Municipalities
Newfoundland and Labrador

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Municipal Emergency Plans

Do you exercise your plan & include community stakeholders

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Outline

- Emergency plans and why exercise
- Overview of Exercise Vigilance 2015 (Ex V15)
- The planning process
- Bringing realism to the exercise
- Results of using Multi Agency Situational Awareness System (MASAS)
- Exercise feedback
- Questions

Emergency Plans and Why Exercise

- An emergency plan is a work of fiction until it is exercised
- An exercise not only validates your plan but also identifies gaps to allow for development of best practices
- More importantly:
  - Opportunity for members of you EOC to work as a team
  - Opportunity for community partners to meet your team and become engaged in the EOC process
- Exercising does not mean all out, full on the ground, the sky is falling scenario!

Exercise Vigilance 2015 (EX V15)

- October 16-22nd, 2015
- Over 25 government, NGO and private industry participants

Objectives

- Test the use of MASAS during a large scale emergency for improved situational awareness. Improving situational awareness was a recommendation from a previous EM exercise, Shipping Blues.
- EOC activation and communication between partner agencies including all levels of government, NGOs and industry.
- Activate participants emergency management plans and identify strengths and improvements

The Scenario

- Warm start
  - Daily weather packages on Tropical Storm David began Oct. 16th and continued until exercise day
  - Information on cruise ship Karnival Queen began Oct 20th
- Port of St. John's is closed
- Roads/bridges washed out across the Avalon Peninsula
- Infrastructure damage to downtown St. John's buildings (2nd stage)
- Mass power outages on the Avalon Peninsula (200,000+ customers)
- THINK A MORE WINDY IGOR



The Planning Process - Team





Royal Canadian Mounted Police



ST. JOHN'S

Environment Canada | Environnement Canada

Public Safety Canada | Sécurité publique Canada

The Planning Process – Critical Dates

- July 3, 2014 – Information session with partners
- Initial Planning Meetings; December 2014 & February 2015
  - Confirmed what everyone needed to get out of the exercise
- Main Planning Meeting: May 7, 2015
  - Organizations provided injects and planning team began to build a Master Events List
- Final Planning Meeting: September 24, 2015
  - Final confirmation of the Master Events List
- October 16, 2015 Warm Start to exercise
- October 22, 2015 8:00AM: Exercise Day

Bringing Realism to a Exercise: Injects

- Injects are simulated actions/occurrences from controllers
- Injects can be any format; e-mails, phone calls, radio traffic, social media and media
- Development of injects for Ex V15 required a lot of coordination, it was the most time consuming and for new players this was challenging and time consuming
- Total number of injects for was 51 that spanned 6 days with 36 injects being delivered on exercise day
- Most of time was spent ensuring the 51 injects happen in the proper sequence and contained proper information (Main Event Log)

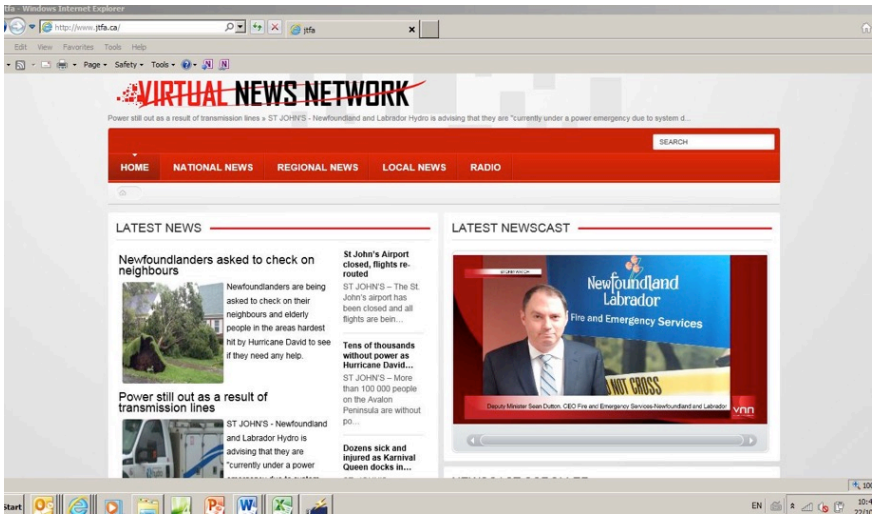
Developing Injects

- Without injects, an exercise does not happen
- They appear complicated, but are simple
  - What is the action and how is it to be delivered?
  - Who is the recipient; do you call/e-mail or otherwise notify the player?
- The inject(s) must meet the need of the exercise, ask yourself are we achieving a objective with this inject (not to say you don't add filler)
- 12-15 injects is sufficient for a single organization completing a 3-4 hour exercise.

