Grant Effectiveness Case Study: Florida

I. Overview

In 2018, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conducted a grant effectiveness case study in Florida to understand the state's use of grant funds to increase its ability to respond to, recover from, and mitigate the impacts of natural and man-made disasters and real-world events. Specifically, FEMA examined how Florida invested Federal, state, and local funds to address lessons learned from previous disasters to close capability gaps, and whether these investments resulted in improved preparedness ahead of Hurricane Irma in 2017. FEMA also examined the processes that Florida and its local jurisdictions use to allocate and prioritize FEMA grant investments. Additionally, FEMA solicited feedback from Florida and its local jurisdictions to inform future improvements to the grant programs.

Overall, the case study found that FEMA grant-funded investments positively impacted the response to Hurricane Irma and other real-world events. Many of the investments highlighted in this case study were the culmination of multiple years of careful planning and used a combination of Federal, State, and local funds. Florida prioritizes grant investments based on regional and statewide initiatives. In addition, collaboration across Federal, State and local entities enabled stakeholders to share technical expertise and specialized equipment across jurisdictional and geographic boundaries.

FEMA collected information for the case study using structured interviews conducted through email, phone calls, and site visits during August and September 2018 with representatives from:

- The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM)
- The Florida State Emergency Response Team (SERT)
- The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)
- The Domestic Security Oversight Council (DSOC) and Regional Domestic Security Task Forces (RDSTFs)
- Brevard County
- Collier County
- Lee County
- Monroe County
- Miami-Fort Lauderdale Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)
- Orange County
- Orlando UASI
- Seminole County
- Tampa UASI

II. Assessing Risks and Capabilities

To understand how Florida assesses risk, FEMA analyzed Florida's Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR, formerly State Preparedness Report) processes. In accordance with FEMA grant guidance, Florida has completed and submitted a THIRA and SPR every year since 2012. FDEM and FDLE share the responsibility for completing the THIRA and SPR, as FDEM is the State Administrative Agency (SAA) and FDLE is the Homeland Security Advisor (HSA). FDEM completes information for two technological and natural-based scenarios: one based on a nuclear power plant incident and the other on a hurricane. FDLE manages content for two human-caused scenarios: one based on a cyber terrorism attack and the other on improvised explosive device (IED) attacks.

The Miami–Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, and Orlando UASIs individually complete their own THIRA/SPRs with the involvement of regional stakeholders/voting members. FDEM representatives said that they currently do not actively involve counties in the THIRA and SPR processes. Florida analyzes data from statewide trainings, exercises, grant purchases, and other preparedness data to better understand the capabilities of Florida's 67 counties. As part of the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) grant project submissions process, Florida uses a project template that requires applicants to identify the area of the THIRA and SPR that a project will address. FDEM and FDLE plan to form a multi-disciplinary stakeholder working group to review the new THIRA and SPR methodology.

Hurricanes and potentially dangerous storms present annual disaster preparedness challenges for emergency managers in Florida. From 1992 to 2017, the President of the United States issued 28 major disaster declarations for hurricanes, tropical storms, and flooding events in Florida. The following chart highlights hurricanes that have most shaped Florida's preparedness activities.

Storm	Year	Fatalities in Florida	Damages	Impacts
Hurricane Andrew[1]	1992	65	$26 billion	49,000 homes destroyed; sustained winds of 165 miles per hour
Hurricane Charley[2]	2004	10	$14 billion	Storm surge up to 7 feet; 9 tornadoes
Hurricane Ivan[3]	2004	25	$7.1 billion	Partial interstate 10 bridge collapse; 10 to 15-foot storm surge
Hurricane Jeanne[4]	2004	3	$7.7 billion	Heavy rainfall; storm surge over six feet
Hurricane Katrina[5]	2005	14	$108 billion	Tens of thousands of homes and businesses destroyed; 1.2 million people ordered to evacuate
Hurricane Wilma[6]	2005	5	$21 billion	6 million people lost power; extensive damage to trees and buildings
Hurricane Hermine[7]	2016	1	$550 million	1,600 homes and businesses destroyed; 253 thousand people lost power
Hurricane Matthew[8]	2016	2	$10 billion	1.2 million people lost power; damage to thousands of homes and businesses
Hurricane Irma[9]	2017	7	$50 billion	6 million people ordered to evacuate; 700 shelters opened

III. Major Disasters and Incidents in Florida and the Use of Preparedness Capability Investments

On **September 10, 2017**, **Hurricane Irma** made landfall in Florida, instantly becoming the most powerful hurricane to strike the continental United States since Hurricane Katrina. Hurricane Irma caused widespread catastrophic damage throughout Florida and was responsible for seven direct fatalities and at least 77 indirect fatalities in Florida. Six million people evacuated from their homes, prompting Florida jurisdictions to open 700 shelters.[10] Hurricane Irma was Florida's largest single-event sheltering operation in history. Hurricane Irma forced Florida to consider how to improve incident management, as it required efforts to inform, evacuate, and shelter the public on a scale not previously experienced in the state.

> *"FEMA helps us stay afloat. Preparedness is the first to go when you haven't had an event in years."*
>
> *-Marty Senterfitt, Monroe County Emergency Management Director*

In addition to these major hurricanes, multiple adversarial threats have impacted Florida in recent years. These threats include three high-profile active shooter incidents that occurred at a nightclub, a major airport, and a school. The attacks captured the attention of domestic security stakeholders and emphasized the need for improved preparedness and response capabilities.

- On **June 12, 2016**, an individual entered **Pulse Nightclub** and attacked patrons with a handgun and a semi-automatic weapon over a three-hour period. The attacker killed 49 people and injured an additional 53 in one of the deadliest mass shootings in U.S. history. The FBI classified the attack as an act of terrorism.
- Less than seven months later, on **January 6, 2017**, an individual opened fire at the **Fort Lauderdale–Hollywood International Airport** baggage claim. Five people were killed, and around 40 sustained injuries. As many as 2,000 law enforcement officers from multiple agencies responded to the incident.
- Most recently, on **February 14, 2018**, a former student entered **Parkland's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School** and attacked students and adults with an AR-15 style weapon, killing 17 people and injuring 15 others.

Florida identifies capability gaps by reviewing previous disasters, conducting standardized risk assessments, and developing planning scenarios for natural hazards and terrorist attacks. Florida invests Federal, state, and local funds—including FEMA preparedness and mitigation grants—to close gaps identified through these processes. FEMA guidance in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) requires that Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) funds support terrorism-related preparedness investments; however, these investments result in increased preparedness for multiple types of hazards, including adversarial threats and natural incidents like Hurricane Irma.

Florida made numerous investments before Hurricane Irma using Federal grants and state funds. Notably, although Florida is the third most populous state in the nation, it is sixth in the amount of HSGP funding received, and third in the amount of Emergency Management Performance Grant

(EMPG) funding received. Multiple funding sources contributed to the investments covered in this report:

- Federal grants:
  - Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP):
    - State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)
    - Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)
    - Operation Stonegarden (OPSG)
  - Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)
  - Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
- State funds from agencies that supplemented any required cost share from Federal grants:
  - Emergency Management and Preparedness Assistance (EMPA) funding

The descriptions below highlight investments in natural disaster resilience and addressing adversarial threats, with each investment's primary funding sources listed in brackets. Appendix A contains more detailed descriptions of these investments.

Hurricane Preparedness and Resilience

- **Interoperable and Deployable Communications Systems** [SHSP]—Florida is expanding the use of deployable communications systems to further facilitate the life-saving response and recovery efforts of first responders during a disaster such as Hurricane Irma. Florida invested in Mutual Aid Radio Communications (MARC) units, which allow first responders to have interoperable and direct on-scene communications using a cache of commonly programmed portable radios. MARC units were initially obtained following wildfires in 1998 in response to communications gaps experienced during the incident. MARC units are now stationed statewide and may be deployed in emergency and non-emergency situations.
- **All-Hazard Incident Management Teams (AHIMT)** [SHSP]—AHIMTs provide situational awareness and support to the SERTs and the State Coordinating Officer (SCO). FDEM deployed all six AHIMTs at least once in response to Hurricane Irma. Before Hurricane Irma, Florida used grant funds in 2015 to develop the All-Hazards Incident Management Qualification Program, which helps to ensure both the efficient allocation of resources and that emergency responders are supported effectively during an incident.
- **WebEOC** [SHSP, UASI, EMPG, EMPA]—FDEM used preparedness grant funds (EMPG) to expand its WebEOC crisis management system, a shared statewide communication software platform that can implement standard emergency management processes to maintain a common operating picture during large-scale events. Counties and local jurisdictions in Florida used various funding methods to fund WebEOC (SHSP, UASI, EMPG, EMPA and state and local funds). FDEM tested WebEOC integration during the 2018 hurricane exercise (HURREX), which was based on a Hurricane Irma-type scenario. Exercise participants used WebEOC to create and update missions, train new employees, and test the execution of emergency operations procedures consistent with the hurricane scenario.
- **Annual Statewide Full-Scale Hurricane Exercise (HURREX)** [EMPG]—Florida conducts an annual statewide exercise based on previous hurricane after-action findings,

during which stakeholders practice continuity of operations and communications. Throughout its existence, the HURREX has resulted in several recommendations, including formalizing the process for handling generator and power restoration requests; updating the ESF-8 standard operating procedure (SOP), emergency operations procedure, and Special Needs Shelter Plan; and creating a dashboard on the WebEOC mission management system with all mass care feeding locations and their site status. The 2018 exercise was based on the impacts of Hurricane Irma.

