



OHIO

**Butler County, Ohio
L.E.P.C.
Full-Scale Exercise
October 2011**

After Action Report



October 21, 2011

PREFACE

This After Action Report (AAR) was produced with the help, advice, and assistance of many local and State agencies. The purpose of publishing an AAR is to document effectiveness and overall exercise performance. As such, this report is tangible evidence of our local partnership. It serves as a compendium of lessons learned, outlines recommended corrective actions, and provides the basis for planning future exercises. This and subsequent AARs will contribute to improving response, responder training, exercise and preparedness testing, and the provision of expert assistance. Exercises serve as “final accountability” of collective preparedness.

The exercise assisted local and State jurisdictions in the prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery of the entire spectrum of Hazardous Material / Mass-Casualty incident. The Butler County LEPC exercise was built on and reinforced the training, emergency response equipment, and technical assistance provided to first responders, emergency management, and the health and medical communities by allowing them to test their plans, policies, knowledge, and skills.

ADMINISTRATIVE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

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4. For information on this exercise, please contact the following points of contact (POCs):
 - a. Exercise Director/State of Ohio POC:

Keven Clouse
Field Liaison
Ohio Emergency Management Agency
2855 West Dublin-Granville Road
Columbus, OH 43235

- b. The Butler County local Exercise Director and POC:

Jeff Galloway
Director
Butler County Emergency Management Agency
315 High Hamilton, Ohio 45011
Office: 513-785-5810
gallowayjl@butlercountyohio.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Butler County LEPC exercise was developed to validate the Butler County Emergency Operation Plans (EOPs) and to provide participants with an opportunity to evaluate current response concepts, plans, and capabilities for a response to a large-scale haz mat incident. The exercise was developed and evaluated using objectives that were identified by the Butler County LEPC Exercise and Training Exercise Planning Team. The exercise evaluation methodology required by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (US DHS) for exercises conducted under the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP). The objectives for this exercise were:

- **Objective: Incident Assessment**
- **Objective: Incident Command**
- **Objective: Response Personnel Safety**
- **Objective: Population Protective Actions**
- **Objective: Emergency Public Information**
- **Objective: Traffic and Access Control**
- **Objective: Shelter Management**
- **Objective: Emergency Medical Services**

The Butler County LEPC Exercise Planning Team discussed the overall expectations of the Haz Mat exercise, which included improved communications between multi-county fire and law enforcement agencies, and coordination of the emergency medical response in tandem with local hospitals. The exercise objectives were established to bring together agency representatives to discuss, agree or disagree, and if possible, resolve operational issues related to a large-scale Haz Mat / Mass-Casualty incident.

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 Butler County LEPC Full-scale exercise met all the evaluated objectives and provided an opportunity for Butler County, Ohio, to demonstrate the effectiveness of EOPs, SOGs, and SOPs. These systems performed extremely well and provide a foundation for a rapid, controlled response to an emergency situation or disaster.

Planners should use the results of this exercise to review and update their respective agency's EOPs, SOGs, and SOPs, as well as to explore methods to increase communications interoperability.

Subsequent exercises should test specific improvements instituted as a result of this exercise and should include a focus on additional drills and exercises to routinely test and enhance the Butler County's EOPs.

Overview

Exercise Details

Exercise Name

Butler County LEPC Full-scale exercise

Type of Exercise

Hazardous Material / Mass-casualty (School bus vs. Chemical HazMat semi tractor trailer)

Exercise Start Date

October 12th, 2011 @ 1500 hours

Exercise End Date

October 12th, 2011 @ 1830 hours

Duration

3 Hours

Location

Hamilton, OH

Sponsors

Butler County Emergency Management Agency

Butler County LEPC

Participating Organizations

- Fairfield TWP Fire & Police
- Middletown Fire
- West Chester TWP Fire
- Hanover TWP Fire & EMS
- City of Oxford Fire
- UC Medical Center
- Mercy Fairfield Hospital
- Ohio State Patrol
- Ohio Special Response Team
- Hamilton Fire Dept.
- Butler County Tech Rescue
- American Red Cross
- Hamilton Police Dept.
- City of Fairfield Fire
- City of Fairfield Police
- Liberty TWP Fire
- Butler Co. Sheriff Office
- West Chester Hospital
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Liberty Campus
- Miami Valley Hospital, CareFlight Air and Mobile Services
- McCullough Hyde Hospital
- Butler County CERT

