

**NEMA Preparedness Committee Meeting
2010 Annual Conference
October 18, 2010**

Committee Chair Doug Hoell (NC) called the meeting to order at 10:15 am and roll was taken. The first item on the agenda was an update on the committee's work related to the NEMA Strategic Plan. The committee's objectives focus on professionalizing emergency management, including defining the emergency management profession.

A description of emergency management was developed and it reads as follows:

Emergency Management is the systematic discipline of preparing for all natural, technological or malicious hazards and the consequences those hazards pose to the human race and the environment.

Through plans, agreements, training, and exercises, Emergency Management assures the full, systematic integration of government (state, local, tribal, territorial, and federal) with voluntary and private organizations to address the full spectrum of preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation responsibilities.

Emergency Management plans and prepares for the potential consequences of an emergency or disaster by developing essential capabilities, assisting the community in reducing its vulnerabilities and thereby, the potential consequences, and encouraging acceptance of individual and community responsibilities. During an event, emergency management coordinates the various disciplines and responding entities. Finally, Emergency Management provides the long range planning framework for restoration of the economic and social equilibrium in the community following a disaster.

Mr. Hoell explained that this description will serve as a foundation for the rest of the committee's work on the strategic plan. He thanked Barb Farr (VT) and John Madden (AK) for their assistance in developing the description.

Another area that the committee is targeting is training, education and professional development. NEMA, along with IAEM, was invited by FEMA to be part of an initiative to re-build its training and education program for a city, county or state EM director. The goal of this effort is to better define the core competencies at EMI and create a clearer educational path for these positions. The Preparedness Committee has several members on this project including Richard Muth (MD); Barb Farr; Rob McAleer (ME); Mark Cooper (LA); and Hans Kallam (CO) and Bruce Holloman from Mr. Kallam's staff.

The first meeting took place in June at EMI and one of the outcomes was a list of core competencies for the emergency management professional. The Preparedness Committee had already reviewed and approved the list with a few changes. Current NEMA President Dave Maxwell and Vice President Dave Miller have also signed off on it. The list is now being circulated to the full membership, and if it's approved, NEMA support for the core competencies as well as the larger training and education initiative will be communicated back to FEMA.

Other areas of engagement for the committee include better interaction with higher education about academic programs; promoting EMAP as the EM standard; and defining expectations for emergency management.

Next on the agenda was a report on the National Preparedness Task Force. The Preparedness Committee had several members on this group, including John Madden. The task force was required by Congress in the DHS Appropriations Bill for FY 2010. Through many conference calls and four face-to-face meetings, the 35 members identified three primary areas of focus: Policy and Guidance; Capabilities and Assessment; and Grants. Overall, the task force found that there has been significant improvement in the state of preparedness, but measuring this improvement remains the challenge.

The task force recently issued its report to Congress with 25 recommendations. Among the recommendations:

- Increasing involvement of state, local, tribal, and territorial in policy development, review, and implementation
- Make better use of the National Advisory Council and the Regional Advisory Council in identifying issues and bringing them forward
- Embedded positions in Preparedness Directorate
- National comprehensive mutual aid system
- Strategic policy planning process for tomorrow's challenges; long range trends, technology, demographics
- Threat and Hazard Identification Assessment process with multi-year investment justifications; evaluate gaps over the long haul
- Update Target Capabilities List with tiered, capability-specific performance objectives
- NIMS-typed resource inventory for nationally deployable assets
- Collect preparedness assessment and resource inventory data from all levels of government
- Implement the preparedness assessment framework over three years with integrated milestones
- Federal interagency working group to coordinate preparedness grants – grant guidance, applications, timelines, monitoring and assessments; common strategic documents
- Encourage SAA's to coordinate grant initiatives
- Consistent application of standards for decentralized grant administration and monitoring
- Flexibility on grants to support sustainment and maintenance costs
- Grant allocation based on baseline; risk and threat based; category/program specific; and competitive programs that encourage innovation
- Link grant programs with capability assessments.

In addition, the task force recommended that innovative investments be made to increase the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of preparedness; the National Intelligence Council consider preparedness in strategic analysis; the Department of Education develop materials for school districts can use to implement a preparedness curriculum; a System of financial incentives be considered to encourage individuals, families, and businesses to train and materially prepare for emergencies; possible incentives for jurisdictions to plan for recovery as well as response; and national cyber security efforts must address state, local, tribal, and territorial preparedness needs.

After Mr. Madden's report, Mr. Hoell mentioned that one of the issues discussed by the Task Force was the possibility of failing infrastructure as the source of a future disaster. Mike Hinman (WI) spoke a few minutes on that state's recent levee breach and the on-going discussion on reinforcing old levees.

Mr. Hoell then welcomed Tim Manning, deputy administrator for Protection and National Preparedness at FEMA, who was updating the committee on several areas. Mr. Manning first thanked Mr. Madden and all the members for their work on the Preparedness Task Force.

Other discussion topics included the following:

- National Exercise Program – undergoing review; the DHS secretary had asked for a new draft, which is almost completed; going to a biennial cycle; not creating new exercises – will link to state exercises already planned; also working through regions to identify key components; moving away from Tier 1, Tier 2
- HSEEP – making a philosophical change in HSEEP, basing it on variable objectives rather than fixed ones; also, it never had a compliance requirement; several states commented this wasn't clear in the grant guidance
- CPG 101 – releasing a revised version with less focus on annexes and supplements; will integrate planning
- Quantifying Preparedness Investments – FEMA has to do a better job in demonstrating to Congress what the government has gotten in return for its grants investments; on-going challenge and priority
- Education and Training – (already mentioned earlier in this report) – FEMA trying to align curriculum at EMI with core curriculum requirements; will identify gaps in the process and attempt to address those gaps
- EMPG grants – can't release EMPG grants under continuing resolution; FEMA is preparing grants packages so that these can be distributed once federal budget is approved; Elizabeth Harman is working with regions and a task force to roll out grants as quickly and as efficiently as possible
- REP Program – looking to improve exercises associated with this program

After Mr. Manning, Brock Long, chair of the NEMA Hurricane Subcommittee, was invited to update the committee. Mr. Long thanked FEMA for the establishment of the FEMA National Hurricane Program task force, a group created to conduct a bottom-up restructuring of the NHP. The group has identified short and long-term goals, which were submitted to FEMA. In addition, the program has been transferred out of Mitigation into Response at the headquarters level. This transfer is still in process at the regional level. Mr. Long said he is hopeful that the full integration of the program and its various products will be accomplished across all directorates. Mr. Manning added that the task force will be reconvened for further work.

Jerome Hatfield, vice chair of the Emergency Management Accreditation Program, was next on the agenda. He updated the committee on the commission's recent efforts. Currently, 27 jurisdictions are accredited and four are conditionally accredited. Also, EMAP 1) is working with the Center for Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance Medicine (CDHAM) on a review of African national emergency management programs; 2) has created a partnership with IAEM Canada to provide Canadian jurisdictions with the EMAP standards and other resources and 3) is conducting pilots in association with the Veteran's Health Administration and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. In addition, EMAP continues its Event Strategic Review, which includes an exercise evaluation component that is voluntary, and its Urban Area Work Group. The full EMAP printed report was distributed to all state directors.

Mr. Hoell then took a couple of minutes to welcome two members of the emergency management community, Laura Furgione, the new deputy director and the second in command at the National Weather Service; and Brian McDermott, director of the Division of Preparedness and Response at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The final presentation for the committee was from Michelann Ooten, lead for the NEMA Public Information Subcommittee. She reported the following:

- FEMA/State PIO Conference – third annual conference was held in DC in June; included two days of training and sessions with best practices that states could adopt. Initiating the conference was a major goal of the Public Information Subcommittee since its rebirth in 2007. The conference represents the only opportunity for State PIOs to meet with FEMA PIOs from both the regional and Washington, D.C. offices at one venue. The Subcommittee Conference Working Group, led by Virginia’s Bob Spieldenner, assisted in planning the conference agenda and selecting speakers.
- Training Project – For nearly one year, State PIOs have been offering the new public information officer training courses developed and updated through the efforts of the subcommittee and EMI staff. Specifically, these are the “PIO Awareness Course” (G289), “Basic PIO Course” (G290), and “JIS/JIC Planning for Tribal, State and Local PIOs Course” (G291). The subcommittee continues to provide input regarding the next step in public information training, which includes an update to the “Advanced PIO Course” (E388) already taught at EMI and the new Leadership PIO Course currently in the developmental stage.
- Mentoring Working Group – The New PIO Mentoring Program is now in place. The program, designed to help newly hired State emergency management PIOs, includes a “New PIOs Handbook” and a network of seasoned State PIOs available to serve as mentors to the newly appointed State PIO. The handbook also speaks to other regional PIO resources that may be available and shares lessons learned in crisis communication situations. It identifies basics in the presidential declaration process and information and issues on training, acronyms, and Websites – all from the newly appointed public information officer’s point of view. Alabama’s Yasamie Richardson leads the working group that developed this program.
- New Director Training Guide/Media Section – subcommittee members contributed to the updated NEMA New Director Training Guide. The “Emergency Management and the Media” discusses the role of the PIO, developing media strategies, tips on interviews, news conferences and crisis communications.
- Monthly Conference Calls – the Public Information Subcommittee meets by monthly conference call. The calls are held the second Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m. Eastern time and usually last no longer than 30 minutes. A different state hosts the call each month.

After her report, Mr. Hoell announced that Ms. Ooten was stepping down from the subcommittee. Yasamie Richardson from Alabama will be taking over. Mr. Hoell acknowledged Ms. Ooten for her leadership of the subcommittee and her overall contribution to emergency management. He presented her with a certificate of appreciation from NEMA President Dave Maxwell as well as a gift.

With no other business, Alaska moved that the meeting be adjourned. Wisconsin seconded.