Emergency Management in Colorado

Educating Policy Makers and Creating Sustainable Programs

Colorado Emergency Management Roundtable

2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Colorado Emergency Management (COEM) Roundtable was formed in 2017 as a grassroots organization with the primary purpose of bringing together a body of emergency management partners to study complex issues and challenges in the field of emergency management.

The first set of questions the Roundtable concentrated efforts on involved the foundation of emergency management. What was found in initial conversations was that not only is there a lack of understanding about the core concepts of emergency management, but there is also a lack of education about what programs should include to ensure each community is most prepared and able to respond and recover from catastrophic events.

Therefore, the Roundtable provides the following insights to address the core function of emergency management, the necessary development of emergency management programs, and the best available methods of sustaining emergency management in Colorado.

Part One explores the definition of emergency management. Most commonly, the definition involves the five phases of emergency management. The proposed definition of emergency management in the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act is "the actions taken to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters and mitigate against current and future risk." The COEM Roundtable found, however, that much more is involved in emergency management than those five phases. Emergency Managers must also describe the actions taken within each phase to adequately define the roles and responsibilities of an emergency manager.

Part Two goes beyond the definition of an emergency manager as a position and discussed the components necessary for a successful emergency management program. This includes program elements and core competencies in the execution of emergency management.

Part Three begins the discussion about the Return on Investment (ROI) in emergency management by reviewing the core benefits of an effective comprehensive emergency management program. Part Four discusses where emergency management belongs in an agency or jurisdiction, and Part Five describes various options to sustain emergency management programs long-term.

Emergency Management is not a person or position, but rather a necessary function and collaborative effort among many jurisdictions and agencies for all communities. In order to be effective, there must be consistency, common standards and general core competencies. There also must be a common understanding of the risks associated with the lack of a comprehensive program, and the benefits to a jurisdiction or agency in investing in emergency management in the future.

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INTRODUCTION

The Emergency Management field is evolving rapidly, and with the increase in both natural and human-caused threats throughout the United States and around the world, there is a greater need for emergency managers to come together to solve complex problems. The Colorado Emergency Management (COEM) Roundtable was formed in 2017 as a grassroots organization with the primary purpose of bringing together a body of emergency management partners to study complex issues and challenges to develop suggestions for future action.

While the list of challenges is long, the Roundtable agreed that we needed to start from the beginning to ensure a collective understanding of emergency management in Colorado. What was found in initial conversations was that not only is there a lack of understanding about the core concepts of emergency management, but there is also a lack of education about what programs should include to ensure each community is most prepared and able to respond and recover from catastrophic events.

Therefore, the Roundtable provides the following insights to address the core function of emergency management, the necessary development of emergency management programs, and the best available methods of sustaining emergency management in Colorado.   To do this effectively the Roundtable has explored the following:

1. A common definition of Emergency Management.

2. A common framework for the development of Emergency Management programs.

3. Sustainability of Emergency Management Programs.

The National Response Framework, National Disaster Recovery Framework, and the National Mitigation Planning Framework all indicate that the local government has the greatest number of roles and responsibilities in disaster management. Current federal policy direction indicates that this responsibility will only grow in the coming years with less federal funds available for disaster response and recovery. All indications are clear that local jurisdictions must begin the shift from reactive to proactive measures for emergency management.

PROBLEM DEFINITION

Political, social, environmental, organizational and economic drivers have created the need for greater flexibility, adaptability, and simultaneous coordination and cooperation among agencies and jurisdictions for emergency management across the United States.

Political: Colorado is a home rule state leading to increased complexity in authorities and responsibilities for emergency management. Home Rule municipalities working within counties can create additional complexity when determining county-wide damage cost thresholds for public and individual assistance and for the coordination of response and recovery activities leading to extravagant efforts for coordination in solving complex problems.

Additionally, emergency management in Colorado looks vastly different from one jurisdiction to another. While some jurisdictions have a fully functional emergency management agency with all responsibilities within the five primary phases (mission areas) of emergency management, others may have only emergency response responsibilities, or "other duties as assigned." Part of the reason for this is that there isn't clarity at the state level or in Colorado State Statutes regarding the core functions and responsibilities of local emergency management programs. Additional local, state and federal mandates increase this confusion and cause a fracturing of the understanding of the value of emergency management in Colorado.

Social: Social Capital has been found in multiple studies to be one of the leading drivers of a community's ability to adequately respond to and recover from catastrophic events. Social Capital consists of three primary areas: trust, networks and social norms. The social capacity, or inherent level of trust from our community members, is increasingly more diverse as our tourists, businesses and residential populations evolve. Local level diversity in our communities is reflective of the changes occurring at the state and national levels. Colorado is becoming more diverse in its social, economic, cultural, educational, and religious backgrounds. The needs for services and support are not the same as they were even one decade ago. A comprehensive and integrated emergency management program enhances the overall effectiveness of preparedness, prevention, mitigation, response and recovery.

Environmental: As we have seen in recent years, natural disasters have increased in complexity and have become more frequent. The incidence of hurricanes has increased, along with their intensity, storm surge is becoming more common, 1,000 year floods are occurring every five years, and tornadoes are now occurring in areas where they have never been recorded in the past. And in the west, we are seeing a change in risk over the last decade with Colorado's largest flood in recorded history along with multiple years of large-scale catastrophic wildfires. The climate drives most of the hazards we see in Colorado. With a changing climate, we will also see a greater need for coordination and cooperation among agencies and jurisdictions.

