

# Trouble on the Tarmac 2009

Springfield-Branson National Airport Full-Scale Exercise

September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009

## AFTER ACTION REPORT/IMPROVEMENT PLAN



Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)

After Action Report/Improvement Plan  
(AAR/IP)

Trouble on the Tarmac 2009

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Springfield-Branson National Airport Full-scale exercise, “Trouble on the Tarmac” is a full-scale exercise (FSE) designed to establish a learning environment for players to exercise emergency response plans, policies, and procedures. To conduct an effective exercise, subject matter experts (SMEs) and local representatives from numerous agencies have taken part in the planning process and will take part in exercise conduct and evaluation.

This exercise was developed to test Greene County’s on-site incident management, law enforcement investigations, and triage/pre-hospital treatment capabilities. The exercise planning team was composed of numerous and diverse agencies, including state, local and federal responders.

Based on the exercise planning team’s deliberations, the following objectives were developed for “Trouble on the Tarmac”:

- **Objective 1**: Evaluate the capability to implement the Incident Command System in response to an incident and the effective transition to a Unified Command.
- **Objective 2**: Evaluate the effective growth of the established incident command system structure as necessary to meet the needs of the incident (i.e. command and general staff positions).
- **Objective 3**: Assess the ability of responders to establish and maintain multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional communications in response to an incident utilizing common language (i.e. plain English).
- **Objective 4**: Exercise the coordination and integration of local and federal response resources by the local Incident Command System.
- **Objective 5**: Assess the ability of local law enforcement in conjunction with federal agencies to recognize indicators and warnings of potential terrorist-related activity.
- **Objective 6**: Evaluate the ability of local law enforcement to identify and maintain liaisons with appropriate lead Federal terrorism investigation entities.
- **Objective 7**: Evaluate the efficient activation of the Homeland Security Regional Response System (HSRRS) for an incident involving a potential hazard/agent.
- **Objective 8**: Evaluate capability of local law enforcement in conjunction with federal agencies to conduct hostage negotiations.
- **Objective 9**: Assess the capability of responding EMS units to be integrated into the Incident Command System.



- **Objective 10:** Evaluate the establishment of a triage, treatment, and transport area at a safe, secure, and easily accessible location.
- **Objective 11:** Assess the capability of responders to conduct initial and on-going pre-hospital triage.
- **Objective 12:** Evaluate the use of the EMTrack patient tracking system by the responding EMS units for providing current status of victims.

The purpose of this report is to analyze exercise results, identify strengths to be maintained and built upon, identify potential areas for further improvement, and support development of corrective actions.

## Major Strengths

The major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows:

- At the Law Enforcement Command post, officers from the Springfield Police Department, Airport Police, and the FBI coordinated and integrated seamlessly together in their response.
- Within 9 minutes of the first arriving units, an Incident Command Structure was implemented and established and information gathering had begun. Information was gathered, analyzed and presented to other law enforcement personnel.
- EMS units utilized new EMTrack Patient Tracking systems and were able for the first time to test the system locally in a full-scale exercise. The exercise verified that the EMTrack system can be a vital part of a mass casualty incident and can be easily integrated into a response.

## Primary Areas for Improvement

Throughout the exercise, several opportunities for improvement in Springfield-Greene County's ability to respond to the incident were identified. The primary areas for improvement, including recommendations, are as follows:

- **There was not any indication of an established unified command between law, fire, airport management and EMS.** The recommended corrective action to be taken for this observation will be to amend the Emergency Communications Center (E911) call-out procedures the next 12 months to state that a representative from fire, airport management, law enforcement and EMS will automatically be dispatched to the incident command post during a hijacking incident.
- **The Greene County HSRRS Team was not notified or put on standby for a potential WMD threat.** The recommended corrective action to be taken for this observation will be to provide training about HSRRS activation to all law

enforcement and fire protection department heads within Greene County within 12 months.

- **“Common terminology” was not utilized by all responders resulting in confusion over command.** The recommended corrective action to be taken for this observation will be to provide minimum of four Incident Command System (ICS) courses in Greene County open to all first responders within the next 12 months.

