

# Active Shooter Preparedness

## *Research Report*



*Out of  
Danger  
Comes  
Opportunity*

Prepared by:

*Everbridge*

*Emergency Management and Safety (EMS) Solutions*

[www.everbridge.com](http://www.everbridge.com)

## Overview

The “Active Shooter Preparedness” research was conducted in July, 2016. A total of 888 organizations were surveyed about their safety plans and ability to manage an active shooter situation. The goal of this research was to gain insight into the security challenges facing today’s companies, especially when it comes to active shooter situations.

Between 2014 and 2015, according to the FBI, the United States experienced nearly six times as many active shooter incidents as during the period between 2000 and 2001. Despite the increasing severity of this problem, U.S. companies are unprepared. Preparedness requires communication and practice plans to make sure responders know who is at risk and people know what to do if an event happens. Companies cannot rely solely on police and other government assistance: an FBI study of active shooter events between 2000 and 2013 found that 60% of the incidents ended before the police arrived.

The sample focused on larger organizations: 58 percent were from organizations with more than 500 employees – and 44 percent of those respondents were from organizations with more than 1000 employees. Those responsible for the security and emergency preparedness at their organizations completed the survey. The most common titles were Director of Security, Manager or Director of Emergency Management, and Manager or Director of Business Continuity. Three-quarters of respondents (75 percent) were responsible for multiple locations.

## Key Findings

- 69 percent of respondents view an active shooter incident as a potential top threat to their company or organization. Workplace violence was cited as a top threat by 62 percent.
- Communicating to people who may be in an impacted building and confirming their safety was seen as the biggest challenge during an active shooter situation (71 percent of respondents).
- Safety concerns are growing: 79 percent of executives/leaders are more concerned about employee or student safety than they were two years ago. 73 percent said that employees or students are willing to exchange some aspects of privacy for enhanced security.
- However, 39 percent of respondents said they didn’t have a communications plan in place for active shooter events.
- An overwhelming 79 percent replied that their companies or organizations were not fully prepared for an active shooter incident.
- 61 percent do not run any active shooter preparedness drills at all.

## Analysis

Respondents were overwhelmingly concerned about violence and violent acts – such as active shooter situations – taking place at their company or organization. Despite that worry, a majority of respondents also said that they were not properly prepared for an active shooter situation, calling out communication to those affected as one of the major issues.

The research also found that over a third of respondents didn't have a communication plan in place, nor were training or safety drills conducted at a majority of their organizations – which are two of the more common ways to prepare companies and employees for the potential of a violent act. Communication plans and readiness go hand in hand, as companies must have a way to share critical real-time information with all parties in these life or death situations.

### 1. Companies Are Concerned About Violent Acts In The Workplace

Three of the top five threats that companies are preparing for are active shooter situations (69 percent), workplace violence (62 percent) and terrorism (38 percent).

79 percent of executives and leaders are more concerned about employee or student safety than they were two years ago.

### 2. Communication During Critical Events Is A Major Challenge

71 percent of security leaders believe that communicating to impacted individuals is their biggest challenge during an active shooter situation. This is followed by the challenge of locating people who may be in an impacted building or facility (55 percent). In order to be properly prepared, companies must have a communications plan in place.

Respondents also agree on the importance of having a method for employees and students to easily report information back to safety officials during an incident, with 94 percent recognizing the importance of this form of communication.

### 3. Despite Recognizing Violent Acts As Top Threats, Companies Are Still Unprepared

While respondents reported that they understood the threat of violent acts – and the need for communication channels to be in place – many are still unprepared.

39 percent don't have a communications plan in place for active shooter events – and almost the same margin (44 percent) don't have a plan to communicate and escalate alerts in active shooter situations to those most likely to be impacted.