- **Law Enforcement Information Exchange (LInX)** [SHSP]—LInX helps to prevent, stop, and solve crimes by enabling investigators to search criminal justice data across jurisdictional boundaries. FDLE implemented the LInX Data System with the support of DSOC to allow law enforcement agencies to connect on a secure, centralized system to share electronic data between local, state, and Federal law enforcement agencies. LInX also serves as a means for transmission through the national Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Data Exchange (N-DEx) system.
- **All Hazards Guides** [EMPG]—Lee County learned from the 2017 hurricane season that additional public communication on disaster preparedness was needed. Lee County published the All Hazards Guide document after the unprecedented 2017 hurricane season to help the community prepare for all types of disasters that may occur, including natural or man-made hazards. Lee County distributed All Hazards Guide documents to the public to increase preparedness and awareness before Hurricane Irma. Brevard County also published two guides titled, "What Would You Do? An All-Hazards Readiness Guide" and "Your Pathway to Preparedness" to improve community preparedness.
- **Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program (SRESP)** [EMPG]—The devastating 2014 and 2015 hurricane seasons demonstrated the need for enhanced evacuation planning in Florida. Florida invested in a framework of information used to update and revise county hurricane evacuation plans and operational procedures to improve response efforts. Florida's Region 6 executed its Regional Evacuation Plan during Hurricane Irma and used the plan to estimate evacuation times and shelter demands by county and region statewide.
- **Mass Casualty Ambulance-Bus** [EMPG, UASI]—Collier County began to consider potential uses for an ambulance bus after observing the impact of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Collier County and the Tampa UASI used grant funds to convert and equip these mobile field hospital vehicles to treat and cool evacuated patients from damaged nursing homes, shelters, and hospitals during Hurricane Irma.
- **Shelter Gap Assessments** [EMPG]—Following Hurricane Irma in 2018, Seminole County conducted evaluations to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as access and functional needs regulations. These assessments helped to identify and accommodate 1,300 people on Seminole County's special needs registry.

> *"It was the life boat, not the love boat."*
>
> *–Dan Summers, Collier County Emergency Manager, on expectations for hurricane shelters.*

- **Nursing Home Emergency Power Plan Review and Facility Visits** [EMPG]—Hurricane Irma highlighted the importance of establishing emergency power plans and resources for nursing homes in Seminole County. In accordance with Florida Emergency Rule

59AER17-1 instituted after Hurricane Irma, Seminole County reviewed over 100 nursing home emergency power plans and conducted facility site visits to ensure that assisted living facilities maintain onsite generators to provide heat and air conditioning to vulnerable residents.

- **State Agricultural Response Team (SART)** [SHSP]—Florida's SART maintains a large livestock sanctuary network that enables ranchers to evacuate and shelter their animals on unimpacted ranches and supports pet sheltering activities during natural disasters. Since 2015, Florida SARTs and partner agencies have been deployed in varying capacities to support hurricane response efforts and to strengthen all-hazard disaster capabilities.
- **Shelter Equipment** [EMPG, SHSP, UASI]—Seminole County has invested in shelter supplies and equipment since 2004. Hurricane Irma highlighted the necessity of adequate sheltering equipment as Seminole County opened nine shelters to assist evacuees. Seminole County used grant funds to purchase shelter equipment and supplies, including medical equipment, access and functional needs equipment, transportation and storage vehicles, warehouses, and training for staff to improve preparedness during a disaster that requires evacuations. Broward County used UASI funds to purchase supplies and equipment to serve those with functional needs and disabilities. The equipment was deployed to 15 general population shelters before the arrival of Hurricane Irma.

Addressing Adversarial Threats

Florida's homeland security projects focused primarily on addressing adversarial threats by **improving school safety** and by **preparing for terrorist incidents**.

- **Mutual Link** [UASI, EMPG]—Seminole County officials recognized the importance of improved communications and data and information sharing after experiencing challenges when coordinating a search in response to a bomb threat sent to a Seminole County elementary school in 2014. Seminole County invested in software to be used in schools that enables effective and secure on-demand radio, voice, and video information sharing with other devices and networks. Schools, hospitals, commuter rail lines, and other organizations now use this software to notify first responders of incidents.
- **Regional Reunification Response Framework** [SHSP]—The 2016 Pulse Nightclub shooting after-action report highlighted the need for a coordinated family reunification effort, including next-of-kin notification and victim identification, following an incident. Since the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in 2018, Florida law requires all schools to have reunification plans. The RDSTF Planning, Response, and Recovery focus group created a framework that assists counties in developing jurisdiction-specific reunification plans.
- **Forest Lake Academy Active Shooter Exercise** [EMPG]—In 2017, Seminole County used grant funds to conduct a full-scale exercise designed to test family reunification capabilities and victim extraction techniques in an active shooter scenario. The exercise was one of the largest and most complex exercised conducted in Seminole County, with more than 20 participating agencies and 115 community member volunteers.
- **Pulse Nightclub Response Resources** [UASI]—The Orlando Police Department (OPD) used grant-funded equipment, including armored personnel carriers, to breach and clear the

Pulse Nightclub in Orlando. The equipment was previously purchased to improve emergency preparedness and response efforts.

- **Forward Looking Infrared Radiometer (FLIR) Camera System** [SHSP]—The Tampa Police Department employed miniature thermal binoculars purchased with preparedness grant funds to search under elevated homes and backyards for a suspected serial killer.
- **Florida See Something, Say Something** [SHSP]—Florida launched the "If You See Something, Say Something"™ marketing campaign in 2015 following the Paris terrorism incident to help prevent or minimize the impact of terror attacks by raising public awareness. The program expanded in 2016 to include an online toolkit with educational videos and other materials.
- **Operation Heat Shield Full-Scale Exercises** [UASI]—The Operation Heat Shield Full-Scale exercises were conducted in response to the threat of complex, coordinated terrorist attacks at unique venues such as stadiums and airports. The Operation Heat Shield exercises took place in Miami and tested Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team and bomb team extraction capabilities along with fire, medical, communications, and intelligence-sharing capabilities. More than 200 on-duty deputies and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel were trained using scenarios that tested response capabilities for active shooters, mass casualty situations, crowd control, and forensics.
- **Vehicle Barriers** [SHSP]—The use of vehicles as a weapon in a terrorist attack emerged as a public safety threat in 2016 and 2017 following incidents in France, Spain, and New York City. Florida's Region 3 invested in unanchored barriers that are used to protect the entry points and perimeters of soft targets, large-scale public events, or other high-traffic areas against hostile vehicle attacks. The DSOC plans to use the vehicle barriers project as a model for how Florida can effectively enhance public safety and security at large-scale events.
- **Statewide Cyber Terrorism Exercise** [SHSP]—Emergency managers and stakeholders in Florida identified cyber terrorism as a persistent and evolving threat. The Cyber Terrorism focus group is developing a cyber annex as part of the Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). Florida will be adding a cyber unit to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). Florida will exercise the cyber disruption response plan in 2019 to test statewide capabilities to respond to a cyber terrorism attack.

IV. Grant Allocation Strategies

Since Fiscal Year (FY) 2008, FEMA has awarded over $1 billion in preparedness and mitigation grant funds to the State of Florida (see **Table 1**). Although the SAA—housed at FDEM—provides oversight for all preparedness grant programs, local stakeholders have discretion when selecting EMPG and UASI-funded grant projects for their jurisdictions.

