



Family Assistance

The Big Picture

March 16, 2015

The Nature of Mass Casualty Incidents

Mt. Washington, NH Cog Railway Accident, Sep 1967



8 PERSONS KILLED IN N.H. COG RAILWAY CRASH.

74 OTHERS ARE HURT WHEN TRAIN PLUNGES INTO
GORGE; GOV. KING ORDERS IMMEDIATE
INVESTIGATION OF DISASTER

Definition:

A Mass Casualty Incident

exceeds the number of...

Fatalities,

Injured, or

Missing persons

**That can be managed effectively
by local resources.**

Incidents Vary in Scale

- **Defined Perimeter**
(e.g. terrorist attack or transportation accident)
 - Likely to be treated as a crime scene
 - Fatalities likely to be located in contained area
- **Broad**
(e.g. earthquake, floods, etc.)
 - Fatalities may be dispersed -- multiple locations
 - Areas may be inaccessible, transportation limited
 - Facilities may be lost or severely damaged
- **Prolonged**
(i.e. pandemic flu)
 - Large numbers of fatalities for consecutive weeks
 - Medical Examiner *may* have a role in managing deaths
 - Fatalities will be dispersed throughout multiple locations

Some Risks in New Hampshire

- **Nuclear Power Plants**
- **Seaport**
- **Airports**
- **NH Motor Speedway**
- **International Border**
- **Proximity to Boston**
- **Natural Disasters and Pandemic**

Moose Mountain, NH Air Crash, Oct 1968



- Plane Crashes on Moose Mountain
- 42 Persons Aboard, Nine Area Persons Are Among 32 Killed

Emotional Impacts of Plane Crash Years Later

- Janice (not verified)- 4 Sep 2010 - 11:33
- Very interesting and accurate article. I was a friend of J.G., and his family. I lived through this disaster. It was tough. I was only eighteen at the time. Now I am Sixty, but still think of J, to this very day. I have been looking for a news article with a picture of him. But have had no luck. Mabe you could help me? I would be so appreciative. It would mean so much to me, to be able to see his face again. The obit I had from 1968 has long been lost. Thank You,
- [I remember this well I grew](#)
- Virginia (not verified) - 11 Jun 2012 - 12:35
- I remember this well I grew up in Enfield and was 10 years old at the time. My parents had an Esso gas station and the V.P. listed among the dead was the daughter of our Esso sales rep who was from Montpeiler. My sister lived not far from Moose Mountain. The following summer, she, her husband and their kids hiked up there. They found quite a bit of wreckage and personal belongs scattered about.

History

All Hazards Family Assistance Center
(FAC) Planning
in NH

Transportation Accidents:

Unique Response

- **Federal Law – National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is required to investigate**
- **Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996**
 - **NTSB has certain federally mandated requirements for managing support to family members**
 - **Legislation mandates the American Red Cross to serve as the lead agency for specific incidents**

Primary Purpose of a FAC

- **Provision of regular, updated information**
- **Provision of emotional support**
- **Gather victim information**
- **Death notification process**

FAC Services

- **Family registration**
- **Briefings**
- **Victim Identification - Ante Mortem interviews**
- **Behavioral Health**
- **Medical / First Aid**
- **Child care**
- **Food**
- **Call center / Hotline**
- **Translation and interpretation**
- **Death notifications**

Start-up Times / Duration

Oklahoma bombing - 169 deaths

- Opened within three hours
- Operated for 16 days

9/11/2001 WTC attack - approximately 2,800 deaths

- Opened on 9/12/01
- Operated for 460 days

9/11/2001 Pentagon attack - 182 deaths

- Opened by 7 a.m. the next morning
- Operated for 30 days

Hurricane Katrina - Louisiana approximately 1,460 deaths and 13,197 missing persons reports

- Opened on 9/7/05
- Operated for 342 days

Key Agencies and Roles

- Department of Health and Human Services
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- Office of Chief Medical Examiner
- American Red Cross

WHO ELSE MAY BE INVOLVED

- **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)**
- **Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)**
- **Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team (DMORT)**
- **Disaster Behavioral Health Response Teams (DBHRT)**
- **Funeral Directors**
- **Law enforcement**
- **Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**
- **Public health network affiliates**
- **Victim advocates**

If Event is Suspected to be Criminal..

- **FBI and/or Attorney General's Office may take over**
 - **Investigation**
 - **Family Assistance Center activities**

STAFF ORIENTATION AND ACTIVITIES

Desirable Staff Qualifications

- A member of a recognized volunteer team or staff of a partner agency
- **Able to perform duties under stress**
- **Capable of providing Psychological First Aid**
- **Not be a member of the press**
- **No personal connection to the event**
- **Not have experienced recent traumatic event**

Staff Qualifications (cont.)

