



## **NERAC17 – Natick Mall Full-Scale Exercise**

**Date of Addendum: August 7, 2018**

**Bid Due Date & Time: August 9, 2018 at 12:00PM EST**

### **Addendum # 1:**

Question 1: Will NERAC or other appropriate agencies furnish safety officers and exercise evaluators?

Answer 1: All evaluators and safety officers will be the responsibility of the consultant.

Question 2: Who is responsible for securing role players for the exercise?

Answer 2: NERAC will be responsible for securing role players for the exercise.

Question 3: Are we required to utilize 200 role players, or do we have the leeway to accomplish the proposal requirements with less role players?

Answer 3: The consultant is required to prepare and coordinate the role players so that they are ready for the exercise. NERAC will be responsible for recruiting the role players. The number of role players will be between 50 and 200 for the exercise.

Question 4: We researched public meeting minutes that indicated that the budget for this Proposal is approximately \$70,000. Are there additional budget resources for this Proposal?

Answer 4: Budget information is not available at this time.

Question 5: Are there electronic After Action Reports/Improvement Plan documents from the previous Natick functional exercise (FX) and tabletop exercise (TTX) that are available to us?

PLEASE NOTE: A copy of all addenda that are issued should be included in the bid package and each addendum should be initialed in the bottom left corner of the first page of the document by the bidder.



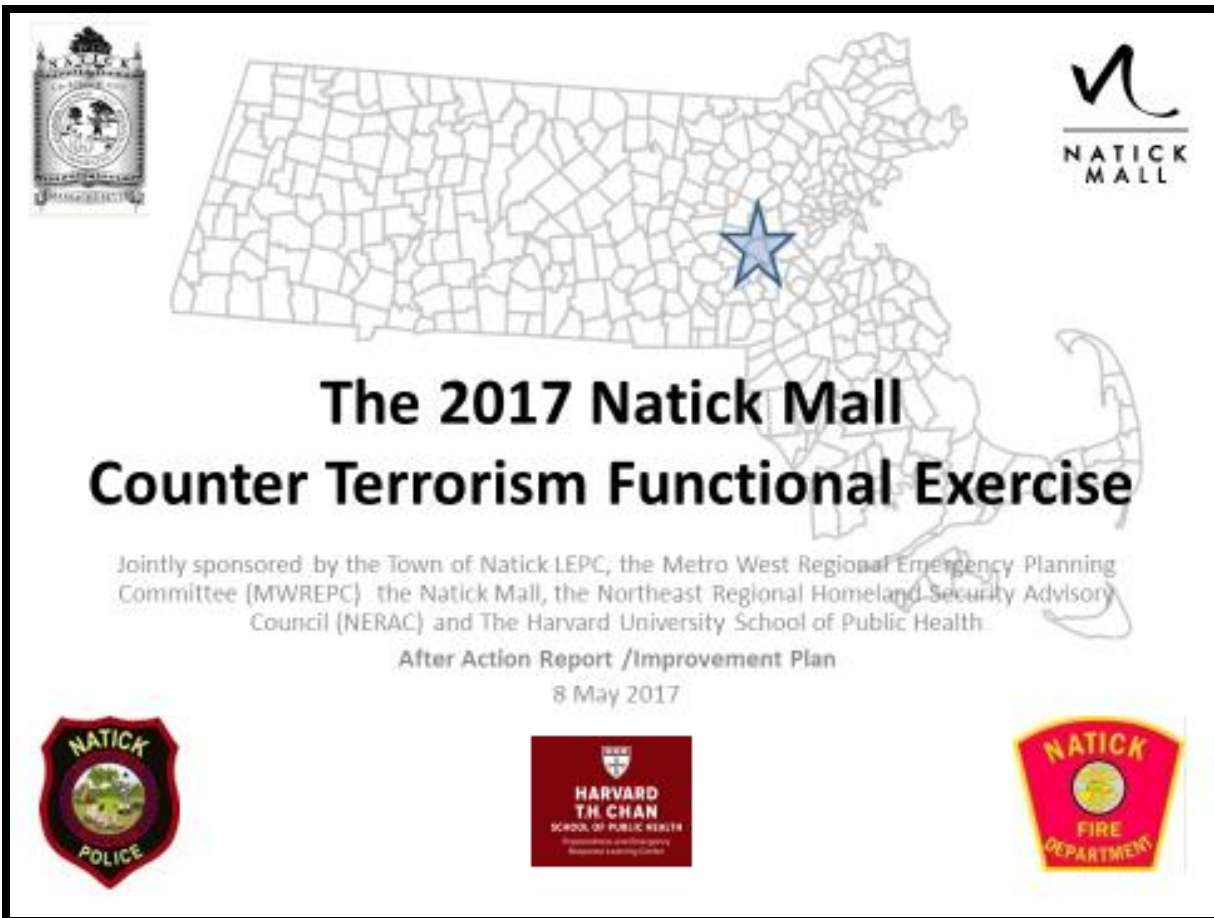
Answer 5: Yes. The After Action Reports/Improvement Plans are included in this Addendum as attachments.

Question 6: Will role player patients be transported to offsite medical facilities, or is it acceptable to perform virtual (simulated) medical transports?

Answer 6: Yes. MetroWest Medical Center will be testing capabilities for up to 20 ambulance trips sent to each of the hospital's campuses (up to 10 each), located in Framingham, MA and Natick, MA. The proposal must incorporate the transportation to offsite medical facilities.

Question 7: Will moulage services, training/prop weapons, or Simunition-type weapons be required for the exercise?

Answer 7: The consultant should be prepared to supply moulage kits for 15-20 victims. No weapons and/or simunition will be needed from the consultant.



## AFTER ACTION REPORT / IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) aligns exercise objectives with preparedness doctrine to include the National Preparedness Goal and related frameworks and guidance. It will serve as a primary source document for planning the Phase III Full Scale Exercise of the Natick Mall Multi Year Training and Exercise Program(MYTEP). This document and the entire Natick Mall Counter Terrorism Training Series MYTEP is structured to meet Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) standards.

This report was built from four external subject matter expert evaluations, review of participant feedback, discussion from the AAR Conference held on March 24, 2017 and planning team participation in the Braintree Mall Shooting AAR held on March 30, 2017.

## HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS/EXERCISE STAFF

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Rescue Task Force (RTF): Lt George Sabbey, Cambridge Police Department

Police Tactics: Sgt Tom Ahern, Cambridge Police Department

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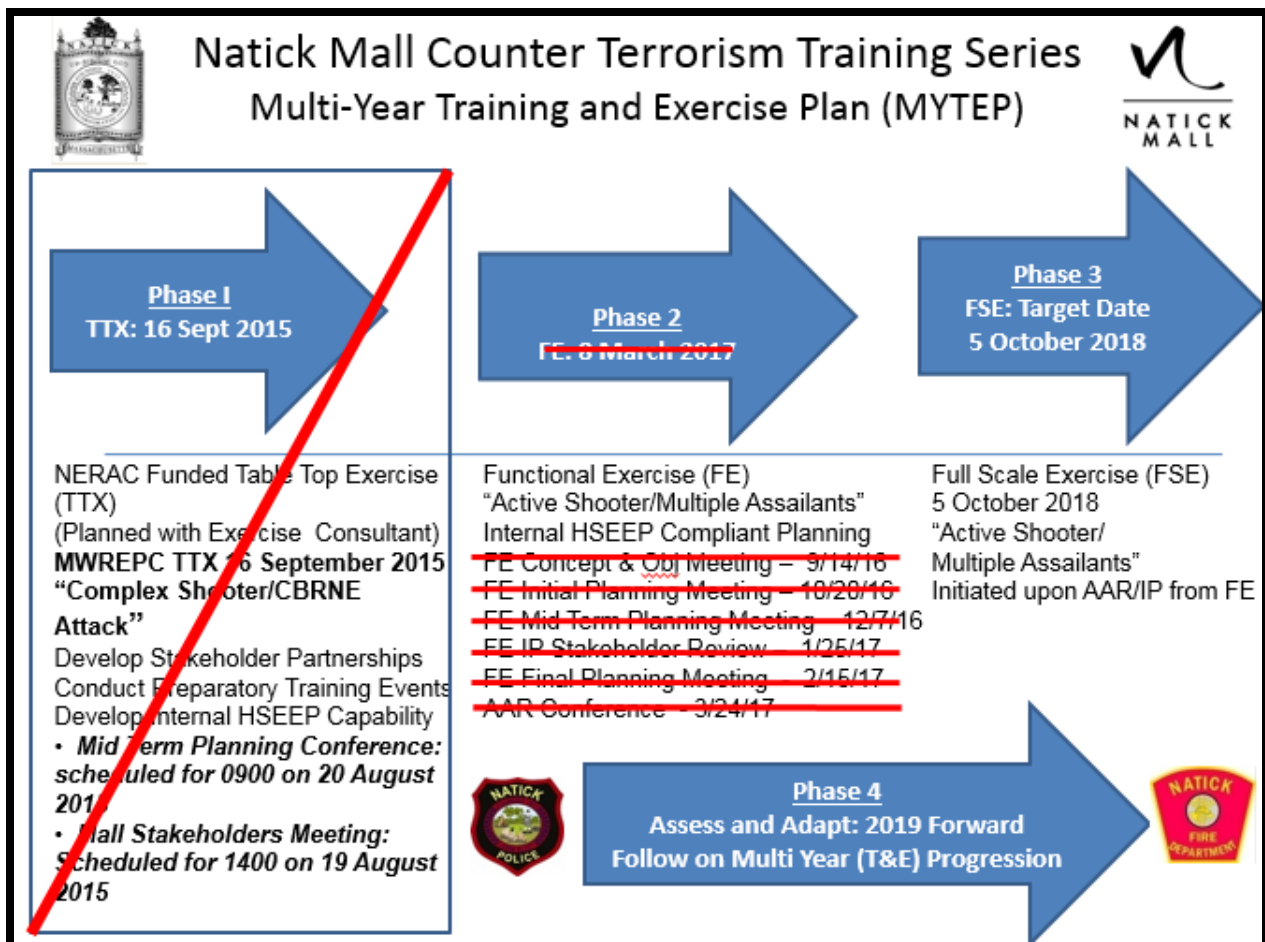
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Wednesday, March 8, 2017, 95 personnel representing 22 entities of Federal, State and Local Government and 4 private partners gathered at the Massachusetts Army National Guard Readiness Center in Natick to conduct a Functional Exercise dealing with a terrorist attack at the Natick Mall. The exercise was phase 2 of a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Program (MYTEP) designed to validate public safety systems for the Natick Mall through comprehensive joint public safety training collaborative between and among the Town of Natick, the Natick Mall, the surrounding mutual aid agencies and responsible State and Federal Agencies.



The purpose of this report is to document exercise discussions, highlight the strengths to be maintained and built upon, identify potential opportunities for further improvement, and support development of future exercise planning. This report is designed to support the building-block approach and improvement planning process of the HSEEP planning/training/exercising cycle by documenting observations and related recommendations in the following sections.

## Major Strengths

Although multiple strengths were demonstrated, the major strengths identified during this exercise were as follows

- Response agencies worked collaboratively amongst each other at all levels of response. In particular, extensive police active shooter training conducted over time in the responding departments was reflected in the collective proficiency in organizing police responders for directly attacking active threats throughout the incident.
- The emerging Natick Rescue Task Force capability proved invaluable in getting medical assistance to casualties throughout the Mall earlier in the incident.
- Effective Unified Command evolved as the incident unfolded resulting in effective representation from multiple agencies became organized into ICS sections and focused on clear incident objectives.
- Proactive coordination in the command center and with Mall management resulted in an informative and concise press conference by the Natick Police Chief with the visual support of the agencies represented in the Unified Command

## Primary Opportunities for Improvement

A detailed itemization of the opportunities for improvement is provided in “Appendix A” of this document. The primary opportunities for improvement, including recommendations, are as follows:

- Efficiency in developing Unified Command (UC), using Incident Command System (ICS) tools and connecting Rescue Task Force (RTF) elements for deployment
  - *Recommendation:* Revise JCIRP to include specific tasks associated with Active Shooter/Hostile Event (AS/HE) and specific protocol for implanting RTF.
  - *Recommendation:* Conduct joint NPD/NFD Leader Training on ICS based Implementation of JCIRP
- Natick Mall Camera system utilization and enhancing the Mall’s geographic orientation products for emergency response.