Organizational: Traditional emergency management programs rely on a centralized hierarchy similar to the Incident Command System used in the field, but this system has proven to be inadequate in the emergency management environment. Municipalities, counties, special districts and other elected offices have jurisdictional responsibilities during and after disasters creating the need for a high degree of coordination and cooperation between jurisdictions to ensure success. This can only be done by honoring jurisdictional authority and responsibility while also using a collaborative approach with non-governmental partners and volunteer organizations. This involves both a vertical and a horizontal approach to emergency management.

Economic: The size and complexity of disasters is increasing without a corresponding increase in staff and resources. Currently, each emergency management program attempts to meet all local, state and federal requirements for emergency management while also trying to meet the immediate needs of the community. With the increasing threat of human-caused disasters such

as the Las Vegas Shooting and Charlottesville, along with the increase in natural hazards from climate extremes, these requirements are more difficult to meet every year. The only way to successfully execute all necessary tasks for protecting our communities and to meet all local, state and federal requirements is to work together in all phases of emergency management.

These factors lead to the need for new solutions and adaptable systems to keep up with our changing environment. Planning efforts can be facilitated more efficiently within the context of multi-jurisdictional emergency management programs developed consistently across Colorado.

Part 1:

Definition of Emergency Management

Spanning the gap between

"It's never going to happen here"

and

"We are all going to die"

PHASES OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Emergency management programs are divided into a set of five phases: prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.

The Five Phases (or Mission Areas):

Prevention:	Actions to avoid or to stop an incident from occurring
Preparedness:	Activities to prepare emergency responders, emergency managers and community members for human-caused or natural disasters
Mitigation:	Activities designed to minimize the losses from disaster
Response:	Actions taken during the disaster
Recovery:	Activities that help to restore critical community infrastructure, functions and manage reconstruction

These five phases are often discussed in a silo, working on one piece without regard to the others. It is the contention of the COEM Roundtable that all five phases are deeply interconnected and are therefore impossible to separate into individual areas. For example, it is impossible to have a robust response program without a comprehensive plan and a training and exercise program. The chances of an incident occurring are higher without prevention programs, which also include key elements of preparedness. Response will also be much more difficult if mitigation has not been a core component of the emergency management program, and recovery will suffer without a prepared community and strong response operation.

THE DEFINITION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The definition of emergency management in the State of Colorado will be different depending upon the jurisdiction or agency that is asked the question. This is also true nationally where the emergency management field continues to evolve. Therefore, the objective of the COEM Roundtable was to determine the common elements across jurisdictions to get to a core definition of emergency management that would be true across Colorado.

General Definitions:

Disaster: A sudden unforeseen event with natural, technological or social causes that leads to destruction, loss and damage.

Emergency: An unexpected event which places life and/or property in danger and requires an immediate response through the use of community resources and procedures.

Hazard: A natural or human-made event that threatens to adversely affects human life, property or activity to the extent of causing a disaster (from the World Health Organization).

Resiliency: The ability of communities to rebound, positively adapt to, or thrive amidst changing conditions or challenges – including disasters and climate change – and maintain quality of life, healthy growth, durable systems, and conservation of resources for present and future generations (from the CO Resiliency Working Group).

Definition of Emergency Management

The definition of emergency management in the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act is "the actions taken to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters and mitigate against current and future risk."

The World Health Organization defines Emergency Management as the organization and management of resources and responsibilities for dealing with all humanitarian aspects of emergencies—preparedness, response, and recovery—to reduce the harmful effects of all hazards, including disasters.

These two definitions have the same basic components of: 1) resource management, 2) preparedness programs, 3) response coordination, 4) recovery efforts, and 5) actions taken to reduce or eliminate risk.

ANALYSIS

Common definitions of emergency management discuss the five phases of emergency management but do not specifically discuss the actions required to be successful. It is because of this distinction that the definition seems to change based upon the jurisdiction. This is also the reason why so many people do not clearly understand the emergency management field even after a definition is provided. Therefore, with a common definition there also must be a set of core competencies that further define the ACTIONS TAKEN to execute the five phases of emergency management. For this reason, the COEM Roundtable favors the World Health organization definition with a few adjustments.

Definition of Emergency Management

The organization and management of resources and responsibilities for dealing with all humanitarian aspects of emergencies—preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery—to reduce the harmful effects of all hazards, including disasters, for future generations.

Part 2:

Framework for Emergency Management Programs

Program Elements and Core Competencies in the Execution of Emergency Management

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Another important aspect of emergency management is to distinguish between an emergency management agency and an emergency management program. As shown below, there are multiple elements to a program which involves several cooperating agencies and jurisdictions in both the public and private sector. An emergency management agency is the organization that coordinates between all the necessary agencies and jurisdictions involved in emergency management, but the program involves the elements to accomplish emergency management tasks.

Two national models exist for the formation of emergency management programs: NFPA 1600 and the Emergency Management Accreditation Program.

National Fire Protection Association 1600

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), in cooperation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), and the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), developed a set of standards in emergency management called NFPA 1600: *Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity/Continuity of Operations Programs*. This standard establishes a common set of criteria for all hazards disaster/emergency management and business continuity programs.

