The Getting It Right Workshop

February 24th and 25th, 2015

Marriott City Center
Newport News, Virginia
About Portlight Strategies, Inc.

Portlight Strategies, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization, founded in 1997 to facilitate a variety of projects involving people with disabilities, including post-disaster relief work. Portlight's longest running disaster recovery effort followed the devastation of Superstorm Sandy in the shore communities of New Jersey and parts of New York City, and lasted for 18 months. During that time, we replaced lost durable medical equipment and ramping, and assisted residents in purchasing and installing accessibility equipment that was made necessary after their homes were elevated to meet federal flood insurance requirements.

Through ongoing programs like our Getting It Right conferences, we are working to promote self-determination of needs and issues with respect to disaster preparedness and response. We foster community relationships with these agencies to promote inclusiveness in disaster preparedness and response plans and to demand provisions for transportation and shelter accessibility.

About the Hampton Roads Regional Catastrophic Planning Team

The Hampton Roads Regional Catastrophic Planning Team (HRRCPT) is comprised of 22 cities and counties in Virginia and 2 counties in Northeast North Carolina. The project is funded through a Federal Emergency Management Agency “Catastrophic Planning Program Grant“ that is administered by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

The purpose of the HRRCPT is to represent the interest and needs of the member jurisdictions, state, regional and private stakeholders in a regional emergency management planning effort to develop a catastrophic emergency response plan for natural and man-made emergencies; specifically for Category 3 Hurricanes, the detonation of multiple Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and the hostile dispersal of aerosolized anthrax occurring in the Greater Hampton Roads Region.

Through this regional planning process, an emphasis of cooperation, collaboration and consolidation of effort has led to the development of a "Regional Catastrophic Response Framework" (Framework) consisting of an overview of the planning process, an identification and discussion of the roles and responsibilities of the major stakeholders at the local, state and federal levels, incident annexes for each of the three hazard categories noted above and support annexes for a regional approach to mass care, logistics, decision support, collaboration and communications issues that would result from a catastrophic event.

One of the main focuses of the HRRCPT planning process has been to engage the “whole of community” stakeholder groups, including the Functional and Support Services Community, to
open lines of communication and establish dialogue that will ultimately assist in the identification of needs and the development of effective response plans to assist in response and recovery efforts during emergencies. In addition, it is recognized that a well informed and educated public will greatly enhance the region's ability to both respond to and recover from the debilitating effects of a catastrophic event. This conference is an important part of our goal to inform, exchange information and educate stakeholders. The results of this program will ultimately improve our ability to plan for emergencies and minimize suffering and loss following a disaster. We thank you for your attendance and participation.
Day One - February 24, 2015
Agenda

8:00am–9:00am   Registration

9:00am–9:10am   Welcome – Portlight Strategies, Inc. and the Hampton Roads Catastrophic Planning Team

9:10am–10:30am  Susan Dooha, Executive Director of the Center for Independence of the Disabled New York (CIDNY)

Susan Dooha was one of the main plaintiffs in the lawsuit filed against the City of New York after hurricane Isaac. Susan has extensive experience in the Independent Living Movement, emergency preparedness and response for people with disabilities. Susan will discuss what led up to the case filed against the City of New York and solutions created as a result of the lawsuit.

10:30am–10:45am  Break

10:45am–12:00pm  Sid Wolinsky, Director of Litigation Disability Rights Advocates

The Disability Rights Advocates (DRA) represented CIDNY in the lawsuit filed against the City of New York. Sid will give a background on the DRA and how the DRA has helped people with disabilities. Sid will discuss the lawsuit filed against the City of New York and other lawsuits that have been filed as a result of the success in New York.

12:00pm–1:00pm   Lunch (provided)

1:00pm–2:15pm   Janet Schumacher, City of Charleston ADA Coordinator

Janet is an expert on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Janet will identify issues people with disabilities face during times of disaster. Janet will give tools to insure full ADA compliance which will decrease the risk of litigation.

