

**Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services**

# **After Action Report Improvement Plan**

## **VTTX Mass Casualty Incident (MCI)**



**9/26/2016  
Final**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services participated in a Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) Virtual Tabletop Exercise (VTTX) that is sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA), Emergency Management Institute (EMI) as one of a series of virtual exercises designed to bring numerous communities together in a collaborative environment. This After Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) follows guidance set forth by the U.S Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

The nearly four-hour, facilitator-led discussion touched the core capabilities of Planning, Public Information and Warning; Critical Transportation; Operational Coordination; Mass Casualty Services; On scene Security, Protection and Law Enforcement; Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services; Situational Assessment and Health and Social Services. This AAR/IP summarizes the success of the exercise in meeting its goals.

Several strengths were noted in the County's understanding and performance of emergency procedures and roles. There were also several areas that could be improved based on the gaps, challenges, and recommended actions identified in the VTTX. These identified areas of improvement provided a basis of recommending a series of corrective actions or assignments in Appendix A. Improvement areas actions included coordinated training, plan review, and outreach to external partners.

A list of workshop participants can be found in Appendix B.

## EXERCISE OVERVIEW

<b>Exercise Name</b>	<b>Virtual Tabletop Exercise (VTTX) – Multi Casualty Incident (MCI)</b>
<b>Exercise Dates</b>	August 25, 2016 8:00 am – 1:00 pm
<b>Scope</b>	This is a discussion-based exercise, planned for four hours hosted by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) and conducted with multiple remote Video Teleconference sites including Sacramento County.
<b>Mission Area(s)</b>	Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery
<b>Core Capabilities</b>	Planning, Public Information and Warning; Critical Transportation; Operational Coordination; Mass Casualty Services; On scene Security, Protection and Law Enforcement; Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services; Situational Assessment and Health and Social Services.
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase Mass Casualty awareness</li> <li>• Assess Mass Casualty integration in all hazards preparedness</li> <li>• Examine Mass Casualty information sharing and related courses of action</li> <li>• Examine Mass Casualty incident structures</li> <li>• Review Mass Casualty resources requests and management processes</li> </ul>
<b>Threat or Hazard</b>	Mass Casualty
<b>Scenario</b>	The Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) VTTX was designed around the realistic scenario of a traffic accident involving a school bus with children, which causes significant actions, by the participating jurisdictions and agencies.
<b>Sponsor</b>	Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services
<b>Grant</b>	No grant funds were allocated
<b>Participating Organizations</b>	A VTTX sign-in sheet is attached in Appendix B.
<b>Point of Contact</b>	Mary Jo Flynn, MS, CEM Emergency Operations Coordinator Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services <a href="mailto:flynnm@sacoes.org">flynnm@sacoes.org</a> (916) 874-4671 office; (916) 508-5131 cell

## ANALYSIS OF CORE CAPABILITIES

Aligning exercise objectives and core capabilities provides a consistent taxonomy for evaluation that transcends individual exercises to support preparedness reporting and trend analysis. Table 1 includes the exercise objectives, aligned core capabilities, and performance ratings for each core capability as observed during the exercise and determined by the evaluation team.

Objective	Core Capability	Performance
Conduct a systematic planning process which has engaged the whole community	Planning, Public Information and Warning;	P
Discuss the capability to deliver, coordinated, prompt, reliable and actionable information to the whole community	Planning, Public Information and Warning	P
Discuss the capability to establish and maintain a coordinated and unified structure and process that integrates all stakeholders	Operational Coordination	P
Have the ability to stabilize critical infrastructure functions, minimize health and safety threats, and efficiently restore vital systems and services	Critical Transportation, Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services	P
Discuss the capability to provide life-sustaining services to the affected population	Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services	P
Discuss the capability to provide decision makers with decision relevant information regarding the nature and extent of hazard	Situational Awareness	P
<b>Ratings Definitions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Performed without Challenges (P):</b> The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.</li> <li>• <b>Performed with Some Challenges (S):</b> The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws; however, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified.</li> <li>• <b>Performed with Major Challenges (M):</b> The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s), but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other activities; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.</li> <li>• <b>Unable to be Performed (U):</b> The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were not performed in a manner that achieved the objective(s).</li> </ul>		

**Table 1. Summary of Core Capability Performance**

The following sections provide an overview of the performance related to each exercise objective and associated core capability, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

## **Core Capability: Planning, Public Information and Warning; Operational Coordination; Situational Awareness; Critical Transportation, Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services**

### **Objectives:**

- Conduct a systematic planning process which has engaged the whole community
- Discuss the capability to deliver, coordinated, prompt, reliable and actionable information to the whole community
- Discuss the capability to establish and maintain a coordinated and unified structure and process that integrates all stakeholders
- Discuss the capability to provide decision makers with decision relevant information regarding the nature and extent of hazard
- Have the ability to stabilize critical infrastructure functions, minimize health and safety threats, and efficiently restore vital systems and services
- Discuss the capability to provide life-sustaining services to the affected population

The strengths and areas for improvement for each core capability aligned to this objective are described in this section.

### **Strengths**

The structure of the exercise focused on a multimedia, facilitated format for the national players as well as Sacramento County players. This scenario, a bus accident with an SUV on Highway 50, requiring a response to treat, triage and transport multiple school aged patients and handle the secondary issues from the accident such as: managing the children; family reunification; EMS response; media; fatalities on scene; and post incident procedures was a realistic situation for most of the participants in the room. The disciplines were well represented enabling quality discussion.

