



# THE READY NJ REPORT

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE NEW JERSEY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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# Welcome

to the first edition of *The Ready NJ Report*.

The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management has created this newsletter to support and enhance the state’s ability to address the emergency management mission areas of **Prevention, Protection, Response, Mitigation and Recovery** by strengthening the concepts of Preparedness, Connectivity and Empowerment.

To build a culture of Preparedness, we will actively engage our Federal, State and Local partners and stakeholders to develop resiliency to all hazards, natural or human caused. We will ensure “whole community” preparedness starting with youth outreach and continuing to leverage technology to inform residents of best practices to protect themselves before, during and after a disaster strikes.

We will seek technology platforms that enhance situational awareness and collaboration. Interoperability and relationships with our many partners will be fortified through the active engagement of digital and mobile resources, and of course, this newsletter.

NJOEM will ensure that best practices are in place to protect its networks and technological solutions against the emerging digital threat landscape. With an increased reliance on digital solutions it is essential for all of us to employ safety measures to protect our networks and service platforms against those who attempt to disrupt emergency management services.

We will continue to develop strong relationships and meaningful connections with all our partners so that essential emergency management services are provided to the residents of the State of New Jersey.



## FEMA

### STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SEMPS

PROGRAM STAKEHOLDERS



PREPARE    ♦    CONNECT    ♦    EMPOWER

## A Message from the State Director

### Colonel Patrick J. Callahan

New Jersey's COVID-19 Vaccination Program is open to sworn law enforcement, fire professionals, and other first responders.

New Jersey State Police Superintendent Colonel Patrick Callahan encourages all law enforcement officers to get vaccinated to protect themselves, their families, and the people we serve.



Please click the link to view the informational video about the vaccine and a message from Colonel Callahan.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wv1A3aXuDRU&t=35s>

Note: Colonel Callahan was able to receive the Moderna vaccine at Morristown Medical Center shortly after making this video.

For information and resources about COVID-19 Vaccination, please visit <https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/vaccine>. For general COVID-19 questions, please call 2-1-1. For medical COVID-19 questions, please call 1-800-962-1253.

## P25 Project

In 2015, the Office of Information and Technology encouraged all state agencies not on the state P25 system to collaborate in an effort to reduce costs and increase interoperability. The New Jersey State Police (NJSP) is one of the largest users on the state radio network. The NJSP took the lead on this project and worked with Motorola on drafting a proposal to meet the needs of every state agency. By grouping the state agencies together, Motorola offered a significant discount and ensured the equipment would be compatible with the existing P25 system.

The primary goal for the NJSP was to transition from the legacy 4.1 system to the P25 system which improves coverage and increases capacity (more available channels). The additional benefits of moving to P25 are improved interoperability, replacing the aging consoles at ODU sites, replacing all portable and mobile radios that are not compatible with P25, and full encryption of the system.

### Current Status:

On October 13, 2020 a purchase order was processed for Phase 1. The project was funded by the Coronavirus Relief Funds Grant. Phase 1 includes infrastructure improvements and delivery of all subscribers (mobile and portable radios), core upgrades, and integration with the older 4.1 system. It was a requirement of the grant that all of the equipment purchased had to be ready for beneficial use by December 30, 2020. The Communications Bureau worked closely with Motorola to meet this deadline and completed Phase 1 prior to the end of December. Phase 2 of the project improvements began in January.

Phase 2 consists of new radio infrastructure and delivery of consoles (ODU Sites) and improvements to 40 state owned radio tower sites. However, physical installation for phase two will begin in early spring of 2021. At the conclusion of Phase 2, (2 to 3 years), the older 4.1 system will be decommissioned and the state will be completely transitioned to P25.

### Change in Command

On December 1, 2020, Major Louis Bucchere retired from the New Jersey State Police. We wish him well in this new chapter of life.

Effective December 1, 2020, Major Scott Poulton is now the Commanding Officer of the Emergency Management Section. Congratulations to Scott on his promotion!



**Maj. Louis Bucchere (Ret.)**



**Major Scott Poulton**

## Conclusion

This project will ensure interoperability with our local, county, state and federal partners. The coverage statewide will be improved and our entire system will be fully encrypted.

Finally, the P25 system upgrade includes fixed radios for schools in State Police areas.



*Sgt. Steve Kreiger #6580 loading up the first shipment of new portable radios (as part of the P25 upgrade program) being deployed to Troop 'A'.*

## Highlighting

# Jim Barsuglia

*The Supervising Management Improvement Specialist from the Communications Support Unit has 51 years of service to NJ*



In 1968, while attending an amateur radio event, Jim met Sgt. Martin Ficke #1154, NJSP Communication Bureau who was working on the procurement of a new multi-channel low band radio system for the State Police. At that time, Jim was an engineering student at Newark College of Engineering (NCE), now the New Jersey Institute of Technology. The State was in the process of enacting the NJ Wiretapping and Electronic Surveillance Control Act which allowed court authorized wiretapping in NJ. The NJSP, in response to this new investigative tool, created the Electronic Surveillance Unit (ESU) within the Intelligence Bureau. Sgt. Ficke was placed in charge of developing the Unit, the technology to support and the staff to implement the program. Sgt. Ficke

contacted Jim for technical advice and hired him as a part time summer assistant. In 1971, Jim was made a full time employee while finishing up his degree on a part time basis.