Inject Samples

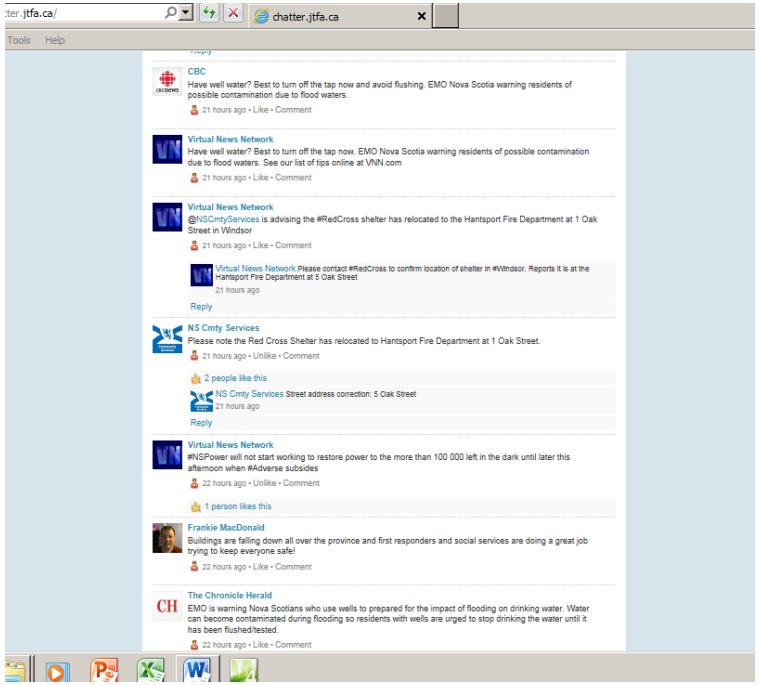
Time	From	To	Method	Description	Expected Action	Comments
8:15 AM	EC	All	E-mail/MASAS	Update info on David	Players continue monitoring storm	Post on VNN
8:30 AM	Ex Control	All	Chatter/call to 311	Flooding of Waterford River	CSJ to investigate and issue road closures	
8:40 AM	FES-NL	All	E-mail	Request for Teleconfer	Players dial into call at 10 AM	
8:40 AM	Ex Control	City of MtP	Phone	Flooding of bridge	MTP to investigate	

Bringing Realism to the Exercise: Traditional media Virtual News Network



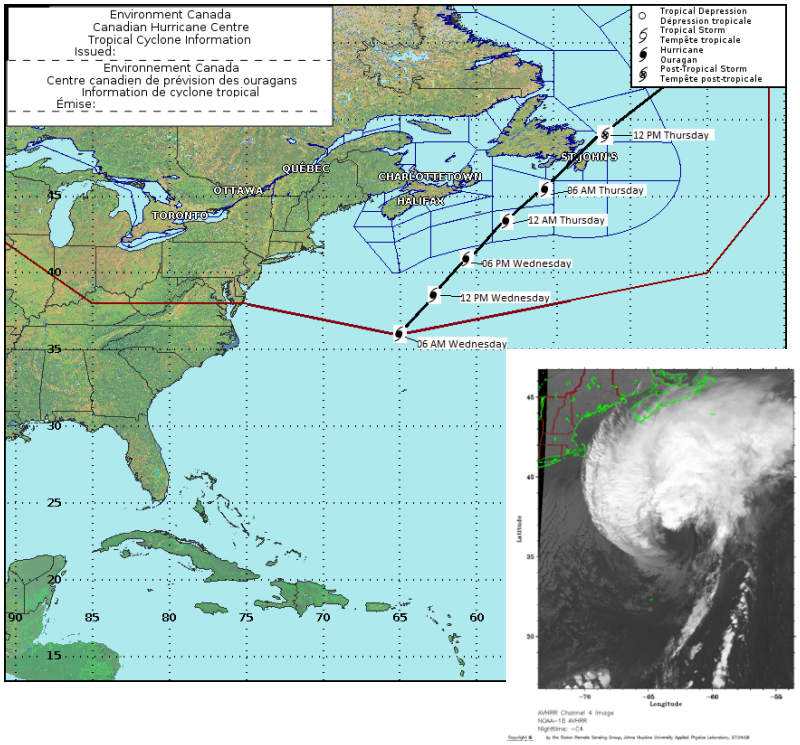
- Dealing with media during a real emergency is a reality.
- It is an important consideration for your local emergency planning.
- DND, through Joint Task Force Atlantic (JTFA), has developed a virtual news network to simulate traditional media during an exercise.
  - Interviews
  - Video
  - New feed
  - Actual news from the area