Florida partitions preparedness grant funding strictly between emergency management and homeland security disciplines. FDEM and Florida's counties generally select and fund projects that support emergency management capabilities using EMPG and Florida's EMPA funding. FDLE advises on the process for proposals on homeland security-related projects using SHSP funding, as FDLE is the HSA. Urban areas in Florida also select and fund homeland security-focused projects using UASI funding.

Table 1. Florida Preparedness Grant Funds, FY 2008–FY 2017

Grant Program	Award Amounts (in thousands)										
	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	Total
SHSP	$36,584	$34,272	$29,881	$16,505	$8,657	$8,566	$11,006	$11,040	$11,040	$11,023	$178,578
EMPG	$12,605	$13,098	$14,226	$14,235	$14,827	$14,587	$15,451	$15,567	$15,712	$15,865	$161,670
OPSG			$870	$250	$250	$954	$872	$1,150	$1,315	$1,135	$6,797
UASI	$37,509	$35,356	$35,367	$18,813	$8,775	$8,374	$9,427	$8,500	$8,392	$8,017	$178,533
PSGP	$17,977	$15,340	$10,488	$12,122	$2,679	$6,167	$8,681	$8,192	$8,055	$7,240	$96,947
TSGP	$2,967	$9,315	$1,777	$155				$435		$784	$15,436
Fire Grants	$13,817	$18,832	$37,380	$25,805	$48,401	$33,915	$51,068	$34,544	$28,923	$53,732	$346,421
HMGP	$14,917	$12,885			$15,270	$10,173	$24,399		$6,433	$22,875	$106,954
Total	$136,376	$139,098	$129,989	$87,885	$98,859	$82,736	$120,904	$79,428	$79,870	$120,671	$1,091,336

Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)

FDEM serves as the SAA for EMPG funding, overseeing the allocation and distribution of EMPG grant funds to local jurisdictions. FDEM retains 60 percent of the state's EMPG award at the state level to support FDEM and other statewide initiatives. These funds pay for staff, SEOC operations, and basic systems maintenance and upgrades. Florida also uses these funds to purchase office supplies, staff uniforms, SEOC technology, weather-mapping software and equipment, and sheltering equipment for evacuees and their pets. According to FDEM representatives, EMPG funding is essential for building statewide capabilities since the State of Florida does not dedicate general funds to FDEM.

> *"Emergency Managers rely on EMPG in Florida."*
>
> *–Dan Summers, Collier County Emergency Manager*

FDEM allocates the remaining 40 percent of EMPG funding to county divisions of emergency management, with each of the state's 67 counties receiving a base amount of $30,000. FDEM then distributes the remaining grant money to the counties based on population. Counties use this funding to pay for emergency manager salaries or operational costs. Each quarter, counties are required to report activities completed to FDEM and submit a request for reimbursement. Quarterly reporting compliance is assessed based on previously established performance measures and deliverables.

Innovative Practice: State Supplemental Funding Program: Emergency Management and Preparedness Assistance (EMPA)

In the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew in 1992, Florida established the EMPA program (Section 252.372, Florida Statutes) to provide funding for an emergency manager position in each Florida county. In 1993, Florida began funding EMPA through an annual surcharge of $2 per policy on every homeowner's, mobile home owner's, tenant homeowner's, and condominium unit owner's insurance policy, and an annual $4 surcharge on every commercial fire, commercial multiple peril, and business owner's property insurance policy, collected into the Emergency Management, Preparedness, and Assistance Trust Fund. The EMPA program generates approximately $15 million annually.

FDEM manages the EMPA program and uses approximately 50 percent of EMPA funding to maintain state-level operations. For instance, FDEM spends more than $2 million annually to support the State Logistics Response Center. FDEM distributes the remaining EMPA funding (approximately 50 percent) as county base grants. Each county receives a $105,806 base amount annually to support staffing, training, or operational needs. Each county is eligible to receive an additional $10,000 if it achieves or maintains Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) status. FDEM plans to phase out the incentive because there are not enough funds for all 67 counties should each county gain EMAP accreditation. According to the EMAP website, 18 Florida counties are currently EMAP accredited.

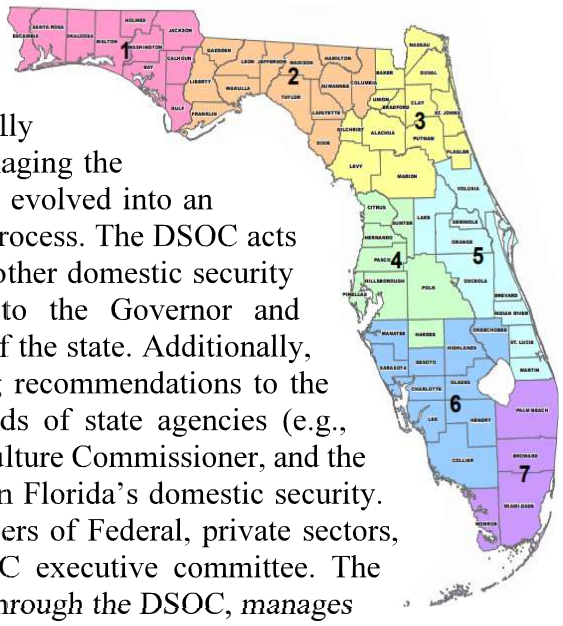
Innovative Practice: Florida Emergency Preparedness Association

In 1956, local, regional, and statewide emergency management stakeholders created the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association (FEPA) to help professional emergency managers work to protect the people of Florida. The association now has more than 600 members from Federal, regional, state, local, and tribal organizations. FEPA's broad membership base helps bridge the gap between the state and the counties and promotes collaboration on regional and statewide projects. FEPA's mission is to promote emergency management professional expertise through training and education, to share best practices, and to disseminate emergency management information to its members. For instance, in past meetings, FEPA held shelter operations workshops through the Mass Care Working Group and had a Shelter Terminology Team, planned special needs registries, coordinated WebEOC working groups to discuss best practices, trainings on AlertFlorida, held training sessions on critical decision making for complex coordinated attacks, facilitated EMAP accreditation working groups, and held a roundtable on successes and challenges in Hurricane Irma response and recovery.

State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)

The Domestic Security Oversight Council (DSOC) is an executive policy advisory group chaired by the Commissioner of FDLE with the Director FDEM serving as the vice chair. The DSOC sets the overall direction and priorities for domestic security and related emergency management plans, actions, and funding. Initially created by executive order to assist FDLE in managing the new domestic security responsibilities, DSOC has evolved into an integral part of the domestic security operational process. The DSOC acts as an advisory council to guide the RDSTFs and other domestic security working groups and provides annual reports to the Governor and Legislature regarding the domestic security state of the state. Additionally, DSOC provides annual domestic security funding recommendations to the Governor and Legislature. DSOC comprises heads of state agencies (e.g., FEPA, the Florida Hospital Association, the Agriculture Commissioner, and the Fire Chiefs Association) that have a critical role in Florida's domestic security. Representatives from the RDSTFs and key members of Federal, private sectors, and professional associations make up the DSOC executive committee. The Domestic Security Coordinating Group (DSCG), through the DSOC, manages the SHSP project selection process and prioritizes projects that build or sustain capabilities relevant to terrorism-related preparedness efforts. In FY 2017, Florida received over $11 million in SHSP funding.

Figure 1. Florida uses a regional organizational structure to help coordinate emergency management and homeland security efforts



Florida is organized into seven regions to coordinate emergency management and homeland security efforts. Each region has a **Regional Domestic Security Task Force** (see **Figure 1**). RDSTFs serve as the foundation of the state's domestic homeland security structure, linking policymakers at the state level and regional public safety partners. Each RDSTF consists of local, multi-disciplinary representatives who participate in the SHSP grant project selection process.[11]

Approximately 250 RDSTF members represent their regions across nine **multi-discipline focus groups** (see **Table 2**). The focus groups use strict criteria to decide how to allocate SHSP funding. Projects considered should offer solutions to identified vulnerabilities in Florida and advance regional or statewide capabilities.

