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Partners in Preparedness

ADDRESSING REGIONAL PRIORITIES AND WORKING TOGETHER TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

Conversations are Building Blocks for the Success of the Whole Community

FEMA REGION VIII ADMINISTRATOR ROBIN FINEGAN WELCOMED PARTICIPANTS TO THE MARCH 2011 REGIONAL INTERAGENCY STEERING COMMITTEE meeting in Castle Rock, Colorado. The topic: Whole Community of Emergency Management.

“Whole Community is you, me, all of us here in the room plus those not represented at the table as partners”, she said, “not only when we respond, but when it’s time to plan, protect, mitigate and recover from incidents – man made or natural.”

Too often, the inclination is to hunker down and think small. But especially during tough budgetary times, when none of us has all the assets to do everything ourselves, we ought to admit limitations and reach out to partners in the private, public, and voluntary sectors for support, expertise and resources.

The essence of whole community in emergency management is all about bringing diverse people into the discussion, into the planning and into the action; taking advantage of the diverse expertise and resources to creatively solve diverse problems. “If we don’t reach out to each other,” Finegan said, “we are not going to succeed”.

We in America are communities of communities. Not only people in common geographic areas, but communities also are those with common hobbies or passions, people of different ages, those with various access and functional needs, children, the elderly and families without access to personal transportation. We have communities of faith, those with ailments, employment or any one of a thousand variables. Including these various communities in discussions, with an equal seat at the table, is the essence of the “whole” in community.

“This is not a paper exercise,” said Finegan, “but it is imperative that we link up on paper, and then meld these various communities into our operations in a natural way. Our conversations portend our success.”

In this issue of *Partners in Preparedness*, you will read some of the conversations our Region needs to continue having in order to move toward a more capable future.



From the Executive Committee



ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS REQUIRED OF THE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAC) BY LEGISLATION AND CHARTER IS TO PROVIDE ADVICE TO THE FEMA REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR REGARDING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ISSUES SPECIFIC TO THE REGION. BY CHARTER, ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS OF THE REGIONAL INTERAGENCY STEERING COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IS TO REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS OFFERED BY THE RAC AND DETERMINE WHETHER TO ADOPT AND IF SO, HOW TO BEST IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS. DURING RAC MEETINGS IN APRIL AND JULY 2010, REGION VIII RAC MEMBERS DETERMINED THE EXISTING EIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS WERE STILL VALID AND USEFUL IN 2010-2011. THE RISC IS CURRENTLY WORKING A NUMBER OF THE EIGHT EXISTING RECOMMENDATIONS (INCLUDING CATASTROPHIC PLANNING) AND WILL CONTINUE EFFORTS FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. THREE NEW RECOMMENDATIONS WERE ADDED AT THE DECEMBER 15 RAC MEETING.

The Region VIII RISC Executive Committee met on March 15 to vote on three recommendations presented by the Regional Advisory Committee. All three were adopted.

Establish a risk assessment capability that would be standardized, easily accessible, and useful to a wide range of users within the Region as a basis for risk-based decision making, planning, and community-level mitigation measures.

The Committee agreed to begin the discussion with the RISC membership at the next meeting (scheduled for July 2011 in Denver, Colorado). Region VIII is one of the nation's leaders in Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis work. A demonstration of the software involved and a discussion of tremendous strides the Mitigation Division has made will be an excellent beginning to this effort.

Support and sustain the development of baseline emergency management capabilities within Native American Tribes.

Respect for the diverse cultures of Native Americans has always been part of the Region VIII paradigm of working with partners to further the progress of emergency management and expertise of those who devote their lives to this effort. The RISC chartered a working group devoted to Tribal Relations and this group will continue to support and sustain the development of capabilities within the Tribes in Region VIII.

Promote a clearer understanding of the roles and relationships between the Regional Office and its advisory and coordination groups, and how they should fit together.

This will likely involve an organizational depiction of how information moves from the various advisory and coordination groups and the Regional Office as well as the RISC working groups that are tasked with developing and implementing a variety of assignments.

Please stay tuned to upcoming RISC meetings for updates on progress from the various working groups. If you or your colleagues are interested in participating in any of the three initiatives, please contact Lynn Pisano-Pedigo at Lynn.Pedigo@dhs.gov or 303.235.4855.

