

Unconventional Wisdom: *New Perspectives on EMS at National Political Conventions*

Tom Collins, MD (Cleveland) – RNC

C. Crawford Mechem, MD (Philadelphia) – DNC

How does EMS coverage for political conventions differ from other special events?



RNC Medical Operations

- Cleveland EMS, private EMS
- Contracted Medical Teams
- Street Medics
- Hospitals
- HHS – DMAT/Medical Strike Team
- FBI, USSS medical teams, TEMS
- Homeland Security Intelligence
- US Capitol Office of the Attending Physician
- Staged Consequence Management teams

Cleveland EMS

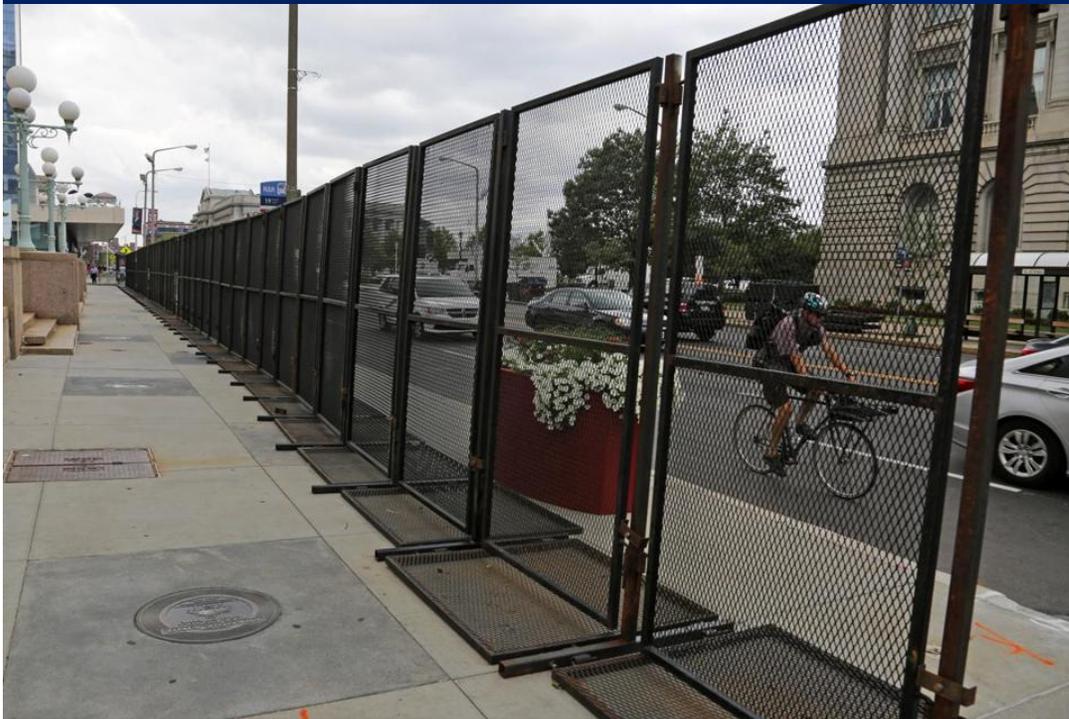


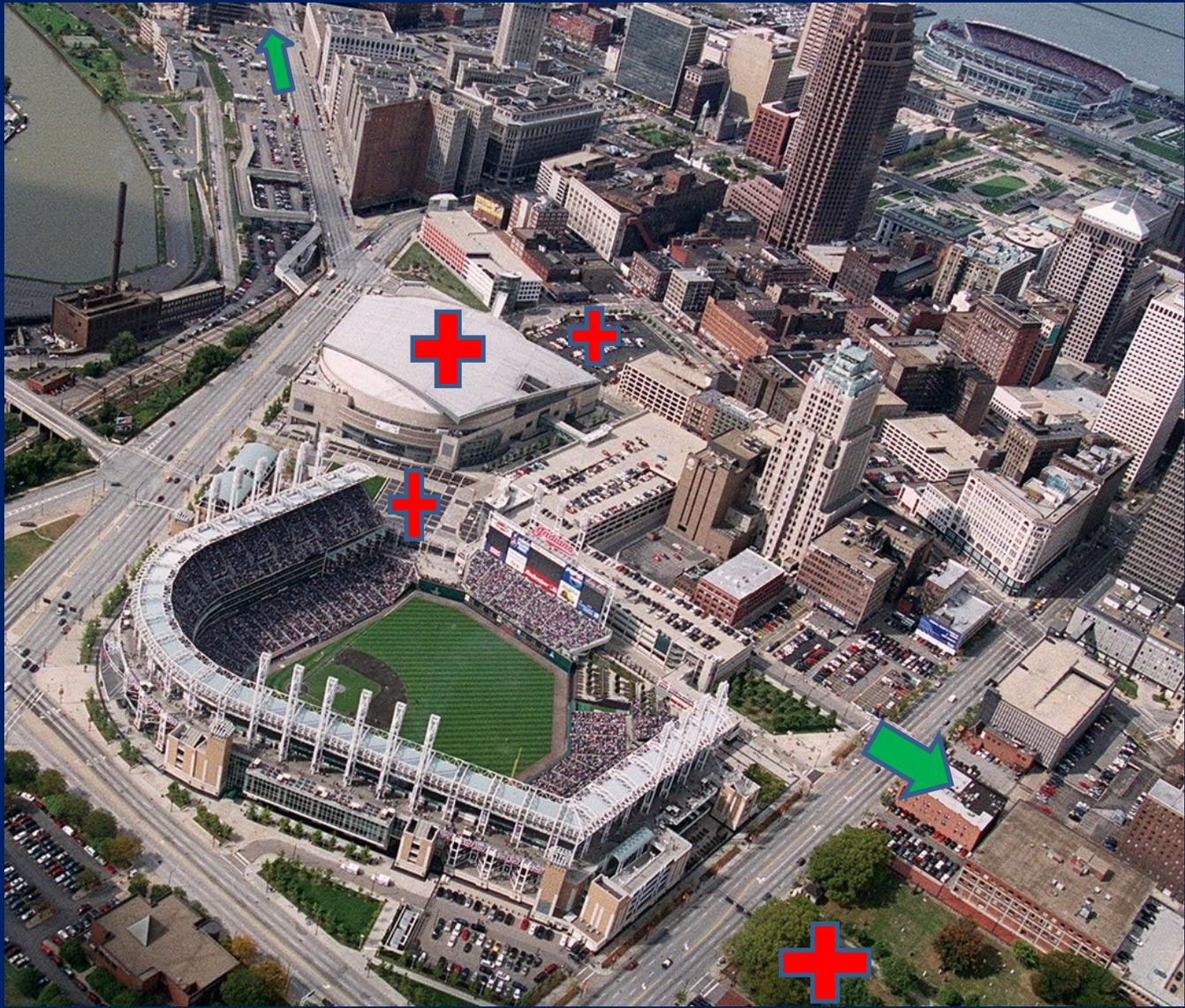
“Street Medics”

- Protester support
- Volunteers
- Variable training
- Well intentioned
- Set expectations



It's All About the Movement!



