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Preparedness Stand-Downs: Cost-Effective Means of Maintaining Community Preparedness Levels

Maintaining preparedness levels in a community is critical to mitigate the impact of disasters and increase resilience, but requires time, personnel, training, and funding. Austere budget environments place limitations on each of those resources, challenging the ability of emergency management professionals to uphold sufficient preparedness levels in their respective communities.

Exercises are one of the principle means through which communities assess and enhance their preparedness levels. The efficacy of exercises is well-established, as is their cost in terms of time, money, and personnel utilization. Communities require a means of maintaining preparedness levels at a lower total cost.

The aviation industry has long relied on “Safety Stand-Downs”—single-day events focused on training and review of operational practices and procedures—to maintain focus on best-practices for effective operations at a low cost. The first responder and emergency management communities increasingly utilize Safety Stand-Downs and should extend the model to implement “Preparedness Stand-Downs” involving key disaster response decision-makers and personnel.

This poster recommends implementing Preparedness Stand-Downs as a cost-effective means of maintaining and enhancing community preparedness levels in austere budget environments which may limit the ability of communities to conduct exercises.

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