

Distribution Management Plans

Effective 2019, all Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) recipients are required to develop and maintain a Distribution Management Plan as an annex to their Emergency Operations Plan.

Background

This fact sheet provides guidance on the development of Distribution Management Plans for State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) partners. EMPG recipients must:

- Establish and maintain an effective Distribution Management Plan
- Submit the plan to their respective FEMA Regional EMPG Program Manager and Logistics Branch Chief for review and feedback
- Review and update their Distribution Management Plan annually

FEMA has developed the Distribution Management Plan Guide and is available at developed the [Distribution Management Plan Guide](#)

Purpose of Distribution Management Plans

Distribution management means effective and efficient distribution of critical resources to disaster survivors in the community. Distribution management involves managing a comprehensive supply chain. This includes end to end commodity and resource management; warehouse and transportation operations to effectively and efficiently distribute supplies to distribution points and staging areas; provision of equipment and services to support incident requirements; and a mechanism for supplies and commodities to be provided to survivors. Distribution Management Plans enable SLTT partners to strengthen capabilities before a disaster to enhance capacities to distribute resources to survivors after a disaster. Distribution Management Plans address strategies/plans for each of the following components: Defining Requirements; Resource Ordering; Distribution Methods; Inventory Management; Transportation; Staging; and Demobilization.

Approach to Distribution Management

SLTT partners should consider these concepts when developing their Distribution Management Plan:

- **Focus on the SLTT Distribution Management Plan:** SLTT led distribution management provides clear direction and outcomes. Emergency management is locally executed and state managed; it is Federally supported when requested and appropriate.



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- **Collaborate with the whole community:** Partnership with the private sector, nonprofits, and SLTT partners can bridge the gap until supply chain systems are restored. Improved communication among all actors mitigates the risk of artificial demand and ensures government places teams and critical commodities in areas that support survivors and communities.
- **Explore and develop innovative solutions to getting resources into the hands of survivors:** Consider implementing new ways to mobilize commodity points of distribution (C-PODs), routes, and traffic patterns. Develop innovative messaging to inform the public of resource locations before a disaster. Work to preidentify nodes of critical supplies along major routes followed by memorandums of understanding to utilize these facilities for distribution.

Defining Requirements

What and how much is needed? Where and when is it needed? Who will be receiving or using it? Some of these requirements can be identified prior to an event based on the jurisdiction's hazard analysis, previous events and operations, demographic profiles, and modeling. Planning models and matrices help determine the resources necessary to assist affected populations. As resource requirements may exceed a jurisdiction's capability to manage its distribution, the amount of resources ordered should not exceed a jurisdiction's ability to store and distribute them; sending too many resources into a disaster area could hamper the response. While generic planning factors may be Fact Sheet Distribution Management Plans Federal Emergency Management Agency used, jurisdictions should refine the requirement based on anticipated demand for meals, water, mass care supplies, transportation of the resources, and an understanding of private sector capacity and capabilities. To ensure response efforts do not impede rapid recovery, it is necessary to engage with the private sector to understand the established the baseline (blue sky) norms, pre-disaster supply chain flow, and how disasters impede this flow.

Resource Ordering

Sourcing resources relies on establishing organic capabilities and capacity to provide commodities and equipment to disaster survivors based on the pre-identified jurisdictional requirements. Establishing multiple sourcing mechanisms mitigates supply chain risk. Thus, building existing internal capability and stocks—through developing standing, spot, or contingency contracts for resources, vendor managed inventory, logistics services, and warehousing and coordinating with nonprofit and other government partners (e.g., Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD), the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC))—is paramount to effective distribution management.

Distribution Methods

Methods of distribution describe how commodities are provided directly to the impacted community. The plan should include robust yet scalable methods to accommodate any level of disaster and support the characteristics of the affected communities. Direct distribution is when supplies are initially moved to a central location for staff to collect and redistribute through “door-to-door” residential delivery. Establishing commodity points of distribution (C-POD), another distribution method, provides an initial point(s) where survivors can obtain emergency relief supplies. C-PODs can be established in open areas or use existing community infrastructure (e.g., schools, athletic facilities,

community centers) or mass care facilities (e.g., shelters, food banks, cooling/warming stations, feeding kitchens, or state responders).

Inventory Management

Inventory management is the management of the quantity of commodities and equipment that an organization physically has on hand. Managing the acquisition, use, distribution, storage, and disposal of commodities and equipment is vital to identifying available resources, controlling costs, and improving the efficiency and readiness of an organization. Ineffective inventory management may result in a shortage or surplus of resources. Effective inventory management starts with a plan that incorporates proper assessment of needs; regular accounting of resources; standard, consistent, and understandable policies and procedures; and industry best practices.

Transportation

Transportation is the function of the supply chain, through the execution of coordinated transportation nodes to effectively deliver goods and services in an expeditious and efficient manner. Capacity, capability, speed, cost, resiliency, reliability, and robustness all contribute to a supply chain's ability to respond to demand or changes in demand while meeting mission requirements. Jurisdictions should describe transportation architecture (e.g., key routes and nodes) and inbound and outbound flows. Outbound flows may include evacuation and medical facility moves; inbound flows may include Urban Search and Rescue, power restoration, commodities, equipment, and medical assistance teams.

Staging

A staging area is a designated temporary site established in the community to receive and distribute emergency relief supplies (e.g., water, food, cots, blankets, tarps, generators) following an incident. Sites should be predetermined and assessed for equipment, staff, contracts, and other support needs. Sites may also be used to support and stage disaster relief personnel/equipment (e.g., search and rescue teams, damage assessment teams, security teams) for employment into affected areas.

Demobilization

Demobilization is when resources are retrieved, rehabilitated, replenished, disposed of, and retrograded. The Distribution Management Plan should address how the jurisdiction will conduct property reconciliation and an organized shut down of the response.

Support

For more information, please contact your respective FEMA EMPG Program Manager and Regional Logistics Branch.