

Chapter 2

Evaluation From The State and Local Perspective

As mentioned in Chapter 1, objectives categorized under eleven different functional areas were chosen by State and local participants as critical to the smooth functioning of their emergency preparedness organizations. These areas were examined during RESPONSE 98 using an evaluation methodology that first required identification of the item to be exercised and its evaluation element along with criteria for judging success. In this Chapter, the areas and evaluation elements listed in Table 1-1 under State and Local Perspective will be presented in some detail, along with the findings of evaluators during RESPONSE 98.

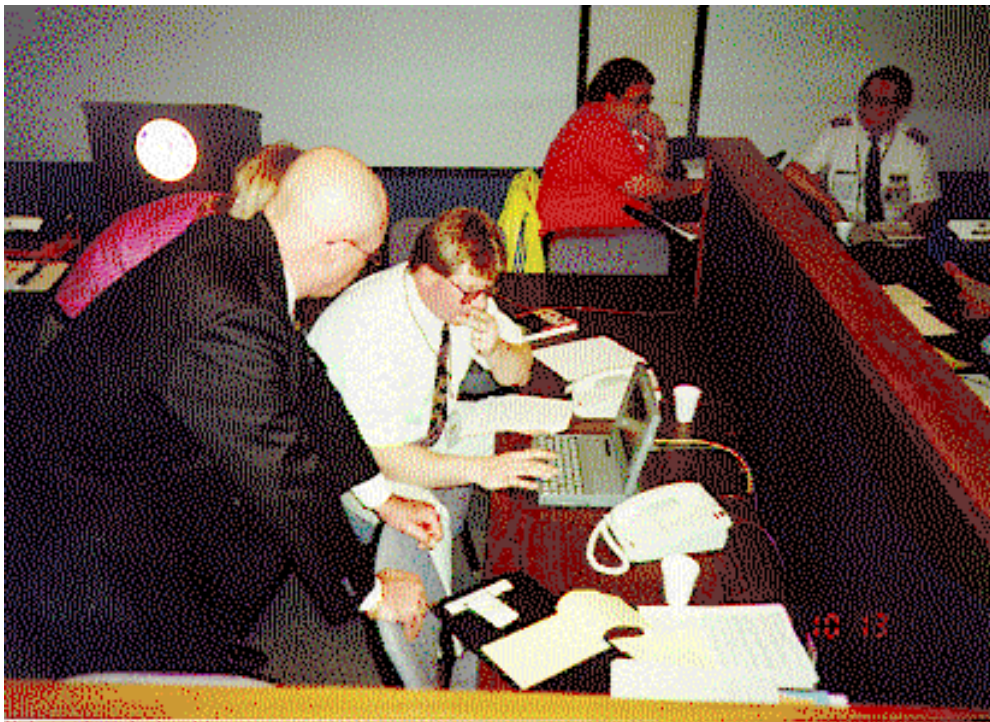


Figure 2-1. *Activation of State and Local Community
Emergency Operations Centers.*

ALERT AND NOTIFICATION

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response and recovery activities for alert and notification

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability to interface with Federal, State, and local counterparts during the watch and warning phases of a hurricane.

- **Finding** – As the exercise Hurricane Janet moved north, the States and localities in FEMA Regions I and II began to prepare for the potential impact of the storm. In Region II, the State of New Jersey was the first to activate its Office of Emergency Management (OEM) on day one of the exercise, based on the span of warning or watches and the projected hurricane path. New Jersey notified both the State of New York and FEMA Region II, and New York activated its Emergency Management Office (EMO). Simultaneously, FEMA Region II deployed State Liaison Officers to New York and New Jersey, followed by the deployment of Emergency Response Team Advance Element (ERT-A) teams to Trenton, NJ, and Albany, NY, and activated the Regional Operations Center (ROC). Situation briefings, conference calls, and face-to-face meetings were held to coordinate resources and exchange operational information at all locations. The Region II ROC informed Region I of the ROC activation.

In Region I, Connecticut was the first state to activate its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on day two of the exercise, as Hurricane Janet continued to move north, up the East Coast of the United States. Region I deployed a State liaison to Connecticut and activated its ROC. As each State EOC was activated, State liaisons were deployed by the Region I ROC to three States in the region.

