

ANNEX P

Hazard Mitigation



STATE OF TEXAS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Revised August, 2008/Updated February, 2013

STATE OF TEXAS
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

ANNEX P
HAZARD MITIGATION

APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION

This annex is hereby accepted for implementation and supersedes all previous editions.

08/05/08
Date

SIGNED

Jack Colley
Chief
Texas Division of Emergency Management

Definition of Terms

Acronyms

ARC	American Red Cross
CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
DDC	Disaster District Committee
DMA	Disaster Mitigation Act
DSR	Disaster Summary Report
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMA	Flood Mitigation Assistance
FMP	Flood Mitigation Plan
GAR	Governor's Authorized Representative
GLO	General Land Office
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
IA	Individual Assistance
JFO	Joint Field Office
LCRA	Lower Colorado River Authority
MAP	Mitigation Action Plan
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NRF	National Response Framework
ORCA	Office of Rural Community Affairs
PA	Public Assistance
PDM	Pre-Disaster Mitigation
PDM-C	Pre-Disaster Mitigation-Competitive
RAU	Rapid Assessment Unit
RFC	Repetitive Flood Claims
RRC	Railroad Commission
SCO	State Coordinating Officer
SHMO	State Hazard Mitigation Officer
SHMT	State Hazard Mitigation Team
SOC	State Operations Center
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SRL	Severe Repetitive Loss
TCEQ	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
TDEM	Texas Division of Emergency Management
TDI	Texas Department of Insurance
TEEX	Texas Engineering Extension Service
TFS	Texas Forest Service
TPWD	Texas Parks and Wildlife
TWDB	Texas Water Development Board
TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation
TxGS	Texas Geographical Society
WISE	Wind Science & Engineering

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ANNEX P

HAZARD MITIGATION

I. AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES 1

II. PURPOSE..... 1

III. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS 1

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS..... 1

V. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES 6

VI. DIRECTION AND CONTROL 10

VII. EMERGENCY RESPONSE LEVEL/ACTION GUIDES 10

VIII. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT 10

IX. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT 11

X. DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE 12

APPENDICES

- 1. STATE HAZARD MITIGATION TEAM ORGANIZATION
- 2. STATE HAZARD MITIGATION TEAM ACTION GUIDE

ANNEX P

HAZARD MITIGATION

I. AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

- A. See Basic Plan, Section I.
- B. The Stafford Act as amended by the Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000 (Public Law 106-390)
- C. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44 (Emergency Management and Assistance)
- D. State of Texas Mitigation Plan, October 25, 2007

II. PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this annex is twofold:
 - 1. To identify emergency support function (ESF) tasks for hazard mitigation, and
 - 2. To define responsibilities and procedures for taking action to eliminate or reduce long-term vulnerability risk to life and property from natural hazards.
- B. This annex is applicable to all State Hazard Mitigation Team (SHMT) member agencies, all other agencies, organizations, and personnel with hazard mitigation ESF responsibilities.
- C. The primary focus of this annex is to coordinate state-level hazard mitigation activities. The coordination of state-level disaster recovery activities is addressed in Annex J, Recovery.

III. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

See Basic Plan, Section III.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. State MITIGATION POLICY AND STRATEGY

- 1. The State of Texas formulates its mitigation policy and strategy pursuant to National Incident System (NIMS) operating principles and protocols, and integrates with the National Response Framework as required. Within this perspective, the State views mitigation as encompassing two equally important components: pre-event mitigation, and post event mitigation.
- 2. Pre-event mitigation involves proactive measures undertaken by state and local officials to reduce or prevent loss of life and property that may occur in the future. Pre-event mitigation includes, but is not limited to, activities and measures to identify

risks and vulnerabilities that threaten citizens and their property, economies, and resources in local jurisdictions. The key and initial step in pre-event mitigation is to conduct a comprehensive quantitative hazard assessment. This process will not only identify risks and vulnerabilities, but prioritizes hazardous conditions responsible government officials must address to protect lives and property in the community. The Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) publishes a comprehensive State Hazard Analysis document which addresses the major natural and hazards that can affect most communities in the state.

