



Technical Assistance Overview

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is offering a Collaborative Technical Assistance (CTA) series to help communities at risk of dam-related flooding to better understand their risk landscape and the potential consequences of dam-related emergencies. The CTA will include planning for emergencies related to operational discharges or dam-related infrastructure failure. This document outlines the proposed concept of operations, schedule, goals, and objectives for a CTA offering.

A Two-Way Commitment

The CTA is a two-way commitment. FEMA will provide participating communities with the necessary expertise, coaching, and tools. In turn, each community is expected to identify a project manager who will attend all relevant sessions and ensure project milestones are met. The CTA is an interactive process that requires continued, dedicated involvement from participating communities.

What to Expect

Participants will engage in a facilitated planning process with community stakeholders to build relationships, develop plans, and collaborate with whole community partners to achieve the goal of increased preparedness to dam-related hazards. Potential stakeholders include local, state, and federal emergency managers; dam owners and operators; private sector representatives; community planners; nonprofit partners; and other individuals and organizations facing dam-related emergencies.

The process starts with scoping calls and needs assessment interviews followed by an in-person kickoff meeting. Following the kickoff meeting, FEMA will develop a draft plan for topic-specific, in-person sessions and webinars. All sessions will be supplemented by office hour meetings to provide additional support, as needed. Additional in-person meetings may be scheduled based on participants' needs.

The CTA delivery team will support the entire process with subject matter experts, as well as models, tools, and templates to foster the planning process. During the process, participants will develop benchmark activities, such as forming planning teams, conducting community analysis, compiling data reports, identifying operational priorities, goals, and objectives, and developing or refining current plans. At the end of the process, a tabletop exercise will be used to examine the plans that have been developed or refined.

Highly Flexible

FEMA recognizes that communities maintain differing levels of capabilities of dam risk understanding and dam-related emergency preparedness. Therefore, the CTA series is flexible, scalable, and adaptable. After communities assess their capabilities, they should consider participating in the entire series. FEMA will collaboratively work with communities to develop a framework of sessions that best fit the communities level of capability.



Common Community Objectives

Communities work collaboratively with FEMA to set their own goals and objectives. Below are example goals and objectives set by different communities.

Goal: Increase county, community, and individual preparedness in participating jurisdictions for responding to dam emergencies and conducting evacuation and shelter-in-place operations.

- Objective 1** Form a dam emergency planning workgroup including core stakeholders for this CTA and maintain the workgroup after its completion.
- Objective 2** Achieve a detailed understanding of impacts due to a dam emergency through the CTA analytic framework that will inform planning, response, recovery, and mitigation activities.
- Objective 3** Develop a joint strategy for both stakeholder engagement and risk communications for dam emergencies that will be documented in the local Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) and Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs).
- Objective 4** Complete revised, risk-informed EAPs and develop dam incident and evacuation and shelter-in-place annexes to the local EOPs.
- Objective 5** Conduct an exercise to evaluate and identify gaps in the written plans and further enhance relationships amongst stakeholders.

Results

The CTA program will result in:



New or renewed partnerships between dam owners and operators, public safety officials, and individuals, communities, and organizations that are at-risk of dam related emergencies.



Greater understanding of the operational considerations for dam owners and operators before, during, and after dam-related emergencies and the associated consequences of these actions.



Enhanced risk communication strategies and better protective action decision-making for all dam owners and operators, public safety officials, and stakeholder organizations and communities.



Training on modeling and analysis of dam failure scenarios—including how to coordinate with State representatives to use the Decision Support System for Water Infrastructural Security Web (DSS-WISE) to understand likely consequences of dam emergencies and how to integrate the results into future planning or situational awareness products.



New or revised plans and assessments, such as emergency operations plans, emergency action plans, hazard mitigation plans, floodplain management plans, business continuity plans, and Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessments (THIRA) that give greater consideration to dam-related emergencies.