



## TRANSCRIPT FROM WEBCAST 3/22/2011

DESCRIPTION: City Of LA Fire Department

WHO: Battalion Chief Robert Rose (Ret.)

This is Battalion Chief Robert Rose from Los Angeles Fire Department. Welcome, well, chief, would you tell us a little bit about how you've been involved in this project. I know you've been out of the picture for a little bit and kind of kicking back and fishing I guess now. You look like you're still heavily involved because here you are.

>> Yes. And somehow you just can't get away from it, you know, which is a good thing for me. Like Bob, I was very involved with our hazmat program. I was kind of our hazmat coordinator at a time before Chief Cramer was. And I know he talked a little bit about the history. I kind of add a little bit to that. I am not quite the technician that Bob is to being able to understand the knots and bolts of it, or certainly not as highly understanding as David is. And for me, when we first envisioned this program and bring it onboard in our department, it was an opportunity to greatly increase the safety for our responders and that was kind of the perspective that I had then was just the people who were managing a single incident being able to see those readings realtime.

>> Bob mentioned one incident that he talked about was kind of an inspiration for him. We had others where we had difficulty for any of those folks out there who are hazmat responders. They know what that sounds like when a guy is trying to communicate from the suit. And the person on the other end who is trying to receive that information who is responsible for their actions inside has a very difficult time, a lot of times just understanding information, numbers and everything else can be difficult to transmit. And I saw this as an opportunity to greatly reduce those mistakes that were just inherent with doing hazmat. And this entire program has just expanded phenomenally from my perspective since then. And sort of part of my involvement since I retired, okay, is first of all I am an instructor for the State of California at our hazmat training center up in San Luis Obispo. So when they put on our classes all during the year, then I'm one of the people that teach there. And I do, you know, at each one of these times, give a demonstration of this system so that other folks and other agencies and other regions and other cities can take back with them the thought process the next time that they have the ability to make changes and be able to write grants and you know, acquire additional equipment that this is one of the things that they consider. And I just talked to them about how successful the program has been here. It hasn't been without a few bumps in the road along the way but thanks to the great support of you folks, okay. I think that has really, you know, seriously, that has really been able to make the system



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become more robust, reliable and everything else along the way, and that's a great part of it for us. And I also am the training coordinator for safe environment, so when these systems get purchased or brought onboard and two different agencies have been around the different locations where we have the system now along with the L.A. region, up in the Seattle region, up in the San Francisco area, coming soon down to San Diego. I think back in Boston we're gonna be doing it. When the hazmat teams try to get their arms around what this system's capabilities are, I don't think they really get an appreciation for it until we can get there and actually, give them the training for them to realize and understand the capabilities for the hazmat folks along with the ability to share with other agencies. And I think, you know, Bob talked and also Captain Alva talked briefly about interagency. And one of the things that has certainly, you know, greatly been improved is that cooperation between law enforcement and the fire service in this region. It didn't start out that way. We were too different entities with two different missions. And I think that one of the things this system, especially the ICBRNE expansion of it has brought on is the understanding that we all have needs at one of these large scale incidents and this ability to share this information live for each one to be able to view, everybody's instruments allows us to work together on a way, not only more professional but you know, safer and more efficient, you know, capabilities.

>> And I think it's great that this is, you know, one of the reasons we're having this webcast is to be able to take the lessons learned coming from this program, coming from all this experience you have and make it to others, available to others so they can do the same thing within their city or their agency or what to meet their needs.

>> That was probably the critical part here. I mean we can't just do it here and not move it and expand it out, expand out the capability and safety--

>> And it has been used in just speaking from my involvement with the Seattle area. They're kind of a different model than we have here, in that it's a regional concept for their hazardous materials response teams. And each smaller city brings a component of the overall hazmat response system. And so, one may have the instruments to do a radiological margin. One may have the instruments to be able to do monitoring for all of the flammable combustible atmospheres. One may have different instruments that we can tie into system. When they come together, their ability to be able to see back and forth and share on the multi-viewer system, each other's instruments allows them to work together more efficiently than they could in the past. In the past, they have to kind of have just one person who would try to be the, you know, kind of the center if you



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wanna call it that for their information sharing, and it's all done verbally and kind of manually. And now they can do this all in a realtime and a real view of all of the instrumentation. That's been a real, real plus for them. And this is a smaller scale system than we have here in the City of Los Angeles. For us, we have four hazardous materials response teams and the capability for us to be able to share that back, information back and forth between our people at a larger incident allows the incoming teams to be able to already see what may be going on in an incident as it expands. A lot of ability to do that and then to push that data out to subject matter experts that may be in the area or even outside the area. For us to be able to have someone on the east coast, be able to look at a national lab or something, to be able to look at a reading and then provide us with, you know, feedback as to what that means, it's truly an asset for the local teams to be able to have that.

>> Great. Thank you. You hit on some really, really important issues there especially and I guess I didn't realize, I wasn't even thinking along these lines before when you said that, you know, different groups, different entities, lab, different pieces of equipment that test for different things. So, you don't have to have--nobody has to go and buy their own equipment. They can actually share the data from the equipment that already exist in the force that's already out there.

>> And I think one of the real pluses about how ICBRNE and certainly a safe environment approach to this program was that you didn't have to necessarily procure all new equipment to become a part of the system. In fact, there was all of that existing sensor technology piece of equipment that everybody had as a standard kind of within our hazmat world already. And then the safe environment, you know, module that you put on there to be able to transmit that information is able to adapt several different manufacturers and probably 35 to 40 different piece of equipment now that can be utilized on. And that's just excellent.

>> And I wanna emphasize that's just one way, one application. But anyone who is using standards could do the same thing.

>> Well, thank you very much, chief. Greatly appreciate your taking the time.



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>> Thank you, thank you for your time.