



# Emergency Management Performance Grants

*Providing Returns on a Nation's Investment*

2016 Edition

Joint Report Presented by the National Emergency Management Association and  
the U.S. Council of International Association of Emergency Managers



April 7, 2016

For the fifth year, the U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA) and the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) are proud to offer this joint report detailing the return on investment realized by the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program. This program is the only source of federal funding provided directly to state and local governments for all the functions which help build a robust emergency management system. In fact, the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) requires these funds be used in building all-hazards emergency management capacity at the state, local, and tribal government levels.

Recipients of this grant continue demonstrating a strong commitment; for every dollar of federal funds invested, at least that much is matched by both grantees and sub-grantees. Each year's data continues to illustrate progress. In the absence of these funds, state and local governments would struggle to maintain the personnel or capabilities necessary to build and sustain an effective emergency management system.

Emergency managers all across the country remain dedicated to illustrating the full impact of EMPG in its entirety and demonstrating to the nation the true return on this investment. We remain thankful for the commitment within Congress and the Administration, especially in this time of austerity, to maintain this worthwhile program. Subsequently, we will continue to do all we can as associations to reflect back on the appropriated \$350 million and provide transparency in how these funds are sub-granted and invested.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan W. Koon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "B" and "K".

Bryan Koon  
President, National Emergency Management Association  
Director, Florida Division of Emergency Management

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robie Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "R".

Robie Robinson, CEM  
President, U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers  
Executive Director of Public Safety, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

**D**emonstrated throughout the emergency management community, the return on investment of EMPG is validated through the actions of thousands of emergency managers at the local and state levels. This report on EMPG by NEMA and IAEM-USA represents a continued commitment to ensure that Congress and the Administration realize the capabilities being built and the work being conducted through the local, tribal, and state use of these funds. The current iteration of this report represents funding decisions made throughout Fiscal Year 2015 and reflects survey responses from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and 1,423 local emergency management agencies. This number represents only 39 percent of local jurisdictions estimated to be eligible for EMPG funding.

Despite the strong response to our survey, in reality, far more local and tribal jurisdictions receive EMPG funds than represented here. Therefore, far more is being accomplished with EMPG funds than represented in this report. Also, while the numbers of tasks accomplished by local and tribal jurisdictions shown in this report are impressive on their face, they are all the more so given 30 percent of the responding jurisdictions accomplished these tasks with less than a full-time emergency manager coordinating the effort and 38 percent of the tasks were carried out in jurisdictions with populations of less than 25,000.

Winston County, Mississippi was impacted by an EF-4 tornado on April 28th, 2014. The preparedness actions taken due to EMPG funding allowed the rural county to be at a state of readiness that otherwise could not have been accomplished. The county medical facility was destroyed ; however, not a single injury occurred on-site due to enacting the facility's Emergency Action Plan which had been reviewed and tested by the local EMA, through EMPG funded activities.



## Overview

EMPG is a unique federal grant program. Since its inception, EMPG has required a dollar-for-dollar match from grantees and sub-grantees for every dollar received from the federal government. Therefore, in each grant cycle, local, tribal, and state governments demonstrate their continued commitment to preparedness by sharing in the investment in EMPG. Even in these difficult economic times, local, tribal, and state governments continue to embrace the requirement of 50 percent non-federal match on all EMPG funds. In fact, most recipients exceed the required match. Local and tribal respondents indicated matching an average of over \$4.00 in local funding for every \$1.00 in federal funding.

The program exists to build preparedness at the local, tribal, and state levels. Since the 1950s, the federal government has acknowledged a federal interest in the preparedness of state and local governments through investing in this program to ensure a minimum level of preparedness exists across our nation. Yet, the federal government has not made this investment alone.

Much is accomplished through the shared investment in EMPG. For instance, the program enables state, local, and tribal governments to prepare for all-hazards through planning, training, exercises, and developing professional expertise. It also supports response capability, communications systems, emergency operations centers (EOC), mutual aid agreements, and public outreach campaigns. Those areas are highlighted in this report.