Bringing Realism to the Exercise: Social Media Chatter



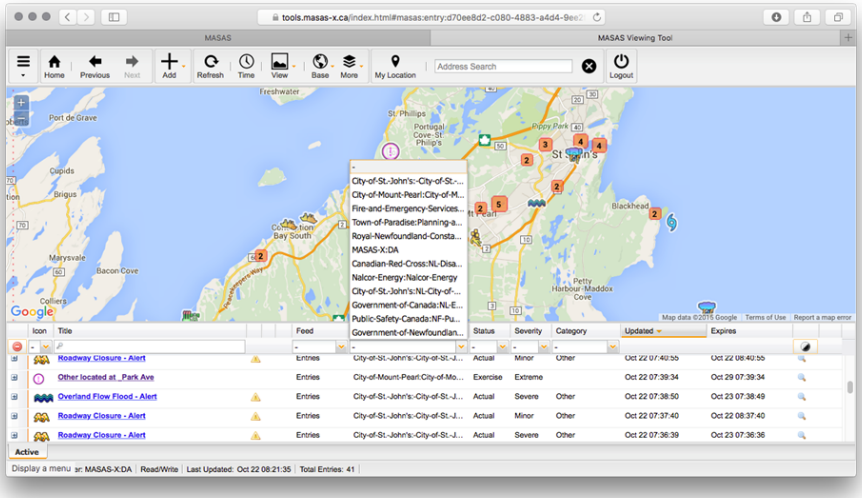
- Social media has fundamentally changed the manner of information exchange.
- Most people in this room use, or live with someone who uses, social media through FaceBook.
- Twitter (www.twitter.com) is another means of connecting people and sharing information through social media.
- JTFA has developed it own version of Twitter called Chatter.
- Chatter was a fantastic means of bringing the impacts of hurricane David to life.

Bringing Realism to the Exercise: Weather Packages



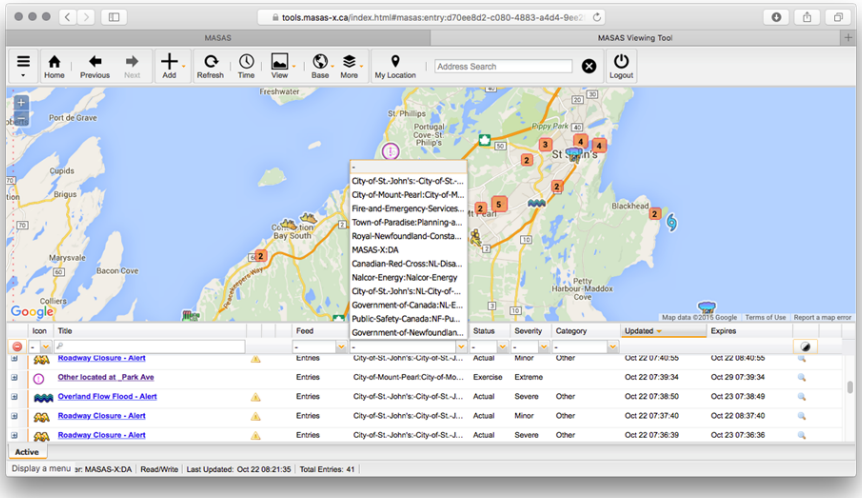
- Hurricane Igor & tropical storm Chantal physically changed eastern Newfoundland and had an emotional impact on the affected population.
- The scenario of a land falling tropical cyclone is relatively easy to imagine and hold people's attention.
- Weather information packages were developed to mimic what would produced if an actual hurricane was approaching NL.
- The weather injects/packages started on Friday, October 16th and continued on Monday to Thursday.
- Each package contained more information and a higher degree of certainty than the previous package.

