

Action Plan

Category #9 - Flood Emergency Planning, Response and Recovery

Action #9.2 – Update procedures and agency roles for emergency flooding response



Overview and Implementation Strategy:

The Flood Emergency Planning, Response, and Recovery category recognizes that despite flood mitigation efforts, flooding will occur. Flood response and recovery procedures, as well as agency roles and responsibilities, need to be efficient and coordinated when flooding occurs. HSEMA, in coordination with other District agencies and quasi-governmental organizations, leads the District's preparedness planning, training, and exercise actions in this category.

Flood planning includes the development and testing of the District's Emergency Operations Plan, and its mission and service content. Since 2019, the District has used agency-aligned mission and service assignment constructs to organize, document, and communicate complex incident response operations. These missions and services, the incident command structure, and functional lines of communication are captured and codified in a Coordination Support Plan (aligns to Incident Action Plan) during an Emergency Operation Center activation. In all cases, Agencies Having Jurisdiction (AHJs) conduct immediate lifesaving and incident stabilization measures through legal and statutory authorities.

- Exa., In coordination with OUC's 911 alert operations, DC Fire and EMS will immediately deploy tactical rescue units to save stranded drivers whose vehicles are submerged or disabled by flood waters on roadways.

In addition to missions and services, HSEMA leverages 24/7-365 watch operations to monitor, alert on, and initiate interagency coordination efforts to respond to flooding incidents. First responder and command, control, and coordination measures are immediate. HSEMA uses incident management processes, protocols, and resources that assist in organizing response and recovery actions. These resources include but are not limited to:

- District Emergency Operations Center
- District Response Plan 2017
 - Updated Agency-specific Service Plans
- Flood Planning and Emergency Response, National Park Service, Washington D.C. Potomac River Flood Interagency Coordination Plan, Dec. 2019
- Consequence Management Team and Chief Operations Office/Senior Emergency Manager Conference Calls
- Director All-Hazard Incident Command Book
- *In Draft – Incident Commander/Unified Command Flood Checklist

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The implementation strategy that HSEMA uses to improve and enhance flood response and recovery in the District is to use the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program to inform and enhance District-wide flood planning products and preparedness. Exercise evaluation assesses the ability to meet objectives and capabilities by documenting strengths, areas for improvement, capability performance, and corrective actions in an After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP). Through improvement planning, HSEMA uses the corrective actions needed to improve plans, build and sustain capabilities, and maintain readiness.

In September 2022, HSEMA is sponsoring a series of exercises designed to test coordination and communication of efforts related to the threat of flooding in the city. District agencies as well as Federal, military, regional and private partners will be participating.

- On Tuesday, Sept. 13: Discussion-based Tabletop Exercise concerning operations in the first few days after a flooding event:
 - Damage Assessment mission, including “substantial damage assessment” required under the National Flood Insurance Program
 - Health inspections of restaurants, food stores, and other establishments that have a Health Department license to operate
 - Post-Emergency Canvassing Operations
 - Debris Management mission
- On the following Tuesday, Sept. 20: A second Tabletop Exercise will review plan for “just-in-time” mitigation and flood control efforts, including activation of flood control devices; information sharing about weather and flooding forecasts, and protection of infrastructure and essential services.

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Impacted City Ward/ANC:

- All Wards

Lead Agency:

- Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA)
 - Training and Exercise Bureau is developing and hosting the two-day discussion-based tabletop exercise
 - HSEMA is a participant in the flood exercise

Supporting Agencies, Roles/Commitments:

- Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)
 - Participant in the flood exercise
 - NFIP Substantial damage assessment
- Department of Health (DOH)
 - Participant in the flood exercise
 - Health inspections
- Department of Buildings (DOB)
 - Participant in the flood exercise
 - Building Inspections
- DC Water (DC WASA)
 - Participant in the flood exercise
- Department of Public Works (DPW)
 - Participant in the flood exercise
 - Debris Management
- DC Health and Medical Service
 - Participant in the flood exercise
- *DC Department of Transportation*
- *DC Flood Task Force*
- *DC Silver Jackets*
- *US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)*
 - *Participant in the flood exercise*
- *US Geological Survey (USGS) Water*
 - *Participant in the flood exercise*
- National Park Service (NPS)
 - Participant in the flood exercise
- Naval District of Washington
 - Participant in the flood exercise
- Military District of Washington
 - Participant in the flood exercise
- *National Weather Service (NWS)*
 - *Participant in the flood exercise*
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) ONCRC IMAT
 - Participant in the flood exercise
- *FEMA R3 Hurricane Planners*

