

3/6/2010

## **TURNING POINT 4: ACTIVITIES OF MDA FORCES DURING THE NATIONAL HOME FRONT EXERCISE May 25, 2010**

The national Home Front exercise, Turning Point 4, is coming to an end in the coming days, and the national emergency and rescue service of Israel, Magen David Adom, is taking a central role in it. Rescue and emergency teams of MDA, in cooperation with the Israel Police forces, the fire brigade and the Home Front command, are spread out all over the country and ready to face different scenarios, which are intended to test the preparedness of the rescue forces in the field.

During the next few days, MDA teams will be tested and exercised in a number of scenarios in different areas of the country. MDA teams in the Jordan Region will have an exercise tomorrow, Wednesday (26th May 2010), involving an attack of missiles and rockets on the settlements in the North. MDA Doctors, Paramedics, and medics, reinforced with Mobile Intensive Care Units and ambulances, will treat those wounded as a result of the firing of missiles, launched from the Northern border of the State of Israel. In the Carmel and Asher region the exercise will involve a scenario of leaking dangerous substances in an area full of people, and in "Rambam" Hospital in Haifa, the MDA teams from the Carmel Region will have an exercise during which they will deal with an attack of chemical missiles shot at the buildings of the hospital. Rescue teams from the Sharon Region, in cooperation with the Rescue forces of the IDF Central command, will take part in an exercise treating victims in a mass casualty incident, and the rescue of citizens injured as a result of buildings collapsing in the cities of Hadera and Netanya. In the cities of Petach Tikva, Kfar Saba, Ramat Hasharon and the facility at Pi Gilot, a number of exercise will take place at the same time, during which tens of doctors, paramedics and medics will treat the hundreds of citizens injured as a result of a rocket attack and the leakage of dangerous substances. In the Government building in Tel Aviv and in the Kirya base which is nearby, MDA and Israel Police rescue teams will work to clear the injured from the building hit during the rocket attack. In the Ayalon and Jerusalem Regions, MDA staff will carry out an exercise rescuing injured people from a collapsed building, and treating victims suffering from a leakage of poisonous substances. In the Ramat Hovav facility, which is in the MDA Negev Region, the medical teams will deal with a leakage of dangerous substances and with giving medical treatment to citizens who have been affected by this leakage.

MDA Director General, Eli Bin, believes that the national Home Front exercise, which is being held for the fourth year in succession, will improve the general readiness of the organisation for any future emergency situations in the State. "MDA workers and volunteers, who deal non stop with saving lives in Israel, understand the great weight of responsibility on their shoulders. Therefore, the MDA organisation places great importance on the readiness of its staff to deal with emergency situations".



## **SHE WON THE DOUBLE**

### **A WOMAN GAVE BIRTH TO TWINS: THE FIRST – IN AN AMBULANCE IN ASHDOD, THE SECOND – IN THE PARKING LOT OF KAPLAN HOSPITAL**

The mother (left) with the midwife and the twins "Born 10 minutes apart in time and 10 km apart in distance"

Sapir Nino (34) an inhabitant of Ashdod, yesterday gave birth to twin girls. The first was born in an ambulance which was called for by her older children to take her to hospital, and the second at the entrance to the Emergency Room of Kaplan Hospital in Rechovot. The mother and twin girls are well.

"I woke up in the morning with an uncomfortable feeling" recalled Nino, "my 13 year old daughter and my 10 year old son called an ambulance. The paramedic who came told me that my contractions had begun, and quickly drove in the direction of Kaplan Hospital, where I wanted to give birth. In the middle of the journey they realized that the birth had begun and they transferred me to a mobile intensive care unit. The Paramedic, Ravit Keren, began the delivery and suddenly we heard crying. At this point everything stopped and we continued our journey to the Hospital with one baby girl who weighed 2.3kg at birth".

"At the entrance to Kaplan Hospital a medical team was already waiting for us and they ran to the ambulance to continue the delivery. The midwife, Renate, entered the ambulance and delivered the baby with great sensitivity and devotion and my second daughter was born weighing 1.7kg."

