



## TRANSCRIPT FROM WEBCAST 3/22/2011

DESCRIPTION: County of LA Sheriff's Department

WHO: Sergeant Mick Kelleher

CBRNE HAZMAT specialist

>> Well, now we're gonna move from the city level to the county level. Now the county of Los Angeles is quite unique. It's huge. It's a large complex region. There're 88 municipalities and unincorporated areas. It encompasses more than 4,000 square miles. And according to the 2010 census, at 9.8 million people L.A. County is the most populous in the United States and a population density of nearly 2,500 people per square mile. It's the home of over 250,000 businesses. Now events and incidents that happen here though involve multiple jurisdictions and cross several jurisdictional boundaries. We're gonna hear from the county level both from the sheriff's department and from the county fire department. We're gonna start off with a video interview with Sergeant Mick Kelleher. He is the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazmat specialist from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Please roll the video. Thanks.

>> Hi, I'm Mick Kelleher with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Hazmat Detail. My team's responsible for responding to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear instance in Los Angeles operational area. We've been part of the ICBRNE projects for approximately 8 years. We started off small trying to get some type of telemetry to as an officer safety issue. So as we're making entries into contaminated environments someone else would have access to our meter readings and can warn us as our meters are alarming. So we didn't have to pay 100 percent attention to him, 'cause as cops we're hoisting and tactical, don't always wanna be looking down at our meters. From there we start to graduate to can we share this with other agencies out there. We're very fortunate in Los Angeles operational area that we have a lot of hazmat assets that had the need or want to join in on this. So we joined in with other fire departments, other law enforcement agencies and county health departments to come together and share information at hazmat incidents. Start off with just a couple meter readings going with 4 gas and 5 gas meters and we've actually developed into both chem and rad. And now it gives situational awareness not only to local responders, incident commanders but also to federal assets of national labs. As part of the sheriff's department, we're responsible for assisting and security of events of national interest such as the Rose Bowl, Rose Parade, award ceremonies. We've had the chance to use the ICBRNE project during this. It was great to be able to put sensors out and have all that information at realtime go back to our command post to help us give sensor information so we know where to deploy assets if needed. Recently in a large national event of interest which was a football game with over 100,000 people in attendance, we



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set out the ICBRNE project as sensors outside the fence line. The sensors were out there to detect radiation as it came closer to the stadium. Inside the fence line were search teams with other detectors. The ICBRNE project worked very well on the fact that as the sensor went off, the information was relayed immediately back to our command post who was then able to tell the people out near that area that radiation was coming towards them.

>> I was at one gate at a time when a source of radiation was coming through the gate, not a terrorist event, not a criminal event but just a large amount of radiation was coming through. My command post by monitoring the ICBRNE project was able to give me a full minute to minute and a half warning that radiation was coming towards my gate. That allowed me and my team to start scanning the fence line and the gate for any threats and preparing for radiation to come through. As the radiation came through, we were able to determine that it was just a medical patient with radiation inside and not a threat to anyone. Behind me is one of our vessels called Ocean Rescue II. On board we have equipment that's linked to the ICBRNE. It's one of the largest rad detectors in the maritime realm. It's the largest on the west coast. It is hooked into the ICBRNE system so that as this boat is traveling around it streams live data including spectrum back to not only my computer but I can immediately share that information with national labs who can view it and manipulate the data. We also have a chemical sensor on board. So if we get intelligence that there could be some type of threat offshore or anywhere in the operational area, the boat can go out there. As it's traveling around take air samples and let us know if it's a chemical warfare agent or toxic industrial chemicals. It can also provide safety for the people on board to know whether or not they need to have safety mask on. Ocean Rescue II as part of the sheriff's department is only one of several maritime radiation assets in the nation. Talking to other agencies I believe we're the only one that sends live data back to national labs. The sheriff's department decided to invest money into this and assets into this 'cause they felt that the port was a major target. The L.A. Long Beach Port Complex provides access to 60 percent of all imports to our country. If this port complex was shut down, the amount of industrial imports coming to our nation would almost stop. The other ports in the west coast are unable to handle the amount of volume that comes to this port. As part of this, we do joint operations with the United States Coast Guard and customs and border protection. We'll actively go out and search container ships offshore before they get to the port to assure that they're not bringing any threats into the port. The great part about the ICBRNE project was the easy sell to all the agencies. Once you looked at the capabilities and the ease of sharing information, every agency want to buy into it. I've had the chance to travel around the country and see how other people share information, how other devices share information. And I was shocked when I first got in this job that there was no real standards for sending information out from a detector back to any type of communication device. One of the toughest parts about the ICBRNE



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is that technology is moving so fast, all of our meters had different ways of sending information out. One of the first obstacles to overcome was taking that data and putting it into a meter that could be set out so that other people could read it. After that it was taken care of. Interoperability was great. Every hazmat agency out here now has it so it's multi-agency, multidiscipline. L.A. County Rad Management has many rad mirrors out there that in the event of an incident, an accident or a terrorist incident, they can put sensors out and we would know immediately from wherever--whatever computer I'm at where a radiation plumes out or radiation threat is out. And the same effect that if I'm out looking for radiation, I find it, L.A. County Rad Management would know exactly where I'm at and what my readings are and give me information that can safeguard myself when I'm in a radiation field. Readings on your meter are in microgram, millirem. When you get that information if you don't have this type of system giving that information back out to your command post is often difficult. You're trying to read it, you're telling them millirem, they might hear microgram. Communications is often bad over radios. The system was great that there's no longer need for that radio communication going back and forth because we can see it. And I'm just amazed that other agencies throughout the nation haven't embraced this idea that you know instead of relying on someone's eyes to read a meter and then explain it to someone else who has to write it d down or play the telephone game, the people at the command post or your instant commander or your team leader can read your personnel's meters immediately. This is great for safety, when to pull people out, or to give them further information of when they can stay in.