80% of elected and appointed officials and their staff say they do not know if their state has a cyber-emergency incident plan in place.

Learn more by downloading a complimentary copy of the cybersecurity policy guide at: governing.com/cyberguide
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Flavors of the Day?

When I asked our Major Player for this issue, Stephanie Murphy, emergency preparedness coordinator for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, what would be at the top of the hazard list for her organization, she replied, “I would say it’s sadly the flavor of the day.”

This issue of Emergency Management is composed of the flavors of the day that also happen to be flavors of the future. They are issues that are with us now — policing, immigration, climate change, population demographics — and will be for some time. They are topics emergency managers will be working around.

You might not think immigration is an emergency management issue. But it is, albeit indirectly. The emergency manager has to know who’s in his community, what the culture of that community might be and any language barriers that might affect communication. Emergency preparedness plans have to be updated to acknowledge changes in population shifts and adjusted accordingly to allow for a holistic response. You can read what that means in Immigration Implications on page 14.

Community policing isn’t an every-day issue for emergency managers, but it is for public safety officials. When community incidents boil over into violent protests or riots, it’s everybody’s problem. Our cover story, Lending a Hand, on page 24, deals with issues impacting many communities in the U.S. right now and at least a partial solution might be for police to “get out of the car.”

We invite you to read Scrutinizing Cops? on page 38, another article on policing. This one is about a management system that helps police officials stay on top of interactions between officers and those they aim to protect.

In the Hot Seat (page 18) takes us cast to New Hampshire, where more intense wildfires are happening. The Covered Bridge fire this past winter “was the largest fire in the 100-year history of the White Mountain National Forest and was more than twice the size of the next-largest fire.” Two weeks later, the Gatlinburg, Tenn., fire killed 14 people and destroyed 2,063 homes and 53 commercial structures. “It’s unlike anything we’ve ever seen,” said the mayor of an area where high humidity and frequent fog keep the fire risk low. Is it climate change? Wildfire suppression tactics? Development? Why is the East Coast facing the large, intense wildfi res more traditionally thought to be occurring in the West?

And finally, who’s watching and/or listening? What will surveillance look like during the new presidential administration? Can we really know what to expect? See page 29 and A New Era of Surveillance? to find out.
Hands-On + In Demand

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In the News

Oroville Dam, in Northern California, alarmed authorities and residents down river when the hillside adjacent to an emergency spillway eroded to within feet of the structure after a series of massive storms left a heavy snowpack. The storms caused the lake level to rise up and over a concrete weir at the top of the dam’s emergency spillway and flow uncontrollably, threatening to collapse the weir and send a 30-foot wall of water down into the Feather River and communities below. The erosion prompted worried officials to evacuate more than 180,000 people living downstream of the dam. As the danger subsided, repairs began and it was learned that problems with the dam had been known since 2009.
New Orleans Police Department cameras are recording the activity on Bourbon Street and temporary barricades have been erected nearby, part of a security rollout for Carnival festivities that also presages some elements of Mayor Mitch Landrieu’s proposed long-term security plan for the city.

The security plan also is facing new criticism from bar owners and supporters, who said in a letter to the City Council that they worry the presence of hundreds of cameras, some of which the bars would be required to install, would burden their businesses.

The installation of hundreds of cameras in 20 neighborhoods around the city is one of the cornerstones of Landrieu’s security plan, which was formulated in the wake of terrorist attacks in Europe and a shooting on Bourbon Street on Thanksgiving weekend. — Tribune News Service

Yellow fever has broken out in the jungles outside Brazil’s most densely populated cities, raising a frightening but still remote possibility: an epidemic that could decimate that country’s population and spread throughout the Americas, including the United States. In an essay rushed into print by the New England Journal of Medicine in early March, two doctors from the National Institutes of Health warn that cases of yellow fever, which can kill as many as 10 percent of those infected, have seen an unusual spike in the last few weeks in several rural areas of Brazil. Those outbreaks have been limited to places where there aren’t enough people or virus-spreading mosquitoes to fuel a rapid run-up in transmission. But they are on the edge of major urban areas where residents are largely unvaccinated, and where humans and insects are packed densely enough to accelerate the disease’s spread. — Tribune News Service

Fires were down in Fishers, Ind., and the fire department wanted to maintain its value to the city. So the department expanded its role in the community and changed its name to Fishers Emergency Services. The department still puts out fires, but now, with the WeCare community paramedicine program started in November 2014, it also tends to elderly patients who need follow-up care after hospital stays and youngsters who have had mental health problems. When an elderly person is discharged from the hospital, that person is vulnerable in the first few weeks for potentially returning to the emergency room for complications. The WeCare program will track these patients for 30 days after discharge, checking on meds, safety at home and even what the patient is eating. It has worked, reducing the readmission rate from 22 to 7 percent. — JIM McKAY

Nearly two years after a rash of earthquakes rattled the sensibilities of north Texas residents and state lawmakers, a meticulously designed network of seismographs is being rolled out to determine if the tremors are occurring naturally or can be linked to oil and gas industry production.

Researchers at the Texas Bureau of Economic Geology have installed 14 of 22 permanent seismographs and another 15 portable stations as part of the $4.5 million TexNet system approved by state lawmakers two years ago. There are two permanent and 13 portable TexNet seismograph stations in the Fort Worth/Dallas area. That brings to 31 the number of stations in north Texas, including the equipment being monitored by geologists at Southern Methodist University. — Tribune News Service
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City Corporation operates Russellville Water and Sewer System, providing service for nearly 30,000 residents in Russellville, Ark. When it was time for City Corp. to choose a new system for human-machine interface (HMI) and supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA), it worked with system integrator Brown Engineers to come up with a solution.

City Corp. chose Ignition by Inductive Automation®. Ignition is an industrial application platform with fully integrated tools for building solutions in HMI, SCADA, and the Industrial Internet of Things (IoT). “We have to have faith in the software,” said Steve Mallett, general manager of City Corp. “Ignition has worked perfectly for us, and we’ve had no issues.”

Brown Engineers is such a strong believer in Ignition, the firm is a certified Ignition Integrator. “We went live with the Russellville upgrade in mid-2015,” said Dee Brown, principal and co-founder of Brown Engineers. “Ignition is helping run and control the water treatment plant and the water distribution system with pump stations and tanks. It’s also on the sewer treatment plant and sewer collection. So it’s a fairly large system. They also have radio and cellular telemetry sites that have been added.”

City Corp.’s SCADA system has nearly 38,000 tags. That includes data from a variety of PLCs and controllers installed at various times over the years. The system includes two HMI servers per plant in a master/backup redundant configuration. Ignition controls digestion blowers, clarifiers, sludge pumps, and more. It also provides alarm management and reporting functions.

Big Improvement

Mallett said the Ignition platform is more flexible than the utility’s previous system. And it provides a lot more data, which can be seen by more people. “That is critical,” said Mallett. “It provides information we need to make daily decisions, and it keeps us from having to go out to our sites. It drives costs down.”

Cost was a big factor in choosing Ignition. Its unlimited licensing model is an important benefit. “The software we had before charged by the number of tags,” said Mallett. “So if you wanted to upgrade, you’d have to pay more. Our system is growing, so that was a critical consideration. With Ignition, we never have to worry about any additional cost for adding tags.”

There are other savings as well. “The yearly maintenance costs are much lower with Ignition,” said Mallett. “So it was an easy decision to go with Ignition.” And the transition was easy. “We stayed up and operating during the entire process,” said Mallett. “The switchover
to Ignition was quick and painless. That’s what mattered to us, and we appreciate Brown working with our staff to make sure that it went smoothly.”

**Faster Process, Less Paper**

City Corp. also found a non-SCADA use for Ignition, one which saves time and makes it easier to report data to the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). Seeking a more efficient process for tracking and reporting sanitary sewer overflows (SSO), Mallett asked Brown Engineers to create a mobile system that would cut down on paper and speed up the process. Brown leveraged Ignition to deliver exactly what Mallett envisioned.

The SSO Mobile application allows City Corp. to create field assessments on mobile devices, using standard Internet technologies. The other part of the system, the SSO Workstation app, provides tools for managing the data and reporting it to ADEQ. Field crews now use tablets and smartphones instead of paper and pencils. “We were able to make the process more efficient on several levels,” said Julie Halford, GIS/CAD Technician for City Corp. “The reporting, the calculations, making sure there were no mistakes. It all goes much faster now. And we found the new system to be extremely user-friendly for our field crews.”