Over the next ten years, he was involved with the assignment of police and emergency medical radio frequencies for all State and Local Government agencies in NJ. In 1983, now working within the Communications Bureau, Jim was assigned the responsibility of evaluating the existing NJSP radio system which led to the design and implementation of the first 800 MHz trunked radio system, released in 1984.

Jim was part of a design team in 2009 when NJ received a grant to build an interoperable radio system in the Urban Area Security Initiative area (UASI), comprising the seven counties in NJ adjacent to New York City. During the system installation phase, the NJDOT was exploring the possibility of a new radio system to provide more advanced features, including vehicle location and status. With funding provided by NJDOT, this system was expanded to provide mobile radio coverage throughout NJ. In 2010, NJDOT was completely switched over to the new system with the purchase of over five thousand mobile and portable radios. In late 2020, NJ secured CARES Act funding for completing the upgrade to the new P25 system for all State agencies. Jim was an integral part of the design team to see the system upgraded to the latest technology.

Jim's career, spanning a half century, and his accomplishments have been an essential part of our emergency response and recovery mission. Our gratitude goes out to Jim for his dedication and continued service to New Jersey.

The Communications Bureau would like to recognize the following Public Safety Telecommunicators (PSTs) for using zero sick days for 2020.

- Sr. PST Martin Isler (ODU Tpk/Pkwy)
- PST Brandon McBroom (Call Center)

Their dedication to their peers, the citizens of New Jersey, and the missions of both the Communications Bureau and the New Jersey State Police exemplify the core values of Honor, Duty, and Fidelity. Congratulations on a job well done!



Throughout the COVID 19 pandemic, the Recovery Bureau has risen to the occasion to support our partner agencies in providing for the citizens of the State of New Jersey. In addition to addressing the recovery and mitigation requirements from legacy disasters, the Bureau has taken on new challenges with great success. This is largely attributed to our agile civilian and enlisted members, and their genuine advocacy and interest in enhanced customer service for the citizens we serve. Below are just a few of the respective Unit's accomplishments during the COVID 19 (DR4488) response:

**The Public Assistance Unit** has worked remotely throughout the pandemic and achieved many significant accomplishments this year:

- Received more than 1500 requests for public assistance with more than \$346,000,000 in eligible funding submitted to date, with more likely to come as the pandemic continues. This funding will be integral in enabling our state to recover from this disaster.
- Worked as a liaison between our federal partners, state and local agencies to clarify ever-evolving interpretations of eligible costs related to matters such as medical treatment, vaccination etc.
- Conducted our state's first virtual Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment for Tropical Storm Isaias.
- Tropical Storm Isaias Presidential disaster declaration was approved December 11, 2020 and the Unit has conducted virtual applicant brief-

ings on emerging technologies.

**The Mitigation Unit** engaged in numerous tasks above and beyond their normal assignment, including but not limited to:

- Requesting and achieving approval for Non Congregate Sheltering requests for our citizens and tracking appropriate data.
- Working with our Department of Labor and Workforce Development in applying for and receiving more than \$1,478,674,000 in Lost Wages Assistance for NJ residents.
- Obtaining more than \$11,100,000 in individual assistance for programs such as crisis counseling.
- Managing the application process for the Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities program.
- Hoboken's Northwest Resiliency Park continues to serve as a national model for collaboration to solve complex mitigation problems. The park is designed to mitigate flooding concerns for the city while serving as a recreational haven for its citizens on blue sky days. For more information: <https://nwpark-cityofhoboken.opendata.arcgis.com/>

**The Finance Unit** continues to assist with managing the funds for all Recovery Programs and has most recently taken on further tasking related to the COVID 19 response.

- The Unit currently tracks the documentation for the more than \$2.4 billion awarded to New Jersey through the CARES Act. Manages and dispenses CARES Act sub-grantee awards to County agencies that did not receive direct assistance from the

### Spotlight On:

## Sal Marcello

Administrative Analyst 4 Salvatore Marcello serves as a remarkable example of State Police civilian leadership. Sal has been a state employee for more than 25 years and a member of the Recovery Bureau since its inception. He has managed the funding for all our states disasters since 2012 and has been integral to the tracking of the recent CARES Act funds awarded to New Jersey. In total, Sal has assisted in processing and managing billions of dollars in grant funds and Federal awards related to disasters. His ability to navigate the complexity of legacy technological systems while adapting to emerging systems is remarkable and the command staff has great faith in his abilities. He has endured many audits with great success and is recognized throughout state government for his accounting capabilities and attention to detail. We salute Sal for his accomplishments and invaluable services.



*L to R: Lt. John Phelan, LTC Glen Szenzenstein, Michael Sangiovani (NJOEM), Chris Testa (NJOEM), Major Lou Bucchere, & Captain Scott Poulton at the Hoboken Northwest Resiliency Park site.*



The past year was unprecedented; it brought a tidal wave of unique and coalescing challenges to the world, including the Emergency Response Bureau (ERB). The North, Central, and South Regional Units were heavily involved with the COVID-19 response throughout the Winter, Spring, and Summer of 2020. In addition, the Units were called upon to assist Field Ops and Special Ops during periods of heightened civil unrest. This increased workload did not prevent the ERB from conducting its normal operations during Hurricane season and a hotly contested Presidential Election race that attracted more mass gatherings during a resurgence of the COVID-19 virus.