# SECTION 1: EXERCISE OVERVIEW

## Exercise Details

### Exercise Name

Trouble on the Tarmac 2009

### Type of Exercise

Full-Scale Exercise

### Exercise Start Date

August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009

### Exercise End Date

August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009

### Duration

The exercise occurred over the course of a four hour block of time from 13:00-17:00

### Location

The exercise was conducted at the Springfield-Branson National Airport in Springfield, Missouri.

### Sponsors

Funds utilized in the planning and conduct of this exercise were derived in part from:

- Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)
- Greene County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)
- The Federal Aviation Administration

### Program

Program Grants:

- Fiscal Year 2009 Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG)
- Fiscal Year 2009 Chemical Emergency Preparedness Fund Grant Program (CEPF)
- Fiscal Year 2010 Chemical Emergency Preparedness Fund Grant Program (CEPF)

## Mission

The mission areas emphasized in this exercise focused on the **response** phase of an incident

### Capabilities

The following Target Capabilities were addressed in this exercise:

- Law Enforcement Investigations and Operations
- Onsite Incident Command
- Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment

### Scenario Type

Plane Hijacking

### Exercise Planning Team Leadership

Exercise Planning Team Role	Name	Agency
Exercise Director	Ty Davisson	Springfield-Greene County OEM
Deputy Exercise Director	John Elmore	Springfield-Greene County OEM
Assistant to the Exercise Director	Julie Sorrell	Greene County CERT
Airport Representative	Shawn Schroeder	Springfield-Branson National Airport

### Participating Organizations

The Following Organizations or agencies participated in “**Trouble on the Tarmac**” 2009:

#### Federal:

- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- American Red Cross (Greater Ozarks Chapter)

#### State:

- Missouri State Emergency Management Agency

- Missouri State Highway Patrol
- Missouri National Guard

**Local:**

- Cox Hospital EMS
- Greene County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)
- Greene County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- Greene County Medical Examiner's Office
- Greene County Sheriff's Office
- Ozarks Technical Community College
- Republic Office of Emergency Management
- Springfield-Branson National Airport
- Springfield Fire Department
- Springfield-Greene County Emergency Communications Center
- Springfield-Greene County Health Department
- Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management
- Springfield Police Department
- St. John's Hospital EMS
- Vatterott College
- Willard Office of Emergency Management
- Willard Fire Department

**Number of Participants**

**Players:** 65

**Controllers:** 16

**Evaluators:** 13

**Facilitators/Support: 56**  
**Observers: 6**  
**Actors/Victims: 35**

## SECTION 2: EXERCISE DESIGN SUMMARY

### Exercise Purpose and Design

“Trouble on the Tarmac” was sponsored by the Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management, Springfield-Branson National Airport, Greene County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), and the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG). This Exercise was designed to follow the guidance set forth in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

The purpose of this exercise is to evaluate player response actions against current response plans and capabilities.

### Exercise Objectives, Capabilities, and Activities

Capabilities-based planning allows for exercise planning teams to develop exercise objectives and observe exercise outcomes through a framework of specific action items that were derived from the Target Capabilities List (TCL). The capabilities listed below form the foundation for the organization of all objectives and observations in this exercise. Additionally, each capability is linked to several corresponding activities and tasks to provide additional detail.

Based upon the identified exercise objectives below, the exercise planning team decided to demonstrate the following capabilities during this exercise:

- **Objective 1:** Evaluate the capability to implement the Incident Command System in response to an incident and the effective transition to a Unified Command. This will include the establishment of clear incident objectives and efforts directed to meet these objectives
  - **Onsite Incident Command:** Activity 1: Implement On-Site Incident Management
  
- **Objective 2:** Evaluate the effective growth of the established incident command system structure as necessary to meet the needs of the incident (i.e. command and general staff positions).
  - **Onsite Incident Command:** Activity 2: Establish Full On-Site Incident Command
  
- **Objective 3:** Assess the ability of responders to establish and maintain multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional communications in response to an incident utilizing common language (i.e. plain English).
  - **Onsite Incident Command:** Activity 2: Establish Full On-Site Incident Command

- **Objective 4:** Exercise the coordination and integration of local and federal response resources by the local Incident Command System.
  - **Onsite Incident Command:** Activity 3: Resource Management
  
- **Objective 5:** Assess the ability of local law enforcement in conjunction with federal agencies to recognize indicators and warnings of potential terrorist-related activity.
  - **Law Enforcement Investigation:** Activity 1: Conduct Investigations of Criminal Activity
  
