



# Catastrophic Response

Coordination | Communication | Unity of Effort

*Working together makes us stronger*

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## EXEC'S PODIUM

## BUILDING ON OUR EFFORTS

JOE PICCIANO – Deputy Director for Preparedness, NJ Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (Ret.)



As the Regional Catastrophic Planning Team (RCPT) begins the process of transferring the body of work completed over the last six years to key players in this multi-state, multi-jurisdictional region, it is important to highlight the process and the hopeful future of this important effort.

Early on the approach taken was to build a process that included planning integration. Success would be driven by an office, a Regional Integration Center (RIC), dedicated to integrating projects across jurisdictional boundaries from NYC to Northern New Jersey to Long Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and southern New York State. The goal was never the development of detailed plans for every aspect of catastrophic planning, although some were developed, but rather to provide a framework with supporting documentation and tools that could be successfully utilized to build specific jurisdictional plans that supported regional integration.

As the initial players met in Lower Manhattan in 2008, very close to the area of the 9/11 WTC attack, we considered the critical areas of integration that would be supported by the RIC. Staffed by planners and logisticians, the RIC would work with regional stakeholders to develop and provide models, plans,

and guidance to support: mass sheltering; information-sharing; disaster housing; evacuation; disaster logistics; training and exercises; planning for events ranging from radiological to multiple improvised explosive devices (IEDs); and major efforts in victim identification. These proposed approaches and many others have resulted in a series of well written and coordinated documents and procedures that, for New Jersey and our other key participants, are being utilized and will continue to be utilized in the future. Training and exercises using RCPT-developed materials have been successfully used throughout the region, and there is a demand for more.

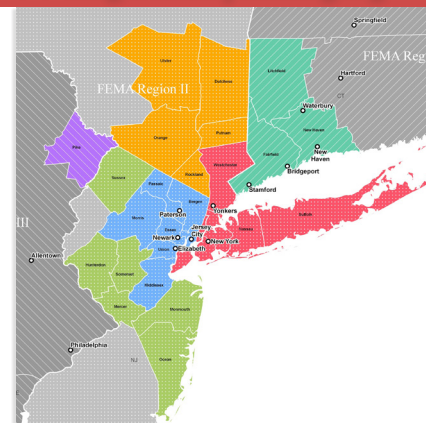
The recent RCPT-generated, multi-state exercise as well as coordination with states, local jurisdictions, and major utilities for energy restoration are examples of the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP) efforts now moving forward as independent efforts. For those who question the success of planning as a team and the usefulness of planning tools, training and exercising, and the overall collaboration effort of the RCPGP, it is important to note that planning integration in this multi-state region is now an accepted part of the way of thinking and planning. To me this is the truest measure of success.

## RCPGP Extended!

Christmas came a few days early to the RCPGP NY-NJ-CT-PA in the form of a six-month extension. The program, originally set to end on February 28, has been extended until August 31, 2015. During this time, we will continue to work with our partners to integrate some of the 65 unique products into local and state preparedness plans, creating a shared regional system. The work completed by the RCPT over the last five years has been centered on the core value that working and coordinating together in planning and preparedness leads us to be more effective and efficient in response and also bolsters our region's resiliency.

This extension provides more time to share the various components of the training and exercise program, already presented in more than 20 jurisdictions throughout the region. Over the coming months RIC staff will conduct train-the-trainer sessions so jurisdictions can continue to provide these trainings and exercises on their own. The RCPT will also provide technical assistance to further help address access and functional needs at the county and state level.

In the coming months we look forward to working with our partners to ensure continued access to all of the plans, tools, and trainings, thereby sustaining the RCPGP investment in the region.



## Don't Miss These RCPT Trainings and Exercises

Since its introduction in September 2014, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Catastrophic Emergencies Lab has been presented a dozen times, often in conjunction with Lightning Bolt exercises, and more are being scheduled every day. The course is geared toward agency representatives and others who may be called in to the EOC, but who may not be as well versed as the local emergency management agency staff in the 'whys' and 'what fors' of the EOC.

The EOC Leadership Development Lab, introduced in November, has had a positive response and sessions are being scheduled throughout the region. This course is designed to help EOC decision-makers be more effective when deliberating in the midst of a disaster.

If you would like to bring these EOC trainings and exercises to your jurisdiction, don't delay! With only a few months left in the program, the calendar is filling up fast!

To learn more about the RCPT's EOC training courses, the Lightning Bolt Exercise-in-a-Box EOC game, or the Disaster Logistics training, contact Nancy Harris at:

[nharris@regionalcatplanning.org](mailto:nharris@regionalcatplanning.org)

## CATEX 2014

On November 19th the RCPT hosted the CATEX 2014 public-private regional information-sharing drill. Participants included 4 states, 2 major cities, 20+ companies, 60+ players, and 100+ observers from public agencies and the electric, food, and fuel sectors. The drill was conducted by the All Hazards Consortium as part of the CATEX Annual Exercise Series led by the Multi-State Fleet Response Working Group and the East Coast Corridor Coalition (EC3). CATEX 2014 built on the previous year's exercise with the electric sector (hosted by the National Capital Region RCPT), and on this past September's findings of the Lifeline Sectors Response Coordination Workshop (hosted by NY-NJ-CT-PA RCPT).

