

Testimony of J. Douglas Boles
President, Indianapolis Motor Speedway
House Committee on Homeland Security
Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications
“Mass Gathering Security: A Look at the Coordinated Approach to Super
Bowl XLVIII in Newark, New Jersey and Other Large Scale Events”
June 23, 2014

Chairwoman Brooks, Ranking Member McCaul, and members of the Subcommittee. I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss planning and preparation efforts for the largest single-day sporting event in the world, the Indianapolis 500, held annually at the Racing Capital of the World, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in Speedway, Indiana.

We are proud to report that Hulman & Company, the parent company of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway (IMS) and the Verizon INDYCAR Series, recently concluded a successful month of May in Indianapolis, culminating with the crowning of Ryan Hunter-Reay as the champion of the 98th Running of the Indianapolis 500.

Annually, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway hosts four major automotive racing events. The most famous is the Indianapolis 500, which is the signature event of what we refer to as our “Month of May.” Our month features the country’s largest participation half-marathon, the OneAmerica 500 Festival Mini-Marathon; the Verizon INDYCAR Grand Prix of Indianapolis; two consecutive days of Indianapolis 500 qualifications; two major concerts that attract upwards of 50,000 people each; the IPL 500 Festival Parade, and the Indianapolis 500 Mile Race.

Our planning and preparation is year-round and never rests, and our top priority is the safety and security of everyone who is in and around our facility. We have the highest expectations for ourselves and our local public safety agencies as we collectively prepare to host hundreds of thousands of guests each year. Our fans are passionate about our facility and our races, and our employees and partners are even more passionate about protecting our most valuable assets, those legions of fans that make a visit to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in May an annual tradition.

A look at our facility and some history will provide some perspective.

The Indianapolis Motor Speedway was constructed in 1909, a 2.5-mile track that inhabits 275 acres of land inside our 1,000 acre campus. IMS has nearly 240,000 permanent seats covering approximately 20 acres. Four holes of our renowned 18-hole championship golf course, the Brickyard Crossing, are contained within the track oval, as is our museum, interior named streets, the iconic Pagoda, nearly 200 luxury suites, other hospitality areas, garages, and an on-site level 1 rated trauma medical facility (the busiest emergency room in the state of Indiana on the day of the Indianapolis 500).

J. Douglas Boles, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications,
June 23, 2014

Together, Yankee Stadium, the Rose Bowl, Churchill Downs, the Roman Colosseum and Vatican City all can fit inside the IMS oval – at the same time.

The first racing surface at IMS was crushed rock and tar, not ideal for the inaugural automobile race in August 1909 for which 65 cars were entered. That fall, track owners, led by Carl Fisher, decided to accept the recommendation of a national paving brick organization and resurface the track with street-paving bricks. Over 63 days, 3.2 million bricks – each weighing 9 ½ pounds, were laid on the oval surface, and the term “The Brickyard” was coined. Many of those bricks remain today under several layers of asphalt. Some portion of the bricks were maintained as a part of the racing surface until 1961, and even today, competitors take the checkered flag at the The Yard of Bricks.

Following the first racing on the bricks in 1910, organizers settled on a 500-mile format over Memorial Day weekend and the Indianapolis 500 was born. Ray Harroun took the checkered flag in 1911 in six hours and 42 minutes, driving an average speed of 74.602 miles per hour. By comparison, in 2013, Tony Kanaan won the Indianapolis 500 with an average speed of 187.433 miles per hour. Qualifying speeds regularly exceed 230 mph.

The race continued until World War I forced cancellation in 1917 and 1918, but it resumed again in 1919 and took off in popularity, and continued until World War II when motor racing was again brought to a halt. From 1942 to 1945 the track fell into disrepair and some thought that at the conclusion of the war, the facility would be sold to developers and divided for post-war housing.

Following the War, Terre Haute, Indiana businessman Anton “Tony” Hulman, Jr., purchased the racetrack in 1945 and a massive undertaking began to get the track back in shape. Mr. Hulman embarked on a renovation project that brought the facility back to life, and it re-opened for the 1946 Indianapolis 500.

Today, IMS remains owned and operated by Hulman-George Family and is one of only three tracks in the United States outside the operation of Speedway Motorsports, Inc., or International Speedway Corporation. The Hulman-George Family continues to lead efforts to grow the sport of open wheel racing and is setting the stage for the second 100 years of racing at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway as the 100th running of the Indianapolis 500 approaches in 2016.

IMS and the Indianapolis 500 have hosted many celebrities and dignitaries over the years, including Presidents Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, Chief Justice John Roberts, cabinet secretaries and foreign ambassadors.

IMS is set to embark on a nearly \$100 million upgrade project that will introduce cutting edge technology, infrastructure upgrades, and fan experience engagement. The last major construction project at IMS occurred from 1998-2000 when the current Pagoda control tower and its adjacent plaza, pit-side garages and road course were built. The latest addition to our campus will be unveiled next week when we cut the ribbon on a 25-acre solar farm on our property, the largest such system hosted at a sporting facility.

J. Douglas Boles, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications,
June 23, 2014

IMS is located in the small town of Speedway, Indiana, which is enveloped by the city of Indianapolis. Downtown Indianapolis is located a mere 5 miles from the Speedway and the track is surrounded by neighborhoods, major traffic thoroughfares and industry, such as our neighbors Praxair and Allison Transmission.

