ISSUE PAPER

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Issue:
The IAEM Training & Education Committee requests space in the Resources Tab to post Fact Sheet summaries of current research articles to allow Emergency Management professionals to benefit from such research.

Reference: IAEM-USA Strategic Plan [link]

The Fact Sheet Repository project aligns well supporting the value IAEM must be a responsible advocate of creative solutions in a profession marked by rapid change. The Association will serve as a catalyst for imaginative, appropriate risk-taking on the part of its members who seek to incorporate new forms of collaboration, new knowledge, new technology, and new approaches into the emergency management profession. Emergency Management professionals need to make decisions based on credible facts. Appropriate research can build that credibility but often isn’t easily accessible. The use of Fact Sheets will work to bridge that gap.

This project also aligns with Key Results Area #2: Goal 2.3 Support and facilitate the professional development of students in emergency management or related fields of study. Anyone who has ever done research looks to see how it might be used by others. By offering Fact Sheets that provide a good summary of the research but also key points an emergency management professional can use, this project will benefit the student providing the research and the practitioner utilizing it.

Background:
This project began at the 2014 IAEM Conference when ideas were discussed to look at the opportunity to work with the Leadership Academy with EMI to review the deliverable papers being submitted to see if emergency management (EM) professionals could benefit from them like those submitted from the Fire Academy into the EMI Library for others to access.

The project has evolved, with regular guidance and input from NETC Library staff, to explore how IAEM might help with hosting a website where the Fact Sheets could be posted. Housing the Fact Sheets on the IAEM website would include some benefits such as IAEM branding, availability to all EM professionals, and less strict accessibility guidelines. The project would still partner with the NETC Librarian, Ed Metz, and the Higher Ed Community.

In Summer of 2017 the working group brought forward samples of Fact Sheets (sample attached) and the Training & Education Committee had an opportunity to review them and provide input. The project was informally discussed with IAEM leadership along with the idea of hosting the
Fact Sheets on the IAEM website. Guidance was provided about approaching the IAEM Board with the project.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Training & Education Committee repository working group recommends that the Board allow website space in the Resources Tab under the Document Exchange to house Fact Sheets that would summarize research papers into key take-away points that would benefit EM professionals in the field and refer them to the research that was done.

A team of volunteers would help build the Fact Sheets from research papers that might be provided by the authors or recommended by others, including the librarian at the NETC Library. They would be designed using basic accessibility guidelines and with the target audience being EM professionals working in the field.

The Training & Education Committee would work with the IAEM website webmaster to get the Fact Sheets posted, and then to market them through the *IAEM Bulletin* and other mechanisms such as partnering organizations.

**Next Steps:**

- Design a Fact Sheet template with IAEM branding.
- Formalize the process for building a Fact Sheet and getting it on the website.
- Organize a cadre of volunteers to develop Fact Sheets.
- Market the new tool through IAEM, EMI, and other partners.
Research article: Disaster relief volunteerism: Evaluating cities' planning for the usage and management of spontaneous volunteers


Background: Emergency Managers in 50 cities were surveyed regarding the perceptions, usage, and planned management of spontaneous volunteers in disaster planning and response in urban environments. The study reviewed two key discussions: perception of volunteers in general volunteer management and challenges of using spontaneous volunteers in disaster response. The benefits of volunteers as well as the liabilities were listed from several references. A key component of the paper was identifying how and if emergency plans considered the role of the spontaneous volunteer. An unexpected element surfacing during the research was the effectiveness of electronic dissemination of emergency plans for the general public to better understand the role of spontaneous volunteers.

Practitioner Takeaways:

• States and Local Governments have a responsibility under the National Response Plan to deal with spontaneous volunteer management.
• Spontaneous volunteers are a potential resource but also a potential liability due to their lack of organization and legitimacy.
• Emergency plans may not adequately address spontaneous volunteer management. Five cities were named with emergency plans that specifically addressed spontaneous volunteers, and had “publicly available descriptions and work plans for how to anticipate, coordinate, and make the best use of spontaneous volunteers”.
• The National VOAD Volunteer Management Committee developed a document “Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disasters” to serve as a guide.
• E-government use of technology may need to be used more effectively to communicate to the general public about what needs to be done, how it is to be accomplished, and how they can serve in beneficial ways during a disaster.

For more specific details about the results of the survey relative to this topic review this article which you can read online here [a link to the article in the LRC would be posted here].

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Research article: New Tools for Emergency Managers: An Assessment of Obstacles to Use and Implementation


New tools for emergency managers: an assessment of obstacles to use and implementation

**Background:** The focus of this research is to explore how crowdsourcing and social media is used by Emergency Managers (EMs) in disaster planning, response, and recovery. The research does not automatically assume these tools to be effective but rather looks at their use and how to improve such effectiveness. The initial findings provide some insight into why many EMs may not use social media and crowdsourcing. Secondarily, the findings demonstrate how internal functioning and staffing issues may present challenges. The author reviews an assortment of tools used during incidents. While accurate situational awareness is the goal of local EMs, crowdsourcing and social media may present a challenge about data verification, security of information, liability, and subjectivity. The article speaks to each of these. Three main factors may contribute to the use of social media and crowdsourcing: access to resources, leadership, and exposure to new tools.

**Practitioner Takeaways:**
- Officials need to address the transition to new tools rather than allowing their use to happen on its own “potentially resulting in missteps and delays”.
- Efforts need to be made to find the intersection between formal responders gathering situational awareness and that information provided by informal networks.
- EMs may need to consider adequate staffing, standardizing practices, and developing professional norms when starting to use new tools.
- Adequate training may influence EMs’ willingness and trust using new tools.
- Training may be necessary to keep up with changing technology.
- Social media and crowdsourcing is likely to continue to grow as a crisis management tool.
- Lessons can be learned about more effectively using social media and crowdsourcing from the case studies of those who use new tools.

For more specific details about the results of the survey relative to this topic review [this article which you can read online here](#) [a link to the article in the LRC would be posted here].

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