

Stoddard Railroad Hazardous Materials Incident

Community Tabletop Exercise

**Stoddard American Legion
Vernon County
August 9th, 2016**

After-Action Report/Improvement Plan

**Published on:
August 30th, 2016**

Prepared By:

*Richland County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) with the technical assistance of
JT Heinen Global Consulting.*

*Funding assistance was provided by the U. S. Department of Transportation, Hazardous Materials Emergency
Preparedness (HMEP) Planning Sub-Grant administered by Wisconsin Emergency Management.*

**John T. Heinen, Proprietor, JT Heinen Global Consulting
(608) 604-6972 | John.T.Heinen@Gmail.com**

Executive Summary

The purpose of the tabletop exercise is to improve Community Resilience; Public Information and Warning; Critical Transportation; Environmental Response/Health and Safety; On-scene Security, Protection & Law Enforcement; Public and Private Services & Resources; Operational Communications and Operational Coordination by involving Vernon County Sheriff's Office, Stoddard EMS, Stoddard/Shelby Fire, Vernon/Crawford/Richland/Iowa Hazmat Team, Richland County Emergency Management, Vernon County Emergency Management, Area Elected Officials, Local Residents and the General Public in a simulated train derailment incident in the village of Stoddard that would impact a significant area of downtown, between Broadway and Division streets.

The Vernon County LEPC, in conjunction with the Richland County LEPC, held a Tabletop exercise involving a railroad mixed-hazmat train car derailment incident on the mainline in the village. The exercise was conducted on August 9th, 2016 at 6p.m. in the Stoddard American Legion, 414 Broadway St., Stoddard, WI. Fire, EMS, HazMat, Local Officials, Emergency Management and Area Residents all participated to discuss and test Stoddard Community Emergency Response Plans and Procedures regarding: HazMat release; Public alert & notification systems; Communications; Impact mitigation and Evacuation/shelter-in-place procedures.

A tabletop exercise is a non-stress "verbal" walk through intended to generate in-depth focused collaborative discussion among participants on how they would activate & apply their current agency emergency operations plans & procedures to a hypothetical disaster incident. A tabletop exercise is aimed at facilitating conceptual understanding, identifying emergency plan & procedure strengths/areas for improvement and multi-agency coordination of operations.

In this exercise, participants specifically assessed the following core capability activity performance:

Core Capability	Target Capability (NPG v2.0)
Community Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Preparedness and Participation
Public Information and Warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Public Information and Warning
Critical Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place
Environmental Response/Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMD and Hazardous Materials Response and Decontamination
On-scene Security, Protection & Law Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Public Safety and Security Response
Public and Private Services & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Incident Response Support
Operational Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications
Operational Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-Site Incident Management

The Scenario: It's 6:00pm on August 9th. It's a partly sunny day in the low 80's with a moderate breeze from the west-southwest at 7 to 10 mph. A 911 call was just received at Dispatch detailing a major derailment on the railroad. It was a south-bound train, traveling at a moderate speed. From the description given, there are at least 35 cars lying on their sides. The derailment of cars starts at the north end of the Co-Op (just south of Broadway St.) and continues to Division St. The cars start out being tipped over just off the tracks on the north end of the scene, and become more bunched up in a pile as the scene progresses south. Two Crude Oil cars, a Propane car and a Sulfur Dioxide car are piled on top of each other between the tracks and Pearl St. South, just south of Center St. There are numerous other box cars, hopper cars and intermodal cars all around. There's thick black smoke and an obvious fire coming from a tanker car placarded 1267. There's flame impingement on another tanker car placarded 1075. A third tanker car, which looks heavily damaged, is placarded 1079. The other 1267 car, a couple hundred feet further south, in a jumbled pile, is leaking slowly. Numerous Complications arise due to the proximity of the derailment to houses, the streets that are blocked, etc. Public Notification is made. Response is underway.

At the completion of the exercise, participants discussed the outcome of the exercise and identified numerous strengths & areas for improvement in how participant agencies could perform their emergency plans & procedures to implement the core capability activities in response to the scope of scenario challenges. These identified strengths & areas for improvement are captured in this After Action Report (AAR) and document suggested corrective actions for improvement.

