FEMA and IAEM Work Together to Promote Grassroots “America’s PrepareAthon!”

By Gwen Camp, Director, FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Division

Recent devastating events, including Hurricane Sandy, the Joplin tornadoes, the West, Texas chemical plant explosion, and the severe weather that crippled the Midwest and East Coast this winter, all represent the new normal when it comes to the threats and hazards that Americans face each day. The costs associated with these events are staggering. A recent report by the National Academies, for example, found that annual federal spending on disasters jumped from $20.9 million in 1953 to $1.4 billion in 2009.¹

The growing impact – both in numbers of lives lost and in economic losses – of these natural and manmade hazards underscores our country’s need to advance how we prepare for this new normal. From our urban centers to our rural towns, we must provide all communities with the most up-to-date guidance to practice the necessary steps to stay safe before, during and after an emergency. In 2011, Presidential Policy Directive-8 (PPD-8) formally recognized this need, stating, “Our national preparedness is the shared responsibility of all levels of government, the private and nonprofit sectors, and individual citizens.”

To improve the nation’s resilience and to help increase the number of people taking action to prepare, FEMA has joined with IAEM and other organizations to launch “America’s PrepareAthon!” – a new national community-based campaign for action. The campaign provides a national focus on preparedness twice a year, every spring and fall, and provides practical, action-oriented tools to help individuals, families and organizations take part, including hazard-specific drills, guides for group discussion, and tabletop exercises.

The first America’s PrepareAthon! national day of action will be held on Apr. 30, 2014. On this day, emergency managers, schools and universities, faith-based

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With increasing voter apathy, greater expectations of citizens, and closer public scrutiny of elected officials, as well as the ever-increasing availability of information, citizen engagement provides an opportunity to enhance emergency management programs and increase awareness of our activities. The following article provides an overview of citizen engagement for public sector officials and highlights the potential usages to emergency managers.

What is Citizen Engagement?

Citizen engagement broadly refers to providing opportunities for citizens to participate, exert influence, or inform the decision-making process. Citizen engagement activities can be as simple as an informational poster, as resource-intensive as holding a referendum, and as engaging and collaborative as a charette.

Types of Public Engagement Activities

The International Association for Public Participation’s Spectrum for Public Participation categorizes engagement activities into five broad categories:

- **Inform** – provide information to the public;
- **Consult** – obtain feedback on a policy or the options of a policy;
- **Involve** – work with the public to make sure their concerns or aspirations are accurately represented;
- **Collaborate** – partner with the public in each step of the decision-making process, from initial design to implementation; and
- **Empower** – provide complete decision-making power to citizens through engagement.

Despite the categorization, citizen engagement is already an activity for most emergency management programs, through providing information before, during and after an event. Nevertheless, strengthening citizen engagement usage affords a number of benefits.

Benefits Realized by Emergency Management

At the simplest level, citizen engagement provides the benefit of a forum to involve more citizens with an emergency management program, enhance the profile and awareness of emergency management in a community, and – by extension – increase the resilience of the community. However, for emergency management, citizen engagement provides value-added opportunities during the prevention, mitigation and preparedness phases. Examples of benefits that may result from citizen engagement during these phases include:

- **Ensuring that plans, activities and services not only are more reflective of the community’s present needs but also articulate an ideal future state;**
- **Collaborating with citizens and voluntary organizations to develop, maintain and exercise plans, as well as to identify opportunities to collaborate on activities or services;**
- **Provide opportunities for citizens to discuss issues not currently discussed by elected officials;** and
- **Draw upon the assets of the community to enhance resiliency.**

Not a Single Activity, But Rather an Ongoing Process

A final point to note is that citizen engagement should not merely be a single activity but rather an ongoing process within your organization. This avoids the event being viewed with skepticism and encourages others to participate in activities over time. Citizen engagement is best served with an organizational framework that clearly states the overall vision, goals and processes for engagement.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is that citizen engagement results in a greater sense of co-creation in the public sector. With an increased role for citizens, emergency managers must also provide affirmation and report back to participants the result of their involvement in an activity.

Learn More

For those looking for more information on tools and approaches to engaging citizens, I would recommend the Citizen Science Toolbox developed by faculty at Australia’s Griffith University. For details, see [https://app.secure.griffith.edu.au/03/toolbox/index.php](https://app.secure.griffith.edu.au/03/toolbox/index.php).
From the IAEM-USA President

Operation Invite a Friend

By Bruce Lockwood, CEM, President, IAEM-USA Council

As you know, my recent articles in the IAEM Bulletin were specifically about IAEM member value, which I believe is only determined by the individual member. In the January Bulletin, I asked you to make a list with just three bullet points as to why your IAEM membership has value to you. I said I thought you would need that list in the future.

The Future Has Arrived

On Feb. 11, 2014, the IAEM-USA Board of Directors approved “Operation Invite a Friend,” based on an IAEM-USA Membership & Marketing Committee report. This initiative provides unlimited memberships to each of you as USA Council members to invite U.S. friends, colleagues and stakeholders to join IAEM. The committee report stated that existing IAEM-USA members are encouraged to focus their 2014 outreach efforts in these target markets: state emergency services association members, small town emergency managers, volunteer emergency managers, and members of professional associations affiliated with emergency management (e.g. American Planning Association, American Public Works Association, American Society of Civil Engineers, American Society of Public Administrators, National Association of County Officials, League of Cities, and others with an organizational focus (committee) on EM.

This initiative provides the tool for us as individual members to grow this organization and invite our friends to participate in our network, attend our incredible annual conference, participate in our wide range of committees and caucuses¹, receive our IAEM Bulletin, and have a voice in our profession and the policies that impact our communities.

In the first days of March, you should have received an e-mail with the details of the initiative, which kicked off on Mar. 1, 2014, and runs for six months. The simple requirements are as follows:

- You must be a current, dues-paying Individual Member in good standing of the IAEM-USA Council to give away memberships.
- The giveaway may not be used for renewal of an existing IAEM membership.

What Your Friend Will Receive

This is a full membership for 12 months, with all member benefits. I believe this is an incredible opportunity for you to invite individuals to experience what IAEM has to offer, in addition to growing our collective strength in knowledge and experience.

As you prepare to offer memberships, please think about the committees and caucuses¹ we currently have, and the possibilities of future groups. Think of EM professionals with whom you regularly coordinate or would like to have more frequent collaboration. As a member-based organization, each one of us has a responsibility to grow the organization, to ensure that we are truly representative of our profession.

This giveaway is only the first phase of the initiative, as our success in growing the organization will not be measured by the simple number of memberships you give away, but whether we provide IAEM member value that will encourage these new members to renew their memberships next year. I believe this is a shared responsibility.

Benjamin Franklin said, “Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement and success have no meaning.” I close once again with a statement and a challenge: “Together, we make a stronger IAEM.”

¹ A complete list with links to all IAEM-USA committees and caucuses is available at http://www.iaem.com/page.cfm?p=groups/us-committees. Just a glance at this list shows IAEM member interests in a wide range of issues impacting our communities.

Steps Your Invited Friend Should Follow

2. Complete contact information fields and all other required fields.
3. In the Sponsored ID field, click on the Search Member button, and follow the directions in the pop-up box to search for your sponsor. When your sponsor’s name appears in the pop-up box, click the Pick button and your sponsor’s ID will be filled automatically on the form.
4. In the Membership Category drop-down box, select “U.S. Individual – Invite a Friend.”
5. Click on the POST CHANGES button.
6. You should receive a confirmation e-mail and begin receiving IAEM member entitlements within 48 hours.
In last month’s CEM® Corner, we discussed the Planning Standards with a concentration on Planning Design and Process. This month we continue our discussion of the Planning Standards with a concentration on the Risk Assessment requirements.

The Standard – Planning Standards: Risk Assessment

The NFPA® 1600 version 2013 Planning Standards: Risk Assessment requires the entity to “conduct a risk assessment to develop required strategies and plans” by “identifying hazards and monitoring those hazards and the likelihood of their occurrence.” The standard defines risk assessment as “the process of hazard identification and the analysis of probabilities, vulnerabilities, and impacts.”

1. Evaluate types of hazards. The standard specifies the types of hazards to be evaluated:
   - Natural hazards (geological, meteorological, and biological).
   - Human-caused events (accidental and intentional).
   - Technology-caused events (accidental and intentional).

Recognize the difference between accidental and intentional. Accidental means the hazardous event was not the purpose of the act. An example of an accidental hazard is when a piece of equipment fails due to poor or no maintenance, thus causing a toxic chemical to be released. An intentional hazard would be a person purposely causing the release of the same toxic chemical through some overt act. Think of intentional as an act of sabotage or terrorism. If not designated as sabotage or terrorism, the hazardous event is considered accidental.

2. Identify and monitor vulnerability. The standard next requires the risk assessment identify, evaluate, and monitor “the vulnerability of people, property, operations, the environment, and the entity.”

3. Analyze impacts of hazards. The third requirement is for the entity to “conduct an analysis of the impacts of the three types of hazards identified above on the following criteria:
   - Health and safety of persons in the affected area;
   - Health and safety of personnel responding to the incident;
   - Continuity of operations;
   - Property, facilities, assets, and critical infrastructure;
   - Delivery of the entity’s services;
   - Supply chain;
   - Environment;
   - Economic and financial conditions;
   - Regulatory and contractual obligations; and
   - Reputation of or confidence in the entity.”

4. Evaluate potential effects that could have cascading impacts. The fourth requirement states, “The analysis shall evaluate the potential effects of regional, national, or international incidents that could have cascading impacts.” Here cascading means a chain of events occurring as a result of an initial event. An example would be a downstream flood, road and bridge destruction, and power outages occurring as the result of a dam failure.

5. Evaluate adequacy of prevention and mitigation strategies. The final requirement states, “The risk assessment shall evaluate the adequacy of existing prevention and mitigation strategies.” This evaluation is used to make decisions about how to allocate limited resources, reduce impacts and future resource requirements through mitigation, and build capabilities to ensure resiliency for the entity.

References

For information and discussion on Planning Standards: Risk Assessment, refer to the recommended FEMA Independent Study courses and other related references mentioned below. Do not confuse these general planning requirements with the specific procedures found within your organization. While an emergency manager needs to understand and know local procedures to be effective in the position, those procedures could easily differ from the general procedures discussed in the study references and are not found on the certification exam.

The applicable FEMA Independent Study (IS) courses candidates should review when studying Planning Design and Process are:

- IS 235b – Emergency Planning.

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IAEM in Action

The North American Application Review Commission (shown above and below) met Feb. 19-22 at IAEM HQ, Falls Church, Va. Twenty commissioners worked very long days to review 273 applications. Candidates will receive their notification letters on or around Mar. 17. IAEM would like to thank all of the commissioners for volunteering their time and energy to support the certification program.

IAEM Staff Work Toward the Qualified Association Specialist Certificate. On Feb. 4, 2014, IAEM staff completed the first of 12 modules in the Florida Society of Association Executives’ new Qualified Association Specialist (QAS) certificate. These online educational modules for professionals provide a broad-based view of association management principles, including board governance, financial management, human resources, legal issues, meeting production, and more. IAEM staff will complete all modules within the next year, earning the QAS certificate. IAEM staffing is provided by ASMI, IAEM’s management firm since 1985, which last year was awarded accreditation by AMC Institute, the global trade association representing the association management industry.

