THE HANFORD SITE

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HAMMER Participates in Large-Scale Exercise to Prepare for Catastrophic Earthquake

RICHLAND, Wash. – Natural disasters can occur at any time, and well-prepared responders can significantly improve outcomes in restoration efforts. Earlier this spring, staff from the Volpentest Hazardous Materials Management and Emergency Response (HAMMER) Federal Training Center, managed by Department of Energy Richland Operations Office (RL) contractor Mission Support Alliance, participated in Shaken Fury 2019. This large-scale exercise, held in Nashville, Tenn., helped strengthen the nation's ability to rapidly respond and recover following a no-notice catastrophic earthquake incident.

Shaken Fury 2019 was a simulated 7.7-magnitude earthquake along the New Madrid Seismic Zone near Memphis, Tenn., that tested federal and state responders. Thousands participated in the exercise, including personnel from the Department of Energy, U.S. military, state and local governments, and the private sector. An earthquake of this scale would create widespread catastrophic damage and economic losses.

The exercises help the response community and stakeholders prepare, evaluate capabilities and identify areas for improvement.

"This is one of many examples of how the expertise provided by environmental management cleanup operations is benefitting other Department of Energy offices and the nation," said Jill Conrad, RL program manager for HAMMER.

HAMMER staff served as exercise personnel and actively supported the planning for the exercise. This included coordinating over 1,700 scenarios that emergency groups could respond to, allowing recovery efforts to be tested and evaluated to ensure optimal readiness for an actual event.

"The value these exercises provide to our nation's responders is immeasurable," said Nicole Zawadzki, HAMMER national programs manager. "The relationships and real-world experiences prepare emergency responders to work together to restore energy during catastrophic earthquakes and help people in a time of need."

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Federal, local and private-sector personnel act as exercise controllers in support of Shaken Fury 2019, a large-scale national exercise, held in Nashville, Tenn.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency Communications Command Center was used during the simulation (and is used in real events) to provide communication support to areas that are no longer able to provide cellular, internet and phone services.

The Department of Energy (DOE) is responsible for the federal government's cleanup of the legacy of more than 40 years of plutonium production at the Hanford Site near Richland, Wash. The DOE Office of River Protection (ORP) is responsible for the safe and efficient retrieval, treatment and disposal of the 56 million gallons of chemical and radioactive waste stored in Hanford's 177 underground tanks. The River Protection Project is the largest and most complex environmental remediation project in the nation. ORP oversees the tank waste management mission and the building of the world's largest radioactive waste treatment plant, which will immobilize the legacy tank waste through vitrification. The DOE Richland Operations Office is responsible for all remaining Hanford cleanup and is currently focused on demolishing the high-hazard Plutonium Finishing Plant, excavating and disposing of contaminated soil and waste, treating contaminated groundwater, moving radioactive sludge out of the K West Basin and away from the Columbia River, and configuring Hanford Site infrastructure for the future, with an emphasis on supporting the tank waste mission. The two offices oversee Hanford Site work that is conducted by a federal and contractor workforce of approximately 9,000 personnel. Visit www.hanford.gov for more information about Hanford Site.

OFFICE OF RIVER PROTECTION
United States Department of Energy

RICHLAND OPERATIONS OFFICE
United States Department of Energy