BACKGROUND “THINK PIECE” FOR
THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ROUNDTABLE MEETING
EMI, MARCH 5-6, 2007
ON
WHAT IS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT?
AND
WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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BACKGROUND

The following is meant to assist in jumpstarting a planned meeting at EMI, March 5-6, 2007 on the topic of “basic” emergency management in the United States. This “investigation” started last summer when I emailed several people seeking input for an upcoming “all-hands” meeting at FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute on the future of training and education at EMI. Mike Selves, the Emergency Manager for Johnson County Kansas, and President of the International Association of Emergency Managers, wrote to me the following:

Wayne, I don't know how receptive the "powers that be" in DHS/FEMA would be to this, but it seems to me that the single most helpful thing EMI could do in conjunction with the academic and practitioner E.M. communities would be to revive the concept of emergency management principles (integrated, comprehensive, all-hazard, coordination, linked to research, etc.). This should be developed, not by a "beltway bandit" contractor, but by a task force of academics and practitioners. The purpose of this exercise would be to set forth the basic underpinnings upon which all courses (EMI, collegiate, etc.) in E.M. theory and practice would be based. Our current problems with FEMA and the role of emergency management in the federal structure stems, in my humble opinion, almost entirely from the lack of any generally understanding or acceptance of these basics. One use of this concept would be the creation of a short course on emergency management for all DHS and FEMA employees. We are requiring NIMS training of virtually everyone in the country, what good is NIMS training if you don't understand the context within which NIMS must operate. The current screw up of preparedness and response concepts at the Federal level is due to this problem of defining everything using an "emergency services" first responder framework. Our efforts on Capitol Hill have only born any fruit at all because we are finally getting some key members and staffers to understand this bigger picture. The system is not failing because first responders need more attention, it is failing because the coordinators and decision-makers need more attention. (July 10, 2006 email)

I agree that one of the fundamental problems in emergency management today is that a broad array of very “instrumental” audiences does not understand, or does not adequately understand, what emergency management is. By “instrumental” I refer to people who impact significantly upon the evolution of emergency management, such as personnel within the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, and within Congress. It is also the case, I believe, that too many within the “emergency management community” do not adequately know or understand “basic emergency management principles.”

Several months after the Mike Selves communication in the Fall of 2006, and shortly after Dr. Cortez Lawrence assumed the position of Superintendent of the Emergency Management Institute, I forwarded the Mike Selves email to Dr. Lawrence. A few days later he asked me to set up a meeting with Mike and a small working group of other stakeholders to discuss what could be done about the situation he described in his communication.

The outline below is divided into several components in an attempt to clarify my own thinking as I prepare for that meeting. When I taught an Introduction to Emergency Management course at
Shenandoah University in 1999 I too had difficulty distinguishing between background contexts, principles, and the practice of emergency management. There is not an established “Emergency Management Doctrine,” shall we say, to clear this all up. This I obfuscated by developing sections under the heading of “Fundamentals of Emergency Management” wherein all three were discussed – i.e. background contexts, principles, and practice.

I was reminded how difficult this differentiation is this past Spring while attending a Canadian hazards conference and listening to a plenary presentation on “The Principles of Emergency Management” by Dr. Ian Davis, a Professor from the United Kingdom. He noted that his international research indicates that many if not most hazard, disaster, emergency management and related organizations have difficulty deciding what a “principle” is as opposed to a goal, value, strategy, practice, philosophical orientation, task, objective, core topic, etc. He then noted, that even within the category of what he recognized as “principles” there was not the type of consensus he would have expected after more than fifty years of emergency management professional practice – dating back to the development of civil defense cadres and practice during and after World War II. The post WWII experience has been continuous, with civil defense evolving into emergency management or something like-minded -- thus his surprise at the disarray, and his call for clearer thinking.

The term “context” has been chosen to make the point that emergency management does not happen in a vacuum. The exercise of emergency management is both very much constrained as well as informed by various political, economic, social, bureaucratic/administrative and other contexts. To be successful emergency managers need sufficient knowledge, training, and experience to be able to navigate within these bigger waters.

From *Webster’s New World Dictionary*, the term “principle” is defined as “a fundamental truth, law, doctrine, or motivating force, upon which others are based.” As Dr. David Etkin, Coordinator of the Emergency Management Program at York University in Toronto, and Dr. Ian Davis of Cranfield University, Oxford, UK, write in their working draft monograph “The Search for Principles of Disaster Management,” “Principles guide people’s decisions and actions and procedures developed by organizations, and laws and doctrines of political entities” (Etkin and Davis 2006, p. 1). Coming to grips with the underlying principles of this or any other profession is very important. Not only do I believe that there are underlying principles of emergency management in the U.S. which need to be clearly promoted, understood and taken to heart, I believe that there are more or less universal Principles of Emergency Management that transcend geo-political borders. The primary purpose behind the scheduling of “International Disaster Management” breakout sessions during the last several Annual Emergency Management Higher Education Conferences at the Emergency Management Institute was to discuss what the universal principles of disaster or emergency management might be.

Those Conference Breakout Sessions, though, as well as the investigation by Dr’s Etkins and Davis, and this current “exercise,” demonstrate that this is also a quite challenging task. As Dr. Etkins put it in a December 5th communication in reference to the listings of Emergency and Disaster Management “Principles” we had each put together,
“both mine and yours are different from the ones Ian has suggested. I think it is important for our community continue to grapple with the issue of what the principles of emergency and disaster management are. Certainly it is difficult, but the very fact that experienced, well informed professionals (that's you and Ian) create different lists speaks volumes to the lack of depth in this area. Why is there this lack of depth? I think it goes to the comment that Drabek made about a lack of theory - that we borrow bits and pieces from other disciplines, but otherwise what we have is set of practices that make sense in an empirical way - and therefore depend very much upon ones orientation and perspective.”

Even after considering the words of Professors Davis and Etkin though, and engaging in this “think piece” exercise, I still think that it is less problematic to discuss the “Fundamentals” of Emergency Management. Perhaps some consensus on Emergency Management “Principles” might follow the development of a general consensus on “Fundamentals” of Emergency Management.

On December 14th, Dr. Lawrence asked me if I would be willing to talk for a few minutes at a December 19th EMI All-Hands staff meeting on “my emergency management doctrine” project. While I had used the word “doctrine” in communicating with him on what we might do to improve upon the situation Mike Selves described, and while I had recently received a communication from an old boss, Dr. John Brinkerhoff, on the topic of the need for an emergency management doctrine, I had not really came to grips with trying to focus my thoughts on the identification of specific components of an emergency management doctrine. Like the word “Principles,” the word “Doctrine” can be difficult to grapple with. On December 15th Dr. Lawrence forwarded to me a “Doctrine-Policy-Strategy” 12-page document developed by the Department of Homeland Security Lexicographer, whom I did not know existed. These two communications served to focus my attention on emergency management doctrine. It occurred to me that if we are going to try to enunciate an emergency management doctrine, it should, at least in outline form, be reproducible on one-page in such places as inside the cover of the EMI Course Catalog, printed EMI training materials, and FEMA publications in general.

After several attempts to develop a conception of an Emergency Management Doctrine document, though – one different than an Emergency Management Principles document – I gave up, deciding that “Doctrine” was more of an organizational-specific and operationally-oriented task than the guiding “Principles” of a profession and academic discipline. It appears to me that “Principles” should be formulated prior to the formulation of “Doctrine.” Thus I decided to focus on first things first.

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WHAT IS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT?

Emergency Management Definition:

Emergency Management is the coordinated and collaborative integration of all relevant stakeholders into the four phases of emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery) related to natural, technological, and intentional hazards (NGA, 1978).

Despite the balanced approach perception inherent in the NGA definition of emergency management noted above, traditionally, emergency management practice has been almost synonymous with the preparedness phase – the development by the emergency program manager of an emergency operations plan, followed by training and exercising on this disaster response oriented plan. This is a problem – both in terms of a too narrow conception of the function and in terms of the emergency manager as a drafter of an emergency operations plan (a technician), as opposed to someone who coordinates and manages the drafting of such a plan by personnel found in other jurisdictional organizations (a manager), amongst many other duties.

[In a review of this “think piece,” Robert Freitag at the University of Washington notes that in his opinion “the operative word here is management. It is not the study of emergencies, but the management of them. Solving problems, reducing risk through the four phases of emergency management – the comprehensive management of emergencies.”]

Today there is a new and different problem. One gets the distinct perception that when viewed from the outside “emergency management” is almost synonymous with disaster response – after all, isn’t emergency management the management of emergencies?

Amongst the many other competing definitions of “Emergency Management” are those that focus on risk:

“A simple definition is that emergency management is the discipline dealing with risk and risk avoidance” (Haddow and Bullock 2006, p. 1).

