level personnel from different divisions or bureaus to ensure that there is always a cadre of well qualified managers available in real emergency.

- Regarding FAR staffing levels, it is recommended that OEM offer more section-specific training to non-OEM CAO personnel so they are prepared to work regular CEOC shifts in FAR during exercises and real-world CEOC activations. OEM should invite the appropriate CAO personnel to participate actively in all future CEOC training and exercises.

**Issue 4: Communication from the CEOC Management to General staff was not consistent over the course of the exercise.**

**Reference:**  Exercise Goal # 2
“Share critical information that will enable each level of participation to accomplish its missions as expected in accordance with NIMS, the NRP, and SEMS. This includes using information technology systems where appropriate.”

**Summary of Issue:**
It was observed that the Management Section of all three shifts did not announce significant events to the entire CEOC staff or hold regular briefings during the exercise, as recommended by SEMS.

**Consequences:**
Because the CEOC staff are the primary liaisons to their respective County Department Operations Centers (DOCs) or outside agency operations center, it is imperative that they are aware of all pertinent information in the CEOC environment. Although much of the vital information on an event can be found in EMIS, there also needs to be a personal connection between the management section and the rest of CEOC during an operation.

**Analysis:**
SEMS recommends that all CEOC staff sections and branches follow a prescribed schedule of meetings and briefings during any EOC activation. The goal is to keep all closed door management meetings under 20 minutes, and section OICs need to meet with their section personnel immediately following a meeting to update them on any pertinent information. Also, the CEOC Manager should schedule regular general CEOC staff briefings to keep all staff informed of relative events.

**Recommendations and Improvements:**
- Future CEOC staff training should include elements on scheduling all-staff briefings and sectional briefings. This should include the use of a SEMS approved “planning wheel” which suggests regular briefing times during an EOC activation.
- Future CEOC Management training should include a segment of inter-CEOC communication, including the use of all technologies available in the CEOC to communicate with the entire staff at once, i.e. PA announcement, full briefings, and use of internal audio visual system to broadcast CEOC manager updates to all workrooms.

**Issue 5:** Design of the CEOC workrooms needs to be re-evaluated to accommodate the increased number of personnel now responding to Full CEOC activations.

**Reference:** Exercise Goal #1
“Effectively and harmoniously implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Plan (NRP), the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and the Incident Command System (ICS) in response to a natural disaster and terrorist attack.”

**Summary of Issue:**
The CEOC was originally designed to accommodate representatives from eight lead county departments and fifteen non-county organizations. Since its opening over ten years ago, the number of lead departments sending representatives to the CEOC has increased to nine, with the addition of the Department of Mental Health. Also, the new County Department of Public Health will most likely need to send representatives to the CEOC during an activation (this will be officially decided upon by the County Emergency Management Council). Also, OEM staff use the CEOC workrooms on a daily basis as their offices, which has led to changes in some room configurations.
**Consequences:**
By definition, CEOC staff are responding to an relatively unfamiliar work area, addressing a stressful set of problems, under difficult time constraints. Overcrowded and cluttered workspaces only add to an already confused situation and do not support the mission of the CEOC staff.

**Analysis:**
The combination of the two conditions mentioned in the issue summary above have led to some CEOC workrooms becoming overcrowded when fully staffed and having limited access to important work tools during activations (i.e. white boards, informative wall charts, etc.).

**Recommendations and Improvements:**
- OEM should propose a new general workroom configuration that allows all CEOC staff to work in a comfortable setting. Also, this new workroom configuration should be reviewed by department(s) that staff the CEOC so they can make minor adjustments to suit their discipline-specific needs, e.g. Health Services can decide the best location for their REDDINET terminal.

- OEM should set a uniform office policy for its employees that maintains the operational integrity of the workrooms during non-activation periods.

**Issue 6: EMIS ran slowly and stopped regularly during the exercise.**

**Reference:** Exercise Goal # 2
“Share critical information that will enable each level of participation to accomplish its mission as expected in accordance with NIMS, the NRP, and SEMS. This includes using information technology systems where appropriate.”

**Summary of Issue:**
During the course of the exercise, EMIS ran very slowly and required regular Information Technology (IT) staff support. The EMIS GIS system was also unusable during the exercise. CEOC staff complained that there was an overload of information on EMIS and they found it difficult to both monitor EMIS and interact with other CEOC sections.