NFPA 1600's comprehensive framework is also applied to standards for hospitals. The 2005 revision to NFPA 99 (*Standard for Health Care Facilities)*, Chapter 12: Health Care Emergency Management, incorporated the "program" emphasis of NFPA 1600--serving to differentiate an "emergency management program" for healthcare systems from the current emphasis by other hospital standards on an "emergency management plan."

Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP)

The Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) is a voluntary national accreditation process for State, territorial, tribal, and local emergency management programs. Using collaboratively developed, recognized standards, and independent assessments, EMAP provides a means for strategic improvement of emergency management programs culminating in accreditation.

EMAP uses NFPA 1600 as the basis for guidelines that are used to accredit state, local, and tribal emergency management programs. Accreditation involves a disciplined and stringent review of program documentation, observations, and interviews with program officials (e.g., officials with the emergency management agency and from partner agencies, such as transportation, health, utilities, environmental, fire, and law enforcement).

EMAP is a scalable, yet rigorous, national standard for state/territorial, local, regional and tribal government emergency management programs. EMAP was collaboratively developed in a series of working groups of emergency management stakeholders from government, business,

and other sectors; and continues to evolve to represent the best in emergency management for the public sector.

NFPA 1600 and EMAP Program Measures

The following program measures are considered necessary components of a viable emergency management program as outlined in both NFPA 1600 and EMAP:

1. Program Establishment and Maintenance: A documented emergency management program shall be established to include executive policies, roles and responsibilities, program goals and objectives, plans and procedures, budget and schedule of activities, and records management procedures. This must be shown in official jurisdictional documents, such as codes and standards, executive orders, policies and procedures, resolutions and/or ordinances.

2. Program Management: Demonstrated commitment to the program to prevent, mitigate against, respond to, maintain continuity during, and recover from incidents.

3. Administration and Finance: Fiscal and administrative procedures designed to support an emergency management program are important for day-to-day as well as disaster operations.

4. Laws and Authorities: Laws and authorities refer to the legal underpinning for the emergency management program. Federal, state, tribal, and local statutes and regulations establish legal authority for development and maintenance of the emergency management program and organization; and define the emergency powers, authorities, and responsibilities of the chief executive and the program coordinator. These principles serve as the foundation for the program and its activities.

5. Threat and Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Consequence Analysis: Tribal, state/territorial, and local threat and hazard identification and risk assessment (THIRA) activities involve identification of threats and hazards as well as assessment of risks to persons, public and private property, and structures. The data collected at the community and local level provides much of the data the State or jurisdiction will use to produce its jurisdiction-wide assessment of risk. The information collected during the THIRA will also be used for more detailed data and loss estimation projections and post-event assessments.

6. Hazard Mitigation: The intent of a hazard mitigation program is to target resources and prioritize mitigation activities to lessen the effects of disasters to citizens, communities, businesses, and industries.

7. Prevention and Security: Prevention and security are those program areas dealing specifically with homeland security and terrorism, critical infrastructure and key resource (CIKR) protection, and epidemiological and public health initiatives. It includes intelligence fusion centers, interdiction, deterrence, and enforcement operations. It differs from

mitigation in that it inherently focuses on those threats that can be feasibly prevented, such as intentional attacks or sabotage, and identification and containment of disease outbreaks.

8. <u>Planning</u>: Emergency management involves the development of several kinds of plans. This core competency deals with strategic plans, which set the overall course and direction of the program; emergency operations/response plans, which focus on the mechanisms for activating the organization and its assets during an actual operation; mitigation plans, which focus on prevention and reduction of the impacts of hazards; continuity of operations plans, which provide for continuation of essential program functions during a disaster; and a recovery plan or strategy, which guides the jurisdiction through restoration of essential services, facilities and functions.

9. <u>Incident Management</u>: Incident management allows officials to: 1) analyze the situation and decide how to quickly and effectively respond; 2) direct and coordinate response forces; 3) coordinate with other jurisdictions; and 4) use available resources efficiently and effectively.

10. <u>Resource Management and Logistics</u>: Resource management involves the pre-disaster, systematic identification of resource requirements; shortfalls and inventories; as well as the maintenance of a system to order, mobilize, track, manage, and demobilize resources during an incident.

11. <u>Mutual Aid / Assistance</u>: Mutual aid addresses the need for agreements and capabilities for sharing response and recovery assistance across jurisdictional lines.

12. <u>Communications and Warning (Pre-Disaster)</u>: Communications involves establishing, using, maintaining, augmenting, and providing backup for communications devices required during day-to-day and emergency response operations. Warning and notification includes rapid dissemination of critical and actionable information to the public/communities and government officials.

13. <u>Operations and Procedures</u>: Development, coordination, and implementation of operational plans and procedures are fundamental to effective disaster response and recovery.

14. <u>Facilities</u>: Facilities are required to adequately support emergency management activities (e.g., shelters and emergency operation centers [EOCs]).

15. <u>Training and Education</u>: Training involves the assessment, development, and implementation of a documented training/educational program for public/private officials and emergency response personnel.

16. <u>Exercises, Evaluations, and Corrective Actions</u>: A program of regularly scheduled drills, exercises, and appropriate follow-through activities designed for assessment and

evaluation of emergency plans and capabilities is critical to a tribal, state, or local emergency management program.

