

Regional Partnership-SouthEast Emergency Response Network (SEERN)

Summary

SouthEast Emergency Response Network (SEERN) is a Georgia based non-profit 501(c)3, serving the States of: AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, MO, NC, SC & TN under one Regional network/framework.

Background

SEERN was formed under Secretary Ridge, as the 4th of 4 pilots under the U.S. DHS HSIN-CI Program.

Goals and Objectives

SEERN's Mission: To foster a true public, private and academic partnership -connecting to one common operating picture in the Southeast – communicating in 'real-time'

1. Become the One common operating picture of the Southeast.
2. Drive 'actionable' real-time, street level information sharing between the public & private sectors (ideally via Fusion Centers).
3. Coordinate Regional opportunities for all elements of State, Local, Tribal & County governments to interface directly with the private sector
4. Share and drive best practices across the Region.
5. Act as an honest broker & translator between: SLTF government, the legislative branch, DoD and the private sector; to achieve vital preparedness goals and become a more resilient Region/Nation.

Description

SEERN will approach our outreach from an 'all hazards' perspective to maximize preparedness and resiliency for the Region. SEERN will also interface with the Federal government both on a regional and national basis (DHS, FEMA, ODNI and the Legislative Branch).

Requirements for Success

1. Funding - Resources to do the important work of the Region. These are all National 'problems' with novel & unique solutions. Every partnership has been battered by the downturn in the economy. Without rapid and long term funding, many of these partnerships will disappear, never to return.
That loss would be tragic, as the relationships which have been built will cost 10 fold to recreate, re-understand and retrain. Support the partnerships and add to the tidal wave of success & impact we've had - It's simply more efficient and less expensive to the citizen.
2. Support the First Responder - State, Local, Tribal, Territorial, Private Sector, VOAD & faith-based organizations alike. Only the people closest to the problem can really know; and, own the problem. The more the First Responder is focused on budget & staff cuts,

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the less they are focused upon the 'enemy.' In this new and 'evolving threat' (and all hazards world), we must work in concert with each other more closely than ever before...

3. Interagency Coordination - All aspects of the Federal government from Agriculture to Veterans Affairs ('A to Z'), simply must become better coordinated. We expend an extraordinary amount of time working with (DHS, DoD, FBI, FEMA, ODNI and the Legislature, etc.) making these agencies, departments, divisions and committees aware of things that the Federal government is currently doing in our Regional space. We simply must reduce this wasteful duplication and ideally provide one Regional format in which to discuss plans, coordination & impact of all these initiatives, pilots & programs (in one sitting). A Regional Conference format could go along way to reducing redundancy and miscommunication.

4. Exercises - 'You Fight Like You Train.' The private sector comprises more than 80+ percent of what we attempt to protect. Therefore, the private sector should only be close 'second' to the State and Local, as every incident occurs in a jurisdiction. We must set the tone with NLE11 and other exercises if we hope to ever have true resiliency of our critical economic functions (jobs, transportation, supply chain, commerce & trade, etc.). 'If we fail to prepare, we not only prepare to fail - we guarantee it!'

5. FEMA simply must hire an extremely qualified team to fill the role of the Regional External Affairs Specialist (private sector liaison) for FEMA Region four (IV) & six (VI). Without a lively, competent and street-level knowledgeable person, we will lack an important partner in our quest for regional resiliency.

Resources

SEERN has the following resources available through its partnership- A seat in the Emergency Operations Centers; resources to help prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters; web resources; tools and templates; and secure credentials to gain access to an affected area.

Training and Exercises

SEERN hosts and participates in joint training and exercises with the public and private sectors.

Communication Tools

SEERN uses the following methods of communication—Email alerts; text messages; in-person meetings; conferences and other events; video conferences; website; media outreach; real-time alerts; and secure portal.

Links

<http://www.seern.org/>

<http://www.r-ccc.org/>

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www.llis.gov (DHS Lessons Learned Information Sharing Portal)
http://ftp.fas.org/irp/congress/2006_hr/hsin.pdf

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