- **Physically well**
- **Willing to follow instructions**
- **Flexible**
- **Willing to take breaks and practice self-care**
- **Participate in post deployment check**

Staff Initial Briefing

- **Conducted at Staging Area**
- **Topics addressed include:**
 - **Overall situation report of the disaster and response**
 - **Chain-of-command**
 - **Orientation to community**
 - **General team assignment(s)**
 - **Self care and stress management**
 - **Re-evaluate ability to participate**
 - **Broad policies and procedures**
- **Transport to FAC** *(if necessary)*

Survivor Reactions to Anticipate

- Denial
- Shock
- Fear
- Anger
- Impatience
- Guilt
- Concentration Difficulties
- Depression
- Physical
- Spiritual
- Grief and Mourning

OPERATION OF A FAC

Concept of Operations

- **Alert / Notification**
- **Facility Operations**
- **Security and Safety**
- **Registration and
Messaging**
- **Victim Identification**
- **Information Sharing**

Desired Facility Characteristics

- **Secure**
- **Safe proximity, yet out of sight and sound of the scene and /or recovery efforts**
- **ADA compliant**
- **Private areas for emotional and spiritual support**
- **Briefing area(s)**
- **Capacity to support expanded telephone system**
- **Internet connection**
- **Facilities - bathrooms, dining area, heat, air conditioning**
- **Ample parking**

Job Action Sheets

- Report to ____
- Direct Reports (if any)
- Check In
- Job Aids Duties
- Check Out
- Demobilization

Family Registration

- **Evacuation Software used by DHHS Evacuation Response Team**
- **Mobile and expandable electronic system**
- **State-of-the-art laptops, servers and secure routers**
- **Supports Victim Identification Profile**
- **American Red Cross – Safe and Well**

COMMUNICATION



Areas of Communication

- **Separate Internal briefings for staff and family members**
- **Media briefings**
- **Rumor Control**
- **Public Inquiry Phone Line/NH211**

FAMILY DEFINES FAMILY

Family is defined as any individual that considers themselves to be a part of the victim's family, even if there is not a legal familial relationship.

This includes individuals other family members characterize as family.

This is distinguished from the legal next of kin, who may be the legally authorized individual(s) with whom the Medical Examiner / Coroner coordinates or who is authorized to make decisions regarding the decedent

Family Member Concerns:

Short term

- Where is my loved one?
- Where are their belongings?
- Who is in Charge?
- Where will I get information?
- Can I visit the accident site?
- How did this happen?
- Provision of Services
 - Where do I get.....?

Long Term

- How / where will I get information?
- What happens next?
- How can I prevent this from happening again?
- Memorial and anniversaries
- Provision of Services
 - Where do I get....?

**OFFICE OF CHIEF
MEDICAL EXAMINER**

Assistant Deputy Medical Examiners

- **Approximately 20 in state**
- **Independent contractors**
- **Paramedics, Physician Assistants, RNs**

OCME Mass Fatality Goals:

- To identify the human remains
- To establish cause of death and manner of death
- To coordinate the release of remains to the next of kin

Factors Impacting the Processing of Decedents

- **Number of fatalities**
- **Decedent population (open or closed)**
- **Availability of ante-mortem information**
- **Condition of remains and associated commingling of remains**

July 17, 1996 TWA Flight 800



VICTIM IDENTIFICATION PROFILE (VIP)

Victim Identification Profile (VIP) FORM

- 8 page form asks for identifying information
- Family sits with staff at FAC who completes form
- Separate staff does data entry
- VIP form gets matched with info from morgue
- Identification made

VIP FORM

- DNA samples may be collected at same time
- VIP software sorts and compiles a list of possible identifications for the deceased
- Follow-up to determine positive identification

Interview Structure

- **Environment**
- **Interviewer(s)**
- **Informant(s)**



Interview Structure


- **Team approach**
- **Professionals comfortable regarding sensitive issues i.e., funeral director, medical personnel, behavioral health professional, pastoral care, etc.**

Victim Identification Profile (VIP)

- Scars
- Tattoos
- Jewelry
- Clothing
- Surgeries
- Height
- Weight
- Implants
- Hair
- Dental info
- Collects DNA
from family

VIP - Page 1

Basic demographics



VIP Personal Information

Page 1 of 8

Last Name / Suffix / First / Initial / Sex / If Female/Maiden Name / Age

DOB (MM/DD/YYYY) / Race / Social Security # / Other / Birth City / State/Country / Birth Hospital

