



SIMULATED TORNADO TRAINING EXERCISE BY MUTUAL-AID FEATURED AT FIRE SHOW

E•SPONDER's state of the art alerting technology is used to notify, mobilize and deploy hundreds of resources within minutes

CHICAGO, IL :: August 30, 2010 :: An impressive mutual-aid training exercise designed to demonstrate the effectiveness of utilizing cutting edge technology to query first, then dispatch, mobilize and deploy hundreds of emergency vehicles and personnel was a huge success.

MABAS, the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System of Illinois orchestrated and hosted this massive emergency response drill which occurred during Fire Rescue International's annual meeting held at Chicago's McCormick Place. There were three suburban Chicago response sites at which fire units simultaneously responded. The sites were -- Tinley Park, Glenview and Hoffman Estates.

The purpose of the exercise was to assemble more than 900 firefighters from across four states in neighboring MABAS Divisions, in three different staging areas to be available to respond in the face of a massive storm system affecting central Illinois. During the demonstration, a series of three emergency notification messages were sent using E•SPONDER Alerts, a feature within the E•SPONDER solution (www.e-sponder.com). The first alert message was an activation notice; the second was a pre-tasking, requesting the use of resources. Each of the messages was a voice-based call out electronically from E•SPONDER based on the geographic location of the resource. Once the pre-tasking message was issued, 100% of the task force leaders were able to respond within the E•SPONDER Alert that they would have resources available; the third message was a tasking and mobilization message directing the resources where to go and notifying what materials to provide as well as instructions on next steps. Within minutes, over 2,300 voice-based Alert messages were sent, received and responded to.

MABAS and E•SPONDER have been working together for nine months to provide a platform and method to query the availability of resources in neighboring divisions in an effort designed to accelerate response times. The system will incorporate a sensitivity component that will ensure the neighboring districts are not over-burdened and therefore unable to care for their existing residents by requesting no more than 20% of the districts total available resources. This is accomplished within seconds by continually expanding the geographic circle of districts queried for resource availability.

This exercise took place as the anniversary of 9-11 approached and on a date that nearly 20 years ago brought a massive storm system and extensive damage, near and around Plainfield, Illinois. It is not surprising that hosting this simulation has been a priority for Chief Jay Reardon, who heads up MABAS, "The key is providing training and simulated events which will enable a sustained operation for an indefinite period of time across an expanding geography."

E•SPONDER's President and CEO, Robert Wolf, is pleased to see the hard work pay off. "Our hats go off to the staff at MABAS who embraced this new technology with gusto. This agency has definitely moved into a leadership position in disaster response and incident command."

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, keynote speaker at FRI's opening session on Thursday, viewed the ground-breaking exercise live on closed-captioned TV from McCormick Place. Local Chicago media covered the event as it unfolded: <http://www.wgntv.com/news/wgntv-disaster-drills-expressways-aug26,0,6925446.story>

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