

# Emergency Management Performance Grant:

*An Evaluation of the Nation's Return on Investment*

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**2022 Edition**

Joint Report Presented by:





April 8, 2022

The U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA) and the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) annually offer this joint report detailing the return on investment of the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program. This program is the only source of federal funding provided directly to state and local governments for all the functions which help build a robust emergency management ecosystem; one that has faced unprecedented tests over the past year.

The resources and capabilities built through EMPG serve as the foundation for officials charting the course of coronavirus response as it evolves while concurrently tackling other ongoing disasters. Last year's report examined the supplemental federal funding through the CARES Act and ARPA, the 2022 report will examine how the increased EMPG funding was utilized to both curb the on-going pandemic and expand federal, state, and local emergency response efforts.

The EMPG grant funding comes with a dollar-for-dollar match minimum requirement, so recipients had to increase their matches to accept larger rewards. Despite this, state and local governments continued to demonstrate a strong commitment to this partnership with the federal government in building all-hazards emergency management capacity.

This past year has shown us our greatest EMPG allocations ever – totaling \$455 million. To sustain the investments made through FY22 and FY23 with regular appropriations and supplementals, NEMA and IAEM call on Congress to codify at least one of the supplemental increases of \$100 million and fund EMPG at \$455 million in FY23.

EMPG stands as the beacon of Congressional commitment to ensure communities and states are more ready to prepare, mitigate, respond, and recover from all hazards. We remain thankful for the commitment within Congress to maintain this worthwhile program and will continue to do all we can as associations to reflect on the appropriated funds, provide transparency in how these funds are allocated, and remain good stewards of taxpayers' dollars.

Sincerely,

Erica Bornemann, MPA  
President, NEMA  
Director, Vermont Emergency Management

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## OVERVIEW

EMPG exists as a foundation for the development of critical capabilities for disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation across the country. The collaborative investments in EMPG touches all aspects of the emergency management environment including planning, training, exercises, and enhancing professional expertise. EMPG also supports response capabilities, communications systems, emergency operation centers (EOC), mutual aid agreements, and public outreach campaigns. These capabilities, built over time, have been critical in the COVID-19 response because jurisdictions could base their efforts on existing plans and exercise outcomes rather than building a new response system from the ground up. In the following pages, state and local activities are highlighted and explained to provide a glimpse of the success Congress enables through their commitment to first responders and emergency managers nationwide.

Emergency managers are the coordinators and collaborators who bring together state, local, and regional entities to save lives, orchestrate the government's response to an event, and work for years afterward to ensure a robust recovery. While the number of tasks accomplished by local jurisdictions shown in this report are impressive on their face, special consideration should be given to the fact that approximately 20 percent of the responding local jurisdictions accomplished this work with less than a full-time emergency manager coordinating the effort and approximately twenty-seven percent of the tasks were carried out in jurisdictions with populations of less than 25,000.

For this report, 51 states and territories and nearly 500 local emergency management agencies responded to the survey regarding FY21 EMPG spending and supplemental CARES Act and ARPA funding decisions.

## REDUCING DISASTER COSTS TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

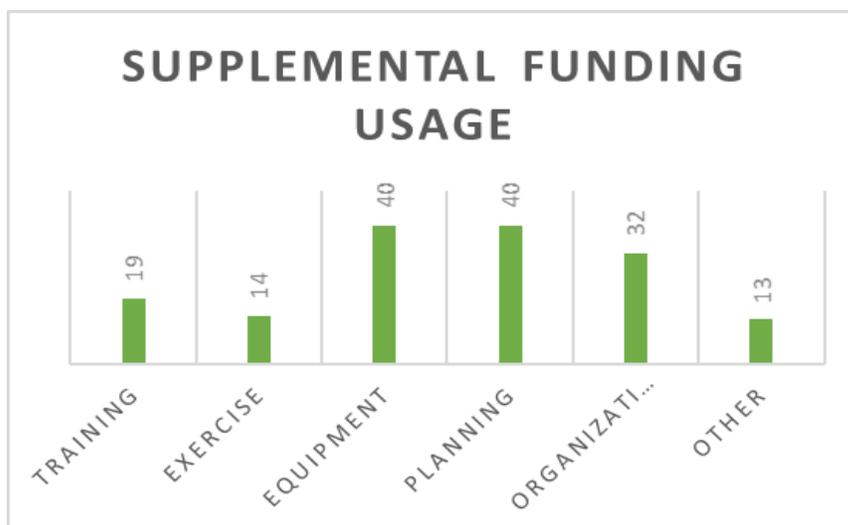
Every jurisdiction nationwide was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, whether that be in lives lost, healthcare and first responder burnout, or economic shocks. Even as a pandemic, hurricanes, flooding, wildfires, severe winter weather, earthquakes, and derechos rocked the United States, EMPG provided the necessary support to build and sustain capabilities necessary to protect residents and avoid the escalation of an event where possible. In many cases, this occurred without a federal disaster declaration from the federal government. In FY21:

- **83** disasters required a major or emergency declaration (this is inclusive of COVID-19);
- Beyond that, **13,704 events required state assets** but did not reach the level of a major declaration,
- **Local assets supported more than 7,778 additional events** using EMPG funded staff or assets without state or federal support, and

*State, localities, and territories managed **21,482** events without additional federal expenditure last year.*

## COVID-19 SUPPLEMENTAL FEDERAL FUNDING

The \$100 million in supplemental funding for EMPG through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is instrumental in supporting the evolving needs of state and local jurisdictions' COVID-19 response. States and localities used the funding for a variety of needs according to their jurisdiction. NEMA and IAEM categorized the types of spending through the POETE structure (Planning, Organizing, Equipping, Training, and Exercising) which is often used in preparedness analyses. Many states and localities utilized their expenditures across multiple parts of the framework as was appropriate to jurisdictional needs. A brief breakout of spending information is below:



### Meeting the Match

A unique facet of EMPG is the level of mutual match between the grantor and recipients. To make this equal match, states used a variety of methods.

9	10	9	32
States used other federal funds	States used State General Funds	States used soft/in-kind matches	States used other methods

## PUBLIC AWARENESS INCREASES PREPAREDNESS

Supporting public preparedness is critical to successful responses when disaster strikes. EMPG funding has supported **986 statewide** preparedness outreach campaigns and **2,271 local** campaigns.



**Preparedness outreach campaigns reached nearly 105 million people last year**

## PLANNING, TRAINING, AND EXERCISES

Through coordinated planning, training, and exercises, states and local jurisdictions are able to increase their preparedness capabilities and be greater prepared for response and recovery when disaster strikes. This type of baseline capacity building leads to less federal involvement and increased savings to the federal government.

<u>PLANNING</u>	<u>TRAINING</u>	<u>EXERCISES</u>
<p><i>Speeds recovery</i> <i>Reduces administrative costs</i> <i>Prepares for mitigation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 2,045 state and 2,364 local plans were developed, maintained, or updated using EMPG funds.</li> <li>Plans address overarching topics such as response, recovery, and mitigation. EMPG funds targeted planning efforts including distribution plans, continuity of operations, state emergency operations, and hazard mitigation.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Ensures effective use of systems</i> <i>Translates planning into action</i> <i>Identifies gaps in planning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In FY21 EMPG supported more than 1,464 local and 4,057 state classes addressing the various phases of emergency management. 88,496 personnel received and completed training.</li> <li>Classes cover the full range of emergency management issues.</li> <li>Participants include public officials, emergency response personnel, and even the general public.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Assesses planning and training</i> <i>Confirms assumptions</i> <i>Provides real-life scenarios</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EMPG supported at least 875 local and 1,650 state-level exercises.</li> <li>Types of exercises include workshops, drills, and functional full-scale exercises. Many stakeholder groups participate in these exercises, which further strengthens partnerships within and external to jurisdictions.</li> </ul> <p><b>More than 322,309 stakeholders participated in FY21 exercises.</b></p>

## FINDING SOLUTIONS THROUGH MUTUAL AID

Last fiscal year EMPG supported **1,442 local** and **2,125 statewide mutual aid agreements, memorandums of understanding, and memorandums of agreement** with neighboring jurisdictions, non-profit agencies, Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADS), and the private sector. These agreements between jurisdictions minimize the need for immediate federal support, thereby reducing costs to the federal government and remain critical to mounting an effective response in the wake of a disaster and mobilizing tested emergency management capabilities across jurisdictions.

## EMPG-SUPPORTED SUCCESS



Photo courtesy of California Office of Emergency Services

While COVID-19 ravaged hospitals across the country, **California** faced one of its worst fire seasons to date, including the Caldor Fire, which burned from California across the border into Nevada. **California's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)** utilized EMPG-funded staff to perform critical advanced planning and implemented an EMAC agreement in September 2021. Both states worked together and with local governments to plan for, and provide, mass care and animal care services on both sides of the border, including non-congregate sheltering. Through the EMAC agreement, Nevada provided evacuation shelters for Caldor Fire survivors from **California** and allowed **California** to request transportation, law enforcement support, medical care and transportation, and other emergency protective measures. In **California**, EMAC is maintained by EMPG funds, showcasing an important facet of the criticality of this funding during the 2021 wildfires.

Public safety communications technologies evolve rapidly. With the development of more reliable technology, the efficiency of response and recovery plans have the potential to reach new heights. Any system purchased today must be dynamic and flexible to keep up with the technology of tomorrow. To ensure the support of residents by effective frontline disaster management technology, state and local officials utilized EMPG to support:



- **690** local and state emergency response systems or services\*  
*\*including WebEOC platforms, shelter management capabilities, and donation management software*



- **692** state and local community warning systems
- **425** redundant communications systems



- **123** state emergency operations centers and approximately **354** local EOCs

These systems provide the ability to alert and warn the public of both pending and spontaneous disaster events. Rather than just purchasing new communications systems, states and locals also maintain or upgrade existing systems to carefully manage tax dollars without sacrificing high quality capabilities.