3. Post-event mitigation activities are reactive measures that take advantage of funds only available after a declared presidential disaster occurs. These measures are undertaken to recover and rebuild in such a way that it prevents future loss of life, property, damages. The duality of this strategy recognizes multi-peril conditions can frequently occur each year throughout the state. Post mitigation activities include determining the major or contributing causes of losses and acting on appropriate measures to prevent a recurrence of those losses.
4. Hazardous conditions exist within the State of Texas with the potential to cause loss of life, inflict injuries, cause major property damage, and degrade important natural resources. Effective response to emergencies, such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, wildfires, conflagration, or hazardous materials releases will continue to be a high priority for all levels of government in Texas. While disaster recovery costs continue to escalate, considerable opportunities are still available to lessen these costs through proactive mitigation activity. The Texas Disaster Act of 1975, the Emergency Management Council, and the State Hazard Mitigation Team were created to help in these efforts.
5. State support and assistance will be provided as required and identified in the State Hazard Mitigation Plan for the conduct of mitigation activities. These policies provide the state with an effective means to assist Texans in mitigating losses in a timely, cost-effective manner. Hazard mitigation actions are evaluated and implemented based on existing state and federal mitigation grant programs and guidance.
6. A State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO), under TDEM, is responsible for administering hazard mitigation programs and projects. The SHMT acts as the focal point for comprehensive mitigation actions, with the SHMO as team leader. The SHMT conducts disaster site surveys, assists in processing applications for grant programs, monitors status of projects through completion, and forwards project recommendations to the Governor that will impact upon the prevention of losses. CFR 44 requires the state to appoint a SHMO.

B. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the State Hazard Mitigation Team (SHMT) is to:

1. Bring together staff personnel from state agencies to identify areas of vulnerability and problems intrinsic to different types of hazards.
2. Develop strategies to prevent or reduce loss of life, damage to property, and degradation of natural resources from those hazards for the state.

3. Review and recommend funding for specific mitigation projects.
4. Make specific recommendations to the Chief-TDEM for changes to state regulations, plans, or laws, which can reduce the risk of loss to the citizens of Texas.

C. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

1. Based on situational requirements, Council member agencies may provide staff to the Joint Field Office (JFO) and to field disaster site assessment teams. Representatives may serve in both a primary and/or support agency role. To facilitate accomplishment of assigned responsibilities, the number of agency personnel needed at each site will be based on operational requirements and coordinated with the appropriate primary agency by the SHMO.
2. Agency representatives serving on or in support of the SHMT are charged with understanding the hazard mitigation program objectives, and Team roles, as well as coordinating resource requests, and deployment, and accountability requirements for assets or services that are at each agency's and/or organizations disposal.
3. The SHMO or the designated representative will locate for field operations at the JFO and work under the direction of the Chief-TDEM/Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR).
4. Upon activation after a major disaster, the Team will operate from the JFO or in the field as required or appropriate. Length of service time required will be based on TDEM operational demands.

D. HAZARD MITIGATION SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Hazard mitigation activities include:

1. Develop and maintain the State Hazard Mitigation Plan which contains the strategies to implement and administer procedures for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program.
2. Provide guidance and assistance to local government in the development and implementation of appropriate mitigation measures that include, but are not limited to, technical advice, planning support, and training.
 - a. Technical assistance consists of on-site and hands-on review and approval of on-going mitigation projects, assistance in completion of mitigation grant applications and providing answers to technical mitigation issues.
 - b. Planning assistance includes guidance on the preparation of hazard risk and vulnerability assessments, review of local hazard analyses, review of eligible mitigation projects, and assistance with mitigation project applications. An integral part of hazard mitigation planning is assisting local emergency management coordinators develop mitigation action plans and Annex P for the local emergency management plan.

- c. Mitigation training is provided to local jurisdictions upon request. This training is offered to assist in the development of a comprehensive mitigation program which should include mitigation-planning, strategies, identification of hazards, vulnerabilities, and potential resources.
- d. The review of Disaster Summary Reports (DSRs), technical data, hazard mitigation study reports, and other available research data to identify areas of vulnerability and problems intrinsic to different types of hazards.
- e. Assisting with the development of strategies that can prevent or reduce loss of life, damage to property and degradation of the state's natural resources from the effects of hazards.
- f. Annual review and update of the State Hazard Mitigation Plan in coordination with federal, state, and any local authorities. Make recommendations through the Chief to the Governor of changes to state regulations, plans, standards, or laws that may reduce risk or loss to the citizens of Texas.
- g. The SHMT will routinely meet to review and recommend funding for mitigation projects submitted by local jurisdictions. Each agency representative may provide data that may have a bearing on project approval. The SHMT may develop strategies to prevent or reduce loss of life, damage to property, and degradation of natural resources of the state.