Table 2. Florida established nine multi-discipline focus groups to advise on SHSP grant-funding decisions

RDSTF's Multi-Discipline Focus Groups	
Communications	Critical Infrastructure
Cyber Terrorism	Education
Fusion Center/Intelligence	Law Enforcement Data Sharing
Planning, Response, and Recovery	Prevention and Awareness
Specialty Response Teams	

The **Domestic Security Coordinating Group (DSCG)** reviews the projects considered by the focus groups and prioritizes the project listing if requests exceed available funding. The DSCG provides the project list to the RDSTF Peer Review Panel for scoring and ranking. The **RDSTF Peer Review Panel** uses a peer review evaluation worksheet with scoring criteria using a point value assigned to each question on the project template. Once the Peer Review Panel scores each project, selections are then ranked based on the reviewed project templates and an updated project list is presented to the **DSCG Executive Board** for review and approval by the DSOC. The DSOC has the authority to re-rank and re-prioritize the Peer Review Panel scored/ranked project listing. The DSOC then submits its recommendations to Florida's Governor and Legislature, who make the final funding determinations. Appendix B contains more detailed information about the emergency management and homeland security project review and selection processes.

"Without FEMA grant funds, we would lose all capability building."

-Dan Summers, Collier County Emergency Manager

NPAD representatives visited RDSTF focus group meetings in August 14–16, 2018, and attended the DSCG meeting in September 18–20, 2018. At the meetings, the focus groups discussed potential projects for the FY 2019 HSGP grant cycle. NPAD learned that grant recipients will likely not receive the approved FY 2019 HSGP grant project funding until 2020 or 2021 due to Florida's lengthy approval process by the Governor and Legislature.

The SHSP grant selection process through the RDSTF helps stakeholders establish a common operating picture for the state's homeland security efforts and helps coordinate statewide initiatives and pilot projects. Representatives shared with FEMA that the RDSTF governance structure helps Florida's emergency management and law enforcement community build relationships and consider collaborative projects that support regional and statewide capabilities. The RDSTF process also drives participants to develop specific project proposal criteria beyond the HSGP NOFO requirements. Project selection guidance and project templates are posted on the RDSTF Focus Group SharePoint site along with information on standard operating procedures (SOP), plans, special teams' operations guides, and other law enforcement-sensitive information to share among the members.

Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)

The UASI program supports high-threat, high-density urban areas in its efforts to deliver the capabilities necessary to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism. UASI programs in Florida support regional collaboration and regional capabilities by including stakeholders in their region as voting members. **Table 3** lists the Florida UASI grant funding amounts from 2008 through 2018. The Miami–Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, and Orlando UASIs individually complete their own THIRA/SPRs with the involvement of regional stakeholders/voting members. In FY 2017, Florida's UASIs received over $8 million in UASI funding, with Miami and Tampa receiving approximately $5.2 million and $2.8 million, respectively. In FY 2018, Orlando received $1.5 million in funding (its first funding year since 2014).

Mitigation Improvement Efforts: Reducing Floodwater Damage in South Florida

South Florida is prone to significant flooding, especially during a major storm. In 2008, the Miami–Fort Lauderdale UASI used $179,598 in UASI funds to purchase six water pumps to help mitigate floodwater damage. In 2009, the Miami–Fort Lauderdale UASI used $462,140 in UASI funds to purchase an additional 10 pumps. Each pump can remove up to 14,000 gallons of water per minute. During Hurricane Irma, the Brickell Avenue area of downtown Miami flooded due to heavy rain and between two and four feet of storm surge. The one pump available to that area was used to address the flooding, but the extent of the damage made clear the need for an additional pump. In the 12 months following the incident, Miami purchased an additional pump using UASI funds and made other infrastructure improvements.

Table 3. Urban Area UASI Grant Funds, FY 2008–FY 2018

Urban Area	UASI Award Amounts (in thousands)										
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Fort Lauderdale	$6,189	$6,063	$6,067								
Jacksonville	$6,678	$5,437	$5,355								
Orlando	$5,269	$5,160	$5,090	$5,471	$1,447		$1,000				$1,500
Miami–Fort Lauderdale	$11,272	$11,040	$11,040	$9,646	$5,401	$5,500	$5,500	$5,500	$5,430	$5,180	$6,000
Tampa	$8,098	$7,934	$7,815	$3,697	$2,595	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$2,962	$2,837	$3,000

V. Grant Recipient Program Feedback

Throughout the case study, FEMA solicited feedback from FDEM, FDLE, and local jurisdictions on the preparedness grant programs. FEMA considered each suggestion in relation to the goals of the FY 2018–2022 FEMA Strategic Plan. Suggestions to FEMA from Florida addressed the effectiveness of FEMA funding procedures and its impact to Florida's grants allocation process.

Goal 1: Build a Culture of Preparedness

- Assist state and local governments with updating emergency plans in the aftermath of large-scale disasters.
- Request that FEMA share more case study projects among the states, particularly in the areas of prevention and cybersecurity.

Goal 2: Ready the Nation for Catastrophic Disasters

- Review FEMA's Authorized Equipment List to ensure that sheltering supplies—particularly those that meet ADA requirements—are included.
- Request that FEMA allow connection from FEMA's WebEOC system to Florida's WebEOC system so that information can be pushed from the state to the Federal level in an emergency.

Goal 3: Reduce the Complexity of FEMA

- Allow for all-hazards preparedness efforts through HSGP grant-funding requirements.
- Streamline hazard identification and risk assessment and THIRA-reporting requirements.

VI. Conclusions

FEMA conducted this Florida case study to:

- Understand how it improved capability gaps identified in previous disasters in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from Hurricane Irma;
- Determine the role of FEMA grants in making the improvements that helped during Hurricane Irma; and
- Identify best practices that Florida implemented to share with other states and jurisdictions.

Interviews with state and local stakeholders and the project narratives show that Florida was better prepared for, and better able to respond to, Hurricane Irma and other real-world events because of how state and local emergency mangers invested in identified gaps using FEMA preparedness grant funding. Florida also has unique processes in place to administer homeland security and emergency management grant funds. The RDSTFs, DSCG, and the DSOC apply important scrutiny when ranking and scoring proposed homeland security projects, ensuring that SHSP funds are used efficiently and effectively, while encouraging statewide initiatives. UASI programs in Florida support regional collaboration and regional capabilities. Florida's EMPA program is an innovative practice that generates supplemental state and county funding to support county emergency managers and emergency management projects using a fee applied to insurance policies. FEPA promotes professional expertise through training and education, sharing best practices, collaborating on regional and statewide projects, and disseminating emergency management information. Finally, recent state legislative changes were made to improve preparedness and response capabilities to address adversarial threats such as mass shootings, particularly school shootings.

FEMA will use the results from this and other case studies to enhance preparedness programs, develop tailored technical assistance, and better communicate the impacts of preparedness grant programs to Federal stakeholders, including Congress, other state governments, and local jurisdictions across the Nation.

Appendix A: Project Narratives

During interviews held in 2018, Florida representatives shared outcomes from projects made possible through Federal preparedness grants. This section summarizes the accomplishments of 22 grant-funded projects that supported hurricane resilience and addressed adversarial threats.

Hurricane Preparedness and Resilience Projects

Stakeholders described natural disaster resilience projects that supported Florida's efforts around **communications, managing incidents**, and **informing**, **evacuating**, and **sheltering** the public. This includes addressing special needs sheltering, emergency notification systems, and statewide communications capabilities.

Communications

Interoperable and Deployable Communications Systems [SHSP]

Hurricane Irma demonstrated the need for improved communications during response and recovery operations, particularly in Monroe County and Southwest Florida. Florida is expanding the use of deployable communications systems to further facilitate the lifesaving response and recovery efforts of first responders. Florida invested in several deployable communications systems in recent years. In FY 2015 and 2016, Florida used $282,402 and $80,000, respectively, in SHSP funding to invest in emergency deployable interoperable communications systems (EDICS) and Emergency Deployable Wide Area Remote Data Systems (EDWARDS). EDICS are located throughout the state and are used to bridge different types of radio systems together and allow public safety officials to communicate directly. The EDWARDS is a data package that accompanies EDICS. Additionally, in FY 2015–2017, Florida used $3,935,048 in SHSP funding to sustain and replace Mutual Aid Radio Communications (MARC) systems. MARC systems are self-sustaining units strategically placed throughout Florida that provide a distribution mechanism for portable radios that are commonly programmed to allow first responders to have interoperable and direct on-scene communications. MARC units can also be deployed to areas where communications systems have been lost, or where additional radio communication is needed.

