

## A WebEOC<sup>®</sup> case study from ESI<sup>®</sup>

# WebEOC in Action: Exercise Orion in the United Kingdom

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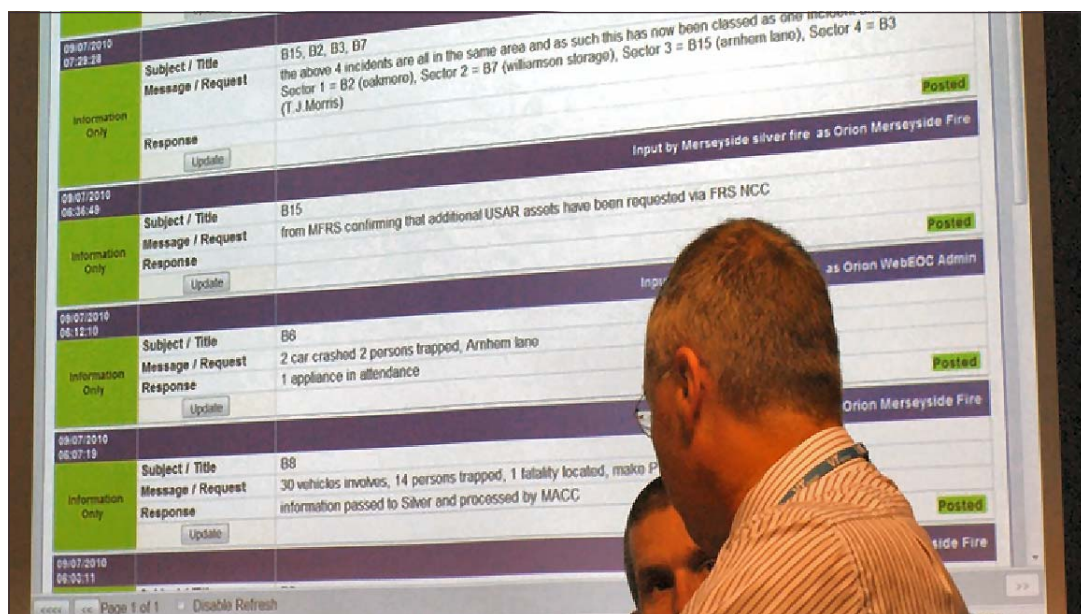
**E**xercise Orion was the U.K.'s first European Union civil protection live exercise, which looked at how the U.K. and Europe would respond to a mid-sized earthquake striking the U.K.

Held for 56 hours, September 7-9, 2010, the exercise was designed to overwhelm the U.K.'s ability to respond and therefore to activate the European Civil Protection Mechanism and request assistance from agencies throughout Europe.

within the U.K. to manage the response resources and assets required to respond to local and national incidents. Hanover was chosen to assist in expanding the role of WebEOC.

Information from the two live exercise sites in Hampshire and Merseyside, England was fed via WebEOC through Exercise Control to the simulated exercise command level.

This required reconfiguring the National Resilience Assurance Team system used



Hanover Associates (U.K.) Ltd.<sup>®</sup>, the ESI Business referrer for the U.K., were brought in to assist the U.K. National Resilience Assurance Team (NRAT) with their WebEOC operations during the exercise and also by the Exercise Orion project team to manage the exercise injects through WebEOC.

WebEOC is used by the Communities and Local Government Emergency Room and the National Resilience Assurance Team

before the Exercise and training personnel. The training that the Hanover administrators received at the WebEOC user conference in Augusta, Georgia, USA in 2010 proved invaluable for making the necessary changes to the system.

The exercise ran at Fort Widley in Hampshire and during that time more than 2,000 crew and support staff simulated the devastation and chaos resulting from a major earthquake striking the U.K.

In addition a second 'live' site was used in Merseyside and data from both sites was used in WebEOC to run tabletop exercises in Lincolnshire and Hertfordshire.

Orion was a true multi agency international exercise and involved teams from across the U.K. and Europe, including Denmark, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, plus the United Arab Emirates. It was designed to test incoming international aid and look at how international teams would work together to overcome obvious barriers such as language and different working practices.

Overseeing the exercise were assessors from the USA and at least one representative from nearly every European Union member state. The evaluators also used WebEOC as a reporting tool on a daily basis.

On Thursday September 9th, there was a VIP conference attended by 26 different countries and the U.K. Fire and Rescue Services.

The WebEOC simulator was used to demonstrate to the delegates how WebEOC had collated and shared information from the many different teams, agencies, sources, and locations to give a clear picture of events.

(CLG-ER), a simulated Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR) and the live-playing Fire and Rescue Service National Co-ordination Center (FRSNCC) in West Yorkshire.

The live field exercises at Hampshire and Merseyside directly fed their SCGs, which largely worked to their own injects and at their own pace, whereas for Hertfordshire and Lincolnshire it was critical that they received localized information from both live exercises and received managed injects from Exercise Control (ExCon).

With the field exercise locations leveraging into a notional 49 simultaneous events, we in ExCon were concerned about how we would be able to maintain an overview of what was happening in each of those live locations and manage the flow of this information into Hertfordshire and Lincolnshire.

We also needed to be able to challenge all four of the local SCGs through injects during the Exercise. We worked together with Hanover Associates to reconfigure the current WebEOC system which is used by the NRAT team in the U.K.



### **After-action Report from Kevin Arbutnot, AFSM Director, Exercise Orion Gold Command Course**

"As Command Post lead for Exercise Orion I was responsible for co-coordinating the injects into, and exercise 'battle rhythm' of four Gold level Strategic Coordination Groups (SCGs) which were operating in four counties: Hertfordshire, Hampshire, Merseyside and Lincolnshire; as well as managing the flow of information and injects upwards to and from the government level Communities and Local Government's Emergency Room

As a result, during the exercise we were able to view information from the live sites and decisions that had been made at Gold and Silver levels both from the relevant Fire & Rescue Services and from other agencies such as the police, ambulance, and local authorities.

I was impressed by the flexibility of WebEOC and by its simplicity. It was easy and intuitive to use and it made my role as Command Post lead much more manageable by supporting strong situational awareness throughout the Exercise."