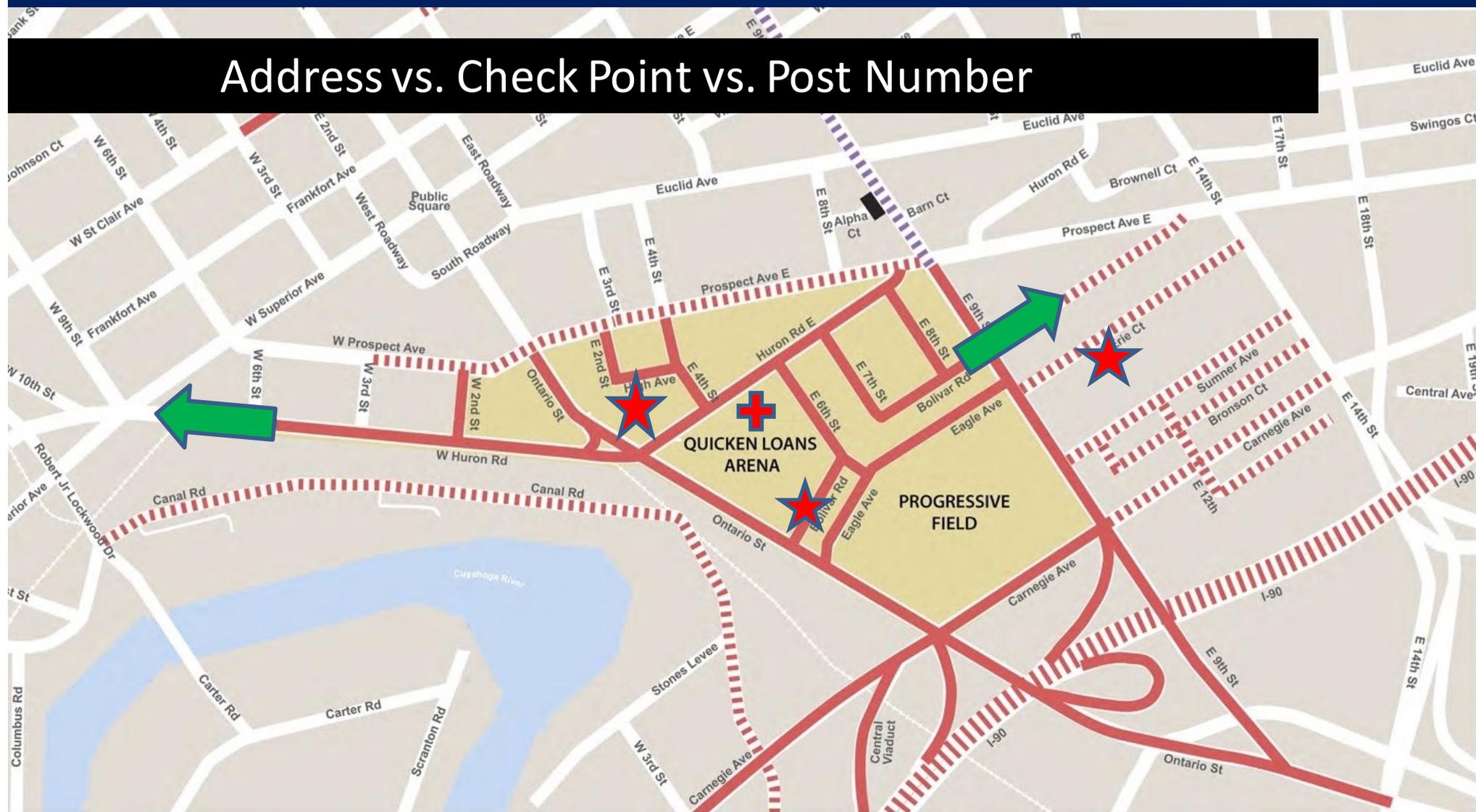


Inner Perimeter

- 2 Tent ERs
- 2 Mini ALS



Address vs. Check Point vs. Post Number



Rehab

- Dedicated LEO rehab areas
 - Secured and unsecured zones
 - Scheduled breaks
- What about EMS?



Philly's Story – The DNC

- July 25-28, 2016
- Primary venue Wells Fargo Center
- Security and potential for mass protests presented unique planning challenges