This definition is singled out from the many other competing definitions in that several comments received on this “think piece” noted inadequate attention and priority given to risk and risk management within the definition of emergency management as well as within the “principles” section.

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2 This document is not the place to get into “what do we call what we do?” – emergency management, disaster management, and the like. This document is concerned with identification and discussion of the core fundamentals and/or principles of the profession that deals with hazards, disasters and what to do about them – that is more often than not referred to as emergency management.

3 A recent, but more narrow definition, in that it pertains only to the public sector, can be found in the "Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006" (Title VI of H.R. 5441) (now Public Law 109-295) wherein emergency management is defined as "…the governmental function that coordinates and integrates all activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from or mitigate against threatened or actual natural disasters, acts of terrorism or other man-made disasters."

4 January 3, 2007 email.
The emergency management community needs to come to grips with a consensus definition.

**What Emergency Management is Not:**

It is *not synonymous with Emergency Services* – Organizations involved in law enforcement, fire service, emergency medical technicians and service, search and rescue organizations and the like.

As the President of the International Association of Emergency Managers, Mike Selves, said on the occasion of the unveiling of a new national logo for emergency management on December 1, 2006:

“…one of the biggest challenges emergency managers face, as a profession, is dispelling the misconception that our function is simply the sum total of the efforts and resources of the emergency services. The public can identify with firefighters, police and EMTs. However, the idea that there is a profession of public administration, called Emergency Management, whose job is to facilitate the creation of basic disaster policy framework and to coordinate the implementation of the policy during a disaster, is not well understood. Our job ties together not only the responders but also the decision makers, public and private agencies not normally associated with emergency response and a whole array of other elements of the local community before, during and after any disaster event.”

It is *not synonymous with First Responders* – Organizations such as Emergency Services, Public Health, Public Works, voluntary organizations active in disaster and other organizations and personnel involved in immediate disaster response.

It is *not synonymous with Homeland Security* – Homeland Security is first about the prevention of terrorism in the U.S., secondly with preparedness for and response to the use of weapons of mass destruction, thirdly with catastrophe readiness and response, and finally with a host of issue areas as reflected in the names of Department of Homeland Security constituent elements -- Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Citizenship and Immigration Service, Transportation Security Administration, U.S. Coast Guard (including boater safety and protecting the coast), U.S. Secret Service (includes, besides protecting key government officials, counterfeiting and child pornography), and cyber-security.

**What Emergency Management Shares:**

Emergency Management shares the interest *Emergency Services* organizations have in certain phases of certain hazards. Thus an emergency manager will share with the fire department an interest in hazardous materials. The fire department will not share the interest the emergency manager has in working with a community planning department and developers to zone and develop in the future in a way that will not aggravate flooding problems from storm water runoff or in floodplains.
Emergency Management shares with **First Responders** their concern that they be adequately supported in a disaster response situation. Usually the first responders are in the field engaged in tactical operations, while emergency managers are in emergency operations centers engaged in coordinating support operations. First responders, though, will not share the interest the emergency manager has in working with health and medical personnel on pandemic planning.

Emergency Management shares with **Homeland Security** an interest in catastrophe readiness and response. It also shares an interest in preparedness for the intentional hazard of a terrorist attack, and in developing capabilities to respond. It does not share the homeland security interest in such other areas as customs enforcement, immigration regulation, boater safety, counterfeiting money, or child pornography. Homeland Security personnel who work within such topical areas, or in terrorism prevention, do not engage, as emergency managers engage, in activities such as working with a planning department and with developers on zoning and construction to minimize or prevent flooding from rivers or storm water runoff.

**Who are Emergency Managers?**

A professional emergency manager is someone who coordinates with and collaboratively integrates all relevant stakeholders into the four phases of emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery) related to natural, technological, and intentional hazards – whether for a political subdivision or a private sector organization.

Ideally, an emergency manager is someone who can “see the big picture” and communicate a strategic “big picture” vision to others within an organization or jurisdiction. Ideally, an emergency manager provides leadership within a jurisdiction or organization on the topics of hazards, disasters and what to do about them (referred to as emergency management in the public sector).

In that at all levels of government, the emergency management office is a small office with smaller numbers of personnel and smaller budgets compared against other, more operational jurisdictional organizations, the task of coordinating activities relating to hazards, disasters and what to do about them with these bigger players is huge. If not done smartly and professionally, it runs a real risk of being marginalized and ineffective. It has been argued that the most effective approach, in these circumstances, is to focus on the development of a risk-based strategic plan for the jurisdiction establishing a vision for the way forward, led by an executive level emergency program manager/coordinator who serves as the chief advisor to the chief executive officer on all matters relating to hazards, disasters and what to do about them (Canton, 2006).

One of the long-standing problems of U.S. emergency management, at all levels of government, is the selection of emergency program managers/coordinators from within the ranks of response-oriented emergency services and military personnel who fail to transcend their response-oriented backgrounds to develop truly all-phase strategic plans and programs. As Canton argues, this response orientation devolves too often into a disaster operations plan-centric program rather than a risk-based strategic plan oriented program. As Haddow and Bullock (2006, p. 58) expand upon this point:
“Implementing mitigation programs and activities requires the participation and support of a broad spectrum of players outside of the traditional emergency management circle. Mitigation involves, among others, land-use planners, construction and building officials, both public and private, business owners, insurance companies, community leaders, and politicians.

“The skills and tools for accomplishing mitigation (i.e., planning expertise, political acumen, marketing and public relations, and consensus building) are different from the operational, first-responder skills that more often characterize emergency management professionals. In fact, historically, emergency management professionals have been reluctant to take a lead role in promoting mitigation. A state director of emergency management once said words to the effect: ‘I will never lose my job for failing to do mitigation, but I could lose my job if I mess up a response’.”

Local Government. At the local government level most counties and many cities and other municipalities have an emergency management office. Sometimes such offices are led by a full time professional. Some governments maintain only a part-time emergency manager, or someone without professional competencies and credentials, or unpaid volunteers. Some emergency management coordinators will have an assistant or secretary. Some, particularly if the community has a large population, is well developed, and is in a hazard prone locale, will have a staff of several or more employees. It is not uncommon to find local emergency managers who “wear other hats” than the emergency management coordinator, or their primary job is something else, and emergency management is “the other hat.” A FEMA Emergency Management Institute Independent Study course (IS-1) is devoted this topic – “Emergency Manager: An Orientation to the Position” – and can be accessed at: http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is1.asp

State Government. At the State level every State has an Emergency Management Office, though they can go by other names, and staff – ranging from several dozen to several hundred employees.

Federal Government. At the Federal level, emergency managers and emergency management personnel are to be found in most Federal Departments and Agencies. The primary locus of emergency management, though, is the Federal Emergency Management Agency, now within the Department of Homeland Security. Historically FEMA has employed about 2,000 personnel. When Hurricane Katrina struck FEMA personnel strength was down to a little better than 1,500 employees (out of an authorized strength of about 2,200). FEMA employees are located principally at FEMA Headquarters in Washington, DC, in ten Federal Regions, and in two training establishments (the Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg MD and Mt. Weather in northern VA.

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5 Citation does not imply I agree with everything in IS-1. For example, I disagree with the first statement after the question “What Is Emergency Management?” – to wit, “In its simplest terms, emergency management may be as simple as a homeowner responding to a broken water pipe and a flooded basement.” This reinforces the notion I take issue with in this document that “anyone can be an emergency manager.”
Private Sector. In terms of the public sector, at every level of government emergency management is inadequately supported administratively, inadequately funded, inadequately and inappropriately staffed, and particularly at the local government level, not well paid – if paid at all. The private sector is less universal at establishing “emergency management” related functions in their organizations. In those that are established though, they tend to be more professional, better staffed, funded, and paid.

Others. There are a very large number of other people who have an interest in one or more hazards, or in one or more of the emergency management phases, or in working with some sub-set of stakeholders interested in a particular hazard. When engaged in such activity, it is accurate to say that they are engaged in emergency management. It is not accurate to say that they, thus, are emergency managers. They are whatever their employment status would indicate.

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6 In the private sector terms such as “contingency planner” and “recovery manager” are frequently used in addition to “emergency manager.”
One-Page Conception of Emergency Management Definition, Mission and Principles

**Definition:** Emergency Management is the risk-based coordinated and collaborative integration of all relevant stakeholders into the four phases of emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery) related to natural, technological, and intentional hazards (All-Hazards).

**Mission:** To safeguard life and property from all-hazards, and to protect the environment and economy.

**Principles:**

1. *Comprehensive Emergency Management* (CEM). CEM is the central organizing principle and definition of professional emergency management -- all-hazards, all phases, all actors.