17. Crisis Communications, Public Education, and Information: Public education and information provides communities with education on the nature of hazards, protective measures, and an awareness of government and citizen responsibilities during a disaster. Crisis communication is also a priority with the focus of providing accurate, timely, and useful information and instructions to people at risk in the community throughout the emergency/ disaster period.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES

The challenge that emergency managers face nationwide is not in the basic definition of the field, but in the actions taken to effectively implement emergency management. Therefore, beyond looking at the five primary phases of emergency management, the COEM Roundtable also explored the core elements required for emergency management to be successful.

California Emergency Management Competency Framework

In 2015, the California Emergency Services Association created an Emergency Management Competency Framework that is evidence-based and collaborative across the United States and Internationally. It was developed as a strategic framework of key competencies required to successfully perform the functions of emergency management.

Source: California Emergency Management Competency Framework

Components of the Framework

The primary component of the framework is an integrated set of evidence-based competencies grouped into eight key areas. These consist of specific capabilities that when integrated, represent core elements of emergency management.

Key Area 1 – Relationship Management

Relationships with partners and communities are managed to achieve mutual understanding and effective action.

A high level of trust is essential in the EM environment. Trust needs to be established through the development and management of effective relationships. These relationships should be established before an emergency, and the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders must be defined and understood. EM practitioners at the local, regional and national levels work together to agree and document EM arrangements. This happens through effective communication during planning, and means that when plans are implemented, every stakeholder understands their roles, and the roles of their partners.

Key Area 2 – Information Management

Information is collected, analyzed, and managed using appropriately structured systems and processes at all levels and across all functions of EM.

Information management is about understanding the information required to support an activity, locating required information, and evaluating and applying it. Information flow can easily be disrupted by a range of internal and external factors. These factors, such as systems failure, must be monitored and addressed for effective decision-making to occur at all levels. Information informs decision-making. To do this, systems need to be established to support gathering and storage of information. These systems may be manual or electronic, and they need to allow for analysis and translation of information so it can be understood and accessible.

Key Area 3 – Risk Management

Risk management is applied at all levels and across all functions of EM.

Risk management addresses the risks associated with all hazards and requires identification and characterization of threats, analysis of the likelihood and consequences of the associated risks, evaluation of those risks to establish priorities, and development of risk treatment options. Risk management processes involve the collection and analysis of information. Successful risk management is undertaken collaboratively, requiring coordinated activity across a range of stakeholders, enabled by effective leadership and relationship management. Regular communication with partner organizations and communities is essential throughout all stages of the process. In the context of EM, there is an emphasis on risk management as the precursor

to planning. However, the same principles apply in terms of operational, financial and reputation risk – these are important dimensions in the implementation of plans.

Key Area 4 – Planning

The process of comprehensive and integrated planning – development, maintenance, evaluation and review.

EM planning involves the development and documentation of scalable arrangements (including governance, structure, management systems, roles and responsibilities, processes, and procedures) for reducing risk and being ready for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies. Planning takes place at local, regional and national levels and across agencies and sectors. The effectiveness of EM plans is determined through implementation, whether in emergencies or exercises. EM plans should be evaluated and reviewed on a regular basis to determine effectiveness of current arrangements, and to identify capability development needs.

Key Area 5 – Implementation

Implementation of operational plans (including response and recovery plans), and management of physical, human and financial resources.

Implementation relies on the effectiveness of operational plans and the allocation of appropriate resources (human, physical and financial). Human resource levels, available facilities and equipment, and financial management processes are all factors in planning and need to be understood, as do the roles and responsibilities of individuals, partners organizations, agencies, and communities.

Key Area 6 – Communication

Collaborative and coordinated development, prioritization and transfer of information and key messages between partners and communities.

EM stakeholders require excellent communication skills to integrate multi-agency mandates, to negotiate viewpoints, and to align plans, policies and procedures. Communication tests the quality and productivity of responsibilities of stakeholders and the resources available to them.

Key Area 7 – Capability Development

Development of individual and organizational capability at all levels and across all functions of EM.

Capable individuals and organizations are central to effective emergency management. Capability includes having and demonstrating the right attitude, displaying a willingness to learn or share learning, and being motivated to continually improve. This includes career and volunteer individuals, as well as the public and private sector.

Key Area 8 – Leadership

The ability to empower and influence others and drive change at all levels and across all functions of EM.

Leadership is important for the development, communication and achievement of EM outcomes. Leaders must be able to initiate and engage in relationship management activities with energy and motivation. Leaders demonstrate personal strength, courage, integrity and the ability to influence others and drive change. A crucial component of leadership is self-management, which includes a learning curiosity and commitment that demonstrates an individual's desire to lead one's own capability development.

Source: California Emergency Services Association (CESA) Emergency Management Competency Framework, September 2015.
https://www.eiseverywhere.com/file_uploads/9fb585198ab8ddea7f6417c8016dbe4d_CESAEMStandardsCompetencyFramework-OfficialVersion-September2015.pdf

COLORADO CORE ELEMENTS OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

In 2017, the COEM Roundtable focused discussions on the core competencies that make an effective emergency manager. These conversations were not conducted with the California Framework in mind, but many of the same elements were found:

Core Element 1 – Leadership

The Emergency Manager creates an inspiring vision of the future and motivates people to engage with that vision; and provides leadership before, during and after events to ensure success.

