2018 National Preparedness Report
Executive Summary

The 2018 *National Preparedness Report* provides an overview of key developments in national preparedness—incorporating findings and lessons learned from incidents in 2017 in combination with data and inputs from federal interagency and whole community partners. The report evaluates and measures progress in building, sustaining, and delivering five selected core capabilities that have faced emerging and persistent challenges. Refining the scope of the 2018 edition of the report to focus on these challenging elements concentrates the discussion on what the whole community—including individuals, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and all levels of government— needs to address to increase the Nation's preparedness. The in-depth assessment of the targeted areas provided in this report will be particularly important in the years to come, as the Nation looks to address long-term trends that will influence national preparedness—including rising disaster costs, new technology, an older and more diverse population, and evolving threats such as cybersecurity.

The 2018 *National Preparedness Report* begins with an **Introduction** before providing a **2017 Year in Review**, which highlights notable real-world incidents and ongoing recovery efforts across the Nation in 2017. Next, the **Learning from Incidents and Improving National Preparedness** section summarizes major milestones in national preparedness, including lessons learned from historical incidents—from the 9/11 attacks to the 2017 Hurricane Season. The main body of the report offers 13 key findings that highlight successes and challenges across five core capabilities that have faced **Persistent Preparedness Challenges**—Operational Coordination, Infrastructure Systems, Housing, Economic Recovery, and Cybersecurity. These lessons learned and findings enable the Nation to better understand its capabilities, identify shortfalls, and build capacity to ready the Nation for future large-scale and catastrophic incidents. The report concludes with **The Path Forward**, which discusses future efforts to assess the Nation's capabilities to prepare for the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.

What is the National Preparedness Report?

The *National Preparedness Report* is a requirement of the *Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act* and a key element of the National Preparedness System. This annual report evaluates progress and challenges that individuals and communities, private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, and all levels of government have faced in preparedness. The report offers all levels of government, the private and nonprofit sectors, and the public practical insights into preparedness to support decisions about program priorities, resource allocation, and community actions.

The 2018 Report offers 13 key findings that highlight successes and challenges across five core capabilities that have faced persistent preparedness challenges—Operational Coordination, Infrastructure Systems, Housing, Economic Recovery, and Cybersecurity

KEY FINDINGS

OPERATIONAL COORDINATION

The Nation is advancing the implementation of a National Incident Management System (NIMS), but significant challenges remain in implementing the system during large-scale events in incident command, resource management, staffing, and communications.

INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS

Interdependencies between energy and other infrastructure systems present challenges in response and recovery; efforts to mitigate disruptions and to help communities learn from and plan for these challenges are growing.

The whole community has taken steps to increase the resilience of infrastructure, but challenges remain.

HOUSING

The Nation continues to face challenges with delivering disaster housing and is exploring innovative programs to address capability gaps.

Challenges remain with efforts to coordinate timely and efficient housing damage assessments for survivors after large-scale disasters.

While research shows that incorporating mitigation strategies in rebuilding can yield positive benefits, limited incentives exist to encourage resilient home reconstruction after a disaster.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Partners across the whole community have engaged in recent efforts to build business planning capabilities, though many small businesses lack business continuity plans.

While federal agencies have made efforts to streamline disaster recovery assistance, businesses continue to face challenges navigating post-disaster economic recovery programs.

Post-disaster, communities often struggle to effectively communicate and coordinate with the private sector, and efforts to address these challenges are ongoing.

Financial disruptions from disasters can disproportionately affect less-resourced communities, prolonging their return to economic viability.

CYBERSECURITY

Evolving cyber threats continue to outpace the development of protective practices; at the same time, technology users often fail to implement precautionary measures to safeguard their cyber systems.

Insufficient information sharing between the public and private sectors has hindered the Nation's effectiveness in defending against cyber threats.

The Federal Government faces persistent challenges in the recruitment and retention of cybersecurity personnel, though it has taken steps to improve cybersecurity training for the Nation.