Bringing Realism to the Exercise: Increasing situational awareness.



- Exercise Shipping Blues 2014 highlighted the need for improved situational awareness.
- MASAS, a free, web-based situational awareness tool, was employed.
  - Membership is controlled.
  - Membership limited to those involved in emergency management and response.
  - Tool not limited to emergency use.
    - Has 3 modes
    - Training, exercise and operational
  - Not intended for media use.

Bringing Realism to the Exercise:
MASAS (Multi-Agency Situational Awareness System)



MASAS has been supported by the Canadian Safety and Security Program (CSSP), which is lead by Defence Research and Development Canada's Centre for Security Science (DRDC CSS), in partnership with Public Safety Canada.

DRDC CSS owns and maintains the MASAS, and has contracted CanOps to provide governance administration, business operations, communications and outreach, and user technical help.

Canadian Public Safety Operations Organization (CanOps)

- Canadian not-for-profit corporation
  - Established in 2014 at the request of the Council of Canadian Fire Marshals and Fire Commissioners (CCFMFC)
- Governed by senior public safety officials
  - Governing "Members" manage the bylaws, select Directors, and determine the product/service scope
- Operational support mandate
  - Focus is on national products, services and programs
  - Support can be as little as hosting a webpage for a national working group, to owning and governing a national system

Bringing Realism to the Exercise: Exercise Control/SIM Cell

- Exercise Control ensures coordination and delivery of injects on exercise day
- Staffed by the planning team, subject matter experts and helpers
- Responsible for the rhythm of the exercise and will make adjustments as required.

Inject #	Date	Time	From	To
EC 1	October 16th	11:00 AM	EC/WPM	All players
Inject method		Contact information		Action by
Email weather package		Dale Foote, 709-256-6631/571-0976		All players
Detailed information				
FOR EXERCISE *** FOR EXERCISE ***** FOR EXERCISE** **Who**: EC Weather Preparedness Meteorologist – Dale Foote **What**: EC weather package on approaching tropical storm in PDF format. Filename: "EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE Hurricane Dave Friday #1 EC-FES weather package.pdf" **When**: Later next week, too much uncertainty for more detail. **Where**: Anywhere in NL or surrounding waters. **Details**: Weather package to contain initial introduction of Tropical Storm Dave to the exercise participants. Information to include: • Initial track guidance **FOR EXERCISE ***** FOR EXERCISE ***** FOR EXERCISE**				
Instructions				
All players should read and consider the weather information provided.				
Expected action by Blue Player				
Stay alert for upcoming weather packages, messages and alerts in the coming day.				

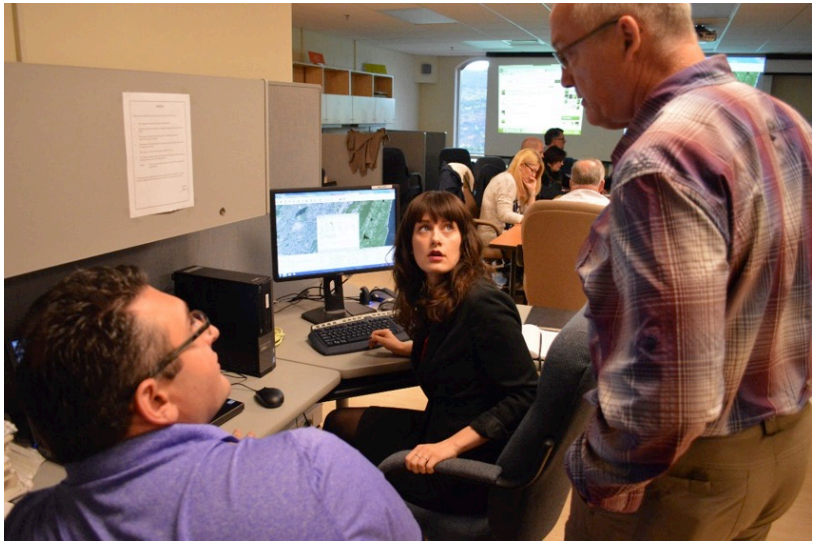
Bringing Realism to the Exercise: Exercise Control/SIM Cell



- Provides a realistic problem that has to be dealt with by the EOC
- Can be overwhelming at times
- Goal is to paint a picture of what is happening outside

Bringing Realism to the Exercise:

- Injects can affect more then one organization/agency. Ripple affect.
- In Ex V15, it was important to monitor MASAS
- Many EOCs received calls from other participants looking for clarification on information or looking for tactical support



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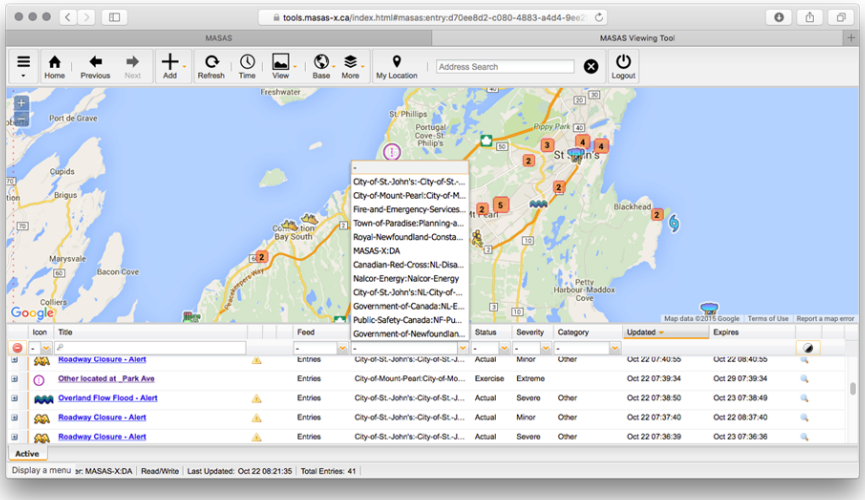

Did it Work?

***Observation*:** The MASAS platform was utilized by all participants and provided an accessible and user friendly environment for sharing information that captured common situational awareness.

***Recommendation*:** Encourage continued usage of MASAS to maintain familiarity and monitor situational awareness.

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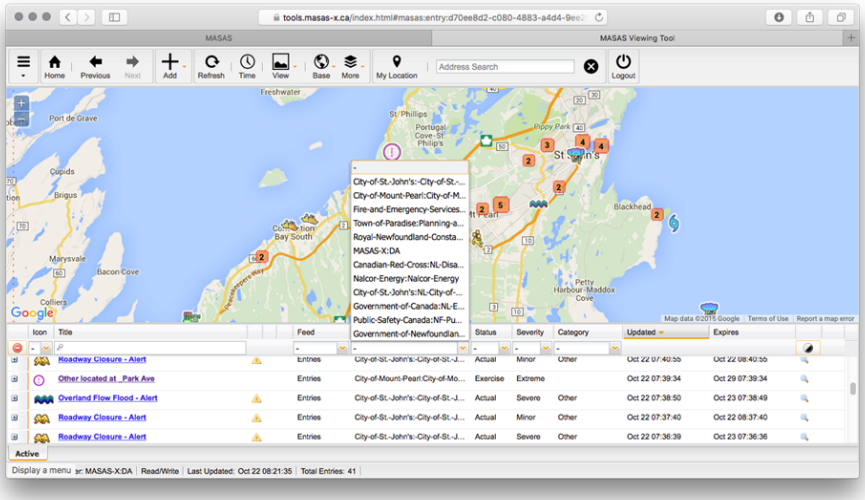

Thoughts on MASAS:

- Sometimes it is easy to forget that not everyone knows what you know.
- Information through social media can be easily replaced with new information.
- MASAS is excellent method of collating and organizing information from different sources and ensuring everyone can be on the same page.
- MASAS should not be intimidating. It is just a web based display system where users control & update their own information.
- Can be followed by agencies not immediately engaged in the event. This allows them to be aware of situation and be anticipate future needs.
    - i.e., GOC and hurricane Igor
- However:
    - It is easy to fall back into old habits like relying on phone calls and your own memory.
    - There is overhead associated with keeping the system up-to-date.
    - In your EOC someone needs to be given the responsibility of updated and monitoring.

Exercise Feedback

- The ‘warm start’ was well received and helped to get participant on the same page.
- The weather injects, in the form of weather information packages, helped to bring a sense of realism to scenario.
  - After the EX V15, NL Hydro added detailed weather packages to their annual EM exercise.
- The networking opportunities that the planning meetings presented was invaluable.
- For new participants, it was a opportunity to get comfortable with the planning and exercising process.

Questions

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