



Emergency Management Performance Grants

Providing Returns on a Nation's Investment

2015 Edition

Joint Report Presented by the National Emergency Management Association and the U.S.
Council of International Association of Emergency Managers



April 1, 2015

For the fourth year, the U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA) and the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) are proud to offer this joint report detailing the return on investment realized by the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program. This program is the only source of federal funding provided directly to state and local governments for all the functions which help build a robust emergency management system. In fact, the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) requires these funds be used in building all-hazards emergency management capacity at the state, local, and tribal government levels.

Recipients of this grant continue demonstrating a strong commitment; for every dollar of federal funds invested, at least that much is matched by both grantees and sub-grantees. In the absence of these funds, state and local governments would struggle to maintain the personnel or capabilities necessary to build and sustain an effective emergency management system.

Emergency managers all across the country remain dedicated to illustrating the full impact of EMPG in its entirety and demonstrating to the nation the true return on this investment. We remain thankful for the commitment within Congress and the Administration, especially in this time of austerity, to maintain this worthwhile program. Subsequently, we will continue to do all we can as associations to reflect back on the appropriated \$350 million and provide transparency in how these funds are sub-granted and invested.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan W. Koon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B" and "K".

Bryan Koon
President, National Emergency Management Association
Director, Florida Division of Emergency Management

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John 'Rusty' Russell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "R".

John "Rusty" Russell
President, U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers
Director, Huntsville-Madison County, Alabama, Emergency Management Agency

Demonstrated throughout the emergency management community, the return on investment of EMPG is validated through the actions of thousands of emergency managers at the local and state levels. This report on EMPG by NEMA and IAEM-USA represents a continued commitment to ensure that Congress and the Administration realize the capabilities being built and the work being conducted through the local, tribal, and state use of these funds. The current iteration of this report represents funding decisions made throughout Fiscal Year 2014 and reflects survey responses from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and 1,159 local emergency management agencies. This number represents less than one third of local jurisdictions estimated to be eligible for EMPG funding.

Despite the strong response to our survey, in reality, far more local and tribal jurisdictions receive EMPG funds than represented here. Therefore, far more is being accomplished with EMPG funds than represented in this report. Also, while the numbers of tasks accomplished by local and tribal jurisdictions shown in this report are impressive on their face, they are all the more so given 35 percent of the responding jurisdictions accomplished these tasks with less than a full-time emergency manager coordinating the effort and 41 percent of the tasks were carried out in jurisdictions with populations of less than 25,000.

The **District of Columbia** Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency uses EMPG funds to support the Joint All Hazards Operations Center (JAHOC) which coordinates all steady state emergency operations functions encompassing routine activities and incident coordination. The JAHOC's day-to-day operations, includes coordination of regularly occurring incidents. The JAHOC acts as the District's communications and coordination hub, monitoring news, public safety, traffic, and weather. The JAHOC is essential for coordinating all city wide day to day activities.



Aftermath of a dam break in Maine.
(Photo courtesy of MEMA)



Training exercise in Utah.
(Photo courtesy of Utah Department of Public Safety)



Georgia search and rescue training.
(Photo courtesy of GEMA)

Overview

EMPG is a unique federal grant program. Since its inception, EMPG has required a dollar-for-dollar match from grantees and sub-grantees for every dollar received from the federal government. Therefore, in each grant cycle, local, tribal, and state governments demonstrate their continued commitment to preparedness by sharing in the investment in EMPG. Even in these difficult economic times, local, tribal, and state governments continue to embrace the requirement of 50 percent non-federal match on all EMPG funds. In fact, most recipients exceed the required match. Local and tribal respondents indicated matching an average of \$3.00 in local funding for every \$1.00 in federal funding.

The program exists to build preparedness at the local, tribal, and state levels. Since the 1950s, the federal government has acknowledged a federal interest in the preparedness of state and local governments through investing in this program to ensure a minimum level of preparedness exists across our nation. Yet, the federal government has not made this investment alone.

Much is accomplished through the shared investment in EMPG. For instance, the program enables state, local, and tribal governments to prepare for all-hazards through planning, training, exercises, and developing professional expertise. It also supports response capability, communications systems, emergency operations centers (EOC), mutual aid agreements, and public outreach campaigns. Those areas are highlighted in this report.

Reducing Disaster Costs to the Federal Government

Fiscal year 2014 represented a range of hazards which required an unprecedented amount of emergency management professionalism and preparedness:

- 45 disasters required a presidential declaration and direct federal assistance.
- Beyond that, 27,006 events required state assets, but did not reach the level of a gubernatorial declaration, and;
- 17,890 local and tribal events were supported using EMPG funded staff or assets without state or federal support.



Photo courtesy of FEMA

Without a strong and robust emergency management system at the state, local, and tribal levels, many of the 44,896 state and local responses would falter or require federal support. *Capabilities afforded through EMPG allow these events to be managed without additional federal expenditures!*

A strong response mechanism is only as strong as the planning utilized to support the effort. In total, 1,707 state and 5,733 local plans were developed, maintained, or updated using EMPG funds. These plans included emergency operations plans, continuity of government or operations, evacuation plans, functional needs planning, and supporting annexes as well as appendices to existing plans.

