Homeland Security Today

November/December 2016 | Vol.13, No.8

Insight & Analysis for Government Decision Makers

Plot On The Grid
Clear and present cyber attack threat puts spotlight on US vulnerabilities

Plus: Expensive Equity Exercise
Growing GAO bid protests are a check and balance but also reflect federal procurement transparency questions

Also Inside:
2017 Education Guide

www.HSToday.us
Plot On The Grid
Clear and present cyber attack threat puts spotlight on US vulnerabilities
By Amanda Vicinanzo

2017 Education Guide
A Comprehensive guide for those seeking higher education in homeland security careers and opportunities

DEPARTMENTS

2 UPDATES & RESPONSES
Trump’s Border Wall: Lessons From Israel
By Anthony Kimery

3 EDITOR’S LETTER
Ambitious Homeland/National Security Policy on Tap for Next Four Years
By Anthony Kimery

4 OPINIONS & POLITICS
Port Security Efforts Face Stormy Seas
By Ben Lerner

7 BORDER SECURITY
Special Ops Bring Unique Skills to Dangerous BP Mission
By Sylvia Longmire

9 AGENCY SPOTLIGHT
Coast Guard GPS Legislation Breaks Through Barriers
By Krysta Dodd

10 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
Crisis Decision Making Transformation Addresses Ever-Changing Homeland Security Challenges
By Sam McGhee

12 CYBERCOM
Cyber Attack Response Creates Conundrum for NATO and the West
By Dave Sloggett

14 ACADEMIC INSIGHTS
North Korea’s ICBM Threat Expanding to the Homeland
By Stephen Schwalbe

20 EXPENSIVE EQUITY EXERCISE
Growing GAO bid protests are a check and balance but also reflect federal procurement transparency questions
By Nick Nayak and James Kim

30 LONE STAR DETERRENT
Hardened Texas grid could preempt EMP catastrophe and protect vital US assets
By David Grantham

34 IMPORT DUTIES
No substitute for Congressionally mandated radiation checks of US-bound seaborne cargo
By Charles Faddis

16 GLOBAL WATCH
News from Around the World
By Dave Sloggett

18 INDUSTRY NEWS
Industry Roster

48 TOOLS & TECHNOLOGY

51 RESOURCES
Advertiser Index
Tradeshows Circuit

52 GROUNDBREAKERS & POWERHOUSES
Dr. Michael Edwards, VP, General Manager Thermo Fisher Scientific’s Radiation and Security Instruments

Cover composition by John Faradaris

JOIN THE DISCUSSION
Crisis Decision Making Transformation Addresses Ever-Changing Homeland Security Challenges

Since its origin, the first responder community has focused on awareness of, preparation for, response to and recovery from crises. Following the attacks of 9/11, first responders have been challenged to not only respond to crises more effectively and efficiently, but to imagine the unthinkable and to adapt to a constantly morphing threat picture. As an example, the active shooter scenario is occurring with increased frequency – a snowballing annual occurrence rate of 6.4 to 16.4 between 2000 and 2013, according to the FBI report A Study of Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Between 2000 and 2013. The same study indicated the pace continues to increase, approaching 20 per year. Many of these events have introduced fresh nuances thrusting first responders into new realms of managing crises – demanding in-the-moment decision making, at times beyond the scope of prior planning, training, equipping and exercising.

To rely solely on various levels of preparedness based on predictable circumstances is one thing, but very often active shooter events, as well as various other types of crises, present new situations that have never been faced. The communities served by the various disciplines who respond to such events expect that crisis managers are skilled in the art of critical thinking while in the midst of emerging circumstances. The level of success in managing a crisis will be directly related to the degree a crisis manager – from a line-level first responder to an incident commander of a major event – prepares for the kind of rapid assessment and moment-by-moment decision making often required in today’s crises.

Within the framework of homeland security, it would stand to reason that the multiple disciplines and jurisdictions charged with handling crises would agree that crisis is the thing most contemplated and prepared for. Whether a natural or manmade crisis, most first responder agencies would claim a certain degree of readiness to effectively manage the predictable hurricane, tornado or even active shooter episode. Nevertheless, an incident may spiral out of the realm of what is known or anticipated. Arjen Boin, in his book Politics of Crisis Management: Public Leadership Under Pressure, defines a crisis as “transitional phases under which normal ways of operating no longer work.” This sets the stage for the notion of crisis in the context that presents a situation wholly, or in part, outside the domain of past experience or preparation.

While certain phases of an event may fall into place according to trends or past experiences, other quickly changing aspects of the incident may erupt and force innovative measures never before considered. For example, during the 2012 Century 16 Theater shooting in Aurora, Colo., officers arrived within 90 seconds only to find 12 fatalities and as many as 70 others wounded from gunfire or injured from the mass exodus.

Although as many as 126 Aurora police officers were available and responding to the scene, it was quickly apparent, due to the pos-
dynamic threat to a barricaded subject who engaged in dialogue with negotiators. The scenario then morphed back to a dynamic active shooter situation.

With each new aspect of a crisis, decision makers must rapidly judge that which is actually shaping the crisis, quickly choose from alternative options based on the initial appraisal and implement decisions swiftly. They must evaluate what will be interpreted based on the decision(s) made and determine when the crisis is concluded. This may not always be evident and may go well beyond the culmination of apparent physical scenes, as there may be political finger pointing and certain meanings construed from the decision making by various factions, including the media.

Nonetheless, the importance of preparedness among first responder agencies has never been more critical. Leveraging the Federal Emergency Management Agency Comprehensive Preparedness Guide principles to ensure responders are trained, equipped and have exercised their training and planning still remains an essential component in today’s emergency preparedness environment. Yet these elements may serve merely as a foundation for effective readiness. Preparing leaders to not only make decisions based on rapidly advancing situations, but to also prepare their line level responders to embrace this notion, is becoming a key element in adapting to the ever-changing challenges before the homeland security enterprise in the 21st century. HST

A lieutenant with the Aurora, Colorado Police Department, Sam McGhee currently is the Professional Standards Section/Emergency Services Coordinator. For two years he served as deputy executive director of the Colorado Information Analysis Center and served a one-year fellowship with the Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group located in the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) in Washington, DC. In 2015, he helped create the implementation plan for the National Network of Fusion Centers. He’s also a member of the Committee on Homeland Security for the International Association of Chiefs of Police.