Contents

Message from AFMDA’s National Chairman & Chief Executive Officer 5
Message from MDA’s Director-General Eli Bin 6
MDA in 2013: From the Front Lines 7
MDA in 2013: Exporting Its Knowledge Abroad 8
MDA in 2013: Preparing for Any Unforeseen Event 9
MDA in 2013: Ready to Respond 10
AFMDA: Looking Ahead 11
2013: Your Gift at Work in Israel 12
2013 Financial Reports 14
About Us & Contact AFMDA 15
2013: In a Year of Relative Calm, We Revisited the Meaning of Preparedness

In 2013, we were blessed with relatively few acts of terror or war in Israel. Given the volatility of the region and the sad memories of 2012, it was a welcomed respite. But we at American Friends of Magen David Adom know things can change rapidly in the Middle East. So we must always prepare.

Preparedness takes many shapes — including ambulances, which remain MDA’s greatest need. In 2013, we continued seeking out ambulance sponsors because the urgency never ends. Every year, Magen David Adom must replenish approximately 12 to 15 percent of its entire fleet as the average life of an MDA ambulance is just 5 to 10 years. There’s no such thing as “MDA’s got enough ambulances.” With your support, we satisfied MDA’s request and sent 97 ambulances to save lives in Israel in 2013.

Preparedness also means anticipating and responding to the everyday emergencies Israelis go through, beyond war and terror. The kinds of emergencies we, as Americans, can relate to. We, too, suffer heart attacks, are injured in car accidents, get sick, and watch our kids break bones playing sports. When we see an Israeli who was saved by MDA, many of us think: “That could have been me or someone I love.”

MDA, as a pillar of Israeli society on par with the Israeli Defense Forces, is the only national institution Israelis rely on to help them during those emergencies. And MDA doesn’t stop saving lives just because terrorism and war abates in a given year. Our support is an on-going necessity for MDA’s 14,000 first-responders, of whom 13,000 are volunteers. And because MDA receives no funding from the Israeli government for its operations, that support is critical.

And that’s why, while there’s so much left to do, we can look back on 2013 with a sense of accomplishment. Together, we raised $36 million for MDA, a record for the organization. We also took major leaps forward in our $100 million campaign to build MDA’s new National Blood Center. And we launched major galas in Los Angeles, New York, south Florida, Detroit, and Cleveland to help fund MDA’s work.

We can only hope and pray that 2014 brings continued tranquility in Israel. But what we do know is that, thanks to you, MDA will be prepared for anything. Your generosity ensures that Israel’s first-responders have the tools and training needed to save lives, no matter the dangers or medical emergencies they face. The task of saving Israeli lives rests heavily on us, and we hope we can continue counting on your support.

MARK D. LEBOW
Chairman, AFMDA

ARNOLD GERSON
Chief Executive Officer, AFMDA
MESSAGE FROM MDA’S DIRECTOR-GENERAL ELI BIN

Facing an Uncertain Future Together

Dear Friends,

Magen David Adom concluded 2013 with a feeling of great satisfaction from the operational point of view, but we’re also concerned about our ability to maintain that level of service to the Israeli people in the future.

In 2013, MDA rescued hundreds of thousands of sick and injured Israelis, collected more than a quarter-million units of blood, and could have filled a football stadium with the number of new volunteers it trained. We handled emergency crises, such as December’s record-breaking snowstorm, with the utmost care and efficiency. Abroad, MDA continued to offer aid, expertise, and manpower to countries that suffered catastrophic natural disasters, such as the Philippines.

And even the people of Israel acknowledged MDA: In a 2013 public opinion poll, MDA was the voted the second-most trusted Israeli organization in the country, closely following the Israel Defense Forces.

Yet, for all of MDA’s professionalism, it is still an organization that relies heavily on the goodwill of our supporters around the world, primarily in the United States. The support is critical. We are always in need of ambulances, modern equipment, and training. And as Israel’s population ages and increases all at once, responding to emergencies will only become more challenging.