- **Objective 6:** Evaluate the ability of local law enforcement to identify and maintain liaisons with appropriate lead Federal terrorism investigation entities.
  - **Law Enforcement Investigation:** Activity 2: Share Information to Aid in Investigations
  
- **Objective 7:** Evaluate the efficient activation of the Homeland Security Regional Response System (HSRRS) for an incident involving a potential hazard/agent.
  - **Law Enforcement Investigation:** Activity 3: Conduct Search, Seizure, and Other Intervention/Interdiction Operations
  
- **Objective 8:** Evaluate capability of local law enforcement in conjunction with federal agencies to conduct hostage negotiations.
  - **Law Enforcement Investigation:** Activity 3: Conduct Search, Seizure, and Other Intervention/Interdiction Operations
  
- **Objective 9:** Assess the capability of responding EMS units to be integrated into the Incident Command System.
  - **Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment:** Activity 1: Direct Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment Tactical Operations
  
- **Objective 10:** Evaluate the establishment of a triage, treatment, and transport area at a safe, secure, and easily accessible location.
  - **Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment:** Activity 2: Activate Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment
  
- **Objective 11:** Assess the capability of responders to conduct initial and on-going pre-hospital triage.
  - **Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment:** Activity 3: Triage
  
- **Objective 12:** Evaluate the use of the EMTrack patient tracking system by the responding EMS units for providing current status of victims.



- **Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment:** Activity 3: Triage

## **Scenario Summary**

- An airplane flying eastbound at 12:45 hours goes off communications tracking. Fifteen minutes later Springfield-Branson National airport receives radio traffic from the aircraft.
- Tower is notified that the aircraft intends to land and refuel.
- It is determined through communications with the aircraft and FAA that the flight has been hijacked.
- Plane lands and hijacker requests fuel and threatens to utilize explosive to blow the plane up if demands are not met.
- Hostage negotiations are continued by FAA and FBI until plane touches down on tarmac.
- Plane is directed to ramp for negotiations and a unified command is established with FBI and local law enforcement.
- Negotiations continue until there is an explosion on the aircraft.
- Law enforcement is sent in and the scene is cleared (this was simulated; no tactical SWAT element was present).
- First responders triage victims
- EMS initiates patient tracking and transports to a “mock” hospital

## SECTION 3: ANALYSIS OF CAPABILITIES

This section of the report reviews the performance of the exercised capabilities, activities, and tasks. In this section, observations are organized by capability and associated activities. The capabilities linked to the exercise objectives of “Trouble on the Tarmac” are listed below, followed by corresponding activities. Each activity is followed by related observations, which include references, analysis, and recommendations.

### Capability 1: On-site Incident Management

**Capability Summary:** Onsite incident management is the capability to effectively direct and control incident management activities by using the Incident Command System (ICS) consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). This capability was tested by the responder’s ability to organize and conduct operations under a unified command structure that would expand based on the need.

#### Activity 1.1: Implement On-Site Incident Management

##### Observation 1.1: Strength – Establishment of ICS

**References:** Springfield-Greene County Emergency Operations Plan, Vol.A, ESF-12

- “The senior qualified emergency response official responding to an emergency shall assume Incident Command. All emergency response activities shall be coordinated and controlled in accordance with the Incident Command System.”

**Analysis:** Within 9 minutes of the first arriving units, an Incident Command Structure was implemented and established. The first and most qualified law enforcement individual to arrive on scene immediately began establishing command.

**Recommendations:** N/A

#### Activity 1.2: Establish Full On-Site Incident Command

**Observation 2.1: Area of Improvement** – Establishment of an inclusive Unified Command.

**References:** Springfield-Greene County Emergency Operations Plan, Vol.A, ESF-11

- “In a terrorism incident, the first responding agency will establish an Incident Command Post to manage operations at that incident site.”

**Analysis:** Communication between the different groups on scene did not occur.

Command had been established by law enforcement with a command post, but was not communicated to the fire component. Law enforcement were the only responders who were directly notified of the incident. There was not any indication of an established unified command between law, fire, airport management and EMS. Identification and location of command post and command and general staff sections needs to be clarified as soon as possible upon implementing a Unified Command.

