

CAPE DISASTER DEBRIEF – THURSDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2004 : FIRE SERVICES PERSPECTIVE – MR MICHAEL BRAND – FIRE SAFETY OFFICER : CAPE TOWN FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen. My name is Michael Brand, I am an Officer in the Cape Town Fire and Emergency Service.

I joined the Fire Brigade in 1973, after completing my Military Service in the South African Navy, where the “Fire Bug” first bit.

I served in all the Fire Stations from Sea Point, Central Fire Station, Salt River, Epping, Wynberg, Lakeside including Mitchells Plain steadily progressing through the ranks to Station Commander Wynberg Fire Station.

I was transferred to the Fire Prevention Division in 1989, where I hold the rank of Assistant Divisional Officer – Fire Safety.

Amongst various other functions, I represent the Chief Fire Officer at various Multi-Disciplinary Planning Committees for Major Events, Film Shoots, etc.,

Many Major Events from the Planning of the World Ruby Cup in 1995, The Michael Jackson Concert, Madeba’s Birthday Party at Culemborg Exhibition Centre, the ICC Cricket World Cup, Argus Cycle Tours, North Sea Jazz Festivals, 46664 Concert to name a few are planned with emphasis on Public Safety.

The Cricket World Cup was the biggest challenge to date. Planning started early in 2002 with the Opening Ceremony Rehearsals, where thousands of volunteers were put through their paces at various venues such as Wynberg Military Camp and Youngsfield Military Camp respectively. All this training culminated in two Dress Rehearsals and an Opening Ceremony on an unprecedented scale.

The Planning for the important Cricket World Cup Games at Newlands Cricket Stadium and other grounds: in Green Point, Langa and Bellville had to be considered as well.

The Fire and Emergency Services ensures that the following Legislation is enforced for all events taking place in it's area of jurisdiction:

- The Fire Brigade Services Act 99 of 1987;
- The National Building Regulations and Building Standards Act, Act 103 of 1977;
- The By-Law relating to Community Fire Safety;
- The Occupational Health and Safety Act, Act 85 Of 1993;
- The Explosive Act, Act 26 of 1956.

One of the concerns faced at Newlands Cricket Stadium is that the current seating capacity is 21,500, which could be increased to 27,500 in terms of current approval conditions governing the use of the Stadium.

The Organisers had to apply for a Temporary Departure in terms of Section 15 (1) (a) of the Land Use Planning Ordinance (LUPO) No. 15 of 1985, to allow:

- The current Stadium capacity of 21,500 to be exceeded to more than 32,000;
- The legal sound level of 55 dbl to be exceeded with other conditions remaining in effect.

This Temporary Departure was granted in terms of the Land Use Planning Ordinance 15 of 1985, to allow the current capacity of 21,500 to be exceeded to no more than 32,000 on the day of the Opening Ceremony.

PLANNING FOR MASS EVENTS:

The following guidelines should be borne in mind when planning for Mass Events:

- Early notification to the Authorities by the Event Organisers for an impending Event:

The Fire and Emergency Service received Official Notice of this Event during March 2002;

- Timeous assembly of all Role Players at a preparatory meeting to receive in-depth briefing of the proposed Event by the Event Organiser:

The first meeting with the Organisers and the Multi-Disciplinary Team took place at Newlands Cricket Stadium on the 14 March 2002. Many many meetings, Planning Workshops, etc. were to follow.

- Carry out or undertake a Risk and Hazard Assessment of the feasibility of the proposed Event with inputs from the various agencies:

Temporary facilities for Special Events – in terms of Section 4 of The National Building Regulations and the Building Standards Act No. 103 of 1977, it is an offence for anyone to erect any type of structure without the prior authority of the Local Authority. Applications for the erection of Temporary Stadia, Stalls, Platforms, Hospitality Tents and the like for Special Events are to be made in terms of Regulation A23 of the National Building Regulations and must be lodged with the relevant Building Development Management Office, at least ten (10) working days, prior to the commencement of the construction. These requirements were fully carried out.

- Provide feedback to the Organisers of the Event in terms of it's feasibility and amending or "tailor-making" the Event to fit in with the Risk Hazard Analysis Profile:

Numerous meetings took place to achieve this.

- Identify clear roles and responsibilities for all Role Players (who does what, why and when:). The Multi-Disciplinary Team responded well to this principle.
- Form an Emergency Planning Committee to organise Emergency Preparation for the Event:

I was privileged to serve on this Committee under the Leadership of Mr Greg Pillay, who set an excellent standard for this Event.

- Obtain clarity of funding for identified additional resources Manpower Equipment, etc.
- Two fully manned fire engines were strategically placed in the Stadium on standby. The presence of the fire resources was two fold: To attend to any Fire/Emergency Incident at the Stadium and also to assist with the Decontamination Procedure that must be in place at a Major Event of this nature. The latter pertains to Emergency Planning for a weapons of Mass Destruction/Terrorist Incident that could involve Chemical or Biological Warfare. Up to eight (8) Fire Safety Officers were placed on duty, including a Fire and Emergency Service Representative in the V.O.C.
- Timeous communication with the Public – target audience ensuring facilities for Pre-Event Purchasing of Tickets, Parking and Transport arrangements advising on what goods will be permissible within the Venue, etc.:

This principle was fully catered for.

- Formulate a Disaster Management/Emergency Event Plan that consolidates and incorporates Line Function Subsidiary Plans, eg. Emergency Medical Services, Fire Safety, Evacuation, Security, etc.:

This Planning set the tone for future Events.

- Put in place a Joint Operations Centre or Venue Operations Centre, to oversee the Event where circumstances warrant such a step:

Circumstances did indeed warrant such a step –

National JOCS
Provincial JOCS

And Local VOCS were put in place. A special mention of my admiration and respect to our JOC Commander Director Roberts, who set a fine example of his talent in Control and Command.

If only South Africa beat the West
Indies in the Opening Match at Newlands

Thank You.