2. *Intergovernmental Structure.* Emergency Management is a shared responsibility of local, State, Tribal and Federal government. Its framework is both top-down as well as bottom-up. Authorities to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from hazards and disasters should be supervised by one official at each level of government.

3. *Horizontal and Vertical Integration.* Integrated Emergency Management is best accomplished through the integration of emergency management principles and practice into the regular routine of a wide range of community, governmental and private sector organizations.

4. *Building Disaster Resistant and Resilient Communities.* The First Aim of Emergency Management is creating a Culture of Disaster Prevention and Preparedness – recognizing that it is better to prevent or reduce impact of disasters through risk-based management approach than to respond and recover.

5. *Nationwide System of Effective Disaster Response and Recovery.* Recognizing that not all disasters can be prevented, the Second Aim of Emergency Management is to build a nationwide disaster Response and Recovery system.


7. *All Disasters Are Different.* While there are many similarities in disaster events, it is a fundamental principle of emergency management that all disasters are different. It necessarily follows that “one size fits all” approaches are inadequate and that such attributes as Flexibility, Innovation, and Improvisation must be practiced.

8. *All Disasters Are Local First.* A recognition of this principle of emergency management drives the centrality of local Community Capability Building as the foundation of national preparedness.

9. *Disasters Impact Differentially.* Some segments of communities and society experience disaster and suffer the consequences more than other segments, such as the economically disadvantaged, the disabled, and the institutionalized elderly. Emergency management recognizes that its resources need to target high-risk and highly vulnerable segments of the population in order to increase their resilience and decrease their vulnerability.

10. *Professionalism.* Emergency Management is a science and knowledge-based profession, valuing education, training, experience, ethical practice, public stewardship, and continuous improvement.
FUNDAMENTALS OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (Outline)


2. Comprehensive Emergency Management

3. Intergovernmental Structure

4. Building Disaster Resistant and Resilient Communities

5. Building Nationwide System of Effective Disaster Response and Recovery

6. All Actors: Building and Maintaining Relationships – Communication, Collaboration, Coordination, Customer Focus and Service, Information-Sharing, Team Building

7. All Hazards, Functionalism and Anticipating Anything That Could Happen

8. All Phases -- Four Phases of Emergency Management

9. All Disasters Are Different

10. All Disasters Are Local First

11. Disasters Impact Differentially

12. Integrated Emergency Management

13. Disasters Are A Growth Business

14. Emergence Management Is Situated in Political, Social, Economic, Administrative, Historical, Contexts

15. Professional Emergency Management Is Science and Knowledge-Based – A Full-Time Occupation Which Requires Education, Training, Experience and Continuous Improvement


17. Approaches to Emergency Management Matter

18. Emergency Management Standards and Certification
1. Safeguarding Life and Property

Safeguarding life and property from natural, technological and intentional hazards is the primary mission of emergency management.

There seems to be a virtual unanimity within the emergency management on this primary mission. It has been argued however that the primary mission of emergency management is, or ought to be, the protection of life, property, the economy and the environment. There seems to be less consensus on whether the protection of the economy and the environment are secondary missions or part of the primary mission.

In 1979 the National Governors’ Association wrote that the principle objectives of a comprehensive emergency management program were to:

- Reduce (if not eliminate) the incidence of disasters wherever possible…;
- Reduce the damage (health, property, economic) caused by disasters that could not be prevented; and
- Reduce the costs of emergency response and disaster recovery while increasing their effectiveness.” (NGA 1979, 39)

In 1993 FEMA, after much discussion and debate (according to James Lee Witt), came to a consensus that the FEMA Mission was to “reduce the loss of life and property and protect our institutions from all hazards by leading and supporting the nation in a comprehensive, risk-based emergency management program of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.” (Witt 2002, p. 26)

According to Witt (pp. 26-27, 44-45, 60) under-girding the new FEMA Mission Statement were the following “core values” –

- Customer Service
- Public Stewardship
- Creativity and Innovation
- Continuous Improvement
- Honest Communication
- Respect for Nature

In November 2006 the National Emergency Management Association, the International

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8 “At FEMA, we defined our customers as people either preparing for or recovering from disasters. The moment we decided to measure our success based on how those people we served, instead of how our programs were run, we were on the road to beating crisis…We broadened the idea of the customer to include everyone, both inside and outside the agency – the people in the next office, the congressmen on Capitol Hill, the FEMA staffers in the field, our counterparts at the state and local levels. If you accept that your job is to serve your customer, then there’s no place for the primacy of programs or the fostering of fiefdoms.” (Witt 2002, p. 116)
9 “Communication is more than just talking – it’s the honest and open exchange of personal views.” (Witt 2002, 45)
Association of Emergency Managers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency agreed that the phrase “Public Safety, Public Trust,” best conceptualized in four words what emergency management was all about.

2. Comprehensive Emergency Management

Comprehensive Emergency Management is the central organizing principle and definition of professional emergency management. It means all-hazards, all phases, all actors.

Coined in the National Governors’ Association report of 1978 entitled State Comprehensive Emergency Management, the term was defined, as noted above, as the coordinated and collaborative integration of all relevant stakeholders into the four phases of emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery) related to natural, technological, and intentional hazards.

The term was “invented” to reflect the fact that civil defense and emergency preparedness as practiced at the time was very fragmented and was not all hazards, all phases, and all actors. Instead, civil defense/emergency preparedness prioritized the single hazard of nuclear attack preparedness at the federal level, reactively focused almost exclusively on the phases of preparedness and response at the State and local government levels, and too infrequently ventured beyond the circle of emergency services personnel in the universe of stakeholders.

3. Intergovernmentalism

Emergency Management is an intergovernmental shared responsibility of local, State, Tribal and Federal government. Its framework is both top-down as well as bottom-up – meaning that the theory and practice of emergency management has been significantly shaped by contributions from all levels of government.

While an argument can be made that “intergovernmentalism” is part of the background context of emergency management – just the way it is in our system of government – and not a “principle,” it can also be argued that if this were not “just the way it is” then this is the way it ought to be, a fundamental principle that should transcend geo-political borders. It takes all levels of government to “make emergency management work” in the U.S. – and probably elsewhere as well.

10 “…the often-used term ‘Comprehensive Emergency Preparedness’ employed by many disaster professionals, has come to place too much emphasis in practice if not legislative intent, on the preparedness phase of emergency management. For this reason, a new term ‘Comprehensive Emergency Management’ may better answer today’s needs” (NGA 1978, 85).
11 “CEM should be distinguished from comprehensive emergency preparedness, a term now generally in use, which emphasizes, in practice if not legislative intent, the preparedness and response phases of emergency management almost exclusively.” (NGA 1979, p. 56)
12 “Local governments should recognize and upgrade, where needed, the responsibilities of local civil defense coordinators to emergency management coordinators for all hazards.” (NGA 1979, p. 60)
This latter point is reinforced by the position of current FEMA Director David Paulison to the effect that one of the lessons of Hurricane Katrina is that “we are all in this together,” that the emergency management system should be “one for all, and all for one.”

4. Building Disaster Resistant and Resilient Communities

_The Aim of Emergency Management_ should be Building Disaster Resistant and Resilient Communities. This principle promotes proactive mitigation and preparedness initiatives over reactive response in combination with efforts to build community-level capabilities so that communities can tolerate and overcome hazards and respond to disasters without outside assistance. While professional, effective and efficient disaster response capabilities are absolutely essential, it is quite obviously better to prevent, mitigate and prepare in the first place than to respond and recover afterwards.

Promoting a Culture of Disaster Prevention and Preparedness furthers this aim. This aim is served through self, public, and stakeholder education as well as “walking the talk” or serving as a model.

In order to draw attention to the importance of building disaster resistant and resilient communities, it was said during the James Lee Witt years as the Director of FEMA, that “mitigation is the cornerstone of emergency management,” meaning lessening the effects of disaster, reducing hazard risks, as well as preventing disaster in the first place. While the other three components on the four phases of emergency management (preparedness, response, and recovery) are performed either in reaction to hazards or in anticipation of their consequences, mitigation measures seek to reduce the likelihood or consequences of hazard risk before a disaster ever strikes. While a strong case can be made that mitigation should be the cornerstone of emergency management, mitigation is not how and has never really been the cornerstone of the broader local, state and federal government emergency management community.

Today, given the national focus on operational response issues, mitigation is little more than an afterthought, given little more than lip-service. One scarcely sees how today’s response-centric approach will contribute to building disaster resistant and resilient communities. Given the virtual inevitability of the decades long trend toward ever increasing disaster loses, though, it would appear that at some point in the future serious attention will once again have to be devoted to disaster prevention, reduction and mitigation – and building disaster resistant and resilient communities.

