



TRANSCRIPT FROM WEBCAST 3/22/2011

DESCRIPTION: Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

WHO: Cass Kaufman (Ret.)

Director of Radiation Management

>> I'm here with Cass Kaufman. She recently retired just about a month ago as the Director of Radiation Management for the Los Angeles County's Department of Public Health. Cass, thank you for joining us and congratulations on your retirement although I understand you are back in action again.

>> I have been called back to duty.

>> And what brought that on?

>> The Japan incident and short staffing, but primarily Japan. We wanted to be on top of it. And I obviously have a lot of experience doing this, so.

>> Well, let's talk about that? So, how are we doing? How are we--how is Japan fitting into this whole picture?

>> We are doing a lot of monitoring in the county.

>> Now? Wow.

>> And right now even as we speak we have--the telemetry system is running. We have a number of people, not just radiation management but Sheriff and LAPD and a number of agencies are on not 24/7 but they are intermittently over the last week, and we have been pretty much 24/7. And then we also have air sampling going on in the county. And



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we're doing some analysis of filter results to determine what nuclides might be on the filters. We know from Japan that we would be looking for specific nuclides that are not normally present. So, when we see those, we know that they came from Japan.

>> You know, and I was gonna ask you how you would use a system like this, you know, if there were a real incident.

>> And this is such a good example of not only how we would use it but we are using it. So, it's running even as we speak. And we have our staff who have instruments with them at all times so we just tell them, "Turn everything on." They put it in their car if they're driving around. If they're at home working, they have it on in their backyard. And so we have the readings from various locations throughout the county that we're constantly monitoring.

>> How many sensors do we have out there?

>> At any one time, right now we have about a dozen going at any one time.

>> It's pretty good. So how--let's backtrack just a little bit and connect that to how the public health department was involved in the ICBRNE pilot project in the first place.

>> It was very exciting. We had had a vision of getting to where we actually are today. And the vision was that multiple agencies would be in the system, that their instrument would give a direct read that we could remotely watch from anywhere in the country. And so it isn't just we who could watch it, the Centers for Disease Control could watch it, the Food and Drug Administration can watch it, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission can watch it. Our state partners up in Sacramento can watch and live, they can see what we're measuring. And it is very exciting to have seen our vision actually come to life. And there are a number of different agencies on the system. I'm guessing Dave already talked about--about that, the number of people who are on.



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>> And--and so it just exponentially increases the manpower that we have to respond to any incident. It's a real forced increase or with very little work on anyone person's part.

>> That's amazing. That's just amazing. And it's even more rewarding I guess to say, you know, something did happen and we had the system in place and ready to go to test things out. So, I couldn't ask for better.

>> It is very exciting. The system is designed better for higher doses of radiation than what we're seeing from Japan.

>> Well, hopefully we won't have it.

>> And hopefully we won't get there, yes.

>> That's the whole purpose, right? We wanna make sure that we're not there.

>> Yes, that is the purpose.

>> Well, thank you very much Cass, I greatly appreciate it and--

>> You're welcome.

>> And coming back to--back to work to see us through the situation.