- *Recommendation:* Develop interoperability procedure for utilizing Mall Cameras in critical incidents and collaborate with Mall to publish improved geographic products for emergency response.
- Communications practices and system utilization.
  - *Recommendation:* Emphasize communications and use of available frequencies in all public safety all training, conduct JCIRP training for communications specialists and include an alternate frequency utilization in Joint NPD/NFD JCRP Leader Training
- Leveraging ambulance task force capabilities
  - *Recommendation:* Include Mass Casualty management presentation at Joint NPD/NFD JCRP Leader Training and incorporate ambulance task force utilization into upcoming NFD In-service training



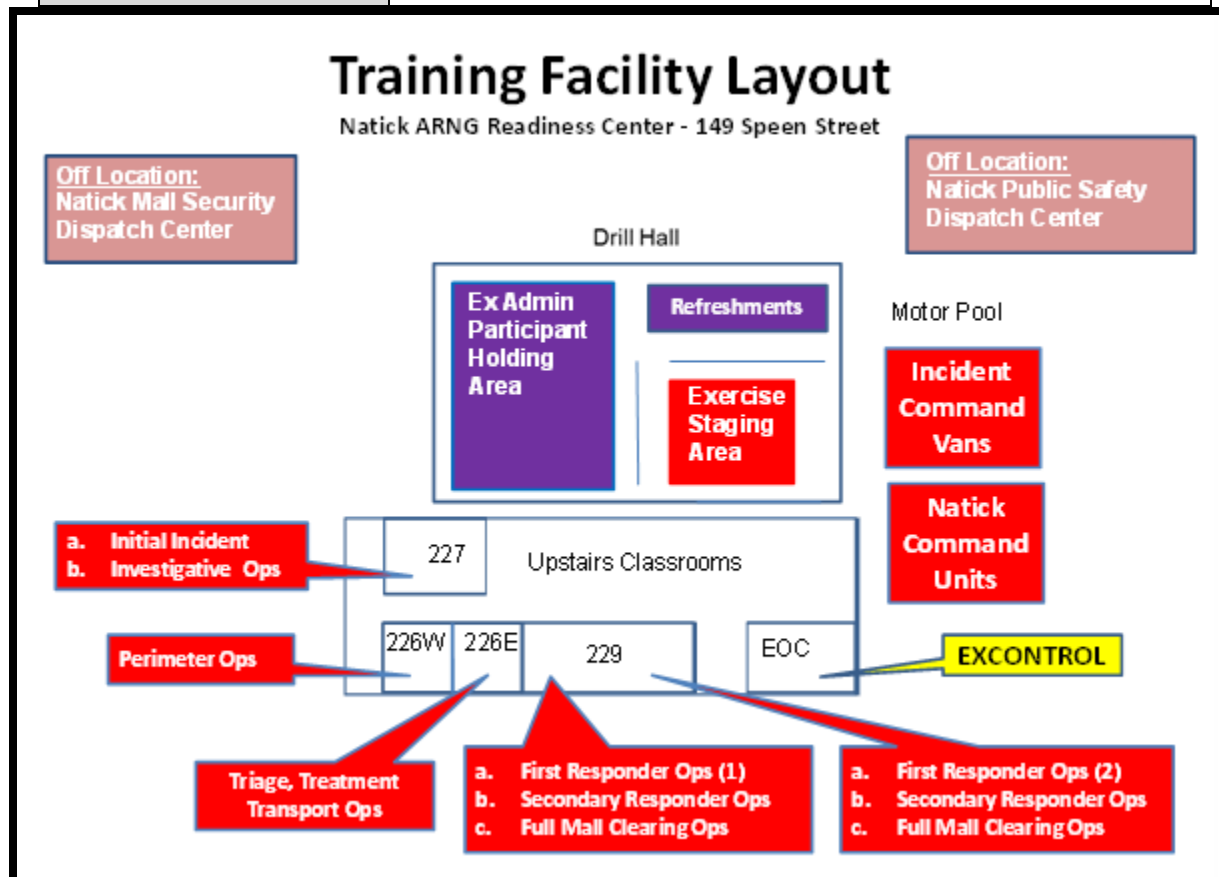


## EXERCISE OVERVIEW

<b>Exercise Name</b>	Natick Mall Counter Terrorism Functional Exercise (NMCTFE)
<b>Exercise Date</b>	8 March 2017
<b>Scope</b>	This was Functional Exercise for a simulated terrorist attack at the Natick Mall conducted over an eight hour period at the Natick Army National Guard Readiness Center. Interactive exercise play was limited to intellectual reactions to the stimuli presented via pre recorded videos and vocal injects sent from exercise control. Response cells were spread out throughout the facility allowing radio communications to be tested throughout the exercise scenario.
<b>Mission Area</b>	Response
<b>Core Capabilities</b>	Operational Coordination, Planning, Operational Communications, Public Information and Warning, Interdiction and Disruption On Scene Security Protection, Law Enforcement, Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Implement Unified Command in accordance with the newly published Natick Joint Critical Incident Response Plan<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1a. Multiagency Police reaction to a multi assailant attack</li><li>1b. Multiagency Fire/EMS to conduct triage, treatment and transport</li></ol></li><li>2. Implement Rescue Task Force (RTF) Operations</li></ol>
<b>Threat or Hazard</b>	Terrorist Attack
<b>Scenario</b>	Multi Assailant Attack with Firearms
<b>Sponsor Agency</b>	Natick Police Department
<b>Participating Organizations</b>	See Appendix B
<b>Point of Contact</b>	Sergeant Brett Conaway, Natick Police, conaway@natickpolice.com

## EXERCISE DESIGN

Wednesday March 8, 2017	
7:30 AM – 8:00	Registration, Coffee, Meet & Greet
8:00 AM – 8:15 AM	Welcome by Natick Police Chief James Hicks & the Massachusetts National Guard
8:15 AM – 9:00 AM	Administrative Instructions
9:00 AM – 11:00 PM	<b>STARTEX Functional Exercise Play</b>
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	<b>PAUSEX Rescue Task Force Video Demonstration</b> (In line with scenario) Working Lunch
12:00 PM – 2:00 PM	<b>Functional Exercise Play</b>
2:00 PM	<b>ENDEX</b> (Following Press Conference)
2:00 PM – 2:15 PM	Exercise Break
2:15 PM – 3:00 PM	HOTWASH AAR
3:00 PM	ADJOURN



## ANALYSIS OF CORE CAPABILITIES

Aligning exercise objectives and core capabilities provides a consistent taxonomy for evaluation that transcends individual exercises to support preparedness reporting and trend analysis.

Objective	Core Capabilities	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
1. Implement Unified Command in accordance with Joint Critical Incident Response Plan	- Operational Coordination - Planning - Operational Communications - Public Information and Warning			M	
1a. Multiagency Police reaction to a multi assailant attack	- Interdiction and Disruption - On Scene Security, Protection, Law Enforcement		S		
1b. Multiagency Fire/EMS to conduct triage, treatment and transport	- Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services		S		
2. Implement Rescue Task Force (RTF) Operations	- On Scene Security, Protection, Law Enforcement - Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services		S		

### Ratings Definitions:

- Performed without Challenges (P): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.
- Performed with Some Challenges (S): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified.
- Performed with Major Challenges (M): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s), but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other activities; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.
- Unable to be Performed (U): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were not performed in a manner that achieved the objective(s).

## ANALYSIS OF CORE CAPABILITIES (CONTINUED)

### Objective 1. Implement Unified Command in Accordance with JCIRP

#### **Core Capabilities:**

- Operational Coordination
- Operational Communications
- Planning
- Public Information and Warning

**Strengths:** The following are the observed strengths during the evaluation of this objective

**Strength 1:** As the incident unfolded during the second operational period it was clear that the communication and coordination between the Natick Police, Fire, MSP, Mutual Aid PDs, FBI, MSP Stop Team, MetroLEC and Mall personnel became extremely efficient

**Strength 2:** The Press Conference that was given by the UC team led by the Police Chief with information that was provided by the Joint Information Center and the Natick PIO was incredibly effective. The UC decided that it would be premature to mention at this first press briefing that this may be a terrorist attack and that the FBI would be the lead investigatory agency.

**Strength 3:** The utilization of the white board in the UC Post to construct a comprehensive checklist of objectives that have been both accomplished and those that still need to be accomplished was very effective in providing a visual illustration which provided focus to the tasks at hand. The UC constructed a chain of command diagram with the respective areas of responsibility and who was responsible for each critical task.

**Areas for Improvement:** The following are areas within the objective were evaluated as needing improvement

**Area for Improvement 1:** Effective Staging and Unified Command were slow to develop.

**Analysis:** When the police established incident command, they initially did not co locate with the Fire department. This caused delay in linking overall Mass Casualty planning into the initial operations and inhibited the employment of the Rescue Task Force Elements. Additionally, the police were delayed in assigning a staging manager which degraded situational awareness of resources were on hand. Ultimately, effective unified command was inefficiently established because commanders inadequately used the newly published Joint Critical

Incident Response Plan (JCIRP) to assign ICS positions and delineate incident objectives.

**Recommendation:** Conduct joint NPD/NFD Leader Training on ICS Implementation of JCIRP.

**Area for Improvement 2:** Situational awareness deficiencies between Unified Command, Natick Control and deployed elements.

**Analysis:** Deficiencies in timely and accurate reporting and broadcasting of critical issues inhibited situational awareness at all levels. Although communications improved as the exercise progressed, Unified Command struggled with establishing/maintaining effective communications with both deployed elements and Natick Control.

**Recommendation:** Conduct JCIRP Training for Public Safety Dispatchers and emphasize communications in all public safety training.

**Area for Improvement 3:** Additional communications platform(s) not used for the multitude of responder activities

**Analysis:** Although a wide array of additional public safety radio frequencies were available during the scenario, command elected to keep all traffic on the main Natick Police and Fire Department channels. This decision resulted in congestion on these channels which inhibited communications throughout the exercise.

**Recommendation:** Include use of alternate frequencies instruction in the upcoming JCIRP training leaders and dispatchers and incorporate testing into normal operations.

## **Objective 1a. Multiagency Police Reaction to a Multi Assailant Attack**

### **Associated Core Capabilities**

- Interdiction and Disruption
- On Scene Security Protection

**Strengths:** The following are the observed strengths during the evaluation of this objective

**Strength 1:** Extensive police active shooter training conducted over time in the participating departments was reflected in the collective proficiency in organizing police responders for directly attacking active threats throughout the incident.

**Strength 2:** Responding patrol units congealed quickly with other responding State and local officers including M.S.P. STOP Team and E.O.D. Perimeters were established around the Mall as well as access points into the Mall.

**Areas for Improvement:** The following are areas within the objective were evaluated as needing improvement

**Area for Improvement 1:** Inadequate utilization of Mall Camera capabilities in police response operations

**Analysis:** It took an hour and thirty-five minutes for officers to decide that officers should respond to the Mall security office to take advantage of the surveillance system. Gaining control of the surveillance system provided situational awareness of the location of the roaming gunman and the number of injured individuals. Placing SWAT members in the control booth can put out actionable intelligence to Command for informed decision making.

**Recommendation:** Develop interoperability procedure for utilizing Mall Cameras in critical incidents.

**Area for Improvement 2:** Cumbersome geographic orientation products for emergency response functions at Natick Mall.

**Analysis:** Officers responding to the Natick Mall for an incident of this magnitude are coming from a wide array of agencies and will likely have little or no familiarity with the Natick Mall. Accordingly, it is imperative to have effective maps and labeling systems for these responders to quickly orient on as they move directly towards addressing the threat. Better oriented personnel are also in a better position to effectively report threat and casualty information as they operate in the affected areas.