Renate Sarel, a senior midwife in Kaplan, related that she received a call from MDA that one baby had already been born and that the second was on the way. "I immediately went out of the department to the entrance of the hospital and went into the ambulance. One baby was in the arms of the paramedic and the second baby I delivered in the ambulance. The mother was calm and felt well. By the way, this is the first time, after hundreds of deliveries, that I have delivered a baby in an ambulance" she pointed out emotionally.

"We checked the babies and saw that they were in good condition and were healthy. Then we transferred one baby to the nursery and the second one to the premature baby unit. Now the mother and babies are wonderful and perfectly healthy".

The happy mother sums up: "I feel completely safe here. They immediately wrapped the babies up warmly and cleaned them up. We are receiving devoted and kind care from the medical teams. The two babies were born ten minutes apart in time and ten kilometers in distance".

# MDA Rescue Teams Olympics

by Judy Siegel, Jerusalem Post 2.6.10

46 medical rescue teams from Israel and around the world – including from Jordan, China and Panama – will participate next week in the annual Magen David Adom Paramedics Contest.

The "Rescue Teams Olympics" which begins on Sunday, will require contestants from 15 foreign delegations and Israel to rescue a parachutist stuck in a tree, provide medical assistance to a woman in labor, treat injuries inside a barn, reach injured people in field vehicles and on horseback, save road accident victims and meet other challenges.

The competition, which is intended to examine the quality and professionalism of the treatment rendered by the participating teams, will take place in two rounds of five contests each. A night contest will be added to each round: Rescue teams will deal with a surprise scenario, set to begin late at night, and will have to find creative solutions for emergency situations under difficult field conditions.

Among the sites of the competition will be Mount Gilboa, the Carmel forest, a Haifa beach, and a barn at one of the farms in the Carmel area. The heritage site Nahalal Police – a memorial center for the pre-state Jewish watchman and policeman – will also serve as a station for the competition.

According to MDA director-general Eli Bin, "the participants in the competition are the front-runners of the rescue alignment in Israel and around the world"

Many of the foreign teams work closely with MDA. Medical rescue teams from various Israel Defense Forces units will also participate in the competition, which is held in memory of Eli Nadler, a senior MDA first aid instructor.

The closing ceremony the Rescue Teams Olympics will take place on Wednesday, June 9, at Haifa's Technion-Israel Institute of Technology. Among those attending the ceremony will be Haifa Mayor

Yona Yahav, Bin and other MDA executives, and representatives of foreign delegations and the IDF.



# MDA DELEGATION TO ITALY 7-10/5/2010

On Friday, 7th May, three MDA members (Paramedics) - Tal Hershko, Raphael Herbst and Zalach Moshe, flew to Trento located in the Trentino region of northern Italy, to take part in a First Aid competition for EMS teams arranged by the Italian Red Cross Trentino Branch. Six teams from Italy, two from Norway, one from Spain and an MDA team, participated. Upon the MDA team arrival in Italy they were met by Paulo Suave, Director of the Red Cross in the Trentino region. The team members shared: "a man about whom this sheet is too short to contain all the praise that is his due – there was not one moment when either he or someone in his place did not concern himself about our welfare and needs. First thing on Friday, upon arrival, we were taken on a visit of the Red Cross facility located in a delightful ski resort in the snow capped mountains, and then were invited to festive dinner in one of the village restaurants."

The next day, on the 8th May, the International Red Cross day, the team took part in an exhibition of the Red Cross divisions in Trento which presented the Hazard Materials Division, the communication vehicles, tracing dogs division, the sea rescue activities, the humanitarian aid and of course the medical teams.

Taking part in the opening ceremony of a new station dedication in the region, the international teams from Israel, Norway and Spain were honoured with the cutting of the ribbon at the entrance.

The EMS competition was held on Sunday 9th May. 10 medical teams competed in providing medical treatment in different scenarios, humanitarian performance and joint work with the sea rescue and tracing dog rescue teams. "The competition posed various challenges, we were examined in 10 different incidents, which included CPR, treatment of hypothermia, chest and abdominal injuries, fall from a height etc.