## EMPG-SUPPORTED SUCCESS

### Escambia County, FLORIDA: Personalized Preparedness

Broad solutions to disaster response and preparedness leaves little room for personalization. EMPG funding provided **Escambia County** the flexibility they need for specific hazards in their cities and towns. Through EMPG, they built their hurricane shelter kits and enhanced plans which allowed for more autonomy in managing hurricane shelters locally and allowing for the county to be better prepared for the operation.

### OKLAHOMA: Aid to Locals

During **Oklahoma's** 2020 ice storm and 2021 winter storm, **Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (ODEMHS)** recognized a lack of resources. To build capacity across the state, **ODEMHS** used EMPG funding to roll-out a new local grant program to provide resources including water buffalos, generators, light towers, and bulk bottled water to local programs statewide. The importance of this program was immediately recognized, and the agency decided to prioritize funding to expand access in all parts of the state thanks to EMPG.

### Noble County, OHIO: Managing Historical Disaster Events

Hundreds, if not thousands, of counties are doing their best to manage record-breaking disasters every year—and **Noble County, Ohio** is no different. This past April, **Noble County** experienced what they referred to as a “100 year flood”, an event that can absolutely devastate a county with a population that is less than 15,000. During the event, their EMPG-funded EOC was able to facilitate response across their response teams and resulted in monitoring of roadways and necessary rescues. In addition to the immediate response, as a result of buy-outs and elevations, EMPG funds were able to ensure no damage to any households in the community.



*Photo courtesy of Indiana Emergency Management and Preparedness Division*

### IDAHO: New Standards for Operating

With new requirements from COVID-19, like social distancing, PPE, and other necessities for in-person operations, states were reeling with how to adapt these changes to their previous operations. **Idaho** used EMPG funding to transition these new requirements in their workspace. EMPG provided resources for an expanded EOC that adheres to the CDC's social distancing guidelines to reduce the transmission of viral contagions. Additional training and exercises supported through EMPG assures plans are robust and will be successful in real-world incidents.

## CONCLUSION

This report illustrates how critical the EMPG is to all levels of government as we continue to look for ways to manage and adapt to our ever-changing environment. The level of innovation and growth the EMPG facilitates, and progress achieved across the country, in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from all hazards cannot be overstated. The program's success is shared by all levels of government and the federal government is critical to its continued effectiveness. When considering the effectiveness of this program:

- ◆ At just over \$1 per resident nationwide, and when including the match requirement and additional state and local investment, the return on investment exceeds \$700 million. That amount balloons to \$1.1 billion when including supplemental funding. Every state and community is more prepared because of this program.
- ◆ To sustain the investments made through FY22 and FY23 with regular appropriations and supplementals, NEMA and IAEM call on Congress to codify at least one of the supplemental increases and fund EMPG at \$455 million in FY23.
- ◆ During FY21, a total of **21, 482** events were managed by local, tribal, and state governments without additional federal assistance. This figure is exponentially greater than the 83 federal disaster declarations declared.

For every dollar Congress appropriates for EMPG, state and local government must match dollar-for-dollar. Data over the years shows that both state and local governments typically provide match well beyond that which is required, providing an unparalleled value to the taxpayer. Rising disaster costs mean that we can no longer base future funding on previous experiences, or there will be long-term impacts to readiness that are a detriment in the face of future events. Through the regular Appropriations cycle for FY23, Congress should codify their efforts to bolster this program through the COVID supplementals and increase the baseline funding level to \$455 million.

Everyone has felt the effects of this on-going COVID-19 pandemic or the challenges of being a disaster survivor. From loss of life and personal health, to economic worry, to mental health and general stress, the impacts of a disaster create an indelible scar on survivors. In addition to these challenges and fears, the United States dealt with **20 disaster events causing losses exceeding one billion dollars in 2021**, the most ever experienced in a single year. Recovery from events like those take years. This report allows for an in-depth look into a small slice of how EMPG impacts the disaster preparedness and response landscape. The benefits of the program illustrated here are undoubtedly shared across the country and exceed the quantifiable due to stakeholder relationship-building and other non-dollar driven activities inherent in conducting related projects.

EMPG stands as a beacon of Congressional support and both NEMA and IAEM-USA remain appreciative of the support. We hope such support continues as emergency managers put these funds to good use and work tirelessly to demonstrate the return on the nation's investment.

### ABOUT NEMA:

Established in 1974, NEMA represents the emergency management directors of the 50 states, territories, and the District of Columbia. These professionals are responsible to their governors for all-hazards emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery from all emergencies, disasters, and threats to the homeland. NEMA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization headquartered in Lexington, Kentucky, and an affiliate of the Council of State Governments.

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### ABOUT IAEM-USA:

IAEM-USA is the nation's largest association of emergency management professionals, with over 5,100 members, including emergency managers at the state and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business and the nonprofit sector. Most of the members are city and county emergency managers who perform the crucial function of coordinating and integrating the efforts at the local level to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters, including terrorist attacks. The membership includes emergency managers from large urban areas as well as rural areas. IAEM is a non-profit, non-partisan organization headquartered in Falls Church, Virginia.

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