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- *FEMA R3 Exercise Team*

Background:

Impact of this Effort on Task Force Goal:

- The impact of this training effort is to adopt best practices and procedures to assess efficiency and effectiveness of establish protocols and agency roles. Through this assessment, HSEMA will develop After Action Reports, as to better identify areas of improvement and initiate actionable steps to solve those areas. This will strengthen flood response protocols, agency roles and inter-agency coordination the event of an incident.

Historical Context:

- *How did we arrive at this particular situation?*

On September 2020, the District was impacted by severe flooding causing thousands of dollars in damages to infrastructure and disruption to resident's livelihoods. Following this incident, the Office of City Administrator established the Flood Task Force to identify policies and projects to bolster flood readiness while equitably protecting the District's residents and economy from damage that floods cause.

The September 10th, 2020, flooding incident, highlighted the importance of flooding response procedures and agency roles to be tested and assessed for areas of improvement. This identified the action item 9.2: Update procedures and agency roles for emergency flooding response. However, response procedures and agency roles need to be tested so corrective actions can resolve identified gaps. Therefore, an interagency flooding response exercise will take place in September to test the flooding response procedures and District and federal partners roles to flooding events in the District.

- *What Actions have already been taken?*

HSEMA Training and Exercise Bureau have kicked off their planning process to host two discussion-based Tabletop Exercise focused on a flooding event. The exercise will include participation from District, federal and military partners. These partners have been identified and notified to participate in both exercises.

The first exercise targets the operations utilized in the following days of a flooding event. This includes damage assessments, health inspections, post canvassing efforts as well as debris management.

The second exercise targets the immediate, or "just-in-time" mitigation and flood control efforts. This includes the activation of flood control devices; information sharing about weather and flooding forecasts, and protection of infrastructure and essential services.

The discussion-based Tabletop exercises are scheduled to take place September 13th and 20th respectively.

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- *What are options to alleviate flooding impacts?*

There are many options to alleviate flooding impacts such as activation of flood control devices; information sharing about weather and flooding forecasts, and protection of infrastructure and essential services. These options will be assessed in the second day of the tabletop exercise to review their effectiveness. Further options may be identified in the process of the exercises and development of the After-Action Report. Further options will be considered when identified.

Equity

How does this action assist vulnerable communities?

- Using best practices, District, federal and military agencies will be able to identify areas of improvement in flood response and relief protocols, focusing on impacts to vulnerable communities. Taking actionable steps to alleviate those areas and strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness to those who are impacted from flooding events will reap the benefit of a stronger District flood response.

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Timeline:

Fiscal Year	Responsible Agency	Action
2022	HSEMA and participating agencies	<p>Training and Exercise Bureau kicked off planning meetings with District partners to discuss existing plans/procedures, set objectives for each exercise, draft realistic scenarios as well as other relevant needs.</p> <p>Individual planning meetings between agencies based on relevance and need to discuss existing plans/procedures</p>
September 2022	HSEMA and participating agencies	<p>Two-day discussion-based tabletop exercise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day 1 Short-term recovery Day 2 Immediate, “just in time” mitigation
TBD	TBD	Functional Exercise

Budget:

Total Estimated Cost: \$0

Cost Breakdown by Phase / Action:

- NA

Long Term Budget Requirements: None.

Fiscal Year	Responsible Agency	Funding Source	Amount to be Requested	Description
2022-23	HSEMA	Local	NA	Annual appropriated and grant funding sources (EMPG)

Public Outreach and Input:

Public outreach & engagement approach/actions: - List outreach undertaken in support of this Action Plan Category.

- HSEMA Training and Exercise Bureau has hosted interagency planning meetings with District partners to develop the discussion-based tabletop exercise focused on immediate, or “just-in-time” flooding as well as relief operations, or the following few days, after a flooding incident.
- Outreach with the public was not utilized as this action is limited to District agency protocols and roles.

What were the Public Comments of relevance to this Action?

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- No public comments were made.