



## **The Intersection of Critical Infrastructure and Emergency Management: An Agency's Preparation for Freight Rail Disruption**

Presented by: **Michael Sharon, CEM**, Chief of the Emergency Programs Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Homeland Security

**Presentation Abstract:** In the fall of 2022, the U.S. faced a nationwide disruption of a key critical infrastructure element: the rail transportation system. This presentation will provide one federal agency's perspective on the potential impacts of national rail disruption and will describe the interagency coordination structure that developed was in preparation for the event. Attendees will learn how Presidential Policy Directive-44 provides a mechanism for other federal agencies to lead the response to an emergency outside of a conventional disaster declaration under the Stafford Act.

**Speaker Bio:** Michael Sharon, CEM, is the chief of the emergency programs division at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Homeland Security. He previously worked at FEMA as deputy superintendent at the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) and in FEMA Region III as director of national preparedness, planning branch chief, and regional integration branch chief. Mike also served as chief of the National

Response Coordination Center's Gold Team and was FEMA's liaison to the US Secret Service during multiple National Special Security Events.

Mike began his federal career at the U.S. Department of State, where he helped develop the department's domestic emergency management and business continuity programs. He also held a variety of emergency management positions at the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency.

Mike earned a Master of Strategic Studies degree from the U.S. Army War College, a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Baltimore, a Master of Arts in Military History from Norwich University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from LaSalle University with dual majors in sociology and criminal justice.