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LESSON LEARNED

Emergency Operations Center Management: Providing National Guard Liaisons During Activations

SUMMARY

State National Guard units should assign liaisons to their state emergency operations centers (SEOC) during activations for large-scale events that require National Guard missions. The liaisons should be trained on SEOC processes and systems.

DESCRIPTION

During the summer of 2008, the state of Iowa experienced a series of storms that produced several tornadoes and a large amount of rainfall. The heaviest period of storms began on May 25, 2008, and prompted the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division to activate the SEOC. Over a 4-week period, the storms produced floodwaters that moved across Iowa, overtopped levees and dams, and inundated Iowa localities near rivers. The SEOC activated its finance, logistics, operations, and planning sections to coordinate complex preparedness, response, and recovery operations throughout the state. Overall, the 2008 summer storms resulted in 17 fatalities, forced the evacuation of approximately 38,000 Iowans, and impacted over 21,000 housing units.

The 2008 storms were comparable to the 1993 floods as the most destructive natural disasters in Iowa's history.

During response operations, the Iowa National Guard did not assign trained liaisons to the SEOC. Consequently, at times, SEOC sections did not receive critical information from the National Guard about its flood operations. For example, the SEOC operations section did not receive updates from the National Guard about mission assignments and fulfillments. As a result, the section lacked information about National Guard missions in the field. The National Guard recognized this gap with the operations section and started developing a Military Support of Civil Authorities Section toward the end of the response. The after action report recommends that the Iowa National Guard provide a dedicated liaison who has received training about SEOC processes and systems.

State National Guard units should assign liaisons to their SEOCs during activations for large-scale events that require National Guard missions. The liaisons should be trained on SEOC processes and systems.

CITATION

Lessons Learned Information Sharing. *Iowa 2008 Summer Storms After-Action Report*. 27 Apr 2009.

<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=36042>

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