E. DISASTER MITIGATION ACT (DMA) OF 2000 (PUBLIC LAW 106-390)

The Stafford Act, as amended by the DMA 2000, requires local jurisdictions and the state to maintain a current Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved Mitigation Action Plan (MAP).

1. STATE STATUS

The State of Texas has a FEMA-approved Standard Mitigation Plan. This allows the state to receive Individual Assistance (IA), Public Assistance (PA), and mitigation grant funds. The standard plan entitles the state to HMGP funds, or 15% of the total amount authorized for IA and PA. The state also has the option to do an Enhanced Mitigation Plan thereby qualifying the state for 20% HMGP funds.

2. LOCAL STATUS

Local jurisdictions must either have or be a signatory to a state and FEMA approved Mitigation Action Plan (MAP) in order to be eligible for mitigation grant funds for mitigation projects. The state hazard mitigation section will review local plans before forwarding them to FEMA for final approval.

F. MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAMS

1. HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM (HMGP)

The HMGP is authorized by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and is only available in the event of a federal disaster declaration.

HMGP is set at 15% of the total federal Individual Assistance and Public Assistance costs. It incorporates a 75/25 federal/local cost share disbursement procedure. Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, acquisition and demolition of hazard-prone properties, small-scale structural hazard control/protection projects, retrofitting facilities, elevation of hazard-prone properties, and development of the federally required MAP.

2. PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION-COMPETITIVE (PDM-C) PROGRAM

The PDM-C grant program is authorized by Section 203 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5133 as amended by the DMA 2000 (Public Law 106-390). The PDM-C Program is an annual grant program that assists states and local communities in implementing long-term hazard mitigation measures by providing a means to fund pre-disaster hazard mitigation actions specifically designed to eliminate or reduce the consequences of future disasters. The PDM-C's focus is:

- a. To prevent future loss of life and property due to hazards, and
- b. To create state or local hazard mitigation action plans. The program is administered by TDEM. Information on how to apply for PDM-C is posted on the TDEM website as it becomes available. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) also provides guidance at the following website: <http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pdm/index.shtm>

3. FLOOD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE (FMA) PROGRAM

- a. The FMA grant program is an annual program that funds planning grants and small projects and is a 75/25 federal/local cost share program.
- b. The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) administers the FMA program. Awards are given to develop Flood Mitigation Plans (FMP) and to implement projects from FEMA approved Flood Mitigation Plans. Information on the FMA Program can be found at the following website: http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/assistance/financial/fin_FloodMitigation/Flood_mitigation_program.asp

4. REPETITIVE FLOOD CLAIMS (RFC) PROGRAM

- a. The RFC grant program provides funding to reduce or eliminate long-term risk of flood damage to structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) having one or more claim payments for flood damage.
- b. RFC funds may only mitigate structures located within a state or community and cannot meet the requirements of the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program for either cost share or capacity to manage the activities reasons.
- c. The long-term goal of RFC is to reduce or eliminate claims under the NFIP through mitigation activities in the best interest of the National Flood Insurance Fund (NFIF).

- d. All RFC grants are eligible for up to 100% federal assistance. Information on the RFC Program can be found at the following website: <http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/rfc/index.shtm>
- 5. SEVERE REPETITIVE LOSS (SRL) PROGRAM
 - a. The SRL grant program is an annual program that provides funding to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to severe repetitive loss structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The SRL grant program will provide funding assistance for eligible flood mitigation projects and is a 75/25 federal/local cost share program.
 - b. The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) administers the SRL program. Information on the SRL Program can be found at the following website: http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/publications/requestforproposals/RFA_SRL_2008.htm

V. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. ORGANIZATION

All ESF groups identified in the Basic Plan are composed of personnel and resources from several state agencies and organizations. Each group is directed by a primary agency selected on the basis of its authority and capability in that particular functional area. Other agencies and organizations within the group have supporting roles based on their ability to provide equipment, personnel, and expertise in support of the functional tasks. The agencies and organizations that comprise this ESF group are listed in Appendix 1 to this Annex.

B. ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

1. GENERAL

All agencies assigned to the hazard mitigation ESF (e.g., the State Hazard Mitigation Team) will actively participate in team meetings, respond to disasters, and deliberate on mitigation projects. Team members will:

- a. Designate and train representatives of their agency to serve as team members, who will actively participate in all team assignments.
- b. Possess a working knowledge of the strategies and goals of the State Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- c. Ensure the capabilities of their agency are identified and available to accomplish the goals and objectives of the State Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- d. Identify staff requirements and maintain current notification procedures to ensure appropriately trained agency personnel are available for extended emergency duty in the EOC, JFO and, as required, on field assessment teams.

- e. Ensure appropriate elements of the State Hazard Mitigation Plan and standard operating procedures (SOPs) are reviewed and annually updated.

2. PRIMARY AGENCY

The primary agency for hazard mitigation is TDEM. The Division is responsible for state-level coordination of hazard mitigation activities, services, and responsible to accomplish the following:

- a. Designate the SHMO to coordinate and facilitate all state mitigation-related functions and responsibilities.
- b. Coordinate SHMT activities.
- c. Provide guidance and assistance to local governments in developing and implementing local mitigation action plans and formation of local hazard mitigation teams.
- d. Assist local governments in the development of local hazard analysis and mitigation action plans.
- e. Conduct hazard mitigation workshops for local governments.
- f. Develop, maintain, and implement the State Hazard Mitigation Plan, which includes administration elements for the HMGP, PDM, and RFC programs.
- g. Determine staff mitigation requirements appropriate to the disaster.
- h. Publicize the types of hazard mitigation assistance available and process requests for such assistance.
- i. Collect information from support agencies and provide reports concerning emergency support operations.
- j. Develop and maintain this annex as required.
- k. Implement the requirements set forth in this annex.

3. SUPPORT AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

All Hazard Mitigation ESF support member representatives (e.g., SHMT members) shall be knowledgeable of the capabilities of their agency to provide assistance and support; be prepared to provide support recommendations to the primary agency representative; and respond to mission assignments made by the designated direction and control authority for the deployment and use of agency-owned, leased, or unique assets.

a. General Land Office (GLO)

Coordinates coastal mitigation issues such as prevention of beach erosion and improvement of the quality of beaches.

b. Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC)

Provides expertise regarding the location and movement of crude petroleum products within Texas that could affect mitigation proposals.

c. Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA)

(1) Provides policy and possible resources to local governments in an effort to prevent households from locating or relocating into flood-prone areas or zones.

(2) Administers a grant program to assist local governments with the 25% match for approved HMGP projects.

d. Texas Department of Insurance (TDI)

(1) Educates insurance policyholders on methods and types of products to reduce losses, claims, lower insurance premiums, and increase the availability of insurance.

(2) Works with the manufacturing industry to develop and promote better construction products (e.g., roofing materials, window protection, storm clips, and other safety products).

(3) Works with local governments to develop a windstorm resistant building code and assists those entities in inspecting structures for compliance.

(4) Develops and distributes to Texans warning and mitigation brochures that provide key information in response to threats and protection against damage from hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, frozen pipes, thunderstorms, lightning, hail, and wildfires.

e. Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

Provides engineering assistance (i.e. department standards, specifications, or advice on roadway maintenance) to local governments related to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).

f. Texas Forest Service (TFS)

(1) Provides technical mitigation assistance to local governments for fire protection in rural areas.

(2) Assists rural communities in wildfire prevention and adoption of mitigation measures such as the use of dry hydrants.

g. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

TCEQ provides technical assistance to local jurisdictions for hazardous material spills, dam safety, levee safety, drought contingency plans, and other water-related perils.

h. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

Reviews mitigation proposals to assess impact on the environment and wildlife in Texas.

i. Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)

TWDB provides technical assistance to local jurisdictions on floodplain management.

(1) Provides matching grants for feasibility level flood protection-planning studies.

