



## 2017 Annual Report to the Coalition of North Eastern Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers

On behalf of the dedicated members of the International Emergency Management Group, it is with great pleasure that we present the IEMG 2017 Annual Report.

This reporting year was another challenging but productive year for IEMG member jurisdictions. As a group, member jurisdictions have opened their Emergency Operations Centers 54 times. Of those activations, 49 were for weather and the others for elections, sporting events or police incidents. This is an interesting acknowledgement of the undeniable effects that severe weather and associated changes in climate has on our society and economy. When our communities face significant impacts and losses from emergencies it often highlights the interdependencies between critical infrastructure sectors we often take for granted.

Identifying mitigation opportunities, preparing for incidents and emergencies, reviewing and updating plans often constitute the primary efforts of our emergency management professionals. During this reporting period, our member jurisdictions were involved in conducting and participating in over 140 reported exercises. Some of these exercises were state or province wide and others were municipally focused, all of them maintained a theme of multi-agency cooperation and collaboration. While these are time consuming efforts, the exercises are a basic foundational component of preparedness activities that test and validate response and recovery plans.

Disaster recovery continues to be a long and arduous process, for most it will take several years to return to any state of normalcy following a disaster. IEMG member jurisdictions reported 11 ongoing/new disaster financial assistance programs in seven jurisdictions to a current, with an estimated, value of \$400 Million.

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Coalition of North Eastern Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers on activities of the International Emergency Management Group (IEMG) for the period of June 2016 through May 2017.



## **Mission:**

The International Emergency Management Assistance Compact provides a framework for participating jurisdictions to render mutual aid to each other when preparing for, responding to, or recovering from an emergency or disaster. Members of the International Emergency Management Group meet face-to-face at least twice each year, and maintain in close communication throughout the year via email and conference calls to enhance regional situational awareness and provide opportunities for collaborative emergency management planning, training, exercises, and sharing of best practices.

## **General:**

The role and responsibility of the International Emergency Management Group (IEMG) is to enhance the capability of member jurisdictions to extend support to provinces and states in the preparation for, response to, and recovery from, significant emergency events. The member jurisdictions of IEMG have remained dedicated to developing the capacity to respond to these events through mutual aid support. This capability has been maintained by regularly meeting, training, and exercising.

## **Member Jurisdictions**

### **Eastern Canadian Provinces:**

New Brunswick  
Newfoundland and Labrador  
Nova Scotia  
Prince Edward Island  
Quebec

### **New England States:**

Connecticut  
Maine  
Massachusetts  
New Hampshire  
Rhode Island  
Vermont

## **Meetings of the IEMG**

The International Emergency Management Group met twice during the 12-month period covered by this report: in New Hampshire in November of 2016 and in St. Andrews, NB in June of 2017. The meetings are summarized below:



***2016 Fall Session – New Hampshire Agenda Topics:***

- Report - Top 10 Resource Requests Common to IEMG Jurisdictions
- Report - CBP/CBSA Border Crossing Project
- Presentation - Steve Gutkin, New Jersey Podcast Program
- Presentation - Matt McCann, US DHS, Cross Border Energy Sector Resiliency
- Presentation - Chief Steve Achilles, Seacoast Incident Management
- Presentation - NH Architects and Engineers Emergency Response Task Force
- Presentation - NH & MA Emergency Management Training Academies
- Presentation - NH Joint Information Center
- Operations Manual review and exercise notification results

***2017 Spring Session – St. Andrews, New Brunswick Agenda Topics:***

- Presentation - Rear Admiral John Newton, Commander Regional Joint Task Force Atlantic
- Presentation and Final Report – Mark Gillan, Bi-National HazMat Interoperability Project
- Presentation – UPEI, Economic Loss Analysis of the Confederation Bridge
- Report – Bi-National Mutual Aid Interoperability Working Group; exploring the three International Compacts and opportunities to enhance collaboration
- Best Practice Sharing – ME, Aroostook EMA and NB Facebook Page
- Presentation - Quebec Spring 2017 Flooding
- Presentation - NB 2017 Ice Storm
- Presentation - Halifax Explosion
- Presentation - NS 2016 Drought and Water Distribution
- Operations Manual review and exercise notification results
- PEI was voted in for a two-year term as Canadian Co-Chair

