



FOCUS





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FEMA Administrator, W. Craig Fugate, visited the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) Feb. 4.

“Over the years, you have demonstrated that you are part of FEMA,” Fugate said to the assembled federal employees, citing such accomplishments as the 35 employees who deployed to New York in support of Hurricane Sandy relief and the support the CDP provides in training FEMA full-time employees and reservists.

In the past couple of years, the CDP has trained several cohorts, groups of emergency responders from the same city or area.

“Outside of a disaster, this is the only place where we can train teams,” Fugate said.

Last year, the CDP trained more than 13,000 state, local and tribal responders. The Center expects to train as many, if not more responders this year.

ON THE COVER:

Emergency Responder Hazardous Materials Technician for CBRNE Incidents (ERHM) course is a five-day class providing responders with a combination of lectures and advanced hands-on practical exercises. ERHM provides the necessary training to prepare response personnel to tackle hazardous incidents.

The ERHM course provides a hands-on experience in identifying hazardous materials, using advanced survey and monitoring equipment, selecting appropriate levels of personal protection, and performing decontamination procedures, to include evidence preservation.



CDP Welcomes Atlanta Fire Chief

Story by Lisa Hunter

The CDP will host a Black History Month Observance, Feb. 27, in conjunction with the CDP All-Hands meeting, starting at 1 p.m. in the Bldg. 61 Auditorium.

This year’s guest speaker is Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran.

Cochran has more than 28 years of experience with involvement in all phases of the profession, including firefighting, emergency medical services, and hazardous material handling with a specialty in training and strategic planning/facilitation.

Cochran began his career in the fire service in 1981 as a firefighter for the Shreveport, La., Fire Department. He was promoted to fire training officer and served in this capacity from 1985 to 1990, when he became assistant chief training officer. He was appointed the Department’s fire chief

on Aug. 26, 1999.

In January 2008, Cochran was tapped by Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed to serve as Fire Chief for the City of Atlanta Fire Rescue Department. He served in that capacity until July 2009, when President Obama appointed him as U.S. Fire Administrator for the U.S. Fire Administration in Washington, D.C. In that capacity, Cochran was charged with overseeing, coordinating, and directing national efforts to prevent fires and improve fire response. He worked extensively with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Homeland Security. In May 2010, Cochran returned to Atlanta to resume the position of fire chief. His nomination was unanimously confirmed by the Atlanta City Council in August 2010.

He has held several positions with the International Association of Fire Chiefs, serving on the board of directors as first vice president in 2007 and second vice president in 2006 among others. In addition, he authored two chapters -- Chapter 1, “Leadership and Management,” and Chapter 25, “The Fire Chief of the Future,” for the Chief Fire Officers Desk Reference, published by Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

In his current position, Cochran and his office are responsible for the overall operation and direction of the Atlanta Fire Department through the implementation of the strategic plan to ensure that its objectives are consistent with the City of Atlanta’s mission, vision and values.

Focus Newsletter accepts suggestions and submissions in writing. All submissions must be submitted by the 1st of the month prior to publication. All submissions are subject to review and screening. “Focus” is an authorized publication for Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) employees and families. It occasionally includes articles expressing views and analyses by individual authors. The contents of those individual articles do not necessarily reflect the official views of the U.S. Government, the Department of Homeland Security, or the Center for Domestic Preparedness and publication herein does not imply endorsement.

TECHNOLOGY/ THE FUTURE OF CDP

Story by Shannon Arledge Photos by Benjamin Crossley



In July 2012, Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) incorporated electronic-based strategies in the classroom. By removing traditional paper course materials from approximately 40 percent of its courses, the CDP saves \$100,000 on average a year in production costs.

“Technology allows the CDP to save money and focus that savings on training and infrastructure improvements,” said Chuck Medley, assistant director of Training and Education. “It seems almost everyone today uses some form of advanced technology and incorporating enhancements in the classroom is not a new concept — universities and city schools are taking advantage, as well. The CDP has adapted and set a pace to maintain a modern classroom and reduce

printing and production costs.” A major challenge to incorporating electronic tablets and laptops was conversion of printed materials to electronic display.

“Technology allows the CDP to save money and focus that savings on training and infrastructure improvements.”

