



DMORT NATIONAL NEWS

Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team

FALL 2007

EDITORS: SHEILA HALL AND TERRY SWANSON

ARE YOU DEPLOYABLE?

*Sue Atwood
Region V Administrative
Officer*

In order to be considered “deployable” by DMORT, there are several responsibilities that you, as a DMORT team member, need to be pro-active in addressing.

Contact

information: It is imperative to keep your Administrative Officer updated with your current contact information. If you are planning on being away for several days, let your AO know, so if there is a call down, someone will not be spending their time trying to contact you while you are not available anyway.

Immunizations: TB and flu shots are the yearly requirements that most members are lacking. Be sure to keep your immunizations current and forward a copy of your proof of immunizations to whoever is in charge of immunizations in your region.

Online training: Every member is required to complete the IS-100, 200, 700, and 800 courses. Your certificate of completion is to be sent to either your Administrative Officer or Training Officer for your file. The person in charge will differ from region to region. Additional online courses will be added soon, so complete these four classes now.

HHS Badges: Most members have gone through the badging process at one location or another. If you have not gone through the badging process yet, please check with your Administrative Officer to obtain a list of available badging locations.

Uniforms: Proper uniforms are mandatory for deployment. Make sure you have what you need now and don't wait until you are contacted to deploy. Update your uniform with the appropriate patches in the correct locations: NDMS patch on the left pocket, DMORT patch on the right pocket. The U.S. flag patch should be sewn to the outside right sleeve of the blouse, located 1 inch below the

shoulder seam - centered across the sleeve, with the blue field facing forward. At this time, there are no patches on the left sleeve.

Licenses: If your team position requires a professional license, then a current license must be on file at all times. Members **cannot** be deployed without a current license on file.

Please help your Administrative Officer by doing your part.

TRAVEL ISSUES

*Sue Atwood
Region V Administrative Officer*

All authorized travel is arranged through headquarters. Travelers are **not** to change or cancel flights, contact the airline directly, or call the travel agency, even though your itinerary states otherwise. All requests for changes **must** go through the OSC and every change incurs a charge to the team. All airline travel is charged to a central account and should **not** be put on your US Bank credit card. Travel

authorizations include dates of travel, and members are **not** to travel outside of those dates. Expenses incurred outside of your authorized dates will **not** be reimbursed.

Hotel expenses are to be charged to your US Bank card. The US Bank credit card is mandatory for deployability. Meals and other expenses while on official travel can be charged to your card. Only those travelers with permission to rent a vehicle are allowed to purchase fuel and put it on their US Bank card. It is the traveler's responsibility to pay the invoice from US Bank before/by the due date, whether or not reimbursement has been received for travel expenses. Reimbursement is by direct deposit, not by receiving a check in the mail.

The OSC is to be called upon arrival to your destination and again upon your safe return home. The OSC is responsible for you from the time you leave your home until you return home.

REGION III NEWS



DMORT Region III is happy to announce the engagement of their Commander, **Pat Kauffman, MD**, to **Daryl Sensenig**. Dr. Kauffman is a forensic pathologist and has been the Commander of DMORT III for five years. Daryl is the Training Officer for the DMORT WMD team, and formerly served as Administrative Officer for DMORT III. Nuptials are planned for January 2009 in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. The ceremony will include two Best Men: **Paul Sledzik**, Commander Emeritus of DMORT III, and **John McGuire**, Deputy Commander of DMORT III. Inquiries and best wishes may be directed to [<jmcguire@bellatlantic.net>](mailto:jmcguire@bellatlantic.net). Please join Region III in wishing their Commander and her fiancé many years of happiness.

REGION III
ANNUAL TRAINING
Lancaster,
Pennsylvania
July 28, 2007

On July 28, DMORT Region III held its second team training for 2007. Team members gathered in Lancaster, Pennsylvania for a comprehensive exercise: a review of “Alert and Activation” procedures; interface with the new “DMORT Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s)” as they relate to the “DMORT National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Standard Operating Procedures”; small group sessions that correlated the Standard Operating Procedures to actual activation experiences; a refresher session on the importance of ensuring good mental health, both in theory and in practice, while on deployment; an in-depth review of the Incident Command System (ICS), specifically focusing on the Planning function; and a presentation on multiple fatality “pearls and pitfalls,” as encountered by local coroners.