In October 2020, Troopers from North, Central, and South ERB Units conducted the first Virtual Basic Workshop in Emergency Management. Lt. J. Beatrice #5560, SFC. C. Boyle #6094, SFC. S. Talty #6532, Sgt. L. Visone #6766, Tpr. II A. Polanco #7524, Tpr. II M. Pepler #7331, and Tpr. II J. Zarecki #7380 utilized the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) platform to educate approximately 250 attendees on the history, roles, and fundamentals of Emergency Management. This was an extremely innovative and successful use of the HSIN platform as an instruction tool in New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) as a means to educate new Coordinators and partners joining the discipline throughout the State.

The HSIN platform is the Department of Homeland Security's official system for the trusted sharing of sensitive information between federal, state, local, territorial, tribal, international and private sector partners. Previously, the HSIN platform had already been incorporated by OEM and ERB to collect and share information during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As we embark on the 100 Year Anniversary of the State Police, the 3 ERB Regional Units continue to provide their usual service to their counties through their region representatives. They assist counties in conducting daily operations, ensuring emergency operation plan compliance, assist with Emergency Management Agency Assistance (EMAA) submissions, procuring personal protective equipment (PPE), and reporting and responding to hazardous weather.

The representatives assisted the All Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT) in developing six Vaccination Mega Sites (VMS) throughout the State. These sites are a joint effort, involving NJOEM, County and Municipal OEM, the Department of Health (DOH), private health partners and the United States Army National Guard. The sites are now capable of vaccinating 4,000 people a day contingent upon the availability of the vaccine. The sites began administering vaccine to healthcare workers in the "1A" category in mid-January and will open new categories according to the state plan.

In the South, the region reps assisted the AHIMT, Virtua Health System, and Atlantic Health System with the sites at Rowan College of South Jersey in Sewell Township, Gloucester County; Lord & Taylor at the Moorestown Mall in Burlington County; and The Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic County. All three sites opened in the third week in January.



**Opening day of Gloucester County COVID-19 Mega Site at Rowan College of South Jersey.**

The Central Region assisted Robert Wood Johnson and the AHIMT with the setup of the VMS at The NJ Convention and Exposition Center in Edison Township, Middlesex County.

The North Region assisted the AHIMT with location scouting, setup, and operations at the VMS sites at Sears in the Rockaway Townsquare Mall in Morris County and the Meadowlands Complex in East Rutherford, Bergen County. The private health partners, Atlantic Health, and Hackensack Meridian, worked tirelessly to open these sites by mid-January.



## Task Force 1

In addition to the VMS, many counties have begun the setup and dispersal of their own county level vaccine operations. Hudson County OEM began vaccination operations on December 23rd and Middlesex County OEM began operations in early January 2021. ERB personnel are assisting with these operations as necessary.

In addition to VMS operations, Trooper II M. Ma #7318 (North Region), Trooper C. Warwick #7708 (South Region), and Kevin Palmer (Support Services Unit) have been invaluable in assisting with the State's Warehouse COOP Program. These members have provided logistic planning, overseen daily inbound and outbound orders, managed inventory, and assisting FEMA, DOH, and local agencies with fulfilling their ongoing COVID-19 operational and logistical needs.

With a difficult winter and a Presidential Inauguration, the ERB Units provide winter storm reports, civil unrest response, PPE deliveries, and resumed training and exercise opportunities to their OEM partners. With 2020 now behind us, the ERB Units will continue to incorporate their training, innovation, collaboration and crisis management with the hopes of achieving a peaceful, healthy, safe and productive 2021.



*On August 29, we took a moment to remember the fateful day Hurricane Katrina made landfall, causing catastrophic devastation. NJ-TF1 and the New Jersey State Police answered the call 15 years ago to assist the people of Louisiana. 7 years later, Louisiana State Police answered our call as we responded to Superstorm Sandy. Our thoughts are with all of those forever changed by Hurricane Katrina.*

## Dr. James Pruden on the Road to Recovery

Dr. James Pruden was released from St. Joseph's Hospital in April of 2020, almost a month after his hard fought battle with COVID-19.

For those who aren't familiar with Dr. Pruden, he is a founding member of New Jersey Task Force 1 (NJTF-1) and a leader in emergency medicine in the State of New Jersey. Dr. Pruden has spent his life selflessly serving the residents of New Jersey and our country, as well as responding to numerous disasters.



*NJ-TF1 members were on hand to offer Dr. Pruden a salute of gratitude as he left the hospital.*



The SEOC is currently activated at level 2 for COVID-19 response. In terms of COVID-19, the SEOC is currently coordinating with the NJ All Hazards Incident Management Team regarding the six state run mega mass vaccination sites. The SEOC is also coordinating with our stakeholders and OEM partners regarding covid operations. The Unit oversaw the NJSP closed point of distribution operations to vaccinate the enlisted members.

