The Station Nightclub Fire: Emergency Response

Federal Advisory Committee
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Magnitude of life loss & injury

100 fatalities:
- 96 on site
- 4 subsequent to hospitalization

Estimated 230 casualties (186 of whom were transported by 1st responder agencies)

In U.S. history:
- 4th deadliest ‘nightclub’ fire
- 9th deadliest ‘place of public assembly’ fire
West Warwick Fire Department

Provides primary fire suppression, rescue & EMS to a population of just under 30,000 in a service area of approx. 8 sq. miles

Operating out of 4 Stations with a total of:
- 4 engines,
- 1 ladder truck,
- 1 special hazards / light unit &
- 2 rescue ambulances

Staffed by 13 career officers & firefighters per shift* (NFPA 1500 & 1710)
Type & Scope of the Incident

Type: Occupied commercial public assembly fire

Scope: Mass Casualties / Mass Fatalities Incident

WWFD “all hands” response w/ callback of off duty personnel
RI multi-regional, multi-State Fire-EMS-Police Mutual Aid

Activated:

- The Southern New England Fire Emergency Assistance Plan – MCI component
- The Rhode Island Mass Casualty Disaster Plan
Type & Scope of Incident (cont.)

583  Fire, EMS & Police responders

57 +  Public & 6 Commercial Amb. Co.s (BLS-ALS)

2  Bus Services provided transportation & shelter

RI State Fire Marshal’s Office

RI State Medical Examiner’s Office
Incident progression

2/2/03
11:07 pm  Ignition of stage area wall covering
11:10 pm  WWFD dispatched to the scene
11:14 pm  WWFD Eng.4 on scene advising “Heavy Fire” on arrival
11:16 pm  WWFD Eng.4 “booster tank” initial water on fire
11:22 pm  WWFD Chief responding, orders implementation of MCI plan
11:24 pm  WWFD Eng. 4 receives water supply, begins "Master Stream" operations
# Incident progression (cont.)

2/21/03  (Rescue & Fire suppression efforts continue)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:15 am</td>
<td>Partial collapse of poolroom area</td>
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<tr>
<td>? am</td>
<td>Fire extinguished, recovery operations continue</td>
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<tr>
<td>01:05 am</td>
<td>All casualties transported from the scene</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 am</td>
<td>Chiefs meet to plan demobilization</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 am</td>
<td>Crane arrives to assist body recovery efforts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Last body recovered</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15 pm</td>
<td>All units returned to quarters, incident scene secured, fire investigation ongoing</td>
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Incident assessment sources

- Information independently acquired by the NCST from State / local agencies & officials (e.g., A/V tapes, dispatch logs, photographs)
- Information detailed in DHS/ODP’s after-action report acquired from various participant interviews, news accounts, existing records, etc.

Actions remaining to be taken:

- Complete “critical events” & “key actions” timeline
- Identify missing information and resolve inconsistencies
- Coordinate information with State / Local officials and DHS/ODP