



Unit 8: Policies and Procedures

CERT Program Manager



FEMA





Unit Objectives



- At the conclusion of this unit, the participants will be able to describe the role of policies and procedures in operating a local CERT program:
 - Explain why policies and procedures are necessary for running a successful program
 - Identify policies and procedures necessary for starting and maintaining a program
 - Identify resources for developing program policies and procedures

PM 8-1





Unit Topics



- Importance of Policies and Procedures
- Policies and Procedures for CERT
- Resources for Developing Policies and Procedures



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Importance of Policies-Procedures

- Terms sometimes used interchangeably
- “Policy”
 - Plan of action that links organization’s “vision” and day-to-day operations
- “Procedure”
 - Series of steps organization will take to implement policy
 - Functionally same as “protocol”

PM 8-2





Important Thing to Remember

- Don't worry about definitions
- Bottom line: CERT program needs to know **what** it plans to do and **how** it plans to do it
- Policies and procedures are required when there is need for consistency in day-to-day operational activities



PM 8-2



Write Them Down



- They are guideposts for program:
 - Used to operate
 - Turned to whenever there is a question
- They give guidance to staff and volunteers on how to perform job correctly



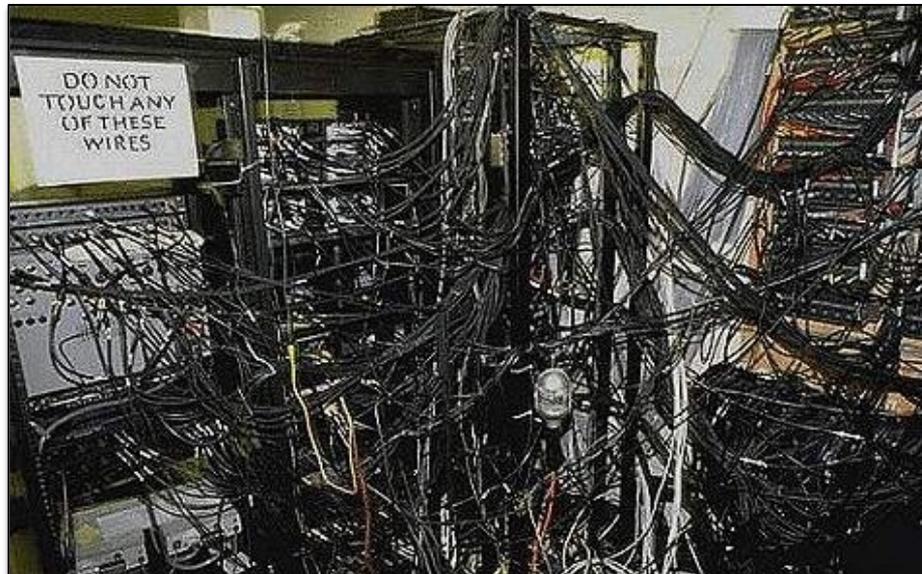
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Write Them Down (cont'd)

- They help eliminate common misunderstandings
 - Define roles and responsibilities
 - Establish boundaries



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For Experienced PMs



- Periodically ask
 - Are policies and procedures still meeting program's needs?



PM 8-4





“Signs”



- Some “signs” that review and update are needed
 - Increase in number of injuries?
 - Ineffective team operations?
 - More questions on “normal operations”?
 - Feeling of general confusion?
 - Inconsistent performance of CERT members?
 - Increase in stress levels of CERT members?
 - Complaints about poor performance?

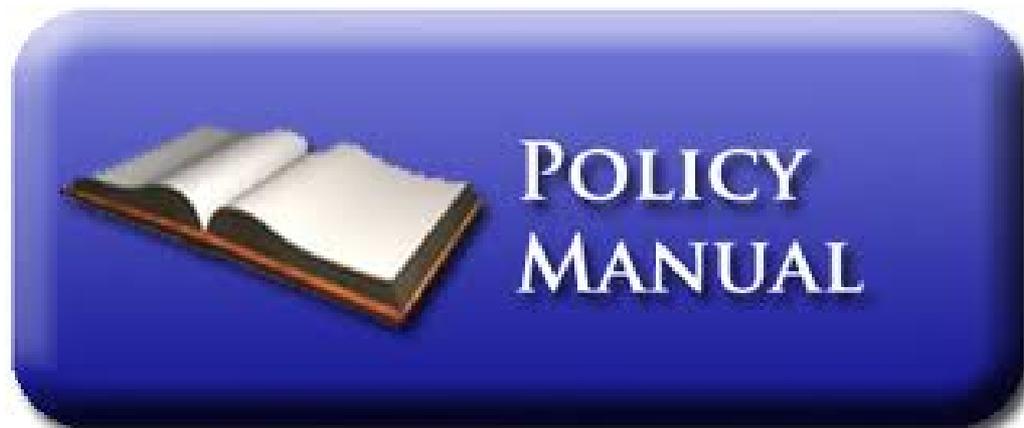
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Format

- Determined by program
 - One document with all policies
 - Each policy is its own document
- Need to be well written and complete



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Policies-Procedures for CERT

- Over years of experience Program Managers have identified the key policies and procedures that CERT program needs to operate smoothly and effectively
- See *CERT Policies and Procedures*



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Development Resources

- CERT policies and procedures cannot be developed in a vacuum
- Must be developed with input from sponsoring agency and partners
- Need to be consistent with:
 - Sponsoring agency's needs and procedures
 - EOP or CEMP
 - State and local statutes and regulations

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Liability



- Risks associated with taking *CERT Basic Training* and with being CERT member
 - CERT training and CERT program require physical activity; possibility of personal injury
 - Participation in a CERT may lead to exposure to potentially hazardous conditions
 - CERT members must only respond within scope of their training

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Tips for Reducing Liability

- Reducing liability during training, exercises, and activation must be prime concern for Program Manager
 - Keep safety at forefront, whatever CERT activity
 - Become familiar with regulatory requirements for volunteers in your State
 - Visit CERT Liability Guide at www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-team-liability-guide

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More Tips



- Visit Web site of Legal Information Institute, U.S. Code Collection, Limitation on Liability for Volunteers at:

<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/14503>





Find Policies and Procedures

- Don't need to be developed from scratch
- Many already exist in another CERT program or in one of the entities that has authority over CERT program



PM 8-13





What Do You Think?



- Experienced Program Managers:
Where have you found sample or actual policies or procedures to use when you were developing the ones for your program?

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Activity



Draft Program Plan:

Develop Policies and Procedures

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Unit Summary



- Importance of Policies and Procedures
- Policies and Procedures for CERT
- Resources for Developing Policies and Procedures



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