The team has been tasked with the following operations:

- Standing up a Community Based Testing Site (Monmouth County)
- Standing up and managing 3 Field Medical Stations with a total bed capacity of 1,000 (Secaucus, Edison & Atlantic City)
- Standing up 2 Temporary Morgue Sites (Newark & Central New Jersey)
- Overseeing the completion and management of the Alternate Care Facility in East Orange
- Supervising the Battelle Critical Care Decontamination System for PPE
- Demobilization of all 3 Field Medical Stations
- Standing up and managing Community-Based Vaccination Sites throughout NJ



The New Jersey All-Hazards Incident Management Team (NJ-AHIMT) has been busy to say the least. With NJ being one of the hardest hit states in the nation by the COVID-19 pandemic, the team was activated by Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, Director of the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) to assist the NJ Department of Health with the response to the pandemic. The team began work in March 2020, and are continuing their job to date.



Some of the team, taken at the Field Medical Station at the NJ Convention & Exposition Center in Edison.  
Back Row: Marc Pellegrino (NJSP), CAPT Peter Moore, NJ EPLO (DOD), Robert Little (FEMA), Rick Leeman (NJSP), Clay McClain (NJDOC), Chris Mull (Hamilton Twp FD), Bryan Enberg (NJSP), John McKay (NJDOC), David De Jesus (NJSP), Kevin McGowan (NJDOC), Capt. Scott Poulton (NJSP), Major Louis Bucchere (NJSP)  
Front Row: Laura Connolly (NJSP), COL Todd Liebig DCE (DOD), Dennis VanNatta (Scotch Plains OEM), Michael DiVito (Deptford Twp. PD), Michael DiGenni (NJDOC)

## Teen CERT Member Helps NJOEM with Disability & Access & Functional Needs During Pandemic

Since pandemic response efforts began last year, numerous Administrative Orders and other documents have been posted online to help keep the public informed. In an effort to ensure individuals who are blind or visually impaired have equal access to this information, Manalapan Teen CERT President Robert Dahill has been working diligently to ensure the documents are accessible to those who use screen readers.

Considered assistive technology, a screen reader is used by individuals who are visually impaired to convert text, icons, images and other information on a computer screen into speech or braille.

Dahill, a senior at Manalapan High School, has a retinal disease called Leber's Congenital Amaurosis and has relied on a screen reader since he was six years old. "Although I have some usable vision, I am considered legally blind," he explained, adding, "there are very good screen readers out there for people who are blind or visually impaired. The problem is that whether or not a document is accessible depends upon how it was created."

Dahill's familiarity with ensuring documents are accessible for those who use screen readers has not only been a benefit to NJOEM, but also to a Social Media Coordinator from Voorhees Township who he recently assisted by making sure their posts were compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Prior to the pandemic, Dahill served as a guest instructor during several of the Responding to the Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs Community CERT trainings to demonstrate ways members can assist those who are visually impaired. "He is a true asset to our team and is always willing to help out no matter what," said Kim Silverstein, Coordinator of the Manalapan MRC-CERT.

Although Dahill will go on to Stevens Institute of Technology after he graduates, he plans to stay involved with the Manalapan MRC-CERT program and is willing to assist NJOEM whenever needed.



## SPOTLIGHT ON.....

### SUPPORT SERVICES UNIT

In an emergency, the timely obtaining of personnel, equipment, and supplies to support response and recovery operations is essential. When confronted with this problem, the NJSP Preparedness Bureau SUPPORT SERVICES UNIT (SSU) can be a valuable partner.

The Unit maintains a large inventory of emergency response equipment, including a fleet of fifty-eight 75kw and 175kw trailer-mounted generators stationed in strategically located depots across New Jersey to make deployment fast and efficient. Light towers, mobile command posts and utility trailers in various sizes, tents, and numerous other items are available for use in support of any function or emergency. Memorandums of Agreement with private sector suppliers are also in place to ensure needed commodities will be available in an emergency.

Support Services Unit members handle all responsibilities associated with New Jersey's affiliation as a member state in the national Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). In September 2020, twenty members of the NJ Forest Fire Service, along with three Wildland Engines and a Command Vehicle were deployed to California to assist in fire containment operations. A contingent of Troopers were deployed to Puerto Rico in January and February to support their earthquake disaster recovery. Medical equipment (50 Pulse Oximetry Units) was received from New York in May to support Field Medical Stations dealing with Covid-19, and New Jersey also received medical supplies from Delaware to fulfill an immediate need.

The Emergency Management Agency Assistance (EMAA) subgrant awards to County and Municipal OEMs are coordinated by SSU members along with the Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) and General Services Administration (GSA) federal surplus property programs.

The Unit supports Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) by providing training materials, equipment, and instructor and exercise support. Utility trailers filled with equipment and supplies to support CERT personnel are periodically awarded to Teams who meet award criteria.

To deal with the statewide Covid-19 pandemic, SSU personnel are working with our partners to procure personal protective equipment (PPE) requested by NJ agencies and staff the State Strategic Warehouse where all commodities and equipment is received, inventoried and then disbursed. SSU personnel routinely deliver these supplies to hospitals, long term care facilities, medical offices, State and County OEMs and other locations as deemed necessary.