One of the most emotional moments we encountered during the contest was when we realized that all the contest supervisors and the many logistic personnel were wearing Red Cross shirts which showed on their fronts all the three Red Cross emblems (Cross, Crescent and Crystal) but on the backs of all appeared only the Crystal emblem! A warm gesture, and indeed we expressed our delight to the competition organizers."

After a fascinating day, all the participants got together to dinner alongside many Red Cross representatives. The dinner was followed by the closing ceremony of the First Aid Competition during which the MDA team was announced to win the first place. "The honor which was our part, the warm words spoken to us when we went up onto the Dais were all very emotional.

We would like to thank all those who chose us, took care of us and made our trip to Italy possible, starting with MDA Director General, Eli Bin, Itzik Ben Aharon, Shaul Abramovich and of course Shira Katiy who cared, helped and kept in touch with us all the time we were abroad."

MDA would like to express deep gratitude for the Italian Red Cross for the ongoing cooperation shared between our two National Societies and for a remarkable event.



# First Responders – Vital Task in Multi Casualty Incidents

During the past month, MDA has been forced to deal with and give treatment in two different incidents of buses overturning with a large number of injured passengers.

MDA First Responders took part in these incidents and proved the importance of the First Responder system to reinforce the teams and to turn a multi casualty incident into an incident in which the number of people giving first aid matches the number of injured within a very short period of time.



In the road traffic accident which happened on 13.5.2010 at the Gilon junction in the direction of Karmiel, 13 First Responders took part.

2 First Responders arrived with motorbicycles (1068 and 1080) on the scene. 11 First Responders arrived on the scene in their own private cars.

In addition, many First Responders came to the MDA stations and manned ambulances for routine work.

At the incident of the overturned bus at the Beit Ha'arava junction on 23.5.2010 the first person to arrive on the scene arrived within only 4 minutes from the moment that the call of a multi casualty incident went out. The First Responder reported, using his Mirs machine, that about 30 injured people were lying on the ground and he began life saving treatment. In fact, the report of the First Responder was the first professional report received by the MDA Dispatching centre and enabled them to understand what type of incident it was, the exact location and extent of the injuries. 3 MP3 motorbicycles arrived at the scene (1108, 1107 and 1072) and a white motorbicycle (1030).

50 First Responders took part in the incident carrying out a variety of tasks as listed below:

Task	Number
Medic	5
Arrival at the scene of the incident	25
Ambulance driver	11
Multi casualty ambulance driver	1
Hospital representatives	4
Reinforcement teams	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>

# Visits

## Visit of the Palm Beach Delegation 21- 30.5.10

14 members of a group from Palm Beach, Florida – amongst them major donors to MDA for many years – visited Israel. Their meetings with MDA:

- Sunday, 23.5. Blood Services – meeting with Professor Shenar and an in depth visit to the laboratories of the Blood Services, a review of the MAK project and its great importance. Members of the group asked for additional practical information so that they can translate it into an “enticing sales programme” to members of the wider group.
- Monday 24.5. The Afula Station – an emotional meeting with Batsheva Goaz, Shimon Aboutboul, Erez Geller, Yossi Goren, Yossi Fachima. The meeting began with a short film about the events of the second Lebanese war and continued with personal stories of MDA personnel. The stories and tour of the station, in the emergency dispatching centre and seeing the MICU and new Supervisor’s vehicle, caused the visitors great emotion almost bringing them to tears. This meeting was the most meaningful of their visit to Israel and gave them a great sense of personal pride, being as they are donors to MDA.
- Wednesday 26.5. – a visit to the Jerusalem station –a review of the activities of the region, and the range of people receiving services in the Jerusalem Region, a visit to the regional dispatching centre, a visit to the building project and a view of the progress of the project from the roof of the station.
- The Berstin couple visited the building site of the new Holon station and the existing station, met with members of staff in the station and understood first hand the great importance of the building project for the new station, a project that the group is considering funding.

