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Transit Security Officer Willie Miles helps to evacuate children from the Gateway Child Care Center during the 'Great Shakeout' evacuation drill. The children were relocated to the MSSC cafeteria across the street from Metro Headquarters for the duration of the exercise. *Photo by Transit Security Sgt. Arthur Grant.*

Metro Makes Strides in Safety Measures During the Great Shakeout

By SCOTT R. NORWOOD

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(Nov. 20, 2008) Metro employees, guests, and visitors participated in The Southern California Great Shakeout on Nov. 13.

Metro held drills at various locations throughout the agency involving both the rail and bus systems. Drills included a "Duck, Cover, and Hold" procedure and an evacuation of Metro Headquarters.

During a "Duck, Cover, and Hold" exercise, employees are encouraged to "duck" to seek shelter under a sturdy piece of furniture, "cover" to protect their heads from falling objects, and "hold" on to the furniture overhead. The exercise teaches employees how to protect themselves from falling debris during an earthquake.

Employing an internal safety mechanism, organizers designated "missing" people during the drill to make sure that the floor wardens who "sweep" the floors and those doing the head counts can account for everyone.

Immediately following the earthquake drill, employees, guests, visitors, and Metro contractors were instructed to evacuate the building.

Evacuation drills are necessary to prepare anyone who is in the building from potential harm in the event that the building is unsafe.

The exercise also permits Metro Security, Floor Wardens, General Services, and the LASD Transit Services Bureau to verify that equipment and procedures work during an actual emergency.

The overall consensus noted improvements in response time and performance of Metro employees.

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