To contact the Support Services Unit, reach out to...

Lt. Deb Couts	<a href="mailto:deborah.couts@njsp.org">deborah.couts@njsp.org</a>	609-963-6996
SFC Ray Schiavo	<a href="mailto:raymond.schiavo@njsp.org">raymond.schiavo@njsp.org</a>	609-963-6970

# The New Jersey FEMA Integration Team: A Closer Look...

The FEMA Integration Team (FIT) program came to fruition as a result of a tumultuous 2017, a year marked by 137 declared events across the nation. FIT teams fully integrate FEMA staff with their state counterparts and also connects them with their respective FEMA regions to enhance readiness across the nation. FITs assist state partners in identifying and resolving risks, develop plans, coordinate preparedness training and exercises, and provide technical assistance for FEMA grant programs. FIT is designed to minimize the time needed to assist communities post-disaster and to enhance collaboration and coordination. The program is designed to be flexible and may vary by state.

In New Jersey there are four dedicated FEMA staff members who work to support the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management in preparing for and responding to all hazards; ultimately creating better prepared and more resilient communities.

The New Jersey FIT team began service in 2018 to support four areas as identified by NJOEM and FEMA Region II: Preparedness, Hazard Mitigation, Response/Operational Planning and Recovery. The team is assigned to New Jersey State Police Headquarters, located at the Regional Operations Intelligence Center in West Trenton.

## Meet the Team

### *Preparedness: Joann Lowry*

Joann Lowry joined the NJ FEMA Integration Team in late 2020 and replaces Deborah Costa, who has since taken on the position of Region II Community Preparedness Officer where she leads Individual and Community Preparedness efforts for New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Debbie is also responsible for the 110 webinars held in 2020 with a reach of 30,000 attendees nationwide.



Joann has many years of FEMA interagency coordination experience, including Hurricane Sandy recovery and U.S. Virgin Islands recovery from hurricanes Irma and Maria. She is often deployed to build the capacity of local and state/territory agencies and provides technical assistance on the numerous federal and private grant programs available for preparedness, mitigation, and recovery. Joann is dedicated to solidifying the FIT team and strengthening their commitment to the State of New Jersey.

### *Hazard Mitigation: John Miller*

John is a licensed professional engineer and floodplain manager. John's knowledge is highly valued by the NJOEM Mitigation Unit he supports. Not only does he provide technical assistance on mitigation policy, planning, and methods, but also floodplain regulations, FEMA mapping, and the National Flood Insurance Program. John is currently serving as the NJ Mitigation Branch Chief for Tropical Storm Isaias operations.



### *Response/Operational Planning: Rob Hutchinson*

Rob joined NJ FIT in the Response/Operational Planning position following a 13-year career with FEMA Region III, including service on the National Incident Management Team. Rob was already a fixture in NJOEM when hired for the FIT position in 2018, having provided technical support to NJOEM for exercises including the FEMA 2017 Gotham Shield. This event simulated a nuclear detonation outside the Lincoln Tunnel and involved a year-long planning process that engaged every level of federal and state government.



Rob contributes to the NJ FIT in several ways. He acts as a liaison to the NJ Incident Management Team and their Planning and Training Units, he assists with State response plans, and synchronizes State and FEMA plans for maximum effectiveness. Rob is often activated for incident management roles, spending the majority of 2020 deployed to the NJ State Emergency Operations Center as the Planning Section Chief for COVID-19 and Tropical Storm Isaias operations. He was

also instrumental to the NJ State Police in sending a team to Puerto Rico following the January 2020 earthquakes. He also provides training and exercise support to emergency managers statewide and at the national level. Rob also mentors the New Jersey Emergency Management Team and evaluates state exercises.

**Response: Kelly Higgs**

Kelly was the Executive Director, New Jersey chapter of the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster when she joined the NJ FEMA Integration Team as the Recovery Liaison in 2018. Kelly focuses on mass care and disaster housing planning and also provides FEMA Individual Assistance guidance to the state. Kelly brings years of nonprofit experience to the team and, as a result of her work following Hurricane Sandy, has established relationships with many state, federal, and private



agency partners. She also strengthened regional coalitions to support preparedness, response, and recovery efforts in all 21 New Jersey counties, and implemented HELPNJNOW.ORG; a statewide platform for all-hazards preparedness and coordination of post-disaster response and recovery efforts, including volunteer coordination and donations management. Kelly was also the IMAT mass care lead assigned to the NJ SEOC following the COVID-19 outbreak.

What do all NJ FIT team members have in common? One quality is a heightened sense of responsibility to the state of New Jersey as all of them have deep personal and professional ties to the state. They see this as more than a job; it is an opportunity to ensure the resources of the federal government will benefit all New Jerseyans before, during, and after a disaster.



## FEMA Region II Preparedness Webinars & Bulletin



The FEMA Region II Individual and Community Preparedness (ICP) program covers New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The program prepares communities for disasters through info-sharing and training; inspiring people to take action to be ready for emergencies.

To ensure emergency readiness, the ICP team hosts a webinar series on a variety of topics, ranging from youth preparedness and cybersecurity to COVID-19 preparedness, response, mitigation, and resiliency. This webinar series is open to the public free of charge.