The curriculum staff has converted more than 20 courses that are now offered electronically in classes. According to Bernice Zaidel, director of Curriculum Development and Evaluation, it takes an employee up to

two days to convert one course. “Ultimately we will be 100 percent electronic in the classroom,” said Zaidel. “But, it is not as easy as it sounds. We can’t simply scan a lesson and immediately provide it to students. The manuals must have a professional appearance, be interactive, accessible to everyone through Section 508 Compliance, and undergo a rigorous test before it is offered electronically to our students.”

Once the devices are ready, each one is dedicated to a specific student and distributed during the students’ in-processing. CDP staff provides an overview of the devices’ use and capability, to include technical support throughout the course.

A key feature about the electronic tablets and laptop computers is the specially designed charging and

programming carts, that allows the staff to charge and load 45 devices with the appropriate course material simultaneously.

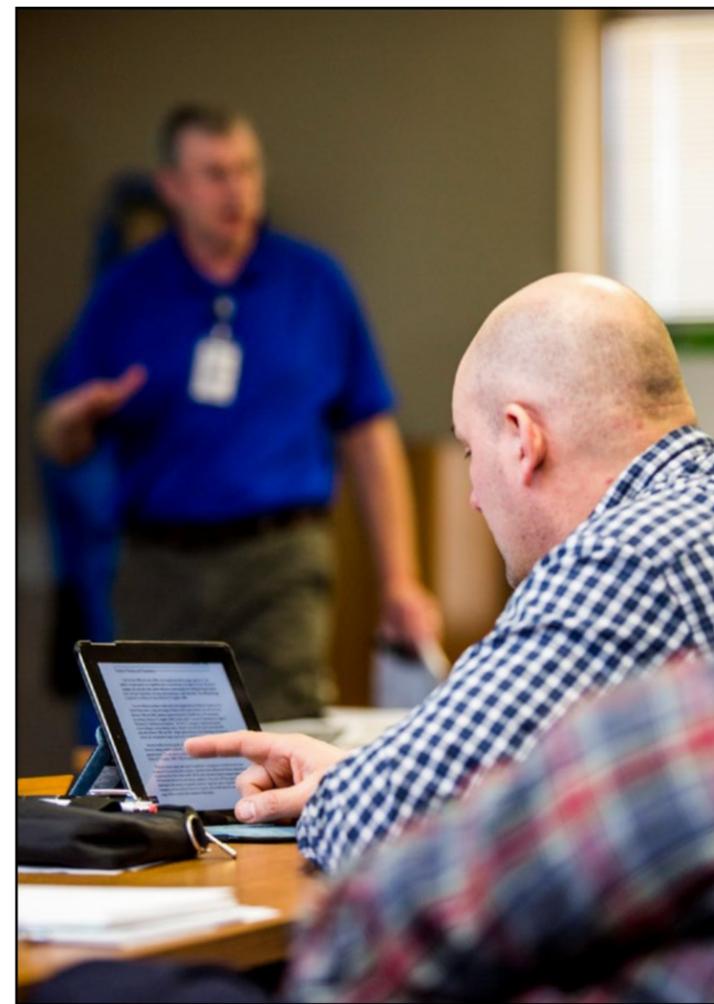
“This is my second CDP course,” said Hilde Perala, program manager of Emergency Preparedness for two Minnesota hospitals. “Technology is more common and used in our day-to-day business, so it was natural to have it available in the classroom and not have to carry a large binder. I could highlight directly on pages, take notes in the margins and email documents to myself. As the courses evolve, it would be nice to have videos used in class available on the devices, as well.”

To avoid the spread of germs between students, each device is sanitized

at the end of the course through a high-tech process called a Level C cleaning before it is issued to another student. The learning technologies are cleaned using micro-fiber wipes then Ultraviolet light completes the sanitization process.

“Adults learners expect an adult-learning environment,” said Medley. “At the same time, as we prepare more courses for electronic display, we increase our savings from reduced production costs. These savings allow the CDP to focus dollars on maintenance, operations, and improvements to training areas.”

The CDP hopes the use of electronics in training enhances adult learning and continues to reduce the amount of materials used.



