

Major accident: the presence of a paramedic, an emergency doctor and a dispatcher on site to lead is a key to success

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BACKGROUND

Excellent coordination between firefighters, policemen and medical rescue is the key to success in major accidents and disasters management.

From our experience, the medical rescue team coordination seems generally less efficient than that of firemen and policemen, mainly due to lack of training and deficient organisation.

AIM OF THE EXPERIENCE

To improve and assist the medical rescue team during major accidents, we decided to apply a new binomial leadership strategy to the on-site crisis management, as well as including an on-site medical dispatcher.

METHODS

We introduced a specific training program in disaster medicine (theory and practice). A group of 10 paramedics and 10 doctors are now specifically trained for major event medical management. A "medical command team" composed of one Head Rescue Doctor (HRD) and one Head Rescue Paramedic (HRP) is now available 24/7 for **joint leadership** for the on-site management.

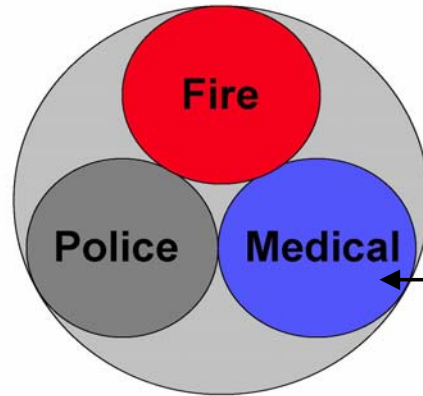
Further on site support of the HRD/HRP team includes a **medical command car**; this vehicle is equipped with all the usual communication modalities (radio, mobile phone, internet) and is staffed by a medical dispatcher.

CONCLUSION

The specific skills of one physician and one paramedic both trained for disaster's management proved to complement one another perfectly and were thus indispensable to the task at hand.

The presence of a dispatcher on site with the medical command car also proved to be useful: order transmission from the medical command team to all other on- and off-site partners was improve. It also relieved the medical command team of the need for repeated back-and-forth communication with the EMS dispatching center, thus allowing the command team to focus on strategy and tactics rather than communication and logistics.

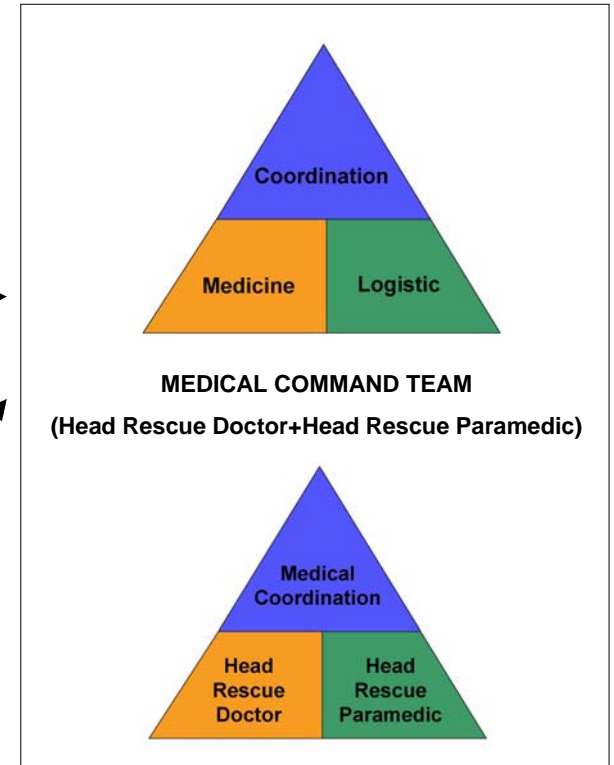
GENERAL COMMAND POST on-site



MEDICAL COMMAND CAR on-site



MEDICAL COMMAND POST on-site



EMS Dispatching Center