City Corp. is so happy with the solution, it may adapt it for other uses. “With the success of the SSO Mobile app, we’re looking at possibly creating an app for hydrant flushing,” said Mallett. “It would allow us to get all the data from the hydrants and develop a database, versus the way we’re doing it now, which is with a pen and pad. And that could develop into an asset management system that we could use for all of our facilities.”

**Improving Cybersecurity**

In November 2015, Brown helped City Corp. replace a failing PLC with a new controller from Bedrock Automation. Bedrock™ controllers provide groundbreaking cybersecurity at the hardware level. City Corp. is so impressed with the performance and security of the controller, it’s planning to replace all its controllers with Bedrock. “It gives us peace of mind, knowing we have that hardware layer of protection,” said Mallett. “We sleep better at night.”

Brown Engineers is also impressed with Bedrock. “We’ve been working with City Corp. to develop a PLC upgrade and control strategy that would include cybersecurity for all their facilities,” said Brown. “And it appears that Bedrock will be the platform of choice.”

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Watch the case study video online at: bit.ly/ia-Russellville
Emergency managers may not directly focus their energy on immigration, but the hotly contested issue indirectly affects how they plan for and respond to crises.
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By Katie Pyzyk
Immigration Implications

A ttention to America’s immigration policies has intensified recently, with politicians and citizens wrangling over whether and how to control the number of foreigners entering the country. Emergency managers, however, largely don’t believe immigration is their issue. Except, in a sense, it is.

“I don’t see why or how [immigration] really relates to emergency management, which is distinct from homeland security,” said hazard and emergency management logistics lecturer Bob Jaffin. “Why would that even come up…in a situation that is an emergency?”

That sentiment holds true when evaluating the black-and-white definition of emergency management, but shades of gray exist in a number of areas. Immigration affects emergency managers in roundabout manners; instead of focusing on direct involvement—such as enforcement or policymaking—they attend to indirect effects, such as language barriers and population shifts.

Emergency managers strive for holistic approaches to serving their communities rather than excluding certain portions of the population for reasons that could include immigration status. “I’ve got to understand that there are people out there who are undocumented,” said emergency management consultant and Emergency Management magazine contributor Lucien Canton. “I can’t ignore them.”

Emergency managers and first responders are hired to attend to their diverse communities, regardless of demographics. “Whether they’re here legally or illegally, they’re still people,” said Jack Brown, director of the Arlington County (Va.) Office of Emergency Management. “We want to make sure, from an emergency management perspective, that we take care of all our residents.”

Because taking care of people—all types of people—is the central mission the profession revolves around.

Although policing agencies technically do fall under the emergency services category, the enforcement part of immigration typically remains out of emergency managers’ realm. Their work more acutely entails devising preparedness campaigns and emergency responses.

Immigration does impact those job aspects in that leaders must account for potential population shifts when determining the most effective disaster mitigation approaches.

Immigration is not the only force that causes demographic shifts. Another common change, for example, ensues in communities housing a significant number of aging residents. “The issues that result due to immigration are the same issues as we’re dealing with in many of the [shifting] populations that we’re serving,” said Lanita Lloyd, president of the United States Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers.

An emergency manager is “neither a social engineer nor a politician” and therefore should not take into consideration citizens’ residency statuses, Jaffin said. They simply must craft plans that aid all members of the public. “That is the tactical view. The strategic view is population trends—whether driven by age or immigration—are a critical issue because an emergency manager is supposed to be able to communicate with everybody,” Jaffin said.

In the end, success in the emergency management field already requires periodically updating plans, so accommodating population shifts should come naturally and not involve scrutinizing immigrants’ legal statuses.

“We have to leave our preconceived notions at the door and deal with people as we find them,” said Canton. “It’s one thing if we’re talking about offering social services or voting rights. It’s another if this person’s been displaced by a disaster.”

One challenging factor facing emergency services providers is the number of immigrants who exhibit fear at the mere thought of interacting with government workers. Governments around the world—including employees such as emergency responders—function differently in how they interface with the public. Some immigrants arrive in the United States with the preconceived notion that no governmental encounters are positive and they may, in fact, be punitive.

Because taking care of people—all types of people—is the central mission the profession revolves around.
A lot of times, folks are going to be skittish about talking to you if you're from the government,” said Brown. “It is like that in many places. The government is viewed differently, especially local officials.

Building trust with these groups can be difficult, even when emergency workers explain that they just want to help.

“The government in general is distrusted in some countries… It’s looked at with incredible suspicion,” Canton said. “How do we explain that the things we do are for a reason and it’s for their protection? For a lot of folks, this is going to be a very different concept.”

An equally different concept is that of bribing government workers, either out of fear or as an expectation. It’s not unheard of for U.S. emergency services employees to approach immigrants and “in some cases, they try to hand you money,” Brown said. Immigrants don’t necessarily view that practice as unethical because “in other countries that’s just the way business is done,” Canton said. “They actually think if I’m getting a service from the government, I need to pay somebody.”

During emergencies, immigrants also might be frightened by the belief that their citizenship status could come into question through an interaction with a government employee. Each U.S. municipality handles that situation a bit differently, which can add to confusion and fear for incoming residents. Those concerns can lead to immigrants refusing to ask for — or accept — life-saving assistance.

“Imagine if I’m asking for food, you approach and say ‘Do you have papers?’ and I go, ‘Yeah, I do,’ and you say ‘OK, I’m giving you this food,’ but you don’t ask who they are, [only] how do I know exactly how to handle various demographics, languages … and have trainers that can help,” Lloyd said. “Other ideas are to provide ‘secondary resources, such as handouts, in other languages … and have trainers that can teach about disaster preparedness in those languages,’ Lloyd said. She also recommends including advocates and language resources during simulation exercises so emergency managers and first responders know exactly how to handle various demographics when an emergency situation arises.

Even when confronted with language obstacles, emergency managers need not directly focus on the immigration issue, only on the community service piece. “I don’t ask who they are, [only] how do I communicate with them,” Jaffin said. “Can they speak English, or do I need an interpreter?”

Connecting with and preparing immigrants requires trust-building. Engaging advocates from within the designated community — especially those who speak the foreign language in question — instead of solely relying on emergency managers to bridge the gap can be useful. “When putting together plans, have [advocates] at the table to help identify challenges and establish processes that will help to protect and better prepare everyone in the community,” Lloyd said.

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It really shouldn’t go beyond that.”

Besides language barriers, newcomers also may not be aware of the overall concept of preparedness. Long-term American citizens know from years of listening to messaging the importance of creating personal emergency plans or stockpiling supplies, but that’s a foreign concept to many immigrants.

“One of the things we push in the United States is this independence, that people need to prepare on their own,” Canton said. “That’s culturally what we do, but it’s not necessarily what people have been taught in other countries.”

That discrepancy demonstrates the need for targeted outreach to all the diverse subsets within a community. Outreach can occur in many ways such as attending civic association meetings and community town halls, passing out business cards and talking to people. “A lot of it is plain old networking,” Brown said, “and developing that relationship.”

Immigrants lack of adherence to common American emergency procedures frequently isn’t a matter of fear, but rather a classic case of culture shock and lack of knowledge about standard practices.

Cultural differences, like population shifts, don’t pertain only to immigrants. An introduction of any new group into an existing population could cause a shock of sorts, such as what happened following Hurricane Katrina. After that disaster, “We moved people out of New Orleans to all over the country,” Canton said. “In many ways, there were some interesting cultural situations taking place there.”

An obvious immigration-related cultural consideration is that people arriving from outside the U.S. often speak primary languages other than English. Reeling calls to action proves challenging when citizens can’t understand the messages, both before and after an emergency. “You have to find out who they are and the languages they’re using,” Canton said. “If they can’t understand my warning messages … it gets very difficult to keep them safe.”

Analyzing demographics regularly and incorporating services in other languages as necessary can benefit the community. “I recruit people to work in my 911 center that speak Spanish and other languages,” Brown said. “I explain that the things we do are for a reason that our services are there for everybody.”

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Regions other than the West are now facing large wildland fires.

By Madeline Bodin
The forest fire burned for four days last November. On the fire’s second day, crews of federal, state and local firefighters boarded buses beyond the fire’s farthest reach. There, they created a fire line, using hand tools, leaf blowers and blowtorchers, a local newspaper reported. At one point, authorities considered bringing in helicopters to dump water on the fire.