Strengths:

In general, the core capability strengths identified in this exercise were:

- The citizens of Stoddard are quite educated on the hazards in their community, how to best protect themselves and how to become a response partner instead of a response concern or liability.
- The communications plan that was developed by the Stoddard Fire Department and Vernon County EM is robust and reasonably comprehensive.
- The public is now aware of what shelter-in-place means and how to receive the necessary information in the event an evacuation is ordered.
- The Village of Stoddard is fortunate to have a hazmat team member as their fire chief. It allows for a lot more operational continuity and enhanced communications interoperability.
- Calling for mutual aid and choosing mutual aid partners based on where they were coming from, in comparison to where the derailment took place, demonstrated a great deal of tactical competence.
- The public's desire to be engaged alongside the work and effort being put in by the EM Director, Fire Chief and Village President to prepare Stoddard for disasters is a major asset to the community.

Areas for Improvement:

In general, the areas for improvement identified in this exercise were:

- The number of citizens who attended the exercise was lower than expected, indicating the outreach isn't as effective yet as it should be for wide coverage of the Alert & Notification System.
- Continue to work with local service clubs, the school district and utility office to promote NIXLE as your primary notification tool.
- Consider hosting a community event where members of the hazmat team, sheriff's office and local responders conduct a hazmat rail derailment drill. This may get the public engaged and allow the local officials to achieve their goal of public preparedness.
- Continue to implement and establish MABAS in Vernon County.
- Continue to host community forums and events which allow the public to ask questions, give feedback and participate in response drills.

Comments received from the exercise participants and facilitators supported that this Railroad Hazmat Car Derailment Incident Tabletop Exercise was highly successful in assessing participant agencies' strengths & areas for improvement to operate within the simulated Multi-Class Hazardous Materials Derailment Release scenario operational challenges.

Exercise Overview

Exercise Name:

Stoddard Rail HazMat Incident Tabletop Exercise

Exercise Time/Date/Location:

The exercise was held on August 9th, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Stoddard American Legion, 414 Broadway St., Stoddard, WI.

Purpose of Exercise:

The Purpose of this Tabletop Exercise was to test and review Stoddard Community Emergency Response Plans and Procedures, to get public input and examine public safety issues, and to discuss improvements that can be made to enhance the resilience of the community – all with respect to a railroad hazmat incident. In particular:

- Review Protocols, Equipment and Plans in relation to Communications
- Implement ICS and/or a Unified Command System structure that fits the scenario in order to manage the incident safely & effectively
- Test Emergency Responder knowledge of Initial HazMat response procedures
- Review Interagency Cooperation and Mutual Aid Agreements (and/or MABAS)
- Evaluate Evacuation/Shelter-In-Place Procedures
- Test Public Communications
- Review Department SOPs, Evaluate Effectiveness, Identify Gaps
- Coordinate Internal & Outside Responder Plans with respect to ICS
- Review PIO Functions & Responsibilities

The exercise will be NIMS-compliant incorporating the use of an Incident Command structure to manage the event and the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

An exercise planning team was formed to determine the scope, agenda, target audience, and objectives of the exercise. The exercise planning team developed an exercise scenario based on the design criteria and the exercise objectives identified by the group.

EPCRA Credit: Yes, EPCRA credit is being requested.

EHS/HS Names: Crude Oil, Propane, Sulfur Dioxide

CAS #'s: 8002-05-9, 74-98-6, 7446-09-5

Core Capabilities – Exercise Objectives:

Core Capability	Exercise Objectives
Community Resilience	<p><u>Community Preparedness and Participation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate community preparedness & participation
Public Information and Warning	<p><u>Emergency Public Information and Warning:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage emergency public information and warnings • Provide notification • Issue emergency warnings • Give protective response instructions • Conduct media relations
Critical Transportation	<p><u>Citizen Evacuation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over Land • Over Water <p><u>Citizen Shelter-in-Place:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement in-place protection procedures • Proper securing of structure • Coordinate delivery of vital response personnel, equipment, and services into the impacted area
Environmental Response/Health & Safety	<p><u>WMD and Hazardous Materials Response and Decontamination:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify material(s) • Conduct hazard assessment and risk evaluation • Protection distance (Establish Hot Zone) • Secure perimeter
On-scene Security, Protection & Law Enforcement	<p><u>Emergency Public Safety and Security Response:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct public safety and security response operations • Control traffic, crowd and scene • Securing the affected area • Safely diverting the public from hazards • Provide security support to other response operations and properties