2:15pm–2:30pm   Break

2:30pm–4:00pm  Cathie Hutchins, Virginia Senior Assistant Attorney General

Cathie Hutchins is with the Office of the Attorney General providing legal counsel to various public safety agencies. In this role she will review the state code as it applies to emergencies, shelter liabilities and the legal areas that need to be addressed at the local level.
Day Two - February, 25 2015

Agenda

8:00am–9:00 am  Registration

9:00am–10:15am  Marcie Roth, Office of Disability Integration and Coordination for the Department of Homeland Security / FEMA

Marcie was appointed by President Obama to her position in 2009. Since 2009, Marcie has led FEMA’s commitment to meet the access and functional needs of children and adults with disabilities in emergency and disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. Marcie will give insight to how FEMA serves people with disabilities on a national level during emergencies and disasters.

10:15am- 10:30am  Break

10:30am–11:45am  American Red Cross

Representatives from the American Red Cross will discuss how the organization has reorganized and restructured to better serve people with disabilities. The American Red Cross will share how the organization works with Portlight Strategies and similar organizations to serve people with disabilities before, during and after disasters.

11:45am–12:45pm  Lunch (provided)

12:45pm – 1:45pm  June Isaacson Kailes, Disability Policy Consultant

June is a pioneer of emergency management and people with disabilities. Her breadth and depth of experience in access and functional needs and her work as a writer, trainer, researcher, policy analyst and advocate is widely known and well respected. June will discuss best practices for emergency managers regarding people with disabilities.

1:45pm – 2:00pm  Break

(Continued on the next page)
2:00pm – 2:45pm   Table Top Exercises, Led by FEMA

This table top exercise was developed for the Integrating Access and Functional Needs into Emergency Planning class taught at the FEMA Emergency Management Institute. The purpose of this activity is to help explore how an emergency operation center functions during an emergency incident that disrupts normal operations. This exercise will test your knowledge of the principles of integrating and access and functional needs concerns into emergency management and identify solutions.

2:45pm – 3:00pm   Break

3:00pm – 4:00pm   Emergency Management Panel Discussion

The panel will consist of representatives from all aspects of emergency management for people with disabilities. Attendees will get the chance to ask the experts questions about integrating access and functional needs into emergency planning. This discussion will create valuable dialogue between the experts and emergency managers to create solutions to better serve people with access and functional needs before, during and after emergencies and disasters.

4:00pm – 4:10 pm   Wrap Up – Paul Timmons and Susan Mongold
Table Top Activity

**Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to help you explore how an emergency operations center (EOC) functions during an emergency incident that disrupts normal operations. You will be assigned an emergency support function (ESF) role and apply your understanding of the principle of integrating and access and functional needs concerns into emergency management and identify priorities for improvement within each ESF.

**Instructions:** Working in groups, review the questions below and – in a very general way – discuss ways to help fill critical gaps, then work together to integrate access and functional concerns into emergency response and recovery. Select a recorder to write your answers.

**Background:** Columbia County encompasses 685 square miles of low rolling hills and the Columbia Creek Basin. As of 2010, the population is 150,000. The county’s population grew 24% between the 2000 and the 2010 census. Much growth was the result of immigration from Mexico, India, and China.

- The Columbia County Unified School District manages 16 elementary schools, 8 middle schools, and 2 high schools. Two main highways bisect the county.
- Columbia County Transit (CCT) is in charge of bus operations across the county, with a fleet of 34 lift-equipped transit coaches.
- The nearest neighboring jurisdiction is of similar size and located approximately 50 miles south of Columbia City.

**Scenario:** It has been raining steadily in Columbia County for the last seven days, averaging 1.3 inches of rain each 24-period. The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a flood watch for the Columbia Creek basin. The continued rains prompt the NWS to raise that advisory from a flood watch to a flood warning. Two weeks ago, the Columbia County Department of Water Resources raised concerns about the integrity of the Columbia Dam.

