

Briefing on COG's Regional Incident Management and Response (IMR) Action Plan

Presentation to the TPB Technical Committee

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Item #4

Overview

- COG formed IMR Steering Committee in the wake of the January 26, 2011 storm
- Committee met 6 times over 8 months, final meeting on October 26
- Oversaw development of a findings and recommendations report
- Report to be presented to COG Board (November 9) and TPB (November 16)

The IMR Steering Committee

- Chairman plus 18 representatives from key sectors including
 - Emergency Management
 - Chief Administrative Officers
 - COG Attorneys Committee
 - Public Information Officers
 - Federal Office of Personnel Management
 - Business Community
 - Utilities
 - Transportation
- Transportation representatives included DDOT, MDOT, VDOT, WMATA, and MATOC

The Report

- Executive Summary
- Review of the day's events
- Review of focus areas
 - Issues, findings, recommendations, and status
 - Communications, coordination, and authority
- What is done elsewhere (e.g., New York's TRANSCOM)
- Recommendations addressing
 - Advanced preparations
 - Just before an incident
 - During an incident
- Appendices with technical background material



Focus Area Issues

- The initial charge to the Steering Committee included 4 focus areas:
 1. Real-time information or situational awareness among local, state, and federal government agencies with operational authority or responsibilities
 2. Real-time information to the media and the public
 3. Regional coordination
 4. Decision-making
- The committee was briefed on and examined these focus areas and developed related findings and recommendations

Major Recommendation

- Creation of a Regional Incident Coordination (RIC) Program
 - Knowledgeable staff would be responsible for regional monitoring and redistribution of relevant information, and have a proactive role to initiate regional RICCS coordination calls
 - Exercises and tests of communications means and protocols
 - Coordinate with MATOC and with the regional Public Information Officers' (PIOs') Virtual Joint Information Center (V-JIC)
 - Establish a RIC oversight group
 - Will be initially housed and staffed at the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA), funded by regional U.S. Department of Homeland Security funding

Other Recommendations in the Report Related to the Focus Areas

- Strengthening use of communications tools
- Improvements to regional snow conference calls
- Media outreach to the public on preparedness, vehicle abandonment
- Updating employee release policies and taking into account transportation conditions and capacity before releasing employees
- Utility preparedness
- The committee examined national/international incident management models to determine if there were a better framework for decision-making
 - Models from places located within one state or with one dominant jurisdiction were seen not to be appropriate for the multi-jurisdictional NCR
 - There would be legal barriers to creating a central authority; it was not clear that a central authority would achieve better results than a robust, well-coordinated multi-jurisdictional approach

Examples of How Regional Coordination Would Work under the IMR Committee Recommendations

- The report describes what happened during the January storm, and two other recent events
 - August 23 earthquake
 - October 11 person struck by Metro train
- Report also describes how regional communication and coordination would have worked based on the IMR Committee recommendations
 - Roles of RIC
 - Coordination with MATOC, other entities
 - Use of conference calls, other information sharing means

Focus Area Recommendations

Addressing Transportation

- Expand MATOC operations from the current 16 hours, 5 days/week to 24/7
- Conduct an assessment of and expeditiously install back-up power for major traffic signals

Outlook

- Short-term initiation of RIC Program
 - Initial operations at DC HSEMA
- Long-run needs and RIC Program enhancements will be pursued, along with improvements that can be achieved under the RIC this winter
- Sunset of the IMR committee and follow-on formation and continuance of RIC oversight group
- Pursuit of recommended follow-up activities by stakeholder entities or committees (e.g., MATOC, utilities)