By the time the fire was contained, 329 acres had been scorched. That may be small in comparison to the half-million acres that burned in the 2007 California wildfires, or the half-million acres burned in Arizona’s Wallow fire in 2011. But what was surprising about this fire was that it happened in northern New Hampshire, where the climate is generally cold and wet, and wildland fires of more than 100 acres are rare.

The Covered Bridge fire was the largest fire in the 100-year history of the White Mountain National Forest and was more than twice the size of the next-largest fire.

Two weeks later, the mayor of Gatlinburg, Tenn., declared that the fire burning there, which killed 14 people, and destroyed 2,013 homes and 53 commercial structures, “is unlike anything we’ve ever seen.” Typically, high humidity and frequent fog keep the area’s fire risk low. Wildland fires can happen anywhere under the right conditions. Communities in even the coldest, wettest and swampiest parts of the country are preparing for wildland fire, and experts urge every community to adapt to resist wildland fire, restore and maintain their natural landscapes to prevent fire, and plan their response.

Three long-term trends — decades of fire suppression, climate change and development in the wildland-urban interface — are changing the risks even in places where wildland fires are rare.

FIRE HISTORY

“History repeats itself,” said Michael Stambaugh, associate research professor at the University of Missouri. “The places that burned will burn again.” Though the nation was surprised by the Gatlinburg fire, Stambaugh was not. He knew that fires had once been much more frequent in Tennessee, and that the conditions at the end of 2016 were right for it.

“Fire is a chemical reaction,” Stambaugh said. In the natural world, the recipe is fuel, in the form of vegetation, and a lack of moisture, including dry air. A high temperature speeds the reaction. Deserts are hot and dry, but don’t burn because there isn’t much vegetation. A Mississippi swamp has plenty of vegetation, but it’s usually too wet to burn. Ecosystems with frequent fires manage to mix abundant vegetation with dry conditions.

“We live in these fire-prone locations,” Stambaugh said, such as south-facing slopes that dry out quickly. Often, though, we don’t know where fire was common in the past. “We don’t realize it until the conditions support the supreme event.”

Stambaugh and his colleagues at the University of Missouri have studied thousands of fire scars on hundreds of trees from across the eastern half of the United States. They found that wildland fires were once much more common than they are now, even before European settlement. Historically, the East had more frequent fires than the West.

For the past 100 years, the policy has been to put out wildland fires quickly, so today, forests contain more fuel. When fires do come to the forest, they can be much more intense, with consequences for human lives and property.

CLIMATE CHANGE

“History is where it all starts, and then we get to the idea that history is changing,” said Erin Lane, North Atlantic Fire Science Exchange coordinator for the U.S. Forest Service. One of the two major changes altering historical fire frequencies is the change in the global climate. How these global changes play out locally varies by region, and Lane has focused on the Northeast in her work, so she offers that as an example. She’s quick to qualify her comments. The climate models for the Northeast have enough variation that matching cause and effect when it comes to fire is imperfect, she said.

However, one of the 12 key messages from the National Climate Assessment is that heavy downpours are increasing nationwide, but especially in the Midwest and Northeast. It’s an easy assumption that these downpours would reduce wildland fire risks, but, Lane said, “The details matter.” There are more big storms and fewer little showers in between. That means that some parts of the country, such as the Northeast, are swinging between droughts and deluges. Those drought periods increase the likelihood of fire.

Probably the most well-known aspect of global climate change is higher temperatures. Warmer springs in the Northeast mean that the snow melts sooner, but leaves appear on the trees earlier. Since one of the Northeast’s fire seasons is in the spring between snow melt and leaf out, exactly how those two effects interact is yet to be seen, said Lane.

But in at least one state in the Northeast, Vermont, the spring fire season seems to be increasing in length as the snow melts much earlier than it did decades ago, while the leaves emerge only a little bit earlier.

The second big change influencing fire risk is development in the wildland-urban interface (WUI), the place where developed property, like suburban housing developments or a hunting lodge, meets a forested landscape. Between 1990 and 2008, 60 percent of the new homes in the United States were built in the WUI, according to information from an International Code Council report, The Blue Ribbon Panel Report on the Wildland Urban Interface Fire. There are 46 million homes in the WUI, meaning that 40 percent of the single-family homes in the United States are found there.

The report also said that the remaining undeveloped land in the WUI is being built on at a rate of 4,300 acres per day, or about 2 million acres per year. Every region of the country has thousands of communities in the WUI and therefore are at risk in wildland fires, the report said.

RESTORE AND MAINTAIN LANDSCAPES

How can communities that haven’t tradition-ally faced wildland fire protect themselves? The same resources and strategies that are used in fire-prone parts of the country can be used anywhere to prepare for wildland fires and reduce their damage, said Erik Litzenberg, chief of the Santa Fe, N.M., Fire Department and chair of the International Association of Fire Chiefs Wildland Fire Policy Committee. The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy outlines three steps for this: restore and
"HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF. THE PLACES THAT BURNED WILL BURN AGAIN."
maintain landscapes, fire-adapted communities and response to fire,” Litzenberg just calls it “the Cohesive Strategy.”

“The landscape” in the Cohesive Strategy is the natural landscape in and around a community, whether that is forest, grassland or something else. The goal is to restore landscapes so that they burn with the frequency and intensity that the ecosystem is adapted to. These less intense fires are easier to control.

Restoring a natural landscape may mean removing non-native species and restoring native plants. Most typically, it means removing decades of fallen leaves and limbs that quick fire suppression has allowed to build up to unnatural levels. The most natural way to do this is through prescribed fire, which is a deliberately set and carefully controlled burn conducted by people who receive certification after extensive training.

“For years, it was a big no-no to put fire on the ground,” said Dave Celino, chief fire warden for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. Massachusetts got serious about doing prescribed burns in state forests for fuel management in 2009, he said. Still, local communities don’t always welcome prescribed fire nearby, with smoke being a major complaint that Celino works hard to prevent.

Thomas Bullo, fire chief of the Mashpee, Mass., Fire and Rescue Department, said there was no conversion moment. Before returning to Massachusetts, he was a firefighter in a fire-prone region of Florida. There, prescribed fire and fire-adapted communities were everyday tools. He brought that mindset home with him.

Bullo said the prescribed burns have had an unintended benefit. Mashpee firefighters get wildland fire training from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (in other states, the forest department provides this training), but he’s noticed they learn best when they accompany the state prescribed fire team on a burn. “They get to see how the fire behaves firsthand.”

Firewise, a program of the National Fire Protection Association, creates the fire-adapted communities that are the second of the three principles described in the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy.

“Firewise is one of the best blessings this small town has had,” said Ophelia Mitchell, mayor of Ethel, Miss., population 500. Mississippi may conjure up swampy images of bayous and trees dripping with moss, but Mitchell’s husband, George, served on the town’s volunteer fire department for decades, so she knew how frequently the department was called out for wildland fires. “I’ve even driven the fire truck once or twice,” she said.

Mitchell enrolled her community in Firewise as soon as she heard about it. “Firewise is active in 42 states,” said Cathy Prudhomme, the Firewise USA program manager. “There is a liaison in each state’s forestry department.” Several states have similar programs, and Canada has FireSmart.

While Firewise is directed at community leaders and individual residents, the International Association of Fire Chiefs’ Ready, Set, Go! program approaches fire-adapted communities from a fire department’s perspective. The two programs work together, with Firewise filling the community engagement role within Ready, Set, Go!

**RECOVERY**

The Cohesive Strategy doesn’t have a recovery step, but the plans made for a community’s recovery after a wildland fire and the steps it takes during recovery close the loop on wildland fire planning.

“All disasters start and end at the local level,” said Paul Hannemann, incident response department head for the Texas A&M Forest Service. “After you get the wet stuff on the red stuff, it’s a business operation.” The Incident Command System functions in place during the fire can roll over into the recovery, he said, with finance and administration being particularly important.

While a community may be relieved when a wildland fire is out, a high risk of erosion (think mudslides and reservoirs filled with mud and ash) and flooding will follow, Hannemann said. Otherwise, recovering from a wildland fire is much like recovering from any other natural disaster. Houses and developments that are rebuilt to prevent wildland fires from spreading to structures, with water access and evacuation routes, will reduce the effect of the next wildland fire on the community.

