



American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles

After Action Report Golden Guardian 2008 Statewide Disaster Exercise

November 13, 2008



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I. Executive Summary

A. Detailed Scenario

At 1000 hours a rupture occurs on the southern segment of the San Andreas occurs, generating a magnitude 7.8 Southern California earthquake (similar to the recent earthquake in China) impacts the region, causing loss of lives and massive damage to infrastructure, including critical transportation, power, and water systems. The strongest shaking and greatest damage is near the stretch of the San Andreas Fault that extends through the fastest growing areas of Southern California, including the Coachella Valley, Inland Empire and Antelope Valley. It takes a little over two minutes before the shaking is felt in the Greater Los Angeles area.

At least 10 million people are exposed to heavy shaking. California's efforts at mitigation have concentrated on life safety and have been largely successful. Thus, in spite of the large numbers of people in highly shaken areas, initial estimates place the death toll at only about 1,800 fatalities. Early estimates are 55,000 injured. Initial estimates of displaced people in the region is 500,000, with nearly half of those (247,000) representing people in the jurisdiction of our Chapter.

Building types known to be vulnerable to damage and collapse, do indeed sustain major damage. All un-reinforced masonry buildings within 15 miles of the San Andreas Fault are completely destroyed. Those that are not retrofitted kill many occupants. Many other older building types without retrofitting contribute to over \$33 billion in damage to buildings.

Strong shaking continues in downtown Los Angeles for 55 seconds - nearly 8 times longer than in the Northridge Earthquake. The prolonged, strong shaking heavily damages and sometimes collapses hundreds of old brick buildings, thousands of older commercial and industrial concrete buildings, many wood-frame buildings, and even a few, high-rise steel buildings. Thanks to a \$6 billion investment in seismic safety, the State highway system fares well. However, although collapse is avoided, some bridges are non-functional so that much of the highway is not passable on the day of the event. The long duration of shaking takes a greater toll on bridges, overpasses, roads and buildings in the Los Angeles area than in most other affected sections. The fault offsets all lifelines crossing into Southern California at Cajon Pass (Interstate 15), San Geronio Pass (Interstate 10) and along Route 14, including pipelines, power lines, roads, railways, telecommunications and aqueducts.

Ruptured gas mains and lines have started many fires in the streets and in buildings. Water mains have ruptured throughout the area. Many of the facilities that the Chapter has pre-designated as shelter locations are either destroyed by the initial event, burned by one of the many fires that follow, or are inaccessible as a result of road closures. Telephone service including cell phones is very spotty to non-existent not only because of equipment and transmission line damage but also because of system overloads. Around Southern California, there will be 1,600 fires are started that are large enough to warrant a 911 call, and many of these fires merge into conflagrations that burn hundreds of city blocks.

Virtually all emergency services in the region are immediately overwhelmed and unable to provide any form of mutual aid. Conversely, however, requests pour in from local emergency officials for evacuation centers, shelters, and canteen operations. The Chapter initiates its



outreach to partner agencies and determines that several hundred partner-trained DSW workers can assist in our staffing needs.

B. Exercise Objectives

Objective I (All Areas, All Personnel)

Assess the knowledge and ability of all Chapter personnel to take correct instant actions both during and immediately following the earthquake.

Objective II (All Areas, On-Site Personnel)

Assess the Chapter's performance in polling all facilities to determine the collective status of people, facilities and infrastructure.

Objective III (WLA, EMT+ and EDR Personnel)

Based on incoming information from all available sources (media reports, government partners, WebEOC, poll of Districts, internet, preliminary Disaster Assessment from incoming volunteers and employees), develop an initial plan of action for the first Operational Period of 4-6 hours.

Objective IV (City and County EOC's, EDR Staff and LG Personnel)

Assess the Chapter's ability to staff the main ARCGLA EOC, and to provide liaisons to the LA County EOC and LA City EOC.

Objective V (All Areas, All Mass Care Staff)

Assess the Chapter's ability to open and manage up to ten (10) shelter locations with at least one scheduled shift-change of personnel (includes site designation, NSS updates, shelter set-up, registrations, and feeding).

Objective VI (All Areas, OVP Staff)

Assess the Chapter's ability to manage a surge of incoming spontaneous volunteers.

Objective VII (All Areas, Advancement Staff, DSHR OS/FR Staff)

Assess the Chapter's ability to initiate and sustain its Disaster Fund Raising Plan (DFRAP).

Objective VIII (All Areas, Communications and Marketing Staff, DSHR OS/PA Staff)

Assess the Chapter's ability to provide effective Public Affairs during the exercise.

Objective IX (All Areas, WLA EOC Staff)

Assess the Chapter's ability to process requests for and receipt of mutual aid from indirectly affected areas.

