

BUSRIDE II Tabletop Exercise
January 29, 2003
Objectives and Issues

BUSRIDE II Purpose

In a tabletop environment, exercise interagency response for a radiological dispersal device (RDD) terrorism event with emphasis on “consequence management” elements and focus on Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) roles/responsibilities and Federal/state/local interface.

Objectives

Objectives for *BUSRIDE II* consisted of the following:

- Review Federal and state/local agencies’ roles/responsibilities for a terrorist incident involving a RDD, as provided in the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan (FRERP), U.S. Government Interagency Domestic Terrorism Concept of Operations Plan (CONPLAN), and Federal Response Plan (FRP);
- Examine the “consequence management” elements of Federal/state/local response for a domestic terrorist incident involving a RDD;
- Examine the responsibilities and capabilities of NRC Headquarters and Regional Offices regarding a terrorist incident involving a RDD;
- Demonstrate NRC capabilities regarding consequence assessment and protective measures for an incident involving a RDD; and
- Address issues from *BUSRIDE I*, including: dose models, rules of thumb, evacuation versus shelter, RDD information availability, and public information.

BUSRIDE II was a successful tabletop exercise with all objectives satisfactorily demonstrated. Participant feedback indicated the tabletop was a valuable communications and coordination learning experience for all attendees.

Issues

By design, *BUSRIDE II* included interactive discussions among representatives of the participating agencies on a variety of response-related topics. Participants addressed their respective agencies’ roles, responsibilities, and interfaces and the discussions resulted in identification of a number of planning/preparedness issues. For information - not for action - key issues identified by participant feedback are summarized:

- RDD Event
Issue. Participants noted the complex challenges to be addressed by Federal, state, and local agencies for response to an RDD event.

- CONPLAN / FRP / FRERP
Issue. Participants noted that Federal-level response plans are in need of revision for consistency and to reflect the Department of Homeland Security. [NRC staff notes that the agency is not identified in the CONPLAN and in the Terrorism Annex of the FRP. Staff is engaged with DHS to address this issue during the revision effort].

- Consequence Assessment
Issue. Participants noted that consequence assessment predictions must be accomplished quickly in such an event. Additional work is in progress to develop simple guidelines that can be used to recommend initial protective actions. Additionally, it was noted that several computerized dose models are available and consensus is evolving regarding determination of the “best” model(s).
- Communication / Public Information
Issue. Participants noted the importance - and the likely confusion - regarding the challenge of timely and accurate information to the media/public.
- Tabletop Realism
Issue. Participants noted that participation by Montgomery County Fire & Rescue provided valuable responder-level perspective for Federal agency representatives and that participation by state-level representatives is needed to enhance realism. [Note - unforeseen circumstances resulted in cancellation by state-level representatives.] Participants identified several response-related topics that, due to time constraints, were not addressed in BUSRIDE II (e.g., long-term recovery, Stafford Act implementation).