Thus, it would seem that the way forward is to better “marry” preparedness to mitigation than the current situation with the marriage of preparedness to response. The role of preparedness is pivotal in either event. Indeed it has been argued that preparedness is the foundation of emergency management:

I see preparedness covering planning, partnership building, training, and exercises for mitigation, prevention, reduction, response, and recovery, so it is the broadest
term among emergency management phases. If you don't have it as the foundation, you will eventually get lost in a philosophical fog….

We are on the wrong path causing ever increasing losses, because we need to go back to the basics, and fully fund preparedness - sharing actionable information with the public about mitigation, facilitating strategic and operational planning and partnership building community by community, training tactical and leadership professionals, exercising various all hazard scenarios. (Goss, 2006)

5. Building Nationwide System of Effective Disaster Response and Recovery

Recognizing that not all disasters can be prevented, the second aim of emergency management is to build a nationwide system of effective and efficient disaster response and recovery. The current nationwide model for disaster response is the National Incident Management System.

6. All Actors – Building and Maintaining Relationships – Communication, Collaboration, Coordination and Customer Service

Emergency management is guided by the Principle of Building Relationships – that is through the constant practice of Coordination, Facilitation, Collaboration, Consultation, Cooperation, Communication, Openness, Networking, Partnering, Stakeholder Involvement, Reaching Out to Others, Information-Sharing, Customer-Service Attitude and Team Approach – with a wide range of audiences in the public, private and “third” sectors. The audience for emergency management ranges from the Chief Executive to the citizen. This is what is meant by the “all actors” component of comprehensive emergency

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13 “Field respondents did not give much emphasis to such factors as funding and staffing for improving state and federal relations. Rather, they indicated that ‘prior working relationships’ are the dominant factor” (NGA 1978, 49).
14 Described as “the crucial element” the response phase (NGA 1978, 35).
15 “…the state must forge a network of facilitative working relationships that extend both vertically and horizontally throughout all levels of government and private organizations” (NGA 1978, p. 70).
16 “You reap what you sow…In this mobile, fast-paced world, it’s easy to let relationship wither… In organizations, as in marriage, steady and clear communication is the key to contentment.” (Witt 2002, p. 121)
17 “I find ‘networking’ a very descriptive buzzword. The word itself implies how one person draws a line to another and another and another, and how each of those people draws lines to still other people, and before you know it, you’ve woven something much stronger than any of the individual parts. In times of crisis – business or personal – you want and need that net….Much of life is about building bridges – and keeping them in good repair…. In my experience, the difference between success and something less is the difference between reaching out and digging in.” (Witt 2002, p. 115)
18 “Teamwork issues are, first of all, about attitude…. Teams operate horizontally, not vertically. A manager’s job, then, is to disassemble the stovepipe structure and reassemble it as a maze of connecting pipes…. [It’s] about egalitarianism, colleagueism, anti-showboatism.” (Witt, pp. 172-173)
19 “The number of organizations, agencies, and individuals called on to deal with emergencies will always be large. Careful spade work can lead to a strong foundation for inter-organizational relationships. It must include development of at least the following six factors: Prior working relationships; Clear roles and responsibilities; Competent personnel; Clear communications systems; Common goals; Simple procedures” (NGA 1978, p. 25).
management – all actors, all phases, all hazards. It is preferable, as an example, to plan “with” a community than “for” a community.

Of course one can engage in communication, coordination, facilitation, collaboration and the like in a pro-forma, top-down, perfunctory, less-than-fully-serious way. One cannot, though, build trustful, meaningful, respectful, on-going and equitable relationships this way. This is one reason that a customer service attitude is essential. According to Haddow and Bullock (2006, pp. 196-197):

A customer service approach includes placing the needs and interests of individuals and communities first, being responsive and informative, and managing expectations…. (Each customer) has special needs, and a good communications strategy considers and reflects their requirements. Good communication starts with a commitment by the leadership of the emergency management organization to sharing and disseminating information both internally and externally.20

Emergency Managers must actively reach out to and engage a wide range of stake-holders in their communities or organizations, do so on a regular and frequent basis, and do so meaningfully and seriously. As Haddow and Bullock note (2006, 221)21:

“Successful coordination and cooperation can lead to great success and many lives saved, but infighting, turf battles, and nonparticipation can lead to confusion and even cause a second disaster.”22

These attributes characterize U.S. EM – building and maintaining relationships – and serve as the best means to build disaster resistant and resilient communities. This is the emergency management model and approach.

The Antithesis to this Principle of Building Relationships through collaboration and coordination is the Command and Control Approach and Model – characterized by top-down, hierarchical, authoritarian, centralized, bureaucratic (rules trump results), regimented, formalistic, scripted, catalogued, secretive systems and styles. Recently Admiral Keating, Commander of the U.S. Northern Command in Colorado Springs, stated in a press briefing, that NORTHCOM “has adopted the phrase collaboration and communication instead of classic military command and control (C2)…” (Brewin, December 12, 2006)

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20 Haddow and Bullock include several examples of how FEMA Director James Lee Witt reached out to FEMA employees, the State and local government emergency management community, disaster victims, the media and many other stakeholders, and in doing so helped to create “a positive image and reputation” for the agency.


22 Less than successful and adequate communication and coordination contributing to a disaster within a disaster brings Katrina to mind.
7. **All Hazards – Being Ready For Anything.**

The principle or concept of all-hazards in the emergency management context means natural, technological and intentional (including terrorism) hazards. In other words it means anticipating just about any disaster that could confront one’s organization or jurisdiction.

When captured in the definition of Comprehensive Emergency Management in the 1978 NGA CEM report, it reflected (1) the necessity of evolving emergency management/civil defense away from a nuclear attack centric world view, and (2) addressing the fractured state of emergency management and civil defense planning that characterized the times.

Planning then was hazard centric. One could go into a community and find a bookshelf of single hazard focused plans in the emergency manager’s office. Then one would find other single-hazard focused plans, uncoordinated in their development with the emergency management office, in various emergency services departments, public works, public utilities, schools, hospitals, prisons, and so on – not infrequently, literally dozens.

By adopting a new “functional” approach to planning, the all-hazards approach recognized that while every disaster is different, there are from a planning view, many commonalities that do not need to be regurgitated ad infinitum in a vast array of plans. Thus, common elements such as communications or warning could be combined into the main text of a basic emergency operations plan. That plan would then be supplemented with appendices that dealt with the unique aspects of individual hazards.

The “All-Hazards” approach also recognizes that for the response phase, it is preferable to set up a single set of management arrangements capable of encompassing all hazards, rather than fractured management arrangements.

In the post 9/11 world of homeland security this is frequently misunderstood. This is demonstrated by the argument that terrorism is different from natural hazards and thus needs to be dealt with independently, and frequently in isolation. In reality, all natural hazards are different from each other and their unique aspects must be fully understood and dealt with in any emergency management program. In terrorism, as in all the other natural, technological and intentional hazards, there are commonalities with the other emergency management hazards and there are unique aspects.

The all-hazards approach also facilitated the move toward a recognition that the more effective approach to hazards was one that built capabilities at the local level in recognition of the broad array of hazards potentially confronting a community. Even if one’s sole preoccupation was nuclear attack preparedness, advocates of all-hazards emergency management in the State and local government practitioner world and from within the social science hazard and disaster research community argued in one voice that the best way “to get there” was through local community capability building for all-hazards.

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23 Other typical functional areas would be direction and control, emergency public information, evacuation, mass care, health and medical, and resource management.
Note the different take on what “All-Hazards” means in the following:

“All-Hazards vs. Terrorism Planning

Question: How does the Department of Homeland Security’s approach to HSPD-8 represent ‘all-hazards’ planning? How is ‘all-hazards’ planning specifically reflected in the Goal?

Answer: HSPD-8 defines ‘all-hazards’ preparedness as preparedness for domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. HSPD-8 states that Federal preparedness assistance is intended primarily to support State and local efforts to build capacity to address major (or catastrophic) events, especially terrorism. To meet those requirements, the Department adopted an all-hazards planning approach focused on the potential scope of catastrophic events and associated capabilities. The approach does not include every possible threat and hazard; rather it uses a range of high-impact threats and hazards to identify capabilities and levels of capability that the range of scenarios would demand….”

“All-Hazards” within the emergency management context translates into preparing for the expected as well as the unexpected, the disaster as well as the catastrophe, being ever-ready, and seeing the “big picture” of what can go wrong.

