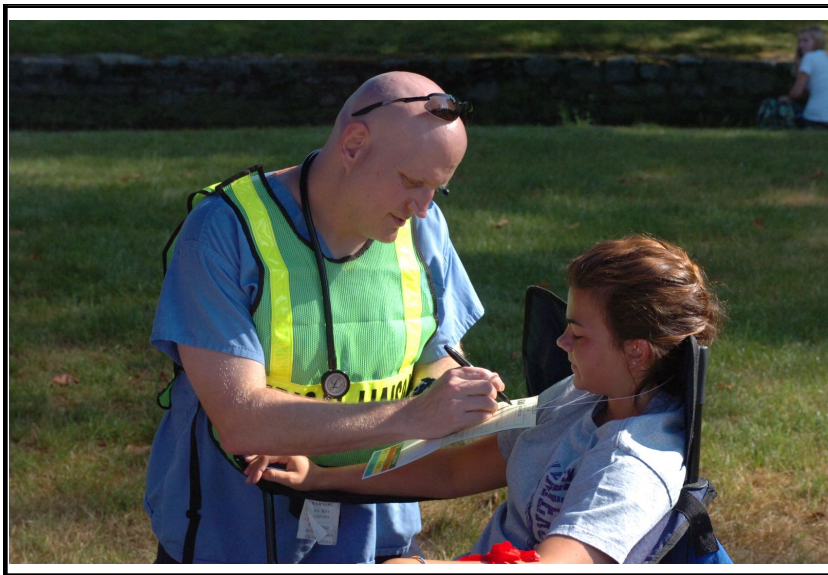


Carlisle Barracks conducts Force Protection Exercise

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By Tyler Davis



On a seemingly average Thursday, 11 men and women were arriving to Carlisle Barracks amid the normal traffic of students and post employees. Instead of heading to an office, they donned body armor and tactical gear, loaded weapons, and boarded a heavily armored assault vehicle. The Cumberland County Special Response Team had arrived on scene.

Left: Dave Geller, Clinical RN, conducts an assesment of one of the victims during the exercise.

The simulated emergency scenario involving a Carlisle school district bus was an exercise concept developed by post emergency planners with their counterparts in local, regional and federal law enforcement. The exercise tested the relationships and emergency plans of Carlisle Barracks and local county law enforcement entities. The end result is a keener sense of how to quickly create a tight, well communicated, working relationship in an emergency.

“We are looking for upfront guidance so we can respond the correct way to real emergency situations,” said Barry Farquhar director of Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security at Carlisle Barracks. “The exercise helps to identify issues that we need to improve on and the things we are doing right.”

The exercise planners created a simulated situation for which all of the installation law enforcement and first responder partners would take part – from the early identification of the problem through negotiations with the ‘bad guy.’ In addition the simulation exercised coordination with the school district, the local hospital, and



planning for how to meet the information needs of post families.

“These are the things we need to think about now,” said Michele Parsons, Emergency Management Training Coordinator for Cumberland County. “We need to start communicating now so we are ready when emergency situations happen for real.”



Emergency planners and exercise coordinators also worked closely with Carlisle Area School District in developing and planning a response for the unlikely event of an emergency involving a district school bus.

Right: Victims are evaluated and transported depending on the severity of their wounds.

Organizations from both the Carlisle Barracks and Cumberland County supported the exercise contributing to intelligence, communications, medical assistance, relief efforts and support for the officers on the ground.

“The participation of the wide span of partners was outstanding,” said Elaine Leist, Deputy Garrison Commander. “That participation was the ‘T’ in ‘Team’ today.”

Cumberland County participated with its Public Safety Office, Special Reaction Team and Cumberland Goodwill fire rescue and EMS.

Carlisle Barracks Police, Guards, Fire, CID, Crisis Management Team and Dunham Army Health Clinic participated alongside Cumberland County, the Department of Justice and the FBI.

In addition to their own internal observers, a team of emergency managers from West Point, New York and Ft. Dietrick, Md., also participated in the event as evaluators.

“It’s very important to stress training and the relationships with your surrounding community,” said Joe Colombo, director of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Safety at West Point. “This stuff isn’t easy but you work very well with your partners in the area.”

The force protection exercise is an annual training event held on Carlisle Barracks to maintain strong communication and working relationships with the surrounding community. Carlisle Barracks has

agreements with local and county law enforcement and emergency organizations to share resources and assist each other in the event of disaster or emergency.

“The most important thing is to fortify the relationship with the Barracks and the Barracks community,” said Megan Silverstrim, Cumberland County Public Information Officer. “It provides open discourse in the event of emergencies where both county and Barracks resources

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 12 July 2012