Figure 2. MARC Unit

Managing Incidents

All-Hazard Incident Management Teams (AHIMT) [SHSP]

All-Hazard Incident Management Teams (AHIMT) play an essential role in the management of, and response to, local/regional/national emergencies, natural disasters, and public events. A Type 3 AHIMT is a multi-agency/multi-jurisdictional team used for extended incidents. Type 3 AHIMTs are deployed in teams of 10–20 trained personnel, representing multiple disciplines, who manage major and/or complex incidents requiring a significant number of local, state, or tribal

resources. They manage incidents that extend into multiple operational periods and require a written Incident Action Plan.

Between FY 2016 and 2017, Florida used approximately $803,057 in SHSP funding to support AHIMTs. Florida has six AHIMTs: five are county teams and one is a state team located in Tallahassee. AHIMTs report to the Operations Section Chief, unless otherwise determined by the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) Chief or the State Coordinating Officer (SCO), and liaise between SERT and the SCO during an incident. AHIMTs provide situational awareness and support for operational planning to the SERT and the SCO by incorporating information collected from the SEOC, county EOCs, and local agencies.[12] Missions that could be assigned to an AHIMT include EOC Augmentation, Base Camp Management, and Recovery Operations.

Figure 3. AHIMT Locations

On March 7, 2013, Florida's DSOC adopted the FDEM Type 3 All-Hazard Incident Management System Credentialing Guide to begin the standardization process for Incident Management Teams in Florida. In 2015, FDEM hosted Steering Committee and Oversight Committee meetings to develop and refine the DSOC guidance and improve the application process. Florida then entered into a period of Historical Recognition beginning in January 2015. The goal was to build an initial cadre of emergency responders qualified for the Incident Command System position, identified as needed to form the program's foundation. With the end of Historical Recognition in November 2016, the state implemented Position Specific Task Books (PTB), which officially launched in January 2017. The goal of Florida's PTBs is to grow emergency responders in Incident Command System positions throughout the state. Florida's Qualification Program[13] was created to ensure that personnel resources match requests, and it supports effective management of deployed responders. The Qualification Program allows officials requesting resources to understand that the AHIMTs arriving in their jurisdiction have the necessary training to complete the task at hand. The program used EMPG funding to help fund the state's All-Hazards Incident Management Qualification Program in 2015. This AHIMT Qualification Program is nationally known and frequently helps associations and other states develop their own qualification programs. Florida now has over 200 open PTBs and over 100 qualified individuals throughout the state who can sign off on them.

During Hurricane Irma, FDEM deployed all six AHIMTs at least once, and some teams were deployed up to five times. AHIMT missions included supporting points of distribution (POD), logistics staging areas, and EOCs. Florida's AHIMTs were also deployed for Puerto Rico Support Operations, and a team was sent to support North Carolina in September 2018 in response to Hurricane Florence through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).

WebEOC [SHSP, ASI, EMPG, EMPA]

WebEOC was designated for statewide implementation to reduce the challenge of communications and operational management during events by the use of varied systems. Florida used E-Team and EM Constellation communications systems from 2005 until 2017 when the state began the transition to WebEOC. Florida completed the transition in May 2018. WebEOC is an emergency management and homeland security communication platform that is highly flexible and can be customized with dashboards, task tracking, and maps to meet the needs of emergency management and homeland security officials. The goal of the WebEOC statewide strategic plan is to implement and sustain a digital system to establish and continually update a common operational picture between local, regional, state, and Federal emergency operations centers or multi-agency coordination units, and build out the WebEOC infrastructure for emergency management stakeholders in the State of Florida.

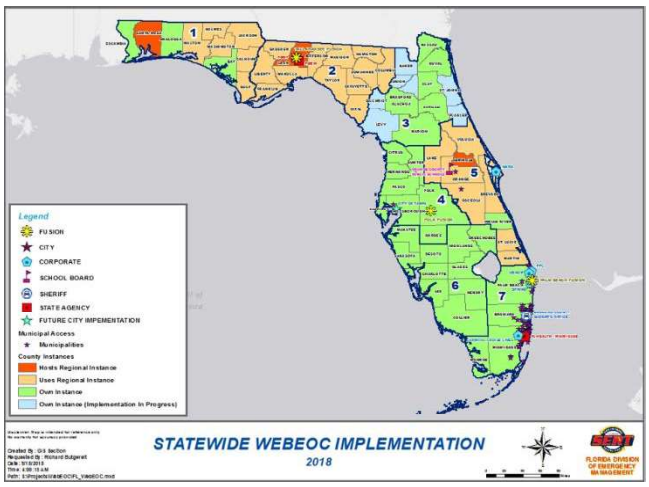


Figure 4. Statewide WebEOC Implementation

In FY 2016 and FY 2017, FDEM used a total of $1,271,777 of EMPG funding to extend its WebEOC mission management software platform. Individual counties used various funding strategies to fund WebEOC implementation in their respective jurisdictions, using a combination of state and local funds, EMPA, EMPG, UASI, and SHSP funding. For instance, the Miami–Fort Lauderdale UASI used $145,000 in UASI funding annually from 2011 to 2017 to support the WebEOC system in Broward, Miami–Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties. Florida met the goal of connecting all local WebEOC systems to FDEM's WebEOC system using the Florida FUSION system by April 2018, including WebEOC customization for the SERT. It also created and implemented statewide processes to maintain a common operational picture, including adding Essential Elements of Information, Information Message, Road Closures, Damage Assessment, and Shelters to WebEOC, completed in May 2018. FDEM tested the new WebEOC integration during the 2018 HURREX. The Emergency Support Function (ESF)-8 players in the exercise encountered only minor issues when using the new system during the HURREX. All system or user errors were addressed with the FDEM during the exercise and were either corrected immediately or added to the After-Action Review Board for FDEM to work through post-exercise.

WebEOC was used during a wildfire and at a number of recent special events, including the Blue Angels Homecoming Show, the Governor's Inauguration, Sun & Fun, the Daytona 500, football games, and music festivals. Several other programs throughout Florida used WebEOC for various purposes, including coordination for Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), healthcare facilities, training and exercises, and for local mitigation strategies. Florida plans to continue investing in WebEOC capabilities to develop a notifications function, Geographic Information System (GIS) and mapping, and for additional guidance and training capabilities. Florida will continue to use grant funding for enhancements and sustainment of WebEOC.

Annual Statewide Full-Scale Hurricane Exercise (HURREX) [EMPG]

Florida conducts a full-scale hurricane exercise every year because hurricanes are an annual potential hazard. FDEM used approximately $10,000 in 2017 EMPG funding to conduct its annual statewide hurricane exercise (HURREX) in May 2018. Florida bases exercise objectives on the previous year's SEOC activations and resulting After-Action Report (AAR) findings and practices continuity of operations. In May 2018, FDEM based the HURREX scenario on a hypothetical hurricane similar to Hurricane Irma. The opportunity for state and local EOC staff to use SERT's grant-supported WebEOC mission management software was a primary focus of the exercise in 2018. The ESF-8 players were able to use WebEOC in a similar way as they used the previous mission management system. They were able to create new missions, access existing missions, and create updates for existing missions. Additionally, the exercise was used to continue to develop positive relationships with Federal, state, county, and city governments as well as other partners in response to a natural disaster incident. The exercise represented an opportunity to assess the training of ESF-8 staff's response capabilities, test the ability of ESF-8 to support the SERT, and integrate improvements to plans and/or training of personnel. FDEM used the exercise to train new and existing employees on its mission-essential response roles and responsibilities within their respective agencies. The HURREX resulted in several recommendations, including formalizing the process for handling generator and power restoration requests; updating the ESF-8 standard operating procedure, emergency operations procedure, and Special Needs Shelter Plan; and creating a dashboard on the WebEOC mission management system with all mass care feeding locations and their site status. Results and lessons learned of the HURREX are also incorporated into the THIRA.