Your support goes a long way in helping us save lives. Every donation makes an impact, and every dollar reminds us how fortunate we are to have partners in America who believe in our mission and recognize the difficulty — and necessity — of our work.

Thank you for your continued commitment to helping MDA save lives in Israel.

ELI BIN
Director-General, Magen David Adom

MDA IN 2013: FROM THE FRONT LINES

For MDA’s Muawiya Qabha, Only Life Matters

It’s an unlikely story in the Middle East. But at MDA, seemingly anything is possible.

In the spring of 2013, 2-year-old Adelle Bitton was nearly killed when the car she was traveling in crashed after being attacked by stone-throwing Palestinians. Adelle and her mother, Adva, were on their way home to the settlement of Yakir. The assault left Adelle with a severe head injury, unconscious and struggling to stay alive.

When Muawiya Qabha (pictured below with Adva), a 14-year MDA veteran who was not on duty that day, got notice of the attack, he rushed to the scene. He performed CPR on Adelle, and stabilized her until the MDA ambulance arrived minutes later. The toddler survived.

The irony was lost on no one: Qabha, an Israeli Arab, saved the life of a young Israeli settler, who was attacked by Arab terrorists.

But for Qabha, saving a life is the only thing that matters. The question of whose life needed saving never played into his thinking.

“I needed to be there because we are all in this together, Jewish and Arab,” Qabha says. “I received blessings from both communities after the incident.”

Today, Adelle is still recovering. Adelle’s mother, Adva, talks to Qabha regularly to give him updates on her daughter.

“He’s an angel. God sent him directly at the right time,” she said. “He saved my life indirectly because me and my daughter — we’re the same connection. If he saved her life, he saved my life.

From MDA Supporter to Patient

Mark Sack knows MDA saves lives every day in Israel. He’s a dedicated American supporter, serving on the board of AFMDA’s David Mark Berger Chapter in Cleveland. But he never expected that one of the lives MDA would save would be his own.

Sack, 55, was traveling to a Maccabiah Games basketball event on the light rail in Jerusalem in July 2013 when he suddenly felt massive pounding in his chest. He knew something was terribly wrong. He also knew he needed MDA.

Once on-site at the event, Sack notified MDA paramedics, who are on site at every major sporting event in Israel, who immediately whisked him away in a Mobile Intensive Care Unit for emergency surgery at a local hospital.

“I was very fortunate,” Sack said. “What makes this so very personal is that my parents (z’l) were involved in raising funds for MDA with the David Mark Berger Chapter in the 1980s and 1990s, and my wife, Aviv, and I are active with the chapter today.”
MDA Expertise Used in Response to Boston Marathon Attack

MDA’s priority is always to care for the people of Israel. But when others are in need around the world, MDA never hesitates to assist. In 2013, that commitment to saving lives — any lives — continued.

MDA was among the first organizations to offer assistance after the deadly terrorist attack at the Boston Marathon in April. While MDA was not needed on the ground, the training the organization had earlier provided many of the emergency first-responders on the scene that day played a role in Boston EMS’ quick response.

Emergency responders who rushed to the scene of the attack, including American MDA overseas volunteer Yedidya Ben-Avie, used tactics learned from MDA to treat victims and secure the perimeter.

“Looking back, we can only view the response as a huge success,” Ben-Avie said. “We managed to clear everyone from the hot zone in just 16 minutes.”

Officials from Massachusetts government agencies were quick to acknowledge MDA’s role in the day’s lifesaving efforts.


MDA’s Caspi Tours the U.S.

In August, Guy Caspi (at left), MDA’s chief multi-casualty instructor and director of HAZMAT exercises and operational training, toured the U.S. to share his experiences with American first-responders. MDA has become a global pioneer in mass-casualty response after years of dealing with terrorism and rocket attacks and is always happy to share best practices anywhere in the world. “No matter where in the world we’re from, the instinct to save lives is universal, so it was an honor to share MDA’s knowledge with American first-responders,” Caspi said.