Top three strengths:

1. The exercise highlighted the depth of resources, skill sets and trained personnel internal to Sacramento County (including the cities) to handle a Mass Casualty Incident involving multiple jurisdictions and agencies. There was a coordinated on scene response with a strong Emergency Medical Services response in dealing with and managing multiple patients (most of whom were minors).
2. The VTTX identified the capabilities of our partners and department personnel to respond to a Mass Casualty Incident event in Sacramento County and highlighted the existing partnership and ongoing emergency management coordination efforts with other local departments/agencies, particularly the Emergency Medical Services response. Additionally, this scenario highlighted the coordination and unification of two neighboring counties.
3. The ICS system works very well in Sacramento County as the first responder community each knows their roles and responsibilities with on scene incident management and stakeholder integration.

4. The coordination of information from the field level to the individual DOC, EOC levels enabled the decision makers to receive vital information related to the event in a timely manner. It also proved to be efficient for the County and local Public Information Officers to relay accurate and timely information to the public, families and the media.

### Areas for Improvement

Sacramento County participants altered the scenarios to fit their needs to ensure valuable learning for all and discussed the effects of a Mass Casualty Incident along the Highway 50 corridor, which enabled play from multiple jurisdictions and agencies and was a realistic scenario for the group. There were multiple areas for improvement identified and are listed in the following:

- Who is authorized to request Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR) and when should those be requested?
- The modernization of the Patient Tracking System within Sacramento County needs to be implemented as the triage tags are not sufficient for knowing which patients were routed to county locations or destinations external to the county.
- The MHOAC Program needs to be advertised, players were not aware of their role at the field and the EOC levels.
- The Medical Reserve Corps can be a valuable support to an MCI and the integration of this volunteer force (how their skills and expertise can be utilized) should be documented and needs to be identified.
- Due to the nature of the event there will be an immediate (within 48/72 hours) and long term need for Critical Incident Stress Management. How to integrate the Behavioral Health department in that role is an important planning component for the well-being of the responders.
- The Family Reunification Center and the planning for those centers, needs to begin countywide with Schools, the Coroner, the Red Cross and many other agencies and with a role in the establishment and management of the centers. The lessons learned from past disasters such as the San Bernardino Shooting and the Orlando Shootings can be helpful for future planning in Sacramento County.

### Analysis:

Overall participants expressed satisfaction with the exercise. There was total agreement by all participants that increased training and advertisement on the role of the MHOAC Program needs to be implemented annually to keep all involved apprised of their roles, responsibilities and resources they bring to the scenario. The Family Reunification planning should include the schools as they are a key player and the planning for Critical Incident Stress Management is a must, in Multi Casualty Incident planning involving minors.

## Participant Survey

Participants were asked to rank elements of the exercise on a five-point scale with 1 indicating strong disagreement with the statement and 5 indicating strong agreement. All participants (N=6) participated in the survey.

The exercise was well structured and organized	4.6
The exercise scenario was plausible and realistic	4.8
The facilitator(s) was knowledgeable about the material, kept the exercise on target, and was sensitive to group dynamics	4.5
The situation manual used during the exercise was a valuable tool throughout the exercise.	4.1
Participation in the exercise was appropriate for someone in my position	4.4
The participants included the right people in terms of level and mix of disciplines	4.3

What changes would you make to this exercise? Please provide any recommendations on how this exercise or future exercises could be improved or enhanced.

- Timeline in scenario seemed too compressed from a gridlock – rush hour traffic standpoint.
- While the invitation to the VTTX was open to all, it would have been nice to see more first responders at the table from both fire and law.
- DHA needs to do a family reunification plan.
- Need to bring together a variety of groups to talk through family reunification and would like to see a seminar on family reunification to aid in planning.
- Valuable exercise, information received was helpful.
- Maybe have a preplanned area picked and use it.
- The coordination between the two counties was good and reinforces the unified command concepts.
- Need to work with County airports on the Temporary Flight Restriction procedures, who can request them, when?
- Effective exercise to assist in learning different ways to manage situations and multiple patients.
- Great event, well organized, good participation, Great job!
- For the sake of time, the group of participants from Sacramento County thought that calling out agencies to speak to their top 3 points from the discussion questions would help in keeping the attention for the other groups across the country, the questions should be summarized rather than all answered in detail.

## APPENDIX A: IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This IP has been developed specifically for Sacramento County as a result of the Multi Casualty Incident VTTX. All corrective actions are entered into WebEOC for tracking over time.

Core Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Capability Element <sup>1</sup>	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
Core Capability 1: Planning, Public Information and Warning; Critical Transportation; Operational Coordination; Mass Casualty Services; On scene Security, Protection and Law Enforcement; Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services; Situational Assessment and Health and Social Services.	Family Reunification	Convene a task force to explore and develop a family reunification plan for the Operational Area	Planning, Public Information and Warning; Critical Transportation; Operational Coordination; Mass Casualty Services; On scene Security, Protection and Law Enforcement; Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services; Situational Assessment and Health and Social Services.	DHA/OES	K. Rudi		
	MHOAC Training Program	Begin training Operational Area stakeholders on the program including hospitals and the medical community	Operational Coordination, Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services, Situation Assessment	EMS/MHOAC/OES	B. Merin		
	MCI planning update	Revise and update existing plans and procedures for an MCI to include CISM, MRC and patient tracking in addition to other critical elements	Planning, Public Information and Warning; Critical Transportation; Operational Coordination; Mass Casualty Services; On	PH/EMS/OES	B. Merin		

<sup>1</sup> Capability Elements are: Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, or Exercise.



		of this type plan	scene Security, Protection and Law Enforcement; Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services; Situational Assessment and Health and Social Services.				
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