

7th Canadian Risk and Hazards Network (CRHNet) Symposium



Acknowledgements



**Justice Institute of
British Columbia**



**CRTI – Centre for
Security Sciences**

**Robin Cox, Royal Roads University
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Introduction

EOC

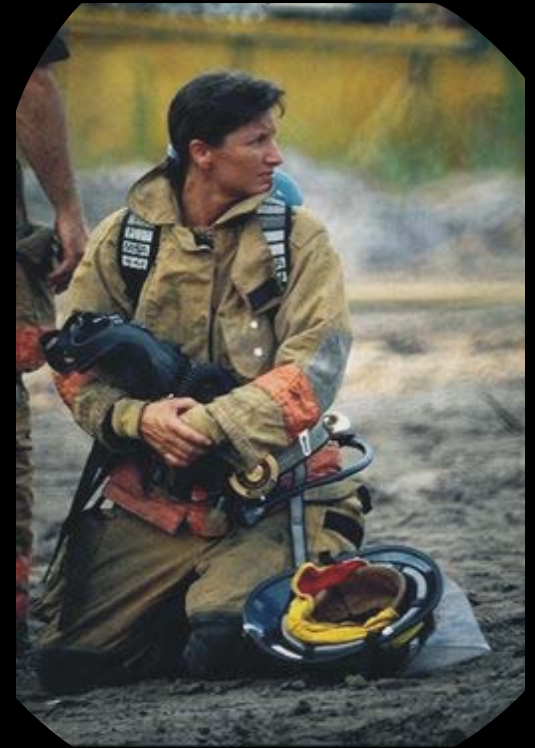


**Emergency Operations Centre
with senior decision makers (at
the strategic and/or tactical level)
involved in support to emergency
disaster sites**

Introduction

Psychosocial

Affects the mind & body including one's physical, psychological and social functioning



Introduction

Experience

In the field

Research



Preliminary Research pre-2010

Various Government Level EOCs

Generally poor
psychosocial awareness
and response to actual or
potential needs



“Looking for unhappy people.”

Introduction

Disaster Psychosocial Effects



have **not** been taken into account by EOCs

➔ poorer decisions

➔ unnecessary trauma for personnel

➔ longer recovery

- community & responders

Disasters
Community
EOCs
Front Line Personnel



Decision Makers

What We Know

Decisions



- 1. Time pressure/constraints**
- 2. Ill-structured problems**
- 3. Uncertain, dynamic environments**
- 4. Shifting, ill-defined or competing goals**
- 5. Multiple event-feedback loops**
- 6. High stakes**
- 7. Knowledge-rich environments**
- 8. High decision complexity**

What We Know

**Symptoms
& Reactions
to Stress**



**One-on-One & Group
Strategies to Assist
Coping with Stress**



What We Know

That most decision makers **never** talk about the **psychosocial** factors and how they would affect the **EOC, Front Line Personnel** and the **Community**