8. All Phases, or The Four Phases of Emergency Management

As coined by the NGA in the 1978 Emergency Preparedness Project Final Report, all phases was defined as the Four Phases of Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery. (NGA 1978, p. xiv)

For simplicity purposes, mitigation was defined in terms of prevention and mitigation, even though “to prevent,” and “to mitigate” are verb forms with different meanings. These were combined to refer to actions that prevent, reduce, or mitigate disaster losses.

Similarly, distinctions between such terms as response, relief, reconstruction, reconstitution, rehabilitation, and recovery were collapsed for simplicity purposes into response and recovery.

Today, the four phases of emergency management are so integral to our conception of emergency management that it seems that it must have always been this way. This is not the case, however. As the NGA noted in their reports in 1978 and 1979, based on extensive surveys of local, State and federal “emergency management” and other personnel, emergency management was conceived then in terms of preparedness and response. Mitigation and

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recovery were “not my job” (NGA 1978, pp. xvi, 73). As the NGA stated in arguing for a new conception of emergency management, “It is evident that the close links between mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery are not adequately understood.” (NGA 1979, p.7)

Each emergency management phase requires its own skill set.

Confusing matters a bit, after the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, RAND Corporation employees under contract to DHS to develop the National Response Plan and the National Incident Management System, invented their own terminology – what I call the Five Phases of Homeland Security: Prevention, Mitigation, Readiness, Response and Recovery. This new terminology was invented, according to those I have communicated with who came into contact with RAND personnel during the review phase of the earlier conceptions of the NRP, to play to the law enforcement and intelligence communities and their mission of preventing terrorism. As noted earlier, emergency management and homeland security are not synonymous. The newly invented Five Phases of Homeland Security operate within Homeland Security and do not supplant or replace the Four Phases of Emergency Management – which is, again, all-hazards, all-phases, all-actors.

9. **All Disasters Are Different.**

It is a fundamental principle of emergency management that all disasters are different. While there are a great many similarities to be found in disaster events it is none-the-less a fact of life that every disaster is different. This is not an insignificant or glib statement – real implications ensue.

It necessarily follows that **one size does not fit all.** One cannot build a regimented, scripted, top-down approach to disasters – at least one that works.

If all disasters are different, and a one size fits all approach is inappropriate, then it follows that such traits as **Flexibility, Innovation and Improvisation** are absolutely necessary and should trump bureaucratized regimented processes and procedures.

The attributes of flexibility, innovation and an ability to improvise do not spring forth from a vacuum. They are developed and enhanced by **knowledge** of hazards, disasters and emergency management principles and systems, **training, experience** and **skilled application.**

10. **All Disasters Are Local First.**

All disasters, regardless of scale, happen first in communities. A recognition of this principle of emergency management drives the centrality of local Community Capability Building – Building Disaster Resistant and Resilient Communities. Local emergency management laws and standards need to be put in place, emergency management needs to be integrated into
existing community structures and procedures, and elected and appointed officials need to be
cognizant of their hazard and disaster-related responsibilities and able to meet their
responsibilities in a disaster environment, and initiatives put forward that seek to prevent or
reduce the impact of disasters in the first place.

This principle also drives and explains the **Emergency Management Philosophy** that:

> The better communities are able to deal with the full range of hazards actually
> confronting them (the “all hazards” approach) the better they will be able to contend with
> anything else.

This principle and philosophy are in contrast to a prevalent and contending national security
or homeland security approach -- namely:

> The better a community is prepared to deal with a single catastrophic hazard (nuclear
> attack, nuclear power plant accident, terrorist attack) the better it will be prepared to deal
> with any lesser hazard.

(See section below on historical case which illustrates these contending approaches.)

(Note: The all-hazards approach is risk-based while the catastrophic hazard approach is
vulnerability-based – typically worst-case or fear-based. That is, the emergency
management “all hazards” approach centers on the conduct of a risk assessment of all
relevant hazards and threats – identification and analysis of hazards, followed by
assessing risks, vulnerabilities and capabilities – which then leads to the development of
plans, procedures, programs, the development of capabilities (risk management). The
vulnerability approach begins with the thought what are the worst things that could
happen to us. Only after the worst cases are determined (those things that keep us up late
at night), are risk-management approaches applied to that universe of hazards.)

11. **Disasters Impact Differentially.**

When disasters impact a community, they differentially impact the citizens of that
community. Historically, some groups typically experience disaster and suffer the
consequences more than other groups. Typically these are such groupings as those that are
economically depressed or living in poverty, minorities, the elderly, the very young, the
home-bound, the institutionalized (as in nursing home residents), in our society.

This is one of the reasons that “one size fits all” approaches to emergency management are
inappropriate. Programs that target the identification of such groupings of highly vulnerable
and at-risk people in our communities, and follow-through on the development of approaches
to either reduce their vulnerability and risk, or that increase and enhance their resilience are
what is needed – not the “biggest bang for the buck,” “one size fits all,” utilitarian approach
that is sometimes practiced in U.S. emergency management.
12. **Integrated Emergency Management, or IEMS (Integrated Emergency Management System).**

The concept of integration can also be found in the 1978 Emergency Preparedness Project NGA report mentioned earlier.²⁶ It was recognized that for a range of reasons, emergency management needs to be integrated or mainstreamed into other components of a political jurisdiction or an organization.

Emergency managers are not lone rangers who can do it all alone. Emergency Management can only be accomplished via the successful efforts of emergency managers working with members of other organizations as an advocate for the integration of hazard and disaster concerns into those organizations.

Social science research concludes that the most effective disaster response is one that utilizes in-place organizations and disaster response structures that are as close as possible to routine organizational structures and procedures. This is one reason why it is important to integrate emergency management into those organizations and to make it as routine as possible.

*Background Context of IEMS.* IEMS is historical terminology. IEMS was a political devise conceived within the Federal Emergency Management Agency to use the unarguable need for integration as a tool to accomplish several purposes. Given the friction that existed between Federal emergency management on the one hand and State and local emergency management on the other over nuclear attack centric civil defense and emergency management, it was difficult for those coming into a new FEMA organization after the last Presidential election to just accept the term “Comprehensive Emergency Management.” In part, this was a reflection of a “not invented here mindset.” The new FEMA administrators after the Macy FEMA administration wanted their own terminology. And, in part, this was a reflection of the “culture war” of the times. CEM was developed as a concept by “the other side” -- the National Governors Association, representing the State and local government community, in part, to break the strangle-hold of the nuclear attack centric Federal government approach to preparedness.

The development of this terminology was also part of an effort to turn the tables on State and local governments on the nuclear attack question, via the argument that part of the integration must be the inclusive of nuclear attack preparedness.

In addition, IEMS was constituted as an approach to sell nuclear attack oriented civil defense to an increasingly skeptical Congress. It would be more difficult for “Congress” to argue against an Integrated Emergency Management System, than a nuclear attack oriented civil defense system.]

Today the concept of “integrated” emergency management remains as a fundamental principle of the profession.

²⁶ “…integrated emergency management for all risks (attack, man-made, and natural) should make the most efficient use of available resources” (p. 17).
13. Disasters Are Growth Business -- Disaster Losses Are Large, Growing, Expected to Become Worse, No End In Sight

Whether viewed as part of the background context of emergency management in the United States, as well as in the rest of the world, or a fundamental of emergency management, it is the case that for at least the last four decades, which comprises the professional life-spans of the great majority of emergency management personnel, it is fundamental to their experience that they have always been behind the curve of rising disaster losses, and there is no end in sight.

Disaster losses are large – approximately $50 billion per year in annualized losses, or about $1 billion per week.

For the last several decades disaster losses have been rising in the U.S. – doubling to tripling per decade. Clearly, as in doubling a penny, this eventually becomes unsustainable. Disaster losses have been, and are going up, in terms of total losses, in terms of federal disaster relief outlays, in terms of insurance outlays, and in terms of a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product.

Disasters are going to be a growth business for the foreseeable future. While the current terrorism threat is sometimes depicted as a one or two generations hazard, natural and technological hazards and disasters are going to be with us in an escalating way for multiple generations.

Disasters are predicted to increase in category (with new disaster agents coming onto the scene), some in frequency, and some in intensity. With flooding, as an example, as a result of a number of factors such as where and how development takes place, a growing number of locations that have never experienced a flooding event, will do so in the future. In addition, a growing number of other locations that have experienced flooding, will in the future experience more severe flooding. This is without taking global warming into account, and any adverse impact this would have on future disaster losses.

I am aware of no person or organization who forecasts the day wherein the disaster loss curve will start to flatten or decline in the U.S.

There have been historical periods in the U.S. where thousands of people have been killed as the result of individual natural and technological disaster events. Prior to 9/11 and Katrina there was about a six decade period without such catastrophic loss of life (measured in thousands of deaths), though there have been many near misses wherein had the disaster event happened a bit differently, catastrophic loss of life could have been experienced. There is scant reason to believe that 9/11 and Katrina were “one-off” events, and that catastrophic loss of life to disaster is in our past.