Since planning ahead prevents tragedy, the aftermath of a wildland fire is the best opportunity to introduce a prevention strategy. “The common denominator among the communities who address their wildland fire risk seems to be that they’ve seen it firsthand,” Litzenberg said. But with planning and preparation, it could be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. ☄
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Extending
Community policing can mean dialog instead of rioting.
In Menlo Park, Calif., the Bel Air neighborhood wasn’t a place you’d want to take your kids. “We had murders, shootings. Drive-bys were common. The area was rife with gangs, drugs and guns,” said Police Commander Dave Bertini. Conventional policing wasn’t working. “We responded to calls, tried to make as many arrests as possible. We executed dozens and dozens of search warrants to try to break up these gangs. That didn’t solve it.”

The department pivoted toward community policing. Cops got out of their cars and started walking the beat. Line officers sat in on town hall meetings. The department opened a new substation where residents are welcome to drop in and get to know the officers. There hasn’t been a gang-related shooting since 2013 and violent crime is down by half. “Residents walk their dogs at night, they go out,” Bertini said. “The fear that used to be palpable no longer exists.”
In broad strokes, community policing suggests the best way to cool down a hot neighborhood is by building lines of communication between citizens and cops. Get cops out of their cars. Invite community input. Build trust so that citizens and police feel like they are on the same team.

The federal government has been hacking this play. Since 1995, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services has invested more than $12 billion to encourage community policing nationwide, with about half those funds going to smaller cities, towns and counties. Police are buying in: The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports about 70 percent of local police departments include community policing in their mission statement. That includes nine out of 10 departments serving populations of 25,000 or more.

In August 2016, Mayor Bill de Blasio expanded New York City’s neighborhood policing program. “In times like these, we have a responsibility to provide our nation with a model for respectful and compassionate neighborhood policing,” he said. “If we want to keep all New Yorkers safe, policing must be of, for, and by the people.”

The International Association of Chiefs of Police hails community policing in glowing terms. “No single factor has been more crucial to reducing crime levels than the partnership between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. In order for law enforcement to be truly effective, police agencies cannot operate alone; they must have the active support and assistance of citizens and communities,” the association declares.

Community policing has its detractors. “A diff erent approach” Sarasota, Fla., made a big push for community policing when Bernadette DiPino came aboard as chief in 2012. DiPino describes it as a philosophy, a way of thinking that’s integrated into every aspect of the department’s work. At the same time, community policing came to Sarasota in some very tangible ways, starting with an effort to curb activity at a prostitution hotspot. The state Legislature wanted to take a law-and-order approach — it was planning to fine Johns $5,000, while the women involved risked being branded as felons after three arrests. But the chief put a diff erent idea on the table.

Now when offi  cers believe a woman is soliciting, they come to her aid. “We help connect people to resources and programs, to get them the help they need, whether it is for drug problems, alcohol abuse, mental health issues, economic problems.” DiPino said. “Most of these women are battered and we can connect them with those kinds of resources, as well as with resources around human traf- ficking, so they are no longer in the life.”

A citizens’ police academy meets twice a year, giving locals the chance to ride along, shoot firearms and experience the city firsthand from the offi  cer’s point of view. “It helps people understand what we do, and it’s also helpful for the police offi  cers,” DiPino said. “We tend to think that everybody in the community is a bad guy, since that is who we deal with, and this exposes them to more and different kinds of people throughout the community!”

An occasional “coff ee with the cops” brings citizens in to chat with offi  cers informally at the local doughnut shop or coff ee bar. “It creates a casual, social way for police and citizens to engage in conversation. There’s no specifi c agenda. It is very non-threatening,” she said.

Cops on the beat are required to be out of their cars for an hour a day. “They can go into businesses, they can be walking around,” DiPino said. “We ask them to get out and engage with the community as best they can.”

The net result of all these eff orts? The department doesn’t claim that crime is down, but the tenor of the situation has changed. Instead of calling to complain...
about how police behave, neighbors these days are far more likely to complain about noise or other local problems. In fact, last year internal complaints about cops exceeded external complaints. “That’s what I want as chief,” DiPino said. “I want my people inside to recognize what could potentially be wrong and handle it internally, rather than hearing about it from the community.”

Ways to reconnect

The Tucson, Ariz., Police Department has implemented various aspects of community policing for years, but when Police Chief Chris Magnus arrived from Richmond, Calif., in 2016, he turned up the heat. “He has challenged us to think of ways to reconnect with the community that we have not done in the past,” said Assistant Chief Kevin Hall.

This meant the Midtown Division would take a fresh look at its relationships with the large community of resettled Central African refugees. “When the chief asked us to re-engage with communities where we are maybe on the fringe, that department started a program where every Saturday morning the officers would go out with donated books, lay a blanket on the ground and read to the kids,” Hall said.

It took a couple of months to build a following, but soon there were dozens of kids coming out to these impromptu events. Officers also have scheduled times when they drop by the local Boys and Girls Club to engage the kids in homework, sports and crafts.

The change in mood is tangible. “It used to be when parents saw a patrol car at the clubhouse they called the director to find out what was wrong,” Hall said. “Now they come over to take pictures with our officers.” The hope is that, for the kids, this feeling and this relationship will carry forward into their adult lives.

Community policing extends not just to young people but also to the adults, for example through a “business watch” modeled after a neighborhood watch program.

“We have foot patrol officers speaking to each and every business, handing out their card and their cellphone numbers, explaining to the business owners that we are all in this together, that we need to look out for each other,” Hall said.

While these kinds of activities are easy enough to describe, they are not always so simple to implement. The community typically has been receptive to the department’s overtures, but it can be challenging sometimes to get police officers on board with these practices.

“There’s a culture shift from just responding to the next call versus stopping on the way and actually getting out of your car and chatting with people,” Hall said. Whether officers do have trouble making the mental shift, it’s most often the community feedback that helps bring them around.

“The community has responded very positively to this. People write letters, they call in, they praise our officers at public forums for engaging and being active,” Hall said. “The other officers see that, and that has been the No. 1 motivator for a lot of officers to gravitate toward this model!”

Getting that officer buy-in is critical to the success of any community policing effort, said Jack Rinchich, president of the National Association of Chiefs of Police. “It’s pretty simple, but it has to be a genuine approach. If it is perfunctory, people know they will frown upon your efforts if you try to manufacture something that isn’t real,” he said.

Bottom-up approach

In Menlo Park, one way the department drives that sense of authentic engagement is by encouraging police officers to help set the agenda. When department leaders sought to pick up the pace on community policing, they turned to the line officers to ask how it might best be accomplished.

“When we had all our gang murders and shootouts with the police, it was the officers who said we should be more active in community meetings,” Bertini said. “It was the officers who asked for a new substation that was more inviting, that would be a place where people could feel that they could come in and feel welcome.”

Officers have implemented a range of other hands-on efforts to build bridges. If there’s a block party going on, an officer will likely drop by. One officer started a wrestling team for kids in a disadvantaged neighborhood. When there was a rash of local burglaries, cops on the beat took part in a town hall meeting to strategize potential solutions. A Chief’s Advisory Board invites input from neighborhood and business representatives.

“We want our frontline-level officers involved in these things, not just us on the command staff,” Bertini said.

Even with all these efforts in the works, people still complain about racial profiling here; for some, the badge still engenders a level of distrust. “It is too simplistic to say that community policing makes that go away, but what it does do is it gives us the conduit to talk about it openly and honestly so that it doesn’t boil over into rioting and people shooting at cops,” Bertini said. “If these open lines of communication exist, we can use those lines to address those issues. Maybe not everybody will be happy at the end, but at least we are airing things.”

But community policing is about more than just talking. Proponents say it can yield tangible outcomes, especially if it is tied to data. For departments to shift toward community policing without straining already-overburdened resources, leaders need to shape these efforts based on facts on the ground.

“Where is the problem occurring? When does it occur? You need to accurately know what is going on in your community,” said David Dial, who after a 45-year career in law enforcement became director of the Criminal Justice program at Aurora University in Illinois in 2012.

To conserve resources and still engage a broad swath of the community, “you need to get some data,” he said. “Build information will help departments target their efforts, while ensuring those efforts are grounded in reality. If the issue is about trust and respect the community is not going to talk to you if they think you don’t know what is going on.”

It’s equally important to ground the effort in the practical. Some departments have been disappointed in the outcomes of community policing efforts that amount to little more than an instruction to “get out and walk around.” To be effective, these efforts need to be more concrete, Dial said.

“Give people goals and objectives,” he said. “Maybe the task is to identify one problem on your beat and over the next six months try to fix that problem.”

Tangible goals and measurable outcomes are keys to success. DiPino incorporates community policing wins into her department’s awards and recognitions and — key to the effort — she makes it a part of every officer’s evaluation. “If they want to get promoted, they need to buy into this,” she said.