Core Element 2 – Coordination and Synchronization

Much like an orchestra, emergency management requires coordination to guide multiple partners and stakeholders and the ability to guide and synchronize activities to meet an end goal.

Core Element 3 – Complex Problem Solving

One-agency problems or unilateral problems are often solved quickly by the agencies facing the problem. Complex problem solving, however, is common in emergency management as subject-matter experts from various fields are often required to work through the complexities involved in order to get to a solution. Emergency Managers work with all of these agencies to come to common understanding and to see a broader view in order to solve complex problems.

Core Element 4 – Communication

Emergency Managers must use a diverse set of communications skills to communicate with the public, emergency response agencies, emergency management partners, and policy makers.

Each will have their own set of needs and different styles of communication are necessary to successfully provide the right message. This also involves mediation and facilitation techniques to resolve conflict among competing parties and facilitating discussions to meet goals.

Core Element 5 – Relationship Management

Collaboration and relationship building is essential to create the plans and programs necessary to be successful. Relationships should be managed well before an emergency or disaster, whether it is for resource management, information management, policy direction, or disaster coordination.

Core Element 6 – Information Management

Information must be managed across multiple sectors, industries, agencies and jurisdictions to produce a common operating picture.

Core Element 7 – Legal and Regulatory Expertise

Knowledge of industry laws and regulations and all levels of government and within the private sector to best protect the agency or jurisdiction served.

Core Element 8 – Resource Management and Capability Development

The ability to find, procure, mobilize, deploy, and demobilize essential resources as well as the ability to develop core capacity within an organization / jurisdiction to meet the needs of the emergency or disaster.

Core Element 9 – Integration

The act of combining key elements across jurisdictions and horizontally/vertically as part of a distributed network. Looking at the end goal and working backwards to determine key connections, interdependencies and areas of integration.

Core Element 10 – Secure, Execute and Develop Fiscal and Contracts Management

The ability to develop fiscal processes and procedures and manage contracts that allow for the execution of emergency management programs.

Core Element 11 – Planning, Training and Exercise

The ability to effectively create and execute plans and procedures for emergency management programs, including testing those plans through training and exercise programs.

Core Element 12 – Consequence Management

Examining situations holistically, looking at the short and long-term effects and consequences of each decision.

ANALYSIS

Much like the definition of emergency management, the definition of what elements should be in an emergency management program differs from one area to the next. For this reason, it has been difficult to adequately educate policy leaders and key officials on roles and responsibilities, and to ensure every jurisdiction has the necessary components to meet the needs of their area.

From the analysis conducted in California, as well as the discussions amongst emergency management partners in Colorado, there is agreement, however, on the core functions within a program. These functions go well beyond the basic standards outlined in NFPA 1600 and EMAP into areas of risk management, information management, leadership, collaboration and coordination. While each agency and/or emergency services jurisdiction has a specific role in an emergency, emergency managers must span across jurisdictions and agencies to effectively manage complex disasters. This is what sets emergency management apart.

Part 3:

Benefits of Comprehensive Emergency Management Programs

BENEFITS OF COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

A comprehensive emergency management program has clear benefits for the participating jurisdictions as well as all our emergency management partners. These benefits are qualitative, quantitative, and can bring tangible results to local jurisdictions. As seen in recent years, those jurisdictions without robust emergency management programs will suffer and ultimately fail in complex emergencies. Since those complex events are increasing, it is more important than ever before to build programs that are comprehensive in nature, span all mission areas, and meet the needs of the local jurisdiction. Some of the largest benefits of emergency management include:

Increased Effectiveness and Efficiency – All jurisdictions will benefit from a comprehensive and integrated program through decreased redundancy and increased efficiency. Instead of each agency attempting to meet the overwhelming needs and requirements of individual emergency management programs, they will be able to collaborate to fulfill all functions. This will lead to improved compliance with local, state and federal requirements while also strengthening the local system for all participating communities. This also provides the opportunity to develop an advanced emergency management program that creates innovative service and excellence for the community, and one that is expandable as the community evolves over time.

Increase in Primary and Support Agency Coordination – The need for increased situational awareness exists on any emergency, whether a daily occurrence or a large-scale or complex event. Local challenges move from severe weather season, shortly followed by wildfire season coupled with summer special events such as bicycle races and festivals. Wildfire season and fall monsoons continue until winter when there is the potential for severe winter weather, closed roads, and the need to shelter stranded people and animals. Each individual agency may be looking at their specific function, but an emergency management program looks at those areas that cross function into other areas. Additionally, no one agency is involved in recovery from disaster – it takes a combination of private and public-sector partners working together to solve the problems that are created in short- and long-term recovery. Emergency managers work through these complexities to ensure everyone has the necessary information and resources to manage each event.

Increased Staffing Support – Cooperating between emergency management partners leads to a force-multiplier of staff to manage all mission areas, including improved resource management, decreased overall cost to each jurisdiction, and an opportunity to sustain continuity of operations through cross-training the staff to serve in multiple roles. This also leads to synergy between agencies ensuring better overall future collaboration.

