Lesson 3: How Partnerships Enhance Emergency Management Efforts

Lesson Overview

This lesson reviews the nation's emergency management system and how public-private partnerships can enhance emergency management efforts.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Describe how public-private partnerships can support the nation's emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation.
- Identify public-private partnership activities that enhance emergency management efforts.

Emergency Management System

FEMA leads and supports the nation in a risk-based comprehensive emergency management system of:

- Preparedness
- Protection
- Response
- Recovery
- Mitigation

In the next section of this lesson, you will learn how public-private partnerships can enhance each of these components of our emergency management system.

Preparedness

Preparedness involves actions and initiatives developed prior to an incident that are designed to improve the response to, recovery from, and mitigation of future incidents.

Preparedness measures include:

- Assessing risks
- Response planning
- Conducting training and exercises

Here are examples of public-private partnerships that support preparedness efforts:

National Level Exercise (NLE): The yearly National Level Exercise (NLE) is designed to prepare and coordinate a multiple-jurisdictional integrated response to a national catastrophic event. It is designed to allow governmental organizations and private sector partners an opportunity to prepare for disasters. The most recent NLE incorporated over 3,000 participants. To read about the 2011 National Level Exercise, go to: http://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/OIG_12-01_Oct11.pdf

National education and awareness: There are many public-private partnerships that have developed national education and awareness campaigns designed to increase the preparedness of the private and public sectors. For example:

- The Ready Campaign (link to www.ready.gov) is a partnership between private organizations and the Ad Council to create public service announcements (PSAs). Ready.gov gives an over of how individuals and businesses can improve their preparedness for emergencies and disasters. This includes promoting National Preparedness Month which is sponsored by the Ready Campaign and Citizen Corps and is designed to encourage citizens to prepare for emergencies in their businesses and communities.
- Stop Think Connect (link to http://stopthinkconnect.org/) is a public awareness campaign designed to help individuals and businesses increase their cybersecurity.

Local examples: There are several examples of local public-private partnerships engaged in preparedness:

- Davis County, Utah reached an agreement with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to share property information on church holdings. This information can be stored in the county's GIS database, allowing church structures to be utilized as emergency shelters during an incident.
- The Miami-Dade County Business Recovery Program (BRP) is a partnership which aims to build a disaster resilient private sector through preparedness. This partnership provides resources to the private sector in an effort to prepare for disasters.

Protection

Protection involves actions to reduce the vulnerability of critical infrastructure or key resources in order to deter, mitigate, or neutralize terrorist attacks and other emergencies.

Protection activities include:

- Continuity of government and operations planning
- Understanding of threats and vulnerabilities related to critical facilities, systems, and functions
- Expansion of voluntary security-related information sharing between government and private entities

Public-private partnerships can be the foundation for effective infrastructure protection. For these partnerships to be effective, it is essential that there is timely, trusted information sharing among stakeholders. As you learned in Lesson 1, The National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) actively calls for public-private partnerships. A regional power company taking steps to protect power lines in case of severe weather is a good example of this type of partnership.

Response

Response includes immediate actions to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs. Public-private partnerships support emergency response by identifying a need (power restoration, supplies for affected residents, etc.) and filling that need with the partnership's capabilities (equipment, food, medicine, etc.). These needs are filled when there is two-way communication between private sector organizations with resources and the public sector.

Public-private partnerships can improve response by providing supplies, volunteers, shelter, and public outreach. For example, during a severe storm in Alabama a large national supermarket chain partnered with state emergency management organizations to give out food, resources, and hygiene kits to affected residents.

Another example comes from California Direct Relief USA. This partnership between California emergency management agencies and pharmaceutical companies helps public agencies obtain donations of medicines and supplies from private businesses during emergencies, allowing them to better respond to health crises.

Recovery

Recovery from an incident involves the repair of damages, return to normal activities, and attempted recovery of losses. During recovery, power lines are repaired, businesses open their doors to customers, and the process of disaster relief begins.

During recovery, there may be a need for programs to promote restoration, and long-term care of affected persons. When partnerships share information, partners can pool their capabilities to create these programs and provide better information and support to the community.