**Recommendation:** Collaborate with Mall to publish improved geographic orientation products for first responders.

## **Objective 1b. Mass Casualty Response**

### **Associated Core Capabilities**

- Public health and medical services

**Strengths:** The following are the observed strengths during the evaluation of this objective

**Strength 1:** Natick Fire initiated staging at a safe distance from the Natick Mall and immediately communicated to Fire Alarm the location of initially responding apparatus.



**Strength 2:** The Fire Deputy immediately assigned a staging manager who maintained strict accountability of initial responders.

**Areas for Improvement:** The following are areas within the objective were evaluated as needing improvement

**Area for Improvement 1:** Inefficient Mass Casualty management integration into unified Command

**Analysis:** After the Fire Department established their initial staging and command, they moved their Deputy Chief into the Unified Command Post away from the Fire Staging Area and subsequently degraded communications with the Fire/EMS resources on scene. Additionally, the Mass Casualty Operations Center was located away from the Unified Command post which further degraded the EMS branch communications with Unified Command regarding triage, treatment and transport operations.

**Recommendation:** Conduct Mass Casualty management presentation at Joint NPD/NFD JCRP Leader Training

**Area for Improvement 2:** Inadequate ambulance management and patient tracking

**Analysis:** Ambulance task forces called for but in low numbers, lack of knowing or estimating victims creates delays in moving victims from CCP. Ambulances identified by which task force or number created significant confusion over who was taken where and by whom. Transport officers struggled to maintain accountability of both patients and available ambulances.

**Recommendation:** Incorporate Ambulance Task Force and Mass Casualty patient tracking into NFD FY18 In-service

## **Objective 2. Implement Rescue Task Force (RTF) Operations**

### **Associated Core Capabilities**

- On Scene Security Protection
- Public health and medical services

**Strengths:** The following are the observed strengths during the evaluation of this objective

**Strength 1:** The emerging Natick Rescue Task Force (RTF) capability proved invaluable in getting medical assistance to casualties throughout the Mall earlier in the incident.

**Strength 2:** Police responders from surrounding communities quickly grasped the RTF concept and were able to work seamlessly with Natick Police and Fire personnel on implementing this new capability.

**Areas for Improvement:** The following are areas within the objective were evaluated as needing improvement

**Area for Improvement 1:** Delayed integration of Rescue Task Force EMS Personnel with police security teams

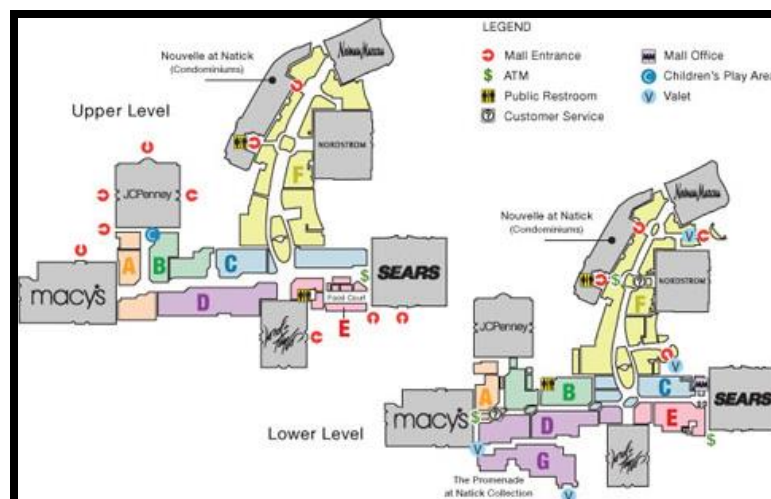
**Analysis:** Conflict initially developed between Fire and Police about entering a warm zone. Fire was present in the staging area awaiting for an escort into the warm zone. No other police resources available for the escort which created a delay in getting medical to the wounded victims.

**Recommendation:** Develop RTF Annex for JCIRP and incorporate police/EMS RTF link up protocol into ongoing RTF Training

**Area for Improvement 2:** Ineffective communications on victim locations and casualty collection point locations

**Analysis:** Communications about casualty status and locations were challenging throughout the entire exercise. At one point a Rescue Task Force Team established a secondary collection point of victims based to location of victims and geography of building but then Incident Command wanted to change decision made in the field because the requirements of the situation were unclear due to communications issues.

**Recommendation:** Emphasize RTF communications procedures within F18 RTF Training Plan.



## IMPROVEMENT PLAN (IP)



Obj	Core Capabilities	Item #	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Agency POC	Start Date	Comp Date
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Operational Coordination</li> <li>-Operational Communication</li> <li>- Planning</li> <li>- Public Information and Warning</li> </ul>	1.1	Inefficiency in developing effective Staging and Unified Command	Add C3 Pathways Active Shooter Incident Management Checklist as Annex to JCIRP	Sgt Conaway	5/15/17	8/1/17
				Conduct joint NPD/NFD Training on ICS Implementation of JCIRP	Lt Lauzon	8/1/17	10/1/17
		1.2	Deficient situational awareness between Unified Command, Natick Control and deployed elements	Conduct joint NPD/NFD Leader Training on ICS Implementation of JCIRP	Lt Lauzon	8/1/17	10/1/17
				Conduct JCIRP Dispatcher training	Lead Disp Goodwin	8/1/17	10/1/17
		1.3	Insufficient communications platform(s) for the multitude of responder activities	Conduct alternate frequency utilization presentation at Joint NPD/NFD JCRP Leader Training and JCIRP Dispatcher training	Lead Disp Goodwin	8/1/17	10/1/17
1a	- Interdiction and Disruption	1a.1	Inadequate utilization of Mall Camera capabilities in police response operations	Develop interoperability procedure for utilizing Mall Cameras in critical incidents	Sgt Conaway	5/15/17	11/1/17

	- On Scene Security, Protection, Law Enforcement	1a.2	Cumbersome geographic orientation products for emergency response functions at Natick Mall	Collaborate with Mall to publish improved geographic products	Sgt Conaway	5/15/17	11/1/17
1b	- Public Health. Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services	1b.1	Inefficient Mass Casualty management integration into unified Command	Conduct Mass Casualty management presentation at Joint NPD/NFD JCRP Leader Training	Dep Chief Dow	8/1/17	10/1/17
		1b.2	Inadequate ambulance resource management and patient tracking	Incorporate Ambulance Task Force and Mass Casualty patient tracking into FY18 In-service	Cpt Rothman	7/1/17	10/1/17
2	- On Scene Security, Protection, Law Enforcement - Public Health. Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services	2.1	Delayed integration of Rescue Task Force EMS Personnel with police security teams	Develop RTF Annex for JCIRP	Sgt Conaway	5/15/17	8/1/17
				Incorporate police/EMS RTF link up protocol into ongoing RTF Training	Sgt Howard	6/1/17	10/1/17
		2.2	Ineffective communications on victim locations and casualty collection point locations	Emphasize RTF communications procedures within F18 RTF Training	Sgt Howard	7/1/17	10/1/17

## APPENDIX B: EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

Participating Organizations	
<b>Federal</b>	
Federal Bureau of Investigation	
US Army Natick Soldier Systems Center	
<b>State</b>	
Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety	
Massachusetts State Police	
Massachusetts National Guard	
Northeast Homeland Security Advisory Council	
Metro Law Enforcement Council	
Fire District 14	
<b>Local</b>	
Natick Board of Selectmen	
Natick Police and Fire Departments	
Framingham Police and Fire Departments	
Wayland Police and Fire Departments	
Wellesley Police Department	
Sherborn Police Department	
Holliston Police Department	
Ashland Police Department	
Hopkinton Police Department	
Natick Department of Public Works	
Natick Board of Health	
<b>Non Government</b>	
Natick Mall – General Growth Properties	
Nouvelle at Natick Residence	
Metro West Medical Center	
Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health	

**95 Total Participants** (54 Law Enforcement, 22 Fire, 24 Other)

## APPENDIX C: NATICK JCIRP



### Joint Critical Incident Response Plan (JCIRP)



**I. Applicability:** This plan applies to all Natick first responders addressing catastrophic incidents within in the Town of Natick which require the major deployment of Natick Police and/or Natick Fire department resources.

**II. References:**

A. Incident Command Protocols: Law Enforcement Response to Critical Incident Video, Produced by the Massachusetts Management Agency, January 2016

B. <http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/assets/reviewmaterials>, May 2008

**III. Purpose:** To streamline joint initial incident command functions in order to efficiently address complex threats and set conditions for the most effective deployment and utilization of follow on resources.

**IV. Annexes:** Incident Command Forms

A. Incident Briefing (ICS 201)

B. Activity Log (ICS 214)

**V. Key Tasks:** The following describes the key collective steps for Natick first responders in critical incidents. They are listed in sequence but many will occur either concurrently, in alternative order or not at all based on the unique dynamics of each incident.

**A. Determine the nature and scope of incident:** Begin to address the threat

**B. Establish Command, Incident Commander (IC) and Command Post (CP):**  
The first responding officer who is best qualified and/or best positioned to command the incident assumes command and then yields command to the more qualified ranking official(s) upon their arrival. Ensure affected facility stakeholders such as: school principals, mall managers, base commanders etc are represented in CP.

**C. Establish communications with Natick 911 Center and responding units:**  
The main channel for Natick Police and/or Fire will be initially used for incident communications. Normal operational radio traffic for Natick Police and/or Fire can be initially switched to an alternate channel. An incident specific communication plan/channel(s) can be introduced by IC at a later point.

**D. Request additional resources as needed:** Give precise staging instructions.



Natick Joint Critical Incident Response Plan (Page 2)

**E. Identify and secure the hot zone:**

1. Continue to address threat
2. If Hazmat present, isolate threat and initiate protective measures
3. Begin triage, treatment and transport of casualties

**F. Establish inner and outer perimeters.** Facilitate evacuation, re route traffic around the incident and limit access only to required responders. Consider decontamination operational requirements and reunification areas for special populations as needed.

**G. Establish secure staging area(s)/Designate Staging Area Manager(s):** Consider: proximity to threat, outside small arms range, upwind from Hazmat, accessibility, capacity/footprint/control features and expected size/duration of event.

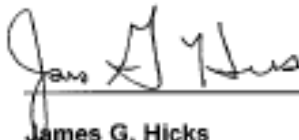
**H. Deploy resources as directed by IC:** Control self deployment.

**I. Consider needs of special populations** (youth, elderly, special needs, residential areas within commercial facilities etc)

**J. Reassess each step periodically:** Use ICS forms.

**K. Designate a Public Information Officer (PIO):** Speak with one voice. Be first, right and credible. Consider all feasible methods of communication including: Media, Social Media, Reverse 911 etc. Establish a Joint Information Center (JIC).

Effective August 1, 2016:



**James G. Hicks**  
Police Chief



**Richard A. White**  
Fire Chief

## APPENDIX D: ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
AAR	After Action Report
EMS	Emergency Medical Service
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FE	Functional Exercise
FPD	Framingham Police Department
CCP	Casualty Collection Point
COP	Common Operational Picture
ggp	General Growth Properties Inc. (Natick Mall Management)
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
ICP	Incident Command Post
JCIRP	Joint Critical Incident Response Plan
MASCAL	Mass Casualty
MSP	Massachusetts State Police
METRO-LEC	Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council
MWREPC	Metro West Regional Emergency Planning Committee
MYTEP	Multi Year Training and Exercise Plan
NERAC	Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council
RTF	Rescue Task Force
UC	Unified Command

# **Natick Mall Counter Terrorism Training Series**



## **Natick Mall Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise**

**After Action Report  
September 16, 2015**

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**Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise**  
**After Action Report (AAR)**

## **HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On Wednesday, September 16, 2015, more than 70 exercise participants representing the Natick Police Department (NPD), Natick Fire Department (NFD), Framingham Police Department (FPD), Framingham Fire Department (FFD), Holliston Fire Department (HFD), Sherborn Police Department (SPD), Town of Natick, Massachusetts State Police (MSP), Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Army National Guard Civil Support Team (CST), and Nordstrom Corporation, Lord & Taylor Corporation, General Growth Properties (GGP) participated in a tabletop exercise (TTX) that was designed to validate public safety systems for the Natick Mall through comprehensive joint public safety training collaborative between and among the Town of Natick, the Natick Mall, the surrounding mutual aid agencies and responsible State and Federal Agencies.