Improved Programs and Plans – A robust emergency management program leads to improved training programs through joint exercises, improved program efficiencies through reduced documentation and planning redundancies, improved on-going cross training for coverage and

continuity, and greater collaboration through joint protocols and procedures and project sharing. Within a program, we will be able to capitalize upon the strengths of each agency, creating synergy and additional opportunities for individual and programmatic success.

Increased Fiscal Capacity – Improved policies and programs through common process development, increased staff support through shared program responsibilities, and an integrated EOC environment leads to fiscal benefits for all participating jurisdictions. Through shared technology, equipment, and resources the ability to meet the needs of the community more effectively and efficiently with limited staffing is greatly increased and controls the need to increase individual budgets to meet upcoming fiscal challenges.

Colorado Resiliency Framework Sectors
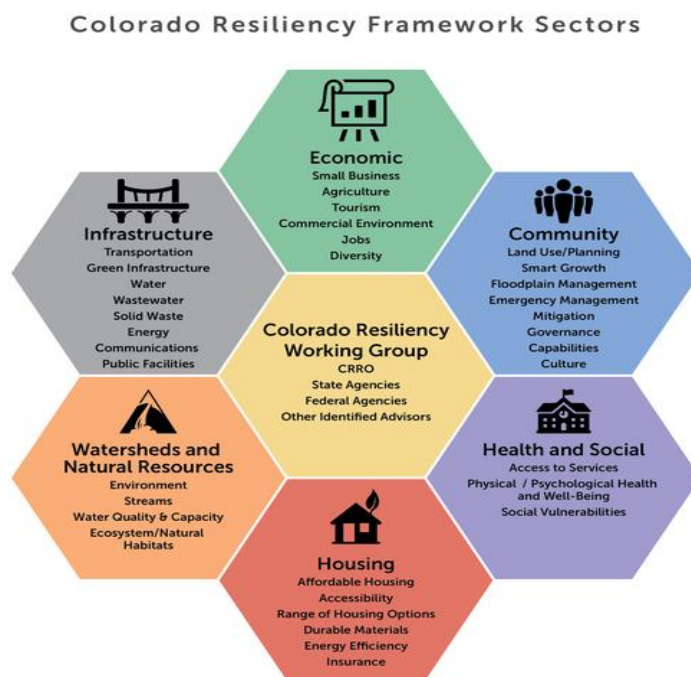
Filling the Gap – The unique nature of the field allows emergency managers to look at problems systemically, across jurisdictional boundaries and agency responsibilities, to see the gap. This may be a gap in understanding, a gap in risk reduction, or a gap in planning and preparedness. The ability to provide strategic gap analysis lessens the risk of failure during emergencies and events.

Consequence Management – Much like gap analysis, consequence management is the art of looking at the cascading effects of an event within a community as a whole. For example, a solar eclipse will not, on its own, cause harm unless you look directly at the sun. But the consequences of the movement of millions of people into areas without the capacity to handle the surge are enormous. To effectively manage these consequences, coordination is necessary between multiple agencies and jurisdictions that cross typical partnership areas.

Part 4:

Where Does Emergency Management Belong?

WHERE DOES EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BELONG?

In Colorado State Statute, within the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act (C.R.S. 24-33.5-707), it states that, "Each county shall maintain a disaster agency or participate in a local or interjurisdictional disaster agency which, except as otherwise provided under this part 7, has jurisdiction over and serves the entire county. The minimum composition of a disaster agency is a director or coordinator appointed and <u>governed by the chief executive officer or governing body</u> of the appointing jurisdiction.   The director or coordinator is responsible for the planning and coordination of the local disaster services."

Therefore, within this section of the Statute, the Board of Commissioners of a County has the authority to appoint an emergency manager that serves the entire county. At the tribal level, their governing body establishes the emergency manager. And in some instances, a municipal jurisdiction will appoint an emergency manager through their local laws and policies if the governor deems that a disaster agency is warranted (C.R.S. 24-33.5-707 (3).

Also in Colorado Statute, the elected Sheriff of each jurisdiction has authorities for response operations. Specifically outlined in the Disaster Act are the authorities for Search and Rescue, but the Sheriff also has the responsibility for the management of wildfire in each county.

Because the Board of Commissioners is able to appoint an emergency manager in any number of departments within a local government, and because the Sheriff has responsibilities for wildfire, public safety and search and rescue, this has led to some confusion about where emergency management should belong in each county. Some Boards have designated the Sheriff's Office as the lead agency for emergency management, others have designated departments such as Public Works or Community Development and Planning to manage their programs, and others have created departments directly under the Board of Commissioners.

After discussions with multiple agencies, it is clear that a one-size-fits-all approach is not feasible in Colorado. Our communities are diverse and each government structure functions in unique ways. For example, the City and County of Denver is governed by a City Council more than a Board of Commissioners, and in rural areas they may not have a Public Works department or a County Manager. Colorado also has many Home Rule jurisdictions that have created Charters that govern their activities. To attempt to dictate the specifics of emergency management for local jurisdictions within state statute would likely cause great disruption to local programs and could inadvertently cause a failure in response or recovery.

ANALYSIS

The development of standards in emergency management for Colorado communities is essential. The location of the agency is not as important as the roles and responsibilities of each emergency management program. If standardization can occur in programs, local jurisdictions will better be able to establish the appropriate agency to execute the program.