**Consequences:**
Since EMIS is the main emergency communications system between the CEOC, County departments and cities, it is imperative that it work reliably at all times. An EMIS failure could result in a significant delay in an exchange of emergency information during a major disaster.

Excessive information, or unfiltered information on EMIS, can cause CEOC staff to focus too much attention on EMIS and ignore problem solving with other CEOC
personnel. An alternate problem is not monitoring EMIS closely enough and missing valid pieces of information that require immediate action.

**Analysis:**
EMIS has run slowly in past exercises and improvements have been made to increase its efficiency. However, during this exercise, the system continued to run slowly and at times stopped altogether, requiring users to re-logon to EMIS to continue working. This was observed in all CEOC sections by the exercise evaluators and at the off-site exercise Simulation Center. Slow run-times and frequent “crashes” caused frustration for exercise players and simulators during the exercise and raised concerns over EMIS’s capabilities in a real emergency.

Spending too much time monitoring EMIS pulled trained CEOC staff away from active problem-solving with other CEOC staff, which defeats the entire EOC concept of bringing agencies representatives to one location to quickly solve problems.

**Recommendations and Improvements:**

- OEM should continue a current in-depth study of EMIS which started in mid-2006 in response to feedback from the 2005 exercise. CAO IT staff working on EMIS are interviewing key EMIS end-users to determine what technological support they need during a disaster. OEM should continue this study and submit their recommendations to the Emergency Management Council by April 30, 2007. These recommendations should include long-term solutions to EMIS’s instability and address information overload for end users.

- A short-term recommendation is for each CEOC section (or branch in large sections) to designate one person to continually monitor EMIS and advise his/her section OIC and other appropriate CEOC personnel of any important information they find on EMIS.

- All CEOC staff should take the regularly offered EMIS training at least two times per year, and practice on EMIS every time their respective CEOC team is on-call.

- All CEOC teams should follow the EMC approved CEOC Staff training guidelines which call for each team to physically respond to the CEOC and practice working in their respective workrooms, as well as testing all the tools available to them, including EMIS.
Task III-4: Notify Government Agencies and Officials

**Issue 1:** Government Agencies were represented in the CEOC during the exercise.

**Reference:** Exercise Goal # 3  
“Determine the need for mutual aid, and make and process appropriate requests for assistance in accordance with the State’s Emergency Services Act and the Master Mutual Aid agreement.”

**Summary of Issue:**  
County government agencies were well represented in the CEOC during the exercise. Representatives from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (OES), American Telephone and Telegraph (ATT), City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Police Department, Disaster Management Area Coordinators (representing the cities of Los Angeles County), and the 31 cities that participated in the exercise.

**Consequences:**  
Exercising without the key players leads to confusion during an actual response.

**Analysis:**  
All of the above mentioned jurisdictions and agencies were also represented in the exercise Design Team and thus had a significant impact on the development of the exercise.

**Recommendations and Improvements:**  
- OEM should continue to work with representatives from key agencies on a regular basis to encourage greater participation in future County exercises.

Task III-8: Direct and Control Distribution of Supplies and Equipment

**Issue 1:** CEOC Sections interacted positively to coordinate mutual aid requests.

**Reference:** Exercise Goal # 3  
“Determine the need for mutual aid, and make and process appropriate requests for assistance in accordance with the State’s Emergency Services Act and the Master Mutual Aid agreement.”

**Summary of Issue:**
Overall, the Operations and Logistics Sections for all shifts worked well together to research and process Resource Requests.

Consequences:
Poor coordination between the Operations and Logistics Section can cause undo delays in processing Resource Requests and seriously impede the rapid procurement of necessary equipment and/or personnel.

Analysis:
The Logistics Section forwarded Resource Requests to the Operations Section for approval to ensure the validity and appropriateness of the request.

Recommendations and Improvements:
- OEM should continue to reinforce positive cross-section communications during CEOC staff training.

Task III-10 Request State/Federal Assistance

Issue 1: FAR Section notified the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the State of California of local emergency proclamations. However, they needed to ensure that all CEOC personnel were aware that a County Emergency was proclaimed.