<p>Public and Private Services & Resources</p>	<p><u>Fire Incident Response Support:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scene Size-Up, Situational Assessment • Scene control coordination with Law Enforcement • Establishing Safe Zones
<p>Operational Communications</p>	<p><u>Communications:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness and Efficiency of information shared between responders • Dispatch to responding units and scene operations <p><u>Public Information & Incident Briefings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media press releases, interviews, requests and social media postings • Local briefings • Communications with affected homeowners
<p>Operational Coordination</p>	<p><u>On-Site Incident Management:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direction & Control of response operations • Allocation & Assignment of resources • Coordination of arriving units

Scenario Hazard or Threat:

Multi-Class (2, 3 & 6) Hazardous Materials release/fire resulting from a large-scale train derailment.

Sponsoring Agencies:

Stoddard-Bergen Fire & EMS; Vernon County LEPC; Richland County LEPC

Participating Organizations:

Local: Stoddard-Bergen Fire & EMS; Town of Shelby Fire; General Public; Elected Officials

County: Emergency Management; HazMat; Sheriff; Elected Officials

State: State Assembly

Total Number of Exercise Participants: 19

Analysis of Exercise Core Capability Performance

Aligning exercise objectives and core capabilities provides a consistent taxonomy for evaluation that transcends individual exercises to support preparedness reporting and trend analysis. **Table 1** includes the exercise core capabilities with associated overall performance ratings (P, S, M, or U) as evaluated in the exercise.

Table 1 – Summary of Core Capability Performance

#	Core Capability Performance	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
1	Community Resilience		X		
2	Public Information and Warning		X		
3	Critical Transportation		X		
4	Environmental Response/Health & Safety	X			
5	On-scene Security, Protection & Law Enforcement	X			
6	Public and Private Services & Resources	X			
7	Operational Communications		X		
8	Operational Coordination	X			

Rating Definitions

Performed without Challenges (P)

Objectives were effectively performed and conducted in accordance with applicable plans, procedures and laws.

Performed with Some Challenges (S)

Objectives were achieved and conducted in accordance with applicable plans, procedures and laws. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified.

Performed with Major Challenges (M)

Objectives were achieved, but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other objectives; contributed to health/safety risks for public or response workers; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, procedures and laws.

Unable to be Performed (U)

Objectives were not able to be achieved or the objectives were not tested to exercise time constraints or safety considerations/decisions.

The following section provides detailed analysis of the performance related to each of the exercise Core Capabilities and associated exercise objectives, highlighting strengths and/or areas for improvement for each Core Capability. [FEMA Capability Evaluation Categories: **POETE** = Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training and Exercising.]

Core Capability 1 - Community Resilience

Description - Facilitate an integrated effort to recognize, understand, communicate, plan, and address risks so that the community is fully aware, trained, and practiced on how to prevent, protect/mitigate, prepare for, and respond to all threats and hazards to improve resilience.

Objective (Target Capability → Critical Task) 1: Community Preparedness and Participation

Critical Task: Coordinate Community Preparedness & Participation

Observation:

Minor Challenges noted in community-wide readiness.

Analysis:

This was a unique tabletop exercise where the public became a response partner and was really engaged in the exercise process. There were approximately 4-6 citizens and 2-3 local officials in attendance, not including the panel of participants. The Fire Chief outlined the hazards of having a railroad running through the Village and emphasized that it wasn't just about Bakken or crude oil: "Any derailment can be hazardous to our community". The Fire Chief went on to describe the geography of Stoddard and that if a derailment were to occur, how it would split the village into East-West halves – creating an island for a section of the Village surrounded on 3 sides by the Mississippi River.

The engagement of the citizens throughout the exercise was outstanding. Questions presented by the public were thought provoking and pertinent to the scenario. The hot wash after the exercise was another opportunity for the community to share their thoughts and comments.

Strength Area(s): Community Preparedness and Participation

POETE Composite Strengths General Discussion:

It was very apparent that the Village Fire Chief, Village President and Vernon County EM director are diligently working towards educating the citizens of Stoddard on the hazards in their community, how to best protect themselves and become a response partner instead of a response concern or liability. The dialogue between the response community and the citizens that participated in the exercise was productive and encouraging, and will go a long way in making the Village of Stoddard more resilient to all types of hazards going forward into the future.