IAEM-USA Region 9 Vice President Carolyn Levering, CEM, IAEM-USA Policy Advisor Martha Braddock, IAEM-USA President Bruce Lockwood, CEM, U.S. Government Affairs Chair Randy Duncan, CEM (not pictured), and IAEM CEO Beth Armstrong met Feb. 5 with FEMA Grant Programs Directorate’s Brian Kamoie, Chris Logan, Paul Belkin and Natalia Roma.

IAEM CEO Beth Armstrong and IAEM-USA President Bruce Lockwood, CEM, met Feb. 5 with FEMA Grant Programs Directorate's Brian Kamoie, Chris Logan, Paul Belkin and Natalia Roma.

IAEM CEO Beth Armstrong and IAEM-USA President Bruce Lockwood, CEM, met Feb. 5 with FEMA NIC Director Doc Lumpkins (center) and IAEM-USA Policy Advisor Martha Braddock (not pictured), to discuss IAEM’s work on the Small Business Recognition Program.

IAEM CEO Beth Armstrong and IAEM-USA President Bruce Lockwood, CEM (right), met Feb. 6 with Gwen Camp (left), Karen Marsh and Alison Carllock, FEMA Individual & Community Preparedness Directorate, to discuss America’s PrepareAthon! IAEM is a primary supporter of the effort. See Page 1.
organizations, businesses, and civic groups from coast-to-coast will hold their own day of action to educate themselves about protective actions, mitigation measures and community plans. In the spring, the America’s PrepareAthon! campaign will focus on floods, hurricanes, tornadoes and wildfires. In the fall, the national day of action will focus on earthquakes, hazardous materials, pandemic flu and severe winter weather.

Findings of Recent Preparedness Report

America’s PrepareAthon! builds on FEMA’s recent Preparedness in America report,2 where findings aligned with the on-the-ground experience of emergency managers. For example, the research revealed that simply talking about preparedness had a strong relationship with preparedness behaviors, such as having a plan, knowing about alerts, and participating in drills. However, that finding was tempered by the reality that less than half of the respondents reported talking about preparedness in the previous two years. With the help of partners like IAEM, America’s PrepareAthon! will change that.

The Preparedness in America report also found that Americans who participated in exercises and training significantly improved their ability to take immediate and informed action in an emergency, enabling them to recover more quickly. Further, the report found that Americans who practice preparedness training had a better understanding of the potential threats and were more likely to take steps to lessen these hazards’ effects.

America’s PrepareAthon! Complements the Work of IAEM

Modeled after the Great ShakeOut, America’s PrepareAthon! complements the on-the-ground work of IAEM and its members. The campaign’s national call to action will educate Americans on proper protective actions to stay safe and mitigate damage; teach the public which disasters threaten their community; and encourage them to know their community’s disaster and resilience plans. We are grateful that IAEM representatives will lead many of these efforts.

Development of Whole Community Exercises

FEMA and IAEM are also working to develop whole community exercises to be a part of the America’s PrepareAthon! movement. To be introduced for the fall national day of action, these customizable tabletop exercises will provide whole community partners with an opportunity to meet face-to-face and share individual perspectives. These simulated discussions will help to improve the effective coordination of plans and actions with whole community partners, and to identify gaps and areas for improvement.

A Shared Responsibility for the Whole Community

Preparedness is a shared responsibility requiring the whole community working together, and ensuring the success of a preparedness campaign like this one is no different. Twice a year, we ask emergency management professionals to join other local leaders, businesses and community organizations in drills and exercises to strengthen communities against disasters. Additionally, we need your help to spread the word and encourage individuals and groups in your communities to register their days of action (and to register your own) as part of America’s PrepareAthon!

Learn More – and Get Involved

For more information about America’s PrepareAthon!, visit www.ready.gov/prepare, e-mail FEMA-Prepareathon@fema.dhs.gov, and join the Twitter discussion @PrepareAthon.

Download the America’s PrepareAthon! all-hazards poster at www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/69941.

IAEM USA Reaches Out

Making a Difference with FIRST® LEGO® League

By Karen Thompson, IAEM Bulletin Editor

Editor’s Note: This is the first in a series of articles profiling IAEM members who have been involved in IAEM USA's commitment to FIRST® LEGO® League.

Profile: Marty Shaub, CEM
FIRST® LEGO® League in Utah

Marty Shaub, CEM, is the IAEM USA Region 8 President and is also an IAEM USA representative on the IAEM Global Board of Directors. She is Executive Director, Environmental Health and Safety and Emergency Management, University of Utah.

Q: How did you become involved in FIRST® LEGO® League?

Marty: I learned of FIRST® LEGO® League last summer, when the Lassande Entrepreneurial Institute at the University of Utah (http://lassonde.utah.edu/) contacted me. The institute was organizing Utah’s participation, and since the topic was natural disasters, they asked what ideas I might have. I identified subject matter experts throughout the state for FLL events and forwarded event information to IAEM.

Q: Tell us about the events with which you were involved.

Marty: For the August 2013 event, I assisted Lassande Institute with identifying subject matter experts and Utah hazards for the participating teams. I provided contact information for Utah experts for the planning of the September 2013 FLL Meet the Experts Night at the Utah Museum of Natural History, and arranged to staff a table with information on pandemic planning. On Jan. 10 and Jan. 17, FFL qualifying tournaments were held statewide. I helped to recruit subject matter experts and forwarded event information to IAEM.

Profile: Paige Colburn
FIRST® LEGO® League in Alabama

Paige Colburn is an Emergency Management Officer at the Huntsville-Madison County (Ala.) Emergency Management Agency.

Q: How did you become involved in FIRST® LEGO® League?

Paige: Several local FLL teams contacted our office between August 2013 and January 2014. This year’s topic was “Nature’s Fury,” so I’m sure the local EMA office was on their list of suggested contacts for their research.

Q: What were the dates and location of the activities in which you participated?

Paige: On Aug. 12, 2013, we gave the Rock City Robo League a tour of our EOC and worked on Quick Response (QR) Codes on emergency supply kits, as well as launching an informational website for the public. On Sept. 26, 2013, I went to the Hampton Cove Middle School and did a presentation to Team Panda-monium on “What is an emergency management agency?” and provided informational handouts. The team worked on a low-cost RFID bracelet for search-and-rescue operations after a tsunami.

On Dec. 13, 2013, Jones Valley Elementary School FLL team toured our EOC. The team was making a cell phone app for disaster locations and exploring important preparedness information. One of my co-workers did a presentation and showed the team several aerial maps of recent disaster damage.

On Jan. 17, the FIRST® LEGO® League Home School Group (aged 9-14) toured our EOC and discussed their...
IAEM-USA FLL in Alabama
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GPS beacon project for a tornado shelter with the GIS department and the Huntsville Fire Department. On Jan. 22, two Horizon Elementary School teams (aged 9-10) toured our EOC and gave a large-scale presentation to first responders and EMA partners about both of their projects – one on a flood sandbag-filling robot and one on lightning-proofing roofs with a grounding sealant.

Q: What was your role in the activities?
Paige: It varied. Sometimes I led presentations or tours of our EOC. At other times, my role was to provide support and information.

Q: Are any teams from your area advancing to the next level of competition?
Paige: YES! We’re so proud! The Hampton Cove Middle School Team Panda-monium! Here is a quote from their team leader and coach, Bill Jacobs: “On behalf of the Panda-monium Robotics Team, I would like to again express our thanks for your support by coming out and speaking to the kids about emergency management. The information they received from you aided the kids in their efforts and allowed the team to win the Alabama FLL State Championship. The team will now be headed to St. Louis, Mo., to compete in the FLL World Festival against teams from other states and 50 other countries around the world. Thanks again for taking your time to come to our school and speak with our team.”

Q: What was the most enjoyable thing to you about participating in this effort?
Paige: I don’t have any kids, but I love them so much! So, for me, the best part was spending time with all the passionate and excited kids. It was great to see them actually interested in what we do. EM is a hard topic to casually explain, as I’m sure everyone in our field has discovered. Most of these kids got it, though! They got the concepts, and they were interested and asked questions. That just makes your day. Plus the robots. The robots were so fun to watch on their little disaster obstacle courses. I loved how principles of logistics, staging areas, transportation, secondary hazards (like downed power lines), and structural integrity for earthquakes were built right into the obstacle course! Who knew our field could be presented in such a fun and interesting way?

Q: Is there anything else you’d like to share with IAEM members?
Paige: I doubt we’ll have a chance to be so involved in FIRST® LEGO® League again in the future, as I’m sure next year’s topic will be something entirely different from “Nature’s Fury.” But should you ever have a chance to get involved, definitely look up the teams in your area. Go to one of the competitions, and be amazed at these kids building and programming (as in software engineering, computer code, and stuff that didn’t exist when we were in school!) real robots that do what they’re told (for the most part). It’s awesome to watch.

I got so into all of this stuff that I agreed to become a judge for the FLL Global Innovation Award (GIA) with the IAEM group of judges. I can’t wait! I should get the first batch of projects to judge next week.

IAEM-USA FLL in Utah
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judges. On Jan. 31, I was there as an observer at the Utah FFL Championship Tournament, which was held at the University of Utah Student Union.

Q: What has been the most enjoyable thing to you about participating in this effort?
Marty: I really have enjoyed meeting the kids, both in Utah and at the IAEM 2013 Annual Conference in Reno. They were all so excited about the experience and frankly just really sharp, smart kids. In addition to the photos I provided for the Bulletin, you can see more photos and learn more about FFL Utah activities at http://www.facebook.com/FirstLegoLeagueUtah.

FFL team at the University of Utah.

Paige Colburn offers a presentation to the Hampton Cove Middle School Team Panda-monium that will compete at the FFL World Festival.
Digital Volunteers and Social Media

By Joshua Kelly, Management Analyst, City of Mesquite, Texas, and Shahrzad Rizvi, Management Analyst, City of Dallas, Texas

It has been well established over the past few years that during disasters, the public is increasingly turning to social media and the Internet for information. A recent Red Cross survey even reported that 76% of Americans expect help in less than three hours after posting a request online.1

The fact that more people are turning to digital venues for real-time information, combined with the amount of new technology that has recently become available (i.e., Nixle, Usadi, Facebook, Twitter Alerts, etc.), has made it easier than ever for emergency managers to connect directly with citizens. While technological advances have been instrumental in developing communication channels, if ignored or not managed carefully, they also can create a rift between citizen expectations and what can realistically be done with limited staff resources.

As the unprecedented use of social media during the response to the Boston Marathon Bombing showed us, social media platforms have evolved to much more than personal sharing mechanisms. Their strengths are now in aggregating conversations about events in your community and creating a real-time dialogue with residents.

Services like “Twitter Alerts” and Facebook push notifications have further expanded the reach of social media beyond the status update, making them viable public safety tools. During the next few years, as social media continues to evolve and individuals increasingly turn to the Internet for information, adding a “digital media dashboard” next to traditional media sources in an Emergency Operations Center may very well become a necessity. One possible way for leaner departments to staff and manage social media expectations, while preserving staff for operational duties, is to use digital volunteers.

Rumor Control

Every experienced manager knows that, during a disaster, managing citizen misperception can be a full-time job in and of itself. In extreme cases, such as what happened at the Superdome following Hurricane Katrina, the out-of-control rumor that the Superdome was an official shelter site resulted in thousands of individuals being stranded. This diverted much needed manpower and resources during the peak response phase of the storm.