**Roles and Responsibilities of the Emergency Support Functions (ESFs):**

- **ESF #1 – Transportation:** Aviation/airspace management and control; transportation safety; restoration/recovery of transportation infrastructure; movement restriction; damage and impact assessment.
- **ESF #2 – Communication:** Coordination with telecommunications and information technology industries; restoration and repair of telecommunication infrastructure; protection, restoration, and sustainment of national cyber and information technology resources; oversight of communications within the federal incident management and response structure.
• ESR #3 – Public Works and Engineering: Infrastructure protection and emergency repair; infrastructure restoration; engineering services and construction management; emergency contraction support for life-saving and life-sustaining services.
• ESF #4 – Firefighting: Coordination of federal firefighting activities; support to wildland, rural, and urban firefighting operations.
• ESF #5 – Information and Planning: Collects analyzes, processes, and disseminates information about a potential or actual incident; conducts planning activities.
• ESF #6 – Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, and Human Services: Mass care; emergency assistance; disaster housing; human services.
• ESF #7 – Logistics Management and Resource Support: Comprehensive, national incident logistics planning, management, and sustainment capability; resource support (facility space, office equipment and supplies, contracting services, etc.)
• ESF #8 – Public Health and Medical Services: Public health; medical; mental health services; mass fatality management

Initial Questions
• What would your agency do based on this information?
• Who would you notify/put on alert?
• What timeline or thresholds have you set possible evacuation orders, opening shelters and suspending or limiting public transportation?
• What would you tell the public based on current information?
• Do these actions differ when taking into consideration people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs?
• What are some out-of-the-box ways you could immediately begin to assist residents?

Command and Control
• When would you activate the county Emergency Operations Center?
• Which individual departments should activate their Departmental Emergency Operations Center?
• Who should be involved in unified command?
• What are your incident objectives?
• What is your incident action plan?
• What are your highest risk areas?
• What do you need to consider regarding donations and volunteer management?
• What are your high-risk public facilities? Whose responsibility is it to evacuate them?
• How do you know who may need evacuation assistance?
• What are the thresholds for considering a local disaster declaration?
• What are thresholds for requesting a state disaster declaration?
Interagency Coordination

- How are you connecting with agencies that serve people with access and functional needs and leveraging their skills, connections and capabilities?
- How are you engaging faith-based organizations and other non-governmental agencies?

Communications

- How will you communicate disaster risks with the public?
- How will you monitor and manage rumor control?
- When and where might you want to hold a news conference?
- How will you secure sign language interpreters?
- What other steps do you need to take to ensure that people with access and functional needs receive information?
- What do you do if traditional methods of communications (cell phones, landlines, cable, and Internet service) are inoperable? How will you communicate critical information to first responders, disaster response organizations, and residents?

Transportation

- What areas should be evacuated and when?
- What transportation do you have at your disposal?
- What additional resources might you put on standby?
- Will you modify policies and procedures for paratransit and public transportation (advanced reservation requirements; only serve clients who have previously registered or qualified for paratransit)? Whose input will you need to accomplish this?

Sheltering

- When and where will you establish evacuations centers and emergency shelters?
- What steps do you need to take to ensure that those shelters are accessible?
- What will you do about ad hoc shelters?
- How will you handle care for pets during the evacuation?

Recovery

- How soon after the water recedes will public transportation, paratransit and other services be restored?
- Consider individuals who may not have evacuated, but may now have needs due to home damage; lack of transportation, lack of power, or lack of community resources. How will these needs be identified and what options and resources are available to meet them?
- What supports may be available to assist community resources and service providers with recovering quickly in order to continue providing critical community services and supports?
INTRODUCTION

This exercise is designed to help you explore how an emergency operations center (EOC) functions during an emergency incident that disrupts normal operations. There are no wrong answers. This is a no-fault environment. The goal of this exercise is to help you identify gaps in emergency plans and procedures, and strategies for those gaps. We can leverage the combined knowledge of the group to identify common issues and recommendations to help guide your emergency response.