View all [upcoming webinars](#).

View [past recordings](#).

The ICP team also distributes a biweekly Preparedness & Resilience Bulletin with preparedness tips, upcoming webinars, events, trainings and grant opportunities. To join our mailing list, [click here to subscribe](#).

Please feel free to email [FEMA-R2-Prepares@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-R2-Prepares@fema.dhs.gov) with questions or to request more information.

# STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

# SEMPS

## PROGRAM STAKEHOLDERS

The SEMPS group was established to engage our partner/stakeholder agencies by providing a forum for collaboration, to bolster coordination throughout the State Emergency Operations Plan, and to enhance preparedness, response, and recovery operations in NJ. There are 16 Member agencies representing each of the Emergency Support Functions identified in the SEOP and 22 additional At-Large agencies that provide support to the Members, as required.



## Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness (OHSP)

### Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and Stakeholder Preparedness Review

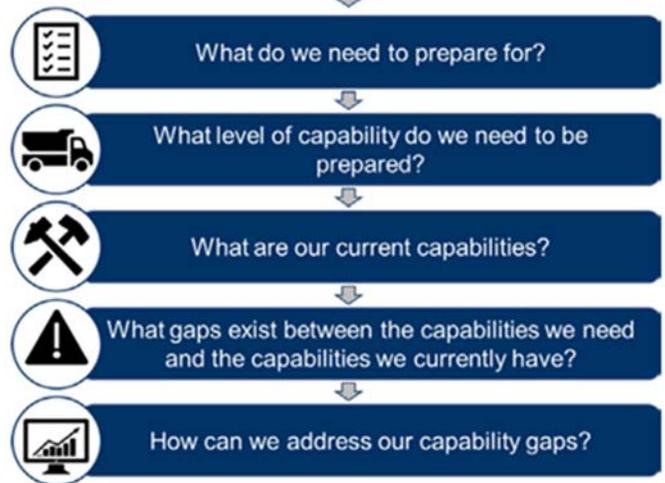
In December 2020, NJOHSP submitted New Jersey's annual Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR) to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The THIRA and SPR is a comprehensive capability assessment based on the mission areas identified in the [National Preparedness Goal](#). This high-priority initiative gathers and assesses preparedness data from homeland security and emergency management stakeholders statewide and is used to align resources and programming to New Jersey's highest priority capability gaps. In turn, FEMA uses information from THIRA and SPR reports from all States, Tribes, Territories, and Urban Areas to inform the annual [National Preparedness Report](#). Completion of the THIRA and SPR is a requirement of New Jersey's eligibility for Federal homeland security grant funding and we rely on input from our Federal, State, and local partners throughout the year in order to complete the report. Thank you to our many SEMPS preparedness partners who made New Jersey's submission possible.

#### Additional Resources

[Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 201, Third Edition](#) provides guidance for conducting a Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR)

[Core Capability Development Sheets](#) provide tools that organizations can use to build or sustain their capabilities and close identified gaps.

Communities can use the THIRA/SPR to answer:



### COVID-19 Vaccination

NJOEM and the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) are working with many other state, federal, and local agencies to distribute COVID-19 vaccines to all New Jersey communities in an equitable manner. It is the goal of the Department of Health to make safe and effective COVID-19 vaccination available to all who live, work, and/or are educated in New Jersey. Check out the NJDOH weekend newsletter "Vax Matters" at <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/VaxMatters.pdf>.



# Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

NJ FOREST FIRE SERVICE

## California Bound

For more than 35 years, the New Jersey Forest Fire Service has offered aid to many states – including Texas, Oregon, Washington, North Carolina, Minnesota, Arizona, Alabama, Kentucky, Virginia, Florida and Alaska. These out of state assignments have no impact on the ability of the Forest Fire Service to fight any wildfires in New Jersey.

This year, New Jersey Forest Fire Service crews have been deployed to California, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, South Dakota, and Wyoming – working side-by-side with fire professionals in these six states as they battled blazes across their landscapes.

Greg McLaughlin, Chief of the New Jersey Forest Fire Service stated that “We have sent back and forth about 74 firefighters and a total of 10 engines in roughly a six-week period.

“Our firefighters’ willingness to volunteer to leave home and family for a two-week assignment during the summer months is a testament to their sacrifice and dedication,” said Asst. Commissioner Ray Bukowski, who oversees the state’s Forest Fire Service.

In 2020, for the first time, NJ firefighters were deployed to California under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) to assist with the Wildland Fires disaster.

Ten Firefighters and several engines were deployed via airlift to California.



**NJ fire engines arriving in California via airlift.**

Additional information and other news articles and pictures can be found posted on their Facebook page: <https://m.facebook.com/NJForestFireService>



**NJ Forest Fire Service personnel deployed to California, l to r: Ken Badger, Bill Donnelly, Mike Achey, John Knapp, Dom Defoor, Deale Carey, Will Jubert, Joe Jubert, Anthony Tobolski, Aaron Rullan**

## New Jersey Water Association Honors DEP Colleague for Outstanding Service

DEP Emergency Management’s Mitzi Kaiura earned some well-deserved recognition recently when the New Jersey Water Association honored her with the coveted 2020 President’s Award.