These sorts of out-of-control rumors are going to be made worse by the increased public reliance on social media sources for information. This is where utilizing digital volunteers can be a viable alternative option to traditional communication sources. Highly trained digital volunteers, from a local CERT team or other trusted source, can go a long way toward helping overly extended staff managing responses to a social media page or designated rumor control site.2 The success of this kind of program already can be seen in organizations like the American Red Cross. During Hurricane Sandy and the Boston Marathon Bombing, the Red Cross actively used their volunteers to answer questions and provide real-time information to disaster victims who turned to social media for help.

Training and Best Practices

While utilizing volunteers to manage a rumor control page can be extremely helpful, for volunteers to be successful they need to be vetted, trained, and briefed well in advance of a disaster. The last thing a manager needs is an unskilled volunteer, even one with good intentions, spreading false information through an official source.

To safeguard against this, staff should hold a semi-formal interview process to gauge the volunteers’ knowledge base; require certification through a social media training course,3,4 such as those provided by the Red Cross or EMI; and establish operating procedures and clear parameters for how a digital volunteer will respond during an event. If this is done correctly and in advance of an incident, a department can have a novel and incredibly useful new tool for virtually no cost.

Conclusion

As citizens increasingly rely on social media as a source of official information, it will become even more important for local emergency managers to shift from utilizing older communication methods, such as press releases and radio broadcasts, to directly interacting

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2 http://www.fema.gov/hurricane-sandy-rumor-control.
To understand why I could possibly be skeptical of this great new tool to get the emergency preparedness story out to the public, one must roll back the clock 30+ years, to when I started my emergency management career.

Thirty Years Ago

From the very start of my training, it was emphasized that the accuracy of the information our office released was of utmost importance. Many times the release of timely information would be delayed to assure that the information was checked and rechecked for accuracy. The collective emergency preparedness community generally worked under similar guiding principles. The goal was to control the accuracy of the information that was being reported.

An example of this principle in action would be when our office would receive a phone call from a citizen reporting storm damage. Our standard practice would be to secure a second verification. Then we would pass the verified information on to the National Weather Service or to our media outlets.

Ten Years Ago

Now fast forward to about 10 years ago. Our TV stations started reporting on-air about storm damage in our counties of which the local EM office was not aware. Our practice would be to follow up on the reports, which were often completely erroneous. The news stations would never go back and correct the misinformation. It would be up to our offices to let weather officials know about the validity of the reports. This acceptance of unofficial reports as fact has been accelerated in recent years with the proliferation of social media reports.

Using Social Media Today

Last year our office secured Facebook and Twitter accounts to access the brave new world of social media. Our entrance into these social media platforms was to provide a source of “official” information to counter any misinformation. The strategy was to provide a credible source of accurate information, since the ability to “control” the accuracy of non-official information was no longer possible.

Sharing the New Strategy in the Real World of Emergency Response

Please allow me to share how this new strategy of utilizing social media fits into the current “real” world of emergency response. Late last year, our emergency management office was notified that one of our major industries had discovered a large suspicious package on the top of a rail tank car next to the control valves. The fully loaded railroad tanker contained a volatile acid.

The industry followed proper procedures, secured the area, and called for assistance. The resulting response involved the assistance of the bomb squad and hazmat support. The risk management plans for the chemical indicated that an area as large as five miles could be affected.

As prudent emergency managers, we activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to support any evacuation that might be needed. A decision was made to relocate any vulnerable populations within the five-mile area prior to disturbing the suspicious package. This resulted in the relocation of students and personnel at several schools and the release of non-mission critical personnel from several adjacent industries.

As part of this response, the public information officer (PIO) produced periodic news releases and arranged several press conferences. After the vulnerable populations were secured, the bomb squad was able to determine that the package contained drugs and not explosives.

Examining the Results

Collectively, all responders involved felt that the event had been a successfully coordinated emergency response. It was only after we examined the social media conversations regarding the event, that we realized there had been major issues with public perception of the response.

- Many posters became instant experts on the properties of the suspected chemical.
- One report stated that there was a small person with a bomb strapped on their back running throughout the plant.
- One post stated that the rail car would take out the plant where it was located, then take out the adjacent chemical plants, and finally would take out the nuclear power plant (five miles away), leaving the entire river valley area decimated. In fairness, there was some
With the evolving and emerging threats that the world faces, infectious pathogens continue to be an important area for domestic and international identification and monitoring. The Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and H7N9 virus continue to expand their presence in animals and humans, requiring a high level of planning and preparedness. The recent mutation and spread of several virus strains have become a considerable challenge for planners, including the following:

- The H7N9 virus has a mutation that is reportedly resistant to Tamiflu, one of the few first line treatment drugs;
- At the end of 2013, H5N1 avian influenza resulted in a mortality rate of over 50%;
- Rarely encountered viruses, such as the H10N8, H5N2, H9N2, H6N1, and H7N3 influenza, are diagnosed in humans, causing illness and sometimes death; and
- The exotic mosquito-borne virus Chikungunya has been encountered in the Caribbean for the first time, which is especially significant during the peak of tourist season.

Time shall tell if these pathogens are occurring more often, or if we are becoming more efficient at epidemiological surveillance and information sharing. Either way, robust and thoughtful preparedness must remain a priority.

For those in the public health and homeland security planning and preparedness fields, it is difficult to estimate or forecast the next emerging or re-emerging epidemic or pandemic threat. However, it may be even more difficult to generate and maintain interest for these pathogenic threats in the expansive world of homeland security vulnerabilities, due to diverse and conflicting priorities.

A key question remains about whether these threats are too distant or low-probability to remain areas of concern with so many other challenges confronting us each day. The answer is likely to be yes; however, there still are many achievements, lessons learned and identified areas for improvement that can be reviewed and evaluated as we continue to plan for these potential threats and honestly assess preparedness levels and priorities.

A 2013 report by the Trust for America’s Health and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation found that our national ability to prevent and control infectious disease was hampered by limited resources and outdated systems. Through the findings of the report, recommendations were identified to address gaps in areas such as infection control and emerging global illnesses. Many of these recommendations and issues are not new and have been identified in previous national public health strategies and continue to require review and contemplation.

The Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota reported progress in public health preparedness in late 2013. After a two year effort to gather and analyze existing state-level data from a wide range of sources, a consortium of 25 public and private public health organizations awarded the nation an overall health security preparedness score of 7.2 on a scale of 10, utilizing 128 variables or measures. The study found strengths in health surveillance, incident and information management, and countermeasure management, and areas for improvement such as surge management and community planning and engagement.

How Prepared Would We Be for a Large-Scale Event?

The level of planning and preparedness for a potential novel viral threat varies, but the most important consideration may be how truly (continued on page 16)
Disasters can have devastating physical, emotional and financial impacts on individuals living with chronic diseases, their families, and the health systems providing services. A dramatic increase in the number of individuals living with chronic diseases and the essential role of the health care safety net treating vulnerable populations fundamentally impact the way we can individually and collectively prepare for and respond to disasters.

**Upswing in Chronic Disease**

Cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, and psychological disorders are among the most common chronic illnesses encountered. Approximately one out of every two Americans are treated for chronic illness, consuming 75% of U.S. health care dollars. By 2020, the number of Americans with a chronic disease is projected to increase by almost 25 million (to 157 million), with 81 million having multiple conditions.

These millions of people with chronic disease often require stringent medication regimens to maintain their health. Without access to their medications or prescribing physicians, diabetics can experience dangerously high blood sugar, which can lead to organ damage or induce coma. Hypertensive patients are at risk for stroke, heart attack, and even death. At the least, people with untreated chronic disease may suffer pain and other debilitating symptoms.

**U.S. Health Care Safety Net**

America’s health care safety net plays a crucial role in providing ongoing affordable health services to low-income, uninsured and underinsured children and adults, many of whom live with chronic disease and are vulnerable in times of disaster. Safety net providers, services and facilities become increasingly critical in times of crisis.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, community health centers in cut-off areas such as Staten Island kept their doors open, treating patients in need of immediate care and survivors with chronic disease whose primary care physicians had evacuated or were victims themselves. In response to the devastating tornadoes that ripped through Moore, Okla., charitable pharmacies refilled lost and damaged prescriptions, preventing chronic conditions from exacerbating and a second wave of patients from requiring more critical forms of medical care. Also, when evacuees arrived at shelters in Alexandria, La., following Hurricane Isaac, free clinics supported shelter operations by providing medicines and medical supplies, which solved access problems and provided for various functional needs.

No monetary value can be attributed to lives saved. However, cost savings from avoided emergency room visits and preserving emergency services for lifesaving measures have great value in the aftermath of disaster. For disaster survivors, especially those on fixed incomes, protecting health and finances by immediately providing access to chronic disease therapy allows them to move more quickly into recovery mode.

**Impact of Health Reform**

As health care reform takes effect, safety net providers may see a relative decrease in the number of uninsured patients they serve, but anticipate that individuals who obtain health insurance for the first time may consume health care services at a higher rate. Despite these changes, not all patients will have access to or obtain coverage. In 2020, an estimated 30 million Americans will remain uninsured. While there is uncertainty as to the effects of health care reform, there is no mistaking the growing role safety net providers will continue to play in addressing the chronic health needs of disaster survivors.

**Maintaining Health in Future Incidents**

In the aftermath of an incident, we are programmed to save lives. Refocusing our approach to simultaneously and rapidly restore access to health services and proactively protect health can avoid an unnecessary second wave of disaster for individuals with chronic diseases. The scope of chronic disease management extends beyond the millions of individuals who live with these conditions to the families, health care facilities, communities and governments who care for them. Empowering individuals living with chronic diseases and their caregiver network to maintain control over their health can prevent erosion of health, crisis and even death. The way we prepare for and respond to emergencies should reflect the changing world around us. Challenges like this are not easy. Proactively caring for individuals with chronic disease and engaging the safety net as strategic partners in this effort will ease the pain that may come as part of the new normal.
The past 65 years for emergency management have included multiple episodes of the new normal, leaving some to wonder where did the old normal go? These re-sets, do-overs and mulligans – or whatever term you choose – reflect a paradigm shift in EM. Many of these second chance moments followed inadequate responses or suboptimal outcomes, driving the innovation to create a new normal in emergency management.

All disasters are local. Yet, at some point, local responders and local response can quickly reach an endpoint for the services they can provide measured against the needs of the community. The resources required to confront a catastrophe can be significant, and reliance on timely provision of regional, national and international resources can be critical for the best outcomes. One influencing factor for emergency managers today, and for the world in which we live, includes the availability of 24/7 news and weather as well as social media. For most societies and cultures, there is little room for delay and minimal tolerance for error.

**The Funding Cycle**

One challenge with disaster preparedness is based on what we remember and/or how it impacted us. In a seemingly linear fashion, EM appropriations dwindle as the years pass until the next “big one” happens. Then the cycle is repeated. As interest wanes and funding shrinks, the ability to sustain preparedness is jeopardized.

This was particularly true with focused disaster planning that dealt with one given threat. During the peak of the Cold War, many countries developed extensive plans and preparedness activities for evacuating and sheltering the population, in response to the potential for a nuclear detonation. While that threat is not as omnipresent today, many of those nuclear threat preparedness activities have offered added value in dealing with other potential disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, cyclones, typhoons, hurricanes or tsunamis.

