

DISASTER NEWS YOU CAN USE

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August 2026

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This Month in Disaster History

Port Explosions – From Beirut to Beyond

On August 4, 2020, one of the largest non-nuclear explosions in modern history devastated the Port of Beirut when approximately 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate, improperly stored for nearly seven years in Hangar 12, detonated after a fire. The blast killed at least 218 people, injured more than 7,000, displaced around 300,000 residents, created a crater more than 100 meters wide, and caused an estimated \$15 billion in damage. The explosion halted port operations, destroyed critical grain silos, disrupted regional shipping, and damaged large sections of the city. While Beirut stands out for its scale and the clear failure of long-term hazardous materials governance, it belongs to a much longer global pattern of catastrophic explosions at port facilities—events driven by the concentration of high-energy cargoes in busy harbors often located near dense urban populations.

The science of these disasters varies by material but frequently involves the transition from...

Continued on Page 2

Policy Shifts in Federal Mitigation Funding

Disproportionate Challenges & Neglect for Rural Communities

Recent changes to FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program and more selective application of Section 404 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds are reshaping how communities reduce disaster risk. After a temporary termination and subsequent court-ordered restoration, the FY 2024–2025 BRIC Notice of Funding Opportunity prioritizes shovel-ready infrastructure projects, caps individual awards at \$20 million, eliminates standalone hazard mitigation planning and non-financial technical assistance, and places greater responsibility on states and localities. Concurrently, new HMGP approvals tied to major disaster declarations have been limited or delayed since early 2025, with heightened federal scrutiny on project selection and obligations. These adjustments aim to focus resources on high-return infrastructure outcomes but create particular hurdles for rural communities, which already face constrained staffing, limited engineering capacity, and smaller tax bases.

Rural areas bear a disproportionate share of disaster impacts yet have historically struggled to access competitive mitigation funding.

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Disaster History

Continued...

The 2020 Beirut Explosion in Global Context

Continued

fire to detonation under conditions of confinement, contamination, or inadequate separation. In Beirut, ammonium nitrate (NH_4NO_3), a common fertilizer that can detonate when heated, confined, or mixed with combustibles, underwent rapid decomposition after a warehouse fire, releasing enormous quantities of gas and generating extreme overpressure. Similar ammonium nitrate detonations occurred at Texas City, Texas, in 1947 (roughly 2,300 tons aboard the SS Grandcamp, killing approximately 581 people) and contributed to the 2015 Tianjin Port explosions in China (173 deaths). Other major port disasters involved wartime munitions: the 1917 Halifax Explosion in Canada (nearly 2,000 deaths) resulted from the collision and fire of the SS Mont-Blanc, which carried picric acid, TNT, guncotton, and benzol;

the 1944 Bombay (Mumbai) Explosion killed 800–1,300 people when the SS Fort Stikine caught fire while loaded with explosives and cotton; and the 1944 Port Chicago disaster in California killed 320 people during the loading of munitions. Across these events, the common sequence was the presence of large quantities of energetic materials, an initiating fire or impact, and insufficient controls to prevent escalation.

Impacts consistently extended far beyond the immediate port zone. Ports serve as critical nodes in global supply chains; their sudden destruction cascades into shipping delays, commodity shortages, and economic disruption. Beirut's blast severely damaged the city's commercial waterfront and grain storage, compounding Lebanon's existing economic and food-security crises. Texas City's 1947 explosions leveled much of the waterfront and nearby industrial facilities. Halifax flattened large residential and industrial districts and generated a tsunami-like wave in the harbor. Tianjin destroyed thousands of vehicles and warehouses and contaminated surrounding areas with hazardous chemicals. In each case, emergency responders—often firefighters arriving without full knowledge of the stored materials—suffered disproportionately high casualties, underscoring systemic gaps in hazard communication and pre-incident planning.