Rushing to the Philippines

In November, after Typhoon Haiyan devastated parts of the Philippines, MDA was quick to offer assistance.

An MDA delegation, led by Ori Shacham (above, in white T-shirt), traveled to the Philippines to assist with relief efforts. The MDA team helped organize logistics and delivered food and necessities to distressed residents who were reeling from the typhoon that killed more than 6,300 people.

As Israel’s representative in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, MDA helps save lives around the world whenever possible. MDA was the first relief organization in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake and is still supporting efforts there today. MDA was in Japan after the catastrophic 2011 earthquake. And it has been on the ground in Indonesia, assisting the world’s most populous Muslim country after the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004.


Saving Lives in the Snowstorm

No one could anticipate that Israel would be completely covered in white, yet MDA responded heroically during December’s record-breaking snowstorm in Israel. Ambulances and paramedic teams treated 5,200 victims — from newborns to seniors — throughout the country. MDA responded to more than 10,000 calls in Jerusalem and northern Israel alone.

“MDA teams did the impossible in reaching every place and every road, under almost impossible conditions,” said MDA Director General Eli Bin. “We have once again proven that when faced with national crises, we know how to work in the best possible manner and with total dedication.”

MDA Accompanies President Obama

Americans have always been generous in supporting MDA. But every so often, a gift will get “presidential” treatment.

In March, a surprise and historic trip to Israel by President Barack Obama required MDA to assign Mobile Intensive Care Unit #12 (MICU12, below) to the elite medical and security motorcade accompanying the president.

MDA IN 2013: EXPORTING ITS KNOWLEDGE ABROAD

MDA IN 2013: PREPARING FOR ANY UNFORESEEN EVENT

MICU12, one of eight MDA ambulances that made up part of the presidential motorcade, was dedicated in honor of Eva and Dr. John J. Mames (of blessed memory), the founders and namesakes of the Dr. John J. Mames — Michigan Chapter of AFMDA.

New Mobile Command Vehicle

Ready for Action

In October, MDA unveiled its new, state-of-the-art National Mobile Command and Control Vehicle designed for helping to direct rescue operations on the most difficult terrain and during a cellular network failure. The truck is the most technologically advanced vehicle in the world.

Designed in response to the lack of adequate first-response technology during the Mt. Carmel forest fire in 2010, the truck can be used in many different emergencies, including earthquakes, train derailments, and war.

Inside the vehicle, up to five dispatchers and 18 officials can observe more than two dozen flat-screen computers, which display dispatch information and the location of every ambulance in Israel.
Saving Lives. No Matter the Cost.

Everything at MDA Has a Cost. Except a Life.

MDA is Israel’s largest volunteer non-governmental organization. And it relies on its 13,000 volunteers to do one thing — save lives. But running into harm’s way to administer CPR or transport a patient to a hospital has a cost. MDA’s expenses range from several hundred dollars for uniforms to $100 million to help build a new national blood center.

But MDA doesn’t have an endowment or government support to fund its operations. So while MDA first-responders concentrate on saving Israeli lives, Americans can ensure they have the means to do so.

Ambulance Donors Needed

Where would MDA be without its ambulances? The notion of an ambulance shortage is scary, but it’s one that MDA’s emergency responders deal with constantly. Unlike civilian cars and trucks, ambulances experience significant stress and wear-and-tear from high-speed maneuvers and the payloads they carry. Replenishing MDA’s fleet of ambulances is critical to lifesaving efforts.

“MDA ambulances are like an animal that never gets off the endangered species list; there’s always the fear that there won’t be enough around,” says Yoni Yagodovsky, MDA’s director of international affairs. “The only certainty we have is knowing that we’ll need approximately 120 new ambulances every year to save lives.”

So if ambulances are the staple of MDA’s operations, then ambulance sponsors are the lifeblood of AFMDA’s work.

With that in mind, AFMDA’s Beacon Society proudly welcomed new members in 2013. The Beacon Society, an initiative that acknowledges individuals who’ve made saving lives in Israel a reality by sponsoring an ambulance, provides members with special benefits such as insider briefings and VIP receptions.