**The New Normal Relies on the All-Hazards Approach**

From a disaster preparedness point of view, the new normal relies on the all-hazards approach. Given the commonalities between many preparedness and response needs, this was a reasonable evolution. The cycle of funding is a way to better understand the value of all-hazards preparedness. The all-hazards focus supports a better state of ongoing readiness by making it reasonable to maintain funding.

One challenge in the new normal is the ongoing pressure to reduce costs during a difficult economy. There will always be a difficult balance between overall costs and the need to maintain resources to ensure a state of readiness. Even with the more recent disasters around the world, the economics of disaster preparedness does not always align with the financial resources of the affected community, state or nation. In fact, in some communities, there may be disaster fatigue. When the novelty of disaster is lost to the mass of information and data, the interest in funding can be lost as well.

**A Wider Array of Threats than Ever Before**

The old normal was probably less simple than we want to think, but it is still represented by those who carry on, sometimes as the lone supporting voice of preparedness, planning and mitigation. The new normal carries with it a wider array of threats than ever before. In addition to the usual disaster contributors, new threats range from a novel virus yet to be discovered to the consequences of a cyber-attack that could potentially alter almost any computer-driven device in our lives.

**The New Normal Puts the EM Profession in the Spotlight**

Recent disasters have elevated the role of the emergency manager and brought the profession into the spotlight to lead and influence policymakers who are faced with crisis decision-making. When the next disaster strikes, the new normal will include instant information with tweets, Facebook posts, and other forms of unvarnished communications from the everyday citizen. The local, national and international news will be delivered faster than ever before.

While the margin of error has always been minimal, the new forms of communication will offer immediate information from the scene to create the opportunity for more informed decisions as well as instant critiques that include the good and bad at a moment’s notice. Get ready now, because the new normal is here.
The New Normal in Guyana: Torrential Rainfall and Leptospirosis

By Obiano Huntley, IAEM Student Member, New York, N.Y.

Floods on the Rise

Over the past decade, it has become the norm for torrential rainfall to lead to flooding in Guyana. The latest event occurred in November 2013, but the one that stands out in the minds of most observers is the calamitous 2005 flooding event that led to an outbreak of leptospirosis. Lessons are to be learned from that experience, not only for countries in the region but also for tropical and rural communities around the world.

Located at the northern tip of South America, Guyana is a former British colony. It is a country blessed with a myriad of natural resources and rich biodiversity, but it is partly plagued by poor land use policies and practices instituted centuries ago.

The majority of the country’s population is settled in the coastal region. This is exacerbated by the fact that 90% of the country is below sea level, with some segments being under by as much as eight feet. Communities are precariously positioned and very susceptible to the rising sea level and intricacies which can manifest themselves in cases of flooding.

The Little Known Threat

On Jan. 15, 2005, after a month of daily rainfall, 10 inches of rain fell. This exorbitant amount of rainfall led to Region Four – home to the capital of Georgetown and villages on the east coast – being inundated. The flooding affected more than 300,000 residents, and public health professionals suspected that health hazards would arise. Residents were aware of malaria and dengue fever, but the lesser known leptospirosis emerged as the massive threat to survival.

Before 2005, a few cases of leptospirosis were detected but no previous outbreaks had been reported. This outbreak resulted in a strain being put on institutions, resources and agencies responsible for handling such public health emergencies. The threats and the risks associated with heavy rainfall are a part of the new normal that residents face every year.

Leptospirosis is a zoonotic disease that is spread by rodents, livestock, dogs, cats and other animals. It is transmitted through skin or mucus membrane contact with water or soil contaminated with urine from infected animals, or through contact with tissues from infected animals. Especially in tropical countries, where farmers and those who interact with animals and water are in abundance, the danger of the disease spreading is especially pronounced.

Collaborative Response

Guyana’s Ministry of Health reached out to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for advice and for assistance in surveying and monitoring the prospect of waterborne diseases arising. In Guyana, the local authorities were not prepared and had to summon assistance from the CDC, the Red Cross and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). After much deliberation, it was agreed that a massive chemoprophylaxis campaign was needed.

Great strides were made after a month of treatment, as evidenced by the number of persons with leptospirosis admitted to hospitals. This number went from 18 on the first day of the chemoprophylaxis campaign, to 26 on the second day, and down to one by the final day.

It was ascertained that 34 individuals died from leptospirosis. An estimated 300,000 individuals were given doses of doxycycline, while amoxicillin was given to children under eight years, pregnant women, and breastfeeding mothers.

At the peak of the ordeal, the public hospitals were overwhelmed by the large number of people who showed up at the emergency unit complaining of symptoms associated with leptospirosis. This quickly resulted in a shortage of space and facilities to accommodate patients.

PAHO provided beds to alleviate the overcrowding in the hospitals, and shelters were opened to accommodate displaced individuals. The CDC provided advice and trained local laboratory staff in the use of Dip-S-Ticks and microscopic agglutination tests, both of which are integral in deciphering the presence of leptospirosis.

The New Normal

Since 2005, the new normal in Guyana relates to the fear that grips vulnerable residents when heavy rainfall leads to flooding. The effect of the rainfall, which is expected every year, is compounded by the poor irrigation system that is sometimes clogged with debris.

However, individuals are more careful, as they know what the outcome can be. The new normal is characterized by measures that stress proactivity. These involve (1) educating area residents about (continued on page 19)
Community Preparedness: a Return to the Old Normal
By Dr. Christopher G. Hennen, CEM, MEP, Emergency Manager,
U.S. Army Garrison West Point, West Point, New York

The “old normal,” a sufficiency – and in some cases, an excess – of resources needed to address community needs during a crisis, has been supplanted by the “new normal,” a lack of sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials, funding) to adequately address all hazards, all needs and all expectations. While it is an article of faith among EM officials that people ought to be prepared to sustain themselves for 48 to 72 hours until help comes, the public continues to believe that help will be readily available when they expect it.

Few Citizens Have Accepted Responsibility for Preparedness

Although the incidence of natural and human-caused emergencies has increased over the last decade and changed America in many ways, surprisingly few citizens have resolved themselves to take personal responsibility to obtain the knowledge, skills and resources needed to care for themselves in the short-term should the unforeseeable occur. With the demand for care outstripping the supply of available services, a dramatic shift in thinking about the role that citizens may play – both individually and collectively – in emergency preparedness is urgently needed. Current efforts are clearly not penetrating into the American psyche.

Like many communities across the nation, the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., has had to grapple with the fiscal realities that have impacted both its capacity to respond to a large-scale incident affecting the installation and its ability to respond to calls for assistance from neighboring communities.

Surveys Reveal Relationship Between Perceived Risk and Preparedness

A 2011 survey of academy residents conducted by West Point cadets revealed that most residents were ill-prepared for an emergency, unaware of the installation’s emergency plans, and confused about what to do and what to expect in the event of an actual crisis. Not unlike other surveys conducted by FEMA, Citizen Corps, Fritz Institute and Federal Signal Corporation, there is a clear and diametric relationship between respondents’ levels of perceived risk of experiencing a disaster and their levels of preparedness. People expect to be served rather than become prepared to serve themselves and others. The marriage of public expectation and government expenditure has sired dependence.

The Need for an Altered View of Citizen Preparedness

The new reality, government’s increasing inability to serve as a source of salvation, necessitates an altered view of citizen preparedness. Community preparedness can no longer be viewed as a “feel good” issue, relegated to an aside for funding, or focused on sporadic or annual attention during a “preparedness month” media release. Bold statements can no longer refer to the priority and importance of preparedness without a dramatic and sustained new approach.

The public must no longer be viewed as “victims” in need of assistance, but instead as “responders” capable of enhancing the response and accelerating the recovery. An engaged and educated citizenry understands instructions, follows orders, and is less prone to panic. An educated and prepared citizenry has well-informed expectations of responders following an emergency. A prepared citizenry can allow first responders to focus on the most acute needs: safeguarding lives and property, maintaining order, and restoring lifelines.

Citizen Preparedness: a Force Multiplier

Citizen preparedness must necessarily be viewed by community officials and the traditional first-responder community as a force multiplier. A well-crafted, well-funded, leader-supported, and sustained effort can create a culture of preparedness that will be an essential life-and-death component to response and recovery efforts in the critical first few days following the onset of a disaster.

Action Plan for Community Preparedness

Our action plan for community preparedness includes:

- Informing and engaging leaders whose actions inspire commitment.
- Inculcating emergency preparedness in our school-aged population through curriculum modifications and readiness exercises.
- Encouraging community-wide participation in emergency management committees and activities.
- Conducting an annual emergency preparedness fair.
- Surveying community members about emergency communications preferences and acting upon the results.

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Pathogenic Threats
(continued from page 11)

prepared we would be for an actual large-scale event. It is often easy to be prepared for an exercise or assessment with current strategies, plans and policies, since many of the evaluations are designed for the existing framework or recent past experience. We often plan for the last incident through after action reports and lessons learned. Needless to say, the great majority of our plans and strategies are not reviewed and adopted by our adversaries for implementation, whether human or microbe, which may result in a false sense of security. Difficult and probing questions arising from the above listed pathogenic developments may identify plan weaknesses, but they will strengthen subsequent strategic planning and discourse.

CDC’s Top Five Threats for 2014

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) included the emergence and spread of new microbes and globalization of travel for the spreading of illnesses as part of their top five threats for 2014.12 Many organizations may not have the resources or common interest to appreciate the CDC ranking regarding this public health concern. However, with the regular reports of common and novel pathogens evolving, emerging or re-emerging around the world, we may not have the luxury of time to adequately prepare for a threat once it appears in our presence.

If your organization were to be required to oversee or support the distribution of medical countermeasures or other critical actions next week during an exploding serious illness within your jurisdiction, are you and your partners truly prepared beyond a previously successful tabletop exercise or a comprehensive plan on the shelf? Many public and private organizations have demonstrated impressive progress in recent years, but so have many of the pathogenic threats.

Author’s Note: The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author in his individual capacity, and do not necessarily represent the views of his agency, department or the U.S. government.


CEM® Corner
(continued from page 4)


Additional Resource for USA Candidates

USA candidates also should consult FEMA’s 386-2, Understanding Your Risks: Identifying Hazards and Estimating Losses, and CPR 201, Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) Guide.

Next month we will continue our description of the Planning Standards with a concentration on the Business Impact Analysis requirements. We will also provide a recommended list of FEMA Independent Study courses and/or other references to study.

Concept of Comprehensive and Integrated EM

The CEM® Commission has received numerous questions regarding the concept of comprehensive and integrated emergency management. According to FEMA’s IS 230d, comprehensive means the program “takes into account all threats/hazards, all phases, all stakeholders, and all impacts relevant to disasters.” Integrated means the program “embodies an all-threats/hazards approach to the direction, control, and coordination of disasters regardless of their location, size, or complexity, and it goes hand-in-hand with the concept of whole community preparedness.”

Therefore, an integrated and comprehensive emergency management program is one that involves all stakeholders while covering all phases of emergency management; for all hazards regardless of location, size, or complexity; and for all impacts of those hazards to the entity.

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Tell your colleagues about the free IAEM Dispatch!
It is an unfortunate fact that “active shooter” is a term that has been incorporated into today’s society. These incidents create devastation that can require decades for true recovery. The same questions continue to arise as time moves on. How can we identify potential active shooters prior to an incident, and how can the police effectively respond to neutralize the threat?