ACTIVITY STRUCTURE

• Each player will be assigned an emergency support function (ESF) role for the activity scenario.
• Players will be assembled in pods/tables so each table has multiple disciplines represented.
• The facilitators will present a scenario for consideration.
• All groups will work on the same scenario at the same time.
• Players are to discuss how they might respond to the information provided as if it were a real world event. It may be necessary to make assumptions. List any assumptions made during your report.
• Facilitators will periodically offer additional information about the scenario while the group is working these escalating injects may come at a rapid pace and require an adaptation.
• Each group will appoint a scribe to record the group’s proceedings and a speaker to share findings with all participants at the conclusion of the activity.
• Facilitators will lead a discussion at the conclusion of the activity to help identify common themes.
**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Players:** You will be assigned one of eight SF roles listed in the handouts. Respond to the situation presented based on your ESF role, knowledge of best practices and effective strategies, and insights derived from the training.
- **Facilitators/evaluators:** Provide injects based on the Master Scenario Event List (MSEL), answer questions players may have regarding their role in the exercise, and role-play essential response agencies not present at this venue. Facilitators will also lead a debrief at the conclusion of the activity.

**RULES**

You can get the most out of activity if you:

- **Participate** – Don’t worry if your experience level is less than others in the group. Offer your insights, ask questions, ask for clarifications and write down the names of people you want to contact later.
- **Avoid making right or wrong** – Offer your opinion but recognize different agencies have to deal with different realities. Resources can differ, political oversight can affect policies, and differing experience levels can affect what is possible.
- **Do not monopolize the discussion** – If you feel you have a lot of information to offer, ask questions to see if others have the same or similar information. You’ll always learn more by listening.
- **Dare to think outside the box** – This is safe environment to ask the question “what if?” Think of the possibilities.
**COLUMBIA COUNTY STATS**

**The City and County of Columbia**
Columbia City is located along Columbia Creek in the heart of Columbia County. As of 2010, the population is 152,000, 102,000 of which live within the city limits. The county’s population grew 24% between the 2000 and the 2010 census. Much of this growth was the result of immigration from Mexico, India, and China. The nearest neighboring jurisdiction is of similar size, and located some 50 miles southwest of Columbia City.

**Economy**
Primary industries in Columbia County include light manufacturing construction, tourism and regional distribution center for SmallMart America.

**Geography**
Columbia County encompassing a total of 685 square miles of low rolling hills, grasslands, forests, small lakes and streams. Lake Columbia is a reservoir just upstream from Columbia City with 560,000 acre-feet of water. The reservoir provided recreation, water retention and water protection for the county.

**Education**
Columbia County Unified School District manages 16 elementary schools, 8 middle schools and two high schools. Columbia Community College recently became a 4-year educational institution and enrolls approximately 3,000 students.
The Scenario

• Raining steadily for seven days, averaging 1.3 inches of rain each 24-hour period
• The National Weather Service (NWS) issued a flood watch for the Columbia River basin. Continued rains cause the NWS to raise that advisory from a flood watch to a flood warning.
• Two weeks ago, Columbia County Department of Water Resource raised concerns about integrity of Columbia Dam.

THE SCENARIO

Today’s disaster scenario involves Columbia City, located within Columbia County. This fictitious locale allows people from across the country to work together on a common scenario. Assume your normal duties/responsibilities, but for an organization in Columbia City or Columbia County. Use the scenario events to help develop thoughts on what actions you and your organization would or should take.

• It had been raining steadily for the past seven days, averaging 1.3 inches of rain each 24-hour period.
• The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a flood watch for the Columbia River basin. The continued rains cause the NWS to raise that advisory from a flood watch to a flood warning.
• Two weeks ago the Columbia County Department of Water Resource raised concerns about the integrity of the Columbia Dam.

COLUMBIA COUNTY FLOOD INUNDATION MAP
Baseline Questions

• What would your agency do based on this information?
• Who would you notify/put on alert?
• What thresholds would you establish for possible evacuation orders?
• What would you tell the public, based on current information?
• How would you disseminate this information?
• Do these actions differ when taking into consideration people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs?

INITIAL BRIEFING 8:30 A.M.

It has been raining steadily for the past seven days, averaging 1.3 inches of rain each 24 hour period. The National Weather Service issued a flood watch for the Columbia River basin.

Consider the baseline questions in your discussion.

STATUS 9:30 P.M.