## Reducing Disaster Costs to the Federal Government

Fiscal year 2015 represented a range of hazards which required an unprecedented amount of emergency management professionalism and preparedness:

- 43 disasters required a presidential declaration and direct federal assistance.
- Beyond that, 30,275 events required state assets, but did not reach the level of a gubernatorial declaration, and;
- 19,415 local and tribal events were supported using EMPG funded staff or assets without state or federal support. This number includes only those incidents in which no federal assets were utilized during the response and there was not a presidential or emergency declaration.

Without a strong and robust emergency management system at the state, local, and tribal levels, many of the 49,690 state and local responses would falter or require federal support. *Capabilities afforded through EMPG allow these events to be managed without additional federal expenditures!*

A strong response mechanism is only as strong as the planning utilized to support the effort. In total, 2,449 state and 9,496 local plans were developed, maintained, or updated using EMPG funds. These plans included emergency operations plans, continuity of government or operations, evacuation plans, functional needs planning, and supporting annexes as well as appendices to existing plans.

### EMPG Allows for Special Projects:

- New Mexico was able to achieve EMAP Accreditation.
- Texas purchased and implemented the use of a redundant emergency communications system using mobile radio and satellite technology. The state also upgraded the amateur radio equipment in several disaster EOCs to support amateur radio communications network.
- Utah used EMPG to build a WebEOC which made statewide conferences such as the Governor's Public Safety Summit, Utah Emergency Management Association, City and County Directors Conferences Utah Prepare Conference and Expo available.
- West Virginia used EMPG to identify Management/Credentialing/PIV-I Power Generator Cache.

## Practice Makes Perfect; Supporting Training & Exercises

EMPG supported 1,540 statewide and 7,303 local and tribal workshops, drills, and functional full-scale exercises, which benefited 221,691 state and 617,431 local participants. Without a comprehensive exercise program to complement the training efforts, the preparedness cycle would be compromised.

Systems and plans are supported by skilled professionals. These personnel must be trained and exercised on a regular basis in order to effectively support the complex emergency management system. EMPG provided significant support to these efforts in fiscal year 2015 by allowing 17,833 local and tribal, and 6,122 state classes to be conducted related to emergency management. These classes cover the major issues of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery and include training for public officials, emergency response personnel, citizens, and emergency management personnel. In total, 521,441 local and tribal personnel and 109,208 state personnel received training.



Photo courtesy of Oregon

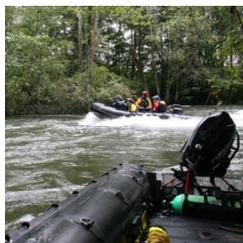
In March 2015 Georgetown County, South Carolina was the largest county that participated in the National Guards Vigilant Guard 15 Exercise which involved over 1500 troops and 500 local and regional first responders and volunteers. This exercise was a tremendous undertaking by local emergency management and EMPG funds were used in the planning and execution of this exercise. The coordination and relationships between the local, state and federal partners built during the Vigilant Guard exercise paid off with the recent flooding events in South Carolina in October as the coordination with all agencies went off with no issues and this is mainly due to the exercise and planning that was done earlier and funded by EMPG funds.

## Empowering the Public through Preparedness

EMPG continues to support efforts to bring about an increase in public preparedness. In fiscal year 2015, EMPG significantly contributed to public awareness and outreach campaign efforts. Local, tribal, and state emergency management officials conducted 124,883 local and tribal and 1,600 statewide citizen and community preparedness outreach campaigns. According to state responses, these outreach programs benefited 135,198,962 residents while locally-specific programs impacted 35,314,573 citizens.