In summary: According to the members of the group the visit to Israel, the meetings with MDA personnel and the visits to MDA facilities was for them a very important and emotional experience, an experience which strengthened their commitment to continue to donate to MDA.

## Visit of the Goldshlager couple and their friends – from Melbourne, Australia 25.5.10

The Goldshlager couple sponsored the refurbishment of the Ramat Gan station and the school for Paramedics. Roni Goldshlager is a writer and full of ideas, a very influential person in Australia. Dina Goldshlager was born and raised in Ramat Gan and her family still lives in the city to this day.



The visit included:

- A visit to the National Medical Dispatching Centre – since the visit was during the “Turning Point 4” exercise, they experienced emergency situations, working and staying in a sheltered room, equipped with an up to date, state of the art security system and command and control systems.
- A visit to the Blood services and a review about the technological advance of the Blood Services and their central role in the health system in Israel whether during normal periods or in times of emergency.
- A visit to the refurbished Ramat Gan station, and a ceremony uncovering a memorial plaque dedicated to the Goldshlager couple’s parents. The visit, and the modest ceremony, together with Micky Segal, Deputy Manager of the Dan Region, Iliya Levy, the chief instructor of the school for Paramedics, and Dani Neuman, affected the donors and their friends greatly.

Turning Point 4 exercise -a directorate of inspectors – within the framework of the International college 26.-27.5.10

Within the framework of the “Turning Point 4” drill a directorate of inspectors headed by the National Emergency Authority was activated. About 80 visitors participated from the national security fields and emergency services from 30 different countries from Eastern Asia to South America, as well as representatives of international organizations: NATO, UN, and including attaches stationed in Israel.

- Wednesday 26.5. In the afternoon they visited the Haifa station, after the exercise at the Rambam Hospital. They received an extensive review from Yonatan Yagodovsky and from Erez Geller about the roles of MDA in peace and emergency times, as part of the national emergency system of the State of Israel, MDA operations in Haifa during the second Lebanese War, and they visited the shelter of the station and observed the activities of the regional dispatching centre, during the exercise the protection and defense system including the locking and activation of emergency and filtration systems, including personal protection of the staff and an exhibition of means and emergency vehicles. The personal involvement of the management of the Region and the staff and the volunteers in the preparation of and throughout the visit are worthy of appreciation and thanks.

- Thursday 27.5 – the visitors watched the exercise in which there was an imagined dangerous substances incident, during war time, at the train station in Lod. They were very impressed with the activities of the MDA teams together with the Fire Brigade forces, the Police, the Home Front command and the Environment control staff. Guy Caspi and Yonatan Yagodovsky explained to them the work protocols in a situation like this, with emphasis on the cooperation between the different organizations working in such a situation, whilst stressing the management of the incident during a war and the dilemmas connected when dealing with the local population in wartime conditions.

- Summary: At the end of the day there was a summary headed by the deputy head of Israel National Emergency Authority with the visitors, who praised MDA's activities.



# Mayan Landsman

## Israeli rescue team in Haiti

Nothing prepared Mayan Landsman for the hair-raising experiences she encountered as a member of the Israeli rescue team in Haiti. However, eight years of intensive activity in MDA trained her to cope with the difficult challenges which lay before her as well as the need for making crucial decisions and to acquit herself with honor.



Mayan Landsman, 23, from Rishon Lezion, has taken numerous courses and received further training during the eight years she has been volunteering and working in Magen David Adom. More than once, Mayan rescued victims of serious road accidents and saw at close hand the results of terrorist bomb attacks during the Second Intifada. But when she tries to describe the sights from earthquake battered Haiti, she has trouble finding the right words to describe the difficult experiences.

The trip to Haiti was, in fact, the climax of a crazy day which began in a routine shift in MDA and ended on a soccer field on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, capital of Haiti. During the morning hours of that very day, before going out on her shift, Mayan heard that an earthquake measuring 7.4 on the Richter Scale had struck Haiti. On her way to Tel Aviv, her cell phone rang. "There was an earthquake," said a voice on the other end of the line. "We're going. Are you coming along?" "Of course I am; what then?", Landsman replied to the contact person from her reserve duty unit who was calling the people in the unit to notify them that an army mission was being formed for Haiti. "The only thing that caused me to consider whether or not to leave with the delegation was my place of work- MDA. I simply didn't take anything else into consideration. Since the age of 15, I've been doing what I know best, at any time and in any place. That's what they taught me in MDA."

