

Somerset County Emergency Operations Plan

ATTACHMENT G - TERRORISM AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION (WMD)

I. NATURE OF THE HAZARD

The most likely current threat to our national security involves terrorist attacks on civilian populations and our critical infrastructure. No areas in our country are truly secure or resistant from either domestic or foreign terrorist agents. The primary goal of the terrorist is to achieve a political or social goal by creating an environment of fear. This is best accomplished by creating a mass casualty event using weapons of mass destruction or WMD. WMD are defined as any weapon that is designed or intended to cause death or serious bodily injury through the release, dissemination, or impact of toxic or poisonous chemicals; disease organisms; radiation or radioactivity; or explosion or fire. WMD may include conventional explosives, secondary explosive devices, cyber attacks, or nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) warfare agents. The presence of NBC agents may not be immediately obvious, making it difficult to determine when and where they have been released, who has been exposed, and what danger is present for first responders and medical technicians.

Chemical agents are intended to kill, seriously injure, or incapacitate people through physiological effects. Hazardous industrial and military chemicals can be introduced via aerosol devices (e.g., munitions, sprayers, or aerosol generators), breaking containers, or covert dissemination. Early in an investigation, it may not be obvious whether an outbreak was caused by an infectious agent or a hazardous chemical; however, most chemical attacks will be localized, and their effects will be evident within a few minutes. There are both persistent and non-persistent chemical agents. Persistent agents remain in the affected area for hours, days, or weeks. Non-persistent agents have high evaporation rates, are lighter than air, and disperse rapidly, thereby losing their ability to cause casualties after 10 to 15 minutes, although they may be more persistent in small, unventilated areas.

Biological agents are also intended to kill, seriously injure, or incapacitate people through physiological effects, though usually at a much slower rate than with exposure to chemical agents. When people are exposed to a pathogen such as anthrax or smallpox, they may not know that they have been exposed, and those who are infected, or subsequently become infected, may not feel sick for some time. This delay between exposure and onset of illness, the incubation period, is characteristic of infectious diseases. The incubation period may range from several hours to a few weeks, depending on the exposure and pathogen. Unlike acute incidents involving explosives or some hazardous chemicals, the initial detection and response to a biological attack on civilians is likely to be made by direct patient care providers and the public health community. Victims of biological agent attack may serve as carriers of the disease with the capability of infecting others.

Nuclear/Radiological is also intended to kill, seriously injure, or incapacitate people through physiological and psychological effects, though the rate of effect may vary. In a conventional explosion, involving radioactive materials, the fact that radioactive material was involved may or may not be obvious, depending upon the nature of the explosive device used. The presence of a radiation hazard is difficult to ascertain, unless the responders have the proper detection equipment and have been trained to use it properly. On the other hand, a nuclear detonation is quite easy to ascertain, but the effects are magnitudes higher.

Conventional explosives are by far the weapon of choice for Terrorists and these devices are also used to kill, seriously injure, or incapacitate people through physiological effects and to destroy structures. The components are readily available, as are detailed instructions on constructing such a device. Improvised explosive devices are categorized as being explosive or incendiary, employing high

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or low filler explosive materials to explode and/or cause fires. Explosions and fires also can be caused by projectiles and missiles, including aircraft used against high profile targets such as buildings, monuments, and special events. Bombs and firebombs are cheap and easily constructed, involve low technology, and are the terrorist weapon most likely to be encountered. Large, powerful devices can be outfitted with timed or remotely triggered detonators and can be designed to be activated by light, pressure, movement, or radio transmission. The potential exists for single or multiple bombing incidents in single or multiple municipalities. Explosive materials can be employed covertly with little signature and are not readily detectable. Secondary explosive devices may also be used as weapons against responders.

Cyber terrorism involves the malicious use of electronic information technology to commit or threaten to commit acts dangerous to human life, or against a nation's critical infrastructures in order to intimidate or coerce a government or civilian population to further political or social objectives. As with other critical infrastructure guidance, most cyber protection guidance focuses on security measures to protect computer systems against intrusions, denial of service attacks, and other forms of attack rather than addressing issues related to contingency and consequence management planning.

Although considered and discussed in the Somerset County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction were not profiled and rated.