DMORT heritage was highlighted, including a tribute to the “Father of

DMORT” – **Tom Shepardson**. At the conclusion of the training, team members enjoyed a team-building excursion on the historic Strasburg Railroad, a short line through scenic Amish countryside, at the height of summer.

REGION V NEWS

Congratulations to **Dr. Jim Adams** - the new Region V Logistics Officer and **Dave Walters** - the new Region V Safety Officer

REGION V
ANNUAL TRAINING
Danville, Indiana
June 20-22, 2007

Over seventy team members and guests attended the Region V Annual Training Session at the Danville Armory and Hendricks Regional Health Center in Danville, Indiana on July 20-22, 2007. The following were key agencies at this training: DMORT V, Emergency Coordinator Region 5, and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. These groups provided a comprehensive and

informative training for the team.

Opening Remarks
Region V Command Staff

Dr. Frank Saul (Region V Commander) led the team in a moment of remembrance for teammate **Gabe Hensley** of Moores Hill, Indiana. Gabe passed away on July 24, 2006, while piloting his single-engine *Cessna 172* aircraft. This training was dedicated to Gabe, whose letter to Frank Saul was instrumental in the training program, emphasizing the need for hands-on training with a Disaster Portable Morgue Unit (DPMU).

The following is a copy of Gabe’s March 6, 2006 email to Frank:

I had never deployed before Katrina and I just wanted you to know that the training we had in Columbus last spring with the Ohio DPMU present was invaluable to me. When I got to Gulf Port in September I was already familiar with the morgue unit and felt very comfortable right off the bat. I served 4 months at both the East

and West morgues serving most of my time on strike teams. I feel that having that training with the DPMU present got me off on the right foot with a very positive first impression.

I am very proud of what we did in Mississippi and La. and am very, very proud to be a member of DMORT. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

- Gabe Hensley

Jan Simons (Region V Training Officer) reviewed the agenda for the training weekend: classroom session with a series of speakers, simulated morgue operations, review and discussion of morgue operations, and updates from Command Staff.

Earthquakes: A Primer

Konrad J. Banaszak, PhD & LPG

This presentation was a thorough introduction to understanding earthquakes: where they occur, how they are measured, and what to consider when they do occur.

Dr. Banaszak explained that the Midwest would experience aftershocks, which are more violent in magnitude than California. Anticipated problem areas include: Memphis, Southwest Indiana, Southern Illinois, and Ohio.

Earthquakes are measured with three seismographs, detecting and recording vertical and horizontal movements of the ground. These seismographs trace “P waves” (Primary), “S waves” (secondary), and “L waves” (slowest wave, which causes surface vibrations). Severity of damage is not only based on the intensity of the earthquake, but also the condition of the ground or foundation where buildings stand.

The speaker listed some of the main earthquake hazards: ground shaking, differential ground settlement, soil liquefaction, ground displacement, floods, and fires.

NDMS Update

Millard “Buddy” Bell, NDMS Program Manager

Mr. Bell addressed questions and concerns by members, regarding the HHS (Health and Human Services) background checks, new badges, uniforms, budget, and training.

Indiana Department of Homeland Security

David Perkins, Operations Director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security

Mr. Perkins explained State Preparedness and the need to develop coordination between Federal, State, and local resources. He also described the Indiana DPMU, including the composition of the Indiana DPMU Team.

DMORT DPMU

Mike Gedert, DMORT DPMU

Mike Gedert updated the team on the status of the three DMORT DPMU’s. He reviewed the importance of maintaining equipment and inventory, in order to assure readiness of the DPMU’s. Mike introduced the team to

the new DPMU Forms, relevant to the accountability, condition, and status of equipment, utilized during a deployment.

