Arizona Department of Emergency & Military Affairs & FEMA RIX

Radiological Recovery Workshop

June 3-4, 2015
After Action Report (AAR)

INCIDENT SUMMARY

On June 3-4, 2015 the Arizona Department of Emergency & Military Affairs and FEMA RIX prepared and conducted a Workshop for the purpose of exercising and exploring the recovery decisions and policies that need to be in place and/or implemented after a radiological release from the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station (PVNGS) located west of the City of Phoenix. This was the first radiological recovery only workshop conducted by FEMA RIX and the State.

One of the primary goals of the workshop was to discuss sensitive issues and concerns among all levels of governmental agencies, Tribal Governments, NGOs; and in particular, private industry (American Nuclear Insurers - ANI) in a risk-free environment to identify practical solutions and alternatives to questions not generally discussed or covered during evaluated radiological exercises under FEMA's Radiological Assessment Program (REP). . The workshop had over 90 players participating at the venue and via Adobe Connect representing over a dozen federal agencies which included many USDA Agency participants from DOI, RD, FSIS, FNS, NRCS, FSA, APHIS (PPQ, VS, AC, and WS) including members from the Advisory Team. The Exercise Planning Team identified three (3) Recovery Core Capabilities and three (3) related Objectives (listed below).

The scenario and the initial plume deposited radiological materials out to 50 miles from PVNGS and included long-term evacuation/sheltering of humans (~20,000) and animals (specifically agricultural industry of both 1,000 of acreage of crops and thousands of head of livestock and ~ 4 million commercial poultry), embargoes to agriculture, public health messaging, and in particular repatriation of the communities affected once determined safe. The challenge was to focus solely on recovery efforts.

The workshop was organized into three (3) Work Groups based on the Core Capabilities and each was facilitated separately with reconvening briefings conducted after each of three (3) Modules. Each Module {**Module 1 - 8 weeks**, **Module 2 – One and Five Years**), and **Module 3 (10 and 40 years**)} was categorized into specific timeframes to focus the conversations of proposed actions and solutions.

RECOVERY CORE CAPABILITIES (Economic Recovery, Housing/Social Services, & Housing)

1. Economic Recovery – Return economic and business activities (including food and agriculture) to a healthy state and develop new business and employment opportunities that result in a sustainable and economically viable community.
2. Health and Social Services – Restore and improve health and social services networks to promote the resilience, independence, health (including behavioral health) and well-being of the whole community
3. Housing – Implement housing solutions that effectively support the needs of the whole community and contribute to its sustainability and resilience.

OBJECTIVES – (As they relate to each of the above Core Capabilities)

1. Increase awareness of the roles and responsibilities of State, Federal, and local agencies and the private sector in long-term recovery activities following a significant release of radioactive materials from the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station (PVNGS).
2. Identify governmental and private sector long-term recovery priorities, issues, and actions. Develop a recovery organization consistent with the National and Arizona Disaster Recovery Frameworks as applicable to the consequences of a significant release of radioactive materials from PVNGS.
3. Focus on the following areas to enhance Arizona's capabilities in effectively developing policy and plans to support long-term recovery, and integrate public information and the policy group within each Core Capability.

A hot-wash briefing with all the participants was conducted immediately after the exercise with the following key issues observed as successful and recommendations for future exercises. An accompanying Improvement Plan to this AAR was prepared by the Exercise Planning Team/ Evaluators specifically for ESF11 identified suggested recommendations, which agency/person is responsible to provide the recommendations and when the recommendations are expected to be completed.

LESSONS LEARNED

Successful:

(1) The use of Adobe Connect provided many players not located within the State of AZ or unable to attend in person a viable solution to experience real-time discussions and decisions.
(2) The first time participation from ANI provided real clarity on just what would recovery effort actions would be covered by the "utility" (PVNGS).
(3) The ability of the players to consider actions not generally discussed or addressed during a FEMA evaluated REP exercise provided tangible solutions and new questions.
(4) Participation and support from a variety of USDA agencies and partners provided a unique experience to meet agencies many would have minimal reason to engage with.
(5) State and industry participation and resources were key to the success of the workshop.
(6) The consideration of not redeveloping the impacted area and looking to relocate due to public perception and past assumptions.

Challenges/Areas for Improvement:

(1) Maintaining player discussions and solutions strictly to "recovery" efforts and not injecting "response" actions
(2) Consideration for future workshops and exercises of this magnitude of participation and topics discussed need a minimum of 10-12 months to prepare.
(3) Inclusion of State Department of Education as many discussions covered impacts to schools and whether communities would be redeveloped.
(4) Discussion of actual resources needed to transport and relocate 10,000+ head of livestock including decontamination along the transportation route and the depopulation, decontamination, and disposal of impacted livestock and poultry as needed. Also, the actions needed to dispose of contaminated agricultural crops.
(5) Development of pre-scripted public messages for agriculture and food resources from the existing safety of milk and retail foods on the shelf to the ongoing safety of fresh foods, meat products, crop conditions and restrictions.