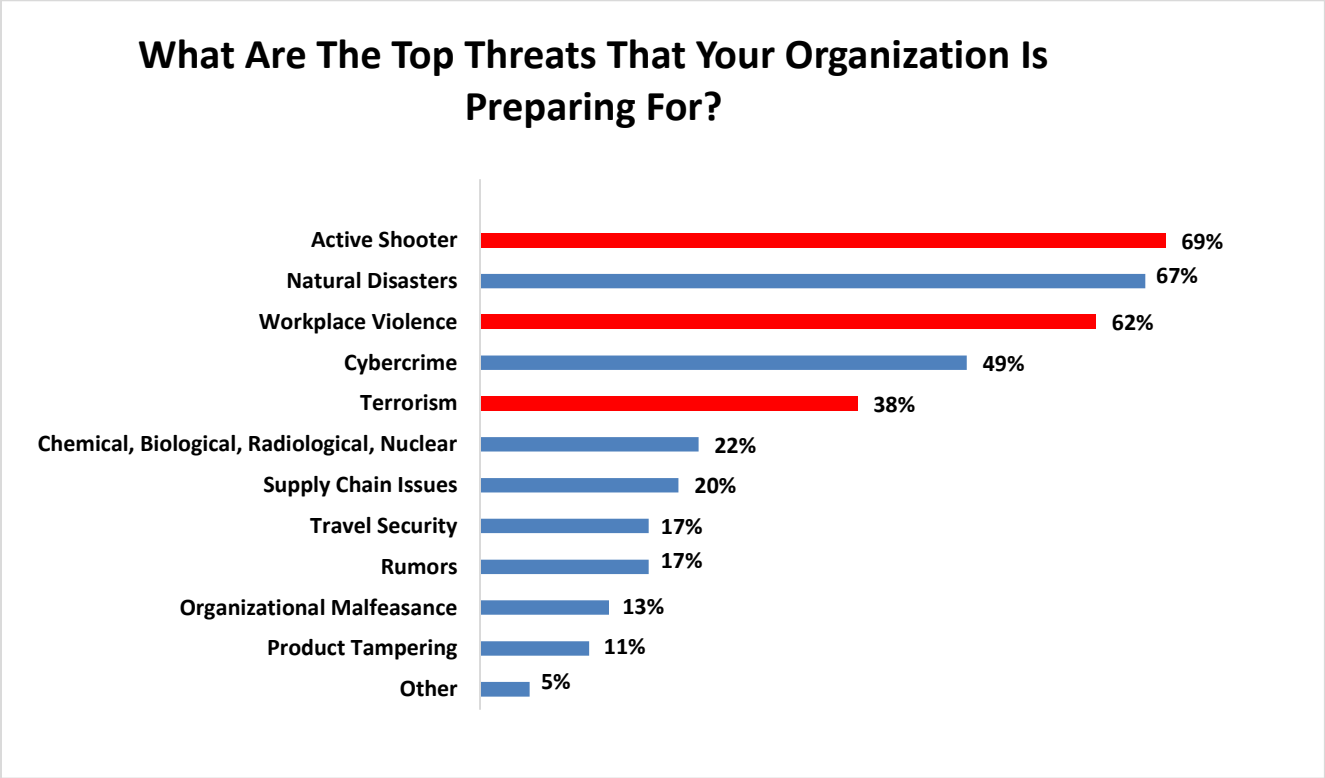
A majority of respondents (61 percent) do not run any active shooter preparedness drills at all, further showing how unprepared companies are for potential incidents.

Respondents were asked directly how prepared they felt they were for an active shooter event – and only 21 percent felt that they were prepared. 79 percent replied that their organizations were *at best* somewhat prepared for an active shooter incident. Even among those who feel prepared, only 7 percent are “very much prepared.”