In bestowing the award, the New Jersey Water Association expressed gratitude for Mitzi’s hard work, responsiveness and contributions to the security and resiliency of the water and wastewater sector in previous years – and especially in 2020 with the challenges that accompany the COVID-19 pandemic.



“This award is a reflection of the hard work, long hours and dedication that Mitzi provides on a daily basis,” said Bob Van Fossen, Director of the DEP’s Office of Emergency Management. “Mitzi’s can-do attitude is critical in coordinating the DEP’s planning and response activities during emergencies. She is a true team player.”

Pictured above is Mitzi accepting the President’s Award from Richard Howlett, Executive Director of the New Jersey Water Association.

The New Jersey Water Association is a statewide, nonprofit professional association of water and wastewater service providers that specializes in providing training and assistance to utilities serving New Jersey.



## Department of Human Services (DHS)

### *Always Ready...*

The NJ Dept. of Human Services Office of Emergency Management (Mass Care Team) works in coordination with the NJ State Police in the development of the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP) that pertains to Mass Care/Emergency Assistance also known as Emergency Support Function #6. The team is responsible for Sheltering, Feeding, Distribution of Emergency Supplies and Family Reunification during crises or disasters.

The team works in coordination with many key partners from Government (Federal/State/County/Local), Non Governmental Organizations, Faith-Based Organizations, Community-Based Organizations, Voluntary Organizations and the Private Sector to support mass care operations. We are continually striving to build upon our partnerships and become more resilient in the mass care field.

When the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) activates the ESF6 team staffs the mass care desk in order to support any resource request or issues that may arise. Representatives from the Red Cross and the Salvation Army support the team at the SEOC. Additionally, we work in coordination with members of the Disaster and Terrorism Branch to support the behavioral health aspect of response to a crisis or disaster.

The ESF6 team is structured into 5 distinct groups to support mass care operations as follows: Sheltering, Feeding, Emergency Assistance, Human Ser-

vices and Disaster Housing. There is a leader assigned to each group to coordinate the mass care activities occurring in response to the activation. In addition to activities associated with the SEOP, we also maintain emergency plans for Family Assistance Centers, Mass Feeding, Disaster Housing, Family Reunification, Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs (DAFN), and State Repatriation. These plans require constant refinement and engagement with our key partners to ensure all plans are current and inclusive.

We have been working in coordination with our State Universities to support the State's Mass Care Sheltering Strategy. The State's Sheltering Strategy is divided into 4 phases:

- **Phase 1 – Local/ County Shelters**
- **Phase 2 – County/Regional Shelters**
- **Phase 3 – State Shelters**
- **Phase 4 – Interstate Sheltering**

To support Phase 3, we are working in coordination with Rutgers, Rowan, Stockton and Fairleigh Dickinson Universities and the College of New Jersey to build upon our State Sheltering initiative.

Our mass care logistical operation is extremely important and we continue to build upon our mass care resource supply to support our County partners in times of need. We rely primarily upon grant funds received from the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness and other grant opportunities to support operations. We maintain a supply of mass care resources to support sheltering operations throughout the State. We have a number of utility trailers containing a supply of cots, blankets, and other mass care related items. We



***DHS trailers staged and ready to deploy with mass care supplies.***

store a majority of our items at the Ancora Psychiatric Hospital but also have additional storage locations at Trenton Psychiatric Hospital, New Lisbon Developmental Center and Woodbine Developmental Center.

The Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness maintain a large warehouse in Morris County that contains additional mass care and disaster related supplies if needed.

We continue to strive to build upon partnerships to support mass care operations. We have connected with the Civil Air Patrol, NJ VOAD, Volunteer Centers of South Jersey, Rotary International and the Masons to assist us with staffing for mass care operations when needed.

We support the work of the NJSTF DAFN Subcommittee Crisis Counseling / Disaster and Terrorism Branch with their valuable work to provide crisis counseling for those impacted by a disaster or event including first responders.

During the COVID pandemic, the Crisis Counseling line is open 7 days a week from 8am to 8pm for anyone to call for assistance. **Call 866-202-HELP (4357) or text NJHOPE to 51684.**

The DHSOEM team is always ready to work in coordination with our partners to provide any assistance needed for mass care planning and/or operations.



**Your DHSOEM Team at the ROIC. Left to Right: Russ Hendrickson, Rich Sensi, Joe Geleta, Jamie Bodrog-Powell, and Ed Conover.**



## **NJ EMS Task Force on the Front Lines of COVID Pandemic Response**

The New Jersey EMS Task Force begins 2021 just as it ended

2020, by playing a significant role in the state of New Jersey's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, while also concurrently preparing for unseen disasters ahead.

The organization was activated in March 2020 as part of the state's fight against the pandemic and has never stopped. Working side-by-side with the New Jersey Department of Health and other local, state, and national partners, law enforcement and office of emergency management agencies, NJEMSTF members have been involved in every step along the way during this national emergency.

