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## Editorial Remarks

*By Catherine Feinman*



The first *DomPrep Journal* edition of 2015 launches a yearlong series on “Preparedness.” In September 2011, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defined the National Preparedness Goal as “A secure and resilient nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.” The five mission areas of prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery address the necessary stages for reaching this goal. However, in order to achieve this or any goal, there must be a plan.

Leading the issue are two hot topics with increasing trends. The first addresses the Ebola crisis, which has spread beyond the areas of the world where the disease is most commonly found. Robert Hutchinson points out the gaps in preparedness that this disease exposed, but also the opportunities to plan better for future public health outbreaks. The second addresses active shooter incidents. Dave Points discusses the need for preincident planning, including the role that emergency operation centers can play for law enforcement planners.

Jordan Nelms and Sarah Tidman discuss FEMA resources to help emergency planners. Nelms shares information about guidance documents for national and regional emergency management operations. Whereas Tidman focuses on identifying planning gaps and challenges using interagency, multijurisdictional training exercises.

Of course, effective planning involves more than just emergency management agencies. Public health, law enforcement, cyber and information technology, and the private sector are just a few of the many agencies that need to be at the planning table. Jessica Brown shows how healthcare coalitions are bringing together public health agencies, hospitals, and other healthcare partners. Lewis Eakins describes a shift in law enforcement to incorporate emergency management planning and coordination. Ann Lesperance and Steve Stein shed light on the challenges of planning for cyberthreats and the need to integrate such plans into an all-hazards approach.

Rounding out the issue, Kay Goss explains how all the pieces of the federal interagency operations plans fit together. In order to recover from disaster, communities must have well-designed and established plans in place.

# Ebola – Another Opportunity to Plan & Prepare

*By Robert C. Hutchinson*

Three previous public health articles in the [November 2013](#), [March 2014](#), and [July 2014](#) issues of the *DomPrep Journal* broadly examined serious pathogenic threats that are emerging and evolving around the world to assess preparedness levels before their possible arrival in the United States. Not long after the delivery of the July 2014 issue, the discussion of U.S. preparedness for a serious novel pathogen became more than academic. The Ebola virus arrived in the United States within both expected and unexpected international travelers from West Africa – stressing again the great benefits and challenges of trade and travel in an ever-expanding globalized economy.

The arrival of Ebola and several other serious viruses in the United States provides another opportunity to evaluate strategies, policies, plans, procedures, and agreements through a whole-of-community or multisector approach. The strong public reaction and evolving policy response to the arrival and treatment of the Ebola virus demonstrates there is room for improvement in many diverse public and private sector organizations. Lessons have been learned and procedures have been modified to address a novel public health threat. The greater challenge may be to truly translate the lessons into tangible planning and preparedness achievements beyond the last serious novel pathogen arriving on U.S. soil.

## ***Lessons Learned***

As the Ebola outbreak appears to be managed within the United States and the world has been educated on this public health threat, interested planners and policy experts wonder if there will be long-lasting lessons implemented or if it shall be overtaken by the next emerging threat or geopolitical conflict. All too often, collective memories become short. With limited resources and the influence of the 24-hour constant news cycle, focus seems to shift from one issue to the next with few lasting effects.

Through many lessons learned by the domestic Ebola response, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) enhanced its recommendations for the management of the Ebola virus to include illness [identification](#), [specimen collection](#), personal protective equipment ([PPE](#)), [waste handling](#), and many other important topics.

The CDC designated 35 hospitals for future Ebola treatment to improve domestic preparedness, over half near the five international screening airports. Additionally, the CDC increased the supply of [Ebola-specific PPE](#) in the Strategic National Stockpile to assist domestic hospitals in the care of patients; the PPE is configured into 50 pods for rapid delivery to affected hospitals.

The CDC updated its guidance regarding legal authorities for [quarantine and isolation](#) with legal, policy, and responsibility references. Although updated, the information remains rather imperfect due to its infrequent exercising and use. The website acknowledges that large-scale quarantine and isolation operations were last enforced during the Spanish Influenza (H1N1) pandemic in 1918.

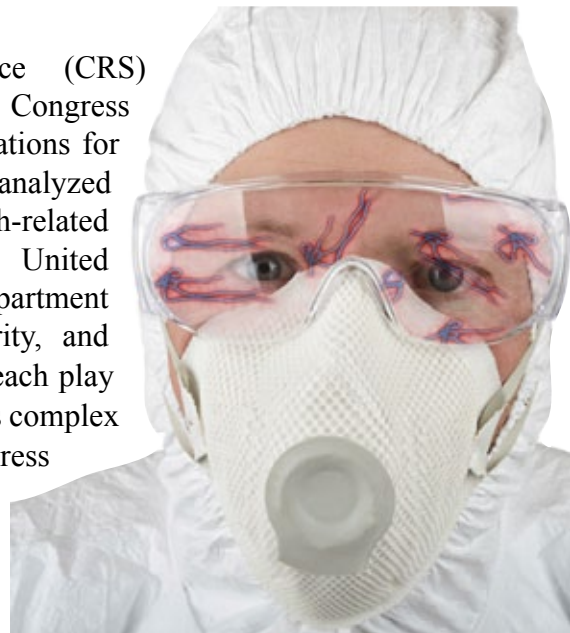


The Government Accountability Office (GAO) identified in a [5 November 2014 WatchBlog](#) lessons learned from previous infectious disease outbreaks, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), H5N1, and H1N1 (2009), and their applicability to Ebola to prepare for the next outbreak. Through this GAO *WatchBlog* posting, many other valuable GAO reports are linked for reference with recommendations and lessons learned.

Time shall tell if the national public health planning and preparedness was insufficient or just not properly designed or tuned for such a severe and rare hemorrhagic fever such as Ebola. Ebola was on very few radar screens before its current re-emergence in West Africa. Nevertheless, these “black swan” events cannot be ignored and lessons must be learned by planners, responders, leaders, and lawmakers.

### ***Sustained Congressional Interest***

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) recently researched several topics for Congress regarding the Ebola outbreak and its implications for the United States. In August 2014, CRS analyzed immigration policies and issues on health-related grounds for excluding people from the United States. That [CRS report](#) identified that the Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, and Department of Health and Human Services each play key roles in the administration of laws for this complex subject. The report stressed that Congress plays an important oversight role of the departments for contagious diseases and potential pandemics.



In an [October 2014 analysis](#) of the international response to Ebola in West Africa, the CRS identified six possible issues for congressional consideration and action. The report concluded with five questions to include if the United States sufficiently supports pandemic preparedness.

Another [October 2014 CRS report](#) addresses the essential and sensitive subject of federal and state quarantine and isolation authority. The analysis identified the legal authorities for this rarely utilized practice as well as three legal challenges to quarantine authority to include due process concerns. This important reference document summarizes many of the issues requiring discussion and resolution before the arrival or emergence of the next unexpected serious communicable public health threat.

A [December 2014 CRS report](#) provided answers to frequently asked questions regarding the introduction and spread of Ebola in the United States. The report addressed issues involving quarantine authorities, passenger screenings, and airline procedures.

Another [December 2014](#) CRS report reviewed the over \$6 billion budget request to counter the Ebola outbreak. The report identified issues for Congress to include the establishment of an Ebola Contingency Fund that may conflict with existing laws and the implications of the pending Ebola Emergency Response Act (H.R. 5710). Over \$5 billion in emergency funding was later approved by Congress to domestically and internationally fight the Ebola virus.

As the Ebola media coverage appeared to recede along with the active cases within the United States, congressional lawmakers [continued to hold hearings](#) for the additional funds requested for the Ebola response. Unexpectedly, the post-election hearings were poorly attended by lawmakers, spectators, and the media. Surprisingly, the newly appointed [Ebola czar](#) is reportedly returning to the private sector in early 2015. Even as the domestic interest may wane from Ebola, many crucial questions remain that require consistent attention.

### ***An Unresolved Critical Issue – Quarantines***

Lessons remain to be learned in several critical areas to include quarantine enforcement. There was immense debate and confusion about quarantine and isolation laws and policies, especially with the early state quarantine guidance announced in New Jersey, New York, and Maine. This rarely considered and implemented practice was the cause of great conflict, confusion, and political posturing. The concept of quarantine appeared to be more of a political than a public health issue. Fortunately, with the limited number of infected persons in the United States, due process and civil rights conversations were able to shape the discussion and political skirmish without a serious public health consequence.

Nevertheless, ignoring this difficult and critical social, legal, and political dispute will not make the next emergence any easier to handle in a timely, consistent, and legal manner. States shall likely lead the way once again with intrastate quarantines, but that does not alleviate the necessity for action by the federal government for border and interstate implementation.

A positive aspect of the confusion over the implementation of a quarantine order was the renewed focus on the process and laws. It is another opportunity to review unfamiliar and inadequate emergency plans. This is another chance to review old and new interpretations and perspectives for this legal challenge for numerous public and private sector organizations.

Ebola is just the latest serious public health concern to raise these legal and policy questions. They are not new. The response to the previous SARS international outbreak and H5N1 regional outbreak, and the challenges in handling them, identified the same issues and questions of today – especially for public health and law enforcement.

In September 2006, the Bureau of Justice Assistance issued [The Role of Law Enforcement in Public Health Emergencies](#) to address the special challenges for law enforcement, to include enforcing public health orders, securing contaminated areas, securing health facilities, controlling crowds, and protecting medical stockpiles. The



document concludes with, “While threats to public health are not new, this is the first time in recent history that local and state law enforcement officials and policymakers have had to consider these threats in such depth.”

In a 2006 *Police Chief* magazine article entitled [QUARANTINES: The Law Enforcement Role](#), numerous important issues and considerations were identified for state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to evaluate preparations for the enforcement of quarantines during a possible pandemic illness or biological terrorist attack.

In addition to the reports identified above, other sources of information, such as a [28 October 2014 legal sidebar](#), have been shared to provide knowledge and guidance to address quarantine and isolation authorities. Much of the same information in the valuable 2014 publications can be found in the 2006 and earlier publications stressing the importance of planning and preparedness. It remains to be seen if the attempted execution of state quarantines for Ebola will result in expanded guidance or if they will be discontinued before the establishment of much needed case law and commonly agreed upon practices.

### ***Another Opportunity to Be Seized or Lost***

This is a complex and complicated issue with many stakeholders for the application of rather unfamiliar laws and regulations. Much of the recent discussion focused only on specific politicians and public health officials – it appeared to burn brightly and quickly. The conversation did not overtly include the many other vital disciplines required to execute appropriate control measures, such as medical, fire/rescue, emergency management, law enforcement, military, and private sector partners.

Due to its rare implementation, political sensitivity, and lack of applicable modern case law, it becomes even more important to resolve authority and responsibility questions long before the next controversial discussion to execute a quarantine order. Unfortunately, the nation’s recent experience with quarantine enforcement left more questions than answers. It is too important and difficult to let the topic slip away into the shadows again because it is such a challenge. Ignoring it does not make it any easier or beneficial to society.

It is important to truly translate the lessons learned from Ebola into tangible planning and preparedness achievements. This is yet one more opportunity to plan before the arrival of another public health threat that has a more serious impact than the current Ebola virus strain did in the United States in 2014.

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*The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author in his individual capacity, and do not necessarily represent the views of his agency, department, or the U.S. government.*

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# Emergency Operations Center Activation & The Active Shooter Scenario

*By Dave Points*



The rise in frequency of active shooter incidents has led agencies outside of law enforcement to develop plans and strategies on how to respond to these events. Emergency managers can facilitate active shooter planning in two key ways: (a) by activating the jurisdiction's emergency operations center (EOC); and (b) by assisting law enforcement in the mitigation and preparedness phases to manage such threats.

Historically, law enforcement agencies have faced hostage situations with regard to this type of incident. Responding officers would form inner and outer perimeters to isolate the incident, request a tactical team and hostage negotiators, and utilize “time, talk, and tactics,” which is a phrase used in the law enforcement community to describe a strategy for hostage situations. If the parties could not reach a resolution through negotiations, the tactical unit was on hand to resolve the situation.

The Columbine High School active shooter incident that occurred in Colorado on 20 April 1999 was a turning point for law enforcement response tactics. During that incident, the offenders issued no demands and, instead, actively killed victims. After the Columbine shooting, law enforcement officers began immediately entering active shooter situations in small teams. In order to stop the threat, they bypass fleeing survivors and wounded victims as they move toward the active shooter's location.

## ***The Role of EOCs for Any Incident***

With the need for rapid response, one resource that law enforcement planners may overlook is the activation of the EOC. Although the incident itself may last less than an hour, the overall event can have a much longer duration and include the coordination of multiple agencies and systems.

This type of situation could quickly become a national media event. Although the activation of the EOC is not necessary to have a Joint Information Center (JIC), the public information officer (PIO) will find it much easier to establish a JIC with the resources that the EOC can offer. Media coverage may extend for days after the incident has ended, which justifies the establishment of a JIC.

The EOC also can serve several important functions with regard to senior staff and elected officials. First, the EOC provides a single location where these staff members and officials can gather, receive information about the incident, and determine how to disseminate the information to the public. Second, it provides them with a location where they can make strategic decisions for the recovery phase. Perhaps most important, the EOC moves these people away from the incident scene.

Emergency support functions of the EOC can help coordinate where to transport wounded victims, thus ensuring that no single trauma center is not overwhelmed. It also can aid in the activation of additional resources if needed. For example, active shooter incidents may result in mass casualties and/or fatalities, where the bodies become part of the criminal investigation. The EOC can assist in the activation of a temporary morgue using an established mass fatality strategy to ensure that the decedent remains are handled in a respectful manner, and secured according to evidentiary requirements.



During the recovery phase, while witnesses are being interviewed, relatives and friends of persons involved in the incident may arrive and need a place to wait for information about the location and condition of survivors as well as decedents. Through their emergency operations plans, EOCs have access to community resources to assist with reunification locations and coordination of counselors and mental health professionals. Two resources that the incident command's logistics chief can call for support are the Red Cross and Salvation Army, which can provide food and drink for first responders at the crime scene.

### ***Preincident Planning***

Beyond the EOC, emergency managers can assist during the mitigation stage of an active shooter incident by providing research material to planners who may be involved in the building of schools, offices, and businesses. This material can provide insights into strengthening the security of these structures. Sometimes emergency managers can even help secure grant funding to pay for all or part of the suggested building modifications.

The preparedness phase is another area where emergency managers can assist with planning for active shooter incidents. First, the emergency manager can help design exercises: (a) discussion-based exercises such as tabletop exercises that involve law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, hospitals, and the EOC; or operations-based exercises such as drills and full-scale exercises. Second, emergency managers can assist local agencies in securing grant funding to acquire equipment that could be useful in active shooter cases.

Activation of EOCs and the roles that emergency managers play can assist large law enforcement agencies, but their effect is multiplied for law enforcement agencies in smaller jurisdictions where resources may be less plentiful. By activating the EOC for an active shooter incident, the responding law enforcement agency can access resources that support many functions in all phases of planning, response, and recovery.

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*Dave Points is a retired lieutenant with the Omaha Police Department, where he has won awards for the development of tactical teams and contingency planning. He has served as the homeland security training specialist with the Tri-County Urban Area Security Initiative in Nebraska. He serves as a part time emergency manager for the Nebraska Humane Society. He is currently an assistant professor and the director of the Emergency Management Program at Bellevue University.*



# FEMA's New Planning Doctrine

By Jordan Nelms



In the first half of 2014, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) published two guidance documents that further developed the concept of integrated planning for emergency management operations at the national and regional levels. With the release of the *FEMA Operational Planning Keystone* and the *FEMA Operations Planning Manual*, FEMA continues to lead the development of the National Preparedness System planning core capability for response, recovery, and mitigation.

The *Keystone* and *Manual* follow in the footsteps of decades of planning guidance. At the state, local, tribal, and territorial levels, emergency management agencies have become accustomed to using the *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide* (CPG) series of publications as primary references. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has revised its national planning standards every couple years with the *National Planning and Execution System*, *Integrated Planning System*, *Federal Plan Development Process*, and *FEMA Regional Planning Guide*, none of which are publicly available. The *Keystone* and *Manual* build on the lessons learned from this anthology to provide planners with the most current information needed to create consistent interoperable emergency management plans with partners from across the whole community.

## ***Setting the Stage for Integrated Planning & Building a Coherent System***

The *Keystone* is a new document that sits at the top of FEMA's pyramid of guidance and accompanies the *FEMA Incident Management and Support Keystone* as the highest-level doctrine to assist the federal agencies coordinate emergency



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operations. The *Keystone* outlines a structured national planning hierarchy, types of plans, a standardized planning process, and five key tenets of planning that articulate value proposition of the planning core capability. At a light 18 pages, the *Keystone* lays a conceptual foundation for emergency managers who may be supporting the development of deliberate (potential incident) or crisis action (imminent or ongoing incident) plans.

The *Manual* is intended to be a definitive resource for the development of federal emergency management plans. At its core, the process remains largely unchanged from previous planning guidance – the civilian application of defense joint operations planning. Where the *Manual* branches off from its predecessors is a more detailed approach to implementing national preparedness policy directed by Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8).

***The FEMA Operational Planning Keystone and FEMA Operational Planning Manual are fusing the newest concepts of national preparedness with the legacy planning guidance found in the Comprehensive Preparedness Guide series.***

With the release of the *National Planning Frameworks*, the universe of plans and planning guidance has evolved rapidly. The *Manual* provides detail on the development of a system of nested national plans that have lacked cohesion in the last decade.

When plans to mitigate, respond, and recover are developed through a standard process and consistent format, operations across the three mission areas – typically under the same roof of a Joint Field Office – become seamless.

In addition, the *Manual* also addresses the functional relationship between deliberate and crisis action (previously called incident-level) plans. Deliberate plans are typically developed as all-hazards plans with hazard or incident-specific annexes. Crisis action plans are most commonly associated with the [Incident Command System's "Planning P"](#) and the incident action plan. The *Manual* includes a chapter that details how to leverage the time spent during nonemergency situations to develop crisis action plans when time is a limited resource.

### ***Integrating Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment***

Since 2012, all state and many local emergency management agencies have become intimately familiar with the annual Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), as mandated by the DHS Homeland Security Grant Program and articulated in [CPG 201](#). The *Manual* applies the process outlined in CPG 201 to plan development by integrating CPG 201's four-step process into information analysis and course of action development. Capabilities-based planning is not a new concept but, at just the third iteration of THIRA, emergency managers are realizing its value in innovative ways. By examining the impacts and outcomes



of a potential or actual threat or hazard on the national core capabilities, emergency managers can estimate the resources needed to achieve success in life safety, incident stabilization, and protection of property and environment.

The successful application of capabilities-based planning using this approach can be seen in the development of Federal Interagency Operations Plans (FIOPs), National Special Security Events (NSSEs) in the National Capital Region, and the more recent FEMA catastrophic plans. State and local emergency planners also have integrated THIRA into their operational planning, specifically jurisdictions in the National Capital Region such as the [District of Columbia](#) and the [State of Maryland](#).

As demand steadily rises for training on this analytical competency, there are currently few opportunities available to planners. FEMA delivers annual technical assistance seminars in each of their ten regions to ensure states and major urban areas included in the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) are able to complete the THIRA report, but attendance is by invitation only. THIRA also has made its way into the [DHS National Planners Course](#); however, deliveries are limited to major hubs of federal activity such as Washington, D.C., and Atlanta, Georgia.

### ***Valuable Resources for National Preparedness***

With the publishing of the *FEMA Operational Planning Keystone* and *FEMA Operational Planning Manual*, FEMA is fusing the newest concepts of national preparedness with the legacy planning guidance found in the CPG series. Although a web search for the *FEMA Operational Planning Keystone* or *FEMA Operational Planning Manual* does not yield a downloadable PDF, the documents are shared with state, local, tribal, and territorial emergency managers supporting regional and national planning. The concepts these documents contain are applicable to all emergency managers looking to adopt the National Preparedness System.

More information on national preparedness can be found in FEMA's [National Preparedness Resource Library](#).

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*Jordan Nelms is the planning section chief on FEMA's Region II Incident Management Assistance Team based in New York City. Prior to joining FEMA, Jordan served as the planning branch manager at the Maryland Emergency Management Agency, and previously worked as a contractor with Witt Associates supporting homeland security and emergency management programs at all levels of government and the private sector. He received a BA in political science/security studies from East Carolina University and pursued graduate studies at Johns Hopkins University, the University of South Florida, and University of St. Andrews in Scotland.*

# Evolving Role of Healthcare Coalitions

*By Jessica Brown*



Nothing has more boldly underscored the need for healthcare providers and their public health and emergency management partners to work together to prepare their communities for health emergencies than the Ebola crisis. More than 740 of these stakeholders gathered in Denver, Colorado, for the National Healthcare Coalition Preparedness Conference on 10-12 December 2014.

## ***A National Strategy for Regional Readiness***

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) began promoting healthcare coalitions as part of a national strategy for regional healthcare readiness following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Currently, there are nearly 500 coalitions nationwide focused on jointly preparing for emergencies that require regional health system response.

This type of cooperation is essential to prepare communities for the increasingly complex disasters they face as a result of growing interaction between the natural and built environments and public participation facilitated by the 24-hour news cycle and social media, according to keynote speaker Admiral Thad Allen (Ret.), the 23rd U.S. Coast Guard commandant. Allen served as the principal federal official for the government response to Hurricane Katrina and the national incident commander for the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

To illustrate, Allen compared the strategies of the Ebola response to the management of the Deepwater Horizon spill. In both cases, the objectives involved stopping the threat at its source and preventing it from reaching and spreading on U.S. soil. Success requires coordination across public and private boundaries and multiple layers of government. "The reason what you're doing is so important is you've already got it," Allen told the conference attendees. "You know what has to be done to address complexity. Be tenacious and keep at it."

This was the third annual conference hosted by the National Healthcare Coalition Resource Center (NHCRC), a collaboration formed in 2012 by the Northern Virginia Hospital Alliance, the Indianapolis-based MESH Coalition, and the Northwest Healthcare Response Network in the greater Seattle, Washington, area.

## ***Bringing Together Stakeholders***

"The NHCRC was started in 2012 as an avenue for coalitions to work together to address some of the inherent challenges with convening stakeholders who are used to operating in competitive environments," said Onora Lien, executive director of the Northwest Healthcare Response Network. "It's been remarkable to see the program double in attendance since our first event. It is obviously meeting a need."

Speakers from across the nation conducted sessions in Denver on topics ranging from business continuity planning to pediatric surge capacity to the role of executives in disaster recovery. Many speakers drew on personal experiences with disasters to highlight the benefits of collaboration. Jeffrey Bokser, vice president for safety, security, and emergency services at NewYork-Presbyterian, reflected on his role as incident commander for the hospital's response to Hurricane Sandy in 2012. "As healthcare workers, it's in our DNA to rise to the events of the day. But it's difficult when the day turns into weeks or months," Bokser said.

Given this reality, many coalitions are built on the premise of sharing information and resources and conducting joint planning, training, and exercises across healthcare facilities. ASPR provides general guidance for coalition structure, but each community, region, or state has flexibility to build a coalition that suits its circumstances.

*"One of the benefits of coalitions has been to make people understand that we're part of a healthcare ecosystem," said James Robinson, assistant chief of operations for Denver Health Emergency Medical Services in Colorado.*

"Each of the coalitions at this conference represents a unique community with a unique story of healthcare organizations and partners coming together to support one another," said Sue Snider, executive director of the Northern Virginia Hospital Alliance.

### ***Coalitions in Various States***

In Boston, Massachusetts, one impetus for bringing coalition partners together was a water-main break in 2010 that forced 2.5 million people under a boil-water order for two days. The relationships built after local healthcare organizations realized the benefits of working together served an important role the day of the Boston Marathon bombings in April 2013, when vascular and amputation kits were in short supply at some facilities and coalition mechanisms helped distribute them.

In New Mexico, where a population of only 2 million is spread across the fifth geographically largest U.S. state and many people drive more than 50 miles to access healthcare, the state's Department of Health has spent four years developing a regional coalition structure that fits the state's unique geographic and social context. Contractors visited each hospital in the state, encouraging them to sign memoranda of understanding to assist one another in case of emergencies like winter weather events that can disrupt supply chains.

Alfred Perez of Memorial Medical Center in Las Cruces, New Mexico, who serves as the executive chair of the state's Region II Healthcare Coalition, said that although some people may have been reluctant to participate at first, the regional coalition structure has shown its value. "There's that corporate wall that exists between hospitals," Perez said. "What the coalition has done for us is break that down so we can work together."



For many coalitions, financial sustainability is among the most daunting challenges. ASPR's Hospital Preparedness Program is the primary source of funding for many coalition activities, including 84 percent of healthcare exercises, according to a recent survey. However, this funding is decreasing, with a 38-percent cut nationally in fiscal year 2014. Still, ASPR reported a 47 percent increase in healthcare coalition members – defined as healthcare facilities and partner organizations engaged in coalition activities – in 2013. Although applauding the growth, ASPR is encouraging coalitions to reach out to more partners, particularly home health agencies, skilled nursing facilities, and emergency medical services (EMS) providers.

James Robinson, assistant chief of operations for Denver Health EMS, has played an active part in his local coalition since planning for the Democratic National Convention held in his city in 2008. Preparing for an event of that scale required broad partnerships across the city's law enforcement, EMS, hospital, and public health agencies to ensure the community was prepared in case of an emergency. "One of the benefits of coalitions has been to make people understand that we're part of a healthcare ecosystem," Robinson said.

### ***Ongoing Opportunities to Collaborate***

In addition to the three hosting coalitions, more than a dozen public health, healthcare, and coalition stakeholders from around the country sit on an advisory board that directs the conference program. "Amid the context of Ebola, extreme weather events, targeted violence, and other threats, meetings like this will only become more important," said Timothy Stephens, chief executive officer of the MESH Coalition. "Our intention is that each year we can give participants the opportunity to collaborate against the most relevant challenges."

The fourth annual conference will be held in San Diego, California, on 2-4 December 2015. Details will be available soon at [www.healthcarecoalitions.org](http://www.healthcarecoalitions.org).

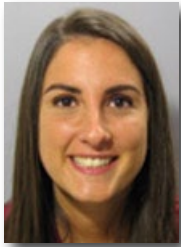
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# Planning: A Continuing Challenge

By Sarah Tidman



Planning is the foundation of emergency management and a critical element of the nation's preparedness. Released in September 2011, the [National Preparedness Goal](#) defines planning as the ability to “conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or community-based approaches to meet defined objectives.” Planning is one of only three core capabilities (operational coordination and public information and warning are the other two) that spans all five emergency management mission areas: prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. Therefore, the success of planning is highly dependent on the success of all [31 core capabilities](#) and is critically important to the overall safety and security of the nation.

## *Identifying Capability Strengths & Weaknesses*

Exercises, particularly national level exercises, provide emergency managers an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of national preparedness doctrine and the mission area capabilities of federal, state, territorial, local, and tribal responders. As such, exercises are good mechanisms to reveal capability strengths and shortfalls. Findings from previous national level exercises – since the inception of the Top Officials (TOPOFF) program in May 2000 to today – reveal planning as a continuing challenge across the emergency management enterprise.

To this day, the challenges to successful planning often involve issues with currently existing plans and ongoing preparedness activities, including: (a) a lack of specificity in existing plans; (b) a lack of established procedures/formal process(es) in existing plans; (c) a lack of uniformity in and across existing plans; (d) lack of necessary plans; and (e) a lack of training on existing plans.

The lack of specificity in existing plans is a challenge that spans a broad variety of diverse disciplines and functional areas within emergency management, including law enforcement, health and emergency medical services, intelligence, and cybersecurity. For example, previous national level exercise findings revealed that, although a plan may outline the possible procedures/pathways for multiple organizations to share situational awareness information (even using confusing diagrams to depict the multiple pathways possible), it does not always

***“[T]he first draft of the National Disaster Recovery Framework, which was the first nationally focused plan designed to outline recovery planning and recovery actions, was not published until January 2010 – nearly 10 years after the first national level exercise.”***

provide the exact procedures for each individual organization. This lack of specificity often would leave responders unclear on the best and most efficient path forward, and affect the overall timeliness of response and recovery operations. Lack of specificity further advances a misperception that emergency planning and management is not a fully developed profession with specific requirements, processes, technologies, accreditations, certifications, degrees, and standards.

The lack of established procedures/formal processes in existing plans continues to be an area for improvement in national level exercises today. Specifically, findings from previous national level exercises point to the overall absence of information regarding coordinating relationships in plans as a hindrance to responders' abilities to adequately perform their duties, including the development of a collaborative presentation of useful information to decision makers, and to effectively respond to and make response decisions based on an exercise scenario.

The lack of uniform information (or the inclusion of contradictory information) in plans and/or across plans remains a problem across all levels of government in the emergency management enterprise. For example, several findings from previous exercises showed that the lack of uniform guidelines and established procedures for validating information to build shared situational awareness and a common operating picture hampered responders' abilities to maintain a shared picture of response and recovery operations.



The plans that are necessary for the safety and security of the nation continue to remain absent in many facets of emergency management. For many years, plans completely lacked a comprehensive approach to recovery operations. In fact, the first draft of the [\*National Disaster Recovery Framework\*](#), which was the first nationally focused plan designed to outline recovery planning and recovery actions, was not published until January 2010 – nearly 10 years after the first national level exercise. Additionally, the absence of hazard-specific plans has been problematic to the overall efficacy and effectiveness of response and recovery operations in exercises. A common area for improvement is that plans outlining response and recovery actions to a specific threat or hazard do not exist.



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Insufficient preparedness activities, such as trainings, are another aspect of planning that can negatively affect responder capabilities in exercises. Findings from previous national level exercises often revealed that responders were unfamiliar with plans, and consequently with their roles and responsibilities during response and recovery operations. A byproduct of this issue is not only that responders are unclear about their organization's mission, its purpose, and their requirements, but also that their response/recovery efforts are often redundant. Additionally, the collaboration under the "Whole Community" organizing concept is next to impossible, without the clarity and specificity needed for general or professional implementation. Therefore, insufficient or inadequate training is another barrier to achieving specific or global success in planning.

### ***Finding Success in the Planning Process***

Identifying gaps and challenges through exercises to amend existing preparedness doctrine and activities is a significant step toward strengthening planning capabilities across federal, state, territorial, local, and tribal agencies and organizations. Emergency managers, along with support from their respective leadership, could increase their organizations' preparedness by reviewing the content of currently existing plans and procedures through tabletop, discussion-based, or operations-based exercises on a regular/consistent basis to ensure they are useful, accurate, and applicable to real-world incidents. Upon consensus that all revised or newly developed plans and procedures are sufficient for use in future incidents, emergency managers may further cement the preparedness of their organizations by providing regular trainings on such plans and procedures to all appropriate stakeholders.

As discussed above, the ability to achieve success in planning remains a challenge across the emergency management enterprise. However, it is only through deliberate planning and preparedness activities and the support of leadership that the emergency management community can create a more secure and resilient nation.

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*For Additional Information:*

*CRS Report for Congress: Homeland Emergency Preparedness and the National Exercise Program: Background, Policy Implications, and Issues for Congress (10 November 2008).*

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# Integrating Law Enforcement & Emergency Management

*By Lewis Eakins*



Federal, state, and local law enforcement, with a focus on combating criminal activity, is well aligned with homeland security initiatives. The attacks of 9/11 exposed the need for local law enforcement to increase its role in anti-terrorism activities. In the United States, there are [18,000](#) local police agencies and, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, [780,000](#) police officers and detectives in 2012, compared to [13,260](#) Federal Bureau of Investigation agents. Hence, it was a natural progression to engage local law enforcement in the war on terrorism. However, Jeff Rojek and Michael R. Smith from the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at University of South Carolina [reported in 2007](#) that empirical and practitioner literature has been deficient in describing the role of law enforcement in emergency management as relates to disaster response and agency experiences.

In the United States, local communities are more likely to be affected by a natural or manmade disaster than an act of terrorism. When a disaster occurs, an inappropriate response by law enforcement can place the officers and the community in greater danger such as in the case of a hazardous materials discharge. Patrol officers often are the first response personnel at the scene of any natural or manmade disaster and must have the requisite skills to make an assessment, perform rescue operations, maintain perimeter integrity, and ensure scene containment until additional support arrives. Therefore, it is imperative that local law enforcement agencies and their personnel become an integral part of emergency management within the communities they serve.

## ***A Paradigm Shift***

Historically, law enforcement has leaned toward reactionary and incident-based responses. Officers generally waited to be dispatched to calls for service; and there was minimal community engagement beyond responding to calls. This mode of operation has slowly changed over time with the increased acceptance of community-oriented policing (COPS) by law enforcement administrators. Jose Docobo, chief deputy with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, found in his [2005 research](#) that COPS involves decentralized problem solving, community engagement, fixed geographic and general responsibilities, and organization decentralization. These tenets can be adopted to better integrate law enforcement and emergency management.

During a critical incident, decentralized decision-making is crucial for a successful response and resolution. There may not be time to seek confirmation or direction through the chain-of-command, or all channels of communication may be disabled. For example, during Hurricane Katrina in 2005, many police officers became isolated with no means of communication.



Community engagement facilitates a “whole community” approach to emergency management, with citizens playing many roles during and after a disaster. In addition, if relationships have been established, community partners that are in tune to the needs of their communities can provide valuable information to law enforcement during a disaster. Police officers assigned to fixed geographical areas also are more likely to build an awareness of community members with special medical, mobility, and even psychological needs. By having such relationships with community members, law enforcement officers are able to maximize their efforts and assist persons with these special needs.

### ***Training & Education: Precursor to Planning***

Rudimentary law enforcement training takes place through two main venues – basic law enforcement academies and academic programs. However, there are problems with both of these training venues in terms of providing an orientation into emergency management. Academic degree programs in criminal justice may follow the guidelines of The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. This organization’s certification standards for College/University Criminal Justice/Criminology Baccalaureate Degree Program criteria identifies seven core content areas inclusive of administration of justice, corrections, criminological theory, law adjudication, law enforcement, research, and analytic methods.

None of these content areas mentions emergency management or homeland security and their parallel relationship to law enforcement. The guideline encourages curriculum developers to add elective courses to these academic programs in the areas of diversity and ethics. However, there is no recommendation for infusing emergency management and homeland security content into these programs, either through the offering of electives or directly into the core content areas.

Allison T. Chappell, associate professor in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice at Old Dominion University, stated in a [2008 research paper](#) that 90 percent of basic law enforcement academy training is spent on task-oriented training such as defensive tactics, pursuit driving, firearm qualifications, and mechanics of arrest. She further stated that only three percent of training is focused on cognitive and decision-making scenarios, reasoning, and applications. Task-driven methods have limited application to emergency management due to the mechanical nature entailed in following “procedures.” Conversely, training in scenario decision-making places police officers in the mindset of “what if?” reasoning, which promotes critical thinking. Critical thinking encourages problem solving through innovation. Innovation builds resilience capacity – the ability to bounce back. In the end, the application of scenario-based decision making, sound reasoning, and critical thinking provides police officers with the competencies to more effectively respond to disasters.

Due to the permanent and diverse deployment of law enforcement, they are a primary agency to first arrive at the scene of an unexpected disaster, according to Rojek and Smith. Basic academy training must be revamped to give police officers the skill sets they need to plan for, respond to, and recover from disasters along with their traditional crime-fighting skills. Criminal justice academic programs, although required to be general in nature to cover all aspects of the criminal justice system, should be more inclusive of emergency management courses for awareness purposes. If a disaster results from an act of terrorism,

almost all aspects of the criminal justice may come into play. Law enforcement, adjudication, corrections, and probation/parole will all be involved.

### ***Planning & Coordinating***

Major disasters often involve the activation of several law enforcement jurisdictions, which can create coordination issues. This underscores the importance of having emergency operation plans and statewide mutual-aid agreements in place before a disaster strikes. It is not enough to rely on the emergency operation plan that has been developed by the local emergency management agency with a reference to law enforcement in [Emergency Support Function #13 – Public Safety and Security](#). Each law enforcement agency should have an emergency operations plan specific to its department, its operations, and its jurisdiction, with agencies testing these plans through exercises and updating them accordingly.

In addition to an emergency operations plan, departments should have in place a continuity of operations plan. A situation may arise where a continuity of operations plan becomes more vital than an emergency operations plan at the onset of a disaster. For instance, it would be very difficult for a department to implement the emergency operation plan if its headquarters is underwater, with records destroyed, communication nonexistent, and vehicles washed away. The first order of business will be determining an alternative location (continuity facility) for a base of operation. It may be necessary to cease operations and turn over law enforcement authority to another law enforcement agency such as the Sheriff’s Department or state police (devolution). If operations are able to continue or quickly resume, the time will come to bring things back to a state of normalcy (reconstitution) or the “new norm.”



Law enforcement is already integrated into emergency management because, whether an incident involves a hazardous material chemical spill, downed power lines and trees from a tornado, or an act of terrorism, law enforcement often arrives at an incident scene before other response personnel. To be effectively integrated, law enforcement has to be properly trained, equipped, and with plans in place to build capacity for effective disaster response. Using the COPS mindset will help ensure involvement from the whole community during the phases of disaster planning and response.

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# Cybersecurity as an Emergency Management Function

By Ann Lesperance & Steve Stein



All emergencies may be local, but it is clear that all responses involve far more than local agencies. Determining which organizations should be involved and the roles they will play has proven challenging at all levels of government for nontraditional catastrophic emergencies such as chemical or biological attacks. When it comes to a cyberattack, emergency managers often struggle to understand the nature of cyberthreats, cybersecurity's place in emergency response, and the decision-making process for a true all-hazards approach that includes cybersecurity.

## *The Challenge of Cyberthreats*

In many ways, a cyberattack is similar to a biological threat like anthrax. That is, it may take some time to realize an attack has indeed occurred, and then the challenge is to understand the geographic scope and level of damage. Then too, for many emergency managers, responding to cyberthreats requires a new lexicon and an understanding of concepts not previously integrated into emergency management. For example, restoring some types of infrastructure may require bulldozers and heavy machinery to remove debris in addition to reconstruction of physical buildings. Restoring cyber infrastructure could require replacement information technology equipment, a surge of technical expertise, changes in policies, more robust encryption of information sources, and repopulation of extensive databases, some of which is privately owned.

Defending and restoring cyber infrastructure also requires coordinating with a different set of organizations than those typically involved in emergency decision-making. Responding effectively to most hazards requires regional coordination and a

*"In many ways, a cyberattack is similar to a biological threat like anthrax. That is, it may take some time to realize an attack has indeed occurred, and then the challenge is to understand the geographic scope and level of damage."*

multijurisdictional decision-making process with financial authority to allocate resources. Multiagency coordination allows jurisdictions to coordinate across a broad range of functional areas, such as fire, law enforcement, public works, and public health. However, much of the infrastructure needed to maintain cyber connectivity

is privately owned, and many of these private sector owners are not clearly identified as being part of the restoration effort following a catastrophic incident.



### ***Building Cyber Response Into the National Incident Management System***

The National Incident Management System and its implementation at federal, state, and local levels include a well-organized and tested notification process. As it becomes clear to an emergency response agency that a major emergency is happening, that agency calls on its local emergency operations center (EOC), perhaps with limited staffing at first, but growing as agencies understand the true nature and depth of the emergency. The local EOC in turn may notify adjacent EOCs and the county and state EOC, as needed, for support.

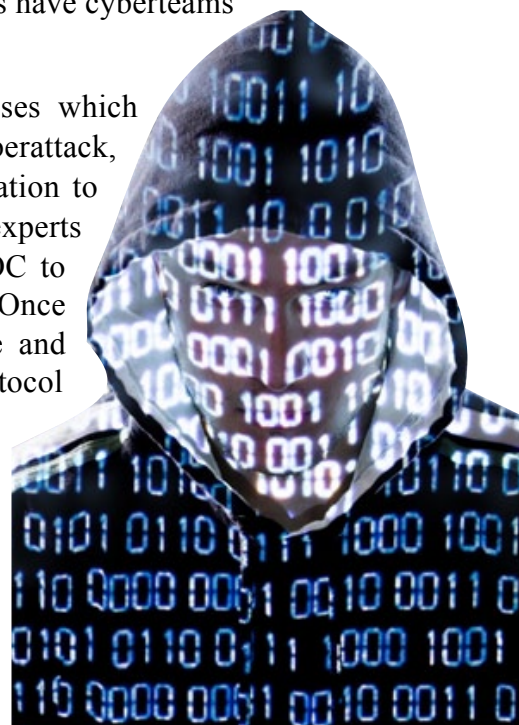
Emergency managers need to think carefully about how to build the response to a cybersecurity emergency into this system. Those creating a cybersecurity-related attack may have several intents such as a denial of service, theft of private or proprietary information, or disruption of critical infrastructure such as the financial system or the electrical grid. Depending on the intent and the level of success, an attack could lead to a range of consequences including power outages, transportation system disruptions, and banking system failures. Even the systems inside the EOC may be impacted.

If the attack first makes itself apparent within an infrastructure provider like a phone or financial services company, the company will seek to mitigate damages to its systems and minimize corporate liability for lost data. Calling an emergency management agency may be low on the list of priorities, identifying which agency even more problematic. Theft of data may not require a public safety response, but a denial of service attack could affect life services infrastructure like power. Such an attack could become a major issue, particularly during a prolonged outage. If the power company does not know the nature of the attack, representatives may call emergency services, and an EOC may be stood up. Unfortunately, lack of information on causality could delay the process of response unless EOCs have cyberteams available to provide advice and support.

What is needed is a protocol that addresses which agency to call in the event of a suspected cyberattack, when such calls should be made, what information to provide, and how to create a liaison between experts in cybersecurity and other members of the EOC to provide situational awareness and advice. Once developed by representatives from the private and public sector infrastructure providers, this protocol needs to be clearly communicated to all and tested through exercises.

### ***Taking a True All-Hazards Approach, Including Cyber***

Responding to a cybersecurity emergency requires a true all-hazards approach with clear lines for decision making. Various regions



across the nation have tried both top-down and bottom-up approaches for responding to all-hazards. For example, the [Transportation Recovery Annex](#) to the Puget Sound Catastrophic Disaster Coordination Plan offers three options to facilitate coordination and refine criteria for setting regional priorities concerning transportation during a wide-scale emergency:

1. Bottom-up approach, in which local jurisdictions organize working groups to address regional issues;
2. Utilization of existing organizations and institutions such as the Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations to resolve issues; and
3. Top-down approach, in which the State establishes task forces or working groups to address regional issues as part of the governor's long-term recovery strategy.

These approaches are not mutually exclusive and could be used in combination, with emergency response leadership tailoring the response to a particular situation. A bottom-up approach may be more effective for cybersecurity if local resources include expertise in that area. As with any multiagency coordination planning effort, the key will be to bring the right people to the table to plan and test strategies before an actual event. With cybersecurity, an added requirement will be more-frequent updates to any plan given the nature of the rapidly evolving threats.

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# Long-Term Community Recovery Planning Guidance

By Kay C. Goss



Preparedness planning is a large part of the foundation of emergency management. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Preparedness Report summarizes the building, sustaining, and delivering of the 31 core capabilities outlined in the National Preparedness Goal across all five mission areas identified in Presidential Policy Directive 8 ([PPD-8](#)): prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. In this format, FEMA provides a welcome opportunity to reflect on the progress that whole-community partners – including all levels of government, private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, communities, and individuals – have made in strengthening U.S. preparedness for all hazards, all risks, all stakeholders, on an interagency, interdisciplinary, and intergovernmental basis.

## *Interagency Operational Plans & Tools*

On 30 July 2014, FEMA released three of five [Federal Interagency Operational Plans](#), which describe how the federal government aligns resources and delivers core capabilities to reach the shared overall National Preparedness Goal, for the mitigation, response, and recovery preparedness mission areas for all federal departments and agencies.

FEMA released the [Resource Typing Library Tool](#) and the [Incident Resource Inventory System 5.0](#). Both tools are no cost, user friendly, and designed to assist communities in inventorying resources, a key part of community planning. As a first step in community recovery planning, it is crucial to discover the greatest risks and hazards. These federal frameworks supplement the updated [Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 201](#) and the [Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment](#) tool. The second edition of the Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 201 provides communities additional guidance for conducting a Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment. Both identify capability targets and resource requirements necessary to address anticipated and unanticipated risks.

*“Building on this abundance of overall recovery guidance, the long-term community recovery process has been delineated in an empowering approach.”*

The five [national planning frameworks](#) outline how the whole community can work together to achieve national preparedness, through prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery preparedness [mission areas](#). In an effort to



provide a flexible structure to enable disaster recovery managers to operate in a unified and collaborative manner, the recovery framework focuses on how best to restore, redevelop, and revitalize the health, social, economic, natural, and environmental fabric of the community and build a more resilient nation.

### ***National Framework & Support Functions***

Called the National Disaster Recovery Framework, it is consistent with the vision set forth in PPD-8, National Preparedness, directing FEMA to work with interagency partners to publish a recovery framework. For the first time in the United States, the National Disaster Recovery Framework defined:

- Core recovery *principles*;
- *Roles and responsibilities* of recovery coordinators and other stakeholders;
- A *coordinating structure* that facilitates communication and collaboration among all stakeholders, guidance for pre- and post-disaster recovery *planning*; and
- The overall *process* by which communities can capitalize on opportunities to rebuild stronger, smarter, and safer.



The National Disaster Recovery Framework introduced six new [recovery support functions](#), modeled along the traditional lines of the emergency support functions do for the response framework, providing a structure to facilitate problem solving, improve access to resources, and foster coordination among state and federal agencies, nongovernmental partners, and other stakeholders. Each recovery support function has coordinating and primary federal agencies and supporting organizations that operate together with local, state, and tribal government officials, nongovernmental organizations, and private sector partners.

The National Disaster Recovery Framework presents three positions that provide focal points for incorporating recovery considerations into the decision-making process and monitoring the need for adjustments in assistance where necessary and feasible throughout the recovery process. These positions are the federal disaster recovery coordinator, state or tribal disaster recovery coordinators, and local disaster recovery managers.

## ***Toolboxes & Social Media***

Building on this abundance of overall recovery guidance, the long-term community recovery process has been delineated in an empowering approach. FEMA has provided four key long-term, community recovery planning [toolbox elements](#):

- Communications Mapping Tool;
- Decision-Making Tool;
- Project Development Guide; and
- Resource Guide.

Many states have successfully used these toolboxes and FEMA Region 7, as an example, has published the resource guides their states – Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri – have developed to build their long-term community planning. All are available on the [FEMA website](#). A local government best practice is Greensburg, Kansas. For a copy of this model long-term community recovery plan, implemented after a devastating tornado practically destroyed its city, go to the [City of Greensburg's website](#).

Social media can play an important communications tool in the process. Communities also have used Facebook to disseminate their recovery messages. For example, [Hudson County's Long-Term Recovery Committee](#) page, includes plans, comments, public input, ongoing information, but is still working on its county recovery planning for Hurricane Sandy more than two years after the storm.

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