On November 8, 2013, there was a crude oil derailment in the south part of **Pickens County, Alabama** carrying sweet crude oil. The trestle the train was crossing caved in and 28 tanker cars fell into the marsh below causing a huge explosion with about 700 thousand gallons of oil in tankers burning and about 20,000 gallons on the ground. Two days before the derailment, the county had a derailment with hazardous chemicals exercise. The exercise gave first responders a better understanding of what to do during such a dangerous incident; and therefore, possibly saving lives. The exercise would not have been possible without EMPG funding.

Practice Makes Perfect; Supporting Training & Exercises

EMPG supported 1,143 statewide and 4,756 local and tribal workshops, drills, and functional full-scale exercises, which benefited 96,361 state and 447,707 local participants. Without a comprehensive exercise program to complement the training efforts, the preparedness cycle would be compromised.

Systems and plans are supported by skilled professionals. These personnel must be trained and exercised on a regular basis in order to effectively support the complex emergency management system. EMPG provided significant support to these efforts in fiscal year 2014 by allowing 8,427 local and tribal, and 5,218 state classes to be conducted related to emergency management. These classes cover the major issues of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery and include training for public officials, emergency response personnel, citizens, and emergency management personnel. In total, 299,040 local and tribal personnel and 102,713 state personnel received training.



Georgia Emergency Management Agency performing a training exercise.

Washington conducted statewide Public Assistance training for local jurisdiction and state agency officials on damage assessment; documentation requirements; project worksheet development; Public Assistance sub-grantee grant program requirements; and Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) requirements with the help of EMPG funding. This outreach greatly enhanced recovery operations during the two disasters in 2014 and trained over 1,300 local and state personnel from October 2013 to June 2014 in 43 training classes. Applicants responded faster during recovery operations. Other jurisdictions that were not impacted by the disaster were able to send trained staff in disaster recovery to assist the impacted local jurisdictions.

Empowering the Public through Preparedness

EMPG continues to support efforts to bring about an increase in public preparedness. In fiscal year 2014, EMPG significantly contributed to public awareness and outreach campaign efforts. Local, tribal, and state emergency management officials conducted 5,886 local and tribal and 1,295 statewide citizen and community preparedness outreach campaigns. According to state responses, these outreach programs benefited 135,568,054 residents while locally-specific programs impacted 24,608,092 citizens.

In September, 2011 *Bastrop County, Texas* experienced the most expensive wildfire in Texas' history and was the third highest per capita loss in the nation's wildfire history. The fire burned 34,000 acres, all within the County, destroyed over 1,700 structures and claimed two lives. The recovery needs included re-building homes, lives, erosion damage and economic vitality. The Bastrop County Office of Emergency Management (BCOEM) has become the lead agent in coordinating the recovery efforts. The BCOEM is partially funded by EMPG dollars and the wildfire recovery effort success will in large part depend upon sustaining the BCOEM with EMPG funding.

Leaders across the country continue to discuss how important it is for the public to achieve higher levels of readiness. From the President of the United States and FEMA Administrator to the local emergency manager of the smallest county, those involved in emergency management emphasize the critical nature of individuals and household preparedness because the strength of our nationwide system rests on how ready they are to contend with disasters.

Alabama Emergency Management Agency reaches thousands of individuals by participating in social media and conducting contests that help Alabamians become more prepared. These programs include activities that allow individuals to learn more about preparedness and offer an opportunity to win important items to add to their emergency kits. As these programs are conducted, participation increases significantly and thousands more learn about preparedness. These efforts are possible with EMPG funding.



Photo courtesy of North Dakota Emergency Management

Communications & Warning Systems

Grantees and sub-grantees purchased or maintained 459 state and 7,734 local emergency response systems or services. Emergency response systems include those assets supporting emergency response operations. Some examples are incident management software, shelter management software, or voluntary and donation management services. In addition to response systems or services, 118 state and 990 local and tribal community warning systems and 244 state and 1,078 local and tribal redundant communications systems were purchased, maintained, or upgraded. These systems provide the ability to alert and warn response organizations and the general public of both pending and spontaneous disaster events.

Communications, warning systems, and emergency operations centers remain an eligible expense under EMPG because these critical systems actively support planning and response efforts. In fiscal year 2014, EMPG supported 139 State and 1,301 local emergency operations centers.



Photo courtesy of New York

The *Vermont* Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) used EMPG funds to implement a statewide notification system. This system allows the public to sign up for and receive public safety notifications through a number of delivery systems including text, e-mail, telephone, social media and fax. The system utilizes the FEMA IPAWS EAS and CMAS systems to reach the public. Vermont's system is a joint initiative with the State of New York. Vermont has entered into a contractual agreement with the *New York* Department of Homeland Security to utilize the alerting system infrastructure which has then been custom designed for Vermont's needs.