Victim Identification Program (VIP)

*Gregory Klimetz,
Family Assistance Core Team (FACT)*

Mr. Klimetz discussed the history of VIP, the challenges with this program, and the updates made to it, in association with the development and advancements in forensics. He illustrated the organization of the FACT Incident Command System (ICS),

The following is a list of significant updates to VIP: Filemaker 8.5 Version (upgraded from 6.0), true relational database structure, complete conversion of old VIP database, more versatility in working with other software, easy EXCEL or PDF reporting, tables allow for faster searches, picture import capability, more secure options and access privileges, same easy interface, record tracking, web-enabled with appropriate security,

and streamlined export protocols.

New Madrid Seismic Zone Catastrophic Planning

Phillip Roberts, Senior Planner, State of Indiana New Madrid Seismic Zone Catastrophic Planning

Mr. Roberts emphasized the importance of improving response capabilities for a catastrophic earthquake event and related hazards in the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ), including a plan to coordinate response and recovery efforts for Federal, State, and local agencies. He commented on the need to incorporate key lessons from the Hurricane Katrina response, the Southeast Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane planning, and previous earthquake response and recovery actions.

Simulated Morgue Operations – Mock Earthquake

The highlight of the training was a mock mass fatality earthquake disaster at the Danville Armory: this realistic drill included a number

of “unexpected” scenarios, which enabled participants to realize that not all disasters are alike and always be prepared! To further the realism, MRE’s (Meals Ready-to-Eat) were served for lunch.

The scenario of the simulation was an 8.0 Earthquake of the New Madrid Fault Epicenter – Tristate: Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee. Numerous problems were encountered, such as limited communication due to disabled towers, power outages, water contamination, road and overpass damages, multiple aftershocks (the largest, a 4.0), delays in supplies, impeded barge traffic, restricted air service in Central and Southern Indiana, and 4 of the 5 major natural gas pipelines to Detroit, Chicago, Indianapolis, and Pittsburg run through the New Madrid Fault.

All team members and representatives from participating agencies were required to obtain and wear mission-specific photographic identification badges for security purposes.

A fully functional portable morgue based on the Federal DPMU's – the Indiana Department of Homeland Security DPMU – was assembled. Mock deceased victims were transported from refrigerated trucks to the temporary morgue, where post-mortem examinations were simulated. Trackers moved bodies through the various morgue stations, where findings were carefully documented: Admitting, Photography, Personal Effects, Radiology, Pathology, Anthropology, Dental, Fingerprinting, and DNA.

A separate area in the armory housed the VIP (Victim Identification Program) data entry team. Combined data from the temporary morgue and FACT (Family Assistance Core Team) are entered into the VIP database and used to match the deceased with the proper identity.

On the final day of the training, Jan Simons presented a comprehensive recap of the drill. This included explanation and results

of the “unexpected” scenarios: mental health issues, aftershock situations, personal safety and accountability for all team members inside and outside of the morgue, team member cooperation, and overall team awareness of your surroundings at a deployment. DMORT Leadership, Morgue Section Leaders, and other participants also offered comments on their learning experiences.

Most memorable moments of the training simulation:

Julie Saul's simple makeshift aftershock motion sensors and warning devices

Brad Targhetta's “crack” (in the wall), with further expansion by **Shawn Wilson** throughout the day

Hew Simons' arrival with a huge semi truckload of “bodies” with more on the way from Memphis

Brent Hartley's meltdown, equaled by a “fight” between **Terry Swanson** and **Sheila Hall**

Mike Frost never leaving his post at lunchtime

Dave Walters' infamous response to the question: “Are you a Structural Engineer?” “No, but I stayed at a Holiday Inn Express last night!”

Jack Horbal's exercise-ending accidental “destruction” of the \$7000 NOMAD handheld X-ray unit

Updates from Command Staff and Special Guests

Dr. Frank Saul reviewed the new “DMORT Standard Operating Procedures” as they relate to the “DMORT NTSB Standard Operating Procedures” and the “National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) Mass Fatality Plan.”

David Hunt (Region V Deputy Commander) updated the team on the DMORT V Recovery Team.

Sue Atwood (Region V Administrative Officer) reviewed team time sheets and form changes.