Address / Apt # / City / State / Zip

County / Country / Inside City Limits / Religious Preference

Education: level completed. Elem/Second (0-12): / College / Degree Earned:

Alias 1 (Last / First / Middle) / Alias 2 (Last / First / Middle)

Phone (H) / Phone (W) / Phone (Cell)

Marital Status Married Never Married Widowed Divorced Separated Unknown **Wedding Date** (MM/DD/YYYY)

Spouse Living Deceased Unknown
 Last / Suffix / Maiden/Birth name / First / Middle

Father Living Deceased Unknown
 Last / Suffix / First / Middle

Mother Living Deceased Unknown
 Last / Maiden/Birth name / First / Middle

Legal Next of Kin Last / First / Middle **Home** / **Work**

Address / City / State / Zip **On Site/Cell Phone**

Relationship: Wife Husband Father Mother Brother Sister Son Daughter Employer Friend Other

Permanent Contact Please place name and contact info here / Please place other here

Contact 1 Last / First / Middle / Suffix **Relationship**
 Wife Husband Father Mother Brother Sister Son Daughter Employer Friend Other

Address / City / State / Zip

Home Phone / Work Phone / Cell Phone / email

Date of Initial Contact / Type of Initial Contact

Contact 2 Last / First / Middle / Suffix **Relationship**
 Wife Husband Father Mother Brother Sister Son Daughter Employer Friend Other

Address / City / State / Zip

Home Phone / Work Phone / Cell Phone / email

Date of Initial Contact / Type of Initial Contact

Contact 3 Last / First / Middle / Suffix **Relationship**
 Wife Husband Father Mother Brother Sister Son Daughter Employer Friend Other

Address / City / State / Zip

Home Phone / Work Phone / Cell Phone / email

Date of Initial Contact / Type of Initial Contact

Airline	Victims	Remains	ID Time	DNA Cost	Comments
Alaska Air 261 (2000)	88	950	4 Months	\$255,500	3 not recovered
American 587 (2001)	265	2077	1 Month	Unknown	
American 77 & Pentagon (2001)	188	2000	3 Months	\$659,000	5 not identified; 5 unique DNA profiles (terrorists)
Comair 3272 (1997)	29	NA	1 Week	\$0	
Comair 5191 (2006)	49	49	4 Days		
Corporate Airlines 5966 (2004)	13	30	2 Weeks	\$41,000	
Egyptair 990 (1999)	217	6000	6 Months	\$856,000	54 families did not provide DNA reference samples
Executive Air (2000)	19	25	5 Days	\$0	
Korean Air 801 (1997)	225	300 bags	6 Months	\$145,000 +	
Swissair 111 (1998)	229	2500			
TWA 800 (1996)	230	1000	1 Year	\$60,000	
United 93 (2001)	44	1300	3 Months	\$334,000	4 unique DNA profiles (terrorists)
USAir 427 (1994)	132	1771	2 Months	\$3,000	
USAirways 5481 (2003)	21	43	1 Week	\$12,500	
Valujet 592 (1996)	110	4282	2.5 Months	\$0	

DEATH NOTIFICATION

Guiding Principles

- **“A good death notification doesn’t change anything. A bad notification changes everything forever”**
 - Parent of a murdered child
- **“Give the role the honor it deserves”**
 - Major Michael Moranti, NH National Guard

Points to Remember

- Early experiences with death
- “Dose it” if possible
- Expected vs. unexpected
- Opportunity for a significant role
- Make sure you know who you are talking to
- Confirm relationship
- Use the person’s name
- “Unassociated” remains-issues

SURVIVORS and FAMILIES

Funeral Traditions

Vary by:

- Country, culture and religion
- family's wishes
- Circumstances
- Begin emotional processing



Site Visits - Things to consider

- **Where and what to be visited**
- **Coordinated with agencies involved**
- **Safety**
- **Privacy**
- **Families of crew, injured, and deceased at different times**