Emergency Management in the U.S. is very much conditioned and constrained by the various contexts within which it must function.

We have, for example, a federal system with a national, State and local governments, along with a variety of regional governmental authorities. By law emergency management is a “joint” Federal and State/local responsibility. Another position advocated is that “...equal local-state-federal partnership is the most effective approach to a comprehensive national system of emergency management” (NGA 1978, xxii). There are serious implications which flow from each of these two “orientations.” For example, when it comes to the phase of disaster response, it has been the position of the federal government since at least 1958 that federal resources are only brought to bear in a disaster response after State and local resources have been “exhausted.” This is not equal “partnership” but a hierarchical relationship.

Recently, as a result of the failed governmental response to Hurricane Katrina, and a broadening realization that natural hazards can be catastrophic, FEMA Director David Paulison has said that we are now in an “all for one and one for all” environment (FEMA, November 30, 2006). Director Paulison stated that one of the goals of “the new FEMA” was to “challenge the traditional emergency management paradigm” noted above. This is indicative of a movement toward the proposition put forward by the National Governors’ Association in 1978 quoted above.

Emergency management operates within this changing intergovernmental system. The “power relationship” amongst these levels of government has shifted over time when it comes to hazards, disasters, emergency management, and now homeland security. A prevailing point of view on this is shared by the emergency management practitioner community and by that part of the social science community involved in hazards and disaster research:

“The most successful emergency management systems are those in which local emergency management agencies maintain operational control of all phases of emergency management, with regional and national authorities only intervening in a supportive role and never assuming any leadership control.” (Coppola 2007, p.350)

At each level of government emergency management also operates within an intro-governmental system – and not from a position of power. A local government emergency manager, for example, does not just go to the Police Chief, the Fire Chief, the Public Works Director, the Public Health Director, the Planning Office, and the like and dictate their participation in emergency management programs, much less the integration of emergency management concerns into their standard plans and procedures.

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27 The Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950, which stated that civil defense was primarily a State and local responsibility, was modified in 1958 to make it a shared, joint, responsibility. This concept was carried over into the Stafford Act when the Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950 was abolished in the 1990s.
For an emergency manager to effectively operate, he or she will need to acquire an understanding of and ability to function within these situational contexts.

15. Professional Emergency Management Is Science and Knowledge-Based – A Full-Time Job That Requires Education, Training, and Experience

There is a wide and growing body of emergency management knowledge – the transfer of which is best accomplished through education, training, and experience.

The days when just about anybody could get a job as an emergency manager needs to end. It should be clear from the discussion above that emergency management is of some importance, and is very complex. It used to be that emergency management was primarily populated by people retiring or moving into it from another occupation or profession – such as the military, the fire service, or law enforcement – without any specific emergency management credentials28 – just whatever credentials their prior occupation bestowed.

The idea seemed to be that anybody can be an emergency manager – can just walk into the job without any specific emergency management education or training or experience and just learn on the go. That is no longer acceptable. Think of it in the following way. Say that in your community the Police Chief, Fire Chief, or Public Health Director retires. You go to the Chief Executive Officer for the community and argue that your next-door neighbor is a personable, smart, go-getter kind of person in need of a job – give them the job. How credible is this? Yet that has been happening in emergency management for decades.

Another continuing problem is that too many communities continue to assign emergency management as “another duty as required,” or as a “second-hat,” or as a part-time or volunteer position to someone who is not an emergency management professional.

Education: In the past emergency management has been experientially-based. People learned on the job, from the experience and assumptions of others, and from whatever related experience their prior occupation provided. That is no longer enough. Emergency Management needs to be built upon a foundation of social and natural science, theory, and knowledge.

Training: Besides social and natural science knowledge, emergency management requires of those who would practice it, a wide range of technical knowledge and skills -- interpersonal, leadership, managerial, political, technical and crisis management29.

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28 “…some local officials appoint unqualified people to local civil defense director positions which are poorly paid or non-paid.” (NGA 1978, p. xvi)
29 “In my experience, the people who handle crisis best are the ones who, either naturally or through training, tend to think of others before they think of themselves…. Whether you’re a victim or a recovery worker, focusing on the welfare of those around you is a key to negotiating the emotional undercurrents of a crisis situation.” (Witt, p. 145)
Experience. Experience is not by definition a good or a bad teacher – it can go either way. Experience has the potential to be a good teacher – particularly if the recipient has had the proper education and training that allow him or her to pick the wheat from the chaff of experience and actually move forward. Experience will indicate whether the recipient has or can develop the necessary attributes, in addition to education and training skills, to be successful – such as, adaptive, imaginative, flexible, creative, possessing initiative, ethical, compassionate, has and practices integrity, can think not only tactically but strategically.

Continuous Improvement – Through a combination of continuing education, training, experience, membership in professional associations, attending conferences related to hazards, disasters and what to do about them, and other such activity, emergency management requires continuous improvement. The world of hazards and disasters is not a static one – it is ever changing, and thus those who work in emergency management must dedicate themselves to a lifetime of learning and continuous improvement.

Side-bar relating to “professional” emergency management from the 1978 National Governors Report Comprehensive Emergency Management – A Governor’s Guide:

“A series of tornadoes across the state inflicted severe damage on two medium-sized cities. In visiting both, the governor noticed that cleanup seemed to be further along in the more severely hit city. He found that the local emergency services coordinator (EMC) was well respected in town and had worked out and tested an emergency response plan for early warnings from the National Weather Service. He had initiated installation of new warning sirens at the fire department and had coordinated health services, evacuation procedures, search and rescue operations, debris clearance, temporary shelter construction, feeding programs, and other response services. He had made particularly good use of trained volunteers. The other city had a part-time EMC, who was not on duty when the tornado hit. Warnings to the city, as well as notification to city and state officials were delayed. The second city, although less severely struck, took longer to respond to and recover from the emergency.” (NGA 1979, p. 16)


I will assert that how one organizes to do the job matters – quite possibly a lot. Quoting Coppola again,

“In a best-case scenario, the emergency management structure is its own department, ministry, or agency, reporting directly to the most senior executive…” (p. 353)

Authorities to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from hazards and disasters should be supervised by one official at each level of government. This was one of the principles drawn upon in the creation of FEMA.

Civil Defense Model. Historically today’s cadre of emergency managers can trace their roots back to the passage of the Civil Defense Act of 1950, and as importantly, to its modification
in 1958 allowing the Federal government to pay up to 50% of the personnel and administrative expenses of State and local government civil defense offices (called originally the P&A Fund). While civil defense had had “starts and fits” earlier, as during World War I, and World War II, and even though natural disaster experience was far from missing, there was no cadre of Federal, State and local government personnel devoted to civil defense until after the passage of the Civil Defense Act of 1950. Slowly, through the urging of the Federal Civil Defense Administration, some State and local governments began to establish Offices of Civil Defense and hire Civil Defense Directors and personnel – for the national security, nuclear attack preparedness mission. But, not enough.

It was eventually realized by the Federal government that advocacy for the creation of such positions was not enough – the majority of State and local governments had not created Offices of Civil Defense. Thus the Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950 was modified in 1958 to allow the Federal government to more or less pay for the development of such a cadre via the incentive mechanism of offering to pay for up to 50% of the personnel and administrative costs of such offices on a yearly basis. Congress, however, did not begin to actually fund this new mechanism until several years later during one of the Berlin crises of the time.

With this funding now flowing to State Offices of Civil Defense, and through them to local County Offices of Civil Defense, a cadre of personnel was developed. (It bears repeated that community experience with natural disasters did not lead to the creation of “emergency management” cadres around the country. It took a national security concern to do this.