What We Don't Know

How to
Change
Behaviour



Culture

- Responder

System

- ICS

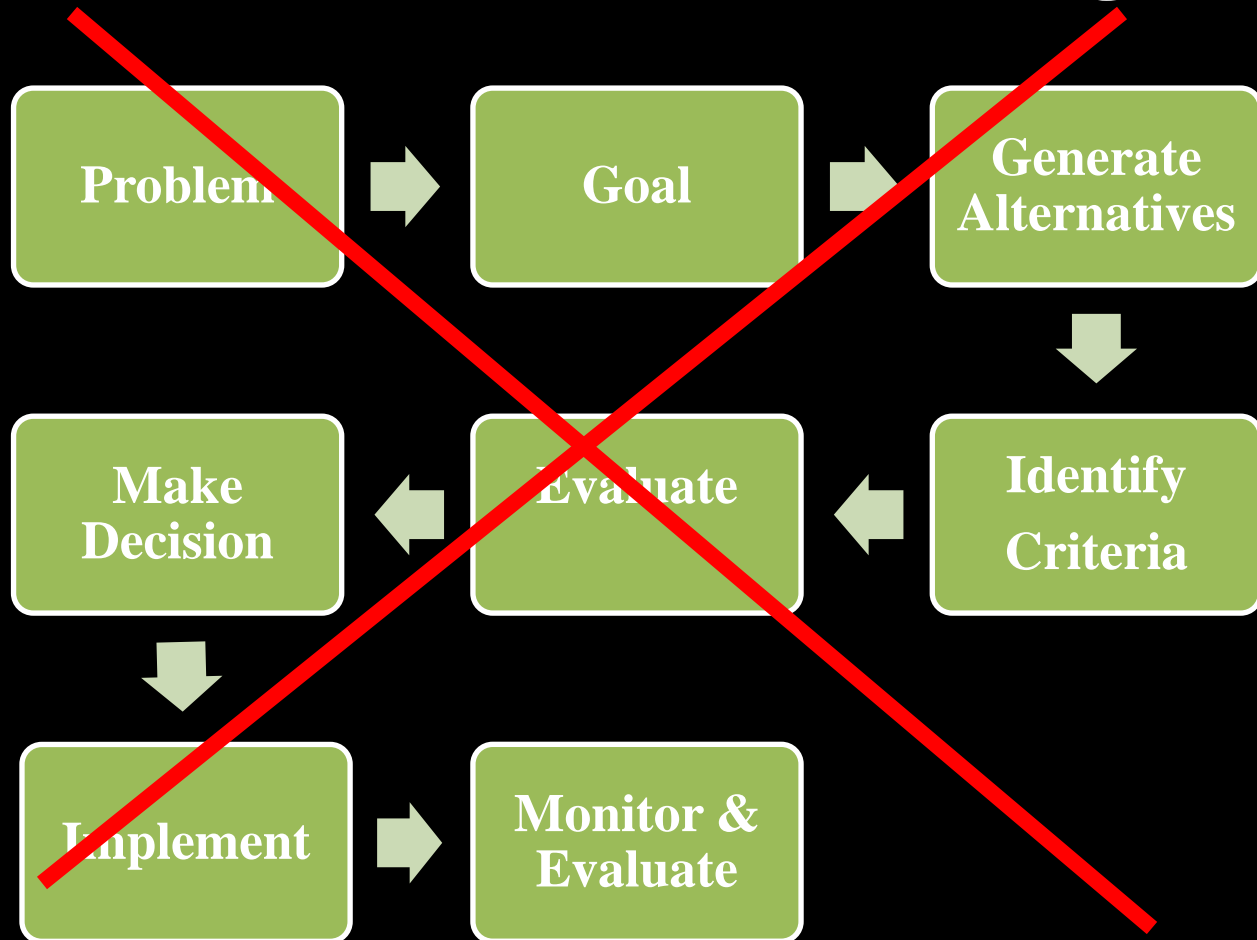


Knowledge

- Transfer
- Dissemination
- Assimilation

What We Know

Structured Problem Solving

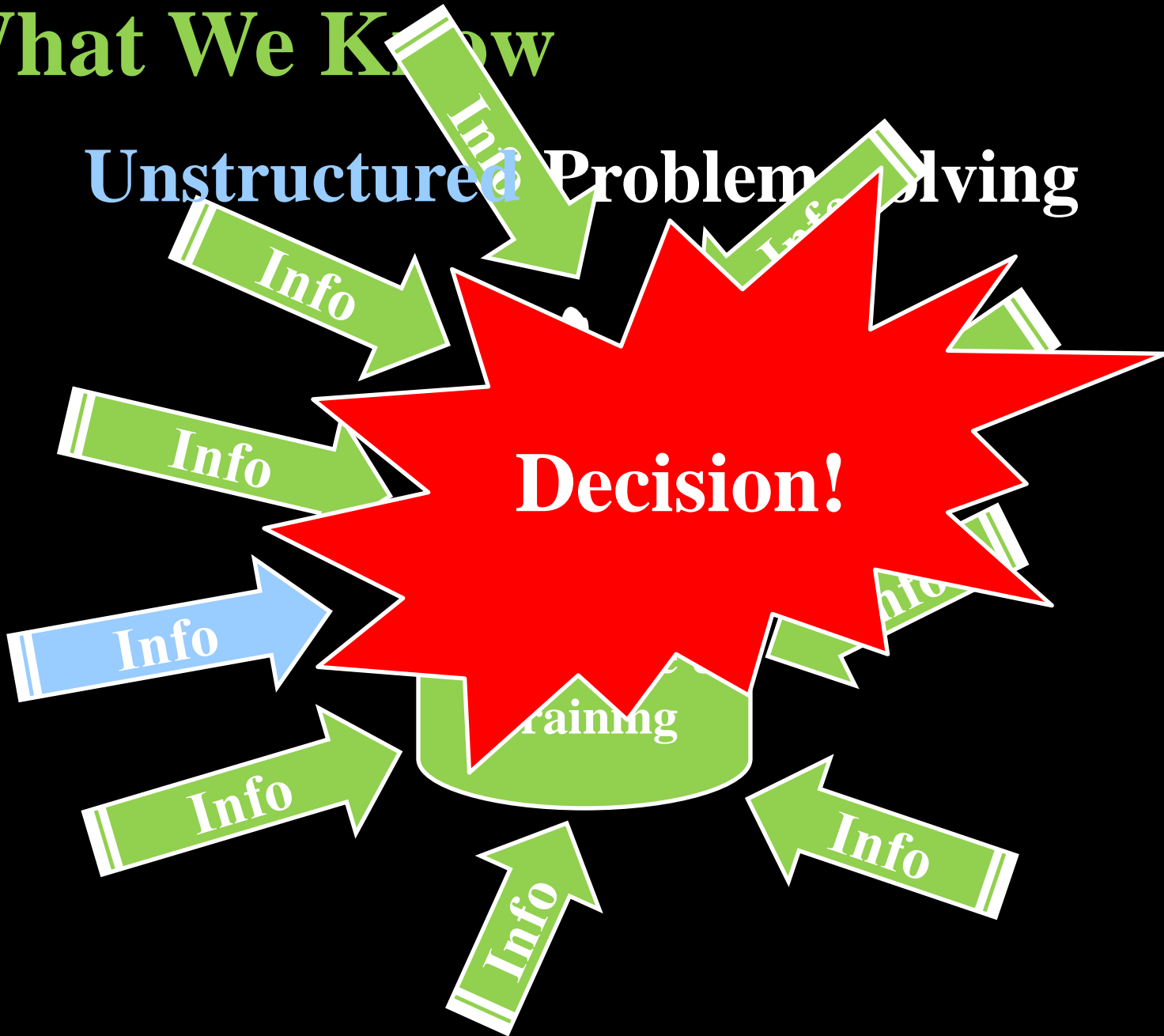


What We Know



What We Know

Unstructured Problem Solving



What We Know

There are **few cues** or recognizable patterns

Culture mitigates against it

System is not conducive to acceptance



What We Know



“A decision maker evaluates a course of action by **imagining how it will evolve.**

In case that a course of action does not work for the current situation, the decision maker can either adjust it, or reject it and examine another option until a workable solution is obtained.”

Klein's Recognition-Primed Decision framework

What We Know

“[When] team wide collaboration opportunities are naturally embedded into the decision-making process they perform better ...in the sense that they can maintain team performance at acceptable levels in high time pressure situations.”



Klein's Recognition-Primed Decision framework

What We Know



“... people make real-world decisions and use specific decision criteria which are used by most of the individuals in a group to make a decision

Ethnographic Decision Tree Modeling

Strategies We Know

But are **SELDOM** ever used!



Strategies for EOC Decision Making

During Your Shift

Who gets the oxygen first?
If you don't take care of yourself
you won't be able to help others.

- Know when your shifts start and ends
- Know who's in charge
- Check in with yourself several times during your shift:
 - How am I doing?
 - What do I need?
- Take 5 minutes alone or with a colleague
- Get up, stretch and take a deep breath
- Drink water, water, water
- Take toilet breaks!!
- Fuel yourself – eat healthy
- Look out for each other
- Talk clearly and calmly
- Take time to listen
- Address issues when they arise
- Remember to smile
- Ask for help if you need it

After Your Shift

- Know who is your emergency contact person
- Get together with colleagues
- Find some way to connect
- Get some sleep
- Get some exercise – walk, swim, run . . .
- Fuel yourself – eat healthy
- Phone family and friends
- Do what is relaxing for you
- Talking helps
- Have a beer – not 10!

If you've had a bad day – Remember
you've made a difference!

Staffing Bureau Telephone: _____

Emergency Contact Telephone: _____

Hotel Telephone: _____

Strategies for EOC Decision Makers

Be a Leader

SET THE TONE — a confident, calm leader creates a constructive environment.

