



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

INFOGRAM 29-08

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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.*

LEPC Approach to Resiliency

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) continues to study the costs and benefits of critical infrastructure resiliency (CIR) for Emergency Services Sector (ESS) organizations and the communities they serve. Whether a disaster is manmade or due to natural causes, the EMR-ISAC learned that resiliency is vital for a rapid recovery. Resiliency measures ensure that critical ESS and community infrastructures can either continue operations during a crisis or quickly reconstitute essential services after the event.

The CIR study by the EMR-ISAC additionally disclosed that numerous county Emergency Management Agencies experienced some success with all-hazards emergency planning by developing a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). Generally, these committees achieve local and regional coordination, address common problems, develop solutions, focus limited resources, and prepare effective multi-jurisdictional emergency operations plans.

Typically, LEPC membership includes a diverse representation of local and regional stakeholders: elected officials, police, fire, emergency medical services, public health, hospitals, public works, environmental, transportation, education, industry, media, Red Cross, and any others who could bring specific expertise to the planning process. At many locations, the goals of the LEPC are to facilitate community or regional emergency preparedness, mitigate vulnerabilities, and minimize consequences.

To effectively resolve vulnerabilities and reduce the consequences of a disaster, a LEPC must actively coordinate and plan for CIR. Whereas critical infrastructure protection (CIP) activities should ideally eliminate vulnerabilities, CIR measures should curtail the consequences of a calamity and enable organizations to continue operations or restore them as soon as possible after an incident.

Through the unity of effort and synergy achieved by the cooperation of a broad-based membership, the LEPC has tremendous potential to formulate plans and conclude arrangements that provide the capacity to maintain continuity of indispensable services during and after a catastrophe. Therefore, the EMR-ISAC encourages the creation of a LEPC within each county or region with a dedicated effort toward prevention, protection, and resiliency.

For more information about LEPCs:

http://www.epa.gov/emergencies/content/epcra/epcra_plan.htm#LEPC.

For more information about Resiliency:

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/HomelandDefense/bg2150.cfm>.

Critical Employee Emergency Planning

After the article "ESS Family Preparedness" appeared in the 24 July 2008 INFOGRAM, the Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) learned of a Department of Homeland Security (DHS)-funded course to help Emergency Services Sector (ESS) personnel ensure the welfare of their families during disasters.

A representative of the Gulf States Regional Center for Public Safety Innovations (GSRCP) contacted the EMR-ISAC to explain that the Center applied for, and received, DHS funding in 2006 to develop and deliver "Critical Employee Emergency Planning (CEEP)," a one-day Train-the-Trainer program. Having completed pilot offerings and final revisions, the GSRCP is now scheduling course deliveries throughout the U.S.

Although first responders are the focus of the CEEP course, it was designed to be appropriate for any employee group expected to remain on duty through a disaster and its aftermath, i.e., employees of essential critical infrastructures (utilities, manufacturing, finance, transportation, etc.). The course addresses agency-level policies, plans, and partnerships that should be in place to help ensure employees respond when needed, and are better able to focus on their tasks.

Also covered is information that needs to be communicated to employees and family members about critical issues and decision points: assembling needed supplies, making rational decisions about whether to evacuate or shelter-in-place, where to go, what to expect, and communications. The course additionally emphasizes the important issue of helping employees and families better understand and deal with the emotional impact of responding to disasters. Participants receive a suggested training outline to use when they present the material to family members after the course concludes.

CEEP will be offered at no cost through local agencies and at conferences nationwide. Agencies interested in hosting the training program can contact GSRCP at 888-283-0966 and visit the center's website: www.gsrcpi.org.

Seat Belts

U.S. Fire Administrator Gregory Cade appealed this month to the nation's Emergency Services Sector (ESS) for a commitment of universal seat belt use by members of first responder departments and agencies on all incident responses.

Speaking of fatalities and injuries that occur when ESS personnel are on duty, but neglect to use seat belts, Chief Cade said, "This is something we can put an immediate stop to. Each and every one of us owns this problem. We are each responsible for the actions we take, or don't take. We are each responsible for stopping these preventable losses from ever occurring."

Statistics from a National Fire Protection Association report entitled "What's Changed Over the Past 30 Years?," affirm that 76 percent of 406 victims who died in on-duty vehicle crashes through 2006 were not wearing seat belts or using restraint systems. From 1999 through 2006, four responders, none of whom was using available seat belts, died in falls from apparatus.

Chief Cade described a positive practice being undertaken by a growing number of emergency departments: all members pledge to use seat belts or restraint systems to secure themselves to moving apparatus. A national seat belt pledge was created to honor Brian Hunton, a 27-year-old Texas firefighter who died after falling from an apparatus to which he was not secured. The Brian Hunton: National Fire Service Seat Belt Pledge can be copied at <http://www.firehouse.com/mz/images/2006/6/pledge.pdf>.

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) supports Chief Cade's appeal. As the foremost among the critical infrastructures of the emergency services, personnel face life-threatening situations with unknown hazards and forces beyond their control on a daily basis. However, seatbelt use can and should be controlled.

After-Action Critiques

A post-incident critique is a fact-finding exercise conducted to collect, relate, and record information that forms a picture of an incident or disaster and the emergency response to it. Lessons learned from after-action critiques have effected changes in emergency response operations, and the protection of Emergency Services Sector (ESS) critical infrastructures.

After reviewing the newly released U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) “Special Report: The After-Action Critique: Training Through Lessons Learned,” the Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) suggests it offers practical guidance for ESS departments and agencies, especially those unfamiliar with the practice. The report points out that a side effect of the decline in fires responded to by the fire service (a positive trend) is a decrease in actual firefighting experience for firefighters. When this is coupled with the retirement of many highly experienced senior officers, a knowledge gap is created. However, the repository of information constructed from sound postincident fact-finding and analysis helps to bridge the gap.

The report explains formal and informal critiques; suggests when and how often they should be conducted; outlines information to include in incident data collection; offers procedures for a formal critique meeting; presents three brief case studies; and concludes with an appendix of sample postincident questionnaires. It urges emergency organizations to write and enforce a policy that establishes a systematic and standardized approach for conducting critiques to ensure that each is conducted in a consistent manner and achieves the goals intended.

The EMR-ISAC acknowledges that after-action critiques are a valuable mechanism to aid continuous improvement, but suggests that ESS leaders also consider the reviews an opportunity to evaluate responses from a critical infrastructure protection (CIP) and resiliency (CIR) perspective. For example, postincident questionnaires could also include questions similar to the following examples:

- What were the credible threats to personnel, physical assets, or communications/cyber systems?
- How were vulnerabilities to the identified threats assessed?
- How were countermeasures implemented to mitigate or eliminate the vulnerabilities?
- What was given to personnel to provide access to appropriate and operable equipment, rehabilitation services, and personal alert safety system (PASS) devices for tracking?
- How were plans and strategies coordinated to ensure seamless cooperation with other departments and agencies?
- What prior information sharing and planning occurred with community stakeholders to ensure that emergency responders had access to special equipment or specialized assistance?

The USFA “Special Report: The After-Action Critique: Training Through Lessons Learned” (USFA-TR-159/April 2008) can be reviewed and downloaded at http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/tr_159.pdf. (39 pp., 460.42 KB, PDF)

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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
- 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, fax: 301-447- 1034, Web: www.usfa.dhs.gov/subjects/emr-isac, Mail: J-247, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727