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Public Safety and Security

A New Era of Surveillance?
A look at some of the telltale signs that could project how the Trump administration will proceed.

By David Raths

President Donald Trump wasted no time in making good on his promises to take a more aggressive stance on immigration policy and deportations. The question many administration watchers are asking is how will this effort intertwine with potential changes to domestic surveillance policies.

Beyond the bulk collection of email and phone records, there are other controversial surveillance issues that will play out over the next four years. For instance, the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) has raised concerns about the use of social media monitoring of foreign visitors, biometric surveillance of immigrant communities and rapid DNA analyzers.

As a presidential candidate, Trump made several comments in favor of restoring the post-9/11 Patriot Act and said that he errs “on the side of security” in the debate over the National Security Agency’s bulk phone metadata program. Now that he is in office, privacy advocates and policy experts are watching his executive orders and key appointees for signals of surveillance policy change, some of which could be made without informing the public.

One early executive order eliminated the extension of Privacy Act coverage to non-U.S. persons for data about them held by the federal government. Previously both U.S. and non-U.S. persons could request to see the information the Department of Homeland Security held on them, such as details from an immigration application, information about a
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citizen’s comings and goings from the country, and interactions with the government.

Surveillance law and policy are complicated because there are overlapping statutes and court decisions and a collection of executive directives, some of which are secret, noted William Bendix, a professor at Keene State College in New Hampshire who focuses on surveillance policy. It’s not so much what they collect; it is what they do with the data once they have it,” Bendix said. “Can they mine it indiscriminately? Can they share it widely? Keep it indefinitely?” For the most part, surveillance statutes don’t provide answers to those questions, he said. At most, they require the executive branch to create “minimization procedures,” which are supposed to place limits on what data is reviewed and shared. “Those are classified and can be changed easily by the president and his officials. If the president imposes serious restrictions on agencies, then we will have strong privacy protections,” he said, “but if the president waters down or decides to disregard these minimization procedures, then watch out.”

Michael German, a fellow with the New York University School of Law’s Brennan Center for Justice’s Liberty and National Security Program, said it would be difficult to imagine creating a legal regime over the intelligence community that would give them any more power than they already have. “Over the course of two administrations, we have deconstructed the restrictions that came out of the J. Edgar Hoover/Nixon/Watergate situation, to ensure that the rule of law would apply to this secretive activity and that there would be enough independent oversight even in a closed system to prevent the types of abuses we are having,” said German, who served as a special agent in the FBI, where he specialized in domestic terrorism and covert operations.

One internal watchdog people will be watching is the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board (PCLOB). The five-member board is one of the few independent actors in the executive branch that can actually conduct thorough oversight of intelligence agencies, Bendix said. The problem is that it needs three members to maintain a quorum to issue public reports. As of press time, it had only one member, Elisebeth Collins, so the board won’t be able to issue any public reports. PCLOB staff can continue working, but it won’t be able to tell the public what it has concluded.

German said PCLOB has never really operated the way it should have. Despite the great intentions and incredible effort by its members, it was never established to be effective as a watchdog, he claims. “The intelligence community is a $70 billion operation and five people and a staff of 10 are supposed to oversee it?” he asked incredulously. “The situation there could be made worse, but not much worse.”

It is the same with the Intelligence Oversight Board, he added. When an Inspector General’s report on FBI abuses of National Security Letters was published, it came out that the Intelligence Oversight Board had never met during the Bush administration. “And it hasn’t been very effective except in short bursts in response to crises,” German said. “I understand that now it is a structure built to perform a task for which it is completely under-resourced, and nobody has ever really attempted to use it in the way it was designed.”

Still another place to watch is the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance (FISA) Court. After the Snowden leaks, it was revealed that one FISA Court judge had approved the National Security Agency’s mass metadata collection program in secret with no debate or consultation. “Given these very intrusive and large-scale surveillance programs have been authorized by a single judge, it was decided that was not good enough — that the court is not engaging in the kinds of deliberations we would expect from a judicial body,” Bendix explained.

Now, when the court receives an application from the Justice Department that pushes into a new, legally controversial area, a friend of the FISA Court is invited to advocate for the privacy position. But it is up to the discretion of the director of national intelligence to inform the public when this happens. “If the new administration wants to be more secretive and not tell the public about these cases, it would be perfectly legal for them to do that,” Bendix said.

The FISA Court is supposed to be more transparent about rulings it issues that represent novel interpretations of surveillance authorities, said Kate Tummarello, who works on surveillance issues for the Electronic Frontier Foundation’s Activism Team. “They are supposed to have a public advocate,” she said. “It is unclear if they are using them in the way they are supposed to be used. It is not clear President Trump will have a huge impact on the court itself. From what we know, that is going to come down to the leaders of the intelligence community themselves.”

Key Appointees
If there are early indications of how surveillance policy will change under the new administration, it is the people being appointed to key positions. Privacy organizations such as the EFF and the Center for Democracy and Technology (CDT) paid close attention to the voting records and nomination hearings of key Trump appointees. Tummarello noted that new Attorney General Jeff Sessions once wrote an op-ed opposing the USA FREEDOM Act and said the bulk phone records collection under Section 215 of the Patriot Act was “subject to extraordi- nary oversight” and warned the bill “would make it vastly more difficult for the NSA to stop a terrorist than it is to stop a tax cheat.”

“We at EFF thought the USA FREEDOM Act was a small step in the right direction,” Tummarello said. Sessions also helped derail a bill in the Senate that would have required law enforcement to get a warrant before accessing stored electronic communications, like emails. “The Privacy Act got bogged down, because a bunch of senators, including Sen. Sessions, attempted to attach privacy-harming amend- ments to a pro-privacy bill,” she said. (The U.S.
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agencies from collecting data, sharing data, or using resources to participate in any program that would create a list or registry of people based on their religion, ethnicity or national origin, which EFF calls a direct response to Trump's call for a Muslim registry, noting that SB 31 would also strictly limit law enforcement from collecting information on a person's religion. Law enforcement officials may take a positive view of enhanced surveillance techniques in immigration and terrorism investigations, seeing them as valuable new tools in their toolbox. But German said even those who are worried about surveillance issues shouldn't focus their concerns on the Trump administration.

"The question isn't how will Donald Trump change things; the question is how will he use this broad power that a bipartisan consensus in the national security establishment has given him," German said. "The problem is not President Trump. The problem is that these powers shouldn't be in the hands of any president. The way to stop Trump from abusing them is to make sure that the restrictions are put back in place so nobody can abuse them."
Disaster Recovery

New Options for Tribes

FEMA offers guidelines for tribes seeking disaster relief.

By Adam Stone

Santa Clara Pueblo, N.M., has seen its share of presidential disaster declarations in recent years. In 2000 it took 1,600 firefighters from 65 local fire departments to put out the Cerro Grande fire. In 2001 the Las Conchas fire burned up the majority of the local watershed. Besides the immediate damage, the fires led to devastating flooding. In both those events, the pueblo, which is a sovereign Native American territory, tapped into Stafford Act funding as a partner on New Mexico's application for assistance.

In 2013 things played out a little differently. In response to two separate summer-time floods totaling some $10 million in damage, tribal leaders applied directly to the government. Santa Clara Pueblo thus became one of the first tribal entities to access Stafford support on its own, rather than having to partner with a state.

While Congress made direct tribal requests possible with its post-Hurricane Sandy adjustments to the Stafford Act, there's been no clear procedure for making such declarations, and so far, only a small handful of the 567 federally recognized tribes have done so. Recently FEMA released a long-awaited set of guidelines, the Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance, laying out for the first time a detailed set of instructions for tribal governments looking to go direct to the source in their quest for disaster relief.

"This provides them with new options. It recognizes tribal sovereignty, and it gives them greater control," said Alex Amparo, FEMA assistant administrator of recovery.

Rules of the Road

The new guidance is weighty, running more than 50 pages. It details the types of assistance available and the necessary assessments and documentation. It offers extensive insight into the considerations a tribe will need to make before requesting a disaster declaration, including the financial commitment, staffing needs, compliance requirements and other issues.

What you are seeing now is the result of our efforts over the last couple of years to talk through formal consultation," Amparo said. "We have been talking to tribes and getting their input, sharing with them drafts of the guidance and receiving more than 2,000 comments from 140 listening sessions. This is the product of all that dialog."

In addition to allowing tribes to directly apply for aid, the guidance implements some other significant changes in the way Native American governments are empowered to respond to disasters. Most notably, there's a change in threshold. States must incur $1 million in damages to be eligible for Stafford assistance. Tribal governments can apply for aid having experienced just $250,000 in damages.