Emergency management and port safety systems repeatedly proved inadequate. In Beirut, repeated official warnings about the ammonium nitrate went unheeded for years amid fragmented authority and weak oversight; firefighters responded to the initial fire without a robust site-specific plan for a potential mass detonation. Parallel failures appeared in Texas City (steam injected into a burning hold containing ammonium nitrate), Tianjin (responders lacking accurate inventories of mixed hazardous chemicals), and the munitions ports of World War II (poor training, high-speed loading under pressure, and limited awareness of detonation risks). Regulatory responses have been incremental rather than transformative. Post-Texas City attention increased to cargo handling practices; the 2013 West, Texas, fertilizer explosion (though not strictly a port event) prompted...

Continued on page 4



*Aftermath of the explosion, with the destroyed grain silos to the left and the flooded blast crater to the right
~ Mehr News Agency (CC by 4.0)*

The Value of Preparedness

A Commitment to a Culture of Preparedness



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The Month in Disaster History

Continued

Port Explosions Across History

Continued

U.S. Chemical Safety Board recommendations and updates to NFPA hazardous materials codes; and international frameworks such as the IMDG Code have been refined after major incidents. Yet gaps remain in long-term land-side storage standards, real-time inventory transparency, and land-use buffers around high-hazard port areas.

For the emergency management community, these disasters—from Halifax and Bombay through Texas City, Port Chicago, Tianjin, and Beirut—offer enduring lessons. Ports concentrate extreme hazards in locations that are simultaneously critical infrastructure and often adjacent to cities; therefore, rigorous inventory control, strict separation of oxidizers and combustibles, time limits on storage of reactive materials, continuous monitoring, and mandatory information sharing with first responders are essential. Multi-agency exercises must include worst-case detonation scenarios, not only routine fires. Land-use planning should maintain meaningful buffer zones, and emergency plans must account for cascading effects on shipping, supply chains, and urban populations. Today, U.S. and international ports rely on layered regulations (Coast Guard, OSHA, EPA, CFATS, IMDG, and local emergency planning committees), improved detection systems, and industry best practices. Sustained progress, however, depends on treating historical port explosions not as isolated anomalies but as recurring evidence that the combination of high-energy cargoes, imperfect governance, and urban proximity continues to generate catastrophic risk. Beirut is the most recent large-scale reminder; the global record shows it is far from unique.

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Statewide Comprehensive EM Program Management Solution