Improvement Area(s): Community Preparedness and Participation**POETE Composite Improvements General Discussion:**

Continue to engage the public. The number of citizens who attended the exercise was low; however by continuing to get the message out, in a variety of ways, the number of citizens at the next exercise will increase.

Core Capability 2 - Public Information and Warning

Description - Deliver coordinated, timely, reliable, actionable and authorized information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally & linguistically appropriate methods to relay information regarding any incident threat/ hazard and the actions being taken by responders, actions that should be taken by the audience and assistance resources being made available.

Objective (Target Capability → Critical Task) 1: Emergency Public Information and Warning

Critical Task: Manage Emergency Public Information and Warnings

Critical Task: Provide Notification

Critical Task: Issue Emergency Warnings

Critical Task: Give Protective Response Instructions

Critical Task: Conduct Media Relations

Observation:

No Exercise Challenges – minor actual deployment challenges were noted.

Analysis:

The Stoddard Fire Chief and Vernon County EM Director shared a draft communications plan with everyone who attended the exercise. The plan outlined how public safety officials were going to attempt to warn the public of an incident and what initial steps everyone should take to protect themselves (i.e., shelter-in-place or evacuate) in the event of a hazardous materials incident involving a train derailment or accident. They emphasized that everyone should have 3 ways to receive a warning. The types of warning devices or methods shared with the public were: outdoor siren (which will sound for 5 minutes), weather radios, NIXLE, TV, Smartphone apps, AM/FM radio and computer programs/apps. There was a lot of discussion on NIXLE and how to get people signed up to receive the email and text message notifications; some felt that maybe the schools and local service clubs would be great resources to get people signed up for NIXLE.

These critical tasks were accomplished in the immediate framework of the exercise without any challenges. The communications plan that was presented was comprehensive, exceptionally well thought out and a very good primer for future disaster planning. The emphasis on getting citizens in and near the village signed up to received NIXLE messages was appropriate

considering the time lag in getting the message out when using other means, such as weather radio, TV and AM/FM radio. I would encourage the officials of Stoddard and Vernon County EM to consider sharing their communications plan with other communities along the railroad.

Strength Area(s): Emergency Public Information and Warning

POETE Composite Strengths General Discussion:

The communications plan that was developed by the Stoddard Fire Department and Vernon County EM is a key component of having a successful response and recovery in the event of train derailment.

Improvement Area(s): Emergency Public Information and Warning

POETE Composite Improvements General Discussion:

Continue to work with local service clubs, the school district and utility office to promote NIXLE as your primary notification tool.

Core Capability 3 - Critical Transportation

Description - Prepare for and support sheltering-in-place and evacuation of at-risk population (and companion animals) to areas of safe refuge, including the provision of evacuation transportation and the delivery of vital response personnel, equipment, and services into the impacted area. In addition, provide transportation support for the safe return of evacuated population.

Objective (Target Capability → Critical Task) 1: Citizen Evacuation

Critical Task: Over Land

Critical Task: Over Water

Observation:

Minor Challenges noted in Evacuation methods and procedures.

Objective (Target Capability → Critical Task) 2: Citizen Shelter-in-Place

Critical Task: Implement Shelter-In-Place Protection Procedures

Critical Task: Proper Securing Of Structure/Room

Critical Task: Coordinate Delivery of Vital Response Personnel, Equipment and Services into the Impacted Area

Observation:

Minor Challenges noted in understanding Shelter-in-Place.

Combined-Objective Analysis:

During the exercise, a video on sheltering-in-place was shown to the participants. Sheltering-in-place vs. Evacuation was discussed at length. Some residents, depending upon the incident location, could evacuate. However, any one downwind/downstream of the incident or on the island would have to shelter in place. The key topic during this portion of the exercise was, "How will the citizens know which option they should use?" Vernon County EM stated "Most people know what to do in the event of a fire or tornado; we are here tonight to help people to understand what they should do when a train derailment happens". The Fire Chief stated that the majority of the time, a shelter-in-place order will be given as it will most likely be the safest choice. The Fire Department would give the shelter-in-place order, for initial public protection, obtain situational intelligence and awareness, develop and IAP and then, if appropriate, give an evacuation order.