Part 5:

Sustaining Emergency Management into the Future

SUSTAINING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INTO THE FUTURE

While the benefits of comprehensive emergency management are clear, it is also clear that most emergency management programs in Colorado cannot currently meet the need and/or struggle with the increasing demands within the field. The majority of emergency managers in Colorado are also tasked with other duties within their jurisdiction, or they are part-time staff funded by the Emergency Management Program Grant. Therefore, the sustainability of these programs greatly depends upon outside resources, without which the program would not exist.

Additionally, emergency management needs compete with all the other needs within a jurisdiction, often leading to a gap between what is necessary for an emergency management program and what may be necessary to just get by. This is why mitigation, prevention and recovery programs often suffer, even when it is known that a threat exists and these programs will have positive effects such as a decrease in damage and loss of life.

Therefore, the final question the COEM Roundtable considered was the question of how to sustain emergency management in Colorado even when federal grant funding and program funding decreases or is eliminated. The following considerations were made as options for emergency management agencies and jurisdictions. Not all of these considerations will work everywhere. Instead, each jurisdiction should consider those that make sense in their area. The considerations are as follows:

Standards for Emergency Management in Colorado

The definition of emergency management in Colorado is too broad and lacks structure. The first step would be to codify emergency management more thoroughly in Colorado by updating statutes, regulations and policies at the state level to ensure they meet the needs of our changing landscape. As stated earlier, standards for emergency management exist through EMAP and NFPA 1600, but as shown in this paper, they do not adequately reflect the complex nature of an emergency management program. Setting standards within Colorado for emergency management will greatly enhance programs across all jurisdictions.

> Benefits: Provides consistency and a framework for emergency management programs. Provides clarity for policy-makers in decision making processes; funding of programs and staff; and in statute, policy and regulation.

> Challenges: Due to the diverse nature of Colorado, a one-size-fits-all approach will not work. All efforts must be cognizant of these differences.

Formation of Taxing Entities

As the need for services increases and available outside funding decreases, alternative measures to fund emergency management programs will be necessary. In some cases, the best opportunity to ensure that each jurisdiction can meet its needs, especially in larger jurisdictions, might be to form a taxing entity such as a Special District.

Benefits: There are some public safety jurisdictions that have recently created taxing agencies/districts that are highly successful, so there are real-world examples that can be leveraged to gain support. This option creates long-term sustainability without a focus on state or federal grant funding that is not guaranteed year-to-year. This would lead to a more sustainable program and greater consistency over time.

Challenges: Obtaining approval from voters for taxing districts in Colorado is often difficult to achieve. This is a solution that will take multiple years to complete, from the ballot initiative and initial public education to the funding being available. Additionally, Colorado has both the TABOR Amendment and Gallagher that can greatly impact special districts. These challenges are not insurmountable, but will require research and time.

Consolidations / Shared Resources

Two of the motivating factors for the creation of a multi-jurisdictional emergency management program are to: (1) directly address the challenges of limited resources including staffing, budgets, and equipment needed for programmatic operations; and (2) to eliminate the competition against each jurisdiction for the same outside resources and funding. This idea may be best suited for the rural jurisdictions who have limited resources and who depend upon one another for day-to-day operations as well as larger events.

Benefits: Conceptually, the combining of staff from multiple emergency management programs is projected to have a synergistic effect on the turn-around time of project completion as well as an overall increase in the number of finalized deliverables. Each participating agency will provide funding and resources to the efforts of shared projects and will be expected to work alongside their partner agencies during EOC activations, exercises, planning meetings, and other mutually-beneficial endeavors.

Multiple benefits can be found in a single, integrated Emergency Operations Center (EOC). A co-located EOC will allow for a reduction in the combined operating expenses and management systems and services, and decreasing the redundancy in dedicated equipment. Instead of multiple independent EOCs operating during large events, there will be one EOC coordinating all activities. This is more efficient resource management and a more effective means for communication, planning, exercising, training, and consequence management between all partners.

Challenges: A multi-jurisdictional approach to emergency management may lead to less customized solutions for diverse agencies and organizations. Additionally, there will be financial, resource management, maintenance and policy decisions of the program and its infrastructure obligated to each participating agencies, as mutually agreed upon. This would need to be done through agreements between jurisdictions, such as an Inter-governmental Agreement (IGA). Another challenge is that state or federal laws or regulations may prevent jurisdictions from working regionally instead of individually. This could be solved through

the legislative or policy process. Finally, the time or distance between jurisdictions may be too large to make this opportunity a reality.

Contracting for Services

For those jurisdictions without the capacity for a stand-alone program, or a multi-jurisdictional approach, it may be possible to contract out for emergency management services, either through the private sector or through the State of Colorado.

Benefits: Contract services often provide a force multiplier in staff and specialized capability that would not be there locally (exercises, training, EOC staff, etc.). This could be done on a project basis or for the entire program. Contractors are likely to have a broader perspective of best practices across the country.

Challenges: Contract services will provide a limited range of tasks for an emergency management program. Most likely those tasks would be associated with initial response operations, but without strong jurisdictional planning efforts, that response will suffer. Additionally, the complexities of recovery on departments such as purchasing, finance, public works, community development and public health are enormous. Therefore, a contract would need to include these factors, which could cause the contract to be less cost effective than hiring staff to manage the program.