As a police officer and a college professor in the field of criminal justice, I have viewed these events much like the rest of the criminal justice community, in that the effective measures of circumventing these events fall under the two questions previously posed. Recently, while working on a community resilience program for the City of Glendale, Colo., I began to seek advice from our neighboring first responding agencies about how they train for active shooter scenarios. It was amazing to see the dedication at all levels of the first responder base to taking the necessary time to train for these tragic events.

Proactive Response Platform

With these conversations came a new proactive response platform. We need to train members of our community to respond to an active shooter event with a survivor mentality, not as a potential victim. The Department of Homeland Security, in partnership with the City of Houston, created a platform identified as Run-Hide-Fight. The Run-Hide-Fight program was established to initiate the mentality that if you can evacuate, then do so. If there is no option to evacuate, hide within your facility. As a last option, fight for your survival.

The Run-Hide-Fight program was integrated into the conversations we had with our local paramedic service, the Denver Health Paramedic Division, and the 9-1-1 EMS provider in the city and county of Denver. As a phenomenal partnership opportunity, the Surviving an Active Shooter and Basic Trauma Care Program was developed. Integrating the Run-Hide-Fight program and the ability to administer lifesaving techniques, a new type of resiliency effort in our community was created.

This program was developed to give the community as many options as possible to work toward their own survival from the time an event begins, to the time when first responders start arriving on scene, and during the time when the scene is being deemed secure by law enforcement personnel. Developing and offering an educational program that combines potential pre-indicators of an active shooter(s), case studies on historical events, utilization of the DHS Run-Hide-Fight program, and the ability to perform self-initiated medical trauma care, has allowed the City of Glendale to provide a foundational platform for business resilience in the face of potential tragic moments.

Conclusion

The new normal, in regard to response to an active shooter event, should not be that of statistical tragedy. Instead, it should be the amount of resilience observed among the citizens who have been trained to save their own lives and assist others in need, when those crucial seconds count.
Navigating the New Normal in EM: What Our Citizens Now Expect of Local EM Offices and How to Provide It

By Robert C. Bohlmann, CEM, FEMA Reservist Cadre, and Retired County Emergency Manager, York County, Maine

It was not many years ago that most citizens in your jurisdiction did not know that your office existed and had no idea what you did in your office. If a disaster impacted your community, the agency would emerge and provide services. Senior elected officials would come forward and deliver the disaster messages that were needed, while you might make the evening newscast during an event. Then the agency would revert back to normal operations.

That was standard, at least in the Northeast and especially where volunteer staff was the agency’s backbone. Preparedness was not a huge effort and was not of interest to most citizens.

The Picture Has Changed

That whole picture has changed. Citizens today track emergency management on social media, and preparedness is practiced in many rural homes as well as city homes. The “new normal” is the expectation that local emergency managers should provide updated emergency plans, as well as school preparedness plans, mitigation plans and animal care plans. The EM agency is expected to offer practical preparedness information to many target groups and to be ready to issue public instructions for many types of incidents at any time needed.

Even small towns and communities with volunteer emergency managers expect them to be trained and qualified to provide citizens with accurate, current information and instructions. If that information is not forthcoming, the community’s elected officials and EM leaders are likely to be challenged. This is the new normal for all local EM agencies. Are you ready to meet the challenge?

To follow up on the challenge, I would like to offer one route forward. When I was hired as county director, the Board of Commissioners said that the emergency management agency was a secret in York County and that I was to remedy that.

- I set out to attend as many group meetings as I could, including faith-based organizations, medical service providers, fire and police associations, regional planning commissions, and a face-to-face visit with every school principal in the county.
- I reached out to print and TV media markets asking for their assistance. Remember that the media is your friend, not your enemy, and that the media is a two-way process. I was called a media hound, but it paid big dividends since county citizens knew they could get good information from the media and that it came from our office.
- I encouraged CERT teams to do outreach and to carry the message of preparedness. Remember that each CERT member’s home and family will be prepared and ready to share information.
- I made sure that the EOC was not a secret place by bringing citizens in for tours and presentations about what activities take place in the EOC. Yes, some areas are secure and information needs to be secured, but it’s important to share the great things that you do for the community.
- I allowed elected officials to share in the effort whenever possible. Consider featuring the chair of the board of commissioners or chair of the board of selectmen as a spokesman for your agency. This expands your message and allows elected officials to be recognized as leaders in community preparedness.

Take Advantage of Training Opportunities Whenever Possible

We must take advantage of training opportunities any time we can.

- Case studies are a great resource.
- Regional workshops and conferences give an opportunity to meet with peers and speakers and to learn from their experiences.
- The IAEM Annual Conference is packed with learning opportunities that reach beyond day-to-day opportunities, while extending your professional network.
- The Emergency Management Institute (EMI) is a great resource offering both independent study and classroom training.
- State training officers provide many resources.

Conclusion

Many opportunities to grow are there for us all, but we must take the responsibility to reach out for them. We can excel at meeting public expectations that exist in the new normal, while providing the citizens in our communities with the level of service they deserve.
The New Normal in Professionalizing the Emergency Management Field: Online Degrees and Certifications

By Misti Kill, Ph.D., Program Director of Emergency Services Management, College of Safety and Emergency Services, Columbia Southern University

I always start off a new term by telling my students that emergency management is a relatively new and up-and-coming field. While the idea of emergency management has been around for arguably hundreds of years, the profession is newly evolving. This means that there are endless possibilities for newcomers to practically advance within emergency management, as well as opportunities for them to move the field itself forward.

Professionalizing the Field of Emergency Management

One of the ways to both advance within the field and move emergency management forward is to professionalize the field. Those working within EM are achieving this professionalization by obtaining certifications as well as academic degrees. Degrees in emergency management are part of the new normal, as they are popping up all over the country, not only in the traditional brick-and-mortar format, but also as online degree programs.

The Value of Online EM Degree Programs

When we consider the online format, there are those who may argue that online degrees may not be as strong as those coming from a brick and mortar institution. However, I would argue that the value of a degree program depends more on the university, and those teaching within it, than on the delivery format.

The online world of academia provides an opportunity for individuals to obtain a degree who may otherwise not be able to achieve this milestone. Students who live in an area away from the university will benefit from a chance to complete their degree while working full-time and caring for their families.

While an online degree may not be the new normal yet, it most definitely is becoming far more common and acceptable today. This is in part due to advancements in technology and the ability to incorporate both synchronous and asynchronous learning environments.

Growth of Academic Professionalization

In addition to online degrees within the field, many of us take advantage of the significant number of independent study courses offered online by FEMA. Today, those working in the field or those interested in emergency management have the opportunity to obtain FEMA certificates at their own pace.

FEMA Online Training

In addition to online degrees within the field, many of us take advantage of the significant number of independent study courses offered online by FEMA. Today, those working in the field or those interested in emergency management have the opportunity to obtain FEMA certificates at their own pace.

Conclusion

New technological advances are coming to the forefront every day in the online world of learning. We must take advantage of these opportunities and promote further professionalization in the field of emergency management. This form of the new normal can increase our ability to support and protect our communities.
IAEM Bulletin Call for Articles: “Emergency Management and Business Continuity: Sharing the Bodies of Knowledge”

Deadline for submissions: March 10, 2014

The IAEM Editorial Work Group seeks articles for its second special focus issue of 2014, “Emergency Management/Business Continuity: Sharing the Bodies of Knowledge.” Possible articles might include: similarities and differences between business continuity in private sector and EM in the public sector; how local emergency management is implementing business continuity principles; how the private sector is implementing what we traditionally think of as emergency management; or how to sell EM to the private sector to show them that we need both. Please read the IAEM Bulletin Author’s Guidelines, and keep your articles at no more than 750 words. E-mail article submissions, by Mar. 10, 2014, to Thompson@iaem.com.

Added Value: The Online IAEM Bulletin

The online edition of this issue includes additional material, available for members only at www.iaem.com.

- New Member Listing, Jan. 16-Feb. 15, 2014.
- Do 1 Thing: Infographic for March 2014, “Sheltering.”
- “Creating a Culture Towards Community and Personal 4Rs: Readiness, Resiliency, Responsibility, and Rebirth,” Dr. Jacqueline McBride, CEM, CPM, CBI, CVA.
- “Hitting the Target in Crisis Communications,” by Nathaniel L. Forbes, MBCI, Director, Forbes Calamity Prevention Pte Ltd, Singapore.

Featured PDF Supplement: Benchmark Profile of the EM Profession in in Canada

In July 2013, IAEM-Canada sponsored an original Canada-wide research project aimed at learning more about the people who comprise the field of emergency management in Canada. The project was a demographic survey of Canadian emergency management personnel, and the results have helped to develop a benchmark profile of the EM profession in Canada.


If you have any questions about the survey, contact the researcher at emsurvey.canada@gmail.com.

Community Preparedness

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- Offering no-cost training opportunities for community members and formally recognizing their achievements.
- Promoting registration for receipt of warning messages and advisories.
- Promoting preparedness awareness through social and print media.
- Regularly evaluating program effectiveness and implementing enhancements.

Critical Importance of Finding Ways to Engage the Public

Finding ways to engage the public in emergency preparedness can no longer be viewed as unimportant, optional or too costly. Moreover, the solution to individual and collective emergency preparedness doesn’t lie in Washington, D.C., or at the state capitol. Government paternalism, out of necessity, must be replaced with responsible individualism.

To some extent, the new normal is a call for a return to an old normal, when Americans took as a matter of pride the responsibility for self-reliance. Citizenship carries responsibilities; among them is emergency preparedness.
IAEM Training & Education Corner

FEMA Introduces New Training Material to Support the National Preparedness System

By Lyn Gross, CEM, IAEM-USA Region 10 President, and Chair, IAEM-USA Training & Education Committee

“A secure and resilient Nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.”

– National Preparedness Goal, September 2011

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is proud to announce the introduction of online training material to support the National Preparedness Goal and System. The Emergency Management Institute offers these courses to the whole community through their Independent Study Program (ISP).

The National Preparedness System ISP courses are arranged in the 2000 series course numbering arrangement. In some cases, these are new ISP courses within the 2000 series. In one case, IS 800.b is replaced by IS 2800 National Response Framework.

Current Courses

The current courses include:

- IS 2800 – National Response Framework (replaces IS 800).
- IS 2900 – National Disaster Recovery Framework.

All four of these courses contain the most current doctrine published in the National Preparedness System, Goal, and Framework. Organizations are encouraged to review these courses and determine their own training requirements based on need.

Find Out More

Interested students may access these courses online at http://www.training.fema.gov/IS/.

The “IAEM Training & Education Corner” is a regular feature in the IAEM Bulletin, provided by the IAEM-USA Training & Education Committee.

IAEM Annual Conference

San Antonio, Texas – It’s Beyond Conventional!

From the Conference Call

The 2014 IAEM Annual Conference & EMEX will be hosted in San Antonio, Texas. We invite you to a city unlike any other—San Antonio—a land of epic battles, flowing rivers and a flourishing culture. From the stones of the Alamo and the meandering paths of the River Walk to Sea World San Antonio and Six Flags Fiesta Texas, San Antonio takes you on a journey through a land as grand as its reputation. Explore the rolling terrain of San Antonio’s Hill Country, a lush oasis offering resorts with top-notch golf courses, spas, and water parks. Come and discover for yourself why San Antonio is more than a conventional destination.