CFC | 2013



Behind the Scenes with John Blandamer

Story by Lisa Hunter Photo by Benjamin Crossley

As the CDP's Industrial Hygienist, John Blandamer has a unique job. To start with, he's the CDP's only Industrial Hygienist. But, what sets him apart from others in his career field is that he is responsible for protecting the students and approximately 800 employees at the only training facility in the country where civilian responders can train in a toxic-agent environment.

In a nutshell, Blandamer is responsible for protecting the students and staff from everything ranging from heat injuries to nerve agent exposure. With a job description like that, it's no wonder that Blandamer spends so little time in his office. Much of his duty day is spent traversing the CDP's 124-acre campus, analyzing the environment in search of health hazards.

His job frequently takes him to the COBRA (Chemical, Ordnance, Biological and Radiological) Training Facility where he serves as the Chemical Hygiene and Bio Safety Officer. As such, Blandamer correlates, analyzes and interprets data pertaining to the GB and VX chemical agents and the ricin and anthrax biological agents that are used in training.

"Different chemicals present different hazards," Blandamer explained. "For example, the nerve agent, VX, can present a hazard to exposed skin so we look at the safety precautions such as the gloves and boots they wear during training."

GB, on the other hand, is more volatile, so Blandamer looks closely at the protective masks and the masks' filter cartridges. His efforts continue to pay off. No student or instructor has ever been injured by

the chemical or biological agents.

Blandamer joined the CDP staff 15 months ago. Instead of having a hometown, Blandamer is more like a citizen of the world. He was born in Dorchester, England, but grew up in McAlester, Okla. During his nearly 24-year career in government service, Blandamer has worked in nine states and served tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. He holds an associate's degree in Medical Laboratory Technology; two bachelor's degrees, one in Zoology with a minor in Chemistry and the other in Public Health and Industrial Hygiene; and a master's in Occupational Health and Safety.

Blandamer closely monitors nearly every course taught at the CDP. In the law enforcement classes, for example the Field Force Operations (FFO) course, he monitors the noise levels of the public address system used during simulated demonstrations. Similarly, for the Field Force Extrication Tactics (FFE) course, he monitors the amount of silica dust the students and instructors may inhale when they cut through the concrete protester devices.

Similarly Blandamer keeps an eye out for conditions that may lead the students to experience heat stress issues from wearing the personal protective equipment.

And, even with all that, there's yet another side to Blandamer's job. Blandamer is one of the lead people helping the CDP go green. As the CDP's Environmental Program Lead, he make sure that the CDP is following the EPA and Alabama Department of Environmental Management regulations on such things as hazardous material and air quality. He also reviews potential



building and renovation projects to evaluate their environmental impact, always looking for ways to minimize or negate that impact. In addition, he oversees the CDP's energy conservation and sustainability initiatives.

Because of these initiatives, the CDP has three of the five buildings on FEMA's short list of buildings that are candidates to receive energy efficiency upgrades.

Making the CDP more energy efficient saves money on operating costs and allows the CDP staff to direct that cost savings toward other critical areas that would otherwise go unfunded due to budget constraints.

The completed efficiency projects are projected to save \$75,000 that the CDP can redirect towards training operations.

As the CDP's Industrial Hygienist, Blandamer is one of the many federal and contract employees who work behind the scenes to ensure that every student receives relevant, realistic and timely training at the Center for Domestic Preparedness.

Story by Wendi Feazell

The Center for Domestic Preparedness raised more than \$25,000 during its 2013 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) that concluded Jan. 15.

"This year's CFC success is due to the compassion and overwhelming generosity of the CDP employees that donated money and volunteered their time. Through their generosity many lives will be impacted and improved," said CDP Superintendent Mike King. King recognized the CFC Board and key persons who worked so hard to make the campaign a success. He also acknowledged the generosity of the CDP Employee Association. The combined efforts resulted in raising \$25,202.40 for CFC this year.

CFC is the world's largest and most successful workplace-giving campaign. The mission of CFC is to promote and support philanthropy through a program that is employee-focused, cost-efficient, and effective in providing all Federal employees the opportunity to

improve the quality of life for all.

