



# Catastrophic Response

Coordination | Communication | Unity of Effort

*Working together makes us stronger*

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In this issue of *Catastrophic Response*, Commissioner Hauer describes a “growing complacency” about the terror threat. In talking with emergency managers around the country we are seeing a different kind of complacency, this one focused on the challenge of a catastrophic response. Based on the premise that the consequences of a catastrophe will be too big and too complex to manage, these people believe that no matter how hard we work we will be overwhelmed. This kind of fatalism is misguided, a self-fulfilling prophecy. As emergency managers we have the insight and the skills to succeed and the mission of this program is to build the tools that enable us to use our insight and skills to confront any and all consequences. We *can* get big enough fast enough to connect to all stakeholders. We *can* support those stakeholders with information, resources, and problem-solving. We *can* get the people, the skills, and the resources of the richest and most powerful nation on earth “all-in” the job. When we do this we can face any adversity. These concepts are the foundation of this program. Our urgent challenge is to get the tools and the systems we are building into the hearts and minds of emergency managers in this region and around the country.

## EXEC'S PODIUM

### CATASTROPHIC PLANNING IN NEW YORK STATE

JEROME HAUER – Commissioner, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES)



In my 30 years in this business of homeland security and emergency management I have been called many things, among them “outspoken” and even “maverick.” This may be because I am rarely reluctant to share my thoughts, especially with those who share

my vision and my goals. I am therefore pleased to contribute to this column, because I believe the NY-NJ-CT-PA RCPT shares my vision and my goals in several key respects.

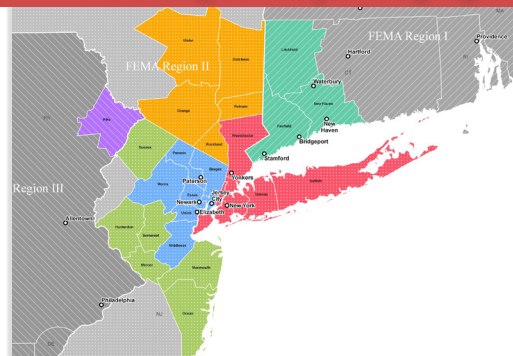
The first is that despite growing complacency around the U.S., and especially in Washington, I believe that the terror threat continues to exist unabated since 9/11. The successful naval operation that killed Osama Bin Laden unfortunately did not eliminate the Al Qaida threat. Rather than a unified organization we now face a dozen or more Al Qaida branches working independently but with renewed intent. In addition to the *jihadist* threat, the intelligence community is increasingly focused on homegrown terror groups, especially right wing groups and “lone wolf” individuals.

Second, we must not underestimate the ease with which terror attacks can be planned and executed. Readily available materials and widely known techniques aid the individuals and groups who would perpetrate them. And these attacks, especially involving biological or chemical agents, would kill and injure as well as cause enormous public disorder and anxiety.

Third, I do not agree with recent trends toward an “all-hazards” approach to planning for such incidents.

Plans intended to work in every situation and for all purposes rarely work well in the real world. I concur with the mission of the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP), which is to plan for the worst-case scenario. This is because, despite the low probability of any individual threat, when combined, the probability of a catastrophic incident is higher, even likely. Should that happen we cannot hesitate, but must get all players—government, non-government, and the private sector—“all-in” the job immediately. It is difficult to quickly scale up a response while we are in the midst of that response and when we start out big we can always scale back once conditions allow. I believe that as a nation we are unprepared to mount an effective response to a worst-case incident such as an improvised nuclear device (IND) that could result in thousands of deaths and serious injuries as well as the loss of local leadership. One of the most important things we can do now is to increase the preparedness of the public for such an incident.

In my first year at DHSES I, along with NYS Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Director Steve Kuhr, have initiated a statewide catastrophic incident planning project based on hazard-specific scenarios such as IND. This project will integrate with, rather than overlap, the good work of the NY-NJ-CT-PA RCPT. By working together we can increase our collective preparedness to the benefit of New Yorkers and of all the citizens of this great New York-New Jersey-Connecticut-Pennsylvania region.



## NEWS

### 249th Prime Power Brigade Emergency Power Assessment

From September 10 to 21, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) conducted power surveys in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut in partnership with the RCPT and local emergency managers. The primary objectives of this preparedness effort were to help assess redundant power needs at critical facilities and reduce the time needed to provide back-up generation in the event of a major power outage. Representatives from the USACE's 249th Battalion and emergency management staff from local jurisdictions visited facilities and captured power assessment data over the course of 10 days. In total, over 300 sites were surveyed, including senior centers, prisons, hospitals, schools, and many other sites, the services of which could be critical in the event of an emergency. Once the collected data is analyzed, it will be shared with all participating jurisdictions and agency liaisons.