So it came to be that many, if not most, of the people hired to populate Civil Defense Offices, because of the national security focus and mission of their work, came from the ranks of retired military and, secondarily, emergency services personnel. Their work was nuclear attack preparedness centric, based on programs and expenditures prescribed by Washington, DC. Over time many of these offices and personnel were relegated to a corner in a municipal, county, or State government because they were not as relevant to other hazards that governments faced besides nuclear attack as their employers would have liked, and the skill-set of many civil defense personnel did not lend themselves to being viewed as part of the executive governing team in their political jurisdiction. (As an aside, this explains why today at the State level the State Adjutant General (National Guard, Military Department) oversees Emergency Management in a number of States)

**Emergency Services Model.** By the time of the end of the Cold War there was significant movement from the nuclear attack centric civil defense model to two others – the Emergency Services Model and the Public Administration Model – both of which were more “All-Hazards” than the Civil Defense Model. Within the emergency services model, emergency management was moved organizationally to either the Fire Service or Law Enforcement (more often than not County Sheriff Offices at the local level and the State Police at the State level). Whether the emergency management officer was a civilian or an emergency services employee, emergency management concerns usually played second fiddle at best to the primary missions of the home organization.
Public Administration Model. By the time of 9/11 a plurality of emergency management offices were either independent offices or organized in some other department than fire or law enforcement – and their numbers were growing at the expense of the other two options. This is the preferred emergency management public sector practitioner model.30

Homeland Security Model. After the creation of the Department of Homeland Security some State and local emergency management offices changed their name to Homeland Security, or modified their name to include Homeland Security. In some jurisdictions new Homeland Security Offices have been created in addition to the already established Emergency Management Offices. This movement has many parallels to the earlier Civil Defense Model – a primary focus on a national security threat – this time terrorism and weapons of mass destruction instead of nuclear attack by the Soviet Union. Again, military and emergency services personnel are coming into such positions in significant numbers. Again, the programs and the funding are essentially developed and mandated from Washington DC. There are many strictures, strings attached, to Federal funding requiring that for all intents and purposes expenditures be contribute to, be consistent with, and do not detract from terrorism preparedness. Obviously, if a jurisdiction spent federal terrorism-centric funding on say flood-gauge monitors instead of say chemical detection suits and kits and the like, then that would detract from terrorism preparedness.

17. Approaches to Emergency Management

Traditional or Technocratic Approach – focus on hazards as agents, hazards management, response-oriented disaster operations planning.

Social Vulnerability Approach – focus on reducing social vulnerability and increasing social resilience.

Prevention and Risk Reduction Approach – focus on risk management.

18. Emergency Management Standards and Certification

National Fire Protection Association Standard 1600 (NFPA-1600)

Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP), National Emergency Management Association.


Appendix A:

What Is Expected of Participants of the March 5-6, 2007 Emergency Management Roundtable at EMI

It is expected that all participants of the March 5-6, 2007 Emergency Management Roundtable will do homework – reflect, if not do some research, on the issues to be discussed. The primary issues appear to be:

What is emergency management and what is it not?

How are the answers to these two questions best communicated to others?

What does the word “Principle” mean in the emergency management context. In other words, what level of aggregation does the word “Principle” imply?

What are the core Emergency Management Principles for the Profession of Emergency Management?

Are the “Principles” of Emergency Management different from a conceptualization of “Emergency Management Doctrine”?

If so, what are the components of an “Emergency Management Doctrine”?

What “deliverables” or end products need to be eventually developed to address the fundamental problems raised in the Selves email?

It is our hope that the March 5-6, 2007 Emergency Management Roundtable not degenerate into a “gab fest” with just notes of the meeting at the end of the process. Prior preparation and deliberation should lead to the development of a more concrete way forward. In addition, full and active participation is anticipated of each participant. We hope that no participant will feel the need to hold their cards close to their vest.
Appendix B

Historical Example of Community Capability Building versus Catastrophic Hazard Focus

Historically contending philosophies or approaches to emergency management were on display and contention during the pre-emergency management era of civil defense against nuclear attack. During the fifty’s, sixty’s and seventies, the prevailing federal point of view was that nuclear attack threatened the very survival of the country, that what civil defense personnel, programs and systems did could very well spell the difference between the survival of the United States following a nuclear attack or its eventual dissolution and destruction on the other.

When I was hired by the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency in the Department of Defense just prior to it's incorporation into the newly created FEMA, there was a strong organizational culture -- one that took its mission very seriously -- believing that millions of lives could be effected by what it did or did not do -- perhaps the existence of the nation state itself in jeopardy -- and not one that was very open to partnership with State and Local Government "counterparts" -- put into quotation marks because such personnel were not really viewed as counterparts but people who were provided funding to do what the civil defense program managers required -- i.e., it was very much a top-down, "command and control" type philosophical orientation. The world view was one of how can the States and Locals fit into our universe.

Thus federal monies were provided to State Offices of Civil Defense and through them to local Offices of Civil Defense – to do the federal bidding through federal requirements and strings attached to the funding. Nuclear attack civil defense funding had to be spent for nuclear attack civil defense preparedness purposes – as conceived and mandated by the federal government. As examples, federal civil defense funds were provided to States to hire Radiological Defense Officers in State Office of Emergency Management – to work on nuclear attack-related civil defense issues and planning. State Civil Defense Directors were not allowed to draw upon these personnel to work on radiological issues or planning related to nuclear poser plants in their states – that was not a nuclear attack civil defense purpose. Similarly, federal civil defense funding was provided to the States to hire and maintain Nuclear Civil Protection Planners – to work on nuclear attack related civil defense plans and procedures. State Directors were not allowed to draw upon these personnel to work on other than the nuclear attack hazard – say on hurricane evacuation planning.

State and local governments and State and local civil defense personnel became very dissatisfied with this state of affairs and argued and lobbied strongly for changes that would allow them to use federal nuclear attack oriented civil defense funding for a broader array of hazards. Eventually the pressure was such that the “Dual Use” approach was implemented. Under “Dual Use” provisions State and local governments could utilize federal civil defense funding to build capabilities for other hazards “to the extent that the use of such funds contributed to, was consistent with, and did not detract from nuclear attack civil preparedness.”
The “Dual Use” approach was nonetheless contentious, with seemingly endless argument and disagreement over exactly what was consistent with, contributed to, and did not detract from nuclear attack preparedness purposes.

The eventual end of this debate can be traced to several factors. I highlight two which I believe to be instrumental. First was the publication in 1978 of the National Governors’ Association report on *Comprehensive Emergency Management*. This report contributed to President Carter’s reorganization of federal disaster and civil defense activity – via the creation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.\(^3\)

The second was the appointment of James Lee Witt, the State Director of Emergency Management in Arkansas, and the first FEMA Director with direct emergency management experience. After the serious operational problems FEMA was confronted with in Hurricanes Hugo and Andrew, which led to calls for FEMA’s abolishment, the new FEMA Director, amongst other changes, made "customer service" a cornerstone of the agency -- and the worldview eventually changed from how can others, such as State and Local government personnel, fit into our universe to how can we (FEMA) fit into their universe -- and lo-and-behold things got better, to the point that FEMA came to be touted as a model federal agency!

Eventually within FEMA the tide turned in favor of acceptance of the position of State and local governments, one also reflected in a growing body of social science hazards and disaster research, that the better States and local governments are prepared to cope with the broad range of hazards faced by States and communities on an historical basis, the better positioned they would be for anything else.

Ultimately it came to be fairly well recognized in the emerging federal emergency management community that the capabilities “bought” with federal funding through a single-minded focus on the nuclear attack hazard were in large measure “illusory.” That is, those capabilities tended to reside mainly in the heads of federal civil defense bureaucrats. If structures, equipment, personnel, programs, procedures, planning and the like are not utilized on a more or less routine basis, then real-world capabilities that one can count on to be there when needed, are not developed. Thus the centrality of the focus on nuclear attack preparedness gave way to “all hazards” community capability building. This took place during the 1980’s and was well established in the 1990’s – up to 9/11 and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security and the focus on the centrality of the terrorism hazard. Post Katrina this focus has evolved to encompass “catastrophe” preparedness, with pride of place belonging to a range of terrorism-based weapons of mass destruction scenarios. There are many similarities between the hey-day of the top-down nuclear attack civil defense era and the new terrorism centric homeland security era.

\(^3\)“On June 19, 1978, after strong resistance from some of the federal agencies concerned, President Carter submitted Reorganization Plan Number Three to Congress. He did so because of strong pressure for the plan from civil defense and emergency services organizations, state and local officials, and public interest groups, among which NGA played a key role.” (NGA 1979, p. 3)
Appendix C

Examples of Fundamental Principles of Disaster Management
(Working Draft, December 5, 2006)

Dr. David Etkin
Coordinator, Emergency Management Program
York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

A. Good governance
   i. Accountability
   ii. Responsibility
   iii. Transparency
   iv. Honesty
   v. Institutional structures that support the other principles

B. Equity & fairness
   i. Intergenerational (looks at temporal issues and examines how the policies debated and decided upon today affect future generations)
   ii. Intragenerational (looks at current distributional effects)
   iii. Procedural (looks at the process by which negotiations and decisions occur)
   iv. Consequentialist (looks at outcomes)

C. Sustainable development [4]
   i. Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of “needs”, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and the future needs. (Brundtland Commission, 1987).

D. Efficiency (might fit better in strategies)
   i. “The ratio of the effective or useful output to the total input in any system.” This would emphasize the importance of mitigation and prevention over response.