Executive Committee Membership

- ▶ CHAIR, Kristi Turman, South Dakota Office of Emergency Management
- ▶ DEPUTY CHAIR, Dan Alexander, Mayor's Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Denver, CO
- ▶ Michael Beaird, CENWD-DDE, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- ▶ Robert DesRosier, Blackfeet Nation

Members of the Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) Executive Committee serve for up to two-year terms.

Mass Care Emergency Assistance

Caring for the Whole Community in an Emergency Response

THE MASS CARE MISSION “TO EVALUATE, COORDINATE AND SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF MASS CARE AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE SERVICES... IS ALL ABOUT COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS.” This was the “whole community” message from Jody Horn, American Red Cross Special Representative for Government Operations to FEMA Region VIII, and Scott Chamberlain, Individual Assistance, FEMA Region VIII.

Horn and Chamberlain explained mass care includes sheltering, feeding, bulk distribution, emergency first aid, and disaster welfare information. Emergency assistance includes mass evacuation services, family registry and locator services, volunteer and donation management, volunteer agency coordination, congregate care, national shelter management, emergency feeding and distribution of emergency relief items. Since FEMA has the national lead for ESF-6 (mass care, emergency assistance, housing, human services), the heavy lifting falls on FEMA, its private sector co-leader the American Red Cross, and a consortium of other partners such as the National VOAD (Salvation Army, Adventist Community, CERT, Medical Reserve Corps, Humane Society, CART/SART, American Red Cross, the Southern Baptist Convention, American Veterinary Medical Association), and other private sector partners.

The foundation for this ESF is a FEMA-ARC Memorandum of Agreement that was signed on October 22, 2010. This document recognizes the ARC as subject-matter experts to strengthen the

FEMA response capacity using the ARC as part of a national strategy entitled National Mass Care (NMC) so all parties can work together to increase effectiveness and sustainability in an emergency. Horn and Chamberlain closed their presentation by emphasizing the national mass care strategy is based first and foremost on a whole community approach where partnerships are the building blocks that create success.

For more information on the FEMA / American Red Cross partnership in Region VIII, please contact Jody Horn at Jody.Horn@dhs.gov.

**Marietta, GA,
September 25, 2009 –
FEMA Administrator
Craig Fugate speaks while
Vice President Joe Biden,
Secretary Napolitano,
Senator Isakson, Senator
Chambliss and
Representative Scott
look on, outside a
temporary shelter at
the Cobb County Civic
Center.
- David Lienemann/Official
White House Photo**



- ▶ Robin Finegan, FEMA Region VIII
- ▶ Sue Mencer, Colorado Emergency Preparedness Partnership
- ▶ Vacant, Voluntary Organization
- ▶ Vacant, State Director of Emergency Management

Victim Advocacy in an Emergency

Anne Darr Shares the Perspective of an FBI Victim Specialist



Anne Darr, Victim Specialist, Denver Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation. Ms. Darr holds Masters degrees in Forensic Psychology and Counseling from Marymount University. She is the Chair of the Victim Specialist Working Group, representing all Victim Specialists Bureau-wide. Ms. Darr was one of eleven team members awarded the Director's Award from the United States Attorney's Office for Best Performance by a Litigative Team in 2010. - Photo Provided by Ms. Darr

WHEN A FEDERAL CRIME HAS BEEN COMMITTED, ANNE DARR AND HER FELLOW FBI VICTIM SPECIALISTS ARE CALLED TO ASSIST AGENTS AT THE SCENE, provide victim and family liaison, crisis response, and coordination of critical services in the aftermath of acts of terrorism, hostage-taking, mass casualty incidents, criminal transportation disasters, humanitarian disasters, and unexplained deaths of U.S. government employees in foreign agencies or countries. Considering how many Federal crimes are committed daily, it's a huge job for the 134 victim specialists nationwide who are available 24/7 to assist victims. This is not a taxpayer funded program; rather, it is entirely paid for by federal offender (VOCA) funds including fines, assessments, forfeited bail, etc.

So where does Federal crime intersect with emergency management? Disasters are considered ripe for many different crimes, including domestic terrorism (actual, attempt or a hoax), violent crimes, crimes against children, cyber crime, human trafficking, crimes in Indian Country that are felony offenses, crimes on Military Bases, National Parks, commercial air and sea carriers, bank robberies, white collar crime and/or hate crimes or Civil Rights violations. Darr and

her colleagues partner with many of the same organizations involved in response and recovery, including FEMA, the American Red Cross, state OEMs, VOADs and others to accomplish their mission.

Darr provided an example of her work where a Victim Assistance Response Deployment Team (VARDT) was deployed to the Tucson area to provide victim assistance to individuals, families and the community, beginning with on-scene support and continuing long after the recent Tucson shootings.

What is important for emergency management professionals to take from Darr's life work and her presentation? Be aware of and partner with the FBI Office for Victim Assistance; get them involved in training, workshops, exercises, meetings (like the RISC) and work with emergency managers to develop local resources like service providers.

Darr concluded her presentation with a challenge to everyone: "Go back to your region and find out who your Victim Assistance Reps are!"

Region VIII Snapshot



Colorado

- ▶ Responding to spring wildfire season
- ▶ Governor Hickenlooper in Office. His transition team consolidated EM Departments
- ▶ State Emergency Operations and Mitigation Plans passed approval process

Montana

- ▶ Preparing for spring flooding due to record snowfall levels
- ▶ Tribal Nations continue to be a focus due to multiple sheltering events over the past year
- ▶ Tribal Emergency Management Response Commission formed

North Dakota

- ▶ Responding to flooding across the State, especially along the Red River Basin
- ▶ Continuing All-Hazards Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) training efforts

Planning for Vulnerable Populations

Emergency Management for People With Disabilities

UNDERSTANDING AND PARTNERING WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES was the essence of Rob Cleveland's presentation on Emergency Management Planning for Access and Functional Needs. Cleveland is the Director of the Emergency Management Agency for the County of Laramie and the City of Cheyenne, Wyo. and has spent a career caring for those with functional and access needs.

Cleveland noted that disasters are equal opportunity events and that some groups are better equipped to respond than others. "Essentially there are two groups in a disaster" said Cleveland, "those that can run, and those that can't and it's caring for those that can't (those Unable to Self Evacuate (UTSE)) that requires more consideration when planning and responding to an incident."

The bottom line, according to Cleveland, is to involve persons with disabilities in the planning stages so responders know who and what to look for during a response. "Keep in mind," he said, "that those with functional needs include not only the mobility impaired, but those with hearing, sight, and emotional needs as well."

Sometimes these are very organized communities but not always, so it's important to be as inclusive as possible.

He encouraged participants to make sure representatives from these various communities are offered a seat at the table during the planning process. Anyone wanting additional information on planning for those with functional and access needs is encouraged to contact Dave Schaad, the FEMA Region VIII Disabilities Integration Specialist at 303.235.4763 or david.schaad@dhs.gov.



During the question and answer period, an American Red Cross representative offered participants a client intake tool that they use during emergencies. This Initial Assessment Intake Tool was developed in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and can be found at www.phe.gov/preparedness.

Washington, DC, July 19, 2010 -- FEMA Administrator W. Craig Fugate signs a Memorandum of Agreement with The National Council on Independent Living, Executive Director Kelly Buckland. FEMA works regularly with state and local officials and has a number of initiatives to ensure people with disabilities are integrated into all levels of disaster planning. NCIL is a member organization that works to advance independent living and supports the interests of people with disabilities.
- Bill Koplitz/FEMA

South Dakota

- ▶ Supporting spring flooding response efforts
- ▶ Interaction with private sector continuing. Thirty NGOs added to state emergency plan

Utah

- ▶ Eighth disaster declaration of the year (flooding) due to high precipitation levels
- ▶ Preparing for end of Legislative Session and votes on several Emergency Management Bills
- ▶ Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program will complete this year

Wyoming

- ▶ Guy Cameron announced as new Director of the Wyoming Office of Homeland Security
- ▶ Preparing for spring flooding due to record snowpack levels

Whole Community of Emergency Management

A Community-Centric Approach for Emergency Management

FEMA RECOGNIZES THAT IT TAKES ALL ASPECTS OF A COMMUNITY (VOLUNTEER, FAITH, AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS, THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND THE PUBLIC, INCLUDING SURVIVORS THEMSELVES) — NOT JUST THE GOVERNMENT — TO EFFECTIVELY PREPARE FOR, PROTECT AGAINST, RESPOND TO, RECOVER FROM, AND MITIGATE AGAINST ANY DISASTER. It is therefore critical that we work together to enable communities to develop collective, mutually supporting local capabilities to withstand the potential initial impacts of these events, respond quickly, and recover in a way that sustains or improves the community's overall well-being. How communities achieve this collective capacity calls for innovative approaches from across the full spectrum of community actors, including emergency management, to expand and enhance existing practices, institutions, and organizations that help make local communities successful every day, under normal conditions, and leverage this social infrastructure to help meet community needs when an incident occurs. (Source: *FEMA Strategic Plan 2011-2014*)

David Kaufman, Director for FEMA's Office of Policy & Program Analysis, began his dialog by stating that he wanted to hold an "open discussion around a set of topics that we don't always discuss". In particular, he wanted to propose a premise and open a discussion on the underlying philosophy of emergency management as a field of practice, including how we, as emergency managers, can apply "the ideals that drive our responses" to reach better outcomes.

Mr. Kaufman painted a picture of how the world around us is changing and how "...some of those changes are having a profound effect on how we [emergency managers] do business, particularly in light

of today's transformational technologies." To make his point, Kaufman asked everyone to think back a few years to appreciate how new technologies and processes have changed the world in which we live.

Ten years ago, local grocery stores had a ten day supply of food and goods on their shelves. Today, changes in supply chain management mean those same stores only have an average of three days of supplies in stock. Ten years ago, a disgruntled customer would complain to close friends and neighbors whereas today, that same complaint, through personal social networks, potentially reaches millions of other shoppers! At the same time, the average American now sees three times more information than 20 years ago, and the rate of information appears to be growing 30% every year. Today, social networking has changed how people learn, communicate, do business, make decisions and how we get our information. It impacts who we trust and when. All of this has implications on how and where we spend our time and resources which leads to decisions regarding enhancing the resilience of our communities.

Kaufman shared some simple truths:

- Citizens tend to be the real first responders. Individuals at or near incidents often engage in "spontaneous reporting" by posting images and messages on their personal communication devices.
- Most successful communities drive their own recovery from an incident because resilience tends to a "societal, not a bureaucratic," process.
- The disaster is only one of the variables that impact communities. Communities are not just geographic in nature; it's the fabric that binds different people – faith, work,

"We need to move away from the mindset that Federal and State governments are always in the lead, and build upon the strengths of our local communities and, more importantly, our citizens. We must treat individuals and communities as key assets rather than liabilities."

**W. Craig Fugate
FEMA Administrator**



recreation, education, etc. It is all these overlapping environments that create a collective grouping and social network.

Kaufman brought this point home by drawing on some analogies including the similarities between disaster response and community oriented policing. “It’s all about the connections and relationships on the street, at the community level,” said Kaufman. “All of this means that we need to engage the *whole community* in preparing for and responding to disasters.”

So what is a whole community response? Experience has taught us it means “understanding and meeting the actual needs of the community, engaging all aspects of the community (public, private, civic), and strengthening what works well.” Using Scottsdale, Ariz. as an example, Kaufman shared that with a recent incident; it took hours rather than days to set up road blocks to divert drivers to a cleared thoroughfare because the response was community initiated rather than bureaucratically driven.

“Emergency management,” said Kaufman, “is about how we care for one another, how we do what we do, and it works really, really well, most of the time, except for when it doesn’t. To make it better, it takes planning for real; broadening the team to include the private sector and neighbors and the only way to know abilities is to broaden the team, meet people where they are, empower local action and take advantage of teachable moments by tapping into what they are interested in rather than imposing what bureaucrats want.”

If we want to deliver better emergency management outcomes, we all need to “understand the community DNA” so that we can plan for what communities will really need in a severe event. We need to create “space at the table” and integrate

social networks to create the conditions for resilience. Many of the participants were surprised by a case study from a commercial district business group in downtown Washington, D.C., which found that the largest danger to their business during an emergency was not terrorism, but their non-involvement in the Incident Command System. Many in the audience were also surprised to find that studies confirm many low income communities want protection and involvement and they are willing to take the responsibility to achieve it, but often feel disconnected when they are left out of the decision making process.

Kaufman closed by offering a value proposition for whole community to the group: *A community centric approach for emergency management that focuses on strengthening what works well in communities, on a daily basis, and offers a more effective path to building societal security and resilience.*

To help meet this value, FEMA is moving forward with three specific actions; creating a national dialog around the whole community response approach, working with new partners, and planning for the maximum of maximums.

For more information on the Whole Community of Emergency Management initiative, contact FEMA-Community-Engagement@dhs.gov.



Washington, DC, September 9, 2009 – David Kaufman, FEMA's Director of the Office of Policy and Program Analysis (OPPA). Mr. Kaufman has extensive experience with homeland security and disaster preparedness issues. He has been a member of the faculty at the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security, where he has taught in the Center's graduate and executive level education programs, and has previously served in several senior positions in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and in FEMA.
- Bill Koplitz/FEMA

Upcoming Events

A look at upcoming training, exercises and events in the Region

May 2011

- ▶ National Level Exercise (NLE) 2011 (FEMA and New Madrid States)
- ▶ *Utah ShakeOut* Table Top Exercise (Utah and FEMA Region VIII)
- ▶ *Operation Mountain Guardian* Urban Terrorism Exercise (Denver, CO and FEMA Region VIII)
- ▶ Basic Records Operations, NARA Rocky Mountain Region (Albuquerque, NM)
- ▶ Electronic Records Management, NARA Rocky Mountain Region (Albuquerque, NM)

June 2011

- ▶ *Up in Smoke* Wildland Fire/Urban Interface Table Top Exercise (Colorado Springs, CO and FEMA Region VIII)
- ▶ Catastrophic Mutual Aid Table Top Exercise (FEMA Region VIII)

July 2011

- ▶ Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) Meeting (Denver Metro Area)
- ▶ Basic Records Operations, NARA Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, CO)
- ▶ Electronic Records Management, NARA Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, CO)

August - December 2011

- ▶ *Operation Mountain Guardian* Urban Terrorism Full-Scale Exercise - SEPTEMBER 2011
- ▶ *Up in Smoke* Wildland Fire/Urban Interface Full-Scale Exercise - OCTOBER 2011
- ▶ Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) Meeting (Denver Metro Area) - NOVEMBER 2011
- ▶ *Utah ShakeOut* Plan Validation Table Top Exercise (Utah and FEMA Region VIII) - DECEMBER 2011

For specific dates and locations for NARA Rocky Mountain Events, please call (303) 407-5720 or email workshop.denver@nara.gov. Dates and classes are subject to change.

For specific dates and locations for all other events listed, please contact FEMA Region VIII at (303) 235-4800. Dates and locations are subject to change.

Looking for More Info?

Please find copies of RISC presentations, copies of the Partners in Preparedness newsletter, meeting handout materials and more at:

www.fema.gov/about/regions/regionviii/

To obtain information in an alternate format, please contact Daniel Nyquist at 303.235.4861 or daniel.nyquist@dhs.gov.



“Using the Past to Plan for the Future”

How History Has Taught Us to Care for our Animals in a Crisis

THE BOND BETWEEN ANIMALS AND HUMANS CAN BE A REAL HELP IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION. This is the message Deborah Colburn, Director for the Animal Emergency Management Program, Colorado Veterinary Medical Foundation (and newly elected Colorado VOAD Chair), shared on day one of the RISC meeting.

Hurricane Katrina was an awakening for many in emergency management regarding pets. People would not leave their pets in an evacuation, no matter how dire the circumstances, even though animal response was not a formal part of emergency management until October 2006. It was during Katrina that the informal and undisciplined response by many animal owners and concerned citizens made front page news. Since then, many non-governmental organizations have trained and organized volunteers to ensure pet owners have a seat at emergency management’s planning table.

The ensuing PETS Act provides for support for companion animals accompanying their owners. It also includes service animals for those with functional and access needs. Colburn did a wonderful job of putting a face on the subject with a profile of a young lady by the name of Tammy and how she was able to “build relationships of mutual trust” regarding the inclusion of pets and service animals into a community’s response effort.

Building social capital is how Colorado’s Animal Emergency Management Program operates. Ms. Colburn shared two case studies. The first was Trinity Gardens in Mobile, Ala. This community received little assistance after Hurricane Katrina and built an informal organizational structure to make sure resources became available to teach their kids how to rebuild their community after the storm. The second highlighted the Clucking Hens of Butler, Alabama; a

remote, black community that had no running water or sewer system, and no jobs, yet responded to the challenge after Katrina. The Clucking Hens was a community group made up of all female heads-of-households that were the core of that community, proving that community can be defined many ways. No matter the common denominator, it is the fabric that holds people together. In Colorado, the Four Mile Canyon Fire was an excellent example of implementing lessons learned from earlier events. Pets were co-located with the human shelter. Animal issues were brought up in community meetings and discussed with insurance companies. There were even organized animal day care services, psychological first aid and supply distribution for those with pets.

Colburn emphasized how important it is to encourage collaboration between volunteers and professionals with an interest in animal issues, and to reach out to the most vulnerable citizens who are likely to be impacted. Local animal response planning begins by identifying which community members are most likely to be impacted by a hazard and least likely to have the capacity to respond. Animal-human bonds can be very powerful and thus a powerful motivator for resiliency, collaboration and eventual change.

According to Colburn, “...you build community resilience by empowering individuals to take ownership of their personal situations and the more vulnerable the population, the more valuable the presence of animal companions” can be in an emergency. If you are interested in more information about animal emergency management, please visit the Animal Emergency Management Program at www.cvmf.org/aemp.



Colorado Emergency Preparedness Partnership

Leveraging Assets Across the Whole Community

THE NEED FOR STRONG PARTNERSHIPS CONTINUED TO RESONATE WITH THE COLORADO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PARTNERSHIP (CEPP) presentation made by John Mencer, CEPP and Bill Miederhoff, Colorado's Resource Mobilization Program Manager and ESF 7 representative.

Mencer shared the history of CEPP which was formed in 2008 as a 501(c)3 non-profit initiated by the Denver InfraGuard Members Alliance, Denver Police Foundation, Philanthropy Roundtable, Business Executives for National Security, and others in the Denver business community. CEPP's mission is to strengthen the regions' collective capacity to prevent, respond to, and recover from all hazard emergencies through the use of public-private partnerships which bring both private and public sectors together to smooth lines of communications through the 18 infrastructure sectors.

Since 2008, CEPP has grown to 240 members, including CH2M HILL, Qwest, Xcel, Target, Verizon Wireless, Belfor Restoration, Booz Allen Hamilton, and Comcast, along with non-governmental organizations like the University of Denver, Denver Seminary, El Pomar Foundation, Denver Police Foundation, the American Red Cross, and The CELL, among others. Members also include representatives from state, local and federal agencies in the area. Mencer and Miederhoff shared details of some initiatives that CEPP currently has underway including a situational awareness tool "SATool" which is a virtual business EOC designed to bring many diverse organizations together in response and manage communications during a crisis. It incorporates a subscription text and email alert service "CEPP Alert," and an improved website at www.thecepp.org.

Another CEPP initiative is Connect Colorado, an impressive, user friendly, web-based fully searchable private asset registry for large scale resource management. This includes a database of organizations and facilities, resources and equipment, as well as subject matter experts. Miederhoff then demonstrated the tool for the participants and encouraged those from the private sector to register.

Utah ShakeOut Update

JEFF GAFKJEN, FEMA REGION VIII EXERCISE OFFICER, PRESENTED AN UPDATE TO THE UTAH CATASTROPHIC EARTHQUAKE PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND EXERCISE SERIES, referred to as Utah Shakeout. The long-term project incorporates 14 ESFs and began in May 2010. It is scheduled to conclude with a Recovery TTX in June 2012. Various exercises and meetings are continuing throughout the intervening time, beginning with a Logistics TTX, Information Analysis Brief, Catastrophic Mutual Aid Plan TTX, COA Workgroups, Senior Leadership TTX, and a Functional Exercise in April 2012.

Gafkjen explained the focus of the exercise series is to validate the draft catastrophic earthquake operations plan and examine state and federal interfaces and logistics strategies to support the saving and sustaining of lives after a catastrophic earthquake along Utah's Wasatch Fault. He highlighted the six-step planning process and the development of a Catastrophic Mutual Aid Plan (CMAP) that covers the period from onset of an event until resources reach the mobilization and staging areas. The series is a practical application of a Whole Community concept that will result in a significant, diversified catastrophic planning and exercising effort for Utah.

William A. Tolbert: “A Note-Taker Takes Note”

A View of the Whole Community Concept from Our Community

Editor’s Note: *In the spirit of Whole Community of Emergency Management, we welcome Bill Tolbert’s comments about the March RISC and Whole Community. Mr. Tolbert volunteered to take notes at the past two Region VIII RISC meetings. He is a retired writer and a very involved volunteer with local homeowners associations, a faith-based organization, and Volunteers of America RSVP program, in addition to state-wide Citizens Corps Councils.*
- Lynn Pisano-Pedigo, Editor and RISC Coordinator

I LISTENED CLOSELY TO DAVID KAUFMAN’S PRESENTATION, PARTLY BECAUSE OF MY ROLE AS THE “RECORDER” FOR THE FEMA REGION VIII RISC MEETING, AND PARTLY BECAUSE I AM FULLY IMMERSSED IN COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES. I wear many of the community hats that Mr. Kaufman envisions having “a seat at the table” for building whole community capabilities. I am the Lead Volunteer for Disaster Preparedness for the Volunteers of America RSVP program. I am the “Preparedness Specialist” and manage preparedness programs in two homeowners associations. I am the Emergency Preparedness Leader for a faith-based organization of 4,000 members. At the same time, I actively participate in statewide Citizens Corp Councils. Essentially, like many others, I am where the rubber meets the road in our community.

I strongly believe that a whole community response is the only practical way to manage and apply the limited resources that we have. And, that the right way to do this is by building the “boots on the ground” level relationships and partnerships that shape resilient communities and ensure effective responses during disasters. I believe that Mr. Kaufman’s comments at the RISC meeting were spot-on...with a couple of small caveats.

It is critical to send the core message that a whole community response is critical to the success of the mission, and that it requires diverse perspectives, different thinking, and a wider range of inputs than many in FEMA have been used to in the prior “top down” approach to emergency response. The right message was transmitted to the people in the room, however, there were people missing that needed to hear it.

The message also needs to be championed from the bottom up. City and county level emergency managers (very few of whom were at the RISC meeting) need to be willing to reach out to their community leaders as well. Likewise, community leaders (formal and informal) need to reach out to the emergency managers in their communities. Until those relationships are built and those trusted partnerships are in place, our communities can’t be whole...and any community needs to be whole in order to be able to be part of a whole community response.

This process requires a lot of work, good communications, and the reallocation of some resources.

Any initiative like this requires what the advertising industry calls repetitive frequency. It has to be repeated over and over again, at every level, before it will really take root. It will also require better up-and-down communications where successes can be highlighted and shared. For example, most of the FEMA and other federal attendees at the RISC meeting probably didn’t know that a lot of this whole community bridge building is already starting to take place along the Front Range. There are “Be Ready” programs that are being successfully rolled out in several neighborhood associations and templates and tools are currently being developed for more of these associations to easily apply.

Continued on next page...



Tolbert Continued...

There are some major faith-based initiatives underway locally that promote preparedness where there isn't any, and move from emergency preparedness (pre-event) to emergency response (being a resource during an event) where good emergency preparedness programs already existed. There are also initiatives underway to bring together diverse faith-based groups and to build bridges between them that allow for the effective teaming before and during an emergency.

There are also some great preparedness tools being developed by READYColorado and others that will clearly help whole community get rolling without every individual community having to reinvent every wheel themselves.

Sound good? It is good news, but there are two obstacles that Dave Kaufman didn't address in his roll-out of the whole community program. First, there doesn't seem to be a good platform or forum in place to effectively identify and highlight the "success stories" at the community level, so that other communities can use them as easy templates. Successes must be visible at the community level if they are to be replicated easily. The implementation of the whole community approach will spread faster and farther if we can find the right way to effectively share those stories and tools.

Second, there needs to be some mechanism in place to ensure that some federal funding gets where the rubber-meets-the-road in building these community partnerships. If all of the dollars get drawn off for equipment and hardware (including CERT bags) or county level training programs, and none of it gets down to community outreach functions like READYColorado and others, those key community level initiatives, partnerships and programs will take much longer to develop, mature, and more will be spent to replicate them.

As the very interested note-taker in the RISC meeting, I applaud FEMA Region VIII and Dave Kaufman for doing a great job in opening the important dialog that we need. If this approach is to reach the full measure of its vision, that dialog must be spread.

Upcoming RISC Meetings:

**July 11-12, 2011
Denver Metro Area**

**November 8-9, 2011
Denver Metro Area**

Please note that meetings are subject to change due to Federal budget constraints.

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