The devastation of natural disasters and other large-scale tragedies demand a humanitarian response of the highest level. It is said that a tragedy brings heroes, and for many individuals, donating time, money, and services is a manageable way to make a difference in this world. At the same time, many other charitable organizations support local, national and international communities. Donations received through the annual campaign allow participating charities to continue helping individuals, improving lives, and strengthening communities year-round.

For the past five years, the CDP has won the East Alabama Combined Federal Campaign Top Perch award. The award is given to the Eastern Alabama federal government agency that donates the most money to CFC per capita.

G4S: KEEPING US SAFE 24/7



Story by Lisa Hunter Photo by Benjamin Crossley

The CDP campus is comprised of 48 buildings spread out over the 124-acre campus. G4S Government Solutions, Inc. is the contractor charged with keeping the campus secure and the 800 federal and contract employees and up to 500 students safe 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

G4S GS has 54 employees assigned to the CDP: 50 armed security officers, the project manager and deputy project manager, the training manager and the administrative specialist/key and lock program officer.

Each security officer is required to successfully complete the Alabama Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission's 50 Round Basic Police Handgun Course on a semi-annual basis.

"Our mission is to protect the CDP and we take our assigned duties very seriously," said Leo Usry, the G4S GS project manager. The security officers participate in weapons firing training

continuously throughout the year.

The G4S GS security officers are responsible for the security of the CDP's five major training areas: the CDP Headquarters complex, the Advanced Responder Training Complex, the Responder Lodging Complex, the Noble Training Facility and the COBRA Training Facility, according to Usry.

Most of the security officers' duties are fairly obvious and most of the CDP employees have seen them going about those duties. Those duties include controlling entry and access to any of the CDP facilities by checking employees', students' and visitor's credentials, as well as conducting package and vehicle inspections as needed at 14 posts across the campus.

They also conduct roving security patrols; direct traffic; and identify, report and detain anyone suspected of federal violations or who may be trying to gain unauthorized access.

But the security officers also

perform some not so commonly known tasks, such as initiating and/or assisting with preliminary investigations; rendering first aid and/or CPR in emergency situations; and identifying and reporting any hazardous conditions on the campus.

Usry said the security officers face few major challenges in conducting their duties. The majority of the CDP employees are cooperative and polite when interacting with them. However, the campus is home to lots of wildlife that presents unique challenges.

"The security officers on roving patrols have to constantly be on the lookout for deer and wild turkeys that may dart out into the road," Usry said. "We also captured surveillance video of a black bear trespassing at the COBRA, so we always have to be vigilant."

Editor's Note: Each month the Focus will feature a contractor that supports the CDP.

Winter Storm Leon

STORM HITS CDP, JAN. 28-30



WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE OF 2013?



Sasha Robertson
Engineer,
Infrastructure

“My favorite movie of 2013 was Disney’s ‘Frozen’. In my opinion it is the best animated production Disney has released since ‘Toy Story’. It was a great story about family and sisterly love. Anyone with a sister or daughters would love this movie.”

“The Hunger Games: Catching Fire’ was my favorite. It demonstrated the resolve, resilience and the determination that all humans possess in overcoming life’s trials and tribulations.”



Marc Lugo
Instructor



Mellione Richards
Resident Training
Team Lead

“I haven’t seen many movies this year but ‘Evil Dead’ seems pretty interesting to me. I am a fan of horror films and this one seems to have a lot of blood and guts.”

“World War Z’ was my favorite. I went to the theater with some skepticism because, when it comes to monster movies, I’m a purist. But this movie really draws the audience in to think of the possibilities; what would happen if the Zombie apocalypse was a reality and the agencies that would be involved like the CDC and WHO. It really gets away from the traditional and focuses on finding out what and/or who caused the zombification for a possible cure.”



John McKenzie
Training Specialist
Contracting Officer



Sue Husted
Food Service
Worker

“It was a toss-up between ‘Frozen’ and ‘Despicable Me 2’. Both were good moral stories and I often like those types of movies. “I think, ‘Frozen’ was my favorite.”

“I’m not a big movie watcher, but ‘Lone Survivor’ has to be one of my favorites that I have seen recently because it was a true story that showed the courage and the never-give-up attitude of our soldiers.”



Stan Jones
Instructor