NEMA ANNUAL FORUM · GENERAL SESSION

FIFA World Cup After Thoughts

What States Need to Know for the Next Global Event



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WITH APPRECIATION

Acknowledgments

01

FIFA

02

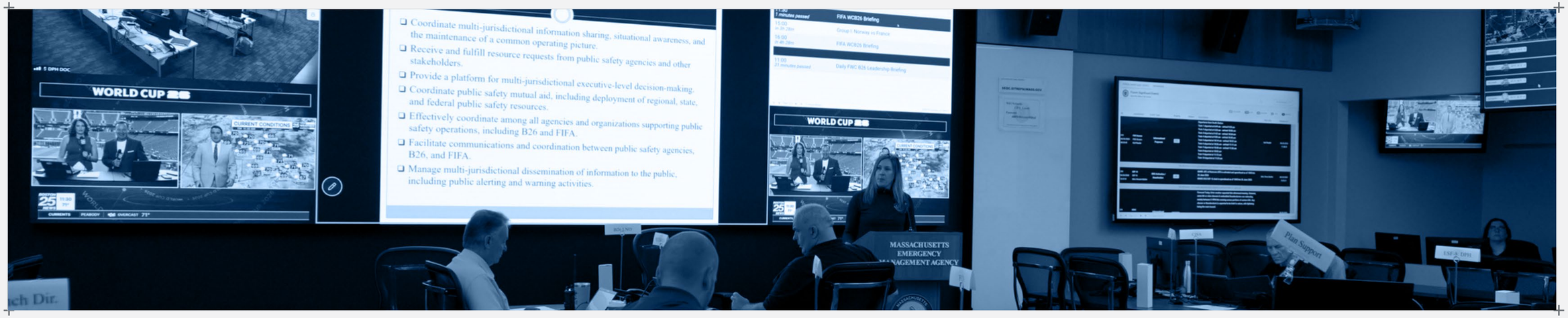
Task Force States

03

Big City Emergency Managers

04

ASTHO



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CONTEXT

The Tournament at Scale

6.8M fans in attendance	**16** host cities	**~4,500** EMS responses
31 severe weather protocol activations	**~300K** name checks conducted	**~40** days in operational posture (Philadelphia)

THE OVERARCHING LESSON

Emergency management activities cannot begin when the event begins.

The jurisdictions best positioned for success started early, involved stakeholders, strengthened existing systems, established trusted relationships, clarified governance, exercised their plans, and continuously adapted as conditions changed.

FINDINGS

Eight Lessons for States

01

Make Safety and Service Part of the Same Mission

02

Build Relationships Before They Are Needed

03

Integrate Health, Weather, and Public Safety

04

Scale Existing Systems and Establish Governance First

05

Build Flexibility and Protect Workforce Capacity

06

Start Early, Exercise Often, and Keep Planning

07

Plan for the Entire Operating Environment

08

Create a Common Operating Picture and Use Intelligence Proactively

FRAMING THE FINDINGS

Measuring Success

Success in emergency management is often invisible.

EXAMPLE

A cyberattack briefly shut down the National Weather Service website during the tournament. The key people knew, and it was resolved.





LESSON 01

Make Safety and Service Part of the Same Mission

The public should feel safe, welcomed, and supported, not simply protected.

MA and NJ	Troopers maintained security while engaging positively with fans
Fans	Behavior was overwhelmingly positive
Planning	Include information, mobility, accessibility, and communication during disruptions



LESSON 02

Build Relationships Before They Are Needed

Trusted partnerships are an operational capability.

Emergency management / public safety	Law enforcement
Interoperable communications	Public information / public affairs
Public health and medical services	Intelligence and investigations
Tactical operations	EOD / CBRNE
Transportation and network security	City / county partners
Private sector organizations	Neighboring jurisdictions
Federal agencies	International partners
Event organizers and venue operators: hotels, festival zones, base camps, stadiums	

LESSON 03

Integrate Health, Weather, and Public Safety

Major event risk does not respect organizational boundaries. The event's risk profile should drive the planning structure.

HEALTH

~4,500

EMS responses, with fewer transports per event than the NFL comparison average

WEATHER

16 + 15

severe weather protocol activations on non-match and match days

ENVIRONMENT

Heat and smoke

Extreme heat rarely causes delays or evacuations but has a health and safety impact

LESSON 04 · PART 1

Scale Existing Systems and Establish Governance First

Scale plans and systems that people already understand.

Georgia	Scaled its ICS, EOCs, State Operations Center, WebEOC, mutual aid agreements, and communications systems
Massachusetts	Used the large-event planning model familiar from the Boston Marathon
New Jersey	Adapted existing command and intelligence structures, adding new components where necessary
Pennsylvania / Philadelphia	Leveraged existing planning and resource structures; the state took a consequence-management approach
Washington	Expanded sporting-event capabilities, including Seahawks-related counter-UAS

LESSON 04 · PART 2

Scale Existing Systems and Establish Governance First

Before detailed planning begins, define:

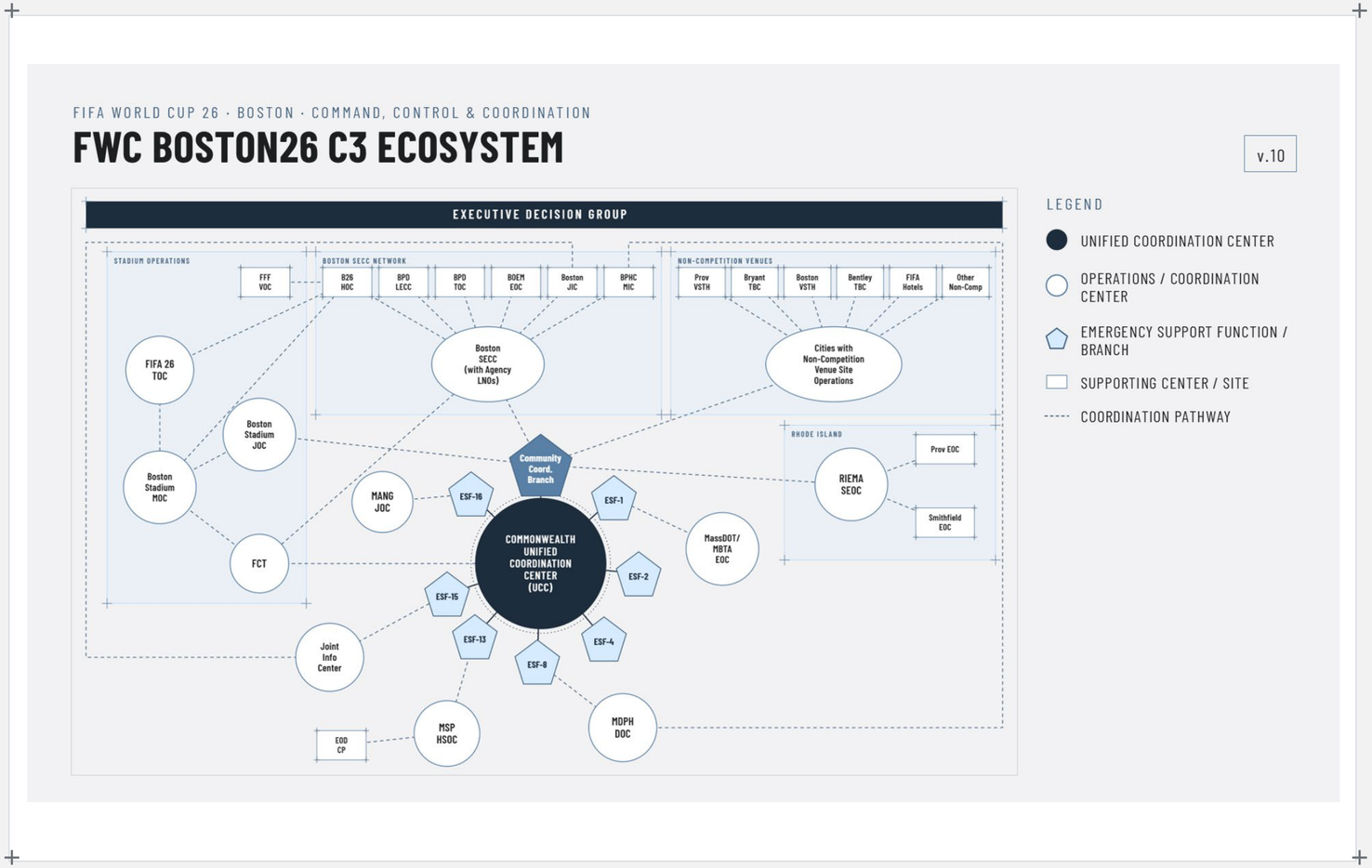
Who leads

Who decides

Who coordinates

Who provides resources

How jurisdictions connect



Massachusetts C3 framework: 11 EOCs connected across Massachusetts and Rhode Island

LESSON 05

Build Flexibility and Protect Workforce Capacity

Workforce capacity is an operational risk.

6 centers

activated at once in Philadelphia for about 40 days

5 weeks

of intensive operations alongside routine public health work

STATES SHOULD PLAN FOR

- Rotating shifts
- Shortened workdays
- Cross-training
- Continuity of routine services
- Planned rest periods
- Relief staffing
- Organizational depth
- Succession and replacement plans

LESSON 06

Start Early, Exercise Often, and Keep Planning

Time is a preparedness resource. Sustained planning is an ongoing capability.



~2 years

Planning begins in some states

180 days

Tabletop exercise

90 days

Functional exercise

30 days

Full-scale exercise

Event

Seven-day advance planning, separate from the EOC



LESSON 07

Plan for the Entire Operating Environment

The official event is only one part of the event.

ALSO ON THE CALENDAR

- America's 250th
- NBA Championship
- NFL Draft
- PGA Tour
- NASCAR races
- Air and boat shows
- Governor-sponsored events
- Fan festivals and watch parties

New Jersey	Structures for activity outside the stadium perimeter
Massachusetts	Tracker for unofficial public fan events over 1,000 capacity

LESSON 08

Create a Common Operating Picture and Use Intelligence Proactively

Establish information requirements and sharing processes before selecting technology.

WHAT WORKED

Dashboards, situation reports, and virtual briefings (NJ)

A shared information platform (Philadelphia)

Daily calls open to all host jurisdictions

WHAT WAS HARD

FIFA and 16 host cities on different platforms

Obtaining ground truth

Knowing where information could be shared

INTELLIGENCE AS PREVENTION

~300,000

name checks through a new FBI/FIFA process

RECOMMENDATIONS

What States Should Carry Forward

Before the event

- Build relationships
- Start early
- Define governance
- Scale existing systems
- Establish information requirements
- Integrate intelligence
- Plan the entire environment
- Build organizational depth

During the event

- Maintain forward-looking planning
- Share information continuously
- Adapt deliberately
- Treat secondary activities as operational venues
- Keep service delivery in the mission

After the event

Capture capabilities, not just lessons learned.

Make the systems, relationships, agreements, technologies, and processes part of the permanent preparedness posture.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Next Global Event

The strongest investments made for the World Cup are capabilities that strengthen a state's ability to manage any major event.



Use the next major event to build a stronger emergency management system for whatever comes next.



FIFA WORLD CUP AFTER THOUGHTS

Questions

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