The purpose of this report is to document exercise discussions, highlight the strengths to be maintained and built upon, identify potential opportunities for further improvement, and support development of future planning aimed at enhancing healthcare partner integration within the Coalition.

### **Major Strengths**

Although multiple strengths were demonstrated, the major strengths identified during this exercise were as follows:

- Natick Police Department and Natick Fire Department demonstrated knowledge of the Natick Mall and surrounding area and were able modify and adapt their action plan as needed and as events dictated.
- Natick Police Department and Natick Fire Department quickly conducted a personnel risk assessment and addressed responder safety early in the incident.
- Unified Command and responder agencies created the basic management framework of the incident early, which enabled the appropriate resources, manpower, and support would be available as needed.
- On-scene command and control was established as efficiently as possible given multiple threats (car fire with chlorine gas explosion and active shooters) and quickly assigned on scene personnel management roles and duty personnel other support roles (such as staging officer, safety officer, and EMS officer).

## **Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise**

### **After Action Report (AAR)**

- The use of multiple triage teams and one transport sector provided for ease of patient access, efficient assignment of triage levels, and rapid allocations of transportation vehicles (ALS, BLS ambulances, MCI bus, and regular bus).
- Participants demonstrated considerable field knowledge of available assets from local, state, and private entities.
- General Growth Properties and the participating anchor stores demonstrated a high-level of collaboration with Natick Police Department and Natick Fire Department as well as incorporation of real-world emergency response experiences into their emergency plans (such as employee training, routine drill conduct, implementation of “Run, Hide, Fight” principles, lockdown procedures, and evacuation procedures).

## **Primary Opportunities for Improvement**

A detailed itemization of the opportunities for improvement is provided in Section 3 of this document. The primary opportunities for improvement, including recommendations, are as follows:

- Initial engine companies concern over the color of the smoke coming from the car was not recognized as a possible additional hazard.
  - *Recommendation:* Continue first responder HAZMAT training and incorporate training principles into future exercises.
- Reinforce incident command training and principles in future exercises to deepen the understanding and implementation of an operational command post between Natick Police and Fire Departments.
  - *Recommendation:* Increase the interaction/participation of multi-jurisdictional agencies in future exercises for a large-scale incident to enhance coordination of setting up and operating a joint command post.
- There is a need to establish a staging manager early in an event that will bring multiple mutual aid units such as in this scenario. It would have been difficult for the Police incident commander to manage the incident and staging simultaneously.

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- *Recommendation:* It is recommended that someone else be assigned this duty early in the incident to ensure the incident commander can focus on tactics for engagement.
- Conduct a future exercise where the unified command group integrates advanced planning section functions to include completion of the ICS 202 (response objectives), 203 (organization assignment list), 204 (assignment listing), and 205 (communications plan).
  - *Recommendation:* Consider integrating an IMAT through MEMA or NERAC to support incident action planning (beyond the initial stages) in future exercises.
- Identify realistic solutions to the interoperable communication gap existing among mall management, stores, and public safety agencies.
  - *Recommendation:* Through public-private sector collaboration, discuss and identify potential solutions to resolve the inability to conduct 2-way communications among mall management and public safety agencies and Natick Mall stores during an emergency. Utilize private stakeholder meetings as a forum to explore communication alternatives through existing resources.
  - *Recommendation:* Collaborate with GGP to address the communication “dead zones” within the physical structure of the Natick Mall. Investigate feasible solutions (i.e. communication repeaters) for deployment and maintenance at Natick Mall.

This report is designed to support the building-block approach and improvement planning process of the HSEEP planning/training/exercising cycle by documenting observations and related recommendations in the following sections.

## **SECTION 1: EXERCISE OVERVIEW**

### **Exercise Details**

#### **Exercise Name**

Natick Mall Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise

#### **Type of Exercise**

Tabletop Exercise

#### **Exercise Date**

September 16, 2015

#### **Duration**

6Hours (9:00 AM – 3:00PM)

#### **Location**

U.S. Army National Guard Readiness Center  
149 Speen Street  
Natick, MA

#### **Sponsors**

Northeast Joint Regional Advisory Council (NERAC)

#### **Program**

State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) - FFY2014

#### **Mission**

Response

#### **Core Capabilities**

Situational Assessment  
Communication  
Interdiction and Disruption  
Operational Coordination  
Public Information and Warning  
Forensics and Attribution

#### **Scenario Type**

Improvised Explosive Device  
Active Shooter

## Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise After Action Report (AAR)

### Exercise Participants

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## Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise After Action Report (AAR)

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**Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise**  
**After Action Report (AAR)**

**Exercise Evaluators**

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## **SECTION 2: EXERCISE DESIGN SUMMARY**

### **Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of the Natick Mall Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise is to validate public safety systems for the Natick Mall through a comprehensive joint public safety tabletop exercise that fosters coordinated response among the Town of Natick, the Natick Mall, the surrounding mutual aid agencies and responsible State/Federal Agencies.

The scope is to provide an HSEEP-compliant tabletop exercise that develops and facilitates stakeholder partnerships and enhances public safety training.

### **Core Capabilities, Objectives, and Tasks**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Core Capabilities form the foundation for all objectives and tasks in this exercise. Additionally, each capability is linked to corresponding exercise tasks developed for this exercise. Based upon the objectives, the exercise planning team determined the exercise participants should address the following capabilities and related tasks presented in the table below:

**Table 1: FEMA Core Capabilities**

<b>Core Capability</b>	<b>Exercise Objective</b>	<b>Exercise Tasks</b>
Situational Assessment	<u>Objective 1</u> : Stakeholders are able to conduct rapid event characterization/assessment related to multiple coordinated events.	<b><u>Law Enforcement</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How would you determine whether or not the yellow smoke had an impact on your first responders?</li><li>• What are the initial traffic flow considerations?</li><li>• Will resources beyond Natick be requested and, if so, which ones?</li></ul>
		<b><u>Fire/EMS</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How many and what types of units will be sent for this event?</li><li>• How/where will Fire and EMS vehicles be staged?</li><li>• What are the considerations for the yellow smoke?</li><li>• Will resources beyond Natick be requested and, if so, which ones?</li></ul>

## Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise After Action Report (AAR)

Core Capability	Exercise Objective	Exercise Tasks
Communication	Objective 2: Stakeholders determine the initial event notification process, the associated communication pathways, the modes of communication, and protocols to coordinate communications among all responding agencies and entities.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Law Enforcement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natick PD: Once 911 receives the call, how many and what types of units will immediately respond?</li> <li>Who would be your main POC at the Mall when gaining situational awareness?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fire/EMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What information would you communicate to hospitals?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Retail</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would this event prompt the need to notify all stores?</li> <li>Who do you notify first?</li> <li>How does Mall Management communicate with the Anchor Stores?</li> <li>How does Mall Management communicate with all other stores/restaurants?</li> <li>How quickly can a “1-Call” alert be generated? Who generates it? Which of the stores can receive it? Is Natick Public Safety on the 1-Call?</li> <li>What instructions are being given to PF Chang’s and The Met and nearby stores?</li> <li>How can your security staff coordinate with law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>How can you work with neighboring stores to ensure an effective response?</li> </ul>
Interdiction & Disruption	Objective 3: Law enforcement representatives develop and discuss procedures to engage the active shooter threat, establish a security perimeter, sweep and control the mall, and the process for all-clear.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Law Enforcement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify location of the command post (coordinate this with Fire)</li> <li>Define the perimeter.</li> <li>How is ingress managed into the streets surrounding the Mall?</li> <li>What about the people that want to leave in their own cars?</li> <li>How would you communicate with Mall Security who may still be in the Mall?</li> <li>Which team enters first? Describe the strategies and tactics to approach and engage the shooters.</li> <li>How will LE agencies address the gunman with hostages in Macy’s?</li> <li>At what point do SWAT team assets become involved?</li> <li>How are threats of the active shooters balanced with the hostage/barricade situation?</li> <li>What are the considerations for the residents in Nouvelle Condominiums?</li> <li>How are the stores cleared? The parking lots?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fire/EMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify location of the command post (coordinate this with Police).</li> <li>How would you coordinate victim/witness investigations with law enforcement?</li> </ul>

**Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise**  
**After Action Report (AAR)**

Core Capability	Exercise Objective	Exercise Tasks
Interdiction & Disruption	Objective 4: Fire Department representatives develop and discuss the immediate response actions for fire suppression, HAZMAT, victim management, and all-clear.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Fire/EMS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What would be done to handle the car fire? Would it be immediately extinguished?</li> <li>• How long will it take for HAZMAT to arrive? What are their initial actions?</li> <li>• What is your Safety Message for first responders?</li> <li>• Which hospitals in the area could accommodate 30 Red and 20 Yellow-triaged patients? How many could Metro-West take?</li> </ul>
Operational Coordination	Objective 5: Mall stakeholders discuss initial decisions and actions, and coordinated command and control with public safety agencies.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Law Enforcement</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operations Commander needs to be identified.</li> <li>• What will be the role of MA State Police? The METRO-LEC?</li> <li>• Provide a briefing to the Unified Command (within 30 Minutes).</li> <li>• Who will be the OPS Commander?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Fire/EMS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operations Commander needs to be identified.</li> <li>• Who would be the operations commander?</li> <li>• Provide a briefing to the Unified Command Group (within 30 Minutes).</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Retail</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the role/actions of Mall Security at this point in the scenario?</li> <li>• What role would you see yourself filling as it relates to informing the incident command group?</li> <li>• Who would serve as the key POC to the ICP during this type of incident?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Unified Command</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and assign section chiefs</li> <li>• Develop incident strategic objectives</li> <li>• Develop incident action plan</li> <li>• Manage Operational Briefing and assign tasks to each operational commander.</li> <li>• Develop strategic objectives for next operational period</li> <li>• Address request and coordination of deployment of NERAC assets to include: Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT), metal crowd barricades, signboards, radios, and Ambu-bus.</li> </ul>

## Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise After Action Report (AAR)

Core Capability	Exercise Objective	Exercise Tasks
Public Information & Warning	Objective 6: Stakeholders are able to address considerations for public information following the incident.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Law Enforcement</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where would the media be staged?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Retail</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the main content that you would include in a statement to the press?</li> <li>At what point would Mall representatives want to have a press conference? Who would be the spokespersons? Is GGP consulted for press conference? How are the anchor stores represented?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Unified Command</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and assign media spokesperson/PIO</li> <li>Address process to monitor social media/rumor control</li> <li>Where will press briefing be held? What time?</li> <li>Develop main points for press briefing</li> <li>Who (from each of the agencies) should provide input into the press statement?</li> </ul>
Forensics & Attribution	Objective 7: Participants address considerations associated with victim management, ongoing criminal investigation, and relative impacts on mall operations.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Law Enforcement</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who would serve as the investigational lead? At what point does this become a federal investigation?</li> <li>How do you work with EMS on preservation of evidence? Would you need to interview any or all of the injured?</li> <li>What would be the process for identifying and interviewing those who left the mall?</li> <li>Would any external investigations immediately take place with others in the Gray Serpents?</li> <li>How are witness interviews coordinated? What about those potential witnesses who many have left the mall?</li> <li>How do all of the jurisdictional law enforcement agencies coordinate in this investigation?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Fire/EMS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metro-West Medical Center: what are you doing to prepare for receipt of victims? What information is critical to know from the scene?</li> <li>Where would you setup triage?</li> <li>Who would coordinate the transport of victims?</li> <li>What role would Fire/EMS play with reunifying victims with family members?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Retail</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who will communicate with the families of the employees that are killed?</li> <li>What access does the Mall/Anchor Stores have for grief counseling and other mental health needs of employees?</li> <li>How would the Mall/Anchor stores coordinate investigations with LE? What access to information/space can be provided to aid the investigation?</li> <li>What would be the considerations/process for reopening?</li> </ul>