II. RISK AREAS

The Risks Areas in Somerset County have been identified as possible targets to terrorist attacks in the most current version of the Somerset County-DOJ Domestic Preparedness Assessment. This document contains sensitive information; therefore the identified targets and their vulnerabilities will not be listed in this Emergency Operations Plan attachment. The DOJ DP Assessment is located in the County EMA Director's files.

In general, the risk areas are critical infrastructures which are very important to the safety and well being of ourselves and our communities. The Federal government defines critical infrastructures as systems whose "incapacity or destruction would have a debilitating impact on the defense or economic security of the nation." For Somerset County, these services include: Telecommunications, Electrical Power Systems, Gas and Oil Storage Facilities, Banking and Finance, Transportation, Water Supply Systems, Government Services and Emergency Services.

Roads and bridges that carry large volumes of traffic or are single points of entry, such as the Route 201 Maine-Canadian Border Crossing Site in Sandy bay Township are critical transportation links that if severed could impact a great number of people.

Facilities that store, use or produce hazardous materials (HazMat), such as Verizon, SAPPI, and Agway are not only critical to the economy, but the HazMat substances themselves could be used as a weapon.

On a municipal level, critical infrastructure would include U.S. Post Offices, police stations, fire stations, EMS garages, municipal offices, community centers, theaters, sport centers, educational facilities, religious facilities, banks, shopping centers, power stations, transmission lines, telephone relays,

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drinking water supplies, water treatment facilities, restaurants, and grocery stores are all potential terrorist targets.

III. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

As stated in the Basic Plan and Annex A, the NIMS-version of the Incident Command System (ICS) will be used for all County command and control operations. Municipalities in the County are also strongly encouraged to use this version of ICS for incident management. The primary difference between a Terrorist Incident and any other Hazard Events is the eventual overwhelming presence of Federal agencies, especially the FBI and FEMA. Therefore, the following direction and control issues are additional to those listed in the Basic Plan.

Each municipality decides who will serve as the Incident Commander; in most communities the IC is the municipal fire chief or the senior ranking fire officer present on scene. A Senior Law Enforcement Officer may act as Incident Commander during a Terrorist Attack after the casualty or damages have been stabilized and the criminal investigation has begun. Special attention will be made to preserve evidence within the crime scene.

The County EMA Director will supervise the operations of the County Emergency Operations Center and will coordinate with Municipal EOCs and Incident Commanders. All local requests for aid during a terrorist incident will pass through the County EOC to the State EOC.

The Somerset County Communication Center will receive calls, elicit information, dispatch first responders, relay information to first responders prior to their arrival on scene, and make notifications.

First responders will make an initial assessment when they arrive on scene. The senior responder will assume Incident Command, establish an Incident Command Post in an area that is safe from potential secondary hazards/devices and warn others of these hazards. First responders in Somerset County are trained in HazMat and WMD Awareness and will determine if the incident is a possible terrorist attack and if there is a potential for weapons of mass destruction. First responders will perform any obvious rescues as incident permits without putting themselves in severe danger. The IC will establish security perimeter and a credentialing system. Responders will begin triage and treatment of victims and attempt to identify the hazard agent.

Incident Command must notify the local hospital that will be receiving the victims exposed to possible WMD agents. On Scene Law Enforcement will contact the County RCC to request notification of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Field Office.

The County EOC will support the Incident Commander by coordinating consequence management activities. Municipal officers will declare a local state of emergency. The County EMA Director may declare a County state of emergency and request that the Governor declare a Maine state of emergency.

The ICS that was initially established will transition into a Unified Command System as Federal responders arrive to augment the local responders. The municipal, County, State and Federal law enforcement officials will develop a consensus "rules of engagement" early in the planning process to smooth the transition from ICS to UCS. This unified command structure will facilitate both crisis management and consequence management activities. The UC structure used at the scene will expand

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as support units and agency representatives arrive to support crisis and consequence management operations. The site of a terrorist incident is a crime scene as well as a disaster scene, although the protection of lives, health, and safety remains the top priority. Because of all of these considerations, as well as logistical control concerns, it is extremely important that this incident site and its perimeter be tightly controlled as soon as possible.

