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- Emergency Management
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BEST PRACTICE

Public-Private Partnerships for Emergency Preparedness: Overview

PURPOSE

Presents an overview of Best Practices in the area of public-private partnerships for emergency preparedness.

SUMMARY

State and local public safety agencies must establish partnerships with private sector entities on emergency prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts to protect the nation's workforce, economy, and critical infrastructure. Public-private partnerships help establish relationships prior to incidents, when familiarity with each other's capabilities and response procedures is paramount. Such partnerships enable the public and private sectors to develop all-hazards plans to pool resources and information, coordinate response and recovery efforts, and share educational and training opportunities.

DESCRIPTION

The private sector is essential to the well-being of communities and plays an important role in emergency prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts. According to the 9/11 Commission Report (*LLIS.gov* ID# [9909](#)), "private-sector preparedness is not a luxury; it is a cost of doing business in the post-9/11 world. It is ignored at a tremendous potential cost in lives, money, and national security." The private sector employs most of the nation's workforce, owns 85% of critical infrastructure, and produces goods and services necessary for the day-to-day functioning of society. Many industries, especially those utilizing or producing hazardous materials, also face pressure from local communities or are legally obligated to enact safety and preparedness measures requiring coordination with the public sector.

Decisions and actions taken by the public and private sectors during and after emergencies greatly impact both sectors' response and recovery efforts. The private sector's ability to produce essential goods and services such as power, water, pharmaceuticals, transportation, or food will affect public sector operations and the community at large. Likewise, public sector decisions can affect the private sector's ability to protect and retain the workforce, stimulate and meet demand for goods and services, and mitigate damage to key assets.

In recognition of these cross-sector

Public-Private Interdependence

Private sector energy providers' role in re-establishing power during the response to the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing was essential to continued response operations. For more information, see the *Lessons Learned Information Sharing* Lesson Learned: Large-Scale Building Collapse: Supplying Temporary Electrical Power for Nighttime Operations (*LLIS.gov* ID# [12811](#).)

interdependencies, many public and private sector groups establish public-private partnerships to enable communities to better coordinate emergency preparedness, prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts. Specifically public-private partnerships can develop methods to share risk, vulnerability, and threat information, produce joint plans, and coordinate response and recovery operations.

Despite the need for cooperation, many communities have failed to coordinate emergency planning efforts because the public and private sectors often perceive partnerships as costly or time-consuming. In addition, public and private sector groups often lack the necessary relationships of mutual trust and understanding to divulge sensitive information, dedicate resources, and commit time and energy to achieving common preparedness goals. The public and private sectors must overcome these barriers and establish partnerships to coordinate all-hazards emergency preparedness efforts. These Best Practices outline methods to develop and conduct successful public-private partnerships for all-hazards emergency preparedness.

About This Series of Best Practices

This series of Best Practices provides general information and guidelines for emergency responders and homeland security officials to develop partnerships for emergency preparedness between public and private sector entities in states and local communities. To reflect the range of partnerships possible, the series is organized around several emergency preparedness functions commonly performed by public-private partnerships.

Exemplary Initiatives

These Best Practices are based on successful partnerships from across the nation that demonstrate techniques and initiatives that merit replication. The following public-private partnerships informed this series of documents:

- Business Network Corporate Emergency Access System: <http://ceas.com/ceas.psp>
- Business Executives for National Security: Business Force: <http://www.bens.org/>
 - New Jersey Business Force: <http://www.njbusinessforce.org/>
- ChicagoFIRST Coalition for Homeland Security: <http://www.chicagofirst.org/>
- Calvert County, Maryland Sheriff's Office (<http://www.co.cal.md.us/residents/safety/law/sheriff/default.asp>) Law Enforcement Coordination Meetings
- Dallas Alert/Dallas, Texas's Downtown Emergency Response Team: <http://dallasalert.com/>
- Delaware County, Pennsylvania Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC): <http://www.lepc.org/>
- FBI, Dallas Division, Emergency Response Network: <http://www.fbiern.org/>
- The Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Information Network – Critical Infrastructure (HSIN-CI): <http://www.swern.gov>
- Kansas City's Partnership for Emergency Planning: <http://www.pepkc.org/>
- King County, Washington Regional Disaster Plan: <http://www.metrokc.gov/prepare/programs/regionalplan.aspx>
- Michigan State University's Critical Incident Protocol: Community Facilitation Program (CIP/CFP): <http://cip.msu.edu/>

- New York City's Public-Private Emergency Planning Initiative: <http://www.ci.nyc.ny.us/html/oem/html/programs/pepi.html>
- Pacific Northwest Economic Region: <http://www.pnwer.org/>
- Pennsylvania Ready Campus: <http://www.readycampus.org/>
- Portland, Oregon's RAINS-Net: Connect and Protect: <http://www.rains-net.org/>
- Potomac Conference Preparedness and Recovery Task Force: <http://www.potomacconference.org/preparedness.html>
- Seattle, Washington Project Impact: <http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/projectimpact/pages/businesses/businesses.htm>
- Ventura County, California Private Sector Terrorism Response Group

Background

Federal Support for Public-Private Cooperation

Public-private partnerships have been recognized by several Presidential Directives and national strategies as a necessary element of preparedness:

- Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 7 (*LLIS.gov* ID# [9937](#)), issued by President Bush on December 17, 2003, tasks the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and various federal agencies with coordinating information sharing and other protective measures with the private sector.
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 9 (*LLIS.gov* ID# [9938](#)), also issued by President Bush on January 30, 2004, establishes public-private information sharing as part of a national policy to protect the nation's agriculture and food systems.
- The National Preparedness Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity (National Fire Protection Association 1600) (<http://www.nfpa.org/PDF/nfpa1600.pdf?src=nfpa>), 2004 edition, recommends cross-sector cooperation on a number of issues.
- The National Response Plan (*LLIS.gov* ID# [11904](#)), released December 1, 2004, outlines the roles and responsibilities of the private sector in emergency response, including coordination with public sector responders.
- The National Strategy for Homeland Security (*LLIS.gov* ID# [138](#)), released on July 1, 2002, states that "government at the federal, state, and local level must actively collaborate and partner with the private sector."
- The National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructure and Key Assets (*LLIS.gov* ID# [11888](#)), released in February 2003, states that "local communities play critical roles in... engaging their public and private leadership in the development of coordinated local and regional plans to assure the protection of residents and businesses."
- The National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace (http://www.us-cert.gov/reading_room/cyberspace_strategy.pdf), released February 1, 2003, also identifies public-private partnerships as a key component of cybersecurity.

Local Emergency Planning Committees

The SARA Title III Act (<http://www.dem.dcc.state.nc.us/SERC/SARA-TITLE-III.PDF>) mandates public-private partnerships called Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) (<http://www.epa.gov/ceppo/lepclist.htm>) in communities where hazardous materials are present. Communities with established LEPCs may consider using them as a foundation for a larger public-private initiative.

Public-Private Partnerships at the State and Local Level

Federally sponsored initiatives to develop public-private partnerships often focus on building relationships between federal agencies and industries on the national level. In many communities, however, local public safety agencies and private sector entities do not collaborate effectively on emergency preparedness efforts. Both the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Office of Grants and Training (G&T), DHS have established initiatives to foster the development of public-private partnerships in local communities:

- FEMA's Project Impact (<http://www.osp.state.or.us/oem/related%20web%20sites/fema%20project%20impact%20building%20disaster%20resistant%20communities.htm>) sponsored community-oriented partnerships in cities nationwide.
- SLGCP funds Michigan State University's Critical Incident Protocol: Community Facilitation Program (CIP/CFP) (<http://cip.msu.edu/faq.html>). CIP/CFP facilitates the development of public-private partnerships for emergency preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery plans in communities.

Other programs dedicated to fostering public-private partnerships may be available at the state or local levels or through non-profit associations. In the absence of these programs, communities should dedicate time and resources to developing partnerships.

Definitions and Terminology

These terms are used throughout the Best Practice documents to mean the following:

- **Critical infrastructure.** The National Response Plan defines critical infrastructure as "systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the United States that [their] incapacity or destruction... would have a debilitating impact on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination of those matters." These Best Practices are based in part on public sector partnerships with privately owned critical infrastructure sectors such as:
 - Agriculture and Food
 - Banking and Finance
 - Chemicals and Hazardous Materials
 - Energy
 - Healthcare Facilities
 - Information Technology and Telecommunications
 - Postal and Shipping
 - Transportation
 - Water
- **Essential personnel.** According to the Department of the Treasury's *Improving Business Continuity in the Financial Services Sector: A Model for Starting Regional Coalitions* (<http://www.fsscc.org/reports/ChicagoFIRSTHandbook.pdf>), essential personnel are those who are necessary for the business to maintain guardianship and keep core business functions operable.
- **Private sector.** The National Incident Management System (NIMS) (*LLIS.gov* ID# [7975](#)) defines the private sector as "organizations and entities that are not part of any governmental structure. It includes for-profit and not-for-profit organizations,

formal and informal structures, commerce and industry, and private voluntary organizations (PVO).”

- **Public-Private Partnership.** This term refers to formal and informal partnerships consisting of public and private sector members that conduct ongoing cross-sector coordination on emergency preparedness issues. Public-private partnerships can take many legal forms, including:
 - **Corporation:** Members have limited liability but may not be eligible for grants and/or tax deductions.
 - **Informal organizational structure:** Partners may be held liable and the initiative cannot enter into contracts or receive grants.
 - **Limited Liability Company (LLC):** Members and managers have limited liability and the organization typically has flexible options for structure, voting, and other issues.
 - **Separate non-profit corporation:** Members have limited liability, and may be tax-exempt depending upon applicable federal and state laws.
- **Sensitive information.** “Sensitive information” refers to information restricted by either the public or private sectors for various motives. Sensitive information can include:
 - Emergency response plans;
 - Facility layouts, location of backup sites, or listings of materials present at a facility;
 - Proprietary information relevant to emergency preparedness efforts, such as the location of critical facilities;
 - Private sector risks and vulnerabilities; and
 - Threat intelligence.

BEST PRACTICES OUTLINE

This Best Practice series consists of the following documents:

- Overview
- Developing Partnerships
- Joint Emergency Planning
- Information Sharing
- Emergency Communications
- Resource Management and Sharing
- Training, Education, and Technical Assistance

RESOURCES

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