(2) Provides funding for flood control planning projects.

(3) Administers the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program.

j. Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA)

LCRA is the sponsoring agency for the Texas Floodplain Managers Association, a private non-profit group with the goal of furthering the education, proficiency, and standing of floodplain managers in Texas, and public knowledge/involvement in floodplain management at the local level.

k. Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool (non-voting member)

The Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool provides Texas municipalities and other units of local government with a stable source of risk financing and loss prevention services at the lowest cost consistent with sound business practices.

l. Emergency Management Association of Texas (EMAT)

EMAT provides local government input through a rotating member assignment.

m. Texas Geographical Society (TxGS)

The TxGS is a membership-based non-profit corporation created to unite public, private, and nonprofit resources to improve government services and education through collaborative development and use of digital geographic data and related technologies. The TxGS uses geographic data and Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies to help improve government services and education in and around Texas.

n. Texas Tech University Wind Science and Engineering (WISE) Research Center and National Storm Shelter Association.

(1) The WISE Research Center at Texas Tech University is focused on wind research, education and information outreach. The Center develops information on windstorm disaster mitigation and other wind-related subjects.

- (2) The National Wind Storm Association determines the quality of manufactured and constructed storm shelters for protecting people from injury or loss of life from the effects of tornadoes, hurricanes and other devastating natural disasters.

VI. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

A. ROUTINE

The SHMO manages state-level hazard mitigation activities and administers the HMGP, PDM and RFC grant programs.

B. RESPONSE

When requested by the Chief-TDEM, the SHMO will provide guidance and answer mitigation questions, as needed.

C. RECOVERY

At the JFO, overall direction and control will be exercised by the Chief, TDEM /Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR) who in turn, assigns responsibility for hazard mitigation functions and activities of the SHMO.

In the field, the SHMO will perform as the State Hazard Mitigation Team leader and coordinate all issues and activities involving mitigation among the various state agency representatives assigned to the Team. The SHMO will also be the focal point for providing strategy and guidance of the Team members and direction for the collection of information required in support of the mitigation program.

VII. EMERGENCY RESPONSE LEVEL/ACTION GUIDES

See Basic Plan, Section VII, for a list of the different emergency response levels and the kinds of activities that characterize each level. Appendix 2 to Annex N (Direction and Control), maintained by TDEM, addresses all hazards, functions, agencies, and response levels. Appendix 2 contains an Action Guide that outlines the actions the ESF group members must accomplish at each emergency response level to ensure the group is prepared to respond and support emergency operations.

VIII. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

See Basic Plan, Section VIII.

IX. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT

A. SUPPORT

In the event of a disaster, management cost funds may be used to hire additional staff personnel on a temporary basis. This staff will be used to support HMGP operations until all mitigation work is completed for that disaster. Depending on the size of the disaster, additional staff may be required on a short-term basis to fill an urgent staff requirement. To fully meet the requirement with qualified personnel, SHMOs from other states may be requested to assist under Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) support provisions.

B. AGREEMENTS AND UNDERSTANDINGS

All agreements and understandings entered into for the purchase, lease, or otherwise use of goods, equipment and services, as a result of a disaster, will be in accordance with the provision of state law and established policy and procedures. After a Declaration of a state of disaster by the Governor, selected rules and regulations that affect recovery support operations may be suspended. The specific impact of the situation will be determined by the Chief-TDEM/GAR in conjunction with the SHMO, and ESF group members will be advised accordingly.

C. STATUS REPORTS

The SHMO, in accordance with the State Hazard Mitigation Plan, will maintain the status of all outstanding mitigation requests and unresolved ESF-related issues. Requests and issues will be submitted to the Chief-TDEM/GAR in accordance with applicable state operating procedures and the State Hazard Mitigation Plan. Quarterly HMGP status reports will also be submitted to FEMA.

D. EXPENDITURES AND RECORD KEEPING

1. Each agency is responsible for establishing administrative controls necessary to manage the expenditure of funds and to provide reasonable accountability and justification for federal reimbursement in accordance with the established guidelines outlined in the State Hazard Mitigation Plan.
2. The first source of funds for expenditures by state agencies in response to an emergency, imminent disaster, or recovery from a catastrophic incident, is to be from funds regularly appropriated by the Legislature.
3. In accordance with established procedures, state agencies may seek financial assistance from the State Disaster Contingency Fund.
4. The TDEM Mitigation Section will maintain minutes of each State Hazard Mitigation Team meeting.

