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**TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE**

**SENATE SUBCOMMITTEES ON STATE, LOCAL, AND PRIVATE SECTOR PREPAREDNESS AND
INTEGRATION
AND
OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE, AND THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

ON

**“NOT A MATTER OF ‘IF’, BUT WHEN’: THE STATUS OF U.S. RESPONSE FOLLOWING AN RDD
ATTACK.”**

THE UNITED STATES SENATE

NOVEMBER 15, 2007

Introduction

Thank you Chairmen Pryor and Akaka, Ranking Member Sununu and Voinovich, and distinguished members of the Committee for allowing me the opportunity to provide you with a statement for the record on Oregon’s Top Officials (TOPOFF) 4 Exercise. I am Ken Murphy, the Director of Oregon Emergency Management. In my statement, I am representing the State of Oregon. Oregon Emergency Management is a division of the Oregon Military Department. I was named to my current position in 2003, after serving with the agency since July 1999. Previous experience includes over nineteen years of service with U.S. Army as an active duty Guard/Reserve Officer.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to testify before your Committees today concerning the lessons learned with a radiological dispersion device in the TOPOFF 4 exercise. The exercise is Congressionally mandated and the State of Oregon and the City of Portland applied for and were accepted to play in the exercise. The unique characteristics of the greater metropolitan Portland area, which is also a defined Urban Area by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, was a factor in our participation. This defined urban area is comprised of four Oregon Counties and one State of Washington County.

One of the great benefits of participating in this exercise was the almost two years of planning by all levels of government and the private sector. When we started this effort, we built the traditional incident command systems as the basis for developing the exercise. I believe that some of the most valuable training and learning for the first responders and the private sector were realized during the planning phase of TOPOFF. Just the simple interactions during the planning process open new doors, new and better understandings of organizations and systems.

There are four key areas that I want to highlight concerning preparing first responders for addressing radiological dispersion devices;

1. Learn and work with your mutual aid partners as much as you can;
2. Learn and practice with your state and federal partners;
3. Good coordination with policy makers is essential; and
4. Cooperation with the private sector is critical to success.

WORK WITH YOUR MUTUAL AID PARTNERS

The radiological dispersion device (RDD) was somewhat new to portions of the first responder community. In preparation for this exercise it was very important to understand what an RDD was, its characteristics and its intended purpose. It became very important to learn as a group of first responders to include those jurisdictions that would or could provide mutual aid. This allowed for a common understanding of procedures, equipment, and actions to take during this type event.

WORK WITH YOUR STATE AND FEDERAL PARTNERS

Working with state and federal partners is where I believe that some very good relationships and learning experiences took place. The practice with state and federal partners provided local responders with another set of tools that helped them determine how far they could or should go in dealing with an RDD event. This also taught the state and federal entities what the local first responder's were capable of and how state and federal partners could be more effective during the initial stages of the RDD event.

The local first responders and the State of Oregon's National Guard Civil Support Team (CST) worked very well together in the initial stages of the event. The CST was able to provide more technical assistance and long term support to the incident commander. Additionally, as the exercise continued and Federal assets arrived from Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Agency, this provided the first responders with more tools and allowed them to deal with other residual events from the RDD, such as the plume moving requiring first responders to block off more streets or specific areas of the city.

COORDINATION WITH POLICY MAKERS

The planning and the exercise truly brought out the emphasis to ensure that from the scene information must flow quickly and accurately in which to support policy makers. The information must be accurate and disseminated from the incident command post (ICP) to the policy makers to support their decision making and communications strategies.

During the exercise, it was very important for information to flow to policy makers, but also to flow to other more technical experts allowing them to provide the science and technical advice to policy makers. During such an event as a RDD the area which is affected changes based upon weather patterns. This requires a coordinated effort among groups when your disaster can and is moving.

WORKING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Working with the private sector during the planning of the exercise and the actual exercise was a rewarding experience for all entities during TOPOFF 4. We had approximately 70 private sector partners participate during the planning process and the exercise. We had utilities, banking, transportation, commercial retail and manufacturing just to name a few that participated. There is no question or doubt that the private sector must be part of every phase of a city, county, and state's planning effort for any event to include the RDD scenario. The private sector, as you know, brings an unlimited amount of knowledge and resources to an event.