Reference: Exercise Goal # 3
“Determine the need for mutual aid, and make and process appropriate requests for assistance in accordance with the State’s Emergency Services Act and the Master Mutual Aid agreement.”

Summary of Issue:
The FAR Section generated a local County Emergency Proclamation and requested the State to request a Presidential Disaster Declaration during the exercise which was sent to the Governor of the State of California via the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (OES). The FAR Section also kept the County Board of Supervisors and the State of California advised of the event status, including the status of various city emergency proclamations, with regular reports. However, some CEOC Sections and Branches reported that they did not see the County Emergency Proclamation during the exercise.

Consequences:
Failure to keep other levels of government advised of local emergency proclamations can lead to undue concern of elected officials for their constituents. A lack of emergency information at all levels can also lead to redundant services.

Analysis:
The FAR section maintained a regular report to the Board of Supervisors which was relayed to the CEOC Manager for approval and then sent to each board office (simulated). They also regularly updated the State’s RIMS (Response Information Management System) as well as communicating directly with the State OES representative in the CEOC.

Although FAR worked well at notifying external entities of the County Emergency Proclamation, some personnel in the CEOC reported that they never saw a copy of the County Emergency Proclamation.

**Recommendations and Improvements:**
- Emergency proclamations should be posted on EMIS and Los Angeles County website so they are available to all CEOC personnel and the general public.
- Copies of the county emergency proclamation should also be distributed to Section OICs and Branch Coordinators so they can be shared with their staff.

**Issue 2:** The FAR Section staff had positive enthusiasm, but some personnel appeared to need a review on the Emergency Proclamation process in general.

**Reference:** Exercise Goal #3

“Determine the need for mutual aid, and make and process appropriate requests for assistance in accordance with the State’s Emergency Services Act and the Master Mutual Aid agreement.”

**Summary of Issue:**
Although the FAR staff was very flexible, there did appear to be a need to review the emergency proclamation process.

**Consequences:**
Delays in preparing a County Emergency Proclamation for review by the Board of Supervisors, the CAO, and/or the Sheriff can cause delays in receiving necessary mutual aid support from the State and Federal governments.

**Analysis:**
This appeared to be a training issue that could be addressed in future section-specific training.

**Recommendations and Improvements:**
- OEM should include specific review training on the Emergency Proclamation process in all future CEOC staff training, specifically all future FAR section – specific training.
Task III-12: Direct and Control Public Information Activities

Issue 1: All shifts produced CEOC Manager approved press releases.

Reference: Exercise Goal # 4
“Employ Public Information staff to gather information from CEOC sections/branches and issue appropriate press releases in a timely manner.”

Summary of Issue:
The Public Information group of the of Management section was able to produce press releases for each shift and had them approved by the CEOC Manager then distributed to simulated media.

Consequences:
Poor Emergency Public Information (EPI) may cause public fear and distrust during crisis situations and lead to undue widespread mental anguish. Also, poorly coordinated EPI can lead to confused situational awareness and delay emergency response efforts.

Analysis:
The OEM Public Information coordinator had been training County PIOs just prior to the exercise and many of those PIOs attended the exercise. This large cadre of PIOs provided the Sheriff PIO (Lead PIO during a CEOC activation) with ample support to respond to simulated media inquiries, conduct mock news conference and interviews, and distribute simulated press releases. Also, this large group of PIOs received “on the job” training by a professional consulting firm so they would learn the proper Emergency Public Information (EPI) procedures and follow the County’s EPI plan.

It was observed that the OES Representative in the CEOC did not receive a copy of any of the releases during the exercise.

Recommendations and Improvements:
• Continue with current level of training and participate in future exercises as available.

• PIO staff need to ensure that all Section OICs and the Management Section Liaison Officer are given copies of each press release so they can be distributed to all CEOC staff.
Task III-14: Provide Emergency Public Information to Media and the Public

Issue 1:  A real world Press Conference was held during the exercise to advise the public of the County’s preparedness efforts for both natural disasters and acts of terrorism.

Reference:  Exercise Goal # 4
“Employ Public Information staff to gather information from CEOC sections/branches and issue appropriate press releases in a timely manner.”