"Part of the reason we went down to $250,000 is that the tribes vary in capacity," Amparo said. "If you have a tribal nation with a population of fewer than 1,000 people, $250,000 is a major disaster for them."

The new rules also give tribal governments a greater degree of flexibility in how they interact with national disaster relief programs. "One of the things we saw prior to this change is just the sheer logistical challenge of these things," said Milo Booth, FEMA's national tribal affairs adviser.

"Take the Navajo Nation. Under the old Stafford Act we'd be looking at a tribe in three states and three FEMA regions, so they would have to go to three different regional administrations to make their case for a federal declaration, while not being able to combine those damages," he said. "You could possibly be going to three different governors to ask for declarations on a single disaster."

Despite the advantages, there may be a financial downside to the new autonomy. The Stafford Act describes a 75/25 split in disaster relief, with the federal government shouldering the heavier load. In many states, that remaining 25 percent has been split in some way between the state and the tribal government, in disasters to which a tribe is impacted.

In New Mexico for instance it's a 50/50 split, so that in state-led declarations, Santa Clara Pueblo has covered 12.5 percent of the expense. When making a direct declaration, the pueblo must carry the full 25 percent itself. Despite the potential drawback — and even in the absence of the newly released guidelines — a small number of tribal entities have made their own declarations in recent years.

"This provides them with new options. It recognizes tribal sovereignty, and it gives them greater control," said Alex Amparo, FEMA assistant administrator of recovery.
Early Adopters

The Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation was the first tribe to apply directly for federal disaster assistance. A 2013 declaration addressed some $5.4 million in damages from winter storms. “It’s a really big accomplishment for the Native American community,” Mollie Grant, then-emergency management program manager for the Eastern Cherokee Nation, told news media at the time. “I think it’s an honor, because we’re the first to lead the other tribes.”

The Navajo Nation also sought damages in 2013 for a $1 billion deep freeze in which more than 3,000 homes were damaged due to frozen water pipes. “We are thankful that we are taking a step to further strengthen our sovereignty as the Navajo Nation,” said then-Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly in a FEMA release. “This agreement recognizes the government-to-government relationship we have with the federal government.”

In Santa Clara Pueblo, some 2,500 people reside on 57,000 acres on the Rio Grande, surrounded by national forestland. The decision to pursue direct disaster declarations in 2013 came in large measure out of a desire for greater control in the emergency management process.

“We got to tell our own story, as compared to someone else telling our story for us,” said Santa Clara Pueblo Gov. Michael Chavarria. “We got direct contact with FEMA, we got direct technical support, rather than working through the state.”

This in turn can impact the ways in which remediation plays out. “When you can tell FEMA face to face this is what happened, you get better control over how you direct resources,” he said.

Direct access also has given the tribes better insight into the inner workings of FEMA and improved access to resources within the agency. “We have to wear multiple hats, and we don’t always have the internal capabilities,” Chavarria said. “We don’t have hydrologists and soil scientists to help us figure out the best way forward, so it’s important that we have these strong partnerships and access to third-party assistance.”

FEMA officials said they are looking to the direct-application process as a means to deepen those ties between the agency and the tribes. “The agency has put in place a tribal liaison in each of its 10 regions and added a tribal adviser to the external affairs roster to conduct outreach efforts. In 2016 some 1,000 tribal representatives went through the training either at FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute or its Center for Domestic Preparedness.

“When you have tribal leaders go through these exercises, this really does go to build resiliency across the entire nation,” Amparo said. “You have more people with a greater understanding of where and how emergency assistance is provided.”

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The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority was created in 1985 to develop, promote and safely operate Reagan National and Dulles International airports, which serve the national capital region. Stephanie Murphy became the first emergency preparedness coordinator two years ago and is poised to gain her first staff member soon. Murphy counts on her years of experience in emergency management, including as deputy coordinator, National Incident Management System compliance coordinator, and deputy and regional planner for the Arlington County, Va., Office of Emergency Management; crisis management trainer for the U.S. Department of State; and planning section chief for FEMA's National Incident Management Assistant Team. We asked Murphy how she does it all at the Airports Authority.

By Jim McKay | Editor
Murphy says being emergency preparedness coordinator means empowering responders to be able to act swiftly.
Can you start by describing your role with the Airports Authority?

My role is to look at emergency management and preparedness from an all-hazards perspective. To ensure that the Airports Authority — meaning Reagan, Dulles and our Dulles toll road — are prepared for whatever might come. I really look at it from a corporate perspective, an enterprise executive level in making sure we have what we need in place to be prepared and filling in those gaps if we don’t.

It’s the full gamut of emergency management. There’s preparedness, response, recovery. I’m the director of the EOC. I put together all the plans for continuity of operations. It’s only two years old, so I’m building from the ground up. It’s been there as long as I’ve been here.

I’m really building the program as a traditional emergency management program, but in the way that best fits our needs at the airports.

Is there a typical day in your workweek?

There isn’t a typical day. One day I’m at meetings with our regional partners, at our council of governments with other emergency managers in the region working on regional issues, or I’m at a safety or security meeting with our leadership at the airports or responding to incidents. We just had a couple of flights over the last couple of weeks that were diverted, and we’ve had protests much like other airports have had with the Presidential Executive Order. So just making sure that those things are managed appropriately, to putting together a planning team and doing several monthlong exercise developments. We do several full-scale exercises, tabletops and drills, and I head those efforts as well.

What a traditional six-to-eight person emergency management team would do right now, it’s just me doing it, so it’s filling in all those different aspects little by little here and there. I’ll be hiring my first staff member soon.

In terms of other agencies, who do you partner with?

We partner with our federal partners who are at the airports — the FBI, TSA, FAA, NTSB, Fish and Wildlife — and the airport operations, public safety and I are the three groups that work very close together. We also work with the state and local governments, from the commonwealth of Virginia, to Arlington County to the city of Alexandria to Loudoun and Fairfax counties, on projects and bringing them into exercises to make sure we’re all working on the same page.

And then you also have to remember we have all the airlines, the concessions — we have to assure as a business those things are running. So we kind of have a dual role in a sense where we’re a corporation and we have to run a business, but we’re also considered our own jurisdiction where we have to run a police department, a fire department and now emergency management. And we have to manage appropriately just like any other government would.

Do all the partners you mentioned take part in the exercises?

Yes, absolutely. Partnering with our airport operations and public safety, I try to bring in those partnerships because I’m at the corporate executive level where we’re trying to make sure everyone is not in silos and make sure that, though we have our own lanes, we all move down the freeway in the same direction. You might need to merge together or cross over here or there, but we’re all
I would say it’s sadly the flavor of the day. A few years back it was pandemics because of H1N1. At the airports we do look at terrorism since we are a vulnerable infrastructure piece. We’ve seen it all over the world from Turkey to Brussels where the airports have been attacked and then a metro system in Brussels where they had a dual attack, to Fort Lauderdale Airport where they had an attack. Right now, one of our biggest concerns is simply ensuring that we protect our public spaces.

How do we make sure that we’re working together to keep our eyes and ears open on the ground and empowering all of those who have badges at our facility because for the first three to five minutes we’re not going to be there? One of our biggest priorities is how we empower all of our badge holders to be leaders.

The cause, whether it’s human caused or not, is not really the main concern; what I really want to make sure of is that whatever happens we’re prepared to deal with it.

I’m surprised that this began just two years ago. There were plans, but it was a little bit more disjointed. It was per airport. There was maybe a large, full-scale exercise every three years. The emergency management preparedness program really looks to bring all those things together enterprise-wide to incorporate our IT and corporate people like finance and taking it a step further out and making it more robust.

I would have thought you would have six or seven people on staff. It’s a heavy lift, but I’ve been given a lot of latitude on building the program (I report to the chief operating officer) and taking it in, prioritizing as I’ve needed to. Six months in, I said we need to get another person, but we had to find money for it since we don’t generate money. We don’t have taxpayers, we have passengers and concessions, but finding the budget is a slow growth.

It’s a huge accomplishment to go from one to two people. I’ve applied for grants that could bring on a third person, and I use interns. I’ve enlisted police to help me write plans, and I’ve tried to be creative that way. I try to find unique ways to get things done and get people to buy in.

You said you prepare for all hazards, but what’s at the top of the list?

moving in the same direction. The exercises that our airport operations does are full-scale, mass-casualty exercises, mandated by TSA and FAA to be done every three years.

