



**Statement for the Record**  
**By Bruce Lockwood, CEM ®, President**  
**U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA)**  
**On**  
**United States Government Response: Fighting Ebola and Protecting America**  
**Committee on Appropriations**  
**United States Senate**  
**November 7, 2014**

Chairwoman Mikulski, Ranking Member Shelby, and distinguished members of the Committee, the U. S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA), our nation’s largest professional association representing emergency managers at every level of government and the private sector, appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony today on the important topic of our nation’s response to Ebola and our role in protecting the American people.

From Dallas, Texas, to Atlanta, Georgia, from Connecticut to Ohio and across America every community has been impacted by the Ebola outbreak and potential threat it poses for every jurisdiction, large and small, urban and rural, across the nation. The common denominator in all of these communities to providing an effective response is coordination and collaboration. And coordination and collaboration are what local emergency managers have a proven track record of accomplishing every day for all types of hazards that threaten our citizens.

In Dallas, Texas after America’s first Ebola patient was being transported to the hospital, emergency managers representing the city, county, transportation, hospitals, schools and universities and others helped activate the Dallas County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in coordination with the City of Dallas and the Texas Department of State Health Services. The EOC operated utilizing a Unified Command structure of city, county, and state public health officials. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and U. S. Public Health worked from the EOC as well in support of the community, the patient and the healthcare providers.

Successful operation of an EOC in any jurisdiction, in any emergency, is made possible through important planning and training in advance of such events. Much of this preparedness is made possible through the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) provided to state and local emergency managers through the U. S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The EMPG program focuses on all-hazards preparedness, response, recovery and

mitigation at the state, local and tribal levels of government for those entities statutorily charged with such responsibility. It is important to note that EMPG is the only source of grant funding that provides for the development of “all hazards” capability. This grant program requires a 50% state and local match thus reinforcing the concept that effective emergency management is, and needs to continue to be, a partnership among all levels of government. We urge the Committee to consider increasing funding and support for this program that demonstrates the effectiveness of shared investments in public safety and collaboration of government at every level.

Another key to the effectiveness of the response in Dallas was the training of local emergency managers in the coordination of such a large and developing event. Dallas County Emergency Management Agency Chief Doug Bass credits the training he recently received through the new National Emergency Management Executive Academy offered at the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) operated by FEMA in Emmitsburg, Maryland for better preparing him and his staff for what would unfold. Chief Bass says, “. . . the leadership and decision-making approaches shared through this advanced leadership training by FEMA were critical in making our response stronger.” This program for advanced emergency management training across the nation is in its infancy; it utilizes academic and proven leadership experts from Harvard, the Naval Post Graduate School and the University of Hawaii to teach principles and practical skills to emergency managers with real “on the ground” responsibilities for our citizens’ safety. IAEM-USA urges the Committee to consider boosting funding for this program and the other emergency management academies at EMI so that more emergency managers across the nation are afforded the opportunity to take advantage of this tremendous training asset.

In Ohio, more than 160 persons were under 21 days of observation for Ebola after possible exposure. There, all 88 Ohio counties operated under a Unified Command structure with the State of Ohio EOC being activated and local EOCs likewise opened to provide for maximum coordination between public health, emergency management, emergency medical service, law enforcement, the fire service and hospitals at the local and state levels. CDC and U. S. Public Health also worked out of the state EOC and deployed as needed to various counties.

Several problems have been identified in Dallas, as well as, across the nation that can and must be improved upon before the next emergency occurs. These included inconsistency from state to state in regards to how to address issues such as the monitoring of potentially exposed persons, the proper protective equipment to be utilized by first responders and healthcare providers, and community education in general. These inconsistencies led to confusion, mistrust and even hysteria in some jurisdictions. “For example, we had a contractor being denied access to the barber shop where he’d gone for 20 years, simply because he had worked on sanitizing the home of an Ebola patient,” explained emergency manager Doug Bass of Dallas. This type of reaction by the public is unwarranted and unacceptable and we must do a better job of educating our citizens on the factual realities of this or any other emergency. IAEM-USA urges this Committee and the federal government to take a serious look into establishment of standardized

responses and community education materials that can be developed by our federal partners to be delivered by local officials at the local level.

In Connecticut, that state's robust Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) served as a model of a collaborative system already in place to address issues during a public health crisis. The MMRS program was originally established by DHS as a part of the post-9/11 grant programs as an individual grant program. However, it has now become just one of many eligible items under the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP) where funding has been significantly reduced and distributed over numerous programs with competing interests, thus diluting the effectiveness of the MMRS program nationally. In fact, some states are without an MMRS program all together today because of this shift in funding priorities and disbursement.

In all of these examples it is clear that collaboration and coordination are essential for a successful response. These types of emergencies require multi-discipline, multi-jurisdictional responses and the planning for, response to and recovery from these types of "all hazards" incidents uniquely fits the emergency management system that we currently operate every day across America at all levels of government. Partnerships and unified command structures succeed because of careful advance planning, training, and exercising on a continuous basis. Current available training from DHS in the areas of Incident Command, Unified Command and the National Incident Management System (NIMS) served all jurisdictions well in addressing the needs during this Ebola crisis and efforts to continue these valuable training programs should be maintained, or even expanded. Additionally improved collaboration between our federal partners such as Department of Health and Human Services on development of standards for effective treatment and response, Department of Transportation on standards for transportation of Ebola-contaminated waste, and DHS on training and exercise guidance for public health emergencies would all prove useful and demonstrate leadership.

As with all emergencies, lessons are learned and preparedness improves, "I believe that overall we did a great job here in Dallas" said Doug Bass, IAEM-USA member and Dallas County emergency manager. "The actions we took and collaboration and partnerships strengthened through this response will work to make us better prepared and even stronger for the next event.

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IAEM-USA is our nation's largest association of emergency management professionals, with over 8,000 members including emergency managers at the state and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business and the nonprofit sector. Most of our members are U.S. city and county emergency managers who perform the crucial function of coordinating and integrating the efforts at the local level to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters including terrorist attacks

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