Continuity IQ from DSPN

Fast Facts for Our Valued Friends and Clients

Dear Paul,

Here are some bullets and brain teasers about current events from your friends at DSPN. In this issue, we feature information about predicting disasters. If you'd like to forward this message to your colleagues, just click the "Forward Email" link at the bottom of this page.

Fast Facts about Disaster Predictions

Did you know....

1. Predicting a disaster type is much easier than predicting when a disaster will occur. But that doesn't stop prognosticators. Their predictions are always available in January! A telephone poll of 1,000 adults was conducted Dec. 12-14 by Ipsos, an international polling firm. Here are some of their findings:
2. "Six in 10 people think the U.S. will be the victim of a terrorist attack during 2007. An identical percentage thinks it likely that a biological or nuclear weapon will be unleashed somewhere else in the world."
3. In the same poll, Ipsos reported that 70 percent of people in the U.S. predict a major natural disaster in the country and an equal percentage expect worsening global warming.
4. People were split on whether 2007 will bring the U.S. its first bird flu case. More than 150 people worldwide have died from the disease. Health officials fear a pandemic if the virus mutates into a form easily passed from person to person.
5. H5N1 viruses have been around for nearly a decade and it might be tempting to conclude that if they were going to proceed to form or contribute to a pandemic strain, they would have done so by now,'' the influenza team at the European Centre for Disease Surveillance and Control said in a report published in December, 2006. Still, the strain that sparked the 1918 pandemic "had been around for some years before it became part of a virus that could efficiently transmit between humans,'" they said.
6. A few slow months in cases doesn't mean that the threat of pandemic is at an end, said Peter Sandman, a risk communication specialist in Princeton, New Jersey. ``When you install a smoke alarm in your house and then go a year without a fire, that doesn't mean you were foolish to install a smoke alarm,'' said Sandman, who consults to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on pandemic communication. ``It means it's time to change the batteries.''
7. The Tropical Meteorology Project at Colorado State University anticipates 14 tropical storms during 2007, seven of them hurricanes and three of those

major ones. The average for tropical storms is nine to 10 a year, of which about six become hurricanes.

8. The swift, late rise of the current El Niño was a key factor in calming this year's tropical weather. After last year's record 28 hurricanes and tropical storms, only nine storms developed this year. Five were hurricanes, but none hit the USA. This year's El Nino weather phenomenon, credited with blunting the 2006 hurricane season, is strengthening as winter arrives, which could mean a warmer, drier winter for the northern USA and wetter weather through spring in the south.

9. According to Reuters, China has come up with an earthquake prediction system which relies on the behavior of snakes. The earthquake bureau in Nanning, capital of the Guangxi autonomous region in southern China, had developed its system using a combination of natural instinct and modern technology. Experts at the bureau monitor snakes at local snake farms via video cameras linked to a broadband Internet connection. The video feed runs 24 hours per day.

10. Risk Management Solutions, the world's leading provider of products and services for the management of natural hazard risk, has updated its U.S. and Canada Earthquake models. The ground motions from earthquakes in the eastern U.S. and eastern Canada have greater high-frequency content than events in the west, an important characteristic in capturing the risk profile for low-rise structures in this region. Using the new U.S. Earthquake Model and insured exposure as of 2006, RMS estimates that the states east of the Rockies comprise 20% of the average annual loss from earthquakes in the U.S. RMS estimates that a magnitude 7.7 New Madrid earthquake, similar to the one that occurred in December of 1811, would result in over $60 billion in insured losses today.

Brain Teasers

True or False:

1. The strongest earthquake ever recorded in North America occurred in 1964.
2. El Niño winters are always characterized by increased snowfall in the Northeast.
3. The retail industry is taking steps to provide terrorism training for mall security guards.
4. Protecting confidential information is becoming an important issue as more American employees work from home.
5. Although 2006 was a big year for wildfires in terms of acres destroyed, it was not as big as other years in terms of property damage.

Check your answers here...

Answers to the above questions:

1. *True.* In 1964, the 9.2 magnitude quake and the tsunami that followed killed 131 people in Alaska.
2. *False.* Take Philadelphia, where snowfall averages about 20 inches per year. In the winter of 2002-03, 46.3 inches of snow was measured at Philadelphia International Airport, compared with only 0.7 inches in another El Niño winter, 1997-98.
3. *True.* Beginning this month, a 14-hour program is being rolled out by the

International Council of Shopping Centers, a trade group, and the Homeland Security Policy Institute at George Washington University at a cost of $2 million. It is the first standardized anti-terrorism curriculum written for the nation's estimated 20,000 mall security guards.

4. *True.* Among American employees, 45 percent say they work from home one or more days per week.
5. *True.* The Oakland Hills fire of 1991 destroyed almost 2,500 homes and more than 400 apartment and condominium units. The economic loss from that fire alone is estimated at $1.5 billion.li>

Readiness Check

Hard-to-remember details:

1. Have you provided safety instructions for your employees who may be using equipment at home that is dangerous for children?
2. Are your employees who are working at home properly safe-guarding confidential information?
3. Have you set goals to be achieved for each of your program elements?
4. Have you designated someone to be responsible for achieving goals in each of your program elements?
5. Do you have a method to measure progress in each of your program elements?

New From DSPN

Check these out on our website:

1. DSPN's schedule of public workshops is now available on our website.
2. Developing an exercise for your program? DSPN can help you design and facilitate it.
3. Want to participate in a mock disaster? DSPN can organize one for your group or professional association.
4. DSPN is now offering Small Business Workshops to organizations who want to help small businesses get prepared.

Contributors to This Issue

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Comments and Contributions

Tell us what you think...

Thanks to all of you who have sent us comments about this mailing.

In responding to recent incidents, did you discover an interesting detail that you would like to share? If so, send it along and we'll consider it for a future issue. If you want us to print a comment or submission about your company, be sure to give us permission when you write.

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