- **Evaluation Element** – Determine the ability of State EOCs to coordinate with the National Weather Service (NWS).
- **Finding** – Information about Hurricane Janet was available from the National Weather Service Regional Offices and the National Hurricane Center. Additionally, weather forecasts and hurricane warnings and watches were received from the FEMA Region II ROC, New York State Emergency Management Office (NYSEMO), and simulated news broadcasts. The combinations of weather information allowed ERT-A teams located in New Jersey and New York to monitor and track Hurricane Janet.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts experienced difficulties receiving timely weather information from the NWS. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) received weather data from the Region I ROC via fax instead of established communications links with the NWS. The standard operating procedures used by FEMA Headquarters and the NWS to identify and access weather links should be distributed to the States and Regions.

COMMUNICATIONS

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for communications services

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to establish and maintain communications essential to support response on several levels: Local to State EOC; State EOC to State staging area; State EOC to ROC; State EOC to Federal Mobilization Center; and State staging area to Federal Mobilization Center.

- **Finding** – In Regions I and II, agency representatives established and maintained essential communications to State EOCs, staging areas, local EOCs, the ROC, and the Federal Mobilization Centers. The ERT-As stayed in continuous contact with the ROCs throughout the exercise.

In Connecticut, the use of emergency management radio systems and amateur radio operators provided town coverage to area offices and from area offices to State EOCs. A communications check from the Connecticut EOC to the Region I ROC, using both voice and data, was completed using FEMA National Radio System (FNARS) and a successful radio check was completed with New Hampshire. It was also established that the Connecticut EOC could implement the FNARS system to contact the Federal Mobilization Center in Westover.

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the methods of communications between the EOC's response forces, if employed; shelter/lodging/feeding facilities; adjacent jurisdictions; and outside assistance agencies.

- **Finding** – The primary means of communications used by most States and Federal agencies (Regional/National) for personnel located in the EOCs, ROCs, and the Emergency Support Team (EST) was landline telephones with conferencing and facsimile capabilities. Cellular telephones were used by elements deployed to remote sites during the exercise. As Hurricane Janet moved up the East Coast and disrupted the primary communications, alternate communications such as HF radios and FNARS were utilized to maintain the flow of information from local and State EOCs and ERT-A teams to the ROCs. In addition to the various types of phones and radios, the internet provided an increased capability to communicate through teleconferencing and video conferencing.

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with all appropriate emergency response locations, organizations, and personnel.

- **Finding** – Communications between the State EOCs and the ROCs were very effective. Incident reports, damage assessments, and resource requirements were forwarded from the local level, through the State, to the regions so the Federal response could be coordinated and executed. Each of the States conducted

communications testing to assure adequate and redundant systems were operational.

- **Evaluation Element** – Determine Vermont’s ability to receive status reports from other States.
 - **Finding** – Vermont’s ability to receive status reports from other States was unobstructed.

COORDINATION AND CONTROL

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency control response for coordination and control

- **Evaluation Element** – Address increased readiness operations and describe actions to be taken by the State, county, local governments, and the private sector during periods of heightened risk.
 - **Finding** – As the probability that Hurricane Janet would have an impact on the New Jersey shoreline and north increased, additional personnel were placed on stand-by, and supplies and equipment were pre-positioned in the States. The ERT-As and the response organizations demonstrated knowledge of increased readiness operations by issuing Situation Reports.

In New York City, efforts are underway to develop an evacuation plan for the city. Over the next few months, the city plans to hold several meetings to initiate the development of this plan. Initially, the meeting participants will include New York City police, fire, and Office of Emergency Management personnel. Additional planning sessions will be held to coordinate with pertinent State and Federal agencies that would play a key role in the evacuation of New York City.

- **Evaluation Element** – Provide security in evacuated and restricted access areas.
 - **Finding** – Security was provided in evacuated and restricted areas by State and Federal emergency response organizations in the areas affected by the hurricane. Master Scenario Events List events allowed testing of local plans to address these evacuation issues.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate direction and control capabilities through "paperless" technologies and data distribution networks.
 - **Finding** – The MEMA is in the process of developing a system that would implement “paperless” technologies to direct and control emergency response

capabilities. Some integration of “paperless technologies” was apparent; however, the major emphasis is still paper dependent.

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to identify the need for and request emergency assistance from Federal and other support agencies.
- **Finding** – The State of New York identified requirements for emergency assistance from Federal agencies early in the exercise. The NYSEMO worked with the ERT-A and the Region II ROC to coordinate with agencies such as the American Red Cross to monitor the evacuation of areas affected by the storm and the sheltering of people. Additionally, Emergency Support Function 5 (ESF-5) coordinated with the Red Cross to provide the FEMA Director with a list of open shelters and information on shelter availability in New York. As the scenario developed and resource requirements were identified, assets were delivered to the State. For example, ESF-7 received a request from the NYSEMO to locate 300,000 cots; 600,000 blankets; and 900,000 Meals-Ready-to-Eat. This information was promptly relayed to the ROC to begin the resource coordination process.