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Core Capability	Exercise Objective	Exercise Tasks
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What role/if any would the Mall play in reunifying victims/employees with family members?</li></ul> <p><b>Unified Command</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where and when will a family assistance center be established?</li><li>• How will family reunification be addressed?</li><li>• What information is provided to the public for victim family reunification?</li></ul>

## Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise After Action Report (AAR)

### Schedule of Events

Wednesday, September 16, 2015	
8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	Registration, Coffee, Meet & Greet
9:00 AM – 9:15 AM	Welcome by Natick Police Chief James Hicks & the Massachusetts National Guard
9:15 AM – 9:30 AM	Exercise Format, Purpose, Scope, & Objectives
9:30 AM – 9:45 AM	MODULE 1 Background Scenario & Initiating Event for Response
9:45 AM – 10:00 AM	MODULE 1 Notifications & Initial Response
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	MODULE 1 Initial Actions Brief Back
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM	MODULE 2 Event Escalation
10:45 AM – 11:00 AM	Exercise Break & Move to Breakout Rooms
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	MODULE 2 Breakout Discussions Group 1: Unified Command Group 2: Police Group 3: Fire/EMS Group 4: Retail <i>Note: No later than 11:30 AM: Operational Briefing to the Unified Command</i>
12:00 PM – 12:30 PM	WORKING LUNCH
12:30 PM – 1:00 PM	MODULE 2 Brief Back
1:00 PM – 1:15 PM	MODULE 3 Event Resolution
1:15 PM – 2:00 PM	MODULE 3 Breakout Discussions Group 1: Unified Command Group 2: Police Group 3: Fire/EMS Group 4: Retail
2:00 PM – 2:15 PM	BREAK
2:15 PM – 3:00 PM	MODULE 3 Brief Back and Hotwash
3:00 PM	ADJOURN

# Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise

## After Action Report (AAR)

### Exercise Scenario

September 2015

#### Domestic Terror Threat

- A growing national threat is that of Sovereign Citizen Extremists.
- Some federal and local law enforcement groups view the domestic terror threat from sovereign citizen groups as equal to, and in some cases greater than the threat from foreign Islamic terror groups such as ISIS.

#### ***Note: Fictional information for exercise purposes only***

- Sovereign Citizens are extremists who believe that they can ignore laws and their individual rights are under attack in routine daily instances such as a traffic stop or being required to obey a court order.
- In the past 12 months, Sovereign Citizens have been responsible for multiple incidents in Massachusetts, which have included the shooting of a police officer in the Central Part of the State and several bogus liens placed against judges in Massachusetts in a variety of cases against Sovereign Citizens.
- The group “Gray Serpent Militia” has grown throughout New England and has established a *retreat facility* about 50 miles West of Natick. While the Gray Serpents purport this facility as a peaceful place to provide seminars to citizens on their individual rights, State intelligence officials have reports of potential training on military maneuvers, automatic weapons, and small bomb making.

#### Incidents in Natick Increase

- There has been a rash of shop lifting in several department stores in and around Natick, including the Mall.
- Three individuals have been arrested in the past week on shoplifting charges who each presented identification from the “State of Gray Serpent” and refused to cooperate with law enforcement officials. All 3 shoplifted from different anchor stores in Natick Mall. They all claimed they had the right as sovereign citizens to take the items they shoplifted. All three were released after posting bond.

#### Profiles of the Arrestees

Jason	Fred	Bobby
• Gray Serpent Captain	• Gray Serpent Lieutenant	• 16-Year-Old son of



## Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise

### After Action Report (AAR)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28 Years Old</li> <li>• Not married</li> <li>• Arrested twice on firearm charges</li> <li>• Arrested for domestic battery</li> <li>• Served 2 years in State Prison for drug charges</li> <li>• Unemployed truck driver</li> <li>• 6'3", 260 pounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 34 Years Old</li> <li>• Unemployed salesman; currently running seminars for those interested in being a sovereign citizen.</li> <li>• Divorced</li> <li>• Arrested, but not convicted of methamphetamine production.</li> <li>• 5'11", 285 pounds</li> </ul>	<p>Fred</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kicked out of high school last year for severely beating a teacher.</li> <li>• Placed in Juvenile Detention and released 6 months ago</li> <li>• Helps father out with seminars</li> <li>• 5'10", 190 pounds</li> </ul>
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### Saturday, September 19<sup>th</sup> – 12:07 PM

A 911 call to the Natick Dispatch reports a car fire in the circle driveway of PF Chang's and The Met Bar & Grill. Yellow smoke is observed upon approach by the Natick Police and Fire Departments, respectively.

## Exercise Injects/Situational Awareness Updates

Inject	Information
Shooters in the Mall September 19 <sup>th</sup> 12:15 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natick Police Arrive, there are several people frantically fleeing from the Macy's and Lord &amp; Taylor exits.</li> <li>• NPD receive reports through calls to 911 of multiple shooters moving throughout the Mall wearing gas masks. Some of these 911 calls are being bumped to Framingham.</li> </ul>
Shooting September 19 <sup>th</sup> 12:15 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initial responding Natick Fire Department engine observes yellow smoke and is engaged with small arms fire upon their approach. No firefighter is injured from the shooting.</li> <li>• The yellow smoke is confined to the area outside of the mall in the vicinity of the exploded vehicle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Temp 78°</li> <li>○ Partly cloudy</li> <li>○ Humidity 70%</li> <li>○ Winds Blowing East at 9 MPH</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Situational Update September 19 <sup>th</sup> 12:20 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many Mall patrons are going to their vehicles and trying to leave creating a traffic jam in the garages.</li> <li>• Fire/HAZMAT has identified the yellow smoke as chlorine and is limited to car fire. The direction of the wind is away from the</li> </ul>

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Inject	Information
	<p>mall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is being reported that there are 3 shooters in the Mall according to video surveillance feeds and 911 calls. It is also reported that they are firing semi-automatic handguns and have killed at least 3 people and injured another 8-10 people. One of the shooters is also yelling that he is going to “blow up the place”. Another shooter reportedly has a dozen hostages he is holding captive in the southwest corner of Macy’s. This shooter claims his name is “Fred.”</li> </ul>
<p>Threats Neutralized, Media Arrives September 19<sup>th</sup> 1:05 PM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All 3 of the shooters engaged in a firefight with LE agencies. 2 of them are killed by LE, one kills himself.</li> <li>4 mall patrons and 6 Anchor Store employees are killed. An additional 60 are injured (30 Red, 20 Yellow, 10 Green).</li> <li>None of the LE officers are harmed in the firefight.</li> <li>All major media outlets have arrived at the perimeter.</li> <li>Helicopters are circling overhead capturing footage.</li> <li>Social media is trending with pictures and eyewitness accounts as well as statements from a group claiming responsibility.</li> <li>There is still some concern that there may be secondary devices in the Mall. The sweep/search is beginning.</li> <li>Fire/HAZMAT has resolved the car fire and the chlorine threat has been mitigated.</li> <li>Natick 911 receives a call from an anonymous 911 caller who says the Gray Serpents claim responsibility for the attack at Natick Mall in retaliation for the arrest of three of their “soldiers.”</li> </ul>

## **SECTION 3: ANALYSIS OF CAPABILITIES**

This section of the report reviews the performance of the core capabilities, objectives, and tasks as observed by the evaluation team.

### **Module 1: Notifications and Initial Response**

#### **Observations and Analysis: Law Enforcement**

Initial Response: The Natick Police Department's initial response would be to dispatch two patrol units to Natick Mall based on the car fire information. Once arrived on the scene, the primary role of the officers would be to control traffic and to assist the Natick Fire Department. Given the information in the scenario timeline, the Natick PD's initial response is considered standard operating procedures for most law enforcement agencies.



Yellow Smoke Considerations: Regarding the yellow smoke or release of a possible toxic gas Natick Police officers would base their next course of action from on scene observations. The officers would likely consider the following to determine their course of action:

- Signs and symptoms of respiratory distress from any mall patrons
- Rapid assessment of the number of injured persons in view
- Any information received from the Natick Fire Department responders on scene

Once the release of a chemical agent was confirmed as being part of the car fire, Natick PD would begin initial notification of unit commanders who, in turn, would notify additional agencies responding to chemical incidents, such as the Massachusetts State Police and HAZMAT units.

Generally, law enforcement training in the area of Weapons of Mass Destruction (specifically chemical agents) instructs police officers to coordinate immediately with the on scene fire department units. Natick PD response discussions reflected both training, real world response, and on scene information sharing and coordination with the Natick FD's responding units.

Traffic Considerations: The initial traffic considerations would be based on the responding fire apparatus and its immediate positioning, which would quickly lead to the expansion of the initial perimeter based on the possibility of a chemical agent (in this instance, chlorine).

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Normally, the area surrounding the Natick Mall is heavily congested; therefore the initial traffic control would be limited to ingress/egress routes in the area of the car fire (i.e. immediate vicinity of PF Chang's restaurant). Law enforcement agencies would begin dedicated traffic control once the location of an incident was confirmed. In this event, the Natick PD began to set up traffic control posts as the event expanded, which included positioning of units at more important traffic control points such as Speen St, Route 9, and other areas of direct access to the Natick Mall.

Command and Control: The immediate operations commander for Natick PD was identified to be the patrol supervisor (sergeant rank), which is standard operating procedure for most law enforcement agencies.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Confirm that General Growth Properties has an up-to-date point of contact for the Natick PD Dispatch in the "1-Call System" database. At a minimum, Dispatch will receive all alerts as part of the GGP notification system in the event of an emergency (including a fire emergency).
2. Collaborate with GGP to identify a realistic solution to enable Natick PD to establish a live link to the security cameras at the Natick Mall.
3. Collaborate with GGP to address the communication "dead zones" within the physical structure of the Natick Mall. Through exercise discussion, acknowledgements of radio/cellular communication "dead zones" are present in certain stairwells and in other locations spread across the Natick Mall. Investigate feasible solutions (i.e. communication repeaters) for deployment and maintenance at Natick Mall.
4. Establish the most effective communication posture between the private management company and the first responder agencies including integration of law enforcement into the Mall Management operations center and establish communications with Natick Dispatch during emergency response.

### **Observations and Analysis: Fire/EMS**

Deployment of Assets: The Natick Fire Department's initial response for a car fire would be to dispatch a single engine company. Additional support would include two additional engines, a ladder truck, an ambulance, and a shift deputy officer. At this time given the scenario event, no outside resources would be requested.

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Staging: The first arriving engine would commence actions to address the car fire. If additional units are requested, they would be staged upon arrival.

Yellow Smoke Considerations: The first arriving engine company would consist of two firemen – an officer and a driver. If the event occurred on Saturday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, the engine driver of this fire company has training as a hazardous materials technician. The engine driver's observation of the yellow smoke was a concern and his recommendation was for a defensive attack of the fire with water supply. The officer was concerned for the exposures of the building(s) and the response was elevated to the entire shift and the incident would be treated as a “typical” car fire with direct fire attack.

Command and Control: The shift deputy would be designated as commander upon his arrival. Although the appearance of smoke coming from the vehicle raised concern of the company, personnel could not reach a consensus in relation to the danger of the yellow smoke and the commander remained committed to fire suppression and protection of exposure operations, but the event was upgraded and a request was made for the remaining on duty personnel and apparatus.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Continue HAZMAT training for all fire personnel as recognition of the yellow smoke from the car fire as presented in the scenario did not automatically trigger a hazardous material incident coupled with the burning car.

### **Observations and Analysis: Retail**

Store Notification: The notification of the Natick Mall stores would be done through the “1-Call” alert system, which is a blast notification system to all the devices (email, cellular phone, land-line telephone) stored in the system database. The “1-Call” alert system can be generated within minutes and all stores would receive this notification alert.