One example of how public-private partnerships assist in recovery comes from the Safeguard Iowa Partnership (SIP). After severe flooding, SIP coordinated Back to Business workshops to help businesses affected by the floods learn about the resources available to help with recovery.

Another example of public-private partnerships helping in recovery comes from the Support Alliance for Emergency Readiness (SAFER) in Santa Rosa, Florida. After the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, SAFER Santa Rosa provided information to the public about how to cope with behavioral health issues stemming from the incident.

Mitigation

Mitigation refers to actions taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from hazards and their effects. Mitigation focuses on breaking the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage.

Mitigation includes such activities as:

- Enforcing stringent building codes for new construction
- Adopting zoning ordinances that steer development away from areas subject to flooding or storm surge
- Retrofitting public buildings to withstand hurricane-strength winds or ground shaking

Public-private partnerships can support mitigation activities. For example, the Safer Arlington Partnership, a public-private partnership in Arlington County, Virginia, provides businesses with the tools to mitigate their risks for various disasters and increase their awareness of particular threats.

Primary Functions of Partnerships

Now that you have learned how public-private partnerships can enhance each component of our nation's emergency management system, we will explore the primary functions of partnerships. Public-private partnerships can contribute greatly to emergency management when it comes to:

Joint Emergency Planning: Public and private sector partners can develop joint emergency plans to help ensure coordinated prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts. Joint emergency plans serve as the basis for a public-private partnership's ongoing coordination of preparedness efforts by outlining procedures and partners' responsibilities.

Information Sharing: Partners can share many types of information in a partnership. Not all of these types of information necessarily need to be shared in every partnership. However, information sharing between partners can greatly benefit emergency management efforts in the whole community and make the partnership more successful. Types of information typically shared between partners include: response plans, contact information, sensitive or proprietary information, as well as threat information.

Resource Sharing: Sharing resources among the public and private sectors helps responders meet response and recovery challenges by supplementing existing inventories. Public-private partnerships can develop plans and resource databases to track personnel, equipment, and other resources for use in emergency management.

Emergency Communications: In order for public-private partnerships to be successful they should establish methods for emergency communications. Established methods of emergency communications between the public and private sectors help partners establish situational awareness and develop a common operating picture. Effective communicating during an emergency promotes coordinated response and recovery efforts and help ensure that informed decisions are made.

Joint Emergency Planning

Public-private partnerships engaging in joint emergency planning must first come together and determine community risks, vulnerabilities, and capabilities - usually through internal assessments.

Partners then meet to agree on prioritization of the risks, vulnerabilities, and capabilities. A plan is developed by the partners, which is then practiced in exercises to improve preparedness.

A good example joint emergency planning is the State of Kentucky's Local Emergency Planning Committee, which includes volunteer participation from 118 of Kentucky's 120 counties. Participation by emergency responders, industry, government, education, media, and community groups provides for joint emergency planning, training, and public outreach.

Listen to Brian Tishuk, the Executive Director of ChicagoFIRST, explain how his organization supports planning.

Story Transcript:

Brian Tishuk
Executive Director, ChicagoFIRST

A specific example of how a partnership can improve planning comes from an odd request that we received from the city of Chicago they asked for project ideas for a Mayor's fellow, a graduate student that would work for the city during summer. They've solicited ideas for such a person could work on it sounds more like a throwaway issue but we decided to try and roll out something we think is important to this so we suggested that some individual collect information about critical infrastructure within the

city that is there all the time that which rolls through like trucking and rail and the like and then indentify means by which the private sector and public sector can work together to enhance the resilience of that infrastructure so surprisingly they accepted that proposal we worked with the fellow on the project, provided them data and access to other parties that could help them write the paper. And in the end, it proposed a critical resilience task force that the city then stood up. So this consists of the public safety agencies on the public side and then a number of infrastructure sectors on the other. And we, Chicago First, is co-chairing this with the office of emergency management in Chicago. So its institutionalized and this addresses planning issues and will do so going forward.

Information Sharing

Information sharing is built on relationships and networking within public-private partnerships. Public-private partnerships generally already have informal methods of sharing information centered on existing relationships. However, formalizing information sharing capabilities can help your partnership evolve and better respond to incidents.