"This was a significant period of activity and action for the NJ EMS Task Force," says Michael Bascom, president of the NJEMSTF. "Our teams have been on the frontlines of this fight, staffing testing centers, providing logistics support, expert planning, administrative and hands-on care throughout the state. Also, while managing today's health crisis, our planners and leadership have been preparing and updating response plans for the future."

Since the pandemic began, NJEMSTF members have participated in providing administrative and logistics support to mobile COVID-19 testing sites, deployed Western Shelter tent facilities at 20 hospitals, placed oxygen generators at various facilities, and coordinated the deployment of its medical ambulance bus fleet to transport COVID-19 positive patients from long term care facilities and hospitals. The team also assisted with the deployment of out-of-state FEMA ambulance teams, worked to obtain and distribute much needed personal protective equipment (PPE) and is currently working to coordinate statewide EMS resource needs.

When the second wave of infections hit New Jersey in the fall and into the winter, the NJEMSTF members were there, delivering more shelter tent systems to locations around the state and assisting with vaccination site planning and deployment. They've done so while responding to day-to-day emergencies within their own local communities, scheduling and receiving their own vaccinations and caring for those ill within their own families.

The year also marked a significant year of transformation for the NJEMSTF. Previously, the NJEMSTF was organized under the NJ Department of Health umbrella. In July 2020, the NJEMSTF became a standalone operation as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with significant funding from the state of New Jersey. The group continues to work closely with the NJ Department of Health as part of the state's emergency preparedness and EMS operations. As part of the transition, the NJEMSTF named a new advisory board, board of directors and operational leadership. The organization also named new planners throughout the state and revamped its membership roster to include more EMS providers.

“This has been a period of significant transition and transformation to make the NJEMSTF a stronger organization,” says Bascom. “The changes and continuing enhancements helped make the NJ EMS Task Force more nimble and better equipped to respond to the rapidly changing emergency medical services landscape in the state.”

The NJEMSTF represents more than 200 of the finest career and volunteer EMS providers throughout New Jersey who are highly trained to respond to large-scale man-made and natural disasters as well as pre-planned events. The NJEMSTF was formed after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks as a way to better unify the New Jersey EMS community for response to Incidents of Significance and large-scale pre-planned events. Today, through partnerships with local EMS agencies, the NJEMSTF has specialized equipment and highly trained EMS providers strategically stationed throughout the state who are ready to respond to any emergency. The NJEMSTF has been critical in the response to such events as Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene, the hurricanes that hit the US Virgin Islands, wildfires, flooding in Bound Brook, a fire on the Seaside Heights boardwalk, the crash of US Airways Flight 1549 on the Hudson River and numerous healthcare facility evacuations. The team has also provided EMS resources at planned events such as Super Bowl XLVIII, the New Jersey Marathon, the Warped Tour concerts, the New Jersey Balloon Festival and Bamboozle.

“We will all look back on 2020 as the period when the planning and preparations put in place by the NJ EMS Task Force in all the years before paid off,” says Bascom. “We’re looking forward to a year ahead of high activity and growth for the organization as well as continued service to the citizens of New Jersey.”

Follow the NJEMSTF on [Facebook](#), on [Twitter](#) and online at [www.njemstf.org](http://www.njemstf.org).



**Members of the NJ EMS Task Force and NJSP/ NJOEM working together in the USVI**



**Scan this QR code to see contact information for many of the SEMPS partner agencies.**

# County Emergency Management Coordinators

The 21 County OEM Coordinators are essential partners for the coordination of all emergency management functions in New Jersey. The Coordinators are listed below:

ATLANTIC	Vincent J. Jones
BERGEN	Lt. Matthew Tiedemann
BURLINGTON	Darryl T. Williams
CAMDEN	Samuel Spino
CAPE MAY	Martin L. Pagliughi
CUMBERLAND	Gabriel Scarpa
ESSEX	Sheriff Armando Fontoura
GLOUCESTER	Dennis McNulty
HUDSON	Jim Woods
HUNTERDON	Brayden Fahey
MERCER	Bob Hartman
MIDDLESEX	Bill Johnson
MONMOUTH	Michael Oppegaard
MORRIS	Scott DiGiralomo
OCEAN	Sheriff Michael G. Mastronardy
PASSAIC	Robert Lyons
SALEM	Scott Haines
SOMERSET	Douglas Vornlocker
SUSSEX	Sheriff Michael Strada
UNION	Chris Scaturo
WARREN	Frank Wheatley/William Hunt

Click on the below link for contact information to the County Coordinators and their staff: <http://ready.nj.gov/about-us/county-coordinators.shtml>



To Request Additional Information About the NJOEM Ready NJ Report Contact:

**Laura Connolly**  
[laura.connolly@njsp.org](mailto:laura.connolly@njsp.org)

**Howard Butt**  
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## New Jersey Office of Emergency Management

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	NJ State Police on Facebook: <a href="https://facebook.com/NewJerseyStatePolice">facebook.com/NewJerseyStatePolice</a>		NJ State Police on Twitter: <a href="https://twitter.com/NJSP">twitter.com/NJSP</a>
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 <b>Nextdoor</b>	Nextdoor Website: <a href="https://Nextdoor.com">Nextdoor.com</a>		NJOEM Website: <a href="https://ready.nj.gov">ready.nj.gov</a>