Summary of Issue:
During the exercise, a real-world press conference was held to advise the public of the exercise and its purpose. Los Angeles County Mayor Michael Antonovich, LA County Sheriff Lee Baca, LA County Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman, and LA County Public Health Officer Dr. Jonathan Fielding spoke at the press conference facilitated by Mr. Michael Brooks, Acting OEM Administrator.

Consequences:
Failure to notify the public of exercises can lead them to inadvertently infer that there is a real emergency in the county, if they are exposed to elements of the exercise. Since this exercise was conducted in a closed setting, away from the public, this was not an issue.

Analysis:
This press conference not only advised the public that the exercise was taking place, but it also publicly illustrated the high level of support of the County’s elected officials and executives for the exercise. The press conference worked well and helped relay the seriousness of emergency planning and practice.

Recommendations and Improvements:
• None

Protection

Task V-2: Prepare and Disseminate Protective Action Messages

Issue 1:  The Public Information unit exceeded their goal of producing one Press Release per shift.

Reference:  Exercise Goal # 4
“Employ Public Information staff to gather information from CEOC sections/branches and issue appropriate press releases in a timely manner.”
Summary of Issue:
The Public Information group had set an internal goal of producing at least one press release per CEOC shift. They exceeded that goal by producing a total of 17 press releases during the entire exercise. This positive work allowed the PIO function to simulate keeping the public informed during the exercise.

Consequences:
Failure to produce approved press releases during an emergency can lead to public concern and anxiety and lead to additional incidents and overall distress.

Analysis:
The PIO group produced eight press releases during the first shift, four during the second shift, and five during the last shift. They also conducted mock media tours of the CEOC and arranged for multiple mock media interviews with PIO staff and CEOC management personnel.

Although Press Releases were produced, approved, and distributed to some of the CEOC staff and the media, there was no observed attempt to use the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to disseminate information.

Recommendations and Improvements:
• Continue to train County PIOs that respond to the CEOC with the team-based approach that was used to prepare for this exercise.

• PIO staff should also coordinate with Sheriff personnel in the CEOC to send an Emergency Alert System (EAS) message directing the public to monitor the media for the upcoming protective action message. The EAS message should instruct the public where to go to receive more detailed information.

Issue 2: The CEOC facility did not fully support the needs of the PIO function.

Reference: Exercise Goal # 4
“Employ Public Information staff to gather information from CEOC sections/branches and issue appropriate press releases in a timely manner.”

Summary of Issue:
The physical space, electronic files, and amount of equipment configuration for PIOs in the CEOC PIO workroom is limiting in both size and capabilities.

Consequences:
Inadequate equipment and work space can lead to a poor PIO response during an emergency and thus slow down the flow of information to and from the public.
Analysis:
The PIO functional work area is small for the amount of people expected to work there during a CEOC activation. The room is narrow and has one long work area. Also, there is only one TV monitor in the room, which doesn’t allow PIO staff to monitor multiple TV channels simultaneously.

Also, the CEOC media observation room (second floor of the CEOC) has work desks which limit the space for news media to set up cameras and conduct interviews.

The media observation room also has easy visual access to Conference Room A/B where the County’s Emergency Management Council would meet during an emergency. This poses possible security concerns because presentations and/or information listed on the room’s white boards may contain sensitive information.

Recommendations and Improvements:
• Develop a map of the CEOC interior with updated phone extensions and e-mail addresses so PIOs, as well as other CEOC staff, can quickly access other CEOC personnel to gather information.

• Develop an electronic library of template press releases that can be quickly accessed and modified. This includes common advisories such as boil water advisories, etc.

• All desks and extraneous materials should be removed from the media observation room so it can easily accommodate real world media that responds to the CEOC during an emergency activation.

• Blinds should be mounted on the windows of Conference Room A/B to ensure privacy for the EMC when they meet in that room during the activation. Anyone in the media observation room can clearly look into that conference room.

Task V-10: Direct Shelter Operations

Issue 1: The CEOC Operations Section, Care and Shelter Branch, was able to coordinate shelter operations during the exercise.

Reference: Exercise Goal #3
“Determine the need for mutual aid, and make and process appropriate requests for assistance in accordance with the State’s Emergency Services Act and the Master Mutual Aid agreement.”