Visit the Annual Conference section of our website at http://www.iaem.com/page.cfm?p=events/annual-conference-San-Antonio-Area-Attractions-2013 for a video overview from the San Antonio Convention & Visitors Bureau, and more information about San Antonio, including links to attractions, historical sites, dining, shopping, maps, and more. You’ll also find details on the “Show Your Badge” Program that will get you discounts at participating restaurants.

Read the Conference Call newsletter, posted at www.iaem.com/Conference for the latest about the IAEM 2014 Annual Conference.
Online Recertification Application Launched

On Feb. 19, IAEM launched the CEM®/AEMSM online recertification application. Current CEMs® and AEMsSM should be aware that all future recertification applications must be submitted using the online application. The recertification application can be accessed at www.iaem.com/CEM on the Recertification page. We have also posted a helpful user guide on the IAEM website (www.iaem.com/page.cfm?p=certification/resource-center) with step-by-step instructions for using the online system. If you have questions or experience any technical difficulties, please contact CEM® Administrator Kate McClimans, KMcclimans@iaem.com.

Results of CEM® Survey

The CEM® Global Executive Board recently sent out a survey to current and former CEMs® around the world. The purpose of the survey was to gather important information on the current program, its future, and the certification process. We received a considerable amount of feedback, with nearly 51% of respondents taking part in the survey. At this time, those with the CEM® designation were selected to participate, as many of the questions pertained to the requirements necessary to obtain the CEM®. The feedback is being reviewed by the CEM® Global Executive Board and by the commissioners in both the North America (formally USA) and Oceania-Asia Application Review Commissions. We received positive comments; identification of areas that need improvement; and details about what current, former and retired CEMs® would like to see the CEM® Global Executive Board consider. Over the course of the next few months, commissioners will examine those comments and provide recommendations based on the feedback that has been received. On behalf of all commissioners, thanks are extended to those who responded to the survey. We are discussing the feedback in various forums, and we will provide more information on our progress. Please stay tuned!

FEMA and IAEM Announce New Opportunity for CEMs® and AEMsSM

Through FEMA’s continuing partnership with IAEM, both prospective and current CEMs® and AEMsSM have new opportunities to contribute toward their certification and recertification requirements by using the Lessons Learned Information Sharing (www.LLIS.gov) program. LLIS.gov is a free, national online network of lessons learned, best practices and innovative ideas for the emergency management and homeland security communities. CEM® and AEMSM candidates can now conduct pre-recorded or interactive webinars to contribute toward IAEM’s certification and recertification requirements. Webinars must be related to emergency management while enhancing the knowledge of the whole community. Additional guidance and submission criteria on how to conduct a webinar can be found at www.LLIS.gov. For questions or feedback on this program, please contact CEMSubmissions@llis.dhs.gov.

Candidate Mentoring and Representation of IAEM

The IAEM website offers helpful information for individuals representing or presenting information on the CEM®/AEMSM Program at http://www.iaem.com/page.cfm?p=certification/resource-center/cem-mentoring&lvl=2. Contact CEM® Administrator Kate McClimans, KMcclimans@iaem.com, for questions about accessing the CEM®/AEMSM Brochure and mentoring candidates through the application process or to get approval for presenting the CEM® Certification Overview.
EM Calendar

Visit www.iaem.com/calendar for details on these and other events.

Mar. 18-20  Saskatchewan 2014 Emergency Planners Association Conference, Saskatoon, SK, Canada.
Mar. 19-21  Virginia EM Symposium, Hampton, VA.
Mar. 24-26  North Carolina State EMA Spring Conference, Cherokee, NC.
Mar. 26  Search & Rescue to Resuscitation: Floodfighters Lifesaving International Conference, Poole, United Kingdom.
Apr. 7-8  Critical Infrastructure Symposium 2014, Colorado Springs, CO.
Apr. 9  Arkansas Technical University’s 2nd Annual Conference on Preparedness and Recovery, Russellville, AR.
Apr. 9-10  IDER 2014, Malmo, Sweden.
Apr. 14-17  2014 National Hurricane Conference, Orlando, FL.
Apr. 23-25  Emergency Management Association of Georgia 2014 EM Summit & Training Session, Savannah, GA.
May 5-8  Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Association 2014 Annual Workshop, Lake Charles, LA.
May 5-9  New Jersey Emergency Preparedness Association 2014 Annual Conference, Atlantic City, NJ.
May 11-16  28th Annual Governor’s Hurricane Conference, Orlando, FL.
May 12-15  Disaster Forum 2014, Banff, AB, Canada. The IAEM-Canada AGM will be held during Disaster Forum on May 15.
May 13-15  2nd Annual Business Continuity and Emergency Preparedness for Utilities, Chicago, IL, supported by IAEM.
June 10-12  EM & Crisis Response Summit Middle East, Dubai, UAE.
June 15-18  WCDM 2014, Toronto, ON, Canada, supported by IAEM.
June 17-19  Alabama Association of Emergency Managers 2014 Summer Conference, Prattville, AL.
Aug. 24-28  IDRC Davos 2014, Davos, Switzerland.
Sept. 10-12  2014 Kansas Emergency Management Association Annual Conference, Junction City, KS.
Oct. 6-10  North Dakota Emergency Management Association 2014 Annual Conference, Junction City, KS.

E-mail Karen Thompson at Thompson@iaem.com to request that an event listing be posted on the online IAEM Calendar.
In October 2012, seven Italian officials were convicted of manslaughter for “providing false reassurance” prior to the 2009 L’Aquila earthquake. The conviction, currently under appeal included sentences of six years in prison and fines of 7.8 million euros.

Reports of the convictions shocked the scientific and emergency management community and raises questions to whether this can happen elsewhere and what can be done to prevent or mitigate such convictions in the future.

In order to raise awareness of this event, the Global Student Council is launching an essay contest to see if this could potentially happen elsewhere.

Complete Information Online


Selection of Winners

A panel of academics, practitioners and a member of the IAEM Global Student Council will select both an undergraduate and graduate winner. Each winner will be provided with a complimentary registration and cover hotel costs for the 2014 IAEM Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas.
Creating a Culture Towards Community and Personal 4Rs: Readiness, Resiliency, Responsibility and Rebirth

By Dr. Jacqueline McBride, CEM, CPM, CBI, CVA,
President, International Network of Women in Emergency Management

According to USAID’s updated definition, resiliency means “the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.”

World Vision Inc. reports, “More than 90 percent of natural disaster-related deaths occur in developing countries, where poverty and lack of resources exacerbate the suffering. We work in many of these countries, preparing for disasters before they happen, and responding quickly when they do.”

Who Are our Vulnerable Populations?

According to the U.S. Census, more than 46 million people live in poverty in the United States. Atlantic Monthly Group reports that 60 million people do not speak English in U.S. homes. Statistic Brain on literacy shares: 32 million adults cannot read; 681,000 children are abused annually; and there are 1,750,000 homeless Americans. These precious jewels need our community and neighborly support.

Through personal and community capacity and coalition building, collaboration, cooperation, innovation, and partnership for empowerment of all, we can create a spirit of preparedness, resiliency, responsibility and rebirth for our vulnerable populations and within our communities. We call this concept “Communities Helping Communities; Neighbors Helping Neighbors.”

Where Do We Begin, and What Action Do We Take?

- Develop a letter of introduction for the key organizations that are your potential partners.
- Identify and meet with local, county and regional offices of emergency management.
- Share your interest to support their office during all phases of emergency management, volunteer, and participate in training, exercise, and drills.
- Express interest to reach out and support other key partners, and meet with local VOAD, long-term recovery committees, key community based and faith-based organizations, and major houses of worship within your communities.
- Express interest to help coordinate preparedness town hall meetings.
- In conjunction with your local CERT, host an ERT Training Workshop.
- Focus on moving forward.

How Can We Help?

There are many ways that your organization can help your “communities and neighbors” during mitigation, prevention, preparedness, recovery, and response phases of emergency management:

- Partner with the local office of emergency management and the local chapter of Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).
- Partner with organizations who advocate for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and access/functional needs, including faith and community-based organizations.
- Implement neighbor disaster recovery preparedness projects.
- Distribute preparedness materials for seniors, youth, individuals, persons with pets, and persons with disabilities.
- Develop a train-the-trainer program, with accompanying tool kit.
- Identify those who need help, and champion their preparedness, response and recovery process.
- Serve as a safety net for those who need assistance or who may fall through the cracks.
- Make door-to-door visits to help members of community prepare, respond, and recover from disasters. More specifically, help neighbors to register for disaster-related programs.
- In the event of a Presidential Declaration, here are some ways to help:
  - Sponsor rides to state/federal disaster recovery centers.
  - Reach out to people who have not completed the SBA application.
  - Reach out to those who need assistance in reading and understanding written materials.
  - Aid community members with submitting appeals and supporting documents.
  - Help community members locate a notary public, copy machines, and fax machines.

Remembering Two FEMA Employees with a Vision

This article is written in honor of two FEMA Employees with a vision. (continued on page 26)
Creating a Culture
(continued from page 25)

The International Network of Women in Emergency Management (inWEM) hosted its annual “International Women in Homeland Security and Emergency Management Hall of Fame” Gala Reception & Induction Ceremony Hall on the occasion of the IAEM 61st Annual Conference & EMEX.

During the 2013 gala, inWEM recognized former Community Relations (CR) Cadre Managers Angeles Morillo Thompson, FEMA Region II, and the late Benard “Ben” Dew, FEMA Region X. Everyone has used the phase, “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” or “People Helping People” – but never really knew where the title or phrase originated.

A resilient community requires first responders, emergency management officials, private sector representatives, and community leaders to empower existing networks that create a culture of preparedness. This concept was nurtured in the late 1990s by Ms. Thompson. In 2004, the late Mr. Dew founded the official “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” program in response to the 2004 Florida hurricanes. Their vision continues to this day.

Upcoming Special Focus Issues of the IAEM Bulletin

**Topic:** “Emergency Management and Business Continuity: Sharing the Bodies of Knowledge”

**Deadline for submissions:** March 10, 2014

Possible articles might include: similarities and differences between business continuity in private sector and EM in the public sector; how local emergency management is implementing business continuity principles; how the private sector is implementing what we traditionally think of as emergency management; or how to sell EM to the private sector to show them that we need both. Please read the IAEM Bulletin Author’s Guidelines at www.iaem.com/Bulletin, and keep your articles at no more than 750 words. Email article submissions to Karen Thompson, IAEM Bulletin Editor, no later than Mar. 10, 2014.

**Topic:** “Resilience: Practical Applications”

**Deadline for submissions:** May 10, 2014

Possible articles might include: what we can do to improve resilience in our communities; how your jurisdiction makes your community or work place more resilient; what steps you have taken to improve community resilience; what unique plans you have written that may be useful to others; practical applications of resilience; or a program that you recommend to other communities. Please read the IAEM Bulletin Author’s Guidelines at www.iaem.com/Bulletin, and keep your articles at no more than 750 words. Email article submissions to Karen Thompson, IAEM Bulletin Editor, no later than May 10, 2014.
received this e-mail from the CEO of U.S. retailer Target Corp. (“Expect more. Pay less.”) in January. Target sent it to 70 million past and present customers. I thought it was a scam or spam because I haven’t had a Target account for 20 years. My son got the same message, and he discovered it wasn’t a scam: http://read.bi/LtorDk.

