

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO DISASTER GOVERNMENTS AND MULTI-NATIONALS

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*International Disaster and Emergency Resilience Conference (IDER)
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Abstract

One area where disaster management can undoubtedly be improved is in the international response. There are huge benefits to be gained, for instance, by developing co-operative arrangements between governments and multi-national companies to improve the international response to disaster.

One of the initiatives at IDER 2007 this October in London is to develop a multi-national response group. This presentation will look at how this initiative and others are being taken forward.

Governments are best able to provide the diplomatic access to countries suffering a disaster but do not readily have all the resources that may be required. Many multi-nationals, on the other hand, do have the resources such as food, medicine, transport, engineering equipment and communications. A co-operative arrangement for disaster response with governments providing the political authority and impetus and multi-nationals providing the resources would do much to improve international response to disaster and satisfy the prime requirements of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The government and multi-national arrangements would be most effective if they are entirely voluntary and based on 'Agreements in Principle'. A central register of disaster response arrangements together with a database containing details of the resources that individual companies may make available would best be held by a global and independent organisation such as the UN to ensure a more focused, co-ordinated and appropriate response.

The benefits from such an arrangement are many. The global community would benefit from improved international disaster response, humanitarian assistance and environmental protection. Inter-governmental assistance would benefit international relations. Governments would have ready access to resources but would pay for them only at the time of use. Multi-nationals would support the humanitarian response, fulfil their corporate responsibility, make good use of their available resources, receive government approval and enhance their reputation.

Biography

Simon Langdon is a Director of CEDAR*three* Limited. This year he is also chairman of the International Disaster Emergency Resilience conference (IDER) to be held in the City of London on

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9th and 10th October. IDER, which last year was held in Rome, attracted over 70 organisations from 20 countries.

Simon is an acknowledged authority on crisis management and has worked with a number of major international organisations and multi-nationals. He has conducted crisis management exercises in the UK, Europe and the Middle East. He has experience of anti-terrorist operations. He was presented with the prestigious Business Continuity Institute Consultant of the Year award in 2005.

Recent crisis management projects with which Simon has been involved include the BBC, the Welsh Assembly Government, the Highways Agency, the Financial Services Authority, a major Swiss bank, WestLB, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals and South West Trains. He has previously worked on major crisis management projects with Lloyds TSB, British Airways, the National Air Traffic Services, IATA and the Strategic Rail Authority. He was operationally involved in the Rail Industry response to the Potters Bar rail crash.

Simon has lectured on Crisis Management internationally and most recently in the Middle East and within the Rail Industry, the Aviation Industry and the Financial Services including an international conference at the Bank of England.

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