The FBI is the overall Lead Federal Agency (LFA) for a domestic terrorist incident involving WMD and will lead the crisis management activities (including law enforcement activities) of the response. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is the lead agency for coordination of Federal support to State and local responders during consequence management activities of the response. Although the FBI is always involved in response to a credible terrorist threat or attack, FEMA support is provided only after a Presidential declaration, typically after State and local agencies request their assistance. Consequence management includes measures to protect public health and safety after an explosion or release; restore essential government services; and provide emergency relief to governments, business, and individuals. When crisis management activities have been completed, the U.S. Attorney General may transfer the overall Lead Federal Agency role to FEMA.

During a terrorist incident, the organizational structure to implement the Federal response at the field level is the Joint Operations Center. The JOC is established by the FBI under the operational control of the Federal on Scene Commander, who is collocated with the State Coordinating Officer and the Municipal Incident Commander in the Incident Command Post.

Representation within the JOC includes officials from local, State and Federal agencies with specific roles in crisis and consequence management. The Command Group is composed of the FBI Federal OSC and senior officials with decision making authority from local, State, and Federal agencies, as appropriate, based upon the circumstances of the threat or incident.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

In the event of a WMD incident, rapid communication is important to ensure a prompt and coordinated response. Communications must be maintained between the Somerset County Communication Center, the first responders, the hospital emergency rooms, and the municipal and County EOCs.

Terrorist attacks have been shown to overload non-dedicated telephone lines and cellular telephones. First responders will rely primarily on radio communications. The County and municipal EOCs will communicate with the responders by radio and with other each other and other agencies by phone or HAM radios. The Internet will be used as much as possible to pass large amounts of information in order to reduce the time on landline and cellular phones.

All radio communication traffic will be managed by the County RCC. The Incident Commander, with assistance from the County EOC will establish communications and frequency protocols and assignments to reduce confusion on the radios. Currently, the County does not have radio interoperability problems, however, when State and Federal responders arrive, a new communications plan will need to be developed.

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Responders must be made aware of the danger of operating radios at the scene of a Terrorist Incident. Radio transmissions have the ability to detonate unexploded explosive devices. Responders should not transmit within 300 feet of the location of a suspect explosive device.

V. WARNING

Initial Warning: When an overt WMD incident has occurred, the initial call for help will likely come through the County RCC, Maine State Police, or several of the municipal dispatchers. The caller may or may not identify the incident as a terrorist incident, but may state only that there was an explosion, a major "accident," or a mass casualty event. Information relayed through the dispatcher prior to arrival of first responders on scene, as well as the initial assessment, will provide first responders with the basic data needed to respond to the incident. Somerset County first responders should recognize that a terrorist incident has occurred.

Initial Detection: The initial detection of a WMD terrorist attack will occur with the municipal first responders or County or State Law Enforcement arriving at a mass casualty incident. A local medical facility may be the first to discover a covert biological attack, through the recognition of similar symptoms or syndromes by clinicians in hospital or clinical settings. Detection of biological agents could occur days or weeks after exposed individuals have left the site of the release.

General Indicators of Possible Chemical Agent Use

1. Stated Threat to Release a Chemical Agent
2. Unusual Occurrence of Dead or Dying Animals
3. Unexplained multiple victims with nausea, disorientation, difficulty breathing, or convulsions
4. Unusual Liquid, Spray, Vapor, or Powder
5. Suspicious Devices, Packages, or Letters

General Indicators of Possible Biological Agent Use

1. Stated Threat to Release a Biological Agent
2. Unusual Occurrence of Dead or Dying Animals
3. Casualties with unusual illness for area or definite pattern inconsistent with natural disease
4. Unusual Liquid, Spray, Vapor, or Powder

General Indicators of Possible Nuclear Weapon/Radiological Agent Use

1. Stated Threat to Deploy a Nuclear or Radiological Device
2. Presence of Nuclear or Radiological Equipment
3. Nuclear Placards/Warning Materials
4. Improvised Nuclear Device or Radiological Dispersal Device discovered

Investigation and Containment of Hazards: First responders will provide initial assessment and scene surveillance of a hazard caused by an act of WMD terrorism. The County EMA Director will be contacted so that the Director may contact the State EMA offices to request a Regional Response Team and/or the WMD Civil Support Team.

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Pre-Event Readiness: The FBI operates a four-tier threat level system that can be used as a basis for initiating precautionary actions when a WMD terrorist event is anticipated:

Level Four (Minimal Threat): Received threats do not warrant actions beyond normal liaison notifications or placing assets or resources on a heightened alert.