Landsman's colleagues at work were surprised when she announced her plans to travel to the disaster area. "I explained to them that I was flying to Haiti within the framework of my reserve duty service. Although my colleagues were worried about me, they supported me and said that they were proud of me for that reason. Landsman began volunteering with MDA at the age of 15, and she spent her years in the army serving as a paramedic. Today, Landsman serves as a shift officer at the MDA national medical dispatching center and as a field worker, caring for the sick and injured. " I wanted to contribute, to be part of something that many people don't do."

Only when the IDF mission landed in the disaster area, did Landsman realize where she had come to. "The scenes in Haiti were simply beyond anyone's imagination. We had never experienced an event of such magnitude. The only thing we knew was that we were arriving as a rescue force and that we had to save as many people as possible." On the way from the airport, Landsman and her colleagues in the delegation noticed hundreds of injured people lying on the sides of the road. "When we began the patrols in the field in order to see what really happened in Haiti, I said to myself that the place seemed like hell. I don't have any other definition. Hell. Suddenly, I understood the meaning of a city which existed and no longer exists. We stayed in a relatively safe place which was suitable for setting up a field hospital. But five minutes away, the city was wiped off the map.

Like the other delegations, the IDF mission also operated under difficult field conditions. "The country's infrastructure was destroyed as a result of the earthquake. No buildings, no electricity, nothing."

The people in the mission first stayed in a factory belonging to a Jewish resident of Haiti and were later relocated on a soccer field where the Israeli hospital was set up in Haiti. Within a few hours, dozens of members of the mission set up the hospital and were prepared for the absorption of the first casualties. Members of the delegation, doctors and paramedics on permanent or reserve duty, worked around the clock. "Between shifts, we helped in other departments and went out on patrol and rescue operations. In short, full employment around the clock."

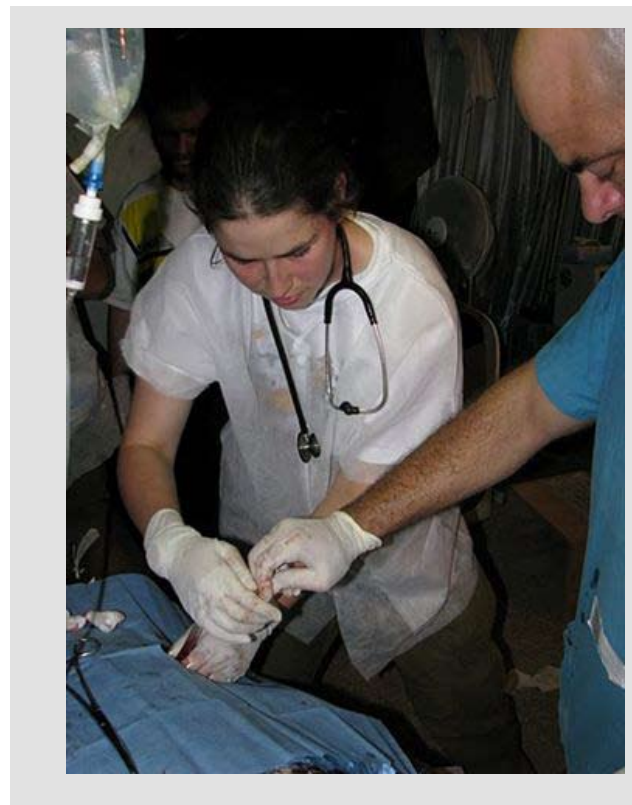
Very slowly, Mayan and the rest of the Israeli delegation were exposed to the real dimensions of the terrible disaster. Only then did they succeed in internalizing the importance of the Israeli mission and their own part in the great humanitarian effort to save lives. "At a certain stage in the chaotic situation, I went over to the make-shift hospital of the Dominican Republic. Hell is not the word for it. Everyone was on the floor, bandages on tables, and the local team and we- doctors and paramedics- were trying to care for patients when it was actually impossible to do much, not under such conditions. The situation was really desperate. It was impossible to go around on the streets. People quickly realized who we were and begged us to be taken for treatment. They grabbed us by our pants and refused to let go. 'Take us! Take us!' It was awful." According to Landsman, it was impossible to be prepared for situations such as these. "There were people with us who had experienced the tsunami disaster in Thailand and there were those who had worked in areas which suffered from earthquakes, but scenes such as in Haiti, no one had seen. You need to understand that in other places, even if there were serious events, they occurred in a certain area of the country, but the government continued to function and rescue forces were also present. There was someone to talk to. In Haiti, on the contrary, there was nothing. The country had collapsed and nothing remained of it."