Local Incident Management Team (IMT) Concept for EM – EOC and Recovery Support Teams

In recent years, we have seen more and more requests come through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) looking for EOC personnel to assist a local jurisdiction in either response or recovery operations. This model is a good one as a force multiplier for large-scale events to ensure staffing levels are adequate to manage the emergency. Colorado could build a program, similar to the IMT model, for emergency management support to local jurisdictions, in either EOC operations for response or in recovery support operations.

Benefits: Provides surge capacity to local jurisdictions with subject-matter expertise that the locals can then learn and use in future operations. This could be built out with both response and recovery personnel since the two phases often involve different departments and subject-matter expertise. The EOC Taskbooks are a good start to this program and WebEOC is available as a tool to track these teams and track qualified individuals.

Challenges: This is mainly for the response phase of an emergency or disaster where individuals can come in and assist in the EOC or at the local level to get through the initial phase of the disaster. It does not build an emergency management program and cannot provide support for the long-term recovery operations required in larger events.

Peer-to-Peer Emergency Management Mentoring Program

Colorado has multiple state and federal agencies and personnel that are willing and available to assist local jurisdictions both before and after disaster. For example, DOLA Field Staff regularly

work with local governments on plans and programs and DHSEM Field Staff work directly with local emergency managers on the development of their programs. While state and federal technical assistance is crucial to local jurisdictional emergency management programs, sometimes local jurisdictions will benefit greatly from also working with their peers. Perhaps the jurisdiction has a new emergency manager or the local jurisdiction has an incident where no emergency manager exists. Having another local emergency manager assist in these cases will ensure that the local perspective is not lost. Additionally, recovery operations require specific subject-matter expertise that is not typically involved during response, such as procurement and finance controls.

Benefits: Having a cadre of local individuals who have faced a disaster in the past that are available to assist other local jurisdictions before, during or after an emergency will build emergency management capacity and capability in Colorado. This could include collaborative planning, training and technical assistance.

Challenges: Establishing qualified personnel who will be available to local jurisdictions may be difficult. This challenge is not insurmountable but will require dedication on the part of those willing to participate in the program. There will also be a time commitment involved, where personnel will need to be available to respond as needed to assist a local jurisdiction. This could also include a mentoring component where jurisdictions are matched in advance of a disaster to work together. This idea shows great promise but will require work at both the local and state level to bring to fruition.

Conclusion and Next Steps

CONCLUSION

Emergency Management is not a person or position, but rather a necessary function and collaborative effort among many jurisdictions and agencies for all communities. In Emergency Management we are dependent upon each other and our ability to leverage resources and collaborate planning, training, and exercise in order to respond to and recover from events. This process is more a coordinated dance than just releasing the troops, and perhaps nets have not been cast wide enough when engaging communities in this aspect. Emergency Management is far too vast for any few folks to effectively carry alone. It takes a community to respond to and rebuild from incidents, not just traditional first responders or emergency managers.

NEXT STEPS

To ensure the long-term viability of emergency management in Colorado, those in the field must do a better job of informing and educating jurisdictions, agencies, partners, and policy makers about the essential function of emergency management to any organization. Additionally, this information must be consistent to avoid confusion between jurisdictions about the roles and responsibilities involved in this field.

The COEM Roundtable discussed several steps that are necessary to take the field from its current form to one that is institutionalized throughout the State of Colorado:

1. Agree on a common definition of Emergency Management.

2. Determine a set of common Core Competencies across Colorado.

3. From the Core Competencies, develop standards for emergency management programs in Colorado using a flexible approach to address small, medium, and large jurisdictions.

4. Develop metrics for each standard to adequately assess progress over time.

5. Codify those standards in statute, regulation or policy.

6. Educate elected (municipal and county), legal staff, and other policy-level individuals on emergency management.

7. Partner with local, state, and federal policy-makers to create positive change in the field of emergency management.

Participating Agencies

The COEM Roundtable consists of a diverse set of individuals from a number of emergency management sectors. The following is a list of agencies or jurisdictions that have participated in the COEM Roundtable discussions.

Alamosa County OEM	Gunnison County OEM
American Red Cross	Jefferson County Public Health
Brighton School District	Jefferson County Schools
CDR Maguire	Lake County OEM
Cherry Creek Schools	La Plata County OEM
Chiefs of Police Association	Larimer County OEM
City of Aurora OEM	Montrose County OEM
City of Black Hawk Fire Department	Parker Police Department
City of Brighton OEM	Penrose / St. Francis Health
City of Colorado Springs OEM and Fire	Pueblo Community College
City and County of Denver OEM	Pueblo County OEM and Sheriff's Office
City of Fort Collins OEM and Utilities	Saguache County OEM
City of Loveland OEM	San Luis Valley Public Health
Clear Creek County OEM	South Central All-Hazards Region
Colorado DHSEM	Southern Ute Tribe
Colorado Department of Human Services	Summit County OEM
Colorado Department of Transportation	Tri-County Health Department
Colorado Hospital Association	University of CO at Colorado Springs
Colorado Information Analysis Center	University of Colorado at Denver
Colorado Springs Utilities	Upper Pine Fire Protection District
Core Defense Group	US Air Force Academy
Douglas County OEM	US NORTHCOM
Eagle River Fire Protection District	Xcel Energy
Elbert County OEM	
Elk Creek Fire Department	
FEMA Region VIII	