I have four areas that I want to highlight in working with the private sector:

1. The private sector must be part of the entire process;
2. The private sector must be part of the government communications;
3. The private sector must be part of government emergency operations centers; and
4. The private sector must be part of the decision making process for recovery.

Private Sector Must be Part of the Entire Process

The private sector has very qualified and trained personnel to deal with emergencies. In the government sector we must take advantage of this expertise and integrate these professionals into each level of government as we plan, train, and exercise. It is of course a two way street, we as government must respect the private sector needs, but take full advantage of the planning and resources that the private sector can provide.

For TOPOFF 4, the private sector was involved in the planning, which made a difference in how we responded and how we started to deal with short-term and long-term recovery. As an example, when a first responder had to deal with a portion of the city that was in the RDD plume the responder did not have to deal with that entity as they might with a neighborhood. The private sector was better prepared and put in place their Business Continuity Plan, thus allowing the first responder to attend to the needs of others.

Private Sector Must be Part of the Government Communications

We must ensure that the private sector is integrated into the government's system for communications at the state, county, and city levels. When something bad happens it is imperative that the private sector is notified just as soon as possible. In Oregon, we created an email and phone system to notify the private sector. This system was for larger private sector organizations. We need to improve on this to try and reach more private sectors groups of different sizes. We are looking at using professional organizations or business alliances to act as focal points during the initial alert phase of an incident and have them relay the message. The private sector organizations in the greater Portland Oregon area are creating a regional communication network for emergencies call Oregon Regional Emergency Network (OREN) to begin addressing communications issues. I think this will work, but we need to expand this statewide.

Private Sector Must be Part of Government Emergency Operations Centers

One of the challenges is to try and have private sector representative(s) in government emergency operations centers (EOC). The real issue here is how to organize the private sector so as to have one representative or a small group in an EOC that can coordinate with multiple private sector organizations. The representative(s) must be integrated into government EOC's and be able to provide relevant information to multiple private sector organizations. This will require that private sector's receive training on the National Incident Management System (NIMS), participating in as many as possible government training exercises. I would submit that government personnel should receive training and participate in private sector exercises and training events.

Private Sector Must be Part of the Decision Making Process for Recovery

During the exercise it was very helpful to have the private sector become part of or know what decisions were made. In the response phase this allowed the private sector to know and make decisions that would effect how there business functions would be affected. Additionally, they can in some cases offer resources or personnel to help, that we in government make not realize.

Also, during the response phase the private sector can also be helpful in advising or recommending courses of action which may affect your initial recovery plans. The private sector is key to how the government entities begin to address short term and long term recovery and the decision making process. There is no doubt as we began working recovery issues that you must have the private sector at the table to provide recommendations and a coordinated effort to restart the economic engine of a jurisdiction.

During TOPOFF 4, Oregon's Governor immediately formed a long term recovery team to begin addressing issues to bring back normalcy to all levels of government and private entities. Along with this we need to expand this into a coordinated effort with private sector organizations so as to restart economic engines and do it in a coordinated fashion, which mutually supports all levels of public and private concerns.

CONCLUSION

TOPOFF was a very intense and rewarding event for Oregon and the City of Portland. We learned a great deal and we are still learning. We conducted an initial recovery tabletop exercise the Monday after the exercise finished and we are now preparing to conduct another tabletop on long-term recovery with are federal partners on December 4-5, 2007 here in Washington D.C..

As with any exercise we now must clearly and identify all lessons learned and then correct them quickly and retest are plans and actions to ensure that we have the best procedures and plans to support are efforts for prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery for RDD events. Additionally, as we learn and correct we must consider how to ensure that what we decide and correct can support the entire State of Oregon.

I appreciate Congress' attention and focus on Radiological Dispersion Devices, first responders and the private sector. We must ensure that our systems have adequate resources to build plans and systems before a disaster and to fully integrate the private sector. I thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the State of Oregon.