**Recommendations:**

1. The recommended corrective action to be taken for this observation will be to amend the Emergency Communications Center (E911) call-out procedures to reflect lessons learned within the next 12 months.

**Observation 2.2: Area of Improvement – Common Terminology**

**References:** Springfield-Branson National Airport Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

**Analysis:** The fire commander for the airport has a call sign of “OPS 1”, and often referred to himself as “OPS 1” instead of Command. Airport fire established command but did not name it – “OPS 1 has command”. Utilizing “OPS 1” as a call sign can be confusing to other responding agencies who may be accustomed to “OPS 1” or “Operations” being utilized for the Operations Section Chief position.

**Recommendations:**

1. The recommended corrective action to be taken for this observation will be to Amend the Springfield-Greene County EOP to state that “common terminology” consistent with NIMS when responding to an incident at the Springfield Branson National Airport..
2. Provide minimum of four Incident Command System (ICS) courses in Greene County open to all first responders within the next 12 months.

**Activity 1.3: Resource Management**

**Observation 2.1: Strength – Local/Federal Integration**

**References:** Springfield-Greene County Emergency Operations Plan, Vol.A, ESF-12

- “The senior qualified emergency response official responding to an emergency shall assume Incident Command. All emergency response activities shall be coordinated and controlled in accordance with the Incident Command System.”

**Analysis:** At the Law Enforcement Command post, officers from the Springfield Police Department, Airport Police, and the FBI coordinated and integrated seamlessly together in their response.

**Recommendations:** N/A

## **Capability 2: Law Enforcement Investigation**

**Capability Summary:** Law Enforcement Investigation is the capability to effectively ensure that Law Enforcement response and information sharing capabilities are conducted seamlessly throughout an incident.

### **Activity 1.1: Conduct Investigation of Criminal Activity**

#### **Observation 1.1: Strength – Conduct Investigation**

**References:** Springfield-Greene County Emergency Operations Plan, Vol.A, ESF-9

- “Initial control at the scene will be established by the first law enforcement officer on the scene, as directed by the Incident Command System. He/She will maintain contact with and provide information to the prescribed communications center and will do so until relieved of duty.”

**Analysis:** Within 9 minutes of the first arriving units, an Incident Command Structure was implemented and established and information gathering had begun. Information was gathered, analyzed and presented to other law enforcement personnel.

**Recommendations:** N/A

### **Activity 1.2: Share Information to Aid in Investigations**

#### **Observation 1.1: Strength – Information Sharing**

**References:** Springfield-Greene County Emergency Operations Plan, Vol.A, ESF-9

- “Law Enforcement will maintain contact with and provide information to the prescribed communications center or essential partnering agencies throughout investigation.”

**Analysis:** At the Law Enforcement Command post, officers from the Springfield Police Department, Airport Police, and the FBI coordinated and integrated seamlessly together in their response.

**Recommendations:** N/A

### **Activity 1.3: Conduct Search, Seizure, and Other Intervention Activities**

### **Observation 1.1: Area of Improvement – HSRRS Notification**

**References:** Springfield-Greene County Emergency Operations Plan, Vol.A, ESF-11

- “Homeland Security Regional Response System (HSRRS) - Greene County HSRRS administered by Springfield-Greene County OEM includes hazardous materials response teams with enhanced capabilities for responding to WMD incidents, including incidents involving nuclear or radiological materials, biological agents or chemical agents and for terrorist response operations, the unified command system will be utilized for direction and control.”

**Analysis:** Upon receiving information that there was a potential bomb or WMD aboard the plane the Incident Command did not notify the HSRRS or put them on standby for a potential activation. The procedures for activating this team were not clear to the incident command and there was not a clear understanding of the resources that this team could provide.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. The recommended corrective action to be taken for this observation will be to provide training about HSRRS activation to all law enforcement and fire protection department heads within Greene County within 12 months.

### **Capability 3: Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment**

**Capability Summary:** Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment is the capability to appropriately dispatch emergency medical services (EMS) resources; to provide feasible, suitable, and medically acceptable pre-hospital triage and treatment of patients; to provide transport as well as medical care en-route to an appropriate receiving facility; and to track patients to a treatment facility.

#### **Activity 1.1: Activate Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment**

##### **Observation 1.1: Strength – Initial arrival and operations**

**References:** Springfield-Greene County Emergency Operations Plan, Vol.A, ESF-13

- “The first emergency medical unit to arrive will set up triage at the disaster site.”