If an evacuation order is given, specific information on routes and locations will be disseminated to the public via NIXLE then TV, radio and EAS. Those on the island, depending upon the time of year, will be evacuated via boat. The DNR Warden stated that if requested, boats from La Crosse, Prairie du Chien and Vernon County would respond to assist in the evacuation. The total number of boats was 13 and they would be able to carry 6 people each. Evacuees would be ferried to Brownsville and then to La Crosse where a reception center would be set up. Participants were instructed that if an evacuation were to occur, they should bring the following items: medications, personal information, pets and any item needed (pills, pets, purse, personal info), to sustain for 72 hours at a shelter.

These critical tasks were accomplished with minimal challenges. Local officials had obviously spent a lot of time thinking through the process of sheltering-in-place vs. evacuation. The island, located on the west side of the tracks, posed a significant challenge, but it appeared that local officials were addressing this the best they could.

Strength Area(s): Citizen Evacuation / Citizen Shelter-in-Place**POETE Composite Strengths General Discussion:**

Educating the public on what shelter-in-place means and how to receive the necessary information in the event of an ordered evacuation were most certainly the greatest strengths of the exercise. EM and Fire officials had obviously spent a lot of time on these core capabilities and that investment will definitely pay off if an event ever occurs.

Improvement Area(s): Citizen Evacuation / Citizen Shelter-in-Place**POETE Composite Improvements General Discussion:**

Continue to educate the public. A lot of good work has been done; however, the majority of the citizens of Stoddard still need to be educated on warnings/notification and what to do if a train, carrying hazardous materials, were to derail within the Village.

Core Capability 4 - Environmental Response/Health & Safety

Description - Protect the public and emergency responders from environmental hazards and health effects of all environmental health emergencies. Ensure the availability of guidance and resources to address all hazards including hazardous materials, acts of terrorism, and natural disasters in support of the responder operations and the affected communities.

Objective (Target Capability → Critical Task) 1: HazMat Response

Critical Task: Identify Material

Critical Task: Conduct Hazard Assessment and Risk Evaluation

Critical Task: Protection Distance (Establish Hot Zone)

Critical Task: Secure Perimeter

Observation:

Within the scope of the exercise, the objective was performed without challenges.

Analysis:

There was minimal time spent, during this exercise, on Hazmat Response and public safety response. The Stoddard Fire Chief is a member of the Vernon County Hazmat Team as is the Vernon County EM Director. Ted Harris, hazmat team leader and educator, discussed how the hazmat team would respond and what the public could expect from their local public safety agencies. Establishing zones, conducting a scene size-up and doing preliminary risk evaluation were demonstrated to the public and the local elected officials who were in attendance at this exercise. These critical tasks were accomplished without any challenges.

Strength Area(s): HazMat Response**POETE Composite Strengths General Discussion:**

The Village of Stoddard is fortunate to have a hazmat team member as their fire chief, as it allows for operational continuity and enhanced communications interoperability.

Improvement Area(s): HazMat Response**POETE Composite Improvements General Discussion:**

Consider hosting a community event where members of the hazmat team, sheriff's office and local responders conduct a hazmat trail derailment drill. This will allow the community to visualize the response to an incident. Visual aids such as fire apparatus, hazmat apparatus and response members actively training, while the public watches, may get the public engaged, allowing local officials to achieve their goal of public preparedness.

Core Capability 5 - On-scene Security, Protection & Law Enforcement

Description - Reduce the impact and consequences of an emergency incident by securing and rendering safe incident threats and providing security support for response personnel engaged in lifesaving operations. Ensure a safe and secure environment through law enforcement and related security and protection operations for people and communities located within affected areas and also for all traditional and atypical response personnel engaged in lifesaving and life-sustaining operations.

Objective (Target Capability → Critical Task) 1: Emergency Public Safety and Security Response

Critical Task: Conduct Public Safety and Security Response Operations

Critical Task: Control traffic, Crowd and Scene

Critical Task: Secure the Affected Area

Critical Task: Safely Diverting the Public from Hazards

Critical Task: Provide Security Support to Other Response Operations and Properties

Observation:

High competency observed in the first-to-respond. This objective was performed without challenges.