Even after Mayan returned to Israel, dozens of the injured she treated pass before her eyes. "I think that the most difficult experiences were with the children who were hurt. They were lying across from us and we felt totally helpless. It wasn't possible for us to care for them. I'm not sure if it was possible to save them even under ideal conditions as in Israel."

Landsman goes through the hundreds of pictures she took during her stay in Haiti. In one picture, she is seen next to a baby with a bloated stomach and large, painful eyes. Mayan is quiet, moves a tender finger over the picture and remains silent. Very slowly, she begins to tell the story. "During the night, they woke me up and asked if I knew how to use a "BIG" apparatus, which inserts a needle into a bone and allows administration of drugs and liquids when intravenous access isn't possible. I went to the tent and saw three doctors standing



around a baby in very serious condition. They were familiar with an older version of the instrument, and here is where the knowledge I acquired in my advanced training course with MDA came in handy. I had been familiar with the instrument for several years, having used it dozens of times. Nevertheless, this was my first experience with such a baby." Landsman, who explained to the doctor how the procedure is supposed to be performed, instructed him as he inserted the instrument into the baby's tiny body. "I thought that the procedure was over, but a blood test revealed that the baby girl had a rare blood type ( -O) and that there was internal bleeding in the stomach." Fortunately for the little girl, who urgently needed a blood donation, Landsman's blood type was identical to hers, and her life was saved after the Israeli paramedic gave her a donation of blood. The baby's father, who had brought his injured daughter to the hospital, abandoned her there and left the place," relates Landsman with pain.



One of the hardest dilemmas which doctors have to face is the need to make fateful decisions. " There's no lack of theories, but this was a mega-happening", says Landsman. "In Haiti there was a need to cope with a process of making hard, ethical decisions which are unlike anything we were familiar with and heard about. Everything is fine and good until you reach the moment of truth such as, for example, who is admitted to the hospital and who isn't, who is capable of being saved and who has no chance. For if it weren't for us, the medical teams, he has no chance. There are no alternatives. There is no other hospital," she says. " Even if someone has been admitted to the hospital, the question arises as to how long the doctors should continue to treat him and when to stop. After all, you can't invest everything in one person when there are others who can and need to be saved."

This is a difficult dilemma, but as it turns out, it was not impossible. Landsman and her colleagues in the Israeli mission made hard decisions, one after the other. They handed down a ruling and continued on to the next case, the next patient and other fateful decisions.

Landsman is proud of what she and her colleagues in the delegation accomplished in Haiti. "We went around with our heads held high. I was exposed to the reactions to our activity, and all those who stayed in Haiti came to see us and our work. We accepted the difficult cases and handed over to others, generally to the Americans, the easier cases and those which required only supervision." Towards the end of Landsman's and her colleague's stay in the disaster area, they went to a hotel for some relaxation. "This was an amazing change of atmosphere. It's incredible that an hour and a half drive away from you, there is nothing but destruction and corpses in the streets, whereas you are now in an enchanted place, a paradise in every respect." Landsman declares that she would go back to the experience again without any hesitation. "I believe in what we did there and I hope we succeeded in contributing more than a little to the efforts to make life easier for the inhabitants of Haiti whose world fell into ruin upon them."