As the president of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, I am responsible for all of our preparations to host on-site major sporting events each year. Our challenges are many; however, it would be impossible for us to provide a safe and secure environment for our fans without the public safety partners and agencies that help us coordinate security, crowd management, and traffic control and provide us with valuable intelligence.

Although the race itself is usually run from start to finish in about 3 hours on the Sunday of Memorial Day Weekend, race day has begun long before the cannon sounds at 5:30 a.m. to mark the official opening of the track to spectators. The track opening begins a morning of pageantry that includes marching bands, recognition of all branches of the United States military, celebration of the rich history of IMS, the singing of *America the Beautiful*, *God Bless America* and *Back Home Again in Indiana*, and the famous command to drivers to “start your engines,” given by family matriarch Mari Hulman George.

IMS counts on the expertise and manpower of the Town of Speedway Police and Fire Departments. Speedway Police Chief Jim Campbell and Speedway Fire Chief Mark Watson both have a wealth of knowledge about our facility and understand our unique needs.

Our list of partners is long, but each is an important component of our public safety plan:

- Town of Speedway Police and Fire Departments
- Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department
- Marion County Sheriff’s Office
- Indiana State Police
- Indiana State Excise Police
- Indiana National Guard
- Indiana University Health
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- United States Secret Service
- Transportation Security Administration
- Federal Aviation Administration
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- National Weather Service

During May, IMS depends heavily on the support of public safety agencies, all leading to the Indianapolis 500 race day, when 800 public safety personnel are on site by 6 a.m. In addition, IMS employs more than 1,600 people responsible for parking operations, ticket/gate entrance, guest services, grandstands, spectator mounds and subcontracted security.

For the first time in 2014, the Indianapolis 500 was designated as a Special Event Assessment Rating II. The SEAR rating previously was III but was changed following the scrutiny of large events after the 2013 Boston Marathon tragedy.

J. Douglas Boles, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications,
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In this initial year of SEAR II rating, we became more acquainted with resources that are now available to us to assist with the ingress and egress of hundreds of thousands of people in a 12-hour period. This year, IMS was assigned a federal agent from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, who provided us with important real-time feedback, additional security cameras and the use of two helicopters for traffic control as well as aerial security coverage.

Now that we are developing relationships with the federal SEAR II team, we will be better prepared with additional expertise and more knowledge in the years ahead.

On race day, we operate from four command centers: our primary center in the track infield, two outside and one on standby as a backup. We use a Unified Command system associated with the National Incident Management System in each of the centers.

A formal chain of command is established and known to all. For IMS, the center is manned by the senior director of operations, director of engineering and construction, and representatives of security, traffic, gates, parking, garages and pits, stands and mounds, guest services, medical and weather. The police command includes representatives from local and state police agencies.

IMS also has a sophisticated and extensive public address system, which is attached to multiple large screen video displays located throughout the facility. The system not only provides audio and video race information but has the ability to communicate any emergency notifications. The public address booth and video control room are located in the primary command center. This gives the unified command the ability to provide up-to-the-minute information about any situation warranted.

IMS was one of the first venues in the country to implement the Department of Homeland Security's "See Something, Say Something" campaign including a visit from Secretary Janet Napolitano to kick off the program in 2011. Posters are located throughout IMS and two INDYCAR drivers recorded a video campaign that aired on-site during the month of May. We credit the program for an increase in the number of reports of suspicious activities and packages we receive from fans.

In 2015, IMS will add a new texting system to improve real-time interaction with our customers. The system will allow fans to text questions, comments or emergency information to the command center, and IMS will react and respond accordingly.

Our primary command center is operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week beginning a week before the official opening of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in May and closes several days after the Indianapolis 500. We operate the same system for our other major racing events.

Our planning for security and related matters is year-round. Monthly meetings to plan for 2015 have already begun with representatives from public safety agencies and will continue throughout the year. As a part of our year-round planning, staff is in regular contact by phone, email and texts with several members of public safety agencies to maintain the dialogue about our events and other events taking place in central Indiana.

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By March of each year, our planning sessions become devoted to specific topics, including executive protection, intelligence, gang control, crowd management and parking. In April, we conduct a table top security exercise and begin on-site training to expose public safety officials and track personnel not only to the sheer physical size of IMS but to handle specific situations.

Emergency preparedness involves many scenarios, including in-venue non-terrorist events, such as a grandstand collapse or fire, as well as preparation for a terrorist threat and, of course, training to deal with on-track incidents.

When the calendar reaches May, staff and partners at IMS are in full event mode. There are regular and unscheduled updates from federal officials when information and intelligence warrants. Daily operational meetings with and without law enforcement are conducted and daily operations movements are outlined to orchestrate the daily schedule of activities.

Following each major event, IMS meets with its public safety partners to complete an after-action report that includes written reports about opportunities for improvement for future events. The operations team at IMS uses the report to make future planning decisions.

Over decades of hosting successful race events, we've learned that building and maintaining relationships on all levels is a key to success. We ask a lot of our public safety partners – sometimes too much of them. We also try to be a good partner by providing meeting space and access to train on our grounds to help meet our needs.

Public safety officials at local, state and federal levels know, understand and buy in to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and its importance to the city, the state of Indiana and racing fans from around the world. Only with them can we continue to host The Greatest Spectacle in Racing.

We look forward to working with this committee to assist in any way we can with information that is helpful in local and federal coordination of large scale events.

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