Law Enforcement Information Exchange (LInX) [SHSP]

Information sharing between law enforcement agencies has long been a challenge. To address the DSOC priority area of Law Enforcement Data Sharing, law enforcement agencies in Florida now connect under one centralized system called LInX. LInX is a regional information-sharing system that enables investigators to search data across jurisdictional boundaries to help prevent, stop, and solve crimes. This system allows for secure, electronic data sharing between local, state, and Federal law enforcement agencies and serves as a means for transmission to, and integration with, the national FBI N-DEx information-sharing system. LInX correlates and identifies hidden data and linkages across multiple jurisdictions, bringing them front and center for authorized users to see. LInX provides advanced analytics capabilities to law enforcement including geographic information system (GIS), entity resolution, trend and pattern identification, temporal analysis, event correlation, and link analysis. Since FY 2015, Florida has used between $1,150,025 and $2,760,054 of SHSP funding annually to support

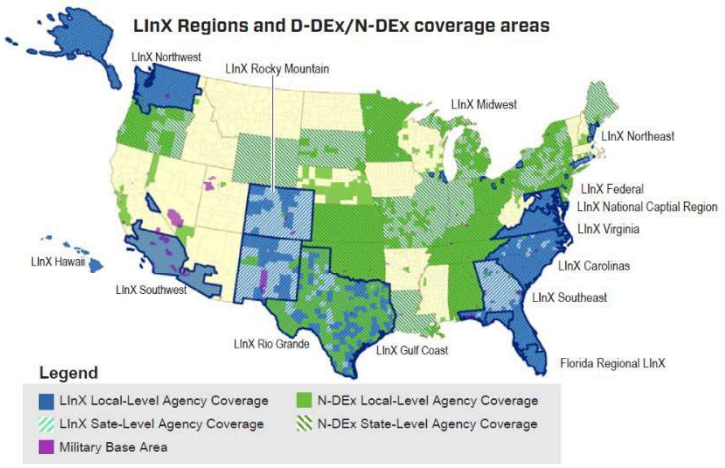


Figure 5. National LInX Regions and Coverage Areas

this system. This funding goes toward the maintenance of a data warehouse, maintenance of data feeds from law enforcement agencies into the warehouse, and staffing costs associated with the ongoing operation, management, training, security, and integrity of the system. With LInX, Florida consolidated five different data-sharing systems into one statewide system along with a parallel consolidation of support services.

All Hazards Guides [EMPG]

Florida county emergency managers spend significant time and resources promoting individual and community preparedness. Lee County uses approximately $12,000 annually in EMPG funds and local operating funds to support public-facing trainings and to cover the cost of developing, printing, and disseminating brochures and other preparedness materials that resonate with the community—including those members of the community with access and functional needs. For example, Lee County has published the All Hazards Guide for more than 20 years, but updated it this year after the unprecedented 2017 hurricane season. The All Hazards Guide is printed in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. The guide is intended to help the community prepare for all types of disasters that may occur in Lee County, including natural and man-made hazards, and is designed to better inform families, households, and businesses on the steps they can take to be better prepared for an incident. The guide provides information on the types of hazards that accompany a hurricane, shelter locations for the general population and people with functional needs, evacuation routes, insurance information, and disaster recovery resources. The guide also includes instructions on how to prepare an all-hazards emergency kit along with a detailed list of recommended supplies.

Figure 6. All Hazards Guides

Similarly, in 2017, Brevard County published two preparedness guides titled "What Would You Do? An All-Hazards Readiness Guide" and "Your Pathway to Preparedness." The all-hazards guide includes resources, checklists, and other information specific to a wide variety of potential hazards or incidents that may occur in Brevard County. The preparedness guide provides instructions and next steps for community members to improve general preparedness in the event of an incident. The preparedness guide also includes information on how to prepare your property and how to safely plan to relocate to a shelter before an incident.

Evacuating

Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program (SRESP) [EMPG]

In response to the devastating hurricane seasons in 2004 and 2005, the Florida Legislature passed House Bill 1721 and House Bill 1359, which identified enhanced statewide hurricane evacuation planning and a redefinition of the coastal high hazard area as state priorities. The Florida Legislature appropriated $29 million to conduct a statewide study to improve evacuation planning and emergency disaster response. In accordance with this legislative direction, FDEM obtained

grant money through the FEMA HMGP to conduct regional evacuation studies across the state. The FDEM Division of Continuity Planning carried out a Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program in close collaboration with the Department of Transportation and Florida's Regional Planning Councils, beginning in 2006. The Regional Planning Councils facilitated consistent and integrated mapping and analysis of all-hazards evacuation plans across Florida. The resulting data provided a framework of information that counties used to update and revise their hurricane evacuation plans and operational procedures and enabled the creation of estimates for evacuation times and shelter demands by region and county.[14] Although hurricanes are a prominent concern in the studies, the framework was established for an all-hazards analysis in order to support planning efforts to prepare for other types of evacuations as well, such as inland flooding or wildfires. In 2012, the SRESP won the National Planning Excellence Award: Best Practices in Hazard Mitigation and Disaster Planning from the American Planning Association. More recently, FDEM used approximately $100,000 in EMPG funds to help Region 6 and the South Florida Regional Planning Council develop its Regional Evacuation Plan in FY 2017. Once completed, Region 6 exercised the plan and recently executed it during response to Hurricane Irma. Region 4 also plans to develop a regional evacuation plan.

Sheltering

Mass Casualty Ambulance-Bus [EMPG, UASI]

Collier County began considering the potential uses and benefits of obtaining an ambulance bus after reviewing the Hurricane Katrina after-action report, which indicated that the use of a multi-patient ambulance bus could have played an important role.[15] One real-world event that initiated the request for the vehicle was a mass casualty accident on Interstate 75 in which 10 people died and 21 patients (including six trauma patients) needed hospital care. In FY 2013, Collier County used $600,000 in SHSP funds to purchase a multi-patient, mass casualty ambulance-bus that serves as a mobile field hospital, accommodating up to 16 patients at once. During Hurricane Irma, when air conditioning failed in one of Collier County's shelters, the county used the mass casualty ambulance-bus to treat and cool elderly patients suffering from heat exhaustion.

Figure 7. Mass Casualty Ambulance-Bus

Pinellas County also invested in mass casualty ambulance-buses to deploy for a large event or during an incident. In FY 2013, the Tampa UASI used $75,702 in UASI funding to purchase equipment upgrades and supplies needed to retrofit three buses with radios, emergency lights, storage, air conditioning, and paint. Pinellas County donated the buses in accordance with local school board rules. Two buses were deployed during Hurricane Irma to evacuate patients from three hospitals and two nursing homes that experienced storm damage. Collectively, the two buses transported 15 patients safely.

Shelter Gap Assessments [EMPG]

To comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Access and Functional Needs regulations, Seminole County used $10,000 in EMPG funding to conduct shelter gap assessments in FY 2018. According to Chapter 64-3 of the Florida Administrative Code, the Florida

Department of Health's Bureau of Preparedness and Response administers a statewide Special Needs Shelter Program to assist county health departments to address the special medical needs of people in their community. The Special Needs Shelters are designed to meet needs of people who require assistance that exceeds the services that can be provided at a general population shelter. Through the assessment process, Seminole County identified and purchased equipment to accommodate 1,300 people on the county's special needs registry.

Nursing Home Emergency Power Plan Review and Facility Visits [EMPG]

Hurricane Irma highlighted the importance of maintaining generators—particularly for nursing homes and assisted living facilities where residents are acutely vulnerable to heat and need air conditioning. Florida put Emergency Rule 59AER17-1 in place after more than a dozen residents of a Broward County nursing home died of heat-related causes in the wake of Hurricane Irma. Such facilities are now required to maintain onsite generators and to draft a Nursing Home Emergency Power Plan. In FY 2017, Seminole County used EMPG-funded staff to review over 100 Nursing Home Emergency Power Plans and to conduct facility site visits at an approximate labor cost of $7,000.

State Agriculture Response Team (SART) [SHSP]

The potential for natural and man-made disasters puts Florida's $62 billion agricultural economy at risk. SART is a multi-agency coordination group consisting of governmental and private entities dedicated to strengthening all-hazard disaster capabilities through partnerships. Florida SART supports a coordinated incident response for the animal and agricultural sectors in the State of Florida. SART operates at the local level through county SART organizations. From FY 2015 to 2017, FDEM used $711,155 in SHSP funding to support Florida SART's planning, training, and emergency response efforts. SART includes veterinarians, ranchers, farmers, university agricultural programs, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and other government and non-government organization partners that assist with agricultural and animal emergencies. SART maintains regional caches of equipment and a large livestock sanctuary network that enables ranchers to evacuate and shelter their animals on unimpacted ranches and supports pet sheltering activities during natural disasters. SART coordinated with partners statewide to transport, shelter, and care for pets and livestock.[16] SART and its partner liaisons mobilized throughout Florida in response to Hurricane Irma to transport, shelter, and treat both livestock and pets.