Carl Adrianopoli
(Emergency Coordinator Region 5) updated the team on field management in response to an emergency. He informed the team that Rear Admiral Vanderwagon is in charge of the Incident Response Coordination Team. This team will take over Field Management issues, Logistics, and Communication on a rotating basis during deployments.

Marc Poulshock
(VeriChip Representative) described VeriChip – an implantable or attachable Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) microchip. Mr. Poulshock explained the benefits and potential application of VeriChip during a DMORT mission.

**THE
COMMANDERS'
AWARD FOR
MERITORIOUS
SERVICE TO
REGION V**



The contributions of the following Team members and others were acknowledged with the Commanders' Award:

**Jim Adams
Dave Hunt
Hew Simons
Marcia Adams
Karen Hunt
Jan Simons
Buddy Bell
Mary Johnson
John Stanley
Helga Sharff-Bell
Denise Murmann
Dave Walters
Kelly Cissell
Bob Nicola, Sr.
Geoff Wells
Scott Davis
Jim Offrink
John Williams
Leslie Eisenberg
Dave Perkins
Shawn Wilson
Todd Grisier
Mike Pratt
Mike Frost
Patty Pratt**

**Jack Horbel
Tim Schmidt**

Congratulations on a job well done!

*Special thanks to:
Dr. Gary Berman for providing photographs from the training*

***Dr. Jim Adams** for providing us with DMART supplies*

***Geoff Wells** for providing the team with radio/ flashlights*

***Hendricks Regional Health** for allowing us to use their meeting room*

Indiana Department of Homeland Security

***The Staff at the Danville Armory** for all their assistance*

***Towne Air Freight** for the use of their tractor trailer during our simulation scenario*

***Tripp's** for the evening retreats*

REGION VII
ANNUAL TRAINING
Omaha, Nebraska
July 6-8, 2007

Over fifty DMORT team members (89% of Region VII) attended their annual training in Omaha, Nebraska on July 6-8, 2007. The goal of the training was to demonstrate how DMORT relates with the forensic sciences on many different levels. The main focus of the team was to work together towards a common goal: addressing the DMORT Mission Statement, which is the positive identification of disaster victims and the repatriation of those remains back to the families for the final grieving process.

Dental personnel participated in a special hands-on workshop, which utilized the WIN-ID/DEXIS Digital Dental Identification software program.

The entire training consisted of a lecture series and a training workshop.

The lectures included information on proper scene documentation of human remains and log entry of the remains, using a system designated by the scene Medical Examiners / Coroner's office. Morgue operations, logistic flow of human remains, accurate record keeping, and log entry were discussed, applying the "chain of command" concepts developed by the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The training workshop stressed to members that deployment field training will be a viable option when the team is in the staging areas, and prior to full morgue operations. Section Leaders will administer pre-training agendas, in accordance with DMORT/National

Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) protocols and Morgue Operation guidelines.

The continuation of "chain of command" reporting was stressed in the pre, during, and post deployment phases. The team was also advised and mandated to complete the NIMS-100, 200, 700, and 800 exercise series, as posted on the DMORT VII website (www.dmort7.org).

At the conclusion of the training, certificates of attendance were distributed and course evaluations were collected from each team member. These evaluations will assist the Command Staff in planning for the 2008 annual team training, as Region VII continues to prepare for field readiness at future deployments following a Mass Fatality Incident.



REGION IX NEWS

Congratulations to **Dr. Michael Iliescu**- the new Region IX Training Officer



REGION IX ANNUAL TRAINING **Tucson, Arizona** **June 29-July 1, 2007**

The DMORT IX annual training took place at the Palo Verde Holiday Inn in Tucson, Arizona on June 29-July 1, 2007. Eighty percent of Region IX team members attended this educational and informative training.

Robert Gerber presented “**California State Coroners’ Mutual Aid System and Mass Fatality Program,**” which included a quick tour of the State of California Mass Fatality program.

“**Search and Recovery of Human Remains**” was discussed by team

member **Rodney Walters.**

Multiple speakers reviewed “**NTSB Morgue Protocols.**” The September 2006 NTSB protocols were utilized. All major sections of DMORT were introduced, including new topics such as: Information Resources, Computerized Digital Radiology, and an Orientation and Tutoring Program for new members, or members who have never been deployed.