E. Efficacy (might fit better in strategies)
   i. “The power or capacity to produce a desired effect.” Many aspects of DM are under-resourced (mitigation being typical), which negatively affects capacity to effectively reduce disaster impacts.

F. Environmental stewardship (this might be considered subset of sustainable development)
   i. Promotion of healthy ecosystems, protection of the natural environment, through the wise use of and interaction with our environment.
G. Evidence/reality-based practice (might fit better in strategies)
   i. The integration of best research evidence with DM practices – thus the avoidance of disaster myths.

H. Cultural context
   i. Any DM strategy must be developed within the context of an existing set of cultural values. Not taking them into consideration can result in a poor scheme at best, or doing a great deal of harm at worst.

I. Address root causes, as much as possible (might fit better in strategies)
   i. For example, develop a ‘culture of safety’
   ii. Many root causes are deeply embedded into the social fabric – addressing them can be extraordinarily difficult, particularly if it requires challenging existing values or elite power structures.

J. Social justice
   i. Several issues related to social justice result in increased vulnerability and decreased resilience to hazards and disasters. Examples include large disparities in wealth, health, access to power and justice systems, and human rights issues. Should this issue be considered as part of equity?

K. Controllability
   i. There is a limit our ability to control events that are large scale and complex. A management approach should include an expectation of surprises, loss of control, other(?) and plan for failure as well as success. This would include safe-fail design as well as fail-safe (thus, when the dyke breaks, what then?).
Appendix D

Principles of Emergency Management
Derived From Introduction to Emergency Management (2nd Ed.)
And from Personal Email Communication, March 1, 2007

1. Secure leadership and support from top executives for the emergency management mission.
2. Clearly define the emergency management mission.
3. All-Hazards Approach to Emergency Management
4. Functional Approach to Emergency Management
5. Customer Focus and Service (internal and external)
6. Making Mitigation the Cornerstone of Emergency Management
7. Build Partnerships (among disciplines, across sectors, including private sector and media)
8. Communicating to the Public, Partners, and the Media
10. Provide emergency management workers with the training and the tools they need to do their jobs
Appendix E:
Principles of Emergency Management from IS-230 (FEMA/EMI), April 21, 2006
(Inferred – document never explicitly states a principle)

“The goals of emergency management are to: save lives, prevent injuries, protect property and the environment.” (p. 2-8)

1. Integrated Emergency Management System (Unit 2)  [Inferred summary of IEMS is that it is all hazards, all resources, all jurisdictions, all phases.]

2. Incident Management Spectrum (Unit 3) – NIMS, ICS, NRP, Five Phases (replaces 1998 “Four Phases” section.

   “An integrated emergency management system provides a conceptual framework for organizing and managing emergency protection efforts. This framework prescribes when and how local officials and agencies will work together to deal with a full range of emergencies, from natural disasters to terrorism” (p. 9-1). [Note that the principle of “horizontal and vertical integration” is not addressed, but rather a disaster response-oriented “framework.”]

3. Building a Network of Relationships (Unit 4: Roles of Key Participants)

   “The effectiveness of emergency management rests on a network of relationships among partners in the system.” (p. 1)

   “Effective response to and recovery from an emergency or disaster requires the active involvement of numerous partners.” (p. 2-10)

   “A successful emergency management program facilitates the development of a network of relationships among local officials and staff who understand their roles and are able to act when needed.” (p. 2-16)

   “In this unit, you practiced applying emergency management principles of coordination and interdependence and explained the fundamental features of an Integrated Emergency Management System” (p. 8-12).

4. Emergency Operations Plan as Emergency Management Program Centerpiece (Unit 5)

5. Planning and Coordination (Unit 6)  – [Mostly devoted to elaboration on ICS and EOP.]

6. Core Functions of an Emergency Management Program (Unit 7)

   [Describes functions from within the practice of emergency management – derived from State and Local Guide 101, Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning and from FEMA’s Capability Assessment for Readiness survey) and never asserts a “principle” or uses the word itself.]
Appendix F

Select Listing of Principles from Eric Auf der Heide’s

1. Because of the limited resources available, disaster preparedness proposals need to take cost-effectiveness into consideration. (p. 23)

2. Planning should be for disasters of moderate size (about 120 casualties); disasters of this size will present the typical inter-organizational coordination problems also applicable to larger events. (p. 25)

3. Interest in disaster preparedness is proportional to the recency and magnitude of the last disaster. (p. 28) [Thus] the best time to submit disaster preparedness programs for funding is right after a disaster (even if it has occurred elsewhere). (p. 30)

4. Disaster planning is an illusion unless: it is based on valid assumptions about human behavior, incorporates an inter-organizational perspective, is tied to resources, and is known and accepted by the participants. (p. 35)

5. Base disaster plans on what people are “likely” to do, rather than what they “should” do. (p. 38)

6. The *process* of planning is more important than the written document that results. (p. 44)

7. Good disaster management is *not* merely an extension of good everyday emergency procedures. It is more than just the mobilization of additional personnel, facilities, and supplies. Disasters often pose unique problems rarely faced in daily emergencies. (p. 52)

8. In contrast to most routine emergencies, disasters introduce the need for *multi-organizational* and *multi-disciplinary* coordination. (p. 78)

9. In disasters, what are thought to be “communications problems” are often coordination problems in disguise. (p. 81)

10. Those who work together well on a daily basis tend to work together well in disasters. (p. 83)

11. Disasters create the need for coordination among fire departments, law enforcement agencies, hospitals, ambulances, military units, utility crews, and other organizations. This requires inter-agency communication networks utilizing compatible radio frequencies. (p. 96)
Appendix G
Emergency Management Concepts and Principles Derived From
Emergency Management Principles and Practice for Healthcare Systems
Washington DC: Institute for Crisis, Disaster and Risk Management, George Washington
University (Educational Course developed for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: 2006)

1. Emergency Management is a Management Science
2. Comprehensive Emergency Management
3. The Four Phases
4. All Risks (All Hazards)
5. CEM applicable across all levels of government and the private sector
6. IEMS (Integrated Emergency Management System)
7. Incident Command System
8. National Incident Management System
9. National Response Plan
10. Relevant Emergency Management Standards
Appendix H

Some Selected Definitions Of “Doctrine”

1. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (accessed December 16, 2006)

“Doctrine, from Latin doctrina (compare doctor), means "a code of beliefs", "a body of teachings" or "instructions", taught principles or positions, as the body of teachings in a branch of knowledge or belief system. The Greek analogy is the etymology of catechism. Often doctrine specifically connotes a corpus of religious dogma as it is promulgated by a church, but not necessarily: doctrine is also used to refer to a principle of law, in the common law traditions, established through a history of past decisions, such as the doctrine of self-defense, or the principle of fair use…

“The term also applies to the concept of an established procedure to a complex operation in warfare. The typical example is tactical doctrine in which a standard set of maneuvers, kinds of troops and weapons are employed as a default approach to a kind of attack….”

“(DOD) Fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application.”

2. (Funk & Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary (Text Edition), 1966.)

“…A particular principle or tenet that is taught, or a body of such principles or tenets.”

3. From the DHS Lexicographer’s December 4, 2006 document:

United States Coast Guard contribution:

“Fundamental principles that guide the employment of forces. Doctrine is authoritative but not directive. It distills the insights and wisdom gained from our collective experience. Doctrine influences the way in which policy and plans are developed, forces are organized, trained and employed, and equipment is procured and maintained. It is interpretative: based on conditions, operating units can apply the doctrine differently, within the constraints of established policy.” (p. 7)

FEMA contribution: “Fundamental principles that guide the employment of personnel and resources.” (p. 8)

OPS contribution: “The fundamental principles and beliefs that guide an organization’s actions in pursuing specified objectives.”
Appendix I

Selected Definition of “Principles”

Definitions of the work “Principle” on the Web:

A basic generalization that is accepted as true and that can be used as a basis for reasoning or conduct; "their principles of composition characterized all their works"

A rule or standard especially of good behavior; "a man of principle"; "he will not violate his principles"

A basic truth or law or assumption; "the principles of democracy"

A rule or law concerning a natural phenomenon or the function of a complex system; "the principle of the conservation of mass"; "the principle of jet propulsion"; "the right-hand rule for inductive fields"

A rule of personal conduct

A rationale: (law) an explanation of the fundamental reasons (especially an explanation of the working of some device in terms of laws of nature); "the rationale for capital punishment"; "the principles of internal-combustion engines"

wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn

According to the Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language a principle is a "a fundamental truth, law, doctrine, or motivating force upon which others are based. Principles are overwhelming obvious ideas that are often accepted as a matter of faith."

With regard to fundamentals although not concerning details.

(http://www.elook.org/dictionary/in-principle.html)
Appendix J

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