Figure 8. SART Logo

Shelter Equipment [EMPG, SHSP, UASI]

Hurricane Irma was Florida's largest single-event sheltering operation in history. The availability of adequate sheltering equipment before, during, and immediately after a disaster is critical. Since 2004, Seminole County has invested in shelter equipment and supplies, including medical equipment, access and functional needs equipment, transportation and storage vehicles, warehouses, and training for staff. Hurricane Irma highlighted the necessity of adequate sheltering equipment as Seminole County opened nine shelters to assist evacuees.

From FY 2005 through FY 2018, Seminole County used approximately $10,000 in EMPG funding each year to purchase and replenish sheltering equipment. Since FY 2014, Seminole County has used $2,000 annually to train shelter workers. Seminole County must train all county staff to work in shelters because the American Red Cross no longer provides shelter assistance during hurricanes. In FY 2012, Seminole County used $15,000 in SHSP funding to build a cache of medical equipment for use during a mass casualty event. In FY 2018, Seminole County used $16,800 in EMPG to rent a shelter warehouse to store shelter equipment, the medical equipment cache, and other sheltering commodities.

Figure 9. Shelter Supplies and Functional Needs Equipment

In FY 2012, Broward County used $31,593 in Miami–Fort Lauderdale UASI funding to purchase shelter supplies and equipment to serve people with functional needs and disabilities. Broward County also used $49,995 in UASI funding to provide training to shelter staff on how to use the equipment. Supplies and equipment purchased included 15 universal cots, walkers, wheelchairs, canes, crutches, transfer boards, portable commodes, battery chargers, tire pumps, hand-held shower hoses, dry erase boards, and hearing aid batteries. The supplies were stored in rolling metal carts that were deployed to 15 general population shelters ahead of Hurricane Irma.

Addressing Adversarial Threats Projects

Florida's homeland security projects focused primarily on addressing adversarial threats by **improving school safety** and by **preparing for terrorist incidents**. For example, Florida is now planning future school hardening projects following the recent passage of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act.[17]

Improving School Safety

Mutual Link [UASI, EMPG]

Seminole County representatives explained that improving data sharing between law enforcement and schools became a primary focus after a 2014 bomb threat was sent to Seminole County's local elementary schools. In response to the bomb threats, police evacuated and searched several elementary schools for explosive devices at once.[18] Mutual Link is a regional interoperable communication system linking video, radio, and telephone technologies. Between 2010 and 2013, Seminole County used Orlando UASI money ($20,000 annually) to fund the capability. When Orlando lost UASI designation, the county used EMPG funds to cover the annual license fee (Seminole County purchased Mutual Link licenses using EMPG funding in FY 2018). Mutual Link software enables effective and secure on-demand radio, voice, and video information sharing, and users can connect the Mutual Link software with other devices and networks.[19] Seminole County schools use this software to help notify first responders of incidents. Florida's commuter rail line, SunRail, Universal Studios, and many hospitals and schools now use Mutual Link.

Regional Reunification Response Framework [SHSP]

One lesson learned from the 2016 Pulse Nightclub shooting is that it is difficult to tag and track patients during a fast-moving, volatile incident, and that family reunification must be addressed

early into an incident. Florida also learned from the 2013 Washington, DC Navy Yard shooting after-action report that planning and communicating the process and location for both the family recovery center (FRC) and a family assistance center in the aftermath of a critical incident was critically important. Representatives from the RDSTF Planning, Response, and Recovery focus group discussed the creation of a Regional Reunification Response Framework. Within hours of the Pulse Nightclub incident, the City of Orlando activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and established an FRC near the Pulse site for next-of-kin notifications and victim identification. The establishment of the FRC allowed OPD to delegate the reunification of survivors with loved ones and conduct next-of-kin notifications for victims killed during the attack. The FRC operated from June 12 to June 14, 2016, to provide notification and support to families of victims regarding the status of their loved ones who had been at Pulse that night. The FBI crisis team, the Florida Emergency Mortuary Operations Response System (FEMORS) staffers, and members of FDLE provided the necessary information on victims of the shooting. Seminole County shared that it conducted its own Family Reunification Exercise after the Parkland school shooting and used approximately $500 in FY 2017–2018 EMPG funding to purchase triage tags, printed materials, moulage, and other related exercise supplies. The RDSTF encourages counties to use the framework to craft jurisdiction-specific plans. Florida's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act—effective since March 2018—now requires schools to have family reunification plans.[20]

Forest Lake Academy Active Shooter Full Scale Exercise [EMPG]

To conduct a full-scale active shooter exercise on February 17, 2017, Seminole County used $3,000 in FY 2016–FY 2017 EMPG funding to test its Swift Action Victim Extraction (SAVE) teams and family reunification capabilities. Seminole County staged a scenario involving a disgruntled student who opened fire in a school, causing multiple casualties, panic, and chaos, at Forest Lake Academy in Apopka, Florida. Over 20 agencies participated in the exercise and more than 115 community members volunteered to serve as exercise actors. Participating agencies included local law enforcement and fire departments, the Seminole County Office of Emergency Management, and the Seminole County Communications Center. After the immediate exercise response, exercise players tested their ability to establish and manage an FRC where they reunified students with their parents. With the FRC component, the exercise was one of the largest and most complex exercises conducted in Seminole County.[21]

Figure 10. Forest Lake Academy Active Shooter Full-Scale Exercise

Preparing for Terrorist Incidents

Pulse Nightclub Response Resources [UASI]

As one of the deadliest mass shootings in U.S. history, Orlando's 2016 Pulse Nightclub shooting incident continues to inform how Florida addresses terrorist threats. Training and exercises paid for with UASI funds helped inform agencies' response to the event. The Orlando UASI's last full scale exercise, "Operation Crash and Surge", was held in 2013 and involved multiple hospitals

and the Orlando International Airport. This exercise was paid for with $100,000 in FY 2011 UASI funds. Additionally, Orlando UASI funds supported staffing backfill and overtime pay incurred during the Pulse response. The Orlando UASI also used UASI funds to purchase equipment used during the response to the Pulse Nightclub shooting. In the Police Foundation review of the Pulse Nightclub shooting response, the report highlighted the following HSGP-funded equipment that aided first responders:[22]

- **Armored Personnel Carriers:** The OPD and Orange County Sheriff's Office deployed two armored personnel carriers (APC) purchased in FY 2004 with $186,733 and $250,218 in UASI funding to assist with response efforts. The agencies used the APCs to protect officers after the breach of the Pulse Nightclub's wall.

Forward Looking Infrared Radiometer (FLIR) Camera System [SHSP]

In FY 2010, Tampa used $123,000 in SHSP funding to purchase tactical response support equipment, including a FLIR Camera System for thermal imaging infrared surveillance. On October 19, 2017, the Tampa Police Department's tactical team activated in response to the third homicide involving the Seminole Heights serial killer incident. The search team used mini-thermal binoculars to quickly and efficiently search under elevated homes and backyards for the suspect. Search team members credited the binoculars for increasing visibility, and thus reduced the serial killer's ability to ambush them.

Florida See Something, Say Something [SHSP]

One of the most effective ways to help keep any community safe is to report suspicious activity before crime occurs. Florida's "If You See Something, Say Something" campaign provides citizens with an outlet to report suspicious activity. Florida initially launched the campaign in 2011; FDLE relaunched the campaign in November 2015 after the Paris terrorist attacks. DSOC made this a funding priority in 2016. FDLE provided educational materials to the public and business community, and unveiled an online toolkit containing educational videos and flyers. The campaign is currently seeking $200,000 of SHSP funding in FY 2019 to create and disseminate marketing materials, including outdoor advertising and social media messaging. The marketing helps prevent or minimize terrorist attacks by making the public aware of additional, easier reporting options. The goals of the project are to (1) prevent or minimize terrorist threats in Florida, (2) educate the public on reportable suspicious behaviors, and (3) promote the campaign, statewide app, and texting capabilities.

