

Crisis Management for Law Enforcement

Crisis Management for Law Enforcement

SECOND EDITION

James Smith



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Foreword

This text explores the knowledge base and procedures necessary for a law enforcement leader to plan, mitigate, and respond to a crisis and the subsequent consequences. A feature of the textbook is that actual events are explored in a Lessons Learned section at the end of some chapters. This provides the law enforcement leader or law enforcement officer with lessons in not only what he or she should do, but also addresses those actions he or she should not take.

Situational awareness is explored from the strategic and tactical standpoint to provide the leader an understanding of the value of both strategic and tactical intelligence. The textbook also provides tactical situational awareness and guidance for the onsite leader in tactical decision making.

Essential information is provided to allow the law enforcement leader to function in the dynamic and evolving environment of terrorism, weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and natural disasters, along with public disorder. The dynamics of leadership during a crisis are discussed.

The issue of novel toxic substances is explored. This provides the law enforcement leader information as to how operations potentially involving these substances should be handled. More important, the text provides information to recognize a potential event involving a novel toxic material.

Events involving emerging diseases, animal, and plant terrorism are reviewed. The law enforcement role in epidemiology involving both human, zoonotic, and plant diseases is discussed. The disease threat for law enforcement engaged in operations and the vectors of diseases are provided, as are countermeasures to exposure to mosquito and tick-borne diseases.

The problems inherent with evacuations, emergency sheltering, sheltering in place, and access issues are discussed. Issues such as interagency interfaces, Law Enforcement Incident Management System, and NIMS are addressed with emphasis on pre-existing mutual aid agreements and memoranda of under-

standing. Decision making is explored with an emphasis on making decisions during a crisis. Legal concepts involving jurisdictional disputes, forcible evacuations, scene access, interagency operations, and incident management are addressed. This textbook provides an overview and essential information for the law enforcement leader to identify the areas in which additional information, study, planning, and education are required. The text emphasizes IMS but also explains the areas in which IMS does not perform well and encourages the law enforcement leader to use the portions of IMS which work well for the agency and event, while discarding the components not needed.

Introduction

Law enforcement personnel will face multiple crises during a career. Most will be self-resolving or require minimal actions on the part of the responders or leaders. However, almost every responder and leader will face a challenging crisis which will test his or her resolve and abilities. A crisis consists of the events preceding or during a disaster, and a disaster is the consequence of a crisis. However, the terms may be used interchangeably in some instances.

The key to resolution in an amenable manner is prior planning and the ability to operate in a stressful environment, making decisions in a time-limited manner with conflicting data. Two occupations perform these tasks routinely: emergency physicians and law enforcement officers.

Mental preparation is crucial. One must be mentally prepared, have resolved any issues in the use of deadly force, and be prepared to make decisions with long-range, life-changing potential. Anecdotal reports from responders and leaders demonstrate that even a short amount of time to prepare mentally for an event is valuable in facilitating coping skills and in facing critical decision making. Drills and exercises are another important aspect of mental preparation for crises. These allow the “what if” scenarios to be portrayed in a safe setting.

Simply considering “If A happens, how would I react?” is the beginning of a mindset which allows one to consider the myriad of scenarios one might face. Those leaders and responders failing to consider the unlikely are doomed to failure should the event occur. Mental and emotional overloads during a crisis are common, and during the crisis is not the time to consider what to do. One should have sorted out and determined many of the options of the more common crises one can expect. This should be accomplished prior to their occurrence. This mindset provides a framework for decision making.

Leaders should consider the following poem, as the poem is prophetic about law enforcement events.

Far-stretching, endless time
Brings forth all hidden things,
And buries that which once did shine.
The firm resolve falters, the sacred oath shattered;
And let none say, "It cannot happen here."

Sophocles, *Ajax*, 400 B.C.

This textbook addresses the facets of mental preparation, development of risk matrices, identification of threat spectrum, and probability of crisis event occurrence. Common events along with some more esoteric issues are discussed. Decision making and analytical skills are reviewed along with resources to obtain information regarding threats and threat periodicity.