Summary of Issue:
The Care and Shelter Branch in the CEOC, headed by the County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) and supported by the American Red Cross (ARC), was able to coordinate with other ARC units through their established reporting procedures. The
San Gabriel/Pomona Valley ARC Chapter also ran a functional EOC exercise in conjunction with the County exercise. They coordinated their efforts with the City of Pasadena, which also participated in the County exercise.

**Consequences:**
Although most shelter operations were executed at a city level and not directly operated by the Operational Area, failure to coordinate these multiple shelter operations could lead to a redundancy of services and exhaust limited resources.

**Analysis:**
DPSS did an excellent job communicating with its Department Operations Center (DOC) during the exercise. This, along with use of the white status boards and good change-of-shift briefings, allowed the sheltering function to work well during the exercise.

**Recommendations and Improvements:**
- DPSS and ARC should continue to build their positive working relationship and continue joint training in shelter operations and management.

**CONCLUSIONS**
The *Operation Double Header* exercise was a success. It met its objectives and pointed out areas of improvement that can be addressed through future training, system upgrades, and the continued participation of all lead departments and participating agencies. The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is already working with county departments to address some of these issues by conducting a thorough study of the effectiveness of EMIS, and developing a continuous training schedule for 2007 to address training needs for the CEOC staff and other Operational Area partners (cities, special districts, etc.).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Recommended Improvement Action</th>
<th>Responsible Party and/or Agency</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task III-2: Activate, Expand and Operate the EOC</td>
<td>Issue 1: The development of SEMS/ICS specific forms was often confusing.</td>
<td>The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) should develop a training curriculum for CEOC staff which emphasizes the proper techniques in completing CEOC specific forms such as Action Plans, Situation Reports, and Resource Requests, as well use of any CEOC specific technology. OEM should offer CEOC section-specific training for CEOC staff that focuses on the unique needs of their particular CEOC section. All County departments with CEOC staffing responsibility should support staff assigned on their CEOC teams to complete all EMC approved training, which includes regular CEOC site visits for hands-on practice with the CEOC systems.</td>
<td>OEM</td>
<td>April 1, 2007</td>
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<td>Issue 2: Management Section meetings were often longer than recommended by SEMS.</td>
<td>CEOC management should attend training which includes segments on CEOC meeting management, appointment of deputies, and efficient use of Plans/Intel personnel during meetings and briefings.</td>
<td>LASD, ISD, CAO, and OEM</td>
<td>April 1, 2007</td>
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<td>Issue 3: Critical CEOC positions were left vacant at times during the exercise, especially following the first shift change.</td>
<td>The Sheriff Department should examine the practice of assigning CEOC management personnel from the same division or bureau on their CEOC Teams. It is recommended that the CEOC Management Team include high-</td>
<td>LASD</td>
<td>April 1, 2007</td>
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<td>Task III-2: Activate, Expand and Operate the EOC</td>
<td>Issue 4: Communication from the CEOC Management to General staff was not consistent over the course of the exercise.</td>
<td>Future CEOC staff training should include elements on scheduling all-staff briefings and sectional briefings. This should include the use of a SEMS approved “planning wheel” which suggests regular briefing times. Future CEOC Management training should include a segment of inter-CEOC communication, including the use of all technologies available in the CEOC to communicate with the entire staff at once, i.e. PA announcement, full briefings, and the use of the internal audio-visual system to broadcast CEOC manager updates to all workrooms.</td>
<td>OEM</td>
<td>April 1, 2007</td>
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<td>OEM, Nine Lead Departments</td>
<td>July 1, 2007</td>
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needs, i.e. Health Services can decide the best location for their REDDINET terminal.

OEM should set a uniform office policy for its employees that maintains the operational integrity of the workrooms during non-activation periods.

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<th>Recommendation</th>
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<td>OEM/CAO IT</td>
<td>May 1, 2007</td>
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<td>Nine Lead Departments, EMC</td>
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<td>Future FAR and PIO training should include guidance on posting Emergency proclamations on EMIS and the Los Angeles County website so they are available to all CEOC personnel and the general public. Future FAR training should also include guidance on the need to distribute copies of the County Emergency Proclamation to all Section OICs, Branch Coordinators, and the CEOC Liaison Officer so they can be shared with all CEOC staff.</td>
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<td>OEM</td>
<td>March 1, 2007</td>
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<td>OEM PIO</td>
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