If you’re already a Beacon Society member and ambulance sponsor, we thank you. You’re a partner in the sacred act of saving lives.

What you may not know is that AFMDA needs a lot more people just like you. We hope you’ll consider helping us recruit new Beacon Society members to save even more lives in Israel.

For more information about the Beacon Society, contact Bonnie Finley, AFMDA’s ambulance coordinator, toll-free at 866.632.2763 or bfinley@afmda.org.

MDA’s New National Blood Center

While Israel was spared widespread terrorist attacks in 2013, some communities continued to be victimized by rockets launched from Gaza. These incidents, coupled with rockets that can now reach the middle of the country, remind us how vulnerable Israel’s national blood supply is to attack. Safeguarding the country’s blood is a higher priority than ever.

The existing center — now 30 years old — needs to be relocated to a secure and partially underground location in order to withstand direct rocket or biological and chemical attacks. Also, Israel sits on an active seismic fault line and there are concerns that the current center might not withstand an earthquake. These factors, combined with the fact that Israel’s population has grown exponentially in the last three decades, mean that the current blood center is critically insufficient to the needs of Israelis.

The threat is clear. A response must be equally strong because the stakes are too high: MDA supplies 100 percent of the Israel Defense Forces’ blood and 97 percent of the country’s hospital blood needs. Managing a safe and secure blood supply is a critical piece of MDA’s responsibility to the Israeli people.

Plans for a new national blood center are currently moving forward. And just as Americans took the lead in constructing the original center, the new building will require a significant financial commitment from AFMDA and its supporters to make it a reality.
Ambulances

Generous American donors supplied 97 ambulances to MDA in 2013. These vehicles did everything from treat victims of rocket attacks, to provide a safe environment to deliver newborn babies. Ambulances are the key to MDA’s efforts, and Americans helped save lives by sponsoring them.

Training

MDA is Israel’s largest volunteer nongovernmental organization, relying on 13,000 active volunteers, including hundreds of American young adults. With our support, they all received critical training to keep their lifesaving skills up to date. MDA also records all emergency calls and communication between ambulances and dispatch centers. These systems allow supervisors to review the performance of paramedics and identify areas where further training is needed.

Securing Israel’s Blood Supply

MDA is responsible for maintaining Israel’s national blood supply, including collecting, testing, storing, and distributing donated blood. In 2013, you helped us launch our most ambitious project yet, raising funds for a new national blood center. The $100 million capital campaign will take all of our collective efforts and creativity. The alternative is not option because Israelis need a modern facility for their blood needs. Your support toward the new blood center campaign in 2013 suggests the future of the project look very promising.
Magen David Adom provides a rapid and skilled emergency medical response, including disaster, ambulance, and blood services, to Israel’s more than 8 million people. MDA is the only organization mandated by the Israeli government to serve in this role, but it’s not a government agency, instead relying on funding from donors around the world. AFMDA is MDA’s U.S.-based fundraising affiliate, raising more than 80 percent of the charitable dollars MDA receives annually. Through your gift, you’re saving lives.

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### AFMDA Operational Expenses and Allocations to MDA in Israel*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction and renovation of emergency medical stations</td>
<td>$370,000</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical equipment and supplies</td>
<td>$980,000</td>
<td>31.57%</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDA computers and telecommunications</td>
<td>$2,837,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training and supplies for workers and volunteers</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
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<td>Renovations, supplies, equipment, and testing kits for current Blood Services Center</td>
<td>$5,880,000</td>
<td>19.33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambulance parts, Medications, and other vehicles</td>
<td>$470,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambulance and Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) costs</td>
<td>$5,718,000</td>
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<td>Project- and program-related operating expenses</td>
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<td>AFMDA administrative expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFMDA fundraising expenses</td>
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Total: $25,863,000

*Funds raised are allocated for the following year.

Additional financial data available upon request.