**Analysis:** Two separate ambulance services (Cox Health and St John’s Hospital of Springfield) arrived in an initial response mode. When EMS was released from staging, they reported immediately to IC for assignment of duties. Supervisors for both ambulance systems were working together in reporting to an EMS representative at the southeast command post.

**Recommendations:** N/A

## **Activity 1.2: Triage**

### **Observation 1.1: Strength – Triage**

**References:** Springfield-Greene County Emergency Operations Plan, Vol.A, ESF-13

- “The first emergency medical unit to arrive will set up triage at the disaster site.”

**Analysis:** EMS supervisors were clearly identifiable. They appeared to be organized when performing triage and transport. Personnel worked together to establish triage and tracking system for accountability of patients. Transport to the “mock” hospital was completed.

**Recommendations:** N/A

### **Observation 1.2: Strength – Tracking**

- **References:** N/A

**Analysis:** EMS units utilized new EMTrack Patient Tracking systems and were able for the first time to test the system locally in a full-scale exercise. The exercise verified that the EMTrack system can be a vital part of a mass casualty incident and can be integrated into a response.

**Recommendations:** N/A

## **SECTION 4: CONCLUSION**

The Springfield-Branson National Airport in conjunction with local, state, and federal responders conducted a full-scale exercise based on a hijacking scenario. This exercise was intended to evaluate the specific local response capabilities of on-site incident management, law enforcement investigations, and triage/pre-hospital treatment.

Many strengths were recognized in the areas of communications and information sharing, triage coordination, patient tracking, and negotiations. There were also many areas of improvement that were revealed. Some of these areas involve the establishment of an integrated unified command, communication between responding agencies, and changes to current Emergency Operations Plans. Although it is never desirable for an event such as the one in this scenario to occur, “Trouble on the Tarmac” afforded the first responders of Greene County the opportunity to test their training and the plans that are in place in order to ensure that they are ready if it does.

## APPENDIX A: IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This Improvement Plan (IP) has been developed specifically for Springfield-Greene County as a result of “Trouble on the Tarmac” conducted on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009. These recommendations draw on both the After Action Report and the After Action Conference.

Table A.1 *Improvement Plan Matrix*

Capability	Observation Title	Recommendation	Corrective Action Description	Capability Element	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Start Date	Completion Date
<b>1: On-site Incident Management</b>	1. Area of Improvement - There was not any indication of an established unified command between law, fire, airport management and EMS.	1.1 Amend the Emergency Communications Center (E911) call-out procedures to state that a representative from fire, law enforcement, airport management, and EMS will automatically be dispatched directly to the incident command post during a hijacking incident.	1.1.1 Amend the Emergency Communications Center (E911) call-out procedures to reflect lessons learned within the next 12 months.	Planning	Springfield-Greene County Emergency Communications Center	Director	October 26, 2009	October 26, 2010
	2. Area of Improvement - “Common terminology” was not utilized by all responders resulting in confusion over command.	2.1 Amend the Springfield-Greene County EOP to state that “common terminology” consistent with NIMS when responding to an incident at the Springfield Branson National Airport.	2.1.1 Amend the Springfield-Greene County EOP to reflect lessons learned within the next 12 months.	Planning	Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management	Director	October 26, 2009	October 26, 2010
		2.2 Train responders within the Springfield-Greene County to utilize common terminology in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) when responding to an incident.	2.2.1 Provide minimum of four Incident Command System (ICS) courses in Greene County open to all first responders within the next 12	Training	Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management	Training/Exercise Specialist	October 26, 2009	October 26, 2010



Capability	Observation Title	Recommendation	Corrective Action Description	Capability Element	Primary Responsible Agency	Agency POC	Start Date	Completion Date
<b>2: Law Enforcement Investigations</b>	1. Area of Improvement - The Greene County HSRRS Team was not notified or put on standby for a potential WMD threat.	1.1 Provide training to insure that responders are familiar with the HSRRS, its activation procedures, and capabilities.	1.1.1 Provide training about HSRRS activation to all law enforcement and fire protection district department heads within Greene County within 12 months	Training	Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management	Training/Exercise Specialist	October 26, 2009	October 26, 2010