The order of notification is as follows: Natick Fire Department to confirm that they have received a call regarding the car fire; the Mall Manager on Duty (MOD) and Director of Security; and then the mall stores. For this exercise scenario, it was determined that a “1-Call” would go out to all tenants alerting them of the current situation as well as closure until further notice of the main mall entrance/exit between PF Changes and Met Bar. Additional General Growth Property management staff would also be notified.

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Mall Management Communications: Mall Management can communicate with the Anchor Stores via the “1-Call” alert system. An additional communication would occur between MOD or Security Director and the Maintenance Department to instruct them to shutdown the Mall’s HVAC system to prevent intake of smoke or potentially contaminated air. Lastly, PF Chang’s and the Met would be instructed to fully evacuate.

Mall Security Role: The primary role of the Natick Mall Security given the scenario information would be to manage crowd control and direct mall patrons away from PF Changs and The Met to another location. The location was not specified and it was speculated that information would come from Natick PD. Natick Mall Security would also close the road into the parking lot near PF Changs and The Met. Mall Security Dispatch would also be instructed to direct cameras to focus on the incident. Of note, Mall Security personnel would not attempt to address the fire or extinguish the car fire.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Identify feasible communication solutions and plan development so that information exchange between GGP and all stores is possible beyond the “1-Call System.” Currently, GGP has no reliable pathway to maintain communications with mall stores following the initial notification from the “1-Call System.” Additionally, responder agencies have no mechanism to communicate directly with any of the stores if an event occurs.
2. Continue to request up-to-date contact information at each of the stores as well as the Natick public safety agencies for entry and maintenance in the “1-Call System” database.

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### **Module 2: Event Escalation**

#### **Observations and Analysis: Law Enforcement**

Command Post: Natick PD immediately identified the need for two essential areas once they confirmed that an armed attack on civilians occurred. The 2 areas were:

- Command Post: The command post was established near the Natick Mall.
- Staging Area: The staging area was designated at TJX parking lot, which is approximately ½ mile away from the Natick Mall, but in the opposite direction of the gas release.

The Natick Sergeant In Charge made the decision in consult with other participating agencies command and control was transitioned from Natick FD to Natick PD upon receipt of an active shooter (or shooters) on mall premises. The on-scene police commander deployed units tactically to protect the fire department personnel on-scene as well as initiate preparations to insert contact teams into the Natick Mall. As part of this tactical unit, participants discussed inclusion of tactical EMS personnel as part of this unit. Consensus could not be reached and the decision was made not to include tactical EMS personnel. Overall, command transition was done without hesitation or confusion and once the incident commander (the Natick Police Department Sergeant) informed other agencies of the command change, Natick PD began to notify and deploy their tactical units.

Perimeter: An initial perimeter was quickly established in the location of the initial car fire and general area of the incident. The incident commander realized that he did not have enough resources available within the first 15 minutes to set up a dedicated perimeter and did not want to commit on scene personnel to these duties given an active shooter(s) injuring and killing mall patrons. All other considerations were deemed secondary.

Mall Patrons Exiting: Patrons of Natick Mall and persons immediate to the area who were attempting to exit the premises via vehicles were not considered an initial priority as the incident commander concluded based on feedback from on-scene units that vehicular traffic could not be controlled at this point in time. The main priority was to neutralize the active shooter threat.

Communications: Communication with mall management and any stores was the responsibility of the unified command post. The main point of contact at the mall was identified as the on-duty security manager. Any information received from video feeds

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within the mall, security radio transmissions, and/or landline telephones would be relayed to units on the scene.

Active Shooter: Contact teams consisting of 3 to 4 officers were tasked with gaining immediate entry into the mall and engaging the shooters. These tactics were based on the standardized training of four man teams (diamond formations) gaining access and utilizing patrol like tactics locating, closing with, and neutralizing the threats(s). Currently, this is the training approach and perspective being provided to law enforcement agencies. The notion of waiting for tactical units to arrive and to deploy in a crisis situation may lead to a higher casualty count and loss of life; therefore, all unit commanding officers agreed with the tactic of gaining immediate entry and acknowledged in discussion that they would begin to organize teams to access the mall facility.

Hostages: The incident command did not initially recognize the hostage situation, as his major concern remained to be the active shooters in the mall. Upon further review and discussion of the situational information provided, consensus was reached that the tactical units would assume command and control to neutralize the active shooters in the mall. Standard operating procedures may also include establishing a controlled perimeter and deploying trained marksmen/observer units, and preparing an entry unit. Although the incident commander did not specifically address these other procedures, on the participating tactical officers assured her that sufficient resources would be arriving on scene to address the hostage situation. The incident commander viewed the active shooters as the immediate threat and, if not neutralized, could lead to the greatest loss of life. The tactical commanding officers agreed and acknowledged that once sufficient personnel were on scene (within 15-20 minutes), the hostage situation would be dealt with and resolved.

SWAT Teams: Following the request for assistance from all units in the area, SWAT team assets became immediately available. The SWAT/STOP teams or tactical officers would then deploy into the Mall to support the contact teams and address more complex problems like hostages and comprehensive clearing of the facility. As discussed previously, current training for all law enforcement personnel is to insert the trained personnel into the area to engage the threats as quickly as possible.

MSP and Metro LEC Roles: The roles of MSP and Metro LEC are provided in the table below.



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Agency	Roles
Massachusetts State Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MSP CO on scene is responsible for notifying and deploying additional troopers to assist in the incident as deemed necessary.</li><li>• MSP Special Tactical Operations (STOP) Team would be deployed in conjunction with other responding SWAT units to address the threat(s)</li><li>• MSP officials would also notify Air Wing units for scene surveillance.</li><li>• MSP officials would notify public information officers to deal with the arrival of media personnel.</li></ul>
Metro LEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Metro Law Enforcement Council (Metro LEC) SWAT and other special response units would also deploy</li><li>• As the primary special response entity for Natick Police, Metro LEC would be the coordinating element for all other LEC units responding</li></ul>

Other units were identified such as the mobile operations patrol unit (MOP), the command post personnel, and other logistical and support units. The participating law enforcement entities clearly discussed their specific roles along with the realistic expectation and amount of resource support that could be provided and committed to the unfolding scene.

Neighboring Communities: The immediate neighboring community is the Nouvelle Condominiums, but they were not specifically discussed as part of the law enforcement response actions. As the event expanded, the incident commander recommended a shelter-in-place message be delivered to all civilians in the neighboring communities until law enforcement officials provided further information. This reflected the safest and most feasible course of action the incident commander could take at this point given the circumstances and the personnel available to support the on-scene.

Additional Resources: In addition to the resources previously discussed, the unified command group identified the other resources for request that would most likely be dispatched to the scene. These additional resources included: the American Red Cross, the Massachusetts National Guard, HAZMAT units, the FBI, DHS, and FEMA.

**Recommendations:**

1. Identifying a method of communications, either from unified command or the on-scene command post, with the mall stores is vital to minimize loss of life and injuries to mall patrons.

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2. Continue planning efforts to establish effective unified command and/or assume command from Natick FD for active shooter threats coupled with fire response. Coordinated planning focused on on-scene command and command post identification between police and fire could be facilitated by discussion of multiple scenarios involving active shooters and isolated fires.
3. Continue planning efforts regarding staging assets (especially as requested assets arrive) in and around the Natick Mall with emphasis on the geographic orientation for responding assets and the complexities in staging these assets in a dense urban environment.

### **Observations and Analysis: Fire/EMS**

Command Post: The on scene fire department commander set up the initial command post in the Sears parking lot, which was uphill and upwind of the burning car fire. As the incident escalated with the initial fire responders coming under small arms gunfire, fire department commander notified Natick PD and ordered all crews away from the area and to report to the command post (at the Sears parking lot). The Chief of the Fire Department would be notified and requested on scene. The Deputy Fire Chief would remain the operations commander and the Chief of the Fire Department would assume Fire Department Incident Commander within Unified Command.

Car Fire: Once the responding fire crew came under small arms fire, they abandoned the apparatus and reported to the command post (in the Sears parking lot). It remained unclear if a master stream was placed in operation, or if the fire was left to burn itself out. Prior to coming under small arms fire, the initial attack consisted of a hand line from the responding/first engine.

HAZMAT: The approximate arrival time of the HAZMAT unit was estimated to be within 60 minutes. Their initial objective would be air monitoring and support identification of a chemical; specifically release of a chlorine gas as part of the car fire. No responders would be allowed in the immediate area until secured by law enforcement.

Safety Message: The safety message delivered to fire crews would include the following:

- Remain together
- Maintain personal accountability reporting (PAR)
- Operate only in areas designated as safe by law enforcement

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- Ensure awareness of gun fire
- Ensure awareness of the possible release of a chemical associated with a car fire
- Remain vigilant for presence of secondary devices

The safety message provided to the residents (and management) of the Nouvelle Condominiums safety message would be a joint message from Natick Fire and Police Departments to shelter in place and the Natick Police Department would provide additional security for the surrounding area.

Information Sharing with Hospitals: Central Medical Emergency Direction (CMED) Center would be the primary hospital notified of the incident and the potential number of victims. On scene triage would be conducted and the victims would be transported as defined within the mass casualty incident (MCI) protocols. The triage officer would provide patient information and forward the destination to the transport officer as is the standard statewide protocol.

Hospital Prep for Victim Receipt: The hospital would institute staff call back procedures as a measure of preparation to receive patients as directed by CMED; however they would not be critical care patients due to limited available services. Additional preparations would be for people who self-report with possible injuries or potential chlorine exposure.

Unified Command Briefing: The briefing to the Unified Command contained the following information:

- Natick Fire Department had pulled back from the car fire due to gunfire.
- An ambulance task force had been requested including District 14 control and a staging area would be designated.
- A 2<sup>nd</sup> alarm was struck and the EMS division established.
- Fire/EMS crews would not enter any areas deemed unsafe by Natick PD.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Coordinate identification and initial setup of an operational combined command post for multiple scenarios involving active shooter and fire scenarios. Establishing an operational command post with police and fire brought about confusion as police wanted to establish a command post further away from the active fire and out of the range of small arms fire. An agreement was reached to

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relocate to the TJX parking lot although Natick FD continued to provide hesitation given the distance from the car fire. The operational combined command post was established inside the parking garage, which was to serve as a staging area. It was not determined whether or not ambulances, large support vehicles or fire apparatus could fit in the structure.

### **Observations and Analysis: Retail**

Measures for Employee Evacuation: Once the “1-Call System” alerts stores of the imminent threat (active shooter) each anchor store and other stores would implement its own corporate policy for either an active shooter or store policy for a similar threat. As such, not all stores adhere to the same policy regarding lockdown versus not locking down the store and allowing people to self-evacuate. Observations were made and discussed that the majority of mall patrons would flee without any notice. Each mall store has to account for their employees, which would not be done (and would not be possible) until a time well after the incident was over.

Patrons that Remain: Once the initial “1-Call System” alert is distributed, no other communication platform or pathway is available to communicate with any of the stores or the patrons that remain either in the mall or have sheltered in the stores.



Response Actions If Not in Vicinity: The response actions taken by a store not in the vicinity vary from store to store as there is no uniform response. No further detail was discussed.

Main Considerations of Lockdown: Since each store has its own policy for an emergency, no considerations for lockdown could uniformly be discussed. Nonetheless, factors influencing a lockdown decision and issues of complexity were discussed to include the following:

- Absence of communication with stores (before, during, and after the event)
- Disparate response action between stores
- Inability to enforce the “run, hide, fight” concept as the mall management cannot enforce stores to adopt this concept, but the Natick PD is strongly encouraging the stores to socialize this concept to its employees
- Inability to control the “panic and chaos” issue

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- Existence of traffic jams at essentially every parking lot and garage with little that could be done to help control the traffic without additional Natick PD resources to assume area control.
- Inability to use the mall intercom system as this could alert the shooters of police presence and actions
- “Civilian” nature of Mall Security as they are unarmed and all response is turned over to the Natick PD and other law enforcement agencies.
- Notification of the Nouvelle residents of the active threat. This would have to be done through a landline as they are not on the “1-Call” list

Role within Incident Command: The mall management assumes a support role within unified command and would provide any assistance to the responding agencies as needed and as requested.

