



NEMA COMMITTEE REPORTS

2022 ANNUAL FORUM

OCTOBER 17 – 20, 2022

STOWE, VERMONT

**NEMA Legal Counsel Committee
October 17, 2022
Meeting Summary**

Roundtable with FEMA OCC

Committee Chairman Will Polk of North Carolina opened with the committee by introducing Kristin Shedd, Associate Chief Counsel of Regulatory Affairs at FEMA, who provided a breakdown of her office and background. She provided seven legislative updates and the legal implications, including:

- The STORM Act which created the authority for FEMA to fund state revolving loan funds to provide low-interest loans to local governments for mitigation projects
- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act which provided \$50 million in funding for the STORM Act and additional funding for BRIF
- Inflation Reduction Act which invests \$300 billion for deficit reduction and \$369 billion in energy security and climate change over the next 10 years.
- The CREW Act provides protections to FEMA reservists similar to that of the National Guard under Title 32; and
- The SPEED Recovery Act which sets the statutory level for the small project threshold at \$1 million.

Shedd then outlined some proposed regulations or rules for the National Flood Insurance Program Homeowner Floodplain Rule, FEMA PA regulation updates, new proposed rules for Federal Flood Risk Standards, and FEMA IA Equity Rulemaking.

Questions from the committee followed Shedd's remarks. The main two discussions were on the states' concerns over the CREW Act affecting their workforce and FEMA's plans for defining "resilience."

Title VI Compliance: Ensuring Diversity & Equity

Polk led a discussion on Title VI compliance. Most of the conversation spawned from a letter that multiple states received from the U.S. Department of Justice in regard to barriers for limited English proficiency (LEP) communities due to lack of proper accommodations – specifically for COVID-19 resources. One of the resources found as a result of remedying these issues was a toolkit provided by the Department of Justice for SLTTs to help develop programs and protocol for LEP communities. Polk also acknowledged that Health and Human Services also developed resources for the states. The committee ended this discussion with some comments on how each department can start to alleviate these challenges for LEP communities by looking back at current processes and procedures.

Other remarks on this agenda topic focused on an action item developed by the committee for NEMA to develop a document around the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and how states are responding to these units in this heightened political environment and to share best practices stories around the country.

Keeping Track of What's New

Anne Vitale, Associate Legal Counsel from the state of Ohio, gave the committee a preview into what is currently in the legal pipeline. Her main comments touched on various legal efforts. One was the SPEED Act final ruling, and why FEMA did not have a comment period – which would have delayed implementation of the new thresholds. Another was FEMA's stance on attorney fee costs for arbitration and whether management costs should be allowed for these expenses. One of the major questions was

if the Stafford Act applies to cyber grants and how FEMA was going to handle the cascading effects of these attacks. The last two remarks were on mitigation efforts on-going in Ohio and a brief breakdown of important legislation moving in Congress – of which the NEMA staff is currently monitoring closely.

Victim Identification & Reunification

The last agenda item was led by Sam Ladich, Senior Deputy Attorney General from Nevada, and Dave Fogerson, Director for Nevada’s Division of Emergency Management. This discussion mainly revolved around the difficulties around Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations and how complex they are when looking to reunify and identify victims in the cases of emergencies. Fogerson shared examples of mandatory information sharing laws for specific incidents (ex. gunshots, sexual assault, etc.) in certain states – and how we can utilize this mandatory sharing legislation for victim identification and reunification purposes.

Committee members shared their efforts to bridge this gap in laws and emphasized the need for patience, with this being a complex issue that will take a long time to resolve.

Closing Remarks

The Committee ended by identifying some future issues for the committee to address. The main issues were working towards solving the issue of incidents that occur on federal lands and impact rural communities, working towards reforming thresholds for low-population communities, and aligning wildfires and droughts with other incidents in the Stafford Act.

**NEMA EMAC Committee Meeting
October 18, 2022
Meeting Summary**

Director Delila Bruno (MT) opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees.

Briefing & Discussion: EMAC Program Assessment

Joyce Flinn (NEMA) reviewed the EMAC Assessment Program available to all EMAC Member States. The self-assessment program reviews the law and guidelines in the EMAC Operations Manual and asks the user questions. At the end of the self-assessment the user will receive an improvement plan from NEMA. Angela Copple will be emailing the link to Directors and EMAC Coordinators to apply for access to the assessment.

Briefing: EMAC Operations and A-Team Training Update

Jake Ganieany (MT) provided an overview of recent EMAC deployments. He also noted a unique snowplow mission between Montana and Wyoming.

Director Bryan Fisher (AK) noted there was a small EMAC deployment in Alaska recently due to the typhoon that recently struck and impacted 1000 miles of coastline. AK's experience is that states always send their "rock stars," i.e., the best that can be sent to respond. AK has had nothing but success with deployments into and out of the state, including the AK deployment to Lee County, FL during Hurricane Irma.

Director Bruno agreed that they have also received the best of the best personnel in deployments.

Director Sima Merick (OH) noted they had sent several resources recently, like IMT's and a PIO and identified some lessons learned:

- Law enforcement personnel deploying through IMTs have had an issue with carrying their sidearms, even though national agreements allow it.
- Direct outreach to A-Team members should be through the proper contacts for the state agencies. If there is a recruitment issue, then reach out to the Directors.
- A recent TERT deployment from OH was a great experience. The team was very excited to deploy, and their work was very appreciated. OH is developing an MRP for the team post deployment to use going forward.

Director Bruno noted that there should be some decompression of those personnel who have deployed.

Director CPT Kevin Sweeney (MI) added that Michigan had received an EMAC deployment from Wisconsin, and they were very appreciative.

Mr. Ganieany noted the online training and the A-Team Training Course and asked states to nominate personnel to take the course so there was a good base of A-Team qualified personnel to draw from for future deployments, including the need for training National Guard personnel as A-Team members.

Briefing & Discussion: Reimbursement Recommendations

Beth Zimmerman has been working for the past year with NEMA and the states to improve the EMAC Reimbursement Phase.

In August 2022, Ms. Zimmerman issued a report with 40 recommendations. Much of the recommendations focus on improving consistency and speed including the following recommendations:

- Eighteen (18) recommendations for NEMA (10 overarching, 8 Training and Website)
- Fifteen (15) recommendations for Member States (2 communications, 8 reimbursement requirements, and 5 training). Recommendations include identifying your EMAC personnel involved in reimbursement and knowing who is responsible for EMAC in your state. Also, providing training and education to Resource Providers.
- Seven (7) recommendations for FEMA. On September 6, FEMA updated policy to use the EMAC reimbursement documentation requirements for FEMA Public Assistance. This is a huge success for states and the EMAC program to improve consistency across all levels of government. FEMA will now accept the EMAC documentation as what is necessary to process those PWs, including the R1 and R2. The next steps focus on implementing the September 6, 2022, Policy, updating PA Program and Policy Guide (PAPPG), and inviting EMAC to PA training sessions and conferences.

Ms. Flinn noted that states must pay out EMAC reimbursements whether they have a federal declaration or not, but the new guidelines were incredibly exciting to simply and streamline EMAC reimbursement for FEMA Public Assistance.

Director Merick asked about the recommendation of developing and deploying a “Reimbursement A-Team.” Ms. Zimmerman explained the need for some states to have a team knowledgeable on EMAC reimbursement to come in and help process reimbursement packages.

Director Fisher noted that the Resource Providers need training to understand what they need to provide and consistency amongst all 55 members would help everyone.

Briefing: National Guard Mission Ready Package Conversion Project

LTC Elizabeth “Betsy” Johnson (National Guard Bureau) briefed on the engagement between National Guard Bureau and NEMA to train personnel on EMAC and the training provided to help state National Guard convert Force Packages into Mission Ready Packages (MRPs) and inventory them in the Mutual Aid Support System or MASS. The training at the National Guard Bureau has been very successful in helping everyone understand that National Guard is a force multiplier but is implemented by the emergency management agency.

The new view-only access for National Guard in MASS has allowed states to see the National Guard capabilities around the country.

There is a need to understand the civilian vs military thinking on reimbursements and timelines for reimbursements.

Hurricane Ian showed the success of deploying National Guard A-Team members to work incidents. The MT National Guard A-Team was a tremendous help to the coordination and timeliness of the EMAC process.

National Guard Bureau has been working closely with Puerto Rico National Guard and Puerto Rico Emergency Management and the development of Mission Ready Packages to deploy to Puerto Rico from Ohio and New York.

Briefing: Mission Ready Package Development Projects

Cris McCombs (Hagerty) briefed on the three (3) Mission Ready Package (MRP) development projects for National Guard, Anthrax, and Energy.

The National Guard MRP development project was kicked off with four (4) pilot states: North Carolina, South Carolina, Indiana, and Tennessee. An additional seven (7) states (AR, IN, LA, SC, KS, NV, MI, VI, KY, CO and RI) joined the training and received technical support following a presentation on the conversion of Force Packages into MRPs at the 2022 All Hazards National Guard Coordination Workshop. A total of 204 MRPs have been entered into MASS, some in draft and some published. Also identified were some barriers in a few states that don't understand the value, or possibly may not appreciate the momentum to convert all force packages. She asked that directors and others help educate on the need to get National Guard packages converted.

Five pilot states (IL, MN, TN, MT, MS) participated in the MRP development project with ASTHO and the CDC to develop public health MRPs focused on an anthrax response. A total of twenty-one (21) MRPs were developed during the project.

Through the Western States Petroleum Collaborative, 11 MRPs have been developed by states and are in the process of being published or are published in MASS.

Over 600 personnel, 31% from EM, have attended Mission Ready Package webinars and over 60 personnel participated in one-on-one follow-ups. It has been an incredible effort to build MRPs across the nation.

This year, the focus will stay on the conversion of Force Packages to MRPs and the development of MRPs with the State Urban Search and Rescue (SUSAR) and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC).

Director Fisher noted that there's been a lot of discussion about the new cyber grant. One of the strategies is to develop a cyber plan. He asked Ms. McCombs what could be done as far as interstate assistance on cyber missions. LTC Johnson noted that each state has capabilities that could be deployed through EMAC and MRPs could be developed. Ms. McCombs said she would take that back to the states engaged in the National Guard projects.

Briefing & Discussion: FEMA NRCC Data Reporting Request

Director Bruno briefed on the request by FEMA to receive a daily report of EMAC activities.

NEMA Diversity & Equity Committee
October 18, 2022
Meeting Summary

Vision for the FEMA Office of Disability Integration and Coordination (ODIC)

Sherman Gillums, Jr., newly appointed Director of the ODIC, FEMA

Director Gillums, Jr. mission for the ODIC is to prioritize the equity and the needs of persons with disabilities before, during, and after disasters. Disaster response reporting is more geared towards the numbers of people as opposed to the experiences of those people, so the shift in culture is needed to ensure that the experience is also a priority. To do this will require more integration and coordination at all levels of government, where the measure of success is in the aversion of inequity and gain the support and trust needed throughout the communities. The FEMA strategic plan emphasizes the operational component of this coordination and look to have milestones crossed within the next fiscal year. To do that, the office looks to have a more regional data analysis approach to help decision makers plan, prepare, respond, and capture the after action needed to move toward progress with their decisions in helping meet the needs of their citizens. This looks to be done with enhancing the stakeholder relationships needed to share the data. And lastly, have a culturally relevant messaging plan for when disasters occur that look to educate and gain trust of the communities served. One urge made by Director Gillums is for states to incorporate the National CLAS (Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services) Standards, into common practice as those standards provide guidance and assistance in support to the response to health disparities. Resource: <https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/OMH/Downloads/CLAS-Toolkit-12-7-16.pdf>

Progress of the States

The committee asked Mark Ghilarducci (CA), John Benson (IA), Dawn Brantley (MA), Kevin Sweeney (MI), Will Polk (UT), and Janna Wilkinson (UT) to showcase programs their respective states are incorporating in their emergency management agencies that brings together inclusion and diversity within their planning and training efforts.

The Governor of California released an executive order to provide the authority to state agencies to help serve diversity and equity for all Californians and to meet metrics to help drive the mission. California has an Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that has a \$30M budget to include 11 positions. The office is looked to amplify engagements with local communities and NGOs to address metrics, build capacity, and gain the recognition during times before, during, and after the disaster. Two specific examples of progress are *Listos California*, an initiative specifically designed to focus on disaster recovery for those underserved communities, that includes guides in 10 different languages. The Office of Access and Functional Needs mission is to enhance the capability in areas of access and functional needs by working with stakeholders, especially with shelter accessibility. California is working to actively change how they respond and mitigate to encourage more resilient communities. Resources: Listos CA: <https://www.listoscalifornia.org/> and AFN: <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/office-of-the-director/policy-administration/access-functional-needs/>

Iowa is midway through a year long effort to evaluate where they are as a state. This process has been effective in engaging in communities the agency has not engaged in before. Thus, a heartening outreach that is leading them on a positive and progressive path that not only improves their planning efforts but also shows the state is going in the right direction. The Iowa legislature provided a \$2M budget toward the diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative. Director Benson candidly gave advice to his colleagues,

“Don’t let ignorance stop you from getting you started.” Resource:

<https://homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/dei/>

Massachusetts looks to data to help guide their efforts. Currently the agency is working on a population vulnerability data map that provides specific data for planning efforts and response that focuses more on the specific needs, i.e., this area needs wheelchair accessibility as opposed to there is a disability identified. The hope is to have an Accessibility and Functional Needs officer position in the state EOC that will amplify the efforts in making inclusion a part of what they do, provide support to rural and low-resource communities, and to aid in grant distribution across programs and services.

Michigan, through the Department of Civil Rights, has a dedicated webpage to DEI initiatives that provides resources such as toolkits, guides to developing a school equity plan, and training solutions through an equity lens. One such guide also highlighted is the work they did with Indigenous educators and partners to provide a guide in Maawndoongan for the Anishinabbe people – being a first of its kind resource guide. The state has implemented the mission of ONE. Which means disparate parts joining together under a singular mission to achieve success; each part may be uniquely different but working together to appear as one. Michigan Department of State Police (MSP) has taken on the mission by implementing employee resource groups (ERGS). These groups are with common interests or backgrounds and can bring their collective voice to drive change, create new opportunities, and help inspire and encourage one another. A few examples of those groups are Asian Pacific Islander American, Diverse abilities, Michigan State Police Professionals Respecting the Identities of Everyone (MSP P.R.I.D.E.), Military Veteran, and Women Leading Change. MSP also has a program titled Future of BLUE (Build, Listen, Untie Engage), a very active diverse group that comprises of members both in law enforcement and civil members that provide a safe space for honest, open dialogue to gain a cultural perspective and awareness. MI Emergency Management interplays with these programs and hosts an active DEI workshop, provides weekly newsletter content to staff, and provides educational and information opportunities. Resource: <https://www.michigan.gov/mdcr/divisions/dei>

North Carolina has recently hired a new Deputy Secretary for DEI and Law Enforcement, Sherry L. Hunter, to further lead their charge and mission. North Carolina implemented a design called TEEIR: Teamwork, Elevating, Equity, Integrity, and Respect. Members of the division are provided a challenge point within TEEIR. As the division works towards their new strategic plan, they look to include a more collaborative engagement and community outreach. And will include long term recovery programs that implement equity and access. Mr. Polk talked about the importance of retaining staff and for this reason the pay is increased at the Division, flexibility has become vital, and diversity and equity is at the forefront of priorities.

Janna Wilkinson (UT) says the state is becoming more multicultural, particularly in quickly diversifying cities. The state is improving with translation and audio usage to improve accessibility. In addition, hiring practices are improving with posting and active recruitment with local universities. There is a further gain of joining diverse backgrounds to help build well-rounded teams.

**NEMA Resilience Committee
October 19, 2022
Meeting Summary**

Hometown Highlight: Mitigation in the Green Mountain State

Stephanie Smith, SHMO, VT Emergency Management and Rebecca Pfeiffer, representing VT Agency of Natural Resources, highlighted how the state utilized ARPA funds to help communities build watershed resilience by encouraging projects for flood reduction with a water quality impact. The initiative was eligible under the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund that created the VT Flood Communities Resilient Fund. With the partnership of the agencies, the initiative covered 11 individual property buyouts (that were strictly not FEMA eligible buyouts), six floodplain restoration projects, and two riparian planning projects. This initiative was able to fill gaps that were found in recent flooding events that FEMA mitigation programs did not cover due to property buyouts within river corridor not eligible, vacant flood prone areas at risk of development, headwater storage conservation, and benefit cost analysis (BCA) challenges within the restoration work. The Flood Communities Resilient Fund provides the ability to be creative, flexible, and fast with applicable projects and proactively addressed equity issues. The State was able to simplify the application process and requirements and can focus on the nonprofit partnerships that came into the fold to successfully finish the projects. Future considerations for the program are continued funding, partnering with housing to help housing needs, promotion of strategies to stop development in river corridors, and the sustainability of the program to continue to fit the need.

Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP)

Nick Crossley, Director of Hamilton County Emergency Management (OH) and the EMAP Commission Chair, encouraged committee members that the organization has listened to the states needs with some new initiatives that will be taking place. EMAP looks to streamline the process for reaccreditation in defining what will potentially need to be assessed for a program. This may also help to narrow down the on-site assessment time frame and cost. Another way to streamline the process is to tie a pre-assessment into the overall accreditation process if the program so chooses to continue. EMAP has invested in a new management system to upload assessment documentation with ease and help programs actively participate in the accreditation process. The organization looks to address consistency in standard application and looks to work on ways to ensure more consistent assessment reports in compliance. EMAP also looks to have private sector representatives assist the accreditation process and will provide the training they need to be able to assess program compliance. EMAP is strategizing on development of a tiered approach towards reaching compliance to standards. The organization also has prioritized establishing high quality staffing and financial independence. Mr. Crossley stated that the strategic plan will be out for review within the week.

A Moment for Mitigation

Eric Letvin, FEMA, quickly reported that the mitigation team continues to identify and breakdown barriers for the application process as well as identify methods to get the funding to the communities. They were amazed by the hundreds of applications received for this new BRIC year which equally shows the importance of mitigation projects to the Nation. \$2.3B for BRIC is coming this year with the projections of \$800M for the next four years. Congress provided \$3.6B to HMGP. Forty percent of the funding must go to marginalized communities in which BRIC and FMA will be a major part of obtaining that percentage goal. Within HMA grant funding, Letvin stated that if a project meets the cost requirement, addresses climate adaptation, or is meant for an underserved community, it is eligible for funding. The goal is to break down the barrier for communities to access the grant programs. Finally, he

warned directors about \$22B in “unspent” HMGP, BRIC, and FMA funding. When asked about how much of that amount was at some level of review within FEMA, he was non-committal and said he would work with NEMA staff on sharing and reviewing the data.

Office of FEMA Resilience Reorganization

The committee provided time on the agenda for David Maurstad, FEMA, to discuss how the Office of Resilience looks to address a major reorganization and culture shift within the entire office. According to FEMA, this is to enhance customer service and match services where they would be better suited in design for program delivery. The aim is to address challenges of limited operational efficiency and the lack of defined mission through structural changes and enhanced communication. FEMA visions to create a shared identity to guide strategic focus and integration; align desired outcomes and resource allocation; and streamline the customer access to resilience and non-resilience programs. The office has a very compressed timeline as the FEMA Resilience Team looks to provide their new version to Administrator Criswell for her review on November 1. This meeting was a way for stakeholders to share their concerns, challenges, and questions with FEMA HQ. More listening sessions will follow for the state directors. So far, concerns from stakeholders include the separation of policy and funding; FEMA adequately defining what they mean by “customer” as the meaning is different for each stakeholder; and diluting impact on the agency’s statutory preparedness mission.

NEMA Homeland Security Committee
October 19, 2022
Meeting Summary

Discussion with the Office of the National Cyber Director

After brief opening comments by Committee Chair Chris Stallings of Georgia, the committee meeting opened up with long-time NEMA partner, Drenan Dudley, who is currently serving as the Assistant National Cyber Director for Budget Review and Assessment in the Office of the National Cyber Director (ONCD). Dudley began with a quick introduction to the ONCD, which is a newer office under the Executive Office of the President. Their role is to align resources of the office with aspirations for safer cybersecurity, and the need to better measure results. Questions mainly focused on the newly created State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP) pertaining to allocations based on cascading impacts, leveraging the emergency management community through the grant and including them in the planning stage, and the importance of incorporating risk reduction and assessments into this.

The Evolving Terrorism: Stochastic Terrorism

Glen Woodbury, Director of the Center for Homeland Defense and Security provided a brief overview of a relatively new term to many, “stochastic terrorism” and how it intertwines with emergency management. The main conversation was defining stochastic terrorism, which essentially explains that when a person uses harsh, directed rhetoric, their platform and following is so large that it is guaranteed that at least one person who see it as a call to action and commits an act of terror – we just do not know who, how, or where. The discussion after the presentation was surrounding the need to increase information sharing to minimize the impact of actors and actions. He related this specifically to emergency management and how instances of domestic terror can occur due to a lack of information sharing, rather than lack of information itself. Fusion centers may do their job correctly, but unless that gathered information is transferred to the correct person, it may not do any good – emphasizing the importance of partnerships, coordination, and communication between law enforcement and emergency management.

Grants Updates: FEMA Grant Program Directorate

Stallings welcomed Pam Williams, the Assistant Administrator for FEMA’s Grants Programs Directorate Office. Williams began by correlating the ongoing discussion around a reorganization of FEMA’s resilience operation and the potential need to reevaluate definitions and guiding principles of “preparedness.” Primarily she noted that if preparedness as we know it today will no longer exist, she hopes NEMA will be at the forefront of discussions to help shape the next generation of preparedness efforts. She went on to explain the FEMA’s views on the SLCGP, focusing on the local consent component of the program and reiterating that FEMA is just standing up policy for the program – not administering. Additionally, a lot of the concerns by the states were on aspects that were statutorily mandated by Congress and cannot be changed at the moment. Her last comments were a call for action from NEMA members – requesting information on what NEMA wants to see from FEMA, and specifically in the realm of grants.

Behavioral Threat Assessments: Train-the-Trainer Model

The last agenda item was a breakdown from Dr. Jennifer Cohen, a Clinical Psychologist from DHS’s National Threat Evaluation and Reporting (NTER) Office, on their Master Trainer Program. Dr. Cohen broke down the factors and behaviors that are looked for when identifying violent actors. She also highlighted the need for universal locations for these identifications to be reported and a plan to be in

place when threats are identified. Dr. Cohen explained that there is a climate where too many different terms and definitions are used, and that NTER is looking to create a standard language in this field. One of the highlights from her presentation was the Office's Master Trainer program, which has currently certified 150 master trainers that are now able to continue to disseminate and train professionals at all levels – working towards that goal of a national network of trained threat evaluators. Dr. Cohen ended her remarks by emphasizing her office's desire to work with members of the community and audience – aiming at training the greatest number of trainers possible from all levels of the emergency management community.

NEMA Response & Recovery Committee
October 19, 2022
Meeting Summary

Director Andrew Phelps (OR), Chair, began with a welcome and gratitude to Tina Titze (SD), Vice Chair, for her expertise and support over the year.

Amtrak

Mary Carlson Bis, Sr. Director of Emergency Management, spoke on initiatives Amtrak offers to partners. Amtrak has a presence in almost every state. Their emergency program mission is to build resilient employees who are prepared and knowledgeable of regulatory requirements, laws, rules, and Amtrak expectations. Ms. Bis stated Amtrak looks to leverage their relationship with emergency management and would like to be a partner within the emergency management community. Amtrak's emergency program has unique factors: community awareness planning is a priority; 72% of the train tracks they utilize are not owned by Amtrak therefore partnerships are top priority for emergencies such as derailments; Amtrak follows emergency managers' plans for fire or mass response so instead of focusing planning efforts to have in response, they wait for federal (mainly), state, or localities to help support the response; and Amtrak receives grants from FEMA. Ms. Bis asked of the committee to think about how Amtrak may be utilized in response plans and to reach out and partner with them. Successful efforts of emergency management partnering with Amtrak have been the utilization of trains to generate fuel-based power in case of an emergency, which can minimize generator needs. Another success is that they look together with emergency management to solve issues on helping to house displaced people in an emergency. Such solution finding initiatives helps to strengthen the partnership.

FEMA Office of Response and Recovery Brief

Anne Bink, Associate Administrator, briefed on FEMA's efforts to have communities build back in a more resilient way as the scale and impact of disasters continues to grow in the field. The PA delivery model assessment from this year exposed the following findings: Large complex projects require a lot of focus and technical assistance. A risk-based approach to public assistance creates a more labor-intensive method as it will require different staff within different positions. The delivery model shifted too much on the process side and so FEMA looks to build a navigator support team so emergency managers have more defined expertise in individual business models, knows FEMA policy, and can get the job done. A key enabler that can be leveraged is the expertise within the consolidated resource centers that better understand the environment and states' goals. FEMA advises that flexibility and variety will better build resiliency. FEMA also looks to fund current gaps in training and development opportunities. Steps already geared toward streamlining the PA process, was by FEMA implementing the simplified procedures. 90% of projects will be under the \$1M threshold which will provide an expedited process for those projects. FEMA also brought back the PA Steering Committee which aims to improve the process for applicants.

Reimagine FEMA Disaster Housing Program

Dr. Melissa Forbes, Assistant Administrator of the Recovery Directorate, Office of Response and Recovery, FEMA; Tony Robinson, Regional Administrator, FEMA Region V

NEMA members have been engaged in listening sessions with FEMA on finding creative solutions to disaster housing. The dominoes that also come into play with temporary to permanent housing has lasting impacts to the social needs of a community such as employment, school districts, and quickly

getting back to a normal life. Reimagining this effort includes changing culture and addressing how to operationalize the housing recovery support function; how to incorporate the resilience program; and promote the state pre-disaster plans. Currently, FEMA is still in the exploratory stage and look to the states for major feedback that includes answers to the following questions:

1. Who is our customer in Direct Housing?
2. How do we ensure equitable outcomes in the program?
3. How connected is your EM agency to your housing agency during blue sky planning?
4. What challenges to you foresee if FEMA provides funding to the state to administer a disaster housing program that is equitable, empowers survivors and enhances a community's resilience?
5. What are we missing?

This follow-up will continue as FEMA works with their partners to encourage more creative planning efforts to assist the disaster housing initiative.

Little Giants: Response and Recovery Highlights from Alaska and Kentucky

Director Bryan Fisher, Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Director Jeremy Slinker, Kentucky Emergency Management

Comparing the impacts of Typhoon Merbok and the floods of Eastern Kentucky, both events had much in common by devastating smaller communities where resources are already scarce and yet the people are tough and willing to help their neighbors even when living in their own despair. Both caused zero chance for evacuation as water came in very quickly. Creating the need for rapid response and quick decision making. Both had communications challenge as in Alaska the native languages cause barriers and in Eastern Kentucky communication infrastructure went to zero very quickly. The lessons proved that time, location, and culture are huge items to think about when it comes to disasters and planning for response and recovery. The sense of knowing your people and the programs offered helps too – the most benefit is when a state becomes creative in programs they may offer to their citizens, where taking the FEMA programs and supplementing with State programs and partnerships for when people are not eligible under the federal government program.

NEMA Private Sector Committee
October 20, 2022
Meeting Summary

Shandi Treloar, Committee Chair, opened the meeting with a welcome and introduced the guest speakers Kathy Hill, DHS(FEMA); Dana Ahrens, CISA, and Bob Rutledge, CISA.

- How do we engage in a way that is meaningful and where we won't lose the momentum that we have had?
- **Dana Ahrens:** Cybersecurity, career intel officer, ESF 14 and Emergency Operations Branch
- **Bob Rutledge:** Homeland Security, Emergency Support Function-ESF 2 and 14
- **Dana Ahrens:** "Emergency Support Function as it pertains with private sector integration (Emergency Support Function 14), critical infrastructure elements-complemented by Kathy's agency, potential cascading impacts or failures that could occur from a response."
- Fuel waivers, hours for drivers, waiver that removes regulatory barriers-areas that haven't been addressed yet as these help private sector members, every single emergency support function has elements of the private sector, look to find areas where those relationships do not exist
- Use a number of different vehicles: Other ESF Partners, ESF support group, private sector integration group, his agency works with other entities such as cross sector coordinating council centered around critical infrastructure communities-conduit for us to reach or tap in to for any disaster-enterprise know the partners and the industry and when disasters are going to happen-coordinate with them to make sure that everyone is migrating from information receive to information push out mode
- Strong bias towards issues that promote cascading failures in other entities and environments
- They go out and have conversations with CISA and FEMA regional partners-build bridges and relationships to identify structures, where people are located, gain information flow, advertise and navigate ESF 14 capabilities when it comes to BEOC (Business Emergency Operation Center) and private sector integration
- **Bob Rutledge:** "ESF 14 is relatively new, ID street addresses of critical infrastructure to distribute over 30 million cloth-based structures to critical infrastructure workers so they could continue to work."
- COVID restrictions in shelters, workers having to drive almost 4 hours to worksite, worked with private sector partners to identify lodging that was closer to decrease the time it would take to restore power and communications
- Summer of 21-CISA private protection advisors-waste water treatment and chlorine distribution. Concerned if supply chain problems existed that it would have a large impact on their process, private sector partners on the phone, FEMA and the EPA-were able to have conference calls that showed it was not a supply issue but rather a distribution issue, knew how to contact EPA and DHS if they were reaching a critical point, ESF 14 is very important for a public-private partnership
- **Dana Ahrens:** "ESF 14's are always active-it just depends on where they are working from."
- **Kathy Hill:** "Office of Business and Industry Integration-realized they need to operationalize private sector integration, sit within logistics (response and recovery), strengthen partnership and coordination, want to get business back to business with the federal government out of the way, not replacing private sector members, office is to pull private sector folks across FEMA together to talk among themselves to help each other and learn about best practices from each other."
- Message from National Integration Center

- Operate the Nation Business Operations Center, staff who monitor the desk from Puerto Rico to Guam to help anyone who sends in a request
- Review with a 5-year road plan for the office-input from states and private sector partners, how to keep expanding and growing, building out the plan
- HR plan that looks at the regions-business and industry coordinators in the various regions to help the states
- Want to be a force multiplier for the private sector liaisons, given money to do organizational execution-identify weakness and gaps to get staff to help get the SOPs that they need, put together training for the BOC as a guide for the states-talk about what is and isn't working and how they can help (state representatives)
- Example of blue-sky activity: real issues around transitional sheltering-pulled together a forum with the American Hotel Lodging Association- gave information about FEMA programs and heard from the different partners to hear the issues in order to find a solution
- **Shandi Treloar:** "Take advantage of what has happened at the federal level to benefit the states."
- **Dana Ahrens:** "Any information that will enable them to assist in the response and recovery, knowing what the problem is ahead of time-don't want to get in the way of other people working towards a solution."
- **Bob Rutledge:** "National Risk Management Center, solicit what is going on and provide a venue for private sector partners to provide that important information, is there potential for cross-sector cascading impacts."
- What industry coordination challenges need the most attention: **Dana Ahrens:** "One of the bigger challenges is dealing with proprietary information when working with members who are competitors so we do not put them at a disadvantage, having faith in partners, respecting their information and not putting companies in a place where they will have a negative economic impact later on, build those relationships prior to the disaster."
- **Kathy Hill:** "Can be hard to get that information, when you gain the company's trust that you will not share the information as they will often willingly provide it, companies calling saying that they can provide a service, make sure that the right people are in the room to support whatever request it is."
- MEBOC: Subject line-membership
- What did the community look like before the disaster and what it looks like now, getting the different reports to the states, goal is to get it to them so they can see the specific information for their area
- What type of supply chain commodities do not receive enough attention? **Dana Ahrens:** "Water and food are covered pretty well, look for the ones that no one else has thought of yet, can be very odd items, understanding the value and need of that specific commodity, understanding the cascading impacts in order to be able to reach out to the necessary contacts, find and look out for the odd scenarios that are very electric power transformers who are non-generic and are often very uniquely tailored, production process can take a great deal of time."
- Issues like supply and distribution are where we really rely on our partners, cascading impacts can often become very broad, mirror the regional construct, PSAs are constantly communicating with businesses, so they are very helpful to work to figure out the actual impacts of a disaster
- Regional stores not recognized, pulling them together to have discussion, very big contributors, do not have a voice currently in the response realm

- CISA and FEMA applying the same time to the supply chain and cascading impacts as critical infrastructure, map and have a good picture of impact of supply chain routes that could be very beneficial to emergency managers
- **Dana Ahrens:** “NEMC mapping critical structure and looking for critical interdependencies, FEMA taking look at those elements of supply chains and could be best solved with a common operating picture that entities can feed information and data in so that everyone could reach in and see, can be very hard to execute, national risk management center.”
- **Jeff:** “Local practitioner-what is the best vehicle to be able to make the request and identify points of contact: CISA.gov, CISA central, Kathy and Dana’s teams automatically coordinate with each other on those issues, getting to the local level and helping them build that engagement and cultivate those relationships (blue sky and grey sky).”
- **Kathy Hill:** “National Integration Center: having an event in two virtual workshops to discuss actions EM managers to support Texas supply chains in the event of a disaster and a food workshop on November 29 and fuel workshop on December 9.”

Private Sector Committee reminders:

- The next quarterly call will be January 12, 2:00 pm
- NEMA is working on several initiatives to engage private sector members, one of which is a new eLearning series. Details to come.

The chair thanked the guest speakers, those in attendance and closed the meeting.

NEMA Legislative Committee
October 20, 2022
Meeting Summary

Committee Chair A.J. Gary of Arkansas opened the meeting with brief comments about NEMA's legislative accomplishments thus far in 2022. He specifically noted how three major legislative priorities for the year passed at least one chamber: the increase to the small project threshold, management cost rollover, and a universal application process for disaster survivors. He also highlighted emergency management priorities included in the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework

Legislative Briefing with Capitol Hill Staff

A common theme among all guests from Capitol Hill was the pending mid-term elections and potential changes in leadership. Ambiguity wove through all their comments as the balance of 2022 and beginning of the 118th Congress remains in a dynamic state of flux. Despite that, each speaker emphasized the importance of NEMA's role in continuing to educate new (and existing) Members of Congress on emergency management processes and bring them up to speed on how the process works. Some highlighted policy priorities included:

- Eric Heighberger, House Committee on Homeland Security outlined issues such as communications interoperability, the Integration Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), oversight of COVID-19 funds, the Emergency Food & Shelter Program, responses to hurricanes in Puerto Rico and Florida, and DHS intelligence operations.
- Mike Herman (House Majority) and Daniel Mencher (Senate Minority) represented their respective Appropriations Committees. They covered the process between now and the end of the year specifically with the current Continuing Resolution due to expire on December 16. This will require some version of a deal between potentially incoming and outgoing Members. They both also mentioned the current strong health of the Disaster Relief Fund and their respective priorities in each house's FY23 budget.
- Lauren McClain, House Committee on Homeland Security is looking toward grants oversight and provided an overview of some recent hearings on FEMA resources, equity, and COVID spending.
- Trey Hicks, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs focused on pending legislation for FEMA's Tech Hazards Division (creating new training priorities), managing the growth of grant programs, and FEMA's ongoing "mission creep."

Partner Discussion with ASFPM and IAEM

Representing the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), Nick Crossley opened his remarks by emphasizing IAEM's support and partnership with NEMA on legislative priorities like universal disaster application, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), the upcoming FEMA Resilience Office reorganization, and continued work on [H.R. 5689](#), Resilient AMERICA. Other comments were made on looking at the current EMAP Standards and educating the next class of new congressional delegations next year.

Chad Berginnis from the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) began his remarks by outlining the recent funding provided for ASFPM's priorities. In that note, Berginnis highlighted it would take an additional \$4-11 billion to flood map the rest of the country. One of the top policy priorities for

ASFPM is reforming the National Flood Insurance Program. Berginnis closed by expressing serious doubts by ASFPM about the pending reorganization of FEMA's Resilience Directorate and their intent to continue seeking ways to understand these actions by FEMA and potentially utilize legislative means to prevent it.

Roles and Responsibilities of State Legislative Staff Subcommittee

Over the summer, the NEMA Board directed the creation of a subcommittee to the Legislative Committee comprised of state legislative staff. Gary led a brief discussion of the path forward for this subcommittee including roles and responsibilities. The committee agreed the subcommittee will focus on information sharing of best practices among state legislative efforts. While directors may utilize their representative on this subcommittee to help coordinate comment on federal legislation, the committee stressed the importance of directors remaining engaged and driving the legislative priorities for the association overall.