Leaders across the country continue to discuss how important it is for the public to achieve higher levels of readiness. From the President of the United States and FEMA Administrator to the local emergency manager of the smallest county, those involved in emergency management emphasize the critical nature of individuals and household preparedness because the strength of our nationwide system rests on how ready they are to contend with disasters.

Florida Division of Emergency Management conducts an annual Severe Weather Awareness Week campaign focused on students. In 2015, the campaign included a poster contest for elementary students and a video contest for middle and high school students. The week included a statewide tour where Division officials traveled throughout the state to recognize the winners of the poster contest. During the FY 15 the Division participated in over 50 outreach events throughout the state including the Homeschool Association Conference; Family Cafe; Feel the Force Event in Miami; Governor's Hurricane Conference; National Hurricane Conference; National Preparedness Day; National Day of Prayer; and local county fairs, and preparedness day events. During FY 15 Florida entered into contracts with nine sports teams which provided the Division with assets on radio and television, outreach events at the stadium, in-stadium promotion, online promotions and interviews for FDEM Director Koon during National Preparedness Month and Florida Severe Weather Awareness Week.



## Communications & Warning Systems

Grantees and sub-grantees purchased or maintained 641 state and 3,265 local emergency response systems or services. Emergency response systems include those assets supporting emergency response operations. Some examples are incident management software, shelter management software, or voluntary and donation management services. In addition to response systems or services, 218 state and 4,086 local and tribal community warning systems and 244 state and 1,449 local and tribal redundant communications systems were purchased, maintained, or upgraded. These systems provide the ability to alert and warn response organizations and the general public of both pending and spontaneous disaster events.

Communications, warning systems, and emergency operations centers remain an eligible expense under EMPG because these critical systems actively support planning and response efforts. In fiscal year 2015, EMPG supported 255 state and 1,792 local emergency operations centers.

Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin has been able to establish and implement an emergency management program directly due to EMPG funding. Prior to this grant there was no such program for this tribe and a lack of interest in emergency preparedness from much of the tribal government. EMPG funding has broadened the horizons of tribal members and government departments alike through planning processes and outreach campaigns, as well as help unify the coordinated efforts of emergency response agencies on the reservation and local communities. EMPG funding has been and will continue to be essential in building the preparedness, resiliency, and ability to respond to disaster as a whole tribal community. Tribal members are increasingly interested in volunteering and preparing at home so that as a tribe they might be able to persevere through disaster by mitigating the impacts. The real success of this program has been the response by the community, which is making great strides to be prepared.

## Working Together Through Mutual Aid

When mutual aid agreements between jurisdictions exist, the need for immediate federal support is minimized. These agreements remain critical to mounting an effective response in the wake of a disaster. Support from EMPG is crucial in maintaining mutual aid efforts across the various levels of government. In fiscal year 2015, EMPG supported 8,710 local and tribal and 3,468 statewide mutual aid agreements, memorandums of understanding, and memorandums of agreement with neighboring jurisdictions, non-profit agencies, Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADS), and the private sector.

In Nevada, mutual aid legislation was signed into law by the Governor on May 14, 2015. This historic legislation requires the creation of a statewide Intrastate Mutual Aid Committee, adoption of policies, procedures and operational plans as well as development of a reimbursement process.

In May of 2015 Williamson County Texas experienced multiple flood events and tornadoes culminating in the Memorial Day floods. The ground was saturated from rain which started on the 7<sup>th</sup> and there was no place for water to accumulate. The NWS estimated that on Memorial Day the county was receiving rainfall rates of 6 to 8 inches an hour. At one time there were 85 county roads closed. Thanks to local swift water rescue teams and air assets provided by the state, Williamson County was able to effect a response that resulted in no loss of life. The planning and coordination efforts funded through EMPG were instrumental in the successful response to this county-wide event.



The State Operations Center (SOC) at the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) has been a model for local governments, the private sector, and non-profit organizations since it was built in 2001.

