Organizational Essentials

Successful EM organizations have commonalities:

- Support by top DOT leadership with EM a core part of agency work.
- Intentionally built organizations and programs with institutionalized processes and behaviors.
- Strong interpersonal relationships with close coordination in planning and implementing.

DOTs vary in how they organize and operate EM:

- 2–30 EM employees
- 74% have full-time EM program manager
- 70% have EM as part of Operations and Maintenance
- 42% have EM staff centralized at HQ
- 65% have centralized HQ-based EOC
- 44% have dedicated emergency response teams
- 70% have cross-trained employees for emergencies
- 50% of agencies have inter-agency mutual aid agreements in place
- 42% rely upon informal ad hoc personal contacts and relationships to access resources

Effective Practices

- Document contacts and relationships to maintain continuity over longer term. Share partner contacts with others in the agency. Bolster formal and informal relationships and nurture them year-round, making sure that they do not decay with attrition and turnover.
- Document agreements and include what is expected of each party and when to avoid conflicts during an event with other practices to remain resilient during leadership changes.
- Establish EM training requirements, including cross-training, and frequency of training to ensure continued workforce development.
- Establish agency EM performance measures.

How to Use the Model:

- Provides scenarios and considerations across major EM functions and facets of the DOT agency.
- View each element as a range of options that may be relevant to agency as part of self-assessment.
- Consider the full spectrum of scenarios across the potential size and scope of emergencies.

Be intentional about Emergency Management:

- Make EM a core part of the agency’s work and establish a shared understanding of the role agency plays in EM.
- Establish and document response procedures and ensure that O&M staff are aware of procedures.
- Clarify and confirm response activities and expectations of partners.
- Recognize the importance of experience to reinforce EM training. Identify ways to exercises and practice EM response and support.
- Establish a forum or mechanism to discuss lessons learned and improvements. Spotlight good EM practices and identify opportunities to incorporate effective EM approaches in agency.

Be prepared to scale up emergency response:

- Establish backup positions and triggers to reevaluate the EM staffing during an event.
- Clarify who will do what in which circumstances and build in flexibility in agency support and to address unique situations.
- Ensure that emergency expedited processes are in place so that emergency contracts can be rapidly implemented using a ready list of pre-identified and pre-qualified contractors.
- Work with State EOC in advance to develop templates and transportation-specific “packages” for equipment and staff. EMPs, to request and/or supply support within and across state borders, consistent with EMAC.

Ensure institutionalization of EM program:

- Document contacts and relationships to maintain continuity over longer term. Share partner contacts with others in the agency. Bolster formal and informal relationships and nurture them year-round, making sure that they do not decay with attrition and turnover.
- Document agreements and include what is expected of each party and when to avoid conflicts during an event with other practices to remain resilient during leadership changes.
- Establish EM training requirements, including cross-training, and frequency of training to ensure continued workforce development.
- Establish agency EM performance measures.
Emergency Management in Your Pocket

Organizational Approach

Model & Effective Practices

**Govermnent:**
Ensure that the agency recognizes the authority of the EM program manager, either formally or informally, and that senior management supports that authority.

Ensure that federal/state/local agencies and agency divisions/districts are aware that EM program manager represents DOT management.

**Reports to Top Agency Leadership**
Reports to Top Agency Leadership

**Alignment with the Operations**

**Setting Strategic Direction**

**Positional Authority**
Positional Authority

**Cross-Functional Committees or Steering Teams**

**Programmatic Planning and Support:**
Ensure adequate support, expertise, and resources are available for EM program manager.

Clarify who will do what in which circumstances; and build in flexibility to address unique situations.

**Staffing**
One Emergency Management Lead

Emergency Management Team of Cross-Functional Resources

**Planning/Training**
Full-Time Job

Part-Time Shared with Other Duties

**Partnerships**

Formal Agreements

Informal Partnerships

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**Response:**
Establish clear communications and chain of command. Know what resources may be needed by event type and geography.

Consider what specialized and/or cross-trained teams agency has in place and evaluate pros/cons of expanding flexibility.

**Lead Response Role**

One Dedicated Person

Dedicated Group That Rotates

Type 1 Major

Type 2 TIMS

Local Incident Manager

DOT EM Program Manager

**Response Staffing and Equipment Structure**

Agency Response Strike Teams

Cross-Agency Response Teams

Type 1 Major

Type 3 TIMS

Response Staff

Cross-Trained Staff

District Operations

Local Partners

**Collaboration**

Formal

Informal

**Surge Capacity for Major Events**
Standing Engineering and Contractor Capability

System to Pre-Certify Contractors or Volunteers

2023

This handout is supplemental to NCHRP Research Report 1088: State DOT Models for Organizing and Operating Emergency Response: A Guide (NCHRP Project 20-128). The full report can be found by searching on the report title on the National Academies Press website (nap.nationalacademies.org).