E. CRITIQUES

TDEM will conduct a critique of the group activities. Support agencies will provide written and oral inputs for this critique and TDEM will consolidate all inputs into a final written report and submit it to the Chief-TDEM.

X. DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- A. TDEM has overall responsibility for development, maintenance, approval, and implementation of this annex.
- B. TDEM is responsible for conducting an annual review of this annex and for coordinating all review and revision efforts to incorporate material learned from exercises and actual events into this annex.

APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX P

STATE HAZARD MITIGATION TEAM ORGANIZATION

PRIMARY AGENCY: Texas Division of Emergency Management

SUPPORT AGENCIES:

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Emergency Management Association of Texas
General Land Office
Office of Rural Community Affairs Railroad Commission of Texas
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Texas Department of Insurance
Texas Department of Public Safety
Texas Department of Transportation
Texas Forest Service
Texas Geographical Society
Texas Parks and Wildlife
Texas Tech University
Texas Water Development Board

NON-COUNCIL MEMBERS: Lower Colorado River Authority
NFIP/Flood Plain Manager

APPENDIX 2 TO ANNEX P

STATE HAZARD MITIGATION TEAM ACTION GUIDE

A. GENERAL

1. Although the majority of emergencies are handled in a routine manner by community public safety responders, there are occasions when the impact of an incident or event requires an extraordinary response. Emergency management is action-oriented, and the number and type of actions required are usually categorized by the level of intensity and involvement needed to respond to emergency situations. This Annex uses “response levels” to reflect the intensity of emergency events. The four levels of standardized response in the State Emergency Management Plan and are designated as follows:

Level IV – Normal Conditions
Level III – Increased Readiness Conditions
Level II – Escalated Response Conditions
Level I – Emergency Conditions

2. Within each response level, certain actions can be expected. Should a higher than “normal conditions” response level be in effect at the time the SHMT members are activated, all the actions required under the lower response level(s) should also be accomplished.

B. RESPONSE LEVELS

RESPONSE LEVEL IV – NORMAL CONDITIONS

The characteristics of this response level are as follows:

1. The occurrence of emergency incidents are reported and recorded as required and appropriate agencies and organizations are notified.
2. SHMT member agencies interact with the State Hazard Mitigation Officer, as situationally required.

RESPONSE LEVEL III – INCREASED READINESS CONDITIONS

Characteristics of this response level are as follows:

1. An increased period of vulnerability to a specific hazard (e.g., hurricane season, severe weather season, wildfire vulnerability, etc).
2. An increase in coordination activities and efforts to review, evaluate, and update appropriate elements of the State Hazard Mitigation Plan, procedures, and equipment to ensure the ability to anticipate and meet the challenges of specific hazards.
3. Briefing SHMT member agencies representatives on the anticipated risk situations, expected impacts, and contingency measures that may be implemented.

RESPONSE LEVEL II - ESCALATED RESPONSE CONDITIONS

The characteristics of this response level are as follows:

1. Employment of all government resources and activities that can contribute to the amelioration of the emergency situation.
2. The SOC fully staffed by representatives from appropriate and required agencies and organizations, and remaining operational on a continuing basis for as long as required with reporting and briefing activities increased to meet situational demands.
3. Initiation of requests for emergency assistance between multiple levels and of government and the initiation of a "state of disaster" declaration, or declarations (there may be more than one type of disaster).
4. SHMT member representatives available for, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Meetings at the designated JFO location or staging site, as required.
 - b. Viewing and evaluating damage for an unspecified period of time.
 - c. Briefing local governments about HMGP or other mitigation strategies.
 - d. Producing reports pertinent to the disaster.
5. Deployment of the Rapid Assessment Unit (RAU) into the disaster area to make damage assessments and report findings to the GAR.

RESPONSE LEVEL I – EMERGENCY CONDITIONS

There are no additional mitigation actions at this level. Mitigation staff and team members may be committed to assist in areas outside mitigation as specific needs develop.