Number of Participants

- Players 80+
- Observers 6
- Facilitators 8
- Evaluators 10
- Victim/Actors 24

Major Strengths

The major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows:

- Identification of Hazardous Material products
- Unified Command System
- Long range monitoring with AreaRAE system
- Red Cross Shelter operations
- Traffic & Crowd control within incident area
- Utilizing multiple dispatch centers during incident
- Identifying and communicating with surrounding nursing home & businesses
- Use of multiple mutual aid channels on the 800 Mhz radio system
- Use of local schools and Principle for information regarding school bus
- Assistant to Incident Commander for scribing information
- Good information sharing between, IC, Law Enforcement, Tech Rescue & HazMat
- Decon / handling incident victims clothing and belongings
- Establish early a hot zone distance from HazMat incident

Primary Areas for Improvement

As a result of the exercise, opportunities for improvement were identified. The primary areas for improvement, including recommendations, are as follows:

- Communications with local hospitals regarding a County-wide HazMat incident
- Use of a mobile incident command post vehicle
- Lack of a Staging Officer
- No clearly designated Accountability Officer
- Incident Safety Officer was not established early in the incident
- No HazMat Safety Officer
- No clearly define triage area (using triage flags & tarps from MCI trailers)

- Initial vehicles from Hamilton Fire proceeded through chemical cloud (identify alternate routes to incident location) with wind direction
- Delay of removing victims from incident (1 hour and 45 minutes for first victim)
- Fixed location for Triage Officer / EMS Branch Officer
- No clear identification of Command Positions (use command vests)
- Public Information Officer on site to handle media and public information to public and residents
- Communicating with local Red Cross shelters on extent of incident
- Long range CAMEO plotting for evacuation areas
- Use of County Incident Management Team for Logistics, Planning, Finance, etc. Command became overwhelmed early and could not fully recover.

Corrective Actions

The Butler County LEPC training and exercise committee will coordinate training and workshops as part of the corrective action process. The committee will work with various agencies within the County to include:

- Butler County Fire Chief's Association (Joint Response Association / JRA)
- Butler County EMS Council
- Butler County Emergency Management Agency
- Butler County Hazardous Material Advisory Board
- Butler County Hospitals

The Committee will establish timelines and priorities from the areas of improvement list and will coordinate with the Butler County Emergency Management Agency for on-site training. Quick reference flow charts will be developed to ease the burden on first arriving Incident Commanders at large-scale HazMat incidents. Triage flow charts will also be developed including ICS organization models for the EMS Branch.

Incident Safety Officer training is scheduled for the year 2012 through BCEMA. Butler County EMA in conjunction with the Butler County Fire and Police Chief's associations will explore the need for Regional Safety Officers. Regional Safety Officers could be requested for larger incidents within the County through the PSAPs as a 24/7 on call single resource.

The Committee will coordinate with the Butler County Hospitals the development of a communication and information network that can be used on scene within Butler County during an incident. A localized network will be the quickest and most efficient method of communication on scene with the Triage or Transport Officer. Training with local Hospitals on the use of the 800 MHz radio system utilizing the mutual aid / Zone B channels should be a priority.

Review with all Butler County emergency responders the use of the communicator system utilized by BCEMA for media and public notifications. Establish through the Butler County EMA and IMT teams the use of a Public Information Officer for on-site response. A network of PIOs should be established within the County similar to the Arson Task Force.

Individual agencies should perform after action reviews on specific areas of improvement and developed in-house corrective actions for future exercises and incidents.

Exercise Summary

The Butler County LEPC training and exercise committee designed this exercise for several specific objectives which were met during the exercise. The objectives were:

- HazMat incident located on boundary line between the City Hamilton and Fairfield Township
- The use of multiple dispatch centers within Butler County
- Early use of mutual aid channels to communicate on scene with multiple departments responding
- Involvement of many Fire & EMS Departments, Law Enforcement Agencies, Public Works Departments and Hospitals within Butler County for a single large-scale incident
- Use of a Unified Incident Command System on large-scale incident in Butler County

The magnitude of this exercise has demonstrated the ability of agencies within Butler County to work together to achieve a command goal. The Butler County LEPC training and exercise committee will review all strengths and improvements outlined in the after action review and make further recommendations for improvement. A timeline and training guideline will be established to improve areas identified for improvement.