

Welcome to SIMTEC!

I would like to welcome you to our first SIMTEC Newsletter. We will use the Newsletter to keep you informed on our research findings, upcoming events and related information. On May 27, 2011 a new multi-year \$3.6 million (\$2.2 funded; \$1.4 in-kind) research project was awarded to the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC). The Simulation Training and Exercise Collaboratory (SIMTEC) project is funded by the Chemical, Biological Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) Research and Technology Initiative (CRTI) of the Centre for Security Science, Department of National Defence. The CRTI Program Manager is Ahmad Khorchid and we are delighted to have François Legault, the National Director of the Employee Assistance Services (EAS) Bureau, as our Project Champion.

Joining me as Co-Principal Investigators are Colleen Vaughan, Director of the Emergency Management Division at JIBC and Robin Cox, Associate Professor and Program Head for Master of Disaster and Emergency Program, at Royal Roads University. We also welcome the new Dean, JIBC Office of Applied Research, Greg Anderson.

The SIMTEC project is an exciting one. People around the world are experiencing an increase in risk due to extreme weather, infectious diseases, natural and human-induced disasters and CBRNE events. The material consequences for individuals, families and communities are immense. So are the psychological and social (psychosocial) consequences.

Those engaged in emergency and disaster management have identified a need for policies, protocols and procedures that will provide effective psychosocial support for decision makers, first responders, other professionals and community members. This support includes practical tools and guidelines, as well as the

training and access to the information required to use them. As we move ahead with our research, we will be asking three primary questions:

1. What resources and training do Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) personnel need to respond more effectively to the psychosocial consequences of disasters?
2. What resources and training would assist first responders, family physicians and other psychosocial practitioners to respond to the psychosocial consequences of disasters?
3. How can the knowledge and resources developed through this research most effectively be made available to EOC personnel, first responders, psychosocial practitioners, researchers and community members around the world?

We will use JIBC's Hydra and ExPod systems to study senior Emergency Operations Centre personnel during various exercise scenarios and the findings will demonstrate how to best enhance Canada's and the international community's capacity to respond more effectively to CBRNE and other threats.

I do hope that as our project unfolds you will find our regular updates interesting and that you will take the opportunity to share your thoughts and ideas with us. We welcome contributions to our Newsletter and website and look forward to developing a relationship with all of you over the next four years.



Laurie Pearce
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SIMTEC Website

We have launched our website and the SIMTEC Project Team would like to thank JIBC staff Rosamaria Fong, Marcela Hernandez, Alex Popov and Chris Wong and his team for their creative insights and hard work in helping create the SIMTEC website before the deadline! We invite you to visit our new website at simtec.jibc.ca to learn more about our research team and project partners.



Work has started...

Just days after having been awarded the contract, Laurie Pearce attended the CRTI Summer Symposium in Ottawa and gave a presentation on the SIMTEC project, which garnered a lot of interest from delegates.

We are particularly pleased to have a great project team at JIBC – Jim Boerma, our Project Manager and Terry Bodaly our Administration Research Assistant. We also are fortunate to have the participation and support from various divisions at JIBC including the School of Public Safety and Security, Library, Technology Services, Technology-Enabled Learning & Teaching (TELT) Unit, Finance & Administration, Emergency Management Division and the Office of Applied Research.

SIMTEC Technology Enhancement Team

The SIMTEC Project Team, together with representatives from JIBC's Technology Services, Office of Graduate Studies & Academic Services, Emergency Management Division and the Office of Applied Research has engaged in discussions on how best to enhance JIBC's existing web-based virtual simulation learning system to engage multiple offsite research pods from around the world. The Hydra and ExPod systems will allow EOC personnel anywhere in the world (with high-speed internet) to download a suite of five table-top exercises and training materials that will be developed to enhance psychosocial considerations of senior decision makers in EOCs.

Literature Review

All research projects begin with a literature review! While a considerable amount of information was gathered in the development of the project proposal, our researchers are exploring literature in several key areas:

- Rapid Decision Making
- Exercises Development and Scenarios
- Simulations
- Psychosocial Issues related to Disaster Response
- Collaboratories

Our current researchers include Bethan Lloyd, Karen-Marie Elah Perry and Paulina Moreno. As we move ahead, we will be building our research team and providing research opportunities for graduate students in the field.

SIMTEC Pilot Exercise Development Team

Representatives of the Emergency Management Division have taken the lead on preparing the project's first exercise. The first pilot exercise will be run in early 2012, followed by a test exercise, with the final exercise to be completed by December 2012. An analysis will be conducted between each exercise, as part of an iterative process that will allow us to gain a better understanding of how and when key decisions are made. These insights will provide us with opportunities to develop training tools and exercise injects that contribute to an improved understanding of the psychosocial considerations of EOC decisions.

Inception Meeting October 11th and 12th

The SIMTEC project Inception Meeting will be hosted at the Justice Institute of British Columbia, 715 McBride Boulevard New Westminster, BC. If you haven't received your invitation, please send Terry Bodaly a note via email: tbodaly@jibc.ca

October 11th Reception JIBC Atrium (4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.)
October 12th SIMTEC Working Group (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

We are delighted to welcome a number of international experts; from the UK, Colin Tansley; from the USA, Bruce Blythe; from Israel, Avi Kirschenbaum; and Mike Tarrant from Australia. We are also fortunate to have a host of local experts, academic partners and community partners joining us. Our government partners are well represented at the federal level, with involvement from Health Canada, the Police Research Training Centre, the RCMP, CRTI and the Public Health Agency of Canada, among others.

We are also very pleased to have Emergency Management BC, the Provincial Health Services Authority, the BC Disaster Psychosocial Council the Vancouver Police Department and the City of

Vancouver joining us, along with other communities and agencies. We will take advantage of the expertise in the room to help guide the research; provide the research teams with links to relevant resources; and ensure that the deliverables are realistic.

Funding Partners

The Simulation Training and Exercise Collaboratory (SIMTEC) Project acknowledges the contribution and support of its Funding & Project Partners - The Centre for Security Science (CSS), Department of National Defence (DND), Health Canada, and Justice Institute of British Columbia.



Project Partner

We also like to acknowledge the support of Royal Roads University.



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