**Background:** Hackers stole card numbers and personal information of maybe 100 million Target store customers (not online shoppers) in a two-week rip-off during the year’s busiest shopping season. (*New York Times:* http://nyti.ms/1dEqi8E).

**Timeline of Target’s data breach:** http://trib.mn/1jsB2lL

I was in Minnesota on Dec. 19 when the theft was announced (Target is headquartered there) and have watched the company’s crisis communication since then. IT professionals will know more than I do about lapses in Target’s information security, but I think the company’s crisis communication has been remarkably well-organized.

Once you know it’s real, the letter is simple and clear. The CEO is apologetic, offers a remedy, and provides a link to the Target website to obtain more information.

His e-mail has the company’s logo but no other graphics, and the links in his message are in plain text, not HTML. Someone in Target’s Guest Relations or Press Relations understands the basics of e-mail security.

The letter doesn’t contain a phone number. That’s good crisis communication management. The last thing a company wants in a crisis is more phone calls.

The e-mail address of the sender is a problem because of the “bfio” in the domain name; it just looks suspicious. As so many articles have noted that problem, I bet they won’t make that mistake again.

I like the URL for the PDF copy of the letter: GreggEmailToGuests. Even the Guest Relations person who must have created the URL appears to be on a first-name basis with CEO Gregg Steinhafel. Charmingly American.

Target put a notice about the problem at the top of their homepage and created a special landing page for their responses about the incident. On that landing page, you can verify the authenticity of all Target messages about the event. I’ve never seen that before. Sharp.

If you click through to that landing page from the home page, you’ll note they’re tracking how you got to the landing page (everything in the URL after the ?). They want to know, “did you get there from the home page or from the CEO’s letter?” They’re trying to learn, even in a crisis. There are no phone numbers on the landing page, either. Frustrating for worried customers, I’m sure, but smart crisis management.

The first tweet of “unauthorized access to payment card data” on the @Target Twitter feed (1 million followers) was on Dec. 19, 2013 – the day after blogger Brian Krebs first reported the hack, American Express confirmed a “data breach,” and the U.S. Secret Service announced an investigation. I wouldn’t call that slow response. The first post about it on Target’s Facebook page (22 million likes) was on Dec. 20. A link to a video message from the CEO was posted on Dec. 21. I can’t find any announcement on Target’s LinkedIn profile or their Pinterest page, but those sites are harder to use for mass communication.

On Dec. 13, Target announced an investment in cyber security in partnership with the National Cyber Forensics and Training Alliance (NCFTA), National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) and Better Business Bureaus (BBB) – just before announcing the news of the data theft. It could be a coincidence, but they were already thinking about data security before the event.

The stock market thinks they’re handling it well enough. Target stock is down three (3%) percent (USD 62 to USD 60 per share) since Dec. 19.

I suppose some folks in Bentonville, Arkansas are watching Target’s crisis management even more closely than I am. They’re checking the data security in their own 5,000 U.S. stores pretty carefully, too, I imagine.

I disagree with this commentary and this one from IT security people about Target’s response. I’d very much like to hear what IT professionals have to say about holes in Target’s information security that permitted the theft. I’m not as interested in what they have to say about a company facing the challenge of communicating accurately, quickly and simultaneously with 70 million (or 100 million) people.

Can it be true that Target stores personal information on one third of the population of the United States?

**Update on Jan. 24, 2014:** This person’s name, SSN and credit history, stolen from Target, has already been used to make USD $30,000 in fraudulent charges.

See more at: http://www.calamityprevention.com/blog/hitting-the-target-in-crisis-communication/#.UuaAtPso7vY.
The Influence of Cascading Effects in the New Normal

By Kerry Kimble, CEM, Colorado SEOC Planning Section Chief

In September 2013, Colorado had a flood that impacted nearly a third of the state. During September and October, response agencies at all levels of government directed their services on the immediate needs of the population and communities. However, as the incident continued to evolve, the consequences of the flood became more apparent, thus requiring more attention. As of December 2013, federal assistance had surpassed $500 million dollars, classifying the incident as a catastrophe.

Historically, when we think of an incident’s cascading effects, we think of such things as floods following wildfires or subsidence following an earthquake or even grasshopper infestation following a drought. However, in this case, I am classifying cascading effects as those smaller events/incidents that are uncovered or have to be dealt with as a result of a larger incident.

Cascading Effects That We Encountered

From our flooding incident, the following is a short list of cascading effects that we encountered. These are provided just as “food for thought.”

- **Alignment of response/recovery activities.** Typically, response/recovery activities are aligned to political boundaries as a command and control measure. However, when a flood disrupts waterways (natural and man-made) it does not make sense to organize operations within a city or county. Instead, a better option is along the watersheds, because any mitigation, re-channeling or clearing actions would have an impact upon all entities reliant upon that waterway.

  - **Rail deliveries.** A large span of railroad was heavily damaged, which required the carrier to re-route its trains, taking an additional week for delivery of products. One of those products, fuel, could not wait that long. Deliveries were then done over the road, which only resulted in a 72-hour delay for the fuel to get to its designated locations.

  - **Water rights.** A new experience for Colorado was that several rivers formed new paths. This resulted in some irrigation companies losing their water source. Water districts lost sources as well, and under Colorado law, the land owners who bordered the new river had acquired new property rights. When discussions occurred about re-channelizing these rivers back to their original paths, these new owners now had a voice in that decision. Some property boundaries are drawn along these rivers.

  - **Public bridges.** Sometimes a flood will take out a public bridge, thus isolating a community or a set of homes because that bridge is the only way in or out. In an effort to support the community, a temporary bridge can be put in place.

  - **Railroad.** When discussions occurred about re-channeling these rivers back to their original paths, one railroad had to acquire new property rights. However, in this case, it is not a tiny bridge. The railroad was heavily damaged, which required the carrier to re-route its trains, taking an additional week for delivery of products. One of those products, fuel, could not wait that long. Deliveries were then done over the road, which only resulted in a 72-hour delay for the fuel to get to its designated locations.

  - **Loss of stream gauges.** Regardless of size, we have all seen the destructive force of fast moving water upon homes, businesses and the land. However, a majority of the time, another casualty of a flood is the loss or destruction of stream gauges. Replacement of these is critical due to the fact that they provide early warning for the “next” flood.

  - **Other areas of concern** could include: endangered species, historic properties and tribal lands.

Conclusion

Whether an incident is natural, technological or human-caused, there will always be one or more cascading effects. Emergency managers must not let themselves develop tunnel vision on the initiating incident. It may be hard to do in the first hours and days of an incident, but eventually they will need to visualize the current situation a week or a month into the future and be prepared for all sorts of unexpected mini-incidents.
Overview of a Functional State Homeland Security Organization in the New Normal

By Martin Hershkowitz, Principal and Executive Consultant, Hershkowitz Associates, and Chairman and Executive Vice President, Citizen Soldier Treatment Center

ABSTRACT: The citizenry no longer displays abject fear when the phrase homeland security is spoken. Where once they envisioned hordes of foreign enemy troops storming ashore or floating down from the sky, today they think of car bombs, bomb vests, aircraft jackings and poisoned water supplies, among other catastrophes, as something that happens elsewhere. When asked what is homeland security, they speak of police, firefighters and the military. They may add the Coast Guard, emergency medical teams and emergency management organizations. Very few would add physicians, nurses, teachers, businessmen, river and stream patrols, the Civil Air Patrol, National Guard, students or themselves. Homeland security is all of the above.

Homeland security (HS) at the state level is an integrated management effort by a small number of dedicated persons with strong management talents and an army of existing state organizations, industry and citizen groups whose missions and members can be organized to provide protection for the citizenry, government, industry and critical infrastructure of the state. In practice, the existing organizations primarily focus on mitigating the emergency as it arises. HS focuses on preventing that emergency from occurring. In effect, the existing organizations’ missions are reactive, while HS’s mission is proactive.

Under the integrated management concept, the HS Program would consist of an integrated team of management, oversight and action specialists. The HS program director is the principal policy and planning specialist, while the program official is the operations management specialist, followed by resource guidance specialists. The remaining organizations and groups are the action specialists functioning at one level or another. It is important to note that action specialists are in reality the leaders of the effort within their functioning areas.

The action specialists fall into two categories: (1) official state, county and municipal agencies; and (2) organized and impromptu volunteer groups. The official agencies all possess an organizational structure, annual budgets and formal training apparatus. HS management provides policy guidance, as well as identifying, obtaining and distributing new resources.

The organized and impromptu volunteer groups pose an entirely different set of relationships. Often, the organized volunteer group, which may include such groups as the Federal Bureau of Investigation InfraGard Program, Civil Air Patrol and Coast Guard Auxiliary, have an organizational structure and some form of minimal budget and training. Their functions are provided by integrating their efforts into and/or alongside the official agencies. Mission direction, training and operational guidance is integrated into a support role – becoming, in effect, a “force multiplier.”

The impromptu volunteer groups are totally different, as they do not have an organizational structure (except possibly on paper), no real budget of their own and no training apparatus. Their missions are often created in response to the rationale for their being called into action. Such groups are typically citizen groups consisting of business people, families, educators, students, volunteer groups formed through their county and municipal office, police volunteers, citizen councils, and groups created to fill a discovered vacuum in support of HS needs. Their function within the HS team framework is not simply a case of integrating them into an official agency’s support network. These groups require extensive team building, exposure to and instruction on mission relevance, partition into areas of expertise to be provided, extensive training, action and mission guidance, and a gentle leadership oversight. In counterpoint to the seemingly high initial preparation effort, these groups function very importantly as an adjunct force multiplier with “eyes on the street” – making them a critical resource supporting the success of the HS mission. The HS Program Team needs guidance to function as outlined above. The following list of responsibilities and activities for each of the groups offer some insight into how the team may begin the organizational and operational processes leading to implementation of the action plan being developed during the early stages of the process.

HS Management Team

Program office responsibilities and activities are to set state

(continued on page 30)
priorities, establish policy, coordinate priorities, policies, strategies, planning, programs, involve citizens and develop a homeland security consortium of universities involved in experimentation and analysis of related technologies.

Individual project officer responsibilities and activities are to train HS program staff (i.e., resource guidance specialists) with the expertise to conduct assessments of terrorism/counter-terrorism vulnerabilities, coordinate between law enforcement leaders, fire service leaders and emergency managers, coordinate exercises, develop a comprehensive information system, law enforcement officer training and education, citizen outreach programs in organized and impromptu volunteer groups, and unified communication equipment and procedures.

**HS Official Agency Action Specialists**

Joint agency responsibilities and activities are to assist the HS Program Office in preparing legislation for felony action against terrorism and material support of terrorism; in establishing rules to require that all general aviation and crop duster aircraft are disabled when not in use; in preparing legislation to require that agencies work together in prevention, disruption and deterrence roles; in coordinating between law enforcement leaders, fire service leaders and emergency managers; in sharing analyses of exercise results, intelligence, indicators, vulnerability assessments and vulnerability reduction; in developing programs to identify, catalog and organize the state’s critical infrastructure; in coordinating wildlife resource agencies, aviation operations; in seeking analytical support from the National Laboratory system and the military, active duty and reserve forces; and in organizing to work successfully with citizens.