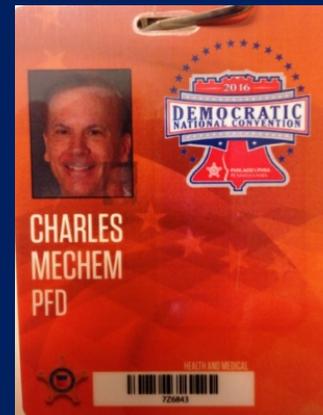
Security

- DHS designated convention a National Special Security Event (NSSE)
 - US Secret Service lead agency for security
 - Heavy presence of federal, state, local assets
 - Road closures, rail and air-space restrictions
 - Operational security major consideration

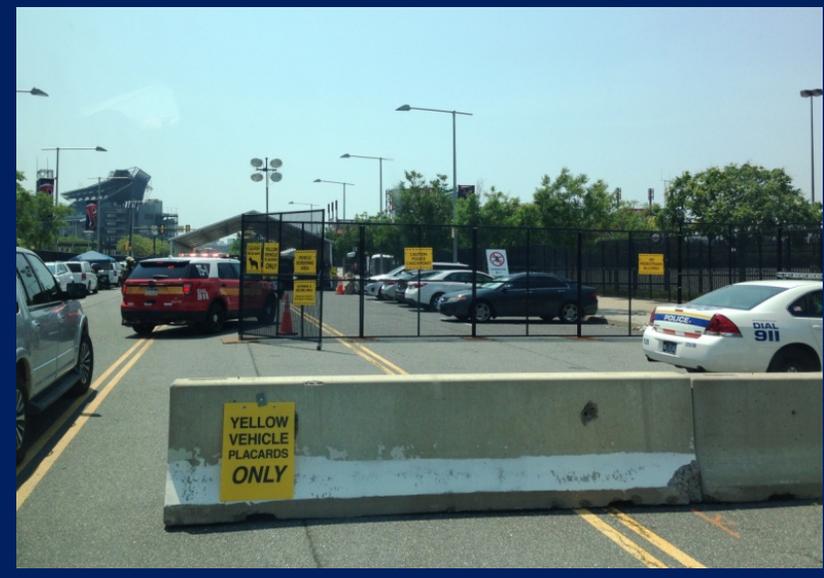
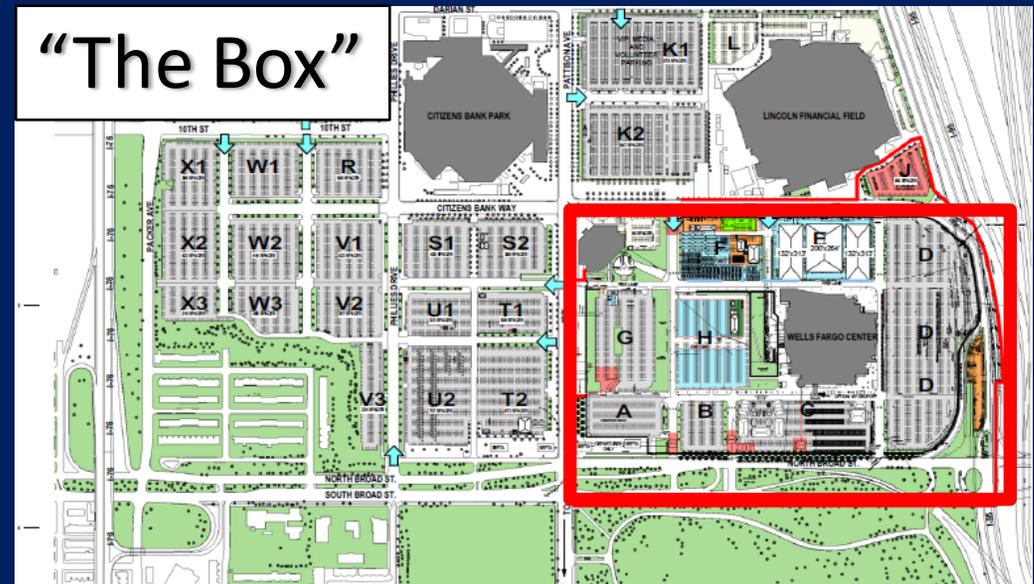