Analysis:

Many of the comments already made for the previous four capabilities apply here. Also of significance is the fact that MABAS is just beginning to be developed in Vernon County. The Fire Chief did recognize how implementing the MABAS system for this type of event would be advantageous. Mutual Aid was called upon early in this event. Departments called upon for Mutual Aid were strategically chosen based on where they were traveling from and time/distance away from the scene.

Strength Area(s): Emergency Public Safety and Security Response**POETE Composite Strengths General Discussion:**

Calling for mutual aid and choosing your mutual aid partners based on where they were coming from, in comparison to where the derailment took place, demonstrate a high level of tactical competence.

Improvement Area(s): Emergency Public Safety and Security Response**POETE Composite Improvements General Discussion:**

Continue to implement and establish MABAS in Vernon County. Having pre-determined mutual aid response cards, for dispatch, based on specific types of calls or incidents will aid in meeting the response needs of a complex event, such as a train derailment.

Core Capability 6 - Public and Private Services and Resources

Description - Provide and/or restore essential public and private resources & services to include fire and other first response activities. Provide essential public and private services and resources to the affected population and surrounding communities, to include emergency power to critical facilities, fuel support for emergency responders, and access to community staples (e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies, and banks) and fire and other first response services.

Objective (Target Capability → Critical Task) 1: Fire Incident Response Support

Critical Task: Scene Size-Up, Situational Assessment

Critical Task: Scene Control Coordination with Law Enforcement

Critical Task: Establishing Safe Zones

Observation:

This objective was performed very competently without challenges.

Analysis:

SAME AS Core Capability #4

Strength Area(s): Fire Incident Response Support**POETE Composite Strengths General Discussion:**

SAME AS Core Capability #4

Improvement Area(s): Fire Incident Response Support**POETE Composite Improvements General Discussion:**SAME AS Core Capability #4**Core Capability 7 - Operational Communications**

Description - Establish and maintain adequate internal, external and interoperable communications systems and protocols to support emergency response & recovery operations. Ensure the capacity for timely communications in support of security, situational awareness, and operations by any and all means available, among and between affected communities in the impact area and all response forces.

Objective (Target Capability → Critical Task) 1: Communications

Critical Task: Effectiveness and Efficiency of Information Shared Between Responders

Critical Task: Dispatch to Responding Units and Scene Operations

Observation:

This core capability was met with some deployment challenges.

Analysis:

The terrain in the Stoddard area, like much of Southwestern Wisconsin, creates some difficulties in communications. There are areas that it poses a challenge for mobile or portable radios to reach a repeater; however, on-scene communications were good. There was no formal ICS 205 form filled out, but it was discussed, as was the use of State Mutual Aid frequencies.

Objective (Target → Critical Task) 2: Public Information & Incident Briefings

Critical Task: Media Press Releases, Interviews, Requests and Social Media Postings

Critical Task: Local Briefings

Critical Task: Communications with Affected Homeowners

Observation:

This critical task was accomplished with some tactical application challenges outside of the Exercise environment. In the theoretical framework of the exercise, however, there were no challenges.

Analysis:

This critical task was accomplished with some challenges and initiated a lot of questions from public such as:

- Not everyone has a smart phone or computer; can public safety officials utilize other means of communicating to the public besides just electronic devices?
- How can a citizen know what's on the derailed car?
- How can the public educate themselves on the hazardous materials that are being transported on the railway?
- What specific alerting tools will Dispatch and Emergency Management use to alert residents in the Village that an incident has occurred?
- How will officials keep the public informed and provide them with situational awareness?
- Does the County have a PIO?
- Will the County send information to the TV and radio stations?
- What role does BNSF play in the event of a trail derailment?

Combined-Objective Analysis:

This core capability overall was met with some challenges. NIXLE, for now, is the primary notification tool besides the outdoor siren. The use of AM/FM radio and TV to get messages out was discussed. The issues with relying on those methods of communicating to public are time lag in getting the information out and not everyone is sitting in front of the TV or next to a radio. The communications plan gave an outline of the steps Dispatch and Emergency Management would take to notify the public and the responders:

- 1) Dispatch takes the 911 call and pages out Stoddard Fire and First Responders.
- 2) Dispatch notifies the Vernon County EM Director; once he has the initial information, a NIXLE message will be sent to everyone in the affected area.
- 3) EM will also begin the request to send out a message via the EAS system.
- 4) Dispatch will set off the Village siren and let it run continuously for 5 minutes.
- 5) Law enforcement and Hazmat team members will deploy to the incident location and aid in establishing an ICP (incident command post) and relay on-scene information to Dispatch and all responding agencies. EM will prepare to stand up the Vernon County EOC (emergency operations center) and initiate their emergency operations plan, including ESFs (emergency support functions) that are associated with Hazardous Materials, Public Information and Public Protection.
- 6) A PIO (public information officer) will be designated; the PIO will use NIXLE, Stoddard Fire Dept. and Village Facebook pages, TV News channels 8 and 19, and local radio stations to relay important information to the affected population in order to keep them informed. The information shared will include, but will not be limited to, shelter-in-place instructions, evacuation routes, reception center location(s), public protection and shelter locations.

The relationship between BNSF and the locals has improved over the years. In the last 3 years, BNSF and members of the public safety response community have been training together; the Sheriff noted that he was impressed by how each entity has worked together in past exercises. BNSF understands that when an incident like this occurs, not only could it cost a lot financially, but if they do not demonstrate a strong commitment to work the local responders, it could damage their public image as well. Sheriff Spears noted that he feels that relationship between the railroad and the responders has improved significantly and will continue to get stronger going forward.

Strength Area(s): Communications/Public Information & Incident Briefings

POETE Composite Strengths General Discussion:

An area of strength is the public's desire to be engaged right along with the work and effort being put in by the EM Director, Fire Chief and Village President to prepare the community for disasters such as a hazardous materials release and/or train derailment. The communications plan that was presented is a good foundation for developing a more comprehensive response and education plan.

Improvement Area(s): Communications/Public Information & Incident Briefings

POETE Composite Improvements General Discussion:

The main challenge during any event is, "how do we notify the public of the event and keep them informed as the situation changes?" This challenge is not unique to the Village of Stoddard. Many communities struggle with this critical task. The key is to strive for continuous improvement; keep the public engaged and listen to what they are saying. The fire chief has a really good understanding of the community dynamics and is committed to public protection and notification. Continue to host community forums and events which allow the public to ask questions, give feedback and participate in response drills.

Core Capability 8 - Operational Coordination

Description - Conduct incident response and recovery operations using the Incident Command System to establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports performance/support of needed core capabilities.

Objective (Target Capability → Critical Task) 1: On Site Incident Management

Critical Task: Direction & Control of Response Operations

Critical Task: Allocation & Assignment of Resources

Critical Task: Coordination of Arriving Units

Observation:

This core capability was performed without challenges.

Analysis:

SAME AS Core Capability #5

Strength Area(s): On Site Incident Management

POETE Composite Strengths General Discussion:

SAME AS Core Capability #5

Improvement Area(s): On Site Incident Management

POETE Composite Improvements General Discussion:

SAME AS Core Capability #5

Appendix A – Improvement Plan (IP)

This IP has been developed for Stoddard Fire & EMS per the Stoddard Railroad HazMat Incident Community Tabletop Exercise conducted on August 9th, 2016.

Core Capability	Objective	POETE	Improvement Action	Action POC	Start-End Date
Community Resilience	Community Preparedness and Participation	EXERCISES	Consider conducting this same exercise again in a few months. Also, hold drills, public rail safety demonstrations, information-to-share sessions and BNSF public education & outreach seminars.	Stoddard FD Chief Joe Pfaff Vernon County EM Chad Buros	<u>Start:</u> 08/09/16 <u>Complete:</u> 08/31/17
Public Information and Warning	Emergency Public Information and Warning	PLANNING	Continue to work with local service clubs, the school district and utility office to promote NIXLE as your primary notification tool. Develop and distribute door hangers, refrigerator magnets and flyers to inform the community of the Emergency Notification Process. Test the Warning System.	Stoddard FD Chief Joe Pfaff Vernon County EM Chad Buros	<u>Start:</u> 08/09/16 <u>Complete:</u> 08/31/17
Critical Transportation	Citizen Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place	PLANNING	Use websites, local media outlets, community events and similar outreach opportunities to educate local residents on what Shelter-In-Place and Evacuation are, How to do them and When to do them.	Stoddard FD Chief Joe Pfaff Vernon County EM Chad Buros	<u>Start:</u> 08/09/16 <u>Complete:</u> 08/31/17