Now, after 14 years, and the support of the EMPG Program, the SOC has received a much-needed technological update, which has transformed it into a state of the art facility to expedite information gathering and sharing during California's imminent disasters. The intent of this modernization was to increase Cal OES capabilities with technology advancements so that it is ready to support all levels of activations, including catastrophic events, 24 hours a day and 365 days per year. The new monitors, computer equipment and storage will help Cal OES adequately support disaster preparedness and response activities. The focal point of the SOC has expanded and it is now comprised of thirty 70 inch monitors that form one large video wall with the ability to display up to 12 different views to enhance situational awareness. The new system allows each room in the SOC to share information to other locations in order to share necessary data with external partners.

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## Conclusion

In 2015, the federal investment in EMPG was \$350 million, a little more than \$1 per citizen. The federal government wisely leverages every opportunity to enhance the emergency management capabilities in this country since local and state government match at least dollar-for-dollar. In almost every category we collect data on, the emergency managers at the state and local level reported increases over the last year's data. Even as communities are being stretched and officials are being asked to do more with less, EMPG continues to illustrate its role in improving preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities.

EMPG provides for planning, training, exercises, communications systems, and building a robust response system. The acquisition of equipment and the authoring of plans alone, however, do not create capacity in state and local governments without trained professionals to use the equipment and implement the plans. EMPG adds value to the system by providing professional emergency managers who coordinate the resources of the whole community to be in the right place at the right time. In addition to these professionals, there remain thousands of volunteers who give their time as emergency management staff. These professionals and volunteers are dedicated to seeing EMPG invested wisely to achieve preparedness in their communities so when disasters occur, less federal assistance is required. Many local and tribal jurisdictions report EMPG funding is the difference between having a local emergency manager (full or part-time), and not having one at all.

Without a strong and robust emergency management system at the state, local, and tribal levels, the responses to many disasters would falter or require federal support. *Capabilities afforded through EMPG allow these events to be managed without additional federal expenditures!*

*As demonstrated in this report, local, tribal, and state governments managed 49,690 events without federal assistance in FY 2015.* While disasters remain unpredictable and no investment can completely eliminate the risks, supporting the development of state, local, and tribal capabilities through EMPG is proven to minimize disaster effects and limit federal expenditures.

The program remains a critical aspect of disaster preparedness and response and demonstrates a significant return on the investment of all jurisdictions—including that of the federal government. This report represents a snapshot of how EMPG impacts the disaster preparedness and response landscape. It clearly demonstrates the value and dedication of all jurisdictions who participate in the program.

We appreciate the support EMPG has received in the past and hope such support continues as we work tirelessly to demonstrate the return on the nation's investment.



*Photos courtesy of California and Arizona*

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*Photo courtesy of Texas.*

#### ABOUT NEMA:

Established in 1974, NEMA represents the emergency management directors of the 50 states, territories, and the District of Columbia. These professionals are responsible to their governors for all-hazards emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery from all emergencies, disasters, and threats to the homeland. NEMA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization headquartered in Lexington, Kentucky, and an affiliate of the Council of State Governments.

#### Headquarters Office:

NEMA  
1776 Avenue of the States  
Lexington, KY 40511  
p: 859-244-8162

#### Washington, D.C., Office:

444 North Capitol St., NW  
Suite 401, Hall of the States  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
p: 202-624-5459

#### ABOUT IAEM-USA:

IAEM-USA is the nation's largest association of emergency management professionals, with over 4,200 members, including emergency managers at the state and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business and the nonprofit sector. Most of the members are city and county emergency managers who perform the crucial function of coordinating and integrating the efforts at the local level to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters, including terrorist attacks. The membership includes emergency managers from large urban areas as well as rural areas. IAEM is a non-profit, non-partisan organization headquartered in Falls Church, Virginia.

#### Headquarters Office:

201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church, VA 22046  
p: 703-538-1795

[www.nemaweb.org](http://www.nemaweb.org)

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