Figure 11. Florida's "If You See Something, Say Something" Poster

Operation Heat Shield Full-Scale Exercise [UASI]

Operation Heat Shield is a full-scale exercise testing regional agency coordination, response, and rescue efforts as emergency managers and responders are faced with complex coordinated terrorist attacks at several unique venues. In 2016 and 2018, Miami–Dade–Fort Lauderdale urban area conducted Operation Heat Shield I and II. The Miami–Fort Lauderdale urban area used $102,449 in UASI funding in FY 2016 to conduct Operation Heat Shield I. In FY 2018, $91,380 in UASI funding was used to conduct Operation Heat Shield II. Operation Heat Shield I tested Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team and bomb team extraction capabilities, along with fire,

medical, communications, and intelligence-sharing capabilities. The exercise took place across multiple locations, including Miami International Airport, Marlins Park, the courthouse, schools, and several other facilities. Miami designed the event to include 10 round-robin scenarios, with approximately 1,100 exercise participants. Miami conducted Operation Heat Shield II[23]—a seven-scenario round-robin exercise—in May 2018. Miami focused on exercising capabilities not addressed in the first Operation Heat Shield, inviting even more stakeholders to participate in the exercise. The training included scenarios that tested response capabilities for active shooters, mass casualty situations, crowd control, and forensics. More than 200 on-duty deputies and EMS personnel were trained in techniques for rapidly moving wounded individuals away from cleared areas and preparing them for treatment and transport.[24]

Figure 12. Operation Heat Shield U.S. Coast Guard Miami Beach Station

Operation Heat Shield III is planned for 2019 and will include a complex coordinated terrorist attack training component. The Miami–Fort Lauderdale UASI is coordinating with the FEMA National Exercise Division on this upcoming event. Operation Heat Shield III will be a full-scale exercise based on a scenario that includes a series of synchronized attacks on multiple high-value targets during the week of the Super Bowl. Exercise locations will include Port Miami, Port Everglades, and Port Palm Beach. The exercise will address previously identified preparedness gaps and will evaluate multiple core capabilities, including operational coordination, planning, operational communications, public information and warning, public health, healthcare and emergency medical services, and on-scene security, protection, and law enforcement.

Vehicle Barriers [SHSP]

The use of a vehicle as a weapon in a terrorist attack is an emerging threat to both hard and soft targets. Examples include the following incidents:

- July 14, 2016, in Nice, France—A man drove a 20-ton rental truck into the crowd, striking and killing 86 people.
- August 17, 2017, in Barcelona, Spain—Thirteen people were killed and approximately 100 were injured after a van plowed through a crowd of people in a popular tourist district.
- October 31, 2017, in New York City—Eight people were killed and approximately 12 were injured when a man in a rented pickup truck drove down a busy bicycle path near the World Trade Center.

Figure 13. Vehicle Barriers

In FY 2018, the Region 3 RDSTF proposed a project in response to those recent events and used $75,000 in SHSP funding to purchase eight anti-vehicle barrier kits to use at special events and

mass gatherings to reduce the risk or mitigate the possibility of a vehicle attack. Region 3 uses these unanchored, "drop-and-stop" barriers to protect the entry points and perimeters of public events or other high-traffic areas—such as college and university campuses—against hostile vehicle attacks. The DSOC is using the Region 3 project as a pilot and believe this project will serve as a model for how Florida can effectively enhance public safety and security at large-scale events.

Statewide Cyber Terrorism Exercise [SHSP]

With cyber terrorism incidents on the rise, the State of Florida formed a cyber terrorism focus group to draft a cyber disruption plan for inclusion as a hazard-specific annex in the Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. A cyber unit will also be added to the SEOC. Florida intends to exercise its cyber disruption plan in 2019 to test statewide capabilities to respond to a cyber terrorism attack, including testing the cyber annex. The exercise will be conducted using $63,500 in FY 2018 SHSP funds, meeting the current requirement in the FY 2018 HSGP NOFO to include a cyber project.

Appendix B: SHSP Funding Allocation Process

A summary of the SHSP funding allocation processes for FDLE and the RDSTFs is provided below.

Multi-Discipline Focus Groups

Approximately 250 RDSTF members represent their regions by participating in nine multi-discipline focus groups. Each focus group holds its own meetings throughout the year, and all focus groups meet collectively once a year to discuss capability gaps and potential future grant-funded investments. They then develop project solutions to fill those needs. The multi-discipline focus groups maintain strict criteria when deciding how to allocate SHSP funding. Projects for consideration should offer solutions to identified vulnerabilities in Florida and should also advance regional or statewide capabilities.

Domestic Security Coordinating Group (DSCG)

The DSCG is composed of RDSTF representatives (including five members from each of the seven regions), a key representative from an urban area (the UASI representative alternates every other year), state agency partners, and organizations that address domestic security issues. The DSCG reviews the project templates that have been narrowed down from the focus groups to prioritize the project listing. This project listing is then provided to the RDSTF Peer Review Panel for scoring and ranking.

Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF) Peer Review Panel

The RDSTF Peer Review Panel includes key RDSTF representatives (one volunteer representative from each of the nine focus groups) who evaluate and score proposed grant projects from all of the disciplines in a closed-door meeting in one day to make recommendations on ranking projects. The Peer Review Panel uses an evaluation worksheet featuring scoring criteria with a point value assigned to each question on the project template. Project scoring criteria include whether the project is a DSOC priority, if it is linked to the THIRA/SPR, if it contributes to building or sustaining capabilities, and if it meets other project management and administrative criteria. The total raw score is added from each of the members, and then the projects are ranked by that total score. The projects are ranked in tiers: Tier 1 projects are those that are designated as DSOC priorities, and Tier 2 projects are those that are scored highly but are not DSOC priorities. Once the Peer Review Panel scores and ranks its selections based on the reviewed project templates, it presents an updated project list to the DSCG Executive Board for review and approval over the next two days.

Domestic Security Oversight Council

Florida's DSOC is an executive policy advisory group that the Commissioner of FDLE chairs and the FDEM vice chairs. Every year, the DSOC has priority listings for project categories. For instance, for FY 2019, the DSOC recognizes that the prevention of any terrorist act is the single most important domestic security initiative for Florida and considers the following as priorities for funding: the support of new and innovative initiatives or pilot projects that increase the prevention of terrorist acts, information and intelligence sharing through the sustainment and enhancement of the "If You See Something, Say Something" campaign; sustainment and augmentation of the Florida Fusion Center network; and sustainment of the Law Enforcement Data-Sharing system, cyber terrorism security projects that meet the criteria recommended by the Cyber Preparedness Advisory Group and approved by the DSOC. Other FY 2019 DSOC priority initiatives include:

(1) enhancing communication systems that focus on first responder communications across county lines, (2) expanding statewide communications and sustaining deployable communication systems EDICS, EDWARDS, and MARCS to facilitate immediate lifesaving response and recovery efforts, (3) sustaining deployable equipment and training on the specified equipment for specialty teams required for immediate lifesaving capability, (4) promoting collaboration between multi-disciplinary and multi-agency first responders, with an emphasis on building cross-functional teams, when responding to large-scale or mutual aid incidents, conducting training or exercises, or using equipment that is specific for cross-functional teams. Representatives from the RDSTFs, the Federal Government, private sector, and professional associations make up the executive committee. DSOC reviews the SHSP project list and has the authority to re-rank and re-prioritize the Peer Review-scored and ranked project listing. It then endorses and submits its recommendations to Florida's Governor and Legislature, who make the final funding determinations.

NPAD representatives visited RDSTF focus group meetings from August 14 to August 16, 2018, and attended the DSCG meeting from September 18 to 20, 2018. At the meetings, the focus groups discussed potential projects for the FY 2019 HSGP grant cycle. NPAD learned that grant recipients will likely not receive the approved FY 2019 HSGP grant projects until 2020 or 2021 due to Florida's lengthy approval process with the Governor and Legislature. This process begins in July of each year, when state agencies submit budget requests to the Legislature and the Governor based on pre-approved guidelines. The state produces revenue projections and each branch of government produces a long-range plan by September. Agencies may submit legislative budget requests from October through January, which are reviewed in appropriations committees before the start of the state legislative session. The Governor releases budget recommendations in February and the Florida Legislature crafts the budget, which must be passed by the end of legislative session in March. The Governor then signs the budget into law. The Governor may also exercise a line-item veto on specific appropriations that require a two-thirds majority in the Legislature to overturn.[25]

The SHSP grant selection process through the RDSTF helps stakeholders establish a common operating picture for the state's homeland security efforts and helps coordinate statewide initiatives and pilot projects. The process also allows participants to develop specific project proposal criteria beyond the HSGP requirements. Focus groups post their project selection guidance and project templates on the RDSTF focus group SharePoint site. On the SharePoint site, they also share information on standard operating protocols, plans, special teams' operations guides, and other law enforcement-sensitive information to share among the representatives. Representatives also shared with FEMA that the RDSTF governance structure helps Florida's emergency management and law enforcement community build relationships and consider projects that support collaborative regional and statewide capabilities.

Appendix C: References

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