249th Prime Power Unit engineers inspecting critical RCPT facilities

## The Art of Making Disaster Logisticians

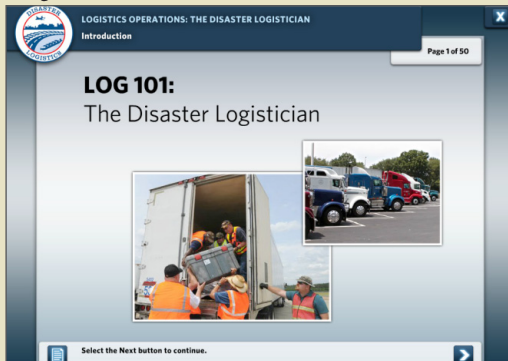
There are many explanations for why emergency managers deny what is stressful and frightening, but in the final analysis the scary stuff just doesn't go away. Perhaps the biggest mental block we all confront is getting our minds around the extraordinary number of human resources we will need to manage the chaos of a catastrophic incident. The reality is, we must get big enough fast to put a lot of people in position to *get the right resources to the right place*. The RCPT has tackled this mission and developed a state-of-the-art training program to supercharge our emergency managers and develop them into a ready cadre of trained, equipped, and alert disaster logisticians.

The RCPT with its Regional Logistics Program is pleased to offer this suite of Disaster Logistics trainings to all its partners in an effort to support every jurisdiction's capacity for disaster logisticians.

The disaster logistics program consists of four web-based courses that take no more than 5 hours to complete. Complementing these web-based courses are just-in-time videos that run between 12 and 15 minutes each. Courses have been designed to give users the disaster logistics knowledge they need to plug in to any Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and get to work fast, when they are needed the most.

The introductory course, *LOG 101: The Disaster Logistician*, transmits the basic principles of logistics in general and the challenges of disaster logistics in particular.

The remaining courses—*LOG 200: Logistics Center*; *LOG 201: Receiving and Distribution Center* and *LOG 202: Commodity Point of Distribution*—are based on the concepts and plans developed by the Regional Logistics Program.



While initially designed as self-paced, web-based training, all four courses are available as instructor-led classroom training. The instructor-led version allows students to discuss the concepts presented in the plans and better relate them to the specific process found in their own jurisdiction. In addition, those students new to Logistics will have an opportunity to meet and learn with fellow future logisticians.

All of the Disaster Logistics training will be available through the Regional Logistics Program's website <https://EmergencyLogistics.org/training/>.

To schedule instructor-led training please contact **Nancy Harris** at 646-215-6563 or via e-mail at [nharris@regionalcatplanning.org](mailto:nharris@regionalcatplanning.org).

## H3R: A Housing Rapid Repair and Recovery Program that Gets People Back to Home and to Work Fast

A catastrophe has the potential to devastate entire neighborhoods. Studies show that if residents are displaced for more than six months, they don't return. To stabilize the economy at the community, regional, and national level, and to reduce the trauma of disaster, people need to return to their homes and their jobs



as soon as possible, so making buildings habitable fast is crucial. With the massive damage caused by catastrophe, well-coordinated construction operations are critical to rapidly repair and rebuild all types of construction. Existing rapid repair programs don't address

the building types that make up most urban areas, so what is needed is to develop a program that will work for cities and not just one- or two-story homes. The Housing Rapid Repair and Recovery Program (H3R) creates a way to manage construction on a massive scale for all building types. The program serves as a blueprint for action to launch a multi-billion-dollar rapid repair program, "overnight." It will include proven management methods, procedures for rapid mobilization, a stakeholder engagement process, guidance for regulatory compliance, and other elements that make it an actionable plan. The companion Bid Specification will enable local governments to procure the appropriate team to handle the job. The RCPT held a project kickoff on July 11 and is now almost ready to deliver two new resources that will get people back in housing as soon as possible. By this winter we will have a plan that works for all our jurisdictions and describes who must coordinate the effort, what they must do, and how to hire the contractors that can do it best.

## RCPT Interim Housing Unit Pilot Project

With more people living in cities than ever before, the country needs a way to provide urban post-disaster housing, and the RCPGP is part of a groundbreaking effort to develop the country's first Urban Post-disaster Housing Prototype. There will never be one manufacturer or one design that can house the thousands of people who may be displaced by a catastrophe in our region, and so the Urban Interim Housing Pilot Program has focused on creating a way to leverage the full capacity of the private sector and the flexibility of many types of modular and manufactured housing system designs. The core of the project is an Interim Housing Unit (IHU) performance specification that describes technical parameters for multi-story, multi-family housing that can be delivered and assembled in an urban area after a disaster. The specification includes rigorous standards for safety, durability, and environmental quality.

The Urban Interim Housing Pilot Program will create a prototype of rapidly deployable housing that will serve as a proof of concept for the performance specification. By

demonstrating how one vendor can create a complex of approximately six housing units on a parking lot in New York City, the Program will tell us a lot about how to implement multi-story post-disaster housing for cities throughout the region and around the country. The prototype will test the full logistical capability of a housing system, from design to manufacture through transport, delivery, assembly, operation, and demobilization. USACE will manage the project. Coordination challenges such as local permits will be addressed by a council of New York City agencies.



## STAY TUNED

After a disaster, community recovery depends on effective collaboration between the government, businesses, and community-based organizations. This year's RCPT Disaster Housing Summit focuses on building lasting connections between community advocates and emergency managers. We will introduce the Community Recovery Playbook, which streamlines the funding process for post-disaster Community Development Block Grant programs, and the Participatory Urban Planning Toolkit, which provides a way for the government and community-based organizations to coordinate recovery planning efforts. Community-based organizations, government agency representatives, and businesses involved with Housing, Community Planning and Development, and Climate Change Adaptation should plan to attend the summit in March 2013. For more details contact: [cbarton@oem.nyc.gov](mailto:cbarton@oem.nyc.gov).