The New York State Plan should consider all potential resource requests to avoid large shortfalls and unnecessary delays in any future emergencies such as the one portrayed by the magnitude of Hurricane Janet. A possible consideration is to develop a pre-disaster Initial Response Resources (IRR) list as baseline for resource requests.

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and provide pertinent emergency public information

- **Evaluation Element** – Coordinate the release of information to the public by any agency or organization through the State public information officer.
- **Finding** – The States issued press releases daily through both the Governor’s Office and the EMOs to provide pertinent emergency public information. In New York, press releases were issued on Governor Pataki’s declaration of a State of Emergency in New York. Brochures on the following topics were made available: Hurricane Safety Tips, Emergency Sheltering Information, A Request that Consumers Not Be Gouged for Unfair Prices, and the Dangers of Hurricane Debris. Additionally, the State also distributed a brochure to shelter, food and water distribution sites about hurricane cleanup and safety procedures.

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the capability of coordinating and disseminating accurate information regarding an incident to the media and the public in a timely manner.
- **Finding** – When situation reports became available, the Public Information Officers (PIOs) in the States and at the ROCs rapidly disseminated the information to the public. Hurricane Janet caused widespread catastrophic damage to the northeastern coast. In such a situation, the State PIO (who was supported by the ERT-A PIO) would normally be replaced by the FEMA Region II PIO and Headquarters representatives, but exercise play did not continue long enough for the transition to take place. Nevertheless, generating the material to be used for the Situation Report is the responsibility of the ERT-A PIO. The ERT-A Team Leader is responsible for information that is released to the ROC. When public information is released, it is sent to FEMA Headquarters, which has the capability to disseminate the information quickly to many news organizations.

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for initial damage assessment

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to mobilize and implement rapid assessment capabilities.
- **Finding** – The New Jersey response organization and the Rapid Assessment Team (RAT) mobilized the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJ-DOT) maintenance field personnel to perform an immediate, preliminary damage assessment on all State highways and bridges. As Hurricane Janet passed, RATs were in place to provide rapid assessment.

In Connecticut, the State Departments of Environmental Protection, Health, Public Works; the Department of Transportation; the Civil Air Patrol (CAP); and the Connecticut National Guard (Lead Agency) were assigned to the Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) Teams. The National Guard supplied helicopters for transport of the RNA Teams to disaster areas. The RNA Teams identified the needs of the victims (e.g., food, water, medical supplies, etc.).

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the collection, display, and reporting of damage information in the State EOC.
- **Finding** – In New Jersey, local and county damage was reported to local aid personnel and relayed to the Trenton Emergency Control Center (TECC). The collection of damage information was accomplished via radio communications and

telephone or fax, if functional to the TECC. The TECC consolidated incoming information and relayed it to the State Police EOC through the NJ-DOT to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), FEMA, and State Coordinators. The staff from the NJ-DOT, Division of Aeronautics and Freight Systems, coordinated a damage assessment of aviation facilities. FHWA notified FEMA via action-tracking forms.

Cost estimates provided were based on existing contract prices, historical costs, and inventory costs on file at NJ-DOT. Assessment information was stored at the NJ-DOT in computer files. Job Numbers were established to track damage repair at each site.

- **Evaluation Element** – Damage Assessment Model.
 - **Finding** – The Consequence Assessment Tool Sets (CATS) model provided information about the severity of the structural damage Hurricane Janet would cause using data provided by the National Weather Service. Therefore, the ERT-A knew to expect a grave situation and had an indication of what kind of structural damage could be expected. It also provided an estimate of needed resources. However, the system did not differentiate between commercial buildings and residential structures, so the number of people affected could not be realistically estimated. The CATS system was not used until late in the exercise.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to perform damage assessment reports.
 - **Finding** – The NYSEMO manager served as the State counterpart to the ERT-A team leader and was responsible for the reporting of damages to FEMA. The New York State Agencies Infrastructure Branch provided information on damage assessment to ESF-3.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for health and medical services

- **Evaluation Element** – Exercise of Disaster Mortuary Teams (DMORTs) and Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) in support of emergency operations.
- **Finding** – The DMORT and DMAT were used to support operations in New York. The facilities used in support of these teams were pre-identified in the State *Emergency Response Plan*.

