Workshop Tasks

Group 1 – Summarize the major features of the event, research methods and the unit of analysis used by Denis (1995).

Group 2 – What were the major coordination problems experienced by the DMO described by Denis (1995).

Group 3 – Explain and illustrate what Denis (1995) meant by these two phrases: 1) “coordination as a strategy” and 2) “coordination as an organizational design mechanism”.

Group 4 – According to Denis (1995), why was the response to the used-tire dump more effective?
Disasters vs. Routine Emergencies

- Fragmented Responses
- Agency Autonomy
- Internal Shifts
- New Tasks
- New Faces
- Jurisdictional Boundaries
- Impacted Resources
- Expanded Media Presence
Expanded Coordination Requirements: Examples of a New Division of Labor

- Interagency Communication
- Search and Rescue
- Triage and Casualty Distribution
- Creation and Maintenance of Official Casualty Lists
- Victim Inquiry Information System
- Issuance of Passes into the Impact Area
- Handling of the Dead (Transportation; Storage; Identification; Notification)
- Provisions for Livestock and Family Pets
- Procedures for Building Inspection and Potential Condemnation
- Debris Removal and Landfill Requirements

Expanded Coordination Requirements: Examples of New Resources

- Non-Emergency Units Within Local Government, e.g., Tax Office, Parks and Recreation
- Private Sector Organizations, e.g., Local Contractors
- Emergency Agencies from Nearby Jurisdictions
- State and Federal Agencies

Six Coordinating Mechanisms

• Mutual Adjustment
• Direct Supervision
• Standardization of Work Processes
• Standardization of Outputs
• Standardization of Skills (and Knowledge)
• Standardization of Norms

Socially Based Strategies for Improving Interagency Communication

- Predisaster Communications
- Trust
- Disputes
- Knowledge
- Joint Activities
- Informal Contacts
- Plan to Plan

Equipment Based Strategies for Improving Interagency Communications

- Backup Power
- Frequency Sharing
- Satellite Communication
- Computer-Based Communication

Constraints on Response

- Legitimation (Dynes 1970)
- Political Influence (Drabek 1986)
- Legal Requirements (Drabek 1986)
- Uncertainty (Denis 1995)
- Communication Difficulties (Coombs 1998)
- Blame Assignment (Coombs 1998)
- Media (Coombs 1998)

Increasing Organizational Effectiveness

- Planning
- Previous Disaster Experience
- Interorganizational Relationships
- Flexible Management