

# Looking Forward to the IAEM 2015 Annual Conference

By Susamma Seeley, IAEM-USA Conference Committee Chair

As we sit back and reflect on the IAEM 2014 Annual Conference in San Antonio, it is already time to think about the 2015 Annual Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. Our theme is “Expanding the Spectrum of Emergency Management.” Many view a spectrum as an array of colors, disciplines or perspectives that capture the characteristics of two extreme points. We challenge our colleagues to consider the spectrum as a scale that is ever widening in scope and range.

## Merely Reacting to Events Is No Longer an Option

Since we are witness to profound political, environmental, technical and cultural changes, the challenges for emergency managers and other decision makers are more complex and urgent than ever. Merely reacting to events is no longer an option. More than ever, we must reach beyond the “normal” and push past the ideology and methodology that are commonplace and “safe” to expand the spectrum of emergency management. From forming creative partnerships and sharpening our technical expertise to embracing social science to better prepare, we must look beyond the conventional and limited role of current emergency management.

## Three Topic Areas

The Conference Committee offers these three topic areas for your consideration:

■ **Emergency Management: Phases or Mission Areas.** In the past, the four phases of comprehensive emergency management exemplified the complex and intersecting nature of managing an

incident regardless of size or type. As you explore expanding the spectrum of emergency management, what changes have you made in your approach with the advent of mission areas in emergency management? How has the inclusion of prevention and protection affected your work? Does the new non-cyclical paradigm resonate in your world? Are there distinct and clear cues for transitioning from phase to phase? What tools, methods or best practices help you expand your range of effectiveness? Presentations may focus on one or more phases/mission areas.

■ **Environmental and Political Influences.** We live in a rapidly changing world where we must make constant adjustments to stay relevant. Ever changing technology, societal fluctuations, political climates, communication strategies, and new weather patterns create a spectrum of challenges for emergency management. How do these changes influence the emergency management profession or its ability to effectively meet the changes? How can we be poised to be successful?

■ **New Partner Practices.** As the spectrum of emergency management expands, how does the profession of emergency management change? What unique partnerships have you developed? What new strategies or actions have you taken? How can we turn challenges into opportunities? What new tools, practices and relationships make up the

spectrum? Do these changes require new types of collaboration?

We encourage innovative thought and want to hear from professionals in all fields within emergency management as well as all of the fields that partner with or are affiliated with emergency management. This industry is moving forward rapidly, and we need the perspectives of those involved at all levels. Consider the IAEM Annual Conference another tool in the arsenal of shared knowledge.

## Call for Speakers

For those IAEM members who would like more information about developing proposals, join us on Jan. 22, 2015, at 1:00 p.m. EST for a [webinar](#). We have specifically designed an informational session to walk you through the submission process, so you can understand exactly what the Conference Committee looks for in all submissions. The call for speakers is now open and closes **Feb. 20, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. EST**. [Refer to the speaker guidance](#) for questions about the submission process or the submission site. ▲



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