



# ***District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency***



## **Adaptation Strategies and Information Needs in Response to Extreme Events Derecho and Hurricane Sandy**



**December 17, 2012**





# Overarching Objectives



- Convene Emergency Liaison Officers (ELOs) to facilitate interagency coordination among the District, Federal and private sectors.
- Implement operational actions as enumerated in the event Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- Coordinate emergency planning, logistics, resources and response efforts to safeguard event venues.
- Implement mitigation measures to avert adverse impacts on participants, the general public and emergency responders.



# Key Objectives



- Accomplish Damage Assessment
- Debris Removal
- Open Streets and Traffic Control Restored
- Power Restoration in DC
- Work towards closing Shelters
- Re-open Metro, Schools, City Gov't
- Monitor Flooding
- Perform Community Outreach
- Determine level of Disaster Assistance needed throughout City



# Key Challenges



- HSEMA was in a response posture to the heat wave. The challenge from the Derecho produced conditions that were not normal and weather predictions did not indicate the severity of the storm.
- The Derecho also occurred leading in to the July 4 holiday so there were challenges with identifying available personnel .person already on leave or out of town . Flooding was an issue
- HSEMA Operations were monitoring the weather for Hurricane Sandy several days out. We reached out to our ESF agencies to advised them of the need to prepare for the possible hurricane including the potential for flooding.



# *Impacts to HSEMA and the Community*



- Impacts to the community during Derecho
  - Flooding in vulnerable areas of the city (Bloomingdale)
  - Sandbag distribution
- Impacts to the organization
  - Coordination of donated resources
  - Staffing
- Public Information
  - Coordination of message and delivery
- Transportation
  - Businesses
  - Individuals



# Challenges to Response



- Staffing impacted leading into the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday - in some cases key persons were unavailable.
- EOC management issues such as inconsistent EOC roles, lack of resource tracking, inability to moving logistics, and utilizing WebEOC properly
- Lack of notification protocols to DC agencies
- Effective use of Senior Leader Checklist no-notice and planned emergency events
- Meeting threshold requirement for federal reimbursement (information is required from FEMA)



# Considerations for Planning and Response



- **Partnerships / collaborations**
  - HSEMA has a number of established relationships with external partners (NWS, Utilities, Red Cross, Hotel Association, etc.)
- **Technologies**
  - Use of Web EOC
- **Knowledge, information, data, training programs**
  - ICS training will improve knowledge of roles
  - IAP's were helpful for managing each event
  - Methods for obtaining information from utilities
- **Government (executive and legislative) support**
  - Strong relationship with FEMA allows the District to move through the declaration process
  - Effective use of Regional Conference call (Mutual Aid)
- **Other tools and approaches**
  - Response teams were identified to conduct damage assessments



# GAPS



## Partnerships / collaborations

- Coordination issues prevented the District from accepting supplies donated from a major retailer.
- Information sharing between local utility providers does not meet the needs of D.C. residents nor D.C. response agencies.
- Several non-governmental agencies as well District Response Agencies, did not participate in EOC operations. The lack of coordination between these support entities and HSEMA resulted in inconsistent or no information being provided.

## Technologies

- Several of the Emergency Liaison Officers (ELO's) were unfamiliar with the WebEOC application.





# GAPS



## Knowledge, information, data, training programs

- EOC staff was not always clear on roles, responsibilities, and expectations during activations. - Implementation of ESF/ICS training for EOC Staff is in place
- Not all EOC staff was available to work, or in some cases work an entire shift so persons were required to assume additional responsibilities. – Cross Training

## Government (executive and legislative) support

- First Hour Checklist for Senior Officials

## Other tools and approaches

- District agencies did not have a comprehensive understanding of how to pay for resources and staff during an undeclared emergency.



# Organization Costs



HSEMA was able to meet the required thresholds for reimbursement.



# *Key Lessons Learned*



- Improve notification process to EOC staff regarding EOC activations.
- EOC staff is not always clear on roles, responsibilities, and expectations during activations.
- Streamline the way in which various District agencies share situational information with each other and the public.
- ELO's assigned to the EOC were unfamiliar with the WebEOC application.
- Procure and track resources in a systematic way.



# Key Lessons Learned



- Clarify the protocol and budgetary implications associated with a state-of-emergency-declaration to all District agencies, and defining the procurement and budgeting procedures in an undeclared state of emergency.
- Follow-on training and exercises should focus on specific improvements instituted as a result of the June Derecho and should include an emphasis on decision making processes, responding to an undeclared emergency, public information sharing, procurement, and transportation needs.
- There were many non-governmental agencies involved in the emergency response that were not included in EOC operations.



# Planning and Response Key Differences



## Derecho

- Where as the Derecho has a unique footprint (high winds and rain) the forecast for Sandy were clear and somewhat predictable.
- The District of Columbia rapidly notified government agencies and officials, despite some difficulties in maintaining staff for an extended response lasting several days including the July 4th holiday.

## Sandy

- Key personnel were present and prepared to respond.
- Predictions were accurate and the storms impact managed to bypass the District as there was an anticipation of flooding there were not periods of intense rain that would cause localized flooding.



# Change



- Implementing an ICS/ESF hybrid structure to EOC Staffing
- Increase the communication and coordination between public and private agencies.
- Creation of job-aids for EOC roles
- Improve approach and coordination strategy for receipt of donations
- Educate District agencies on the process and financial implications associated with an emergency declaration.
- Continue to work with local utility providers to discuss the type of information that D.C. would like to provide to the public, how to address Utilities concerns regarding sharing information, how that information should be communicated (types of software and mediums). All Hazards Consortium



# ***HSEMA Stakeholders***



- Department of General Services (DGS)
- Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
- Department of Public Works (DPW)
- District Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA)
- District of Columbia Department of Health (DOH)
- District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS)



# ***HSEMA Stakeholders***



- District of Columbia Office on Aging (DCOA)
- Executive Office of the Mayor (EOM)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)  
Region III
- Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)
- Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP)
- Office of Chief Technology Officer (OCTO)
- Potomac Electric and Power Company (PEPCO)
- Serve D.C.





# Future Extreme Weather Events



## Short-term plans

- Continue to look at lessons learned from recent events i.e. NJ and NYC
- Look at opportunities to leverage social media to get message out to residents
- Promote new I phone application – personal preparedness

## Long-term plans

- Continue to look at mitigation strategies for severe weather
- Continue community preparedness education outreach efforts



# ***Changes impacting Water and Waste Water Systems***



- Severe weather (heavy rain) as well as commercial and residential development increasingly impact the District's combined sewer system. All contribute to increased water runoff into the sewer system.



# ***Contact Information***

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