

The Role of Mitigation Post-Disaster

Following a disaster, FEMA's mitigation programs play a critical role developing and integrating disaster operations policies, procedures, and training under the National Response Plan. The Regional and Disaster Support Branch within the Mitigation Directorate acts as the coordination point for mitigation disaster operations and activities.

HAZARD MITIGATION FIELD OPERATIONS MISSION

The mission of hazard mitigation is to protect lives and prevent or reduce the loss of property from hazard events. Post-disaster, this is accomplished through comprehensive efforts authorized by the Stafford Act, as amended by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, the National Flood Insurance Act, the Flood Insurance Reform Act, and Executive Orders. FEMA hazard mitigation staff partner with State, local, and Tribal governments to:

- Assess factors that contributed to disaster effects
- Identify risk reduction opportunities
- Educate the public and local government officials in methods to reduce future risks
- Promote hazard mitigation community planning and project development that will result in sustainable community development
- Provide grants to fund hazard mitigation projects
- Assist communities in marketing the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)
- Provide technical assistance to State, Tribal, and local governments to utilize rebuilding as an opportunity for enhanced local codes and ordinances
- Identify and document proven mitigation actions and projects
- Quantify the benefits of hazard mitigation

HAZARD MITIGATION ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS

Under the National Response Framework, Hazard Mitigation exists as a Branch under the Operations Section. The Hazard Mitigation Branch Director and management support staff are responsible for hazard mitigation field operations functions, which are carried out by four groups: Floodplain Management and Insurance, Hazards and Performance Analysis (HPA), Community Education and Outreach (CEO), and Hazard Mitigation Grants and Planning.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

The Floodplain Management and Insurance group serves as the Joint Field Office (JFO) point of coordination and resource on flood insurance. The group also promotes community participation in the NFIP and ensures compliance with NFIP regulations, including sub-damage requirements.

MITIGATION CADRE

Mitigation deploys a cadre of staff to help coordinate and implement mitigation and insurance activities during disaster response and recovery. The Regional and Disaster Support Branch at FEMA Headquarters is responsible for managing the Mitigation cadre through staffing, training, credentialing, and catastrophic deployment.

HAZARDS AND PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

The HPA group provides engineering, economic, and scientific analysis in support of hazard mitigation programs, and ensures that technical hazard mitigation information is available to all local, State, and Federal recovery partners. HPA is the focal point for data collection and analysis in support of hazard mitigation initiatives for all disaster services.

Functions performed by the HPA group include providing analysis of hazards and impacts, such as wind analysis, flood depth, inundation, and velocity studies. The group also conducts damage assessments and loss estimation analysis to identify hazard mitigation opportunities and benefit/cost data. This information is used to ensure that mitigation measures are cost-effective. HPA also works with other JFO groups to share and coordinate disaster geospatial data and technical products.

HPA supports Section 406 of the Stafford Act which authorizes FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) Program. Through the PA Program, FEMA provides supplemental Federal disaster grant assistance for the repair, replacement, or restoration of disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities and the facilities of certain Private Non-Profit organizations.

MOVING FROM PLANS TO SOUND PROJECTS

The Hazard Mitigation Grants and Planning Group supports local and State participation with programs authorized by Section 404 of the Stafford Act (Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)) and Section 322 of the Disaster Mitigation Act (mitigation planning). This support includes assistance to local and State entities in development of multi-hazard mitigation plans and utilization of hazard mitigation funding from the HMGP to reduce the loss of life and property from future hazard events. In addition, the group provides technical assistance for the development, maintenance, and updating of State and local hazard mitigation plans.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH GROUP

The CEO group promotes effective hazard mitigation through community education, outreach, training, and coordination with the public and private sectors. This is accomplished by providing advice to the public on hazard mitigation techniques and measures through Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs), other disaster assistance facilities, community meetings, and special events.

In cooperation with the State, the CEO group promotes partnerships and training of local officials, the construction industry, and residential and commercial building owners. In partnership with External Affairs, they also identify, document, and disseminate Best Practices, which illustrate a variety of sound and effective mitigation measures.

BEST PRACTICES PORTFOLIO

Part of Mitigation's role during disaster operations is to identify, collect, document, and disseminate Best Practices and case studies. The Mitigation Best Practices Portfolio, located on FEMA's website at www.fema.gov/mitigationbp/index.jsp, highlights the ideas, activities, projects, and funding sources that help reduce or prevent the impacts of disasters. Visitors to the website may search for Best Practices based on Region or disaster type, and may also submit Best Practices from their own community, Region, or State.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit www.fema.gov/about/divisions/mitigation to learn more about mitigation opportunities.