



**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE**

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P R E S S R E L E A S E
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER
ACTIVATES TO SUPPORT OPSTAR EXERCISE**

The Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Management initiated a no-notice Level III activation of its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at 0800 on Tuesday, November 26th. The activation exercise was designed to familiarize County staff and newly identified personnel to the EOC and to “stress test” its infrastructure and technology capacity.

Concurrently, the EOC activation supported a regional exercise entitled “OPSTAR” (Offshore Platform Security Threat Awareness and Response) which was conducted through the coordinated efforts of the United States Navy, the United States Coast Guard, the Naval Postgraduate School’s Center for Asymmetrical Warfare, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Ventura County Office of Emergency Services, and the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Management. The OPSTAR exercise was designed to test regional security protocols and the ability to thwart terrorist attacks on local assets and interests. This exercise took place in Ventura County with attendance by Santa Barbara Operational Area liaisons.

Through the use of sophisticated video, satellite, and telecommunications technology as well as the coordinated planning and communication efforts of the various participating agencies, the Santa Barbara County EOC was able to get real time video feed of the tactical events taking place from various points of view to include the deployment of maritime special operations forces. This enabled the EOC staff to get a better understanding of how efforts and decisions made in the field impact EOC-level activities and vice-versa.

Today’s activation, facilitated by the Office of Emergency Management, was considered a success by the executives, managers, and technical specialists serving as EOC staff, and they look forward to similar events. Ryan Rockabrand, Director of Emergency Management, stated that, “OEM plans to conduct many more drills of this nature in the months and years to come. The benefits gained from these exercises allow our EOC teams to become more robust and effective in preparation for any real world events we may encounter in the future.”

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