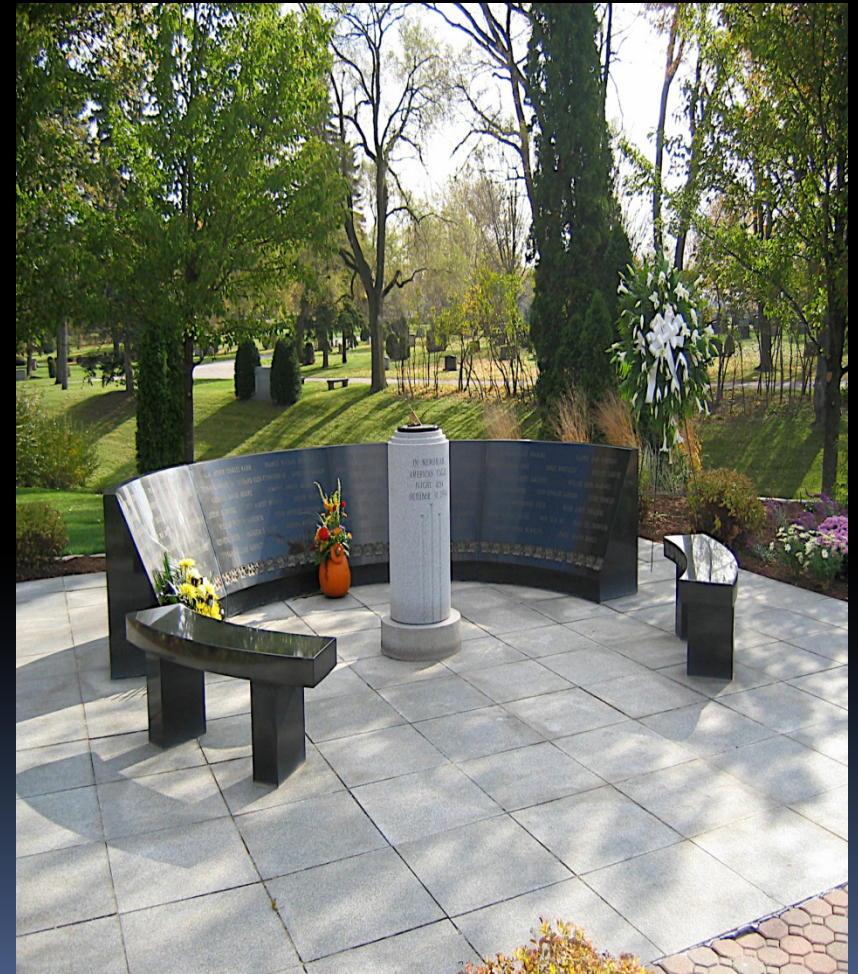


After the Incident

- **Impromptu memorials**
- **Memorial services**
- **Memorials**
- **Anniversaries**
- **Mementos**



Permanent Memorials



EMOTIONAL REACTIONS AND SUPPORT FOR WORKING IN A FAC

Mass Casualty Incidents Can Be:

Overwhelming...

- Numbers
- Sensations
- Images
- Sounds
- Public Expectations
- Challenging for workers

Exposure to Mass Casualty Survivors Can Affect FAC Workers!

- **High Stress**
- **Secondary Trauma**
- **Compassion Fatigue**
- **Difficulty transitioning home**

Reactions That May Be Unexpected

- Unprepared for their own reactions
- Front row witness to pain and suffering
- Inability of being able to “do enough”
- Guilt over privileged access to resources
- Angry and ungrateful survivors
- Detached from personal supports

Taking Care of FAC Workers

- Limit shift duration
- Rotate workers from high-medium-low stress areas
- Monitor safety, health and emotional well-being
- Promote self-help techniques
- Demobilization meetings

Managing Stress At the FAC

- Take care of yourself physically
- Take frequent rest breaks
- Drink water, eat healthy foods
- Use peer supports
- Check in with folks at home
- Attend to body, mind, spirit



Caring for Self and Peers:

- **After large or protracted deployment**
- **Rest, Information, Transition**
 - **10 minute talk on operations and stress management**
 - **20 minute rest period with food & fluids**
 - **Brief Instructions from unit leaders & release**

Post Deployment Check

- Name and role during deployment?
- What worked well? Not so well?
- How did we function as a team?
- Anything about your experience today that you want to talk about?
- How has the experience today affected you?
- How are you going to take care of yourself over the next 24/48 hours?
- Remind about self-care strategies!
- If they need to talk to someone, refer to _____

Develop Your Own Compassion Fatigue Prevention Plan

- How do you know when other people`s pain is getting to you?
- What can you control?
- What are strengths & strategies that protect you during periods of stress?
- What can others do for you? Who are 3 supportive people you can call? Speed dial?
- Stress Reduction / Stress Relaxation Methods?

Tip Sheets

Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress

- **Guidelines on notifying families of dead or missing loved ones**
- **Body recovery & stress management for leaders and supervisors**
- **Information for relief workers on emotional reactions to human bodies in mass death**
- **Media management in body recovery from mass death**
- www.usuhs.mil/centerforthestudyoftraumaticstress

Questions

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