***Near Term Objectives:***

**Continue to solidify working relationships and partnerships with both Canadian Border Services Agency and the US Customs and Border Protection.** This objective will enable expedient border crossing of emergency management resources requested under the IEMAC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

**Continue to share incident/event situational awareness reports among the IEMG member jurisdictions.** With this objective there will be a requirement to update and maintain current distribution lists at Director and Operational levels and with other emergency management partners.

**Continue to work on emergency management (EM) prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery activities as they relate to hazardous materials (HAZMAT) transport.** State and provincial emergency management entities continue to work with key response and stakeholders to maintain situational awareness of the challenges and



changes regarding the transport of hazardous materials. The PEI led, Canadian federally funded, Bi-National HazMat project, provided a final report and identified critical next steps to continue interoperability and leverage resources and expertise from neighbouring and partnering agencies and jurisdictions. While the focus of this project has been on the capability of hazardous materials incident response the outcomes has demonstrated an alignment with other capabilities. For example the exchange of health care workers, fire fighters, and urban search and rescue all face similar approach and challenges.

**Continue to identify opportunities to offer and impediments to offering support and resources through the IEMAC MOU.** There is a need to identify and develop strategies to overcome legal impediments and provide opportunities to gain first hand experiences through staff support exchange during incidents and events acknowledging the approach of 'experience is the best teacher'.

**Continue the efforts previously started via the Bi-National HazMat project which explored a more consolidated and consistent approach of the three bi-national agreements, including NEMAC, PNEMA and IEMAC.** While it is paramount to respect jurisdictional uniqueness of the three groups, there are several opportunities to align to a common process and share valuable insight among these compacts. Further efforts in this area could see a reduction of duplication of effort, enhanced economies of scale, and identification and implementation of best practices when responding to emergencies and disasters across member jurisdictions.

**Conduct and participate in a tabletop exercise which will exercise the IEMAC Operations Plan.** This objective will ensure a state of readiness throughout and within all jurisdictions.

**Develop and publicize a comprehensive training and exercise schedule which will expand training awareness and opportunities for all jurisdiction members.**

## Challenges

There remains a need for to identify opportunities to promote awareness of the IEMAC with our emergency response partners and stakeholders in all member jurisdictions. The ability to provide a prompt, effective and efficient response to any emergency or incident impacting our regions requires familiarity and partnership, both of which are integral components of the compact. Broadening awareness and understanding will strengthen capacity and continue to enhance interoperability between agencies and jurisdictions.

Weather is the common hazard we each face and as a result of changes in our climate, we are seeing weather events impact our regions with increased intensity and frequency. In fact, over



90% of the EOC activations within our member jurisdictions this reporting period were as a result of severe weather. Some of these events impacted with such magnitude that they resulted in disaster declarations and financial assistance programs being offered. These programs can easily cost jurisdictions millions of dollars in recovery costs. Without considerable efforts to mitigate and better prepare, we will continue to see these number increase in the years to come.

Budgetary constraints and changes to the political landscape have challenged all member jurisdictions in some way. As a result there is a need for continued exploration of other opportunities and ways to allow for greater engagement of operational and support staff in the IEMG.

**Fall Session Vermont:**

Efforts have already started to define the work for the remainder of 2017 and into 2018 to advance the identified strategic goals and next steps. The next IEMG meeting will take place in September 2017 in Fairlee, Vermont, followed by the 2018 spring session to be hosted by Nova Scotia.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Campbell  
Canadian Co-Chair

Perry Plummer  
United States Co-Chair