Security Coordination: Initial security coordination would be very difficult during the immediate response timeframe as the primary objective of the Natick PD and other law enforcement agencies is to neutralize the active shooter threat. Once neutralized, a representative from Natick PD would join the Security Dispatch in the mall operations center to make sure all cameras were focused on the incident and communications would be established with Natick Dispatch to maintain situational awareness.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Explore opportunities with Natick public safety agencies to plan and host emergency response workshops to address active shooter threats to identify feasible and efficient protocols for evacuation that are consistent among all stores. Additionally, the workshop should also engage mall stores to discuss their individual policies regarding lockdown and those considerations whether or not to lockdown their store.
2. Identify/develop formal notification and communication plans with the Nouvelle Condominium property through their management company. Future active shooter and HAZMAT exercises involving the Natick Mall should include Nouvelle Condominium property management company to increase awareness of the public safety response.

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#### **Observations and Analysis: Unified Command**

Unified Command Formation: The Unified Command Group was established with the core consisting of the Police and Fire Chiefs from Natick along with a liaison from the Mall Management (GGP). During this session, it became clear that this incident would escalate quickly with involvement of other law enforcement agencies and fire departments in the region as well as the FBI, MEMA, and others. However, in the first 30 – 60 minutes, Natick officials would have an operational lead with others supporting as units/companies arrived and eventual transition to a federal event with the FBI in the lead.

Incident Action Planning: The Unified Command Group was able to rapidly develop a set of objectives relevant to incident response including the following.

- Ensure protection of first responders (especially fire department personnel who were under small arms fire)
- Establish interoperable communications among responding agencies (consider options through patching in existing statewide channels)
- Establish an incident command post (at Sherwood Plaza or Home Depot)
- Establish and secure a perimeter (manage/control ingress and egress)
- Engage the threat in the mall
- Establish a staging area for the multiple responding law enforcement and EMS agencies (may need to be separate for law enforcement at TJX and EMS – one for tactical and one for basic response)

Given the rapid escalation of events it was acknowledged that completion of other incident action plan forms (i.e., ICS 202, 203, 204, and 205) would not be feasible to complete quickly until an incident management assessment team (IMAT) was made available. Representatives from MEMA indicated that they could mobilize an IMAT team, yet it was further acknowledged that this team not be available for at least one hour. An IMAT team can provide much needed support to local jurisdictions by supporting IAP development and maintenance during an incident. In addition, an IMAT can be made available through NERAC.

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Manage Operational Briefing: The operations commanders from Police, Fire, and Retail provided a briefing to the Unified Command Group. During this briefing, the following activities and related needs were communicated.

- Mall tenants should activate their own active shooter plans (based on run, hide, and fight principles)
- Road closures will need to occur
- Staging will be a large and potentially complicated process. The area has been identified (see more on staging, in the above law enforcement section)
- Resources will need to be requested through mutual aid processes to include a tactical team for hostage negotiation
- Fire will issue a shelter-in-place order for residents of the Nouvelle Condominiums. However, it wasn't clear how this order would be communicated
- Rounding up witnesses (i.e. those that are leaving the mall) would not be feasible this early in the event. The focus will be on neutralizing the threat from inside the mall

### **Recommendations:**

1. As a matter of general planning in the region for these types of events it is recommended that local procedures include provisions that are documented and exercised that are related to the request and implementation of an IMAT to support incident action planning. Consider integrating an IMAT through MEMA or NERAC for this purpose in future exercises.
2. Conduct a future exercise that integrates advanced planning section functions to include completion of the ICS 202 (response objectives), 203 (organization assignment list), 204 (assignment listing), and 205 (communications plan). Continued practice in the completion of these forms will provide a consistent approach to response to large incidents.
3. In conjunction with Mall Management, Natick officials should conduct planning for various levels of response at the mall that would indicate EMS and police staging areas. Related plans regarding traffic management at these staging areas should also be included. Some staging area locations discussed during the exercise include Wilson Middle School, Sherwood Plaza, TJX, Home Depot, and State Police Headquarters.
4. There is a need to establish a staging manager early in an event that will bring multiple mutual aid units such as in this scenario. It would have been difficult for

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the Police incident commander to manage the incident and staging simultaneously. It is recommended that someone else be assigned this duty early in the incident to ensure the incident commander can focus on tactics for engagement.



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### **Module 3: Event Resolution**

#### **Observations and Analysis: Law Enforcement**

Tactical Rescue: Law enforcement participants discussed tactical rescue considerations related to clearance of the Mall. Specifically, participants recommended that the on-scene commander consider use of tactical EMS personnel as part of the tactical rescue units as portions of the Mall are deemed “clear.” Rescue considerations will be dependent on the geographic orientation of the Mall and the complexities (e.g. parking structures, hallways, square footage of the building itself) associated with it. The use of tactical EMS personnel would be done in support of the overall ongoing rescue operations.

Investigative Lead: Natick PD, the MSP, and the District Attorney’s Office would initially be the investigative leads. Immediately upon declaration of a terrorist incident (domestic or foreign), the FBI would assume the investigative lead.

Preservation of Evidence: The tactical commanding officers indicated that the total area of the Natick Mall would require a search, which was anticipated to take approximately 8-10 hours. The primary tactical elements would be evacuation of the wounded and security of the scene. Law enforcement participants discussed having crime scene unit (CSU) personnel closely follow the tactical units, but preservation of evidence was viewed as a secondary tactical element at this stage of the operation.

Interviewing Witnesses: The investigative units on scene or those units in route would be responsible for interviewing witnesses. Included in the interviewing witness discussion, utilizations of interview staging areas or witness collection points with rapid ID procedures were discussed by unit commanding officers. Specifically, the MSP suggested that the local MSP headquarters could be used for a staging area and specific personnel have already been assigned to setup and operate this type of staging area. Also, unit commanding officers agreed that many potential witnesses would have exited the mall and may not be located. For such eventualities, the use of the media and other electronic notification and social media platforms could be used to ask any witnesses involved to contact the local authorities.

External Investigations: Detective unit personnel attached to the investigative units confirmed that investigations would immediately take place on other members of the Gray Serpents. The goal would be to identify additional members and possibly prevent further attacks.

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Clearing Procedures: The incident commander recognized that a full tactical clear of the Natick Mall would have to be conducted by tactical units and was delegated to the commanding officers in charge of those units. The SWAT team units assigned to these specific areas would determine clearing procedures.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Continue to discuss identification of personnel and the use of tactical EMS personnel for emergencies involving victim management in which a “hot zone” has been established. Tactical EMS personnel are an emerging concept for public safety agencies to determine effectiveness and viability in response to active shooter threats.

### **Observations and Analysis: Fire/EMS**

Triage Setup: Four triage teams would be established with one team assigned to each exit. Since Natick Fire/EMS would not enter the “hot zones” or contested areas at this point as a secondary threat had not been ruled out, Natick PD would bring any victims to the closest triage team. The triage teams would report victim’s status to a triage officer who would notify CMED.

Victim Transport Coordination: A transport officer would be assigned and this transport officer would be notified by CMED as to transport destination of all victims at the scene. The transportation vehicles would be assigned based upon the level of care needed.

Hospital Surge: As assigned by CMED, most Red triage patients would be sent to level 1 trauma centers in and around Boston, Worcester and possibly Rhode Island as needed. The Yellow triage patients would also be sent to hospitals in Boston and Worcester, although would most likely be transported to hospitals throughout Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Massachusetts.

Metro-West would activate its medical surge plan, bring in additional staff, decompress its emergency department with existing rapid assessment and treatment protocols. Metro-West reported 5 beds were available at the time of the exercise discussion, which would indicate support from Boston, Worcester, and other neighboring hospitals.

Investigative Coordination: Natick FD and EMS would fully coordinate with Natick PD and other agencies conducting investigation. Any information received from victims/witnesses would be communicated to law enforcement. Participants discussed appointment of a liaison

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officer from law enforcement who would interact and coordinate with fire department personnel in order to record any information received.

Reunification: Fire department personnel may have a limited role in reunification. The Fire/EMS triage and the transport officer may assist with reunification efforts coordinated through law enforcement as police personnel are transporting victims from the mall and parking structures while recording the victim's age, appearance, and disposition. This information would be communicated to CMED as well. Regardless, control of and recording of victim's information with the triage tags will be vital in assisting with family reunification.

CST Role: The Civil Support Team would monitor air quality and collect any field samples needed as part of chlorine contamination and recovery efforts.

### **Recommendations:**

1. If not included in current response plans, the transport officer should be identified and included in the on-scene command structure.
2. Continue planning regarding coordinated efforts with law enforcement for victim transport to the triage area as well as recording victim personal information during an active shooter incident.

### **Observations and Analysis: Retail**

Content of the Press Statement: The General Growth Properties corporate headquarters would coordinate and control any information released to the press. The Public Relations Department would rapidly provide local GGP management with formal information to communicate to the press on-scene if approached.

Press Conference: After further discussion in the general session, a press conference would be coordinated through the Unified Command of which GGP would be included. Information on behalf of GGP would be determined by the corporate press department of General Growth Properties in conjunction with the press department of the responding agencies. A local Natick Mall Spokesperson from GGP would be identified and made available to the press unless otherwise determined by the General Growth Corporate Press Department. The corporate headquarters for the anchor stores and other stores in Natick Mall would coordinate their individual messages to the press.

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Communication with Families: It was the understanding of the retail participants that communication with the families of the patrons and victims would be done by the local or lead law enforcement agency on site.

Coordination with Law Enforcement on Investigation: Any and all property would be turned over to the lead investigative agency. All 223 cameras that monitor the mall property would be made available to law enforcement agencies as needed to support their efforts.

Natick Mall's Role in Reunification: Natick Mall Management and Security would assist with the reunification process as directed by law enforcement agencies and other agencies such as the American Red Cross.

Considerations/Process for Reopening: The determination to reopen Natick Mall is understood to be lead and coordinated by the lead law enforcement agency, which was assumed to be the FBI given that this incident was terrorist in origin. Several considerations were discussed for reopening which included: Address and repair damage done to the physical structure; call in an emergency cleaning crew as set by the policies of GGP; and ensure proper staffing levels related to management, housekeeping, maintenance and security are available. Lastly, each store at Natick Mall is responsible for their employees in the process of reopening this property.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Participate in future exercises that involve issuance of a joint press statement (or dissemination of information to the media). Coordination between the private and public sectors is difficult in ensuring consistency in messaging across a multitude of responder agencies and the private sector during an emergency. Aligning the content of press statements with the public safety agencies public information officers is critical and should be incorporated into future stakeholder meetings and exercises.

### **Observations and Analysis: Unified Command**

Public Information: The public information strategy would evolve over time. A Crisis Emergency Risk Communications Plan (CERC) does exist and would be referenced/utilized. Most likely, several PIOs representing various agencies will be involved and there will be a need to establish a joint information center (JIC). Initial messaging would express sympathy for victims and their families and information is locally relevant to stabilization of the incident. Over time, the messaging would evolve to investigative strategies and establishment

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of a “Tips Line” for the public to call regarding information they know about the incident. MEMA indicated that if requested, they could provide PIO support to Natick as well.

There was concern over misinformation through social media. The Mall has a well-established presence on social media and would work with public safety agencies to develop messaging through their own social media accounts to include Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. While it is assumed that many of the public would gather information from social media, the push through mainstream media (i.e., television and radio) will be to emphasize that the public only refer to **official** social media outlets through local, state, and federal law enforcement.

Family Assistance: There will be a need to ensure that contingencies are in place to address the needs of families and friends of victims. This includes mental and behavioral health or grief counseling, patient location services, or spiritual care. There are resources available through the local sheltering team, the MRC, Mass211, and the ARC. Addressing procurement and deployment of mental and behavioral health resources was outside the scope of this exercise.