The key general session was “**Katrina: Mass Fatality Response Organization**” panel discussion. Eleven panelists shared their experiences during the Katrina mission and interacted with the team during a question and answer session.

Team members had the opportunity to practice what was learned by participating in a major table top exercise. The exercise was based on a bombing scenario of a large stadium in Tucson. The team broke into groups and worked together on anticipated

problems in the field, and solving them.

The hotel was ideal for social dinners among the participants. In typical DMORT fashion, team members “made do” with a candlelight dinner, when the hotel had a power supply problem in the ballrooms.

The Region IX team expresses their sincere gratitude to **Dr. Michael Iliescu** (Region IX Training Officer) for his outstanding efforts in planning, preparing, and organizing this thorough and comprehensive training event.

DMORT WMD ANNUAL TRAINING **Knoxville, Tennessee** **September 14-16, 2007**

The DMORT WMD Team conducted their annual training session in Knoxville, Tennessee on September 14-16, 2007. The training was the first and only one for the team this fiscal year. The last training for DMORT WMD was held on September 2006, in Knoxville as well.

For the third consecutive year, the DMORT

WMD Team has had the opportunity to work with cadavers and other human remains, creating a training that was as realistic as possible. The intense training was in cooperation with the University of Tennessee (UT) Department of Forensic Anthropology and the UT Forensic Facility (better known as the “Body Farm”). The Team was provided with cadavers in various states of decomposition and fragmentation to simulate what would be processed on an actual deployment.

The training was held at the City of Knoxville Fire Training Center, where both recovery and decon operations could be performed. The training scenario was a simulated car bomb, packed with containers of Cesium 137, which detonated at a University of Tennessee football game, where up to 107,000 sports fans gathered for a home game. Multiple deaths occurred as a result from significant trauma caused by the initial blast.

DMORT WMD was honored to have **Dr. Bill Bass**, internationally known forensic

anthropologist and author, assist in commencing the meeting on Friday morning. Following his presentation, Dr. Bass and his co-author, **Jon Jefferson**, autographed copies of their recent book, “*Beyond the Body Farm*,” for team members and other guests. This publication is the third in a series of murder mystery books, based on actual cases experienced by Dr. Bass.

Another renowned speaker, who the Team was privileged to have present, was **U.S. Congressman John J. Duncan, Jr.** The Congressman welcomed the Team to Knoxville and East Tennessee. He discussed the importance of the disaster response teams that work under the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), especially the DMORT WMD Team.

Guests who attended this training included representatives from DMORT Region V, Military Mortuary Affairs, Joint Task Force - Civil Support, the State of Virginia Medical Examiners Office, and several members from all three National

Medical Response Teams (NMRT) – NMRT East (Charlotte), NMRT Central (Denver), and NMRT West (Los Angeles).

Participants of the session, who were members of NDMS or other federal agencies, were allowed to suit up in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and work in the decontamination corridor to better understand how the DMORT WMD Team functions.

At the conclusion of the training, the consensus from everyone was that they were better prepared to handle a situation where human remains must be decontaminated from biological, chemical, or radiological incidents before proceeding into the standard DMORT process.

All guests and new team members were also provided with a tour and familiarization of the University of Tennessee Anthropology Forensic Facility (the “Body Farm”).



Team members suit up in their PPE before getting safety checked and starting decon



Dr. William Bass, internationally known forensic anthropologist and author, lecturers to members of the DMORT WMD Team and other visitors during the September 2007 training in Knoxville on differences between human and animal bones

*U.S. Congressman **John J. Duncan Jr.** with DMORT WMD Commander- **Dale Downey** and Deputy Commander- **Leonard Parker***

NDMS TRAINING SUMMIT

**Nashville, Tennessee
March 15-19, 2008**

The National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) Conference has been renamed the **NDMS Training Summit** to better represent the educational and training aspect of the event.

The 2008 NDMS Training Summit will be held on March 15-19, 2008 at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee. The Summit's static website is up and running: www.ndms.chepinc.org. This site provides the link for the Call for Abstracts.

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