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Supply Chains in Crisis: Exploring Their Role in Emergency Management and Critical Infrastructure

Supply chains are critical in distributing essential goods, supporting communities, and facilitating recovery during crises. However, key supply chain components like retail, fulfillment centers, and e-commerce are not officially classified as critical infrastructure under the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) framework. This research aims to determine whether the supply chain should be classified as critical infrastructure and explores how this designation, or lack thereof, affects its integration into emergency management response frameworks. By conducting a literature review, case studies, and comparative analysis, the study will examine how disruptions in the supply chain - including natural disasters, cyberattacks, and organized crime - impact emergency response, recovery, and continuity of services. The findings will provide recommendations to enhance collaboration between public and private sectors, improve preparedness and response strategies, and mitigate risks to supply chain operations. Strengthening the resilience of these critical systems will support more effective disaster recovery and the efficient distribution of supplies, food, and water during emergencies.

Presentation Theme: Analyzing the operational significance of supply chains in emergency response and recovery, and evaluating their position within critical infrastructure and resilience planning.

Collaborators, Advisor(s) and Department(s) that assisted with this research: Collaborators: None

Advisor(s): Chad Foster, PhD – School of Safety, Security, and Emergency Management.

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