The impact of Hurricane Janet as it moved through the New York coastal areas and the previous flooding from a separate storm cell was overwhelming to New York.

The DMORT and DMAT resources were not sufficient to support all emergency operations in New York. This finding led to a discussion with the NYSEMO manager about what needed to be done to bring in teams from other parts of the country.

A question was raised as to whether Urban Search and Rescue Teams should have been moved into place prior to landfall, since the potential for extensive damage was known before Hurricane Janet hit.



Figure 2-2. *Urban Search and Rescue Team.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability to activate crisis counseling through Health and Human Services.
 - **Finding** – Crisis counseling was activated in New York through the Department of Health and Human Services. The situation in New York City was complex because of the multiplicity of cultures in the city: counselors would be required to perform using eighteen different languages.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability of applicable State agencies to implement procedures to identify, evacuate, or shelter at-risk populations (personnel, clients, inmates, patients, and wards).
 - **Finding** – The New York response organization implemented procedures to identify, evacuate, and shelter at-risk populations in fixed facilities. These procedures were in the response organization’s emergency operations plan, and the sheltering and evacuation efforts were coordinated with other agencies. A long-term housing strategy was discussed, but the exercise ended prior to any implementation.
- **Evaluation Element** – Determine the statewide capabilities to respond to and recover from a natural disaster.

- **Finding** – New Jersey had statewide capabilities in place to respond to and recover from a natural disaster. Procedures for health and medical services were included in the State’s emergency response plan. Hospitals in New Jersey have plans describing their capabilities and listing nurses, doctors, EMA, and para-medical personnel available.

EVACUATION AND SHELTERING

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency assistance response for evacuation and sheltering

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the adequacy of State donations management procedures.
- **Finding** – New Jersey donations management procedures were up-to-date but were not used during the exercise.

The State of New York lacks plans and procedures for mass feeding, sheltering, and donations management. The State encountered this same issue during the ice storm. No decisions were made by the State of New York to remedy this during the exercise.

In Connecticut, the National Guard was initially tasked to be the lead agency for donated food, but the Guard had other duties and could not comply. Therefore, a recommendation was made that the lead agency for donated food be a non-profit organization. Another recommendation was that the States in Region I attend the Emergency Management Institute’s State Donations Management Course and possibly develop a strategic donations management plan for the entire Region.

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to establish and operate local distribution centers for bottled water, plastic roof sheeting, etc.
- **Finding** – Local distribution centers for bottled water, plastic roof sheeting, etc., were established at the locations pre-designated in the emergency response plan.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to establish mass feeding operations.
- **Finding** – Mass feeding was only established at shelter locations. Feeding requests were received and food was ordered through the United States Department of Agriculture. The American Red Cross (ARC), in coordination with the State Department of Human Resources, was responsible for managing these operations and coordinated with the procedures in the regional sheltering plans. There were inadequate resources at the mass feeding locations to address the needs of the

hurricane victims. The State agencies applied past experience to implement feeding for mass care, but the magnitude of the disaster and the size of the impacted population appeared to surprise State players. The lack of New York State updated plans and procedures addressing feeding strategies required additional work on the part of the ERT-A to determine resource needs.

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate capability for production and distribution of potable water.
 - **Finding** – New Jersey demonstrated the ability to produce and distribute potable water, which was accomplished at the county level. The State-established, pre-determined potable water distribution sites were identified in the response plan.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the capability of procedures, facilities, equipment and personnel for the care of evacuees.
 - **Finding** – The ARC, volunteer agencies, and local organizations in New Jersey were in charge of providing for evacuees, and they demonstrated the ability to provide appropriate facilities, equipment, and personnel for the care of evacuees. An adequate facility was pre-designated as a mass care center to support emergency operations. 1,651,000 spaces were listed as available, and a total of 779,300 beds were in use in 21 counties.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for public safety activities

- **Evaluation Element** – Identify coastal and inland areas vulnerable to storm surge inundation associated with hurricanes and tropical storms; develop and implement protective actions for those areas.
 - **Finding** – The States and the Region I ROC do not have Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes modeling capability. The Hazards United States model is available at the Region I Headquarters in Boston, but was unavailable at the ROC.

Many Emergency Responders and Managers outside of ESF-5 do not know what Geographical Information System (GIS) data are available. It was recommended that an information session be planned to communicate the GIS capabilities and standards to all of the ESFs and ROC staff in Region I.