Additional Resources: There are additional resources that can and would be utilized in this event through NERAC that include an Ambu-Bus for transport of low-acuity victims and electronic sign boards for messaging regarding road closures.

### **Recommendations:**

1. In upcoming exercises within this series conduct a mock press conference that prompts PIOs to coordinate the development of statement, briefing of a spokesperson, and field questions from mock media. Include retail and/or mall management in this process.

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## **APPENDIX A: IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

This improvement plan template has been developed specifically for the Natick Police Department, Natick Fire Department, General Growth Properties, and the other response partners who participated in the Natick Mall Response to an Active Threat Tabletop Exercise conducted on September 16, 2015. Participating agencies can utilize this table to organize the opportunities for improvement to augment the corrective actions.

Capability	Observation: Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Element	Agency POC	Start Date	Comp Date
Situational Awareness	Mod 1-F/EMS 1: Continue HAZMAT training for all fire personnel as recognition of the yellow smoke from the car fire as presented in the scenario did not automatically trigger a hazardous material incident coupled with the burning car	Conduct HAZMAT Awareness training for all Natick first responders including the use of PPE in continuing operations	Training	NFD Captain Rothman	11/1/15	7/1/16
Situational Awareness	Mod 2-LE3: Improve geographic familiarization in and around the Natick Mall to better orient responders for both operations and support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compile existing products for most effective utilization by responders</li> <li>2. Initiate plan to develop /integrate optimal products</li> <li>3. Conduct tactical response trainings on location to familiarize responders</li> </ol>	Planning	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 3/1/16</li> <li>2. 7/1/16</li> <li>3. 9/1/16</li> </ol>
Comms	Mod 1-LE 1: Confirm that General Growth Properties has an up-to-date point of contact for the Natick PD Dispatch in the "1-Call System" database. At a minimum, Dispatch will receive all alerts as part of the GGP notification system in the event of an emergency (including a fire emergency)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review 1-Call system to insure inclusion of all stakeholders</li> <li>2. Conduct 1-Call drill to ensure effectiveness</li> </ol>	Systems	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 12/1/15</li> <li>2. 2/1/16</li> </ol>
Comms	Mod 1-LE 2: Collaborate with GGP to identify a realistic solution to enable Natick PD to establish a live link to the security cameras at the Natick Mall	Assess shared access capability for all cameras and initiate process to allow more effective access by first responders during emergencies	Systems	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	3/1/16
Comms	Mod 1-LE 3: Collaborate with GGP to address the communication "dead zones" within the physical structure of the Natick Mall. Through exercise discussion, acknowledgements of radio/cellular communication "dead zones" are present in certain stairwells and in other locations spread across the Natick Mall.	Ensure needed infrastructure improvements are worked into the Wegman's Construction	Systems	NPD Chief James Hicks	11/1/15	3/1/16

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Capability	Observation: Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Element	Agency POC	Start Date	Comp Date
	Investigate feasible solutions (i.e. communication repeaters) for deployment and maintenance at Natick Mall					
Comms	Mod 2-LE 1: Identifying a method of communications, either from unified command or the on-scene command post, with the mall stores is vital to minimize loss of life and injuries to mall patrons	Develop emergency communications plan for mall security to insure interoperability with incident command during critical incidents	Planning	NFD Deputy Chief Dow	11/1/15	3/1/16
Interdiction & Disruption	Mod 2-Ret 1: Explore opportunities with Natick public safety agencies to plan and host emergency response workshops to address active shooter threats to identify feasible and efficient protocols for evacuation that are consistent among all stores. Additionally, the workshop should also engage mall stores to discuss their individual policies regarding lockdown and those considerations whether or not to lockdown their store	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure "Run Hide Fight" Training is conducted by Mall Stores and Employees</li> <li>2. Establish collaborative emergency planning process for all Mall stakeholders to encourage consistency</li> </ol>	Training and Planning	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 9/1/16</li> <li>2. 2/1/16</li> </ol>
Ops Coord	Mod 2-Ret 2: Continue planning efforts to establish and/or assume command from Natick FD for active shooter threats coupled with fire response. Coordinated planning focused on on-scene command and command post identification between police and fire could be facilitated by discussion of multiple scenarios involving active shooters and isolated fires	Develop joint critical incident response plan for Natick Mall	Planning	NFD Deputy Chief Dow	11/1/15	7/1/16
Ops Coord	Mod 2-F/EMS 2: Coordinate identification and initial setup of an operational combined command post and staging areas for multiple scenarios involving active shooter and fire scenarios. Establishing an operational command post with police and fire brought about confusion as police wanted to establish a command post further away from the active fire and out of the range of small arms fire. An agreement was reached to relocate to the TJX parking lot although Natick FD continued to provide hesitation given the distance from the car fire. The operational combined command post was established inside the parking	Develop joint critical incident response plan for Natick Mall	Planning	NFD Deputy Chief Dow	11/1/15	7/1/16

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Capability	Observation: Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Element	Agency POC	Start Date	Comp Date
	garage, which was to serve as a staging area. It was not determined whether or not ambulances, large support vehicles or fire apparatus could fit in the structure					
Ops Coord	Mod 2-UC 1: As a matter of general planning in the region for these types of events it is recommended that local procedures include provisions that are documented and exercised that are related to the request and implementation of an IMAT to support incident action planning. Consider integrating an IMAT through MEMA or NERAC for this purpose in future exercises	Develop joint critical incident response plan for Natick Mall	Planning	NFD Deputy Chief Dow	11/1/15	7/1/16
Ops Coord	Mod 2-UC 2: Conduct a future exercise that integrates advanced planning section functions to include completion of the ICS 202 (response objectives), 203 (organization assignment list), 204 (assignment listing), and 205 (communications plan). Continued practice in the completion of these forms will provide a consistent approach to response to large incidents	Conduct training with emergency management supervisors on the utilization of ICS forms. Include designated IMAT	Training	NFD Captain Rothman	11/1/15	7/1/16
Ops Coord	Mod 2-UC 4: There is a need to establish a staging manager early in an event that will bring multiple mutual aid units such as in this scenario. It would have been difficult for the Police incident commander to manage the incident and staging simultaneously. It is recommended that someone else be assigned this duty early in the incident to ensure the incident commander can focus on tactics for engagement	Conduct a specific training with emergency management supervisors on staging considerations for critical incidents at the Natick Mall	Training	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	7/1/16
Ops Coord	Mod 3-LE 1: Continue to discuss identification of personnel and the use of tactical EMS personnel for emergencies involving victim management in which a "hot zone" has been established. Tactical EMS personnel is an emerging concept for public safety agencies to determine effectiveness and viability in response to active shooter threats	Conduct deliberate mission analysis for tactical rescue operations during critical incidents at the Natick Mall and initiate actions needed to optimize tactical rescue capability in accordance with Natick Emergency Management guidance	Planning	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	7/1/16
Ops Coord	Mod 3-F/EMS 1: If not included in current response plans, the	Address triage, treatment and transport duties and	Planning	NFD Deputy	11/1/15	7/1/16



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Capability	Observation: Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Element	Agency POC	Start Date	Comp Date
	transport officer should be identified and included in the on-scene command structure	functions in the joint critical incident response plan for Natick Mall		Chief Dow		
Ops Coord	Mod 3-Ret 1: Participate in future exercises that involve issuance of a joint press statement (or dissemination of information to the media). Coordination between the private and public sectors is difficult in ensuring consistency in messaging across a multitude of responder agencies and the private sector during an emergency. Aligning the content of press statements with the public safety agencies public information officers is critical and should be incorporated into future stakeholder meetings and exercises	Incorporate greater media play into future exercise	Planning	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	9/1/16
Ops Coord	Mod 3-UC 3: In upcoming exercises within this series conduct a mock press conference that prompts PIOs to coordinate the development of statement, briefing of a spokesperson, and field questions from mock media. Include retail and/or mall management in this process	Incorporate greater media play into future exercise	Planning	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	9/1/16
Public Info & Warning	Mod 1-Ret 1: Identify feasible communication solutions and plan development so that information exchange between GGP and all stores is possible beyond the "1-Call System." Currently, GGP has no reliable pathway to maintain communications with mall stores following the initial notification from the "1-Call System." Additionally, responder agencies have no mechanism to communicate directly with any of the stores if an event occurs.	Establish redundant communication systems using all available mediums and incorporate into joint critical incident response plan for Natick Mall	Systems	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	7/1/16
Public Info & Warning	Mod 1-Ret 2: Continue to request up-to-date contact information at each of the stores as well as the Natick public safety agencies for entry and maintenance in the "1-Call System" database	Establish accountability measures to keep the 1-Call system updated with current information	Planning	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	3/1/16
Public Info & Warning	Mod 2-Ret 2: Identify/develop formal notification and communication plans with the Nouvelle Condominium property through their management company. Future active shooter and HAZMAT exercises involving the Natick Mall should include	Integrate Nouvelle Condominiums into all aspects of comprehensive emergency management efforts for the Natick Mall	Planning	NPD Sergeant Conaway	11/1/15	3/1/16

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Capability	Observation: Recommendation	Corrective Action	Capability Element	Agency POC	Start Date	Comp Date
	Nouvelle Condominium property management company to increase awareness of the public safety response					

## **APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK**

Many of the exercise participants provided written feedback immediately following the exercise hotwash.

**Briefly describe the 1 or 2 strengths by your organization demonstrated for any objective during this tabletop exercise.**

- *Interagency cooperation and coordination*
- *Ongoing dialogue with retail partners*
- *Level of training among members of the Metro-LEC*
- *Amount of resources available to support response*
- *Continued partnerships and support for efforts relative to the Mall stores*
- *Metro-West based support for this event*
- *Well-organized and very knowledgeable facilitator and consultants*
- *Multiple jurisdictional participation*
- *Exercising this type of incident may open the door to create a Best Practices*

**Briefly describe the 1 or 2 challenges or weaknesses observed by your organization demonstrated for any objective during this tabletop exercise.**

- *Communication equipment and the ability to have every responder agency on the same channel*
- *Radio frequencies are likely to be clogged*
- *Ability to establish a phone number for victim families as soon as possible in order to mitigate the 911 calls regarding reunification*
- *Ability to quickly access critical patients following active shooter attack*
- *Increase the amount of tactical training for the patrol force*
- *Staffing levels are insufficient to address this event*
- *More training and exercising on media tasks*
- *Determining the effectiveness of “self-deployment” of the law enforcement officers*
- *Better planning for staging and traffic control*
- *Need to be better acquainted with the complexity of the Mall environment and grounds*

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## **APPENDIX B: ACRONYMS**

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
AAR	After Action Report
ALS	Advanced Life Support
BLS	Basic Life Support
CMED	Central Medical Emergency Direction
CO	Commanding Officer
CST	Civil Support Team
CSU	Crime Scene Unit
DOT	Department of Transportation
EMS	Emergency Medical Service
F	Fahrenheit
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigations
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FFD	Framingham Fire Department
FPD	Framingham Police Department
GGP	General Growth Properties
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials
HFD	Holliston Fire Department
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, Air Condition
ICP	Incident Command Post
ID	Identification
IMAT	Incident Management Assistance Team
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
LE	Law Enforcement
MAPC	Metropolitan Area Planning Council
MCI	Mass Casualty Incident
MEMA	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
METRO-LEC	Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council
MOD	Mall Manager On Duty
MOP	Mobile Operations Patrol
mph	Miles Per Hour
MSP	Massachusetts State Police
NERAC	Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council
NFD	Natick Fire Department
NPD	Natick Police Department
PAR	Personal Accountability Report
PIO	Public Information Officer
POC	Point of Contact
SitMan	Situation Manual
SPD	Sherborn Police Department
STOP	Special Tactical Operations

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Acronym	Meaning
SWAT	Special Weapons Attack Team
TTX	Tabletop Exercise
UASI	Urban Area Security Initiative

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