Objective X

Practice safely (no injuries). View the event as an opportunity to learn and improve.

B. Event Name

Golden Guardian



C. Event Date

November 13, 2008

D. Event Locations

Field Exercise Shelter Sites

Church of the Nazarene	23857 The Old Rd	Newhall	91321
Cesar Chavez Park	208 Park Avenue	San Fernando	91340
1st United Methodist Church	22700 Sherman Way	West Hills	91307
Balboa Park Community Center	6300 Balboa Blvd	Van Nuys	91406
General Scott Park	23410 Catskill Ave	Carson	90745
The Accelerated School	4000 S. Main St.	Los Angeles	90037
Malibu Performing Arts Center	23825 Stuart Ranch Rd	Malibu	90265
American Legion Highland Park P206	227 N Ave 55	Los Angeles	90042
ARC Central East District Office	2227 S. Atlantic Blvd.	Commerce	90040
Bandini Park	4725 Astor Ave	Commerce	90040

Volunteer Intake Center

ARC West Valley District Office	6800 Owensmouth Blvd	Canoga Park	91303
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EOC

ARC West LA District Office	11355 Ohio Avenue	Los Angeles	90025
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II. Findings

A. Evaluator Feedback

Objectives Met:	Yes
Personnel Properly Attired:	Yes
Personnel Trained:	Partially
Facilitators Effective:	Yes
Locations / Sites Suitable:	Yes
Adequate Equipment:	Partially
Adequate Staffing:	No
Adequate Exercise Design:	Partially

Overview:



The objective of the exercise was to open 10 shelter sites was met. There were a number of new relationships that were tested with sites and partner agencies. Although, there was a lack of "participating clients" and the low number of volunteer staff also hampered the learning at all of the shelter sites. There appeared to be a sufficient amount of supplies at each of the sites visited. Each had a shelter trailer assigned to the site. The chapter EOC at the time was not sufficient to support this number of shelters.

Deficiencies:

- Lack of volunteer staff at each site to adequately perform many scenario
- Information not being verified with appropriate individuals
- Lack of communication; phones not being answered regularly and voicemails not being checked
- A number of the scenarios relied directly on the Shelter Manager for direction and did not allow the shelter workers to work out scenarios timely
- Lack of Health Services and Disaster Mental Health at a number of sites
- Individuals agreeing to requests when it was known it would not be possible to satisfy

Comments / Observations:

- Exercise contained real life scenarios that were beneficial in role playing
- Participants found the hands on experience highly beneficial
- Participants enjoyed the interaction, teamwork and meeting other volunteers
- Open communication between groups that worked at same site
- Number of individuals using unknown acronyms
- Planned very well, not executed as well as was possible

Corrective Actions Recommended:

- Utilize outside volunteers to act as clients
- Outline all job activities and roles with descriptions for participants
- Be willing to say no when appropriate or not able to satisfy request
- Utilize resources to fix problems
- Develop scenarios that allow shelter workers to problem solve without directly going to shelter manager
- Do not give out information when unsure of validity
- More participants to experience shift change and more role playing of client worker interface

B. Participant Feedback

91% of participants felt that they clearly understand the role they were assigned to play and times & location they were scheduled.

81% of participants felt that clearly understood the disaster scenario.

82% of participants felt that their questions answered thoroughly by the Facilitator before the scenario began.

76% of participants felt that they were encouraged to ask questions prior to the start of the scenario.

83% of participants felt that the exercise & scenarios stay on track & achieve their objectives.



89% of participants felt that this exercise beneficial to them and would participate in another exercise of this type.

70% of participants felt that they had the opportunity to play multiple roles.

84% of participants felt that the length of time devoted to this program was appropriate.

82% of participants felt that additional training be helpful to them.

74% of participants felt that this event will encourage them to recruit others to volunteer for the Red Cross.

C. Areas Requiring Improvement

1. Additional time in planning could have helped with identifying additional "participating client", better development of injects for the exercise at all levels (EOC, Shelters etc.). The use of smaller and objective focused exercises will better develop leadership.
2. Further development of Government Liaisons is needed. We clearly need many more qualified liaisons to cover the many EOC's, and field command posts that will be activated. Training should include many of the FEMA online training courses. The City of LA will also include ARC personnel in any of the trainings that they sponsor.
3. Development of a standard operating procedures or protocols for shelter shift supervisors should be considered. This will set a level of standards for all shelter workers to use. This will in the event of a catastrophic event set standards that can be used when communications with the headquarters are not available.
4. Communications is clearly an issue that needs more work. The chapter needs to test and deploy more of the ARC 47.42 radio system. This is in development and is a key element of the new chapter EOC. The use of other commercial and government radio systems also need to be developed. Cell phones in a catastrophic event will become useless and other systems need to be developed.