

DE-FG02-96CH10860

DOE/CH/10860

TRANSPORTATION EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS  
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

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AUG 07 2000  
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Final Report  
For Period September 30, 1996 – September 29, 1998

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February 2000

Prepared for

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
AWARD No. DE-FG02-96CH10860

N/A

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## **ABSTRACT**

This program funded a local effort to prepare for and exercise responses to transportation accidents involving radiological materials. To achieve this, local radiological response plans were reviewed and revised, radiological awareness and response and public information training were provided, a tabletop and field exercise were conducted, and equipment purchased to enhance the response capabilities for radiological transportation incidents. Participants included the Suffolk County Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services, the Suffolk County Police Department, the Suffolk County Department of Health Services and local fire and ambulance providers along with the cooperation and assistance of the Brookhaven Group of the United States Department of Energy and Brookhaven National Laboratory.

## **PROGRAM PURPOSE**

The overall purpose of the program was to establish a framework for the coordinated response by various emergency response agencies to a transportation accident involving radiological materials. Nine (9) program and eight (8) exercise objectives, as detailed in the original grant application, were identified, tested, and evaluated.

## **RADIOLOGICAL RESPONSE PLAN REVIEW**

The U.S. Department of Energy, Brookhaven Group, was invited to participate with the Plan Development Sub-Committee of the Suffolk County Local Emergency Planning Committee to review and revise the radiological response component of the Suffolk County Hazardous Materials Response Plan, which is an annex to the county's overall Emergency Operations Plan. These meetings did not result in any substantive changes to the plan but did yield a closer involvement by personnel from both Brookhaven National Laboratory personnel and the Brookhaven Group of the U.S. Department of Energy in the regular planning process for hazardous materials incidents in the county. It also afforded the county emergency response forces with additional radiological training opportunities outside of this grant and a commitment for earlier and more frequent intervention of the assets of the Radiological Assistance Program at local incidents.

The Brookhaven Group of the U.S. Department of Energy and Brookhaven National Laboratory continue to sit on the Suffolk County LEPC Plan Development Sub-Committee and provide valuable input to the county's community based planning efforts particularly as they relate to radiological issues.

## **TRAINING**

The grant provided training in two specific areas, public information and emergency responders. The Transportation Public Information Training was offered in two formats, direct student instruction and train-the-trainer. Both courses were conducted over two full days at Brookhaven National Laboratory Berkner Hall by the Office of Environmental Management, the former on November 28 and 29, 1995, and the latter on November 30 and December 1, 1995. In addition to laboratory and Department of Energy personnel, representatives from the Suffolk County Departments of Police and Health Services participated in each of the classes.

The responder training was in the form of two Radiological Emergency Training for Local Responders (RETLR) course offered through the U.S. Department of Energy's Transportation Emergency Training for Response Assistance (TETRA) Program. One of the two course was offered during the day for career responders and the second during evening hours for the local volunteer fire departments with borders contiguous to the Brookhaven National Laboratory property. Both classes were conducted at Brookhaven National Laboratory's Berkner Hall from December 4 through December 8, 1995.

Six (6) seats each in the evening RETLR course were offered to the Manorville, Ridge, Rocky Point, Wading River, and Yaphank fire departments and were ultimately attended by representatives of the Brookhaven, Manorville, Ridge, Smithtown, and Yaphank fire departments.

Participation in the daytime RETLR course was opened to county emergency responders from the Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services, the Police Department, and the Department of Health Services as well as town fire marshals offices. Actual class composition included representatives of the aforementioned county departments and staff from the Towns of Brookhaven, Huntington, and Southampton fire marshals offices.

## **EXERCISE**

Staff from the Suffolk County Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services worked with the Brookhaven Group of the U.S. Department of Energy to develop a full-scale exercise to test the effectiveness of the radiological component of the county's hazardous materials plan and the RETLR training provided to county and town career emergency responders. The exercise was also used to test the success of the public information training. The exercise was dubbed SCORE 95 for Suffolk County Operational Response Exercise 1995.

The exercise was conducted on December 4, 1995, the last day of the RETLR training program, at Brookhaven National Laboratory. The scenario developed for the exercise focused on a pickup truck accident in which the nuclear products being carried were thrown from the vehicle when it overturns after swerving to avoid a deer. The driver received minor injuries but refused transport to the hospital. There is no fire or spilled motor fuel. The accident was reported by cellular telephone by a passing motorist and a nearby resident who had heard the crash and went out to investigate.

Participants in the drill included:

- Suffolk County Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services
- Suffolk County Police Department Emergency Services Section, Public Information Office, and Sixth Precinct patrol officers
- Suffolk County Department of Health Services Public Information Office, Division of Emergency Medical Services, and the Inspection Bureau of the Environmental Health Division.
- Brookhaven National Laboratory Fire Department acting as the local volunteer fire department
- U.S. Department of Energy Radiological Assistance Program (RAP) team

In addition to providing participants for the exercise, the Suffolk County Departments of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services, Police, and Health Services, the Brookhaven Group of the U.S. Department of Energy, and Brookhaven National Laboratory all supplied personnel to serve as evaluators and controllers for the exercise.

A formal critique involving evaluators, controllers, role players, and participants was conducted in the afternoon of December 4, 1995, following completion of the exercise.

## **RESOURCE PROCUREMENT**

The grant provided \$25,000.00 to Suffolk County government for improving its planning, safeguarding, and response capabilities relative to radiological storage and handling as well as transportation incidents. As a result of the award, the following equipment, arranged by department of distribution, was purchased:

### Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services

- Two (2) Ludlum Model 3 low range, geiger-mueller survey meters with pancake probes
- Two (2) Eberline Model PIC-6B high range portable ion chamber survey meters
- Three (3) Motorola MTS2000 3-watt analog, rotary control 800 MHz portable radios for interagency communications

### Department of Health Services

- One (1) Chevrolet Cavalier 2-door response vehicle for the county's radiological response officer

### Police Department

- One (1) self-contained decontamination shower unit
- Ten (10) unbreakable instrument carrying cases for existing radiological survey meters
- Twenty-four (24) Tychem 9400 hooded coveralls

## **SUMMARY**

The grant program met and, in most instances, exceeded the objectives detailed in the original grant application. The radiological response and public information capabilities of the involved agencies were improved, the existing radiological response plan was reviewed and validated, and a closer working relationship was fostered between the U.S. Department of Energy Brookhaven Group, Brookhaven National Laboratory, and local emergency response agencies. Overall, Suffolk County's radiological preparedness has greatly benefited.