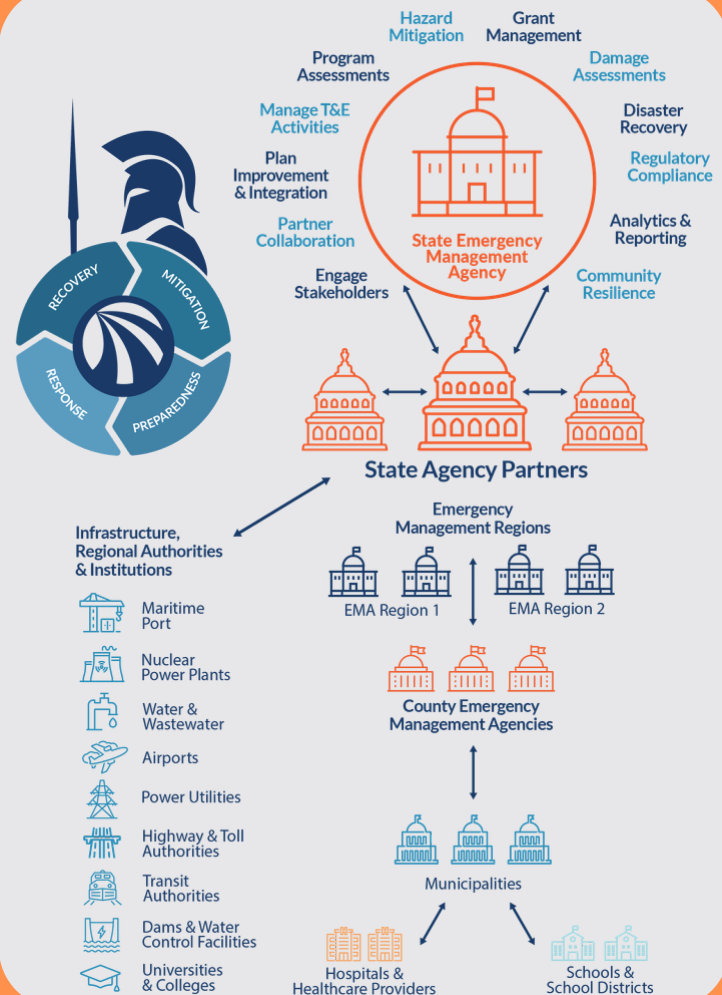


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EM365



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Policy Shift in HMGP Funding & Rural Resilience Continued...

Policy Shift Causes Disproportionate Challenges & Neglect for Rural USA

Continued

Analysis of FEMA declarations from 2016 to 2025 shows that rural nonmetropolitan counties accounted for nearly two-thirds of county-level designations under major disaster declarations and about 58 percent of all counties included in disaster declarations overall, despite representing only 14 percent of the U.S. population. Nearly 86 percent of rural counties received at least one disaster designation during that decade. At the same time, studies of earlier BRIC cycles found that high-capacity counties received roughly 19 times more national competition funding than low-capacity counties, approximately \$3 billion versus \$157 million across multiple rounds, with low-capacity (often rural) places capturing as little as 3–4 percent of competitive awards in some years. The renewed emphasis on advanced design readiness and reduced technical assistance further widens this gap, as many rural jurisdictions lack the resources to develop fully engineered applications without external support.

These access challenges are especially consequential because hazard mitigation delivers among the strongest returns on public investment available. Research by the National Institute of Building Sciences examining more than two decades of federal grants from FEMA, HUD, and the Economic Development Administration found that every \$1 invested in mitigation yields approximately \$6 in avoided future losses, equating to roughly \$160 billion in societal savings from \$27 billion in grants. Riverine flood projects alone have demonstrated closer to a 7-to-1 return. Complementary analyses of modern building codes show returns approaching \$11 per \$1 invested when communities adopt current standards. For rural communities with limited fiscal capacity, these ratios mean that relatively modest, well-targeted projects—such as culvert upgrades, localized floodplain restoration, fuels management, or elevation of critical systems—can prevent repeated cycles of damage that would otherwise strain already thin local budgets and accelerate economic decline.

Because rural places experience high rates of disaster designation while possessing fewer alternative funding sources or recovery options, they stand to gain the most from consistent mitigation investment. Small-scale, cost-effective measures often produce outsized local benefits by protecting essential infrastructure, preserving tax base, and reducing the long-term federal liability associated with repetitive losses. When policy changes make it harder for these communities to compete for or implement such projects, the result is not only elevated future risk but also diminished overall program efficiency.

Policymakers have a clear responsibility to serve as strong stewards of American taxpayers' dollars. With documented returns of \$6 or more for every dollar invested, and with rural communities accounting for a disproportionate share of major disaster designations, continued selectivity that limits HMGP access for the places most frequently and severely affected by disasters undermines both fiscal prudence and public safety. Reconsidering and restoring robust HMGP investment for these high-need, high-ROI communities is not merely equitable—it is the most responsible use of limited federal resources. Protecting the communities that deliver the greatest return on mitigation spending is the surest way to reduce future disaster costs for every American taxpayer.

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What ISC Clients Need to Know: *Uniform Relocation Assistance in FEMA HMP*

Uniform Relocation Assistance in FEMA Hazard Mitigation Programs

What ISC Clients Need to Know

FEMA's July 2026 fact sheet reinforces that the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA) applies fully to Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) projects. While not a new law, the release signals that any HMA project causing involuntary displacement carries mandatory relocation assistance obligations that applicants and subapplicants cannot treