Current Issues in Emergency Management
– October 2012
Florida Division of Emergency Management
Bureau of Recovery
Disasters in Florida
Overview on Declaration Process, Communications and Damage Assessments
Disaster Declaration Process

- Once a disaster strikes, the Division immediately goes to work supporting county recovery efforts by:
  - Coordinating federal recovery with local jurisdictions; and
  - Coordinating with counties as they begin the initial damage assessment (IDA) process.
- Ultimate goal is to obtain whatever type of declaration is most appropriate.
Why locals must complete IDA first:
- Locals are better tuned into the affected areas and the extent of damages; and
- Locals know their own resource capabilities.
IDA Considerations

- Conducted by local officials immediately following an event and used to determine whether the affected local government should request state assistance.
- It serves as the “blueprint” for state and federal officials when conducting the joint damage assessment.
- At the end of the assessment, this “blueprint” includes:
  - Extent of damages
  - Costs of damages (PA)
  - List of damages and locations
  - Impact on the community
  - Community’s ability to recover
Prioritize Areas to Inspect

- Ask yourself these questions (these are mostly geared towards PA):
  - Where are the most severely impacted areas?
  - Where are the “high dollar” damages?
  - What critical facilities or structures were damaged that would have the most severe impact on the community?
Communications are really important at this stage between the State, local and federal government to ensure:

- IDAs are identifying eligible damage;
- All eligible damage is being considered; and
- This information is provided in a timely manner so that decisions on PDAs can flow properly.
Requesting Joint PDAs

- First, the IDAs must be complete.
  - For PA, the IDA results should be close to or over the county’s PA threshold.
  - For IA, considerations include extent of damage, trauma to the community, etc. (there is NO set threshold).
- A Mission Request must be entered into EM Constellation stating specifically the type of Joint PDA needed (PA, IA, or both) and include the IDA as an attachment.
- Recovery staff or the State PDA Coordinator will communicate with the contacts listed on the Mission Request to schedule the best available time and meeting location for the Joint PDA.
Joint Damage Assessments for IA/PA

- The State PDA Coordinator contacts the local EM Directors directly or through the Regional Coordinators to schedule the dates and meeting locations for the start of the Joint PDA.

- PDA Coordinator organizes teams and schedules PDAs based on a number of factors:
  - Heavily impacted counties are typically prioritized first.
  - But we may take advantage of counties geographically grouped together.

- Joint PDA Team meets with potential applicants and gather lists of their damages and explanation of costs.

- Joint PDA Team enters the disaster area and assess the eligible damages directly caused by the event.
  - Reports findings back nightly to State and FEMA PDA Coordinators.
Joint PDA Team Members

- Local officials:
  - Know the area/extent of damages
- SBA Representative (IA ONLY)
- SERT Representative
- FEMA Representative
  - Additional Members:
    - FEMA Technical Specialist (Environmental, Historical, Insurance, etc.)
    - Army Corps (PA, Beaches ONLY) - Used to assess beach erosion damages for FEMA.
Goals of the Joint PDA

- Visually inspect the damages to homes, businesses, and eligible facilities. For PA, determine a dollar amount of damage.
- Report damages and costs to the State in order to determine if a disaster declaration should be requested.
- Work effectively, as a team, with the federal, state, and local partners.
- Come to an agreement on the total costs or damage criteria by the end of the Joint PDA.
Priorities are shifting during this stage, so State/FEMA/locals must maintain communications to ensure:

- PDA scheduling occurs in an efficient, cost-effective manner;
- State/FEMA/locals all agree on what damage is eligible; and
- All concerns are identified early on so as not to impede efforts in obtaining a declaration.
Disaster Declaration Process for Public Assistance

- If damage meets federal thresholds, the Governor may request a Public Assistance Declaration.
- Current PA thresholds:
  - County Per Capita Indicator: $3.45
  - Statewide Per Capita Indicator: $1.37
  - Statewide Threshold: $25,757,782 (2010 Census)
There is NO threshold for Individual Assistance.

An Individual Assistance Declaration is granted based on the impact to survivors
- Homes and businesses impacted
- Availability of insurance
- Other factors

If granted, an IA declaration makes SBA funding available to disaster survivors in the form of low-interest loans.
Once PDAs are completed and damage costs compiled:

- Governor sends request to FEMA Region IV (Atlanta, GA).
- A recommendation is forwarded by FEMA to the President for review and authorization.
- If granted, President names Federal Coordinating Officer and a Joint Field Office may be established.
Primary factors considered when evaluating the Governor’s Request for a Declaration:

- Amount and type of damage
- Estimated costs of eligible work (PA only)
- Insurance (number of non/under insured)
- Recent multiple disasters
- Assistance from other federal agencies (PA only)
- Economic status and demographics of affected area
FEMA-State Agreement

- Upon approval of the Governor’s declaration request, the Grantee will enter into a FEMA-State Agreement for the Declaration
  - Specifies the type of assistance to be offered and establishes any cost-share provisions
If the declaration request is denied, there is only 1 level of appeal allowed

- The appeal is sent in the Governor’s Name to the President.
- Must be sent out within 30 days of the denial.
ESC / DRC Overview
Objectives

- Define an Essential Services Center (ESC) and a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC).

- Understand the difference between an ESC and a DRC.

- Describe program staff that support each center and what services they provide.
What is an ESC?

- An Essential Services Center (ESC) is a temporary facility located in or near the impacted area where disaster survivors can go for limited essential services and obtain disaster related information within 24-96 hours following an event.
  - Staffed with State, Local, Volunteer and Faith-Based Organizations.
  - Typically remains open 3-5 days, including 1 weekend day.
  - No federal programs
  - Supports the siting of potential, future Disaster Recovery Center(s).
ESC Purpose

- Provides resources not readily available to the impacted county.
- Co-locates representatives from State, Local, Volunteer, and Faith-Based Organizations.
  - Provides information and assistance on available resources.
  - Provides basic essential needs to survivors.
- Reduces the number of requests for assistance that would go to the local government.
What is a DRC?

- A Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) is a temporary facility located in or near the disaster area, where disaster survivors can go to obtain disaster related information and apply for Federal, State and Local Disaster Assistance Programs.
  - A DRC typically opens 24-96 hours once a Federal Declaration has been signed by the President.
  - Staffed with Federal, State, Local, Volunteer and Faith-Based Organizations.
  - If an ESC had been previously established, it is common for the ESC to transition to a DRC after the federal declaration is received.
DRC Purpose

- Starts the recovery process.
- Co-locates representatives from Federal, State, Local, Volunteer, and Faith-based Organizations.
  - Provides information and assistance on available post-disaster aid.
- Allows disaster survivors to speak face-to-face with disaster specialists.
DRC Purpose

- Answers questions and assist survivors in filling out forms and/or information packets.
- Reduces the number of requests for assistance that would go to the local government.
- Provides a safety net for disaster survivors who fall through the cracks.
- Begins identifying any immediate and/or unmet needs.
- Registers survivors for federal assistance.
What Determines the Need?

After a State or Federal emergency is declared:

- The County surveys the critical needs of the disaster survivors during the IDA process, and
- The County makes a request to the State, then justifies the request based on joint preliminary damage assessment results.
The DRC Coordination Center customizes each DRC for the area it serves. It is staffed and equipped based on the needs of the community.

- If an ESC opens first, the State takes proposed DRC needs into account.

- Each county is asked annually to provide a minimum of three (3) mobile and three (3) fixed locations.

- Site selection should be identified in highly populated areas of the county.

- Each site requires a Premise Use Agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) during inspection to be signed prior to opening.
Types of DRCs

- Fixed
- Soft Side
- Mobile
Fixed DRC

- Usually set up in community centers, government buildings, vacant rental buildings, malls or storefronts.

- Generally chosen to serve a large target area.

- Ideally located near major highways or intersections.

- The DRCs may remain open as long as the State, Local and/or Federal Government deem necessary.
Fixed DRC

- Basic General Requirements:
  - Donated facility
  - Reserved 24/7 for 30 days with a 30 day extension
  - 1st floor preferably
  - Meets all safety & security requirements and is ADA Compliant
  - Fully functional and structurally sound
  - Easy to locate
  - Legal address with zip code
  - On-site parking for 100 vehicles
  - 2,000 sq ft (at a minimum)
Fixed Equipment

- The following should be provided by the county, but may be provided by FEMA on an as needed basis:
  - 25 tables (6 ft)
  - 100 chairs (minimum)
  - 6-10 phone lines with phones
  - 1 data line and modem DSL
  - Trash cans/liners
  - Janitorial Services
  - Copier/paper
  - Fax (possible)
  - Printer/toner
  - Scanner
  - 2 Variable Message Boards
  - 25 Barricades (As Needed)
  - 25 Traffic Cones (As Needed)
  - Transportation (As Needed)
  - Security (As Needed)
State/ FEMA Equipment

- Office Supplies
- Interior signs
- 1 MDRC
- Computers
- Outdoor Signs/Banners
- Floor Tape
- Mailbox
- Satellite
- SanPak
Soft Side Equipment

- 3 + Acres (Paved)
- 40 x 40 Tent (A/C or Heat)
- 40 x 40 Tent
- String Lights
- Light Tower
- Tables and Chairs
- Generator
- Cell COW (As Needed)
- Communications Trailer (If Available)
- Portable Potties
- Portable Hand Wash Stations
- Variable Message Boards
- 50 Traffic Cones
- 25 Barricades
Mobile DRCs

- Designed to be totally self contained, move weekly and reach into small populated areas.
- Used as a support function of the Soft-Side and Fixed DRC.
- Skeleton crew, many agencies not represented.
Conclusion

QUESTIONS ?
Recovery Contact Information

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