Lead agency action specialist responsibilities and activities are to coordinate with HS project officers to prepare public service announcements, recruit, organize, train, educate and utilize citizens in law enforcement and emergency management; to involve industry in appropriate training and exercises; to share intelligence, indicators, vulnerability assessments and vulnerability reduction; to identify vulnerabilities of interest to terrorists; to coordinate citizens in observation and prevention roles for all emergency situations; to teach both citizen groups and industry in prevention and communication; to analyze investigations of gangs, guns, drugs, car thefts for possible connection to terrorism; to establish agricultural programs for farmers and agricultural agents on reporting suspicious or unexplained incidents involving animals and develop animal disaster reporting teams and syndromic reporting; and to conduct citizen outreach programs to partner in law enforcement prevention, protection and response.

**HS Organized and Impromptu Volunteer Action Specialists**

Organized group responsibilities and activities are to train citizen groups as eyes and ears on the street as vital to prevention; to coordinate with HS project officers in citizen outreach programs for organized volunteer groups; to cooperate with law enforcement in citizen outreach programs to partner in prevention, protection and response; to involve community volunteer groups, such as neighborhood and boat watch groups, Civil Air Patrol, State Defense Force units, Chamber of Commerce, Lions, Veteran groups, etc., in prevention and communications training.

Impromptu group responsibilities and activities are to provide trained eyes and ears on the street as vital to prevention; to establish citizen outreach programs to partner in prevention, protection and response; and to create an environment that becomes difficult for terrorists to operate within and lead to increased terrorism investigations.

The observations and suggestions above present a guide or pathway for establishing a state homeland security organization. However, it is important – throughout the training and implementation effort – to understand and incorporate into all HS planning the fact that terrorists are smart, learning, and improving.

**References**


2. Although the material contained herein was conceived and drafted independently of Tennessee’s Homeland Security Program, as described in the Homeland Defense Journal article “Operations BOLD TIGER” (see Endnote 3), the concepts and presentation are rewardingly similar. In some cases, descriptions in “Operations BOLD TIGER” were then adapted for the purpose of the presentation herein.

The new normal is an interesting concept as it relates to emergency management – or any other public policy in the American government system. It has a connotation that things have changed in such a way that there is a new standard for handling business.

For emergency management, budgetary cuts and new pieces of legislation have become part of the cycle, as new problems emerge every time there is a crisis. In an almost cyclical way, budgets are cut, emergency management suffers at some level, and new legislation is created based on whatever crises occurs. Ultimately, legislation is used as a patch for preexisting problems, only fixing public policies temporarily. It has become the new normal, instead of getting to the root of any problem that affects emergency management.

When the Solution Causes More Problems

One aspect of the new normal refers to legislation at the federal level. Problematic pieces of legislation lead to further problems in the American political arena. While they may fix one public policy initiative, they may create other problems in American society.

An example of one of these recent problematic pieces of legislation is the EMS Field Bill, H.R. 809. The creation of this bill, while certainly a start in helping the world of emergency management by condensing emergency medical services under the Department of Health and Human Services (“National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians,” 2014), the bill falls short of the needs of the entire emergency community. This further complicates efforts to consolidate an already fragmented policy initiative. The bill addresses accountability and quality, recognizes HHS as a Primary Federal Agency for Trauma Care, and attempts to pay for EMS with donated tax dollars (“National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians,” 2014).

When the Fix Creates Further Confusion

Recognizing that EMS is a fragmented service at the federal level, the bill attempts to put EMS into a genre at the federal level, when it is in fact, fractured at every single level of government. Federal legislation is certainly one aspect to help alleviate fragmentation, but it would seem that this bill would only create further confusion as it fails to address the fragmentation at all levels of government. The EMS Field Bill therefore is an excellent demonstration of policy initiatives at the federal level that only address an aspect of the larger problem.

As noted with the EMS Field Bill, federal pieces of legislation do not always address the key issues at hand – issues that create numerous aspects for emergency managers at the local and state levels of government. While EMS is certainly a policy initiative that has a lot to do with health care, it should also be noted that it isn’t specifically health care related. Emergency medical technicians and paramedics are actually cross-trained in emergency medicine and public safety issues – two key issues that confuse lawmakers when they try to determine which specific issue area should include EMS.

Should EMS fall into homeland security, public safety or health care? By virtue of its unique issue area, placing EMS into the Department of Health and Human Services would create gaps in future policy initiatives surrounding emergency medical services.

Ultimately, this is a perfect demonstration that legislation at the federal level, developed out of a certain necessity to correct public policies, is sometimes created hastily. The EMS Field Bill is one of those problematic policy initiatives that fails to address how this might work for an emergency manager in a local or state agency.

Conclusion

Lawmakers in Congress are constantly creating new pieces of legislation to fix problems throughout the country. One of these new pieces of legislation, in an attempt to fix preexisting problems, is the EMS Field Bill.

While the idea is certainly an interesting concept, this new public policy will only unravel other areas of public policy. Putting EMS under Health and Human Services is certainly a good idea, but only in part. The EMS Field Bill serves as a good example of the new normal – legislation created hastily on behalf of emergency management that will only lead to future policy issues.
Social Media’s New Normal

By Maureen Connolly Ed.D., CEO, Crisis Response Planning

On Jan. 28, 2014, a snow and road icing event brought the South from Atlanta to Alabama to a standstill. Cars were abandoned along Interstates 20, 65 and 140, as well as on other major and minor roadways as their daring occupants attempted to find refuge.

Hundreds of others were stranded in their cars for many hours, some overnight in below freezing temperatures. Students and their teachers slept on the floors of schools across the South.

Retailers such as Home Depot, Walgreens, CVS and the Botanical Gardens permitted people to sleep on their floors rather than turning them out into perilous road conditions. The police, highway and emergency personnel were out in full force doing what they could to assist and rescue people.

However, this was one of those times when the need depleted the resources and individual citizens stepped in and did what they could to assist and rescue people.

By now, if you have not yet incorporated social media such as Facebook and Twitter into your emergency preparedness plans, you have at least heard that it has become a viable communication strategy. Look at how individual citizens were able to step in and use social media as a component of emergency response.

Stranded Motorist Help

Facebook pages, such as Stranded Motorist Help Jan 28, 2014, took social media to the next level in Alabama, when its creator developed separate links on the home page – one for those stranded and the other for Good Samaritans with four wheelers, four wheel drives, or who had a spare bedroom or food and drink to share. Each link led to a simple form where a stranded motorist could enter their name, phone number, location, number of people in the car, and any special needs such as a need for medication or that there was a small child or elderly person in the stranded vehicle.

The link for Good Samaritans led to a form where they too indicated their name, phone number and location. All of this information was then automatically fed into a spreadsheet that the coordinator manned. The coordinator then made the matches based on location and ability to meet the need.

There were matches made for people in need of medication, food, water, and hot beverages, as well as rescues for the many who were simply cold and tired. Stranded Motorist Help Jan 28, 2014 matched those in need with those who were able to offer assistance.

Snowed Out at Atlanta

In Atlanta, Michelle Sollicito created the Facebook page snowedoutatlanta, and she too was busy making matches between those in need and those who were looking to help on the night of Jan. 28. While Stranded Motorist Help Jan 28, 2014 is no longer up, snowedoutatlanta is still very active with more than 53,000 members. It has developed into an emergency/disaster resource, with feeds for flood warnings, winter snow watches, and emergency health and safety tips. The idea behind this site is to create a one-stop location for all of your weather emergency needs. You can also find, among other important links and phone numbers, those of the local police departments, Department of Transportation, a Red Cross shelter finder, and a link to Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed’s Twitter account.

The Bigger Message

These are just two examples of citizens taking emergency response into their own hands with the use of technology and social media. There are many more out there. But the bigger message is that what these individuals have developed can be used in emergency planning by cities, towns and states across the United States and beyond. Individual companies, schools, colleges and universities can employ this methodology should they find themselves to be in an emergency or crisis situation.

What comes to mind is the situation after Hurricane Katrina. When the devastation to the physical structures at colleges and universities was much more than anyone could have anticipated, these institutions had no workable student retention plan in place. As a result, many students never returned to their schools.

While social media is not going to help rebuild physical structures, it can help to build a sense of connectedness for the affected that says “we care,” which is critical to recovery. So kudos are due to the social media pioneers for taking Facebook and Twitter to the next level in emergency response and hopefully creating a new normal in emergency management communication strategies.
The New Normal: From Home to School

By Peggy Gutierrez, EM Student, University of North Texas

They call me a non-traditional student. I’m a little older than most students at the University of North Texas (UNT), but I don’t feel the least bit out of place. I have the same goal as my classmates, to work in the emergency management field. I’m motivated to learn about emergency preparedness and hazard mitigation, like the rest in the Emergency Administration and Planning (EADP) degree program. But it wasn’t until my late 30s that I recognized this passion. That’s when my “normal” changed, and this long-time wife and mom went back to school.

Why Go Back to School?

The decision came after I joined the Texas State Guard in mid-2010. When I first enlisted, one Saturday per month was the commitment, and it was easy and fun. I was named honor grad of my basic orientation class. Recognition and awards for my efforts was new. Then I learned that the State Guard offers the State Tuition Reimbursement Program to members with good attendance, participation and grades. So I took the chance and enrolled in the EADP program at UNT.

The normal at home has changed, because now I have homework too. Classes at night mean that my husband cooks dinner more often. Grocery shopping is now accomplished on my days off school or between internship hours. All of my family’s daily schedules have changed — and will probably change again when I graduate. But it’s worth it.

Wasn’t I Happy?

Homeschooling my three children, watching them grow, driving to art class on Tuesdays and science co-op on Thursdays? Sure I was happy; it was my normal routine. But I also wanted some non-kid related activities for me. Maybe it was a bit selfish at first, but I also had a greater sense of giving back to the community. The recruiter said the motto is, “Texans serving Texas.” This sounded great to me. The main mission of the State Guard is to provide ready troops for state emergencies and disaster response, like mass-care sheltering and points of distribution. The chances of deployment were slim and hurricane-related.

This was a perfect choice for a homeschooling mom like me. Before all this, I was like many Americans who are oblivious to the systems in place and the efforts being carried out nationwide using ICS and NIMS. As a new guardsman, I had to take some online FEMA courses, and a new world began opening up before me. I was getting excited. My family saw my excitement too.

Building Confidence

After years away from school and the work force, my confidence about my ability to become a professional was a little shaky. Fortunately, I was introduced to a business skills and etiquette program for exceptional students. Through the Professional Leadership Program (PLP) at UNT, I have been paired with an executive-level mentor in my field, who happens to be the Preparedness Director from the North Texas Council of Governments. Her mentorship provides a qualitative perspective, with practical and subjective feedback. She is highly capable and has my best interest and success in mind.

In this program, I have also learned several outside-the-classroom concepts that I’ll need, including resume building, interviewing skills, servant leadership, and professional dress. The varied speakers and panelists in PLP help me gain an edge, which might make all the difference.

Normal From Now On

After I get my undergraduate degree next fall, I plan to stay at UNT and work toward the Masters in Public Administration degree (MPA). The program is ranked eighth in the United States. With the opportunity for tuition reimbursement from the State Guard, how could I pass it up? The MPA program requires a paid internship, so it will be like I am working and going to school.

I have a lot to do and a lot to be proud of as I meet my family obligations and my State Guard duties. I’m normally a busy person. Did I mention I am on the board of my daughter’s American Heritage Girls’ scout troop? That I also volunteer with the American Red Cross as often as I can? That I try to never miss Sunday service? Achieving, volunteering, and serving in the community are what I now model for my children. It’s what’s normal.
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