MAINAIN THE FOCUS — foster a sense of purpose and optimism in your team.

ASSIGN BUDDIES TO FRONT LINE STAFF — look out for each other.

ROTATE RESPONSIBILITIES — tasks differ in complexity, difficulty, levels of stress, physical demands.

TWELVE HOURS MAX! — set up shift schedules.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE — if you don't take a break, your staff won't.

EMPOWERMENT — trust your team members.

ADDRESS ISSUES AS THEY ARISE — park your ego.

DIRECTION — communicate clearly.

EMUST HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT — you can't do it all.

RECOGNIZE WORK WELL DONE — everybody's important — from support levels to the hard line.

SECURITY & SAFETY — make sure your staff are safe.

HUMOUR — laughing is good!

INNOVATION — think outside the box.

PEOPLE ARE THE RESPONSE — get out on the front line!



Strategies for EOC Decision Makers

Manage the Meaning

Manage the Exposure

Manage the Fatigue

Buddy Care

Demobilizations

Provide Information re: Important Others

Get Out on the Front Line

Ask for Help



Our Research



**Enhancing CBRNE
Psychosocial Capacity and
Capability Management**

Methodology



Analysis

Klein's Recognition-Primed Decision Framework

Recognize & Evaluate Adaptive Decision Making

“Human experts make decisions based on the recognition of past experiences that are similar to the current situation.”

- cues, goals, courses of action & expectancies of an experience

Methodology

Analysis



Ethnographic Decision Tree Modeling

Model Building and Model Verification

- ethnographic interviews - identify **key factors, including context variables, that are used in the decision-making process**
- “do it/do not do it” decisions

Methodology

Iterative

Develop Exercise(s)



ExPod at JIBC

Audio-Visual Recording & Analysis

Ethographic & Key Informant Interviews

Focus Groups

Participatory Action Research

What We Don't Know



Decontamination

EOCs



Dealing with Mass Casualty Trauma



Forensic Psychosocial Intervention



Use of a Collaboratory

What is it?



“a center without walls, in which **researchers can perform their research without regard to physical location** — interacting with colleagues, accessing instrumentation, sharing data and computational resources, and accessing information in digital libraries”

Use of a Collaboratory

What is it?

A **research infrastructure** that will support the design, conduct, and dissemination of research



Collaboratory partners **use technology** to share research, apply practice wisdom, and learn from the experiences and perspectives of diverse groups of people

Use of a Collaboratory

What is it?

1. *Shared Instruments*
2. *Community Data Systems*
3. *Open Community Contribution Systems*
4. *Virtual Communities of Practice*
5. *Virtual Learning Communities*
6. *Community Infrastructure Projects*



Distributed Research Centre

ExPod

What is it?



Collaboratory

Suite of Exercises



Collaboratory

Focus Groups

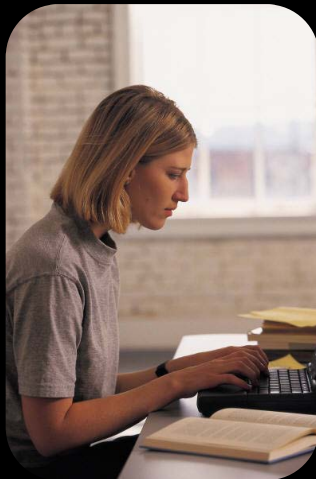
Exercises - Thematic Coding

Interviews

Participatory Action Research

Unaddressed, the psychosocial consequences of working in crisis situations can increase the risk of adverse health outcomes, post-traumatic stress, and exacerbate economic and social disruption. Despite potential costs, psychosocial consequence management is rarely systematically or comprehensively addressed. Exercise training is often recognized as a critical component of effective disaster leadership and decision making. Traditional problem-solving methods are not used at times of crisis when decisions must be made quickly and often with very little information. Event and command realism are critical components for effective training and testing of awareness, knowledge and skills by providing a simulation environment in which individuals and teams must learn how to prioritize actions and manage the kind of multi-agency, complex decision-making process that is characteristic of real-life emergency response.

Data
Data



Outcome



to intervene in the decision making process with new insights and knowledge designed to make things better

and...

Disseminate the Knowledge

Increase Awareness

Change Behaviour

Influence the Culture



Questions?



Thanks!



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Pictures – www.fema.gov

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