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CRJ

ACTS OF TERROR these days take place not only in Russia, but all over the world, and that's why the first thing we should do is compare what we do in Russia with what is being done abroad." These are the words of Nikolai Patrushev, director of the Russian FSB (formerly KGB) in our article on page 19 about the inter-agency failings and other operational shortcomings during the Beslan school siege.

Of course it is not just terrorist incidents that expose breakdowns in liaison or working relationships between emergency agencies in times of crisis – any major incident, whether it be natural or man-made, is liable to lay bare the slightest weak spot, with fatal consequences. And, as discussed in another article (page 32), rest assured that any flaw – whether operational or in terms of co-operation – will be seized upon eagerly by the media and could have devastating effects on public and political confidence in our emergency services.

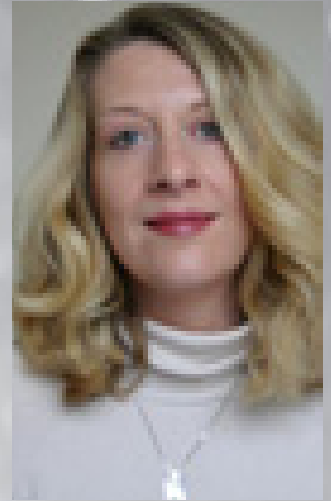
A common theme runs through the articles in this inaugural issue of *Crisis Response Journal* – that of working in partnership. The articles, whether they cover some of this year's most high profile incidents, or focus more closely on specific issues such as terrorism, natural disasters or multiple-fatality fires, all point to one subject – the need for improved communication. This applies to each and every agency that might be called upon to respond to a major emergency, whether these be municipal brigades, the police, ambulance and medical services, private and industrial brigades, airport firefighters, government agencies or NGOs.

Although primarily aimed at the world's Fire and Rescue services, *Crisis Response Journal* aims to bridge any institutional gaps between all the bodies outlined above. Our message is simple: sharing information and knowledge; examining closely lessons learned; and reviewing what is being done by different countries, can lead to more efficient and improved responses.

To this end, the issue carries articles with the widest geographical spread, bringing you analysis and news from Russia, Iran, Iraq, USA, UK, India, Australia, Czech Republic, Africa and France. All of these articles deal with topics that will have relevance elsewhere in the world. Different systems, different rescue services, the same problems...

Crisis Response Journal is also building partnerships by seeking to redefine publishing relationships with the fire industry, truly recognising the vital responsibility that this industry has in terms of developing technology to better equip and protect those in the front line. Our sponsoring partners are among the most trusted names around the world.

Many of the articles in this issue echo Mr Patrushev's comments on the need to know how similar situations are being confronted in different countries. It is *Crisis Response Journal's* core pledge to fulfil this need and to promote the exchange of information necessary to help confront the ever-increasing hazards of the modern world. To help ensure complete editorial quality and integrity, this publication will be relying on the commitment of its subscribers – this journal is answerable to you.



Emily Hough
Emily Hough
Editor



Cover story – chemical warfare: p39

Dräger safety



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