



## Emergency Management and Response Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)

**INFOGRAM 3-09**

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**NOTE:** This INFOGRAM will be distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures. For further information, contact the Emergency Management and Response- Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) at (301) 447-1325 or by e-mail at [emr-isac@dhs.gov](mailto:emr-isac@dhs.gov).

### Combating Complacency

For over seven years the United States has enjoyed the absence of a major terrorist attack. Much credit for this belongs to the many public and private organizations that altered their plans, training, and operations to prevent and protect against the next man-made disaster. Despite severely restrained resources, these countless entities avoided complacency by continuously improving their capabilities to deter or mitigate the catastrophic effects from all hazards.

Now that the political conventions, elections, holidays, and inauguration have passed, informal national research indicates the potential for growing relaxation at numerous public and private venues throughout the country. The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) noted that some localities already reduced protection and resilience measures because of the economic downturn. However, Emergency Services Sector (ESS) departments and agencies cannot afford to ease preparedness. Contentment with the existing state of preparedness is particularly dangerous and undesirable for emergency managers and their local ESS organizations.

To combat complacency, the EMR-ISAC offers the following few suggestions from multiple sources, but particularly from “A Report to Provide an Assessment of Emergency Preparedness in the State of Maryland.” (<http://www.wittassociates.com/6485.xml>)

- Clarify and delineate lines of authority for each individual and agency responsible for managing disaster response.
- Provide clarity for local emergency managers regarding their powers and chain of command.
- Ensure leaders are knowledgeable, trained, and capable to manage massive emergencies and successfully perform in all hazards.
- Revise, distribute, and rehearse emergency operations plans for all probable contingencies.
- Assure a strong linkage between emergency operations plans and continuity of operations plans.
- Arrange for regional response options to maximize capabilities.
- Coordinate and exercise emergency plans with automatic and mutual aid partners.
- Guarantee the continued supply of food, fuel, etc., for extended operations.
- Incorporate the Incident Command System and National Incident Management System into emergency plans, training, and operations.
- Acquire an alternative site from which to operate when the primary site has been degraded.

### Avoiding the Snares to CIP

Regardless of the economic climate, history substantiates that the risk of man-made and natural disasters does not lessen. Therefore, communities, their emergency managers, and Emergency Services Sector (ESS) departments and agencies must avoid the typical snares to critical infrastructure protection (CIP). The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) learned that these pitfalls can be a hindrance to successful CIP and local preparedness for all hazards.

Accepting the necessity for ongoing protection and resilience measures despite the current financial predicament, the EMR-ISAC shares the following common snares for avoidance, which have been extrapolated from a recent article (10 Pitfalls in Creating a Successful Business Continuity Plan) seen at <http://disaster-resource.com/newsletter/2009/subpages/v268/meettheexperts.htm>:

- Assigning scarce resources to other tasks or purchases because a disaster may never occur.
- Applying protection or resilience measures to infrastructure that is not credibly threatened and vulnerable.
- Protecting infrastructure that cannot be protected from all hazards and, instead, should receive resilience measures.
- Selecting vendors that cannot provide uninterrupted supplies and services during steady-state operations.
- Assuming vendors will provide continuous supplies and services during a catastrophe.
- Attempting to prepare one emergency operations plan for all hazards, instead of a basic plan with appendixes for each different contingency.
- Publishing an emergency operations plan that is not frequently tested, revised, and exercised again.
- Rigidly implementing and enforcing an emergency operations plan without using it as a guide.

According to the author of the source document, Tom Abruzzo, "The only thing harder than planning is explaining why you didn't."

## Weathering the Economic Storm

"Weathering the Economic Storm: Fiscal Challenges in Fire and Emergency Medical Services" compiles best practices from Emergency Services Sector (ESS) leaders across the U.S. The goal of the guide, from the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), is to help senior officers and their departments understand the most effective strategies and best practices for, and common pitfalls of, making tough resource decisions collaboratively.

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) notes that financial experts speculate the current weak economy could remain challenging for some time. However, many departments and agencies must decide quickly how to rein in spending, sometimes without the benefit of knowing the consequences. Without key performance indicators, the guide states, departments may "struggle to articulate the real impact of proposed budget cuts." It suggests that for departments without "good data collection and analysis processes...an accurate data management program should be a priority for the near-term."

The guide includes a matrix of best practices, and, to help departments explore new options, a list of 10 key principles for successful innovation. Revisions and updates are planned for the guide, in addition to webinars. Specific advice or assistance with budget or economic issues is available by contacting the IAFC's Economic Challenge Task Force at [economy@iafc.org](mailto:economy@iafc.org) or by calling (703) 273-0911. See the guide at [http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/deptAdminEcon\\_WeatheringTheEconomicStorm.pdf](http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/deptAdminEcon_WeatheringTheEconomicStorm.pdf).

## Training Alternatives

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) is aware that training cutbacks are among the difficult options Emergency Services Sector (ESS) leaders sometimes must consider during times of financial hardship. Some relief is available through a range of no-cost training offered by the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX).

One alternative is a group of six homeland security eLearning courses that award continuing education credits. The topics include terrorism awareness, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)/terrorism awareness, EMS basic concepts for WMD incidents, public works for WMD incidents, WMD incident management/unified command, and introduction to the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) and mass prophylaxis. In addition to the eLearning courses, seven shorter courses are listed as continuing education topics at <http://teexweb.tamu.edu/teex.cfm?pageid=OGTprog&area=OGT&templateid=1663>.

TEEX, which trains more than 81,000 responders annually, presents many on-campus courses for all responder specialties, but also offers Department of Homeland Security (DHS)-Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-funded courses at host jurisdictions. All printed materials and instructors are provided. Hosting jurisdictions are responsible to ensure the minimum required number of participants for the course and must supply a classroom. Wide Area Search and Development of a State/Regional Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRNE) Task Force are three-day courses offered at no cost to eligible jurisdictions. A third training opportunity is a collection of 23 homeland security courses, funded by federal grants, which can be taken online, taught at host jurisdictions, or presented at TEEX facilities. Additional information about the courses and how to enroll or request host jurisdiction training can be found at <http://teexweb.tamu.edu/OGT/index.html>.

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## **REPORTING NOTICE**

The National Infrastructure Coordinating Center (NICC) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Infrastructure Protection is the central point for notifications regarding infrastructure threats, disruptions, intrusions, and suspicious activities. Emergency Services Sector personnel are requested to report any incidents or attacks involving their infrastructures using at least the first and second points of contact seen below:

- 1) NICC - Voice: 202-282-9201, Fax: 703-487-3570, E-Mail: [nicc@dhs.gov](mailto:nicc@dhs.gov)
- 2) Your local FBI office - Web: <http://www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm>
- 3) EMR-ISAC - Voice: 301-447-1325, E-Mail: [emr-isac@dhs.gov](mailto:emr-isac@dhs.gov), fax: 301-447- 1034, Web: [www.usfa.dhs.gov/subjects/emr-isac](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/subjects/emr-isac), Mail: J-247, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727