The National Weather Service has just issued a flood warning for the Columbia River Basin. Flood waters are expected to crest six feet above flood stage at 6 p.m. today.
**STATUS 10:30 A.M.**

This is the Columbia County Department of Water Resource with an urgent message. With all the rains the Columbia Dam is showing signs of instability, forcing us to draw down the reservoir. Expected flows in the Columbia Creek will climb to 12,000 CFS, or six feet above flood stage, by 2 p.m. today.

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**STATUS 12:40 P.M.**

Columbia County Alzheimer’s Care, Inc. is requesting assistance with evacuation of their 22 clients.

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**STATUS 1:15 P.M.**

Columbia City Fire Department has a registry of 100 people who may need some “assistance evacuating”. Although, the office of Emergency Services estimates over 350 people have mobility disabilities that may need evacuations assistance. Columbia Fire reports that they have not yet had time to check on these folks, and that they have received 21 calls for evacuation assistance. Seven of those were on the registry and 14 are not.
Status 1:30 p.m.
Hello, this is Karen at the community center in Foothill estates right below the Columbia Dam. There are 18 people here who use mobility devices, who need assistance evacuating. As you know, we don’t have bus service here and Columbia Taxi is not ADA accessible. Can you send help?

Status 1:40 p.m.
Columbia Creek expected to crest 18 feet above flood stage by 9 p.m.

Status 2:10 p.m.
A police officer called the EOC reporting there is a crowd at a bus stop including 2 people using wheelchairs, 1 person using a scooter, 1 person with a walker, 3 children, 2 individuals that are deaf, 2 older adults who are hard of hearing, and 1 man who is blind. They believed this is where they needed to go to be evacuated. The officer wants to know what to tell them.

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STATUS 2:50 P.M.

- Holy Eucharist Church has called requesting transport of their parishioners who cannot access the shelter that church has established in the basement.
- Micky’s Diner has three customers that need evacuation. Two people using wheelchairs and one person using a scooter.

STATUS 6:00 P.M.

Floodwaters now at 18 feet above flood stage. Flooding into first floor of most structures on west side of town. Power loss reported in many portions of the city.

STATUS 8:20 P.M.

Army Corps of Engineers has completed a diversion channel south of Columbia City. Floodwaters are receding from the city.
City and County Inspectors report that significant flood damage has occurred in the downtown area and that as many as 3,500 homes may not be habitable.

REOC is requesting Situation Report to expedite federal disaster declaration.

What were the biggest challenges?
• What were the biggest surprises?
• Were any standards practices disrupted?
• In what ways is your community well-prepared for evacuation?
• Where are the biggest opportunities for improvement?
• What steps will you take to resolve gaps you have identified through this process?
Summary

• It does not always cost more to include access and functional needs elements, but does take LEADERSHIP, thought, time, and community partnerships in order for emergency plans to encompass the whole community.
• Checklists were developed for emergency planners and managers who have responsibility for developing, maintaining, testing, and revising emergency plans.

SUMMARY

It does not always cost more to include access and functional needs elements, but it does take LEADERSHIP, thought, time, and community partnerships in order for emergency plans to encompass the whole community, issues regarding people with disabilities and access and functional needs must be integrated into work priorities, work group tasks, exercise and drills, and grant applications. Communities should involve an access and functional needs liaison who will be given the authority, responsibility, and resources to integrate access and functional needs issues into emergency planning. The position should be written into emergency procedures and have the authority to be affective before, during, and after an emergency.

Summary Continued

• Many federal emergency grants allow funding for integrating access and functional needs projects.
• Emergency planners must integrate access and functional needs content into new and updated training so the subject is not considered “special”.

A checklist was developed for emergency planners and managers who have responsibility for developing, maintaining, testing, and revising emergency plans. It is designed to help:
• Evaluate current capacity
  • Involve people who have disabilities and other people who have access and functional needs
  • Identify areas needing attention
  • Set priorities
  • Assess program
• Develop inclusive emergency plans, policies, processes, protocols, training, and exercise programs together with people with disabilities and other people with disabilities and other people with access and functional needs.
• People with disabilities can be subject matter experts (SMEs) in every area from planning before disasters all the way to resource acquisition in recovery.
• Identify progress and determine which elements have been implemented by periodically updating the checklist. The results can be used to identify areas that need improvement.