Working Together Through Mutual Aid

When mutual aid agreements between jurisdictions exist, the need for immediate federal support is minimized. These agreements remain critical to mounting an effective response in the wake of a disaster. Support from EMPG is crucial in maintaining mutual aid efforts across the various levels of government. In fiscal year 2014, EMPG supported 6,453 local and tribal and 4,819 statewide mutual aid agreements, memorandums of understanding, and memorandums of agreement with neighboring jurisdictions, non-profit agencies, Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADS), and the private sector.

Duckwater Shoshone Tribe - Five years ago the small Tribe didn't have any type of emergency management in place. Today, they have many approved plans and documents, trained employees, tribal council members and summer youth employees trained in ICS. They also have an approved THIRA, hazard mitigation plan, tribal emergency operations plan, continuity of government plan, and the Tribal Emergency Management Mutual Aid Compact (TEMAC) in the state of Nevada with other tribes. Without funding from EMPG, the Tribe would not have had any of these items completed.

The State of ***Michigan*** has utilized the EMPG program to contribute to the successful implementation of the Northern Emergency Management Assistance Compact between the USA and Canada. Over the course of the fiscal year, staff met with other states and provincial counterparts to finalize the NEMAC Operations Manual and Appendices. The compact enables cross border assistance in emergency situations where interstate or interprovincial resources could be enhanced by cross border resources.



Cavalier County, North Dakota - During the past four EMPG grant periods, North Dakota emergency managers have worked together to enhance communications, mutual aid, improve the sharing of assets and knowledge of inventories that are available in the northeast region. The emergency managers have continued to work with the counties and Tribal Nations in North Dakota, to ensure that they have assistance in disasters, familiarity with plans and procedures, and to ensure the public awareness and educational campaigns are coordinated. By enhancing these relationships, the emergency managers are able to reach more of their citizens with messages that are consistent across the region. A number of counties along the international border with Canada are coordinating messages with EMO Manitoba. Without EMPG funding these efforts would not be possible.

Conclusion

In 2014, the federal investment in EMPG was \$350 million, a little more than \$1 per citizen. The federal government wisely leverages every opportunity to enhance the emergency management capabilities in this country since local and state government match at least dollar-for-dollar.

EMPG provides for planning, training, exercises, communications systems, and building a robust response system. The acquisition of equipment and the authoring of plans alone, however, do not create capacity in state and local governments without trained professionals to use the equipment and implement the plans. EMPG adds value to the system by providing professional emergency managers who coordinate the resources of the whole community to be in the right place at the right time. In addition to these professionals, there remain thousands of volunteers who give their time as emergency management staff. These professionals and volunteers are dedicated to seeing EMPG invested wisely to achieve preparedness in their communities so when disasters occur, less federal assistance is required. Many local and tribal jurisdictions report EMPG funding is the difference between having a local emergency manager (full or part-time), and not having one at all.

Without a strong and robust emergency management system at the state, local, and tribal levels, the responses to many disasters would falter or require federal support. *Capabilities afforded through EMPG allow these events to be managed without additional federal expenditures!*

As demonstrated in this report, local, tribal, and state governments managed 44,896 events without federal assistance in FY 2014. While disasters remain unpredictable and no investment can completely eliminate the risks, supporting the development of state, local, and tribal capabilities through EMPG is proven to minimize disaster effects and limit federal expenditures.

The program remains a critical aspect of disaster preparedness and response and demonstrates a significant return on the investment of all jurisdictions—including that of the federal government. This report represents a snapshot of how EMPG impacts the disaster preparedness and response landscape. It clearly demonstrates the value and dedication of all jurisdictions who participate in the program.

We appreciate the support EMPG has received in the past and hope such support continues as we work tirelessly to demonstrate the return on the nation's investment.

Destruction from a tornado that hit Louisville, Mississippi in May 2014. Photo courtesy of FEMA.



Photo of Napa, California earthquake damage. Courtesy of Ellis Maynard, FEMA



Ready Alabama uses Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training modified for kids to teach them to be prepared for a natural disaster. The week culminates in a realistic mock disaster. Courtesy of U.S. Space & Rocket Center, Huntsville, Alabama.

ABOUT NEMA:

Established in 1974, NEMA represents the emergency management directors of the 50 states, territories, and the District of Columbia. These professionals are responsible to their governors for all-hazards emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery from all emergencies, disasters, and threats to the homeland. NEMA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization headquartered in Lexington, Kentucky, and an affiliate of the Council of State Governments.

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ABOUT IAEM-USA:

IAEM-USA is the nation's largest association of emergency management professionals, with over 8,000 members, including emergency managers at the state and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business and the nonprofit sector. Most of the members are city and county emergency managers who perform the crucial function of coordinating and integrating the efforts at the local level to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters, including terrorist attacks. The membership includes emergency managers from large urban areas as well as rural areas. IAEM is a non-profit, non-partisan organization headquartered in Falls Church, Virginia.

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