



2019 Annual Report to the Coalition of North Eastern Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers

The member states and provinces of the International Emergency Management Group are pleased to present the IEMG 2019 Annual Report.

In the past, much of emergency management organizations' efforts have focused on response and recovery, but with an ever-evolving risk landscape, we are realizing that more work needs to be done on understanding and mitigating disaster risks. Jurisdictions in the United States and Canada are looking at ways to bring government, business, organizations, and individuals together to identify and reduce the impact of disaster risks. While risk can never be completely removed, its effects can be prevented and reduced through partnerships, innovation, and mutual support. IEMG provides an important opportunity for our jurisdictions to discuss challenges, share ideas, and work together to find new approaches to disaster risk reduction.

These risks are changing over time. For example, in 2018-2019 at least six IEMG jurisdictions responded to extreme rainfall or flooding events. At the other end of the spectrum, some of the organizations supported responses for extreme heat, drought/water shortages, and wildfires caused by dry conditions. These emerging challenges require strategic planning and focused training and exercising opportunities for the communities we serve. IEMG member jurisdictions have risen to the challenge, offering a total of 120 exercises and over 240 training opportunities.

In May 2018, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicted an above-average hurricane season with higher levels of activity. The season unfolded as predicted, with 15 named storms, eight hurricanes, and two major hurricanes (Florence and Michael). This was the third hurricane season in a row that had above-average activity, and the fourth in a row where hurricane activity began before June 1. 2018 was also the first season in ten years to have four named storms active at the same time. NOAA has predicted an average hurricane season for 2019 anticipating 4-8 hurricanes, 2-4 of which will become major.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Coalition of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers on the activities of the International Emergency Management Group (IEMG) for the period of June 2018 through May 2019.



Mission:

The International Emergency Management Assistance Compact (IEMAC) 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 a year and maintain close communication 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.

Mandate:

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 Providence, Rhode Island October 23-24, 2018 and in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador on June 11-12, 2019.

2018 Fall Session – Providence, RI discussion:

- Presentation and Group Participation – Director William Hackett and Attorney Brenda Bergeron (Connecticut) facilitated a group discussion on response and recovery awareness from a cybersecurity related Black Sky Event, as exercised in their state.
- Presentation – Tom McQuarrie, ACS Disaster Response Coordinator for Southern New England on the challenges and best practices for donations.
- Presentation – Information on the Cross Border Electric Energy Regional Resiliency Assessment Program was presented by Matthew McCann (DHS).



- Presentation – Ryan FitzSimons, Gigunda Group Inc., discussed Private Sector Assistance.
- Presentation – Shawn O'Rourke (Rhode Island), on the Rhode Island State Resiliency Project and the establishment of RIEC4.

2019 Spring Session – St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador Topics:

- Discussion – Strategic Plan for IEMG.
- Presentation – Mikael Main (MA) on the 2018 Merrimack Valley Gas Explosion.
- Presentation – Amir Ali Khan, NL Water Resource Division on the Hurricane Season Flood Alert System in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Discussion – Climate change adaptation and changes to jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans.
- Presentation – Adi Jakupovic on the Spring 2019 floods in Quebec.

Near Term Objectives:

Update Action Plan for IEMG. At the spring meeting in Newfoundland and Labrador, the group identified five areas of focus for future planning at the upcoming IEMG meeting in Fall 2019 in Connecticut:

- Improved situational awareness among IEMAC jurisdictions
- Updated Report Out Form for distribution during and after events
- Increased focus on sharing lessons learned and best practices
- Increased focus on sharing training and exercising opportunities
- Review of best practices and impediments to cross-border resource sharing

Collaboration with the Climate Change Steering Committee (CCSC) as directed by the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers resolution from August 2017 through sharing information, improving communications, and building climate-related risks and vulnerabilities into planning and decision making.

Emergency management (EM) training and exercising in prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery activities as they relate to hazardous materials (HazMat) transport. State and provincial emergency management entities are working with key partners to maintain enhanced situational awareness of the challenges regarding the transport of hazardous materials.

Promote alignment of the approach of the three bi-national agreements, including the Northern Emergency Management Assistance Compact, Pacific Northwest Emergency Management Arrangement and International Emergency Management Assistance Compact. IEMG recognizes that these three jurisdictions are unique, but believes that opportunities exist to create common



processes and share valuable insight among these compacts. Benefits would include reducing duplication, realizing economies of scale, and identifying and implementing best practices for emergency and disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery across member jurisdictions.

Opportunities and Challenges

The increasing severity of weather events in combination with our reliance on critical infrastructure for day to day life is a key area of challenge for emergency management officials. During the past year our various jurisdictions have experienced examples of storm-related flooding, power outages and transportation disruptions. These challenges provide us with an opportunity to refine our skills and operational processes while continuing to learn and share best practices amongst our various IEMAC jurisdictions.

During the upcoming year IEMAC members will be participating in joint training and exercising activities focused on identifying opportunities for further alignment of operational processes, refining cross-border collaboration/asset sharing and exercising opportunities. Through this work the IEMAC will continue to strengthen the relationships and shared capacity between our jurisdictions.

Fall Session:

Members have already begun the development of the agenda for the Fall 2019 meeting. Work and associated deliverables relating to the Near-Term Objectives noted above will be the focus of discussions. The next IEMG meeting will take place this November in Connecticut.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Mason
Canadian Co-Chair

Erica Borneman
United States Co-Chair