Security

- USSS credentials required to get in
- Credentialed personnel still went through airport-style security
- PFD vehicles swept by USSS agents, dogs
- Had just gone through this with the Pope



Security

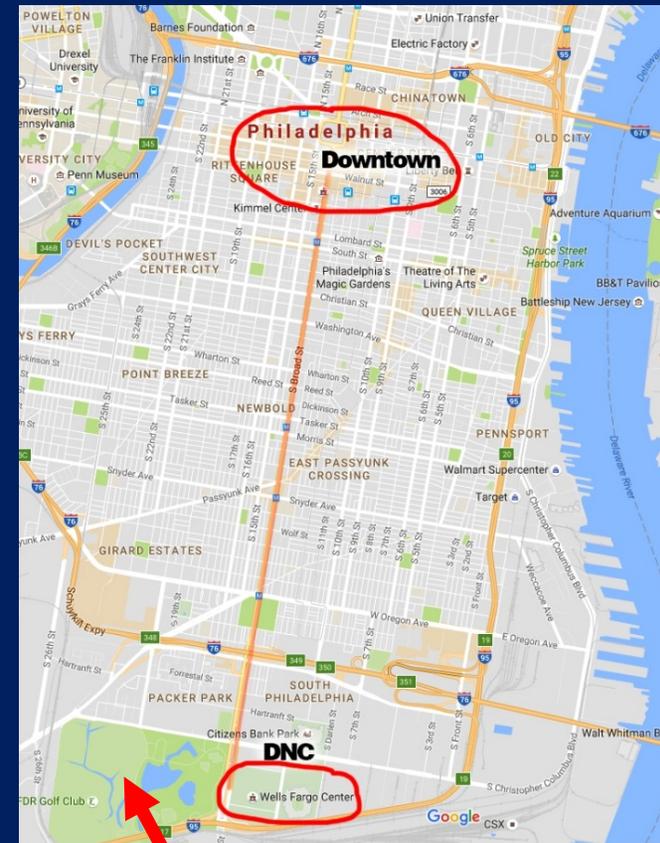


The Protesters

- One of greatest planning variables
- Not sure how many would come
 - Hundreds to hundreds of thousands?
 - Cleveland was a guide
 - Philly expected more
- FDR Park established as Free Speech Zone
 - No assurance they would go there, stay there

Medical Coverage for Protesters

- FDR Park Division
- Center City Division
- Coverage for roving protesters
- Supervisors, ambulances, bike teams, gators, medical tents
- Physician Response Team
- Casualty Contingency Strike Team



FDR Park

“DNC protests in Philadelphia dwarf those outside RNC in Cleveland”



PBS NEWSHOUR

50,000?

The Protesters

- Overall impact relatively small
- Most peaceful, a few less so (“anarchists”)
- Heat was a factor (mid-90s, humid)
- Water stations and cooling tents
- Police were professional, pre-emptive
 - Only 103 citations
 - Few medical encounter

Cleveland/Philly Lessons Learned

- Practice patient movement
- Prepare for different location designations
- Security measures were time-consuming
- Preparing for protesters involved many unknowns. Anticipate more in future
- Building good relations was key