They head those efforts and pull in all the partners, and that typically deals with an aircraft accident. On the flip side, I look at pretty much every other hazard. We did an active shooter exercise in 2015 at Reagan National Airport, and then last year I did a complex coordinated attacks exercise series, where we did a functional exercise that dealt with insider threat issues. We did a full-scale exercise that was an IED and secondary attack, and then we did a tabletop the next day. This was all within a week. We looked at long-term recovery issues. All through the exercises, the planning team comprises those partners, as well as bringing in the response agencies or those people who would be part of preplanning of an event to the actual recovery piece. We had the medical examiner and Red Cross because we absolutely know we’re not going to be doing it alone and we can’t.

You said you prepare for all hazards, but what’s at the top of the list?
With intense public scrutiny of relations between police officers and the communities they serve, departments are looking for new ways to head off problems before they escalate.

Police departments already have a lot of data available that could be helpful: use of force incidents, citizen complaints, praise of officers from other officers or the community. But making sense of that data is not always easy. For example, if two officers use force during stops twice in one month, are they both performing the same — and at equal risk of having a serious incident in the future? What if one officer made dozens of stops during that time and the other only made two — using force both times? Does it make a difference if they were patrolling in different areas, or if one was on the night shift and the other working during the day?

To sort through the data and draw the right conclusions from it, some departments are turning to performance management systems — also called early intervention systems — for data analysis.

Early intervention systems “don’t start from good beginnings,” said Brian Christie, vice president of public sector solutions for Sierra-Cedar, which works with police departments to customize and implement its system, called Insight. Many times, departments create them as part of a consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice after an investigation into problems. “But they set the stage for improvements.”

**How Intervention Systems Work**

The basic idea of an early intervention system is to take data from multiple sources — often about a dozen, though the Seattle Police Department just started using a system that draws on 17 different data sets.
system and tracks arrests, training and other integrates with the computer-aided dispatch from human resources to internal affairs. It at data that comes from sources ranging public safety solutions with Sierra-Cedar. Strandberg, vice president of justice and early intervention system does," said Garth and forms the foundation for what an cer's interactions or job comes together see unusual patterns.

— and analyze them so users can easily see unusual patterns.

“Every piece of data around an offi cer’s interactions or job comes together and forms the foundation for what an early intervention system does,” said Garth Strandberg, vice president of justice and public safety solutions with Sierra-Cedar. The Seattle system, for example, looks at data that comes from sources ranging from human resources to internal affairs. It integrates with the computer-aided dispatch system and tracks arrests, training and other incidents. The Seattle Police Department worked with Accenture to develop this data analytics platform, which was finished in January. The system followed a consent decree with the federal government, which required that the city proactively address the use of force by police officers.

“We’re looking at the whole picture of the officer,” said Jody Weis, Accenture’s director of public safety for North America. “That’s good for the officers, and I think it’s really good for the community.”

Once the system has the data, the key is to analyze it. How many times has an officer used force in the past six weeks? That number may be higher for a member of a SWAT team, for example, than for someone who patrols a relatively peaceful neighborhood. Tuning the system to account for those differences is key to making it work.

“It looks at the outliers,” Strandberg said.

“Do we have an issue with an officer that requires training?” The idea is to engage with the officer before it becomes a punitive action.”

For example, the system the Los Angeles Police Department uses analyzes each officer’s performance each night, sending an electronic action item to the supervisor’s inbox if an officer’s performance appears to vary from that of other officers doing similar work.

The current version of the LAPD’s system, which Sierra-Cedar put together and is called TRAM II (for Training, Evaluation and Management System), went live in 2007. The system was originally mandated by a consent decree between the department and the U.S. Department of Justice in January. The system followed a consent decree with the federal government, which required that the city proactively address the use of force by police officers.

Although early intervention systems can provide valuable insights, departments face many challenges in setting them up and using them effectively:

• **Starting with the right data.** “It’s kind of junk in, junk out,” Weis said. If names have not been entered in the same format in the past, for example, it may cause problems for the new system. “You may have the greatest analytical tools in the world,” but if the underlying data is incorrect or incomplete, the conclusions may be wrong. And departments may use these conclusions to drive policy.

In Seattle, “the team worked really hard on cleaning up their data,” Strandberg said. And in New Orleans, the department realized that it would need to upgrade some of the databases, including the training and inclusion that conversation in the final analysis, which is then reviewed by several higher levels of command staff. Different departments may start out with different data sets and look at them in different ways.

For example, Seattle’s system identifies each officer’s chain of command on any given day. Weis said, so if an officer’s results are different depending on the supervisor, that will become clear.

The system charts the places and times of day when force is most likely to be used. It also tracks demographic information for officers and offenders, so racial patterns will become apparent. And since it also tracks training, it can identify if an officer is missing critical training.

In the system Sierra-Cedar built for the New Orleans Police Department, which has had the company’s Insight tool fully implemented for a few months as part of its response to a consent decree, a supervisor dashboard allows supervisors to “look at everybody in their command in 30 seconds and get a summary of what they have done over the past 24 hours,” Strandberg said.

“The supervisors are where change happens and where it affects the people on the street, and giving them the right tools is probably the most impactful thing the system does.”

**Overcoming Challenges**

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Technology and Trends

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Reaping the Benefits
Because many external factors change at the same time that performance management systems are implemented, it can be difficult to quantify the results of using the systems. However, departments using the systems cite benefits in a number of areas:

• **Early intervention.** Before LAPD had its early intervention system in place, supervisors were often surprised when they heard about officers getting in trouble — but nothing had been done to keep issues from escalating. Scott said, “Now what you see is a department that is very proactive. [The system] allows the command staff to move people or change their assignments — you can do that before an officer gets into any type of risk-based problem.”

• **Staff retention.** “It’s expensive to train an officer,” Strandberg said. “If you can intervene with training or counseling — so your first conversation with that officer isn’t when they’re being terminated — that’s a metric they’re concerned with.”

• **Better decision-making.** The system “is making us a 21st-century police department, where we can know how our people are performing and our decisions are based on science and data,” Harrison said. When officers are being considered for new assignments or promotions, everyone involved wants to be sure the decisions are fair. Without good data available, it was easy for those decisions to be based on memory, not on accurate data. “Now, we’re actually comparing apples to apples and not making those decisions in a vacuum,” Harrison said. This helps ease officers’ concerns about fairness and favoritism in making these assignments.

• **Improvements in culture and management.** Seattle Chief of Police Kathleen O’Toole said in a statement, “This integrated platform has improved our ability to track use of force and officer performance across multiple measures. These analytics not only promote accountability, but also enhance police operations by supporting proper management of personnel — helping SPD officers deliver high-quality policing to the communities they serve.”

In Los Angeles, Scott said, the system “has changed the culture of our department. We’re all on the same page; we’re all looking for risk issues:”

• **Public trust and communication.** In addition to being able to tell the public that the department has an early warning system to help identify officers with problematic behavior, the New Orleans system now has more accurate data available. “As a result, we have been able to release a number of data sets to the public, resulting in public engagement,” said Lamar Gardere, New Orleans CIO. “It’s increased transparency and increased accountability.”

Scott said that in Los Angeles, too, the system has increased openness. “We’re more professional, more open, and because of that we have built the public trust within the community.”

Public trust is critical because of how life-changing an encounter with the police can be. “Police officers have the authority to take away your liberty, and they can under certain circumstances have the authority to use deadly force,” Weis said.

The Future
Early intervention systems are expandable and modifiable, and departments continue to work on them. They can add new data sources, for example, or tweak the way the system identifies trends that need action.

“We constantly look at our assessments,” Scott said. Are there different ways to measure performance? Should they tweak the way they calculate when an action item gets triggered?

“We’re looking to make the system even better and more flexible,” said New Orleans Police Superintendent Michael Harrison. The department also had to digitize some historical information to enter into the system.

Once the data is cleaned up, it’s important to develop policies to ensure future data entry is done consistently.

• **Getting buy-in.** Officers may initially be suspicious of a system that is used to track disciplinary issues. And for the system to reassure the community, the public needs to understand how it works.

The New Orleans Police Department did not want its officers to view the system as punitive: “It is not a disciplinary management tool, it is a human resource management tool,” Harrison said. “It is designed to alert supervisors when we see trends that need some type of supervisory intervention.”

The New Orleans system includes commendations and positive comments from the public, and it gives individual officers self-service access to information in their personnel files. This gives them “something of value that they weren’t getting before,” Christenson said.