During the drill each player received a series of targeted email injects regarding operational issues faced during a Sandy-based scenario. Injects were designed to determine the essential people, information, and processes required to address operational issues in the following areas:

- **Transportation** (impacts of closed roads, bridges, tunnels, rail)
- **Mutual Aid** (electric sector's Regional Mutual Assistance Groups process)
- **Waivers** (request and approval processes)
- **Supply Chain Disruptions** (impacts for food and fuel)
- **Curfews and Access Restrictions** (deliveries and essential employees)

Players carried on with their normal day-to-day activities while receiving between five and seven emails containing sector-specific questions. Player feedback was very positive, and play continued past the exercise's end, as players forwarded emails to partner agencies and constituents who continued the responses throughout the week, providing additional information to drill controllers.

The drill findings are being utilized by sector working groups in collaboration with public agency partners to develop ways to expedite information-sharing and more quickly resolve disaster response challenges during future large-scale events. The drill modules will provide templates for conducting future information-sharing tabletop exercises between the private sector and state and local governments.

For more information on CATEX, contact Laura Stockstill at [Istockstill@regionalcatplanning.org](mailto:Istockstill@regionalcatplanning.org).

## TELL US!

What RCPT developed plan or tool have you found to be the most helpful?

Let us know at:

[RIC@regionalcatplanning.org](mailto:RIC@regionalcatplanning.org).

## Access and Functional Needs Project

Phase One of the RCPT Access and Function Needs (AFN) Project is complete! This two-part project will provide the region with tools and support to assist jurisdictions with AFN integration in their emergency management plans.

Stakeholders from the region came together to assist in the development of *Promising Practices and a Guidebook with Support Tools for AFN Integration in Emergency Management*. The guidebook presents a series of recommendations, promising practices, and support tools that will help jurisdictions meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs in disaster situations and throughout all phases of emergency management. These promising practices have been gathered from jurisdictions around the nation and address a select set of topics and emergency management areas, including evacuation and transportation, communications and public information, sheltering and mass care, and whole community engagement.

The guidebook is accompanied by a project management worksheet, which will assist planners with integrating the AFN planning recommendations and considerations outlined in the guidebook. Planners can use the worksheet to assign tasks to other planners or plan integration participants to ensure the considerations will be addressed.

The Technical Assistance (TA) portion of the project provides interested jurisdictions with TA in AFN integration with their chosen disaster plans, focusing on the four specified areas of evacuation and transportation, communications and public information, sheltering and mass care, and whole community engagement. The disaster plans are reviewed by our project team and recommendations and guidance are provided on how to integrate AFN considerations. TA is still available to interested jurisdictions upon request.

The *Promising Practices and a Guidebook with Support Tools for AFN Integration in Emergency Management* is available upon request. To learn more about TA or to request a copy of the document, contact Pearl Cheng at [pcheng@regionalcatplanning.org](mailto:pcheng@regionalcatplanning.org).

## The logistics work done by the Regional Logistics Program (RLP) NY-NJ-CT-PA has gone bi-coastal!

The California Bay Area RCPT's 12 counties, including the cities of San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose, have leveraged the work done by the RLP to build on their local capabilities in logistics planning. The Bay Area RCPGP has based its catastrophic planning on a 7.9 magnitude earthquake. In an earthquake of that size, an estimated 1,850,000 people would be without water. Approximately 1.1 million people and 400,000 companion pets are expected to be displaced, and in need of food and shelter.



Bay Area Logistics Plans

Effective logistics operations, including Points of Distribution (POD), are a lynchpin to moving critical commodities into densely populated areas during a catastrophic incident. After Super Storm Sandy, the Bay Area RCPT contacted the RLP to find out what types of logistics tools were useful in the response-and-recovery from that storm. The Bay Area was impressed with the Logistics Capstone work detailed on the RLP website ([www.emergencylogistics.org](http://www.emergencylogistics.org)). The C-POD Field Operations Guides (FOGs), Receiving and Distribution Center (RDC) FOGs, and Logistics Center (LC) documents complemented the Bay Area's current Logistics and Critical Lifelines planning.

At the Bay Area's request, the RLP provided the production files for the FOGs and EOC plans to use as templates. The Bay Area used the same graphics and colors for their materials, replacing the words NY-NJ-CT-PA with Bay Area. This allowed the Bay Area to produce similar tools by modeling validated logistics work, while saving thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours of staff time. Most important, if and when Bay Area personnel are EMAC'd (Emergency Management Assistance Compact) into the NY-NJ-CT-PA area, we will use similar tools to standardize our work. Bay Area personnel will be able to work faster with fewer complications, enabling local government to better serve the public and expedite the process of our getting our communities back to whole.