

EDITOR'S NOTE: Senior Administrative Analyst Dan Ramirez gives a firsthand account of the emergency evacuation drill at the Regional Rebuild Center on Jan. 17.

THIS IS A DRILL...



RRC evacuation drill was coordinated by Director Rick Hittinger, center. PHOTO BY DAN RAMIREZ

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THIS IS AN EMERGENCY EVACUATION...

**LEAVE THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY AND
MEET AT YOUR DESIGNATED EVACUATION AREA.**

By DAN RAMIREZ

(Feb. 9) On January 17, 2001 at 11:01 a.m., the Regional Rebuild Center (RRC) emergency command center sprang into action directing the events of a simulated evacuation of the entire RRC facility.

The evacuation drill was coordinated under the direction of Rick Hittinger in cooperation with Safety Operations staff, RRC Directors and Department Managers.

The necessity of emergency preparedness was not lost on the over 400 RRC employees that participated in the drill after witnessing the electrical fire atop the USG building the previous week.

All RRC employees recognize the importance of a well-coordinated emergency evacuation plan and have participated with business-like enthusiasm in this semi-annual event.

This drill simulated an 8.1 earthquake scenario, including missing and injured personnel and emphasized communication between the command center and the three designated evacuation areas.

The use of hand held two-way radios has proven an effective method of communication to account for all personnel, provide information on injured personnel and to dispatch search teams to retrieve the missing.

After the event, the principal participants convened to review the event and offer suggestions to improve the operation.

The RRC evacuation drills assume a worse-case scenario in which the RRC is cut off from all immediate external support services and must act as a self-reliant group at the outset of a disaster.

To meet this level of emergency preparedness, RRC staff has developed a detailed evacuation plan including an emergency command hierarchy with detailed duties and responsibilities, evacuation routes, and emergency response procedures for various scenarios.

Over 120 RRC personnel have completed the MTA Business Emergency Response Training (BERT), First Aide and CPR classes and can administer triage functions until professional emergency service personnel arrive.

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