Communication was also key — both with officers and with the community.

“We spent a lot of time working on messaging,” Harrison said.

In Los Angeles, there were concerns at the beginning that the system would generate extra work for supervisors, Scott said. But after the system had been in use for a couple of years, “what you saw was that it was a tool that assisted supervisors. It kept them focused. And the officers feel that we are now more of a transparent organization, an organization that holds its people accountable.”

• **Making the right comparisons.** The system will not produce valid results — and will make officers feel it is unfair — unless it compares officers to others doing similar work. “Analytics are built into the system to make sure we’re comparing apples to apples,” Harrison said.

Payroll systems, that would feed into the system. “The information had to be accurate and clean,” said New Orleans Police Superintendent Michael Harrison. The department also had to digitize some historical information to enter into the system.

Once the data is cleaned up, it’s important to develop policies to ensure future data entry is done consistently.
Using Fake Social Media to Train

The instantaneous nature of our digital age has added a new set of challenges for crisis managers. As a result, government agencies, Fortune 500s and nongovernmental organizations are now training on private social media platforms that work like their real-world counterparts.

SimulationDeck is a tool created by a team of former FEMA employees who are now emergency management consultants. The private, cloud-based application includes mock media news channels, social media platforms, agency websites and controller tools for emergency managers wanting to simulate natural disasters, technological attacks or human-caused emergencies. The tool is used by airports, seaports, oil and gas companies, universities, state and local governments, FEMA, and the Defense Department. simulationdeck.com

Zistos’ Rescue Dual Mode Thermal Pole Camera

System featuring the THC-51D camera is a tool for technical search specialists to use for victim location in collapsed rescues. The Dual Mode Thermal Camera, with next-generation technology, increases camera performance and decreases size and cost. The THC-51D contains two camera technologies, allowing the operator to toggle between thermal and standard video, and offers a built-in high-gain microphone. The visual information from using these two modes can translate into a faster search operation.

The system features a telescoping and articulating pole, ideal for peering into areas to look for victims without putting the search team into a hazardous situation. The images are displayed on a body-worn LCD display. zistos.com

TERROR ALERT

SMARTPHONE APP

TerrorMate alerts users to both possible and actual terror attacks and provides information on how to stay safe in the affected area. The app sends out real-time advisories and intelligence in short format, updating the user on events as they happen. It utilizes geolocation to deliver information tailored to each user’s location, with alerts appearing within five minutes of an attack or alert.

In addition, users can upload real-time media of the attack or suspicious activity and send anonymous tips, as well as share information with their friends and family with the trusted contacts feature. Various mobile carriers have shown interest in having their users get primary access to the app. terrormate.com
By Eric Holdeman

Are You Chicken Little?

The functions of an emergency management program is to know all about the hazards that could impact the community. These are typically assembled and listed by hazard type. There are natural hazards, flooding, landslides, wildland fires, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc. A long list to be sure.

Then there are human-caused accidents that often involve hazardous materials. These materials are “safe” when contained in properly sealed containers, but there can be leaks at fixed facilities and even more so during transit via rail or road.

Unfortunately there are also deliberate human-caused injuries and deaths. With active shooters, be they teenagers or terrorists, the results are mostly the same. Along with terrorism, foreign or domestic, weapons go beyond guns to include all types of bombs, dirty bombs, chemical weapons, biological weapons, and so on. You can top off this category with thermonuclear war if you like.

All of the above used to be put in a document called the Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Analysis. The last administration decided that just listing the hazards and vulnerabilities was too easy. Now if you are “up to snuff” in FEMA terms, you document all your hazards in a Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA). “The THIRA process helps communities map their risks to the core capabilities, enabling them to determine whole-community informed desired outcomes, capability targets, and resources required to achieve their capability targets,” according to FEMA. Now, are you feeling better informed and prepared?

All of the above have kept many an emergency manager and consultant employed documenting in writing all of this very important stuff.

But let the standards and documentation be; let’s talk about where the rubber meets the road.

Once you have a very thorough understanding of your risks, what is it exactly that you choose to tell the public? Are the hazards left to rot on your Web page? Do you select a few that you use in public presentations? To what degree do you use “worst-case scenarios” to describe the calamity that might befall individuals, families and businesses? Do you talk about EF1 or EF5 tornadoes; Cat 1 or Cat 5 hurricanes; or, for earthquake country, magnitude 5 or 9.5 earthquakes?

Do you even bring up an asteroid strike on land or in the sea? Are coronal mass ejections or electromagnetic pulse events that might fry every electronic circuit and bring about a cataclysmic power outage that could last weeks or months included in your talks? Are these on your list of hazards that you talk about with the average Sally and Joe?

If you are not directly familiar with the story of Chicken Little, according to Wikipedia, “It is a folk tale with a moral in the form of a cumulative tale about a chicken who believes the world is coming to an end. The phrase ‘The sky is falling!’ features prominently in the story, and has passed into the English language as a common idiom indicating a hysterical or mistaken belief that disaster is imminent.”

We are not to be using fear to motivate people to become prepared for disasters. And, we are not supposed to be leaving disasters off our list of hazards because we personally don’t think they will happen. Our mission is to provide information in a thoughtful and meaningful manner so that people can make their own choices. You never know, maybe Chicken Little wasn’t hit by an acorn, but in actuality it was a very tiny asteroid.
The Networked Emergency Manager

Former Gen. Stanley McChrystal’s Team of Teams is an excellent book about leadership and the need to adapt to changing circumstances. In the book, he explains how the U.S. Special Operations Task Force in Iraq had to become a more nimble and networked organization to combat al-Qaida. Many of the lessons and strategies discussed are directly relatable to other disciplines, including emergency management.

The importance of networks within emergency management is not a new concept, as our thinking has evolved to embrace “whole community” partners, including the private sector and nonprofit organizations. Although a fair amount of effort has gone into the idea of networked emergency management, I would like to offer some additional perspectives on what it means to be a networked emergency manager. In doing so, it is helpful to consider the management consulting theory that organizational success stems from three factors: people, process and technology.

In terms of people, the networked emergency manager must be willing and able to work with people and all types of personalities. Building and maintaining relationships takes time, but it is well worth the effort, particularly when you need to rely on other people for information or assistance during an emergency. Emergency managers also play an important role in helping to organize people and in bringing different groups and individuals together to tackle problems, often during a crisis. Investing in these people and relationships ahead of time will help build trust and increase the likelihood of success when it matters the most.

Emergency managers must understand, process and navigate bureaucracy, especially when dealing with multiple layers of government or complex issues that involve different stakeholders. A firm understanding of the Incident Command System is important, but knowing who does what, how they do it and why they do it is also helpful, which is why planning and other preparedness activities are so critical. Taking the time to plan, train and exercise with different agencies and organizations will allow all parties involved to better understand each other's processes and potential challenges. The networked emergency manager will seek out these collaborative preparedness opportunities and new partnerships.

Finally, the networked emergency manager must understand and embrace technology and appreciate the rate at which technology is changing. Social media, emergency alerting apps, mobile devices and other emerging technologies, such as unmanned aircraft systems, are changing the way we receive and share information. The days of relying on tri-fold pamphlets and traditional press releases are over. Today, you need to have a social media strategy and ability to use multiple forms of technology to communicate and connect with an increasingly networked population. Given the rate at which technology changes, it is also important to stay current and explore ways to use new technology to your advantage.

Emergency management has evolved greatly over the last several decades and will continue to evolve as we work to address climate change, terrorism, cyberthreats and other new challenges. Like Gen. McChrystal’s Special Operations Task Force, we must be able to adapt to the changing environment. Doing so will require networked emergency managers with the ability to understand people, process and technology.

By Terry Hastings
Introducing the new DLAN Mobile Responder App

You respond to the scene during an emergency.
So should your Incident Management System.

In today’s complex, fast-paced world of emergency operations, you need an Incident Management System that can help your team work as efficiently as possible no matter your location. With the new DLAN Mobile Responder App, emergency managers in the field can easily communicate essential information with each other and back to the EOC using their mobile device. Designed to meet all FEMA regulations and offer 100% interoperability, DisasterLAN (DLAN) from Buffalo Computer Graphics, Inc. is a fully integrated solution advanced enough to handle all emergency situations, yet simple enough to perform day-to-day tasks and non-emergency event management. Plus, the DLAN platform can be customized to meet the needs and budgets of states, counties, and municipalities.

Receive a free demo today by visiting www.DisasterLAN.com or calling us at 716-822-8668

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