

EA Operational Awareness Record		Report Number: EA-WIPP-FSE-2016-06-21
Site: Waste Isolation Pilot Plant	Subject:	Observation of Emergency Management Full-Scale Exercise
Dates of Activity: 06/21/16 - 07/13/16	Report Preparer: Kurt Runge	
<p>Activity Description/Purpose: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Emergency Management Assessments, within the independent Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA), observed the Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) and Nuclear Waste Partnership, LLC (NWP) full-scale exercise (FSE) for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The FSE is the most complex of the operations-based exercises. NWP designed the FSE to test many aspects of an integrated emergency response and focused on implementing, analyzing, and evaluating plans, policies, and procedures. NWP projected events through a scripted exercise scenario with built-in flexibility, allowing updates to drive activity. CBFO and NWP responded to events in real time, which included a stressful environment closely mirroring a real event. NWP mobilized and deployed first responders and resources to the scene where they conducted their actions, as nearly as possible, as if a real incident had occurred.</p> <p>NWP has been significantly revising the WIPP emergency management program since the shutdown of WIPP operations in February 2014 because of a vehicle fire in the mine and a subsequent, separate radiological material release in the mine caused by an exothermic reaction in a transuranic waste drum.</p> <p>The purpose of the FSE was to demonstrate and evaluate the ability of the CBFO and NWP site-level Emergency Response Organization (ERO) to recognize, respond to, contain, and mitigate an Operational Emergency within the site boundary. Additionally, the exercise evaluated the effectiveness of programs, plans, and procedures, as well as facility and site support systems during a simulated classifiable emergency event involving transuranic waste. The exercise also allowed the WIPP ERO to interface and integrate response activities with DOE Headquarters and local, state, and Federal agencies that would support response efforts during an actual event.</p> <p>During this assessment, the Office of Emergency Management Assessments reviewed the communications and emergency information flow supporting decision-making processes in the following areas: information between NWP and CBFO; information from WIPP emergency operations center (EOC) to DOE Headquarters; offsite information exchange; and public information. The Senior Federal Official (SFO) and CBFO representative are the two CBFO positions in the ERO. EA discussed all identified observations with CBFO and NWP on a real-time basis. This EA activity is part of a planned multi-phase review for assessing WIPP's emergency management program elements.</p>		
<p>ATTACHMENTS:</p> <p>None.</p>		
<p>Results:</p> <p>General Observations</p> <p>The scope of this FSE provided an excellent opportunity for CBFO and NWP to implement, analyze, and evaluate response plans and procedures for improving their emergency management program. Additionally, NWP provided appropriate guidance necessary for good exercise design, conduct, and evaluation. By developing a challenging scenario using a bounding event with offsite consequences, NWP significantly increased its ability to evaluate and validate response plans and procedures.</p> <p>NWP has continued to make substantial improvements in its emergency management program through significant upgrades to the WIPP emergency plan and implementing procedures. For most operational concepts described in the emergency plan, NWP has developed response procedures that are readily available, up to date, and user friendly. EA</p>		

observed that NWP successfully used position checklists and procedures to execute response operations in the EOC and Joint Information Center (JIC).

As emergency conditions changed, NWP's and CBFO's continuous use of WebEOC to record event information provided situational awareness to the WIPP command staff and senior decision makers. This exercise was the first that WIPP has participated in with the DOE Headquarters EOC (simulated emergency management team) since the shutdown of WIPP operations in February 2014. Importantly, offsite command centers (local and state EOCs, as well as the DOE Headquarters EOC) do not have access to the WIPP WebEOC data and information, so event information to offsite authorities was limited to situation reports, notification forms, and telephone calls.

Crisis Manager/Deputy

The NWP Crisis Manager (CM) and deputy CM conducted their duties as assigned and followed the actions specified in their respective checklists. The WIPP facility shift manager provided an adequate turnover briefing to the CM, who then declared that the WIPP EOC was operational and formally assumed responsibilities for emergency management functions in support of the incident commander and facility shift manager. When emergency conditions worsened, the CM responded appropriately by selecting the correct emergency action level and implementing the corresponding event classification upgrade and protective actions. Throughout the exercise, the CM maintained focus on strategic planning while properly delegating tasking of implementation to command and general staff.

Carlsbad Field Office/Senior Federal Official

The SFO and CBFO representative adequately implemented the Federal responsibilities of the WIPP ERO, as specified in their respective checklists. The SFO and CBFO representative reviewed and approved the initial press release and situation reports before they were transmitted, reviewed and concurred with event categorizations and classifications made by contractor personnel, reviewed notification forms, were involved in obtaining Radiological Assistance Program support, and participated in briefings and resolutions led by the NWP CM. SFO and CBFO representative personnel adequately recorded their activities on their position-specific checklists, activity logs, and/or WebEOC.