- **Evaluation Element** – Assessment of personnel needs and coordination of law enforcement and fire/rescue.

- **Finding** – In New Jersey, each municipality has fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical systems. They work from the bottom up on response so that a local unit responds first and then the county. If the county cannot respond, it requests State help. Because the local levels were not playing at the same time as the State during this exercise, the State was not overwhelmed with requests for assistance. The State participants tried to provide realistic State and Federal play for this exercise, but a true assessment of what law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical needs would be for the entire State did not occur. The State plan calls for deployment of a State EOC liaison officer in each of the 21 counties following a major disaster. The State EOC did not deploy in the exercise but would have forwarded any requests for assistance to the State government in the event of a “real-world” incident.

The State of New York EOC manager discussed with the local EOC managers needs for additional personnel to handle law enforcement and fire/rescue, including the Mutual Aid Plan with sister States to provide additional National Guard, State Troopers, etc. During the discussions, the FEMA ERT-A Team Leader informed State agencies that FEMA does not provide law enforcement. An observation made was that the State of New York lacks updated plans and procedures in this functional area.

PUBLIC WORKS

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for public works activities

- **Evaluation Element** – Exercise the capability to manage debris removal and disposal.
- **Finding** – When States requested Federal assistance in debris removal, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was assigned the mission. State staff could benefit from planning and training on debris management. The ERT-A team had difficulty receiving sufficient information to identify emergency routes blocked by debris so help could be provided.

Mutual aid agreements exist among the New Jersey Public Works, Highway Systems, DOT, and transit authorities. State priority was given to major transportation routes. To carry this out, the State’s Department of Environmental Protection selected and identified debris staging areas. Debris management plans exist, although some are in draft, that outline debris separation policy, but the information was not transmitted to the public. The debris separation policy should be a flag item for TV, radio, and press during media briefings. Additional planning and training may be needed for some State staff.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for resource management activities

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to manage State marshalling and staging area operations.
 - **Finding** – New Jersey produced a list of potential staging areas, but the procedures for managing the staging areas and deployment operations were not demonstrated by New York or New Jersey.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to distribute Initial Response Resource (IRR) packages.
 - **Finding** – The Connecticut National Guard is the lead agency for receiving and for distributing IRR packages. The State staging area is located at the Air Guard Unit in Bradley, Connecticut, where military truck and heavy airlift would be used to move items onward to area staging locations.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate Resource Management Control through "paperless" technologies and data distribution networks.
 - **Finding** – There was limited direction and control via "paperless technologies." It was recommended that Massachusetts and Maine continue to integrate and use these technologies to enhance the system.
- **Evaluation Element** – Assess the capability to monitor and respond to the local requests for resources.
 - **Finding** – The ERT-A used Action Tracking and Mission Assignment Logs to track and monitor resources requested by the State and had excellent interface with State agencies.
- **Evaluation Element** – Determine the effectiveness of procedures for requesting resources from a higher level of government and incorporate the Emergency Support Function.
 - **Finding** – Prior to a declaration of a disaster under the Stafford Act, the State requested ERT-A and ROC assistance. After the Presidential Declaration, the States used the Request for Federal Assistance procedures. The procedure for FEMA is to validate mission needs with appropriate State agencies. Because State agency players participated during the exercise in a limited manner, the ERT-A team had difficulty gathering pertinent information from the State to be efficient in providing the support resources needed.

The State of New Jersey did not prioritize resource needs prior to requesting Federal resource assistance. The ESF that requested the resources was responsible for ensuring the proper resources were delivered to the appropriate State response

personnel. It is recommended that States prioritize resource needs before passing them to the Federal level. In addition, the exercise artificiality of State agencies not participating at the same time as the local and Federal participants needs to be corrected.

WARNING

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for warning

- **Evaluation Element** – Assess the ability to coordinate with media and the National Weather Service to provide advanced warning and situational updates to the public.
- **Finding** – The State response organizations coordinated warning and situational update information with the FEMA Public Information Officer (PIO) prior to its dissemination to the media and the public. Additionally, information was coordinated with other organizations prior to disseminating it to the media. Advance warning and situational update information came from the National Weather Service.

In the State of New Jersey, all levels of government were involved in the dissemination of warning information. Once there is a need to alert the public, the State EOC (State Police) informs the Governor's Office. The warning notice is prepared by the State PIO and concurred on by the Governor's PIO. The State PIO coordinates all warning notifications with the county governments prior to releasing them to the media. The States and counties received daily reports from the National Weather Service.

This page is intentionally left blank