Select the following links to read examples of formal and informal information sharing and relationships:

Informal information sharing: Informal tools for information sharing include:

- Webinars
- Advisory boards
- Listservs
- Databases
- Monthly meetings
- Email distributions
- Conference calls

While some of these tools may be regularly scheduled events, they are still informal because they do not have a formal structure of how and what kind of information will be shared between partners.

Formal information sharing: Examples of formal information sharing tools include:

- The Homeland Security Information Network – Critical Sectors (HSIN-CS) is a national secure and trusted web-based portal for information sharing and collaboration between federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, private sector, and international partners engaged in the homeland security mission.
- Protected Critical Infrastructure Information (PCII) Program is an information-protection program that enhances information sharing between the private sector and the government. If the information submitted to PCII satisfies the requirements of the Critical Infrastructure Information Act of 2002 it is protected from the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA); state and local disclosure laws; and use in civil litigation.
- Information sharing between the public and private sectors can also be protected by partnerships gaining exemption from the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). This exemption enables some public-private partnerships to share critical information without any requirement for public disclosure.
- The National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) has a rotating seat for a private sector representative. The NRCC, when activated, provides overall emergency management coordination of the federal incident response. The NRCC private sector seat representative

leverages private sector coordination and collaboration capabilities to contribute to the overall response and recovery during an event; maintains visibility over the status of private sector facilities in impacted areas in terms of inventory levels and facility damage reports; and maintains visibility over private sector requirements, e.g. emergency power and security, in terms of what it will take to get them up and running.

- There are 10 FEMA Region Private Sector Liaisons that actively work to build formal relationships between the private sector and public sector emergency management agencies.
- InfraGard is a formal information sharing and analysis effort serving the interests and combining the knowledge base of a wide range of members between the FBI and the private sector.

Fusion centers: Fusion centers are formal information sharing bodies, but it is worth noting them separately. Federal, state, local, regional, and tribal agencies can come together with nonprofits and private sector representatives in a fusion center and share subject matter expertise and threat information. Fusion centers contribute to information sharing by receiving threat information, analyzing that information, and disseminating it to local public agencies and private businesses that can benefit from receiving that information.

To learn more about fusion centers, view the National Network of Fusion Centers Fact Sheet <http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/gc_1296484657738.shtm>

Resource Sharing

Public-private partnerships often include provisions on how to share resources in the event of an emergency, typically through a regional or statewide resource database.

The Colorado Emergency Preparedness Partnership developed a secure, voluntary registry of business resources (warehouses, office space, trucks, equipment, skilled personnel, etc.) that can be accessed during disasters by state and local emergency management.

To formalize a resource sharing plan, a partnership should ask themselves these questions about the resources they are going to share.

- Is the database available for a fee or for free?
- Who has access to the database?
- Is the database for products, services, or personnel?
- Is the database for response, protection, recovery, or preparedness?
- Is the database national, regional, state, or local?

Emergency Communications

During an incident, communicating situation reports is critical to effective response for both the public and private sectors. In addition to situation reports, partnerships should also consider how to share "real time" public safety messages that may need to be communicated during an incident. These types of emergency communications can help ensure the safety of residents of the impacted areas.

Many emergency management agencies have a private sector liaison and/or program to facilitate these relationships during emergencies. These programs can help to handle information requests during a large scale emergency and maintain an open flow of information.

For example, the New York Office of Emergency management has an email emergency notification system that provides business executives with current information about emergencies in New York.

Scenario: Earthquake in Central City, Liberty County

At 7:30 AM on Monday morning, a magnitude 6.7 earthquake shakes Central City, Liberty County. Steep slopes in the area have loosened rockslides. Older, historic buildings are damaged and may collapse entirely if many aftershocks continue. Cellular phone towers may have been affected, as it is difficult to place an outgoing mobile phone call. This is the first major earthquake in over 20 years and the population is somewhat unprepared. People are scared and nervous.

Central City's Critical Infrastructure Resiliency Task Force (CIRTF), a public-private partnership of public organizations and private businesses, has started to work on responding and recovering from this disaster.

Lesson Summary

This lesson presented the following topics:

- How public-private partnerships support the nation's emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation.
- Public-private partnership activities that enhance our emergency management efforts.