Although the SFO and CBFO representative were involved in the release of situation reports and news releases, approval mechanisms were inconsistent and the expected means of approvals are not procedurally established. For example, the SFO initialed the press release as a record of approval and the SFO and CBFO representatives provided comments on draft situation reports as the means for approval. No emergency plan implementing procedures describe how to document and track these approvals.

Offsite Liaison

The WIPP EOC Offsite Liaison (OL) performed their duties appropriately, following the actions specified in the OL checklist. The OL provided timely follow up for the emergency notification forms, entered key information into WebEOC, formally implemented the request for the 64th Civil Support Unit, and completed the WIPP Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Contingency Plan required notifications. Similarly, the OL adequately interacted with the Lea and Eddy County representatives when they arrived in the WIPP EOC.

The OL was in constant contact with the ranchers and oil field workers and advised them of the potential for evacuation; however, the OL did not issue formal evacuation protective action recommendations to the affected local ranchers and oil field contacts until approximately one hour after declaration of the General Emergency. Additionally, the OL did not adequately document the notifications and follow-up calls with offsite agencies (i.e. time completed and name of contacted person).

Joint Information Center

The JIC was activated in accordance with the procedures and authorities identified within WP11-EA.01, Rev 10; *Joint Information Operations Plan*. Throughout the exercise, the JIC and EOC Public Affairs Officer performed their duties as described in NWP procedures, used their position-specific checklists, and made records of their activities using the checklists, activity logs, and WebEOC entries. NWP executed the initial news release within one hour of the

declaration of the event as directed in DOE Order 151.1C, and the PAO distributed all subsequent public information, which was accurate and timely, via social media. The exercise used the risk communication team from Argonne National Laboratory, which developed mock newscasts, narrative videos, and postulated rumors through social media injects providing players with a more realistic decision-making environment. While the exercise design provided the JIC with tweets to respond to, the JIC did not respond to any of the inquiries as outlined within WP11-EA.01, Rev 10, and the corresponding JIC checklist.

The JIC contacted Federal, state, and local agencies, providing them with an initial event notification and regular situation updates. Additionally, WIPP conducted two mock press conferences with NWP and CBFO senior management. This joint Federal and contractor appearance provided the public with a coordinated and consistent public statement during event resolution.

Throughout the exercise, the Public Affairs releases were coordinated and approved as outlined within the WIPP procedures; however, EA noted that in at least one instance, the approved news release was delayed because of unfamiliarity with the release process.

Recommendations:

- To improve communications among response facilities and offsite command centers:
 - Provide WebEOC access to local and state EOCs, as well as the DOE Headquarters EOC.
 - Identify strategic information requirements needed by DOE Headquarters, state, and local governments.
 - Further define information flow processes and responsibilities within WIPP’s response facilities and offsite response facilities.
 - Foster interoperability with offsite response facilities (i.e., local and state EOCs, and the DOE Headquarters EOC) by enabling access to unclassified emergency response information, such as notification forms, emergency status updates, plume projections, significant events data, and field monitoring data.
- To improve communications and information flow between WIPP and DOE Headquarters, increase the participation of the DOE Headquarters emergency management team in site exercises.
- To improve approval records by Federal officials, provide a procedure that describes how to implement Federal response activities.
- To improve the OL function:
 - Notify affected offsite organizations and ranchers of protective action recommendations within the 15-minute timeframe of a GE declaration.
 - Complete notification forms and checklists to ensure adequate information is available for event reconstruction, lessons learned, and protective action decisions.
- To improve JIC function:
 - Provide additional training to the JIC media monitors on media monitoring and response in accordance with the JIC procedures.
 - Provide additional WebEOC training to JIC members.

EA Participants

1. Kurt Runge (lead)
2. Thomas Rogers
3. John Bolling
4. William Scheib

References

Documents Reviewed

1. WP 12-9, *WIPP Emergency Management Plan*, Rev. 42
2. WP 12-ER3002, *Emergency Operations Center Operations*, Rev. 27
3. WP 12.15, *WIPP Emergency Management Communications Plan*, Rev. 1
4. EA12ER3002-8-0, *EOC Offsite Liaison Checklist*, Rev 2

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. EA12ER3002-16-0 <i>EOC CBFO Representative Checklist</i>, Rev. 1, 6/9/2016 6. EA12ER3002-28-0 <i>EOC CBFO Senior Federal Official Checklist</i>, Rev. 1, 11/2/2015 7. WIPP EX-2016-01, <i>FY' 2016 Annual Exercise Bison-16</i>, 6/22/2016 8. WP11-EA.01, Rev. 10, <i>Joint Information Center Operations Plan</i> <p>Interviewees</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWP Emergency Management and Security Department Manager 2. NWP Emergency Management Section Manager 3. NWP Emergency Management Technical Analyst 4. Emergency Planners
Were there any items for EA follow up? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
EA Follow-Up Items	
None.	