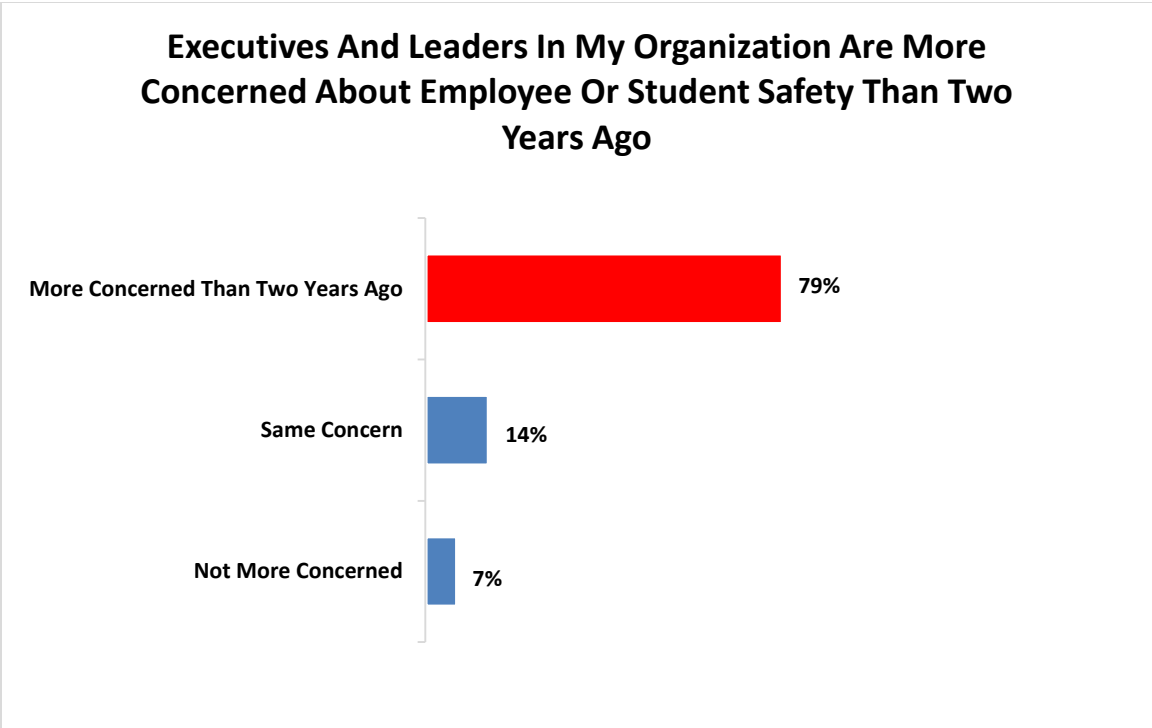
Despite recognition of active shooter situations as a major problem, companies are not addressing the problem and must educate, plan and prepare to manage such an incident.

# Companies Are Concerned About Violent Acts In The Workplace

Three of the top five threats that companies reported they were preparing for were active shooter situations (69 percent), workplace violence (62 percent) and terrorism (38 percent):

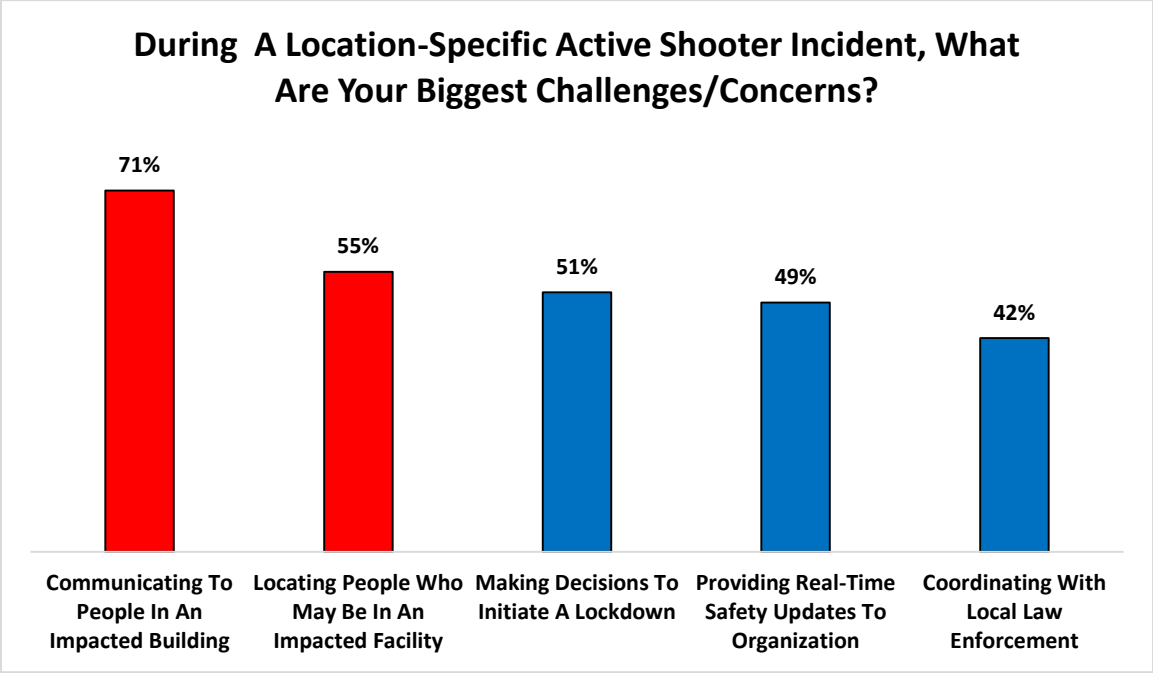


Respondents were also asked about whether executives and leaders in their organizations were more concerned about employee or student safety than they were two years ago and an overwhelming majority (79 percent) stated that they were.



# Communication During Critical Events Is A Major Challenge

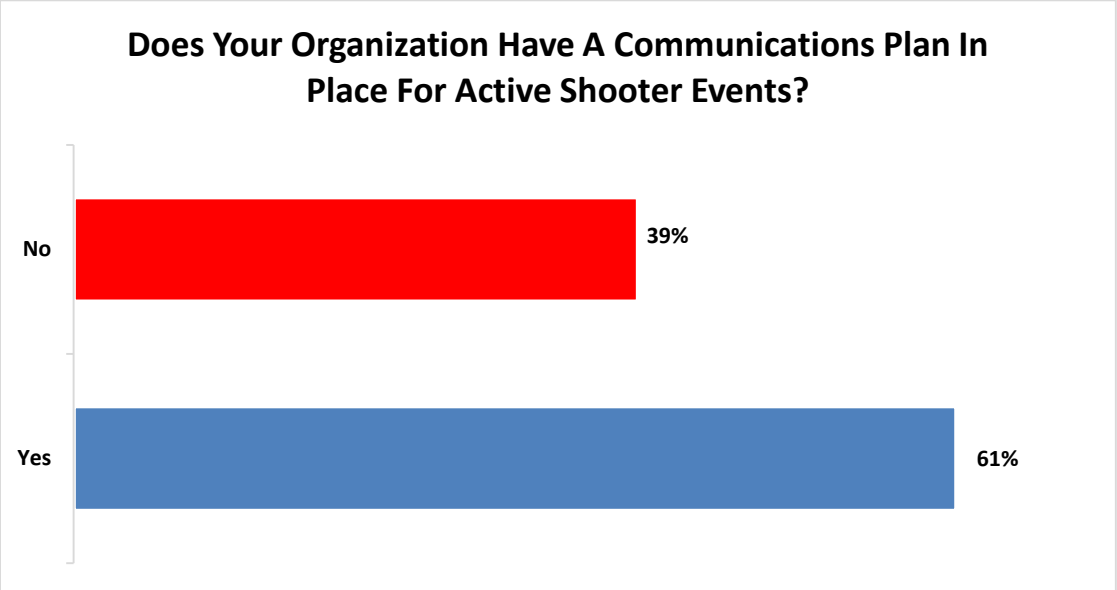
71 percent say that communicating to impacted individuals is their biggest challenge during an active shooter situation. Security leaders also face the challenge of locating people who may be in an impacted building or facility (55 percent). Companies must prepare for active shooter situations by developing and practicing a communications plan.



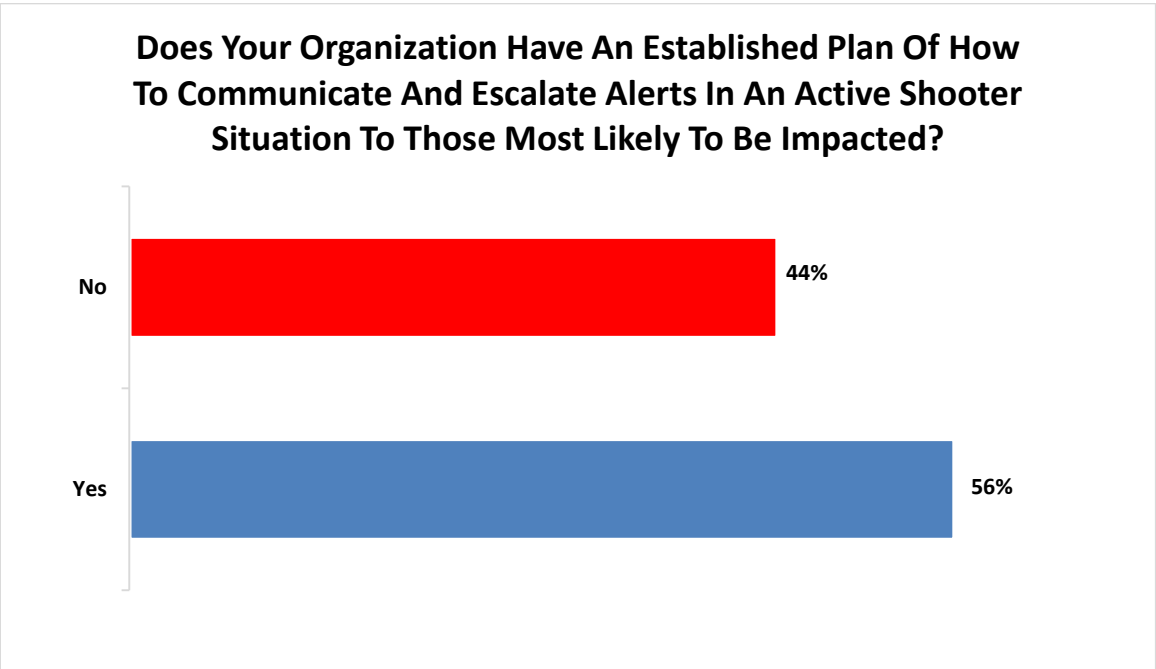
# Despite Recognizing Violent Acts As Top Threats, Companies Are Still Unprepared

While respondents reported that they understood the threat of violent acts – and the need for communication channels to be in place – many are still unprepared.

39 percent of respondents said they didn't have a communications plan in place for active shooter events.

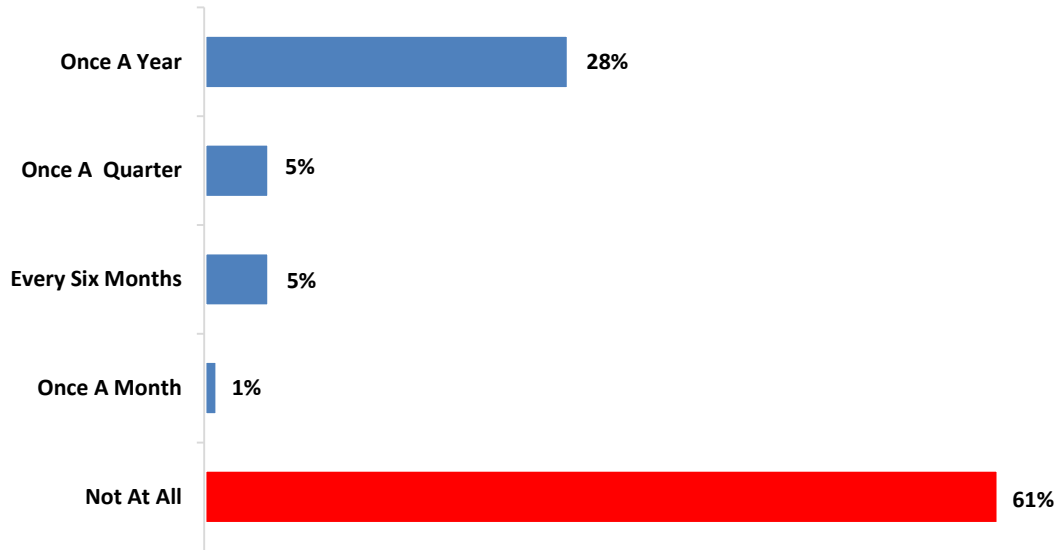


A similar margin to the above (44 percent) stated that they did not have a plan in place to communicate and escalate alerts in active shooter situations to those most likely to be impacted.



A majority of respondents (61 percent) shared that they do not run any active shooter preparedness drills at all, further showing how unprepared companies are for potential incidents.

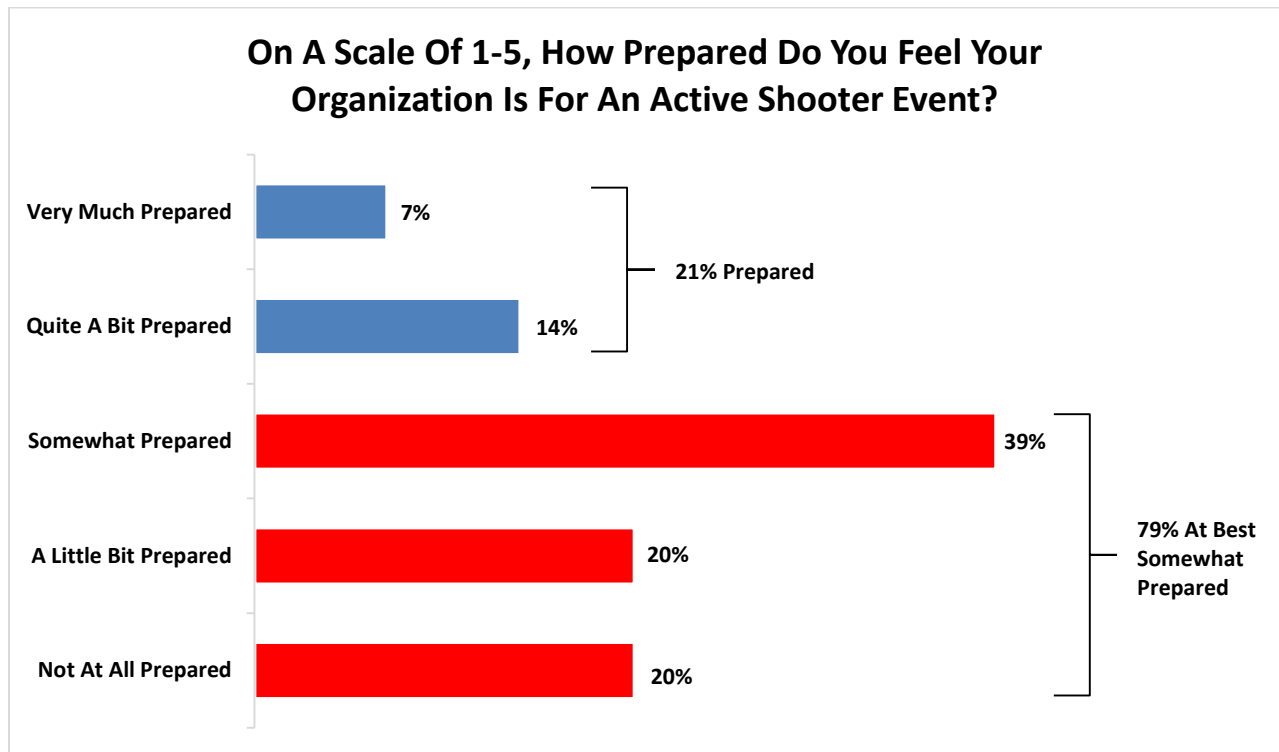
### How Often Do You Run An Active Shooter Drill?





Respondents were asked directly how prepared they felt they were for an active shooter event – and only 21 percent felt that they were prepared. 79 percent replied that their organizations were *at best* somewhat prepared for an active shooter incident.

Even among those who feel prepared, only 7 percent are “very much prepared.”



## **About Everbridge**

Everbridge is a global enterprise software company that provides applications which automate the delivery of critical information to help keep people safe and businesses running. During mission-critical business events or man-made or natural disasters, over 3,000 global customers rely on the Everbridge platform to quickly and reliably construct and deliver contextual notifications to millions of people at one time. The company's platform sent over 1 billion messages in 2015, and offers the ability to reach more than 200 countries and territories with secure delivery to over 100 different communication devices. A broad set of applications enable companies, hospitals, agencies, states, cities and towns to address issues related to severe weather and man-made incidents, IT outages and cyberattacks, safety of traveling staff, and facilitate regulation-compliant messaging. Everbridge serves 8 of the 10 largest U.S. cities, 7 of the 10 largest U.S.-based investment banks, 24 of the 25 busiest North American airports, and 6 of the 10 largest global automakers. Everbridge is based in Boston with additional offices in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Beijing and London. For more information, visit [www.everbridge.com](http://www.everbridge.com), read the company blog, <http://www.everbridge.com/blog>, and follow on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

## **About Emergency Management and Safety Solutions**

EMS Solutions has been providing professional services in the area of incident management, business continuity planning, and safety exercise design since 1982. During that time, EMS Solutions has worked with over 1,000 clients, including many Fortune 1000 companies. A partial list of clients includes Nike, IMF, Whole Foods Market, Northern Trust, VISA, Lam Research, Intuit, Stanford University, International Paper, Bank of Canada, PG&E, Cal-ISO and the World Bank. Regina Phelps, RN, BSN, MPA, CEM, EMS Solutions; Founder, is an internationally recognized expert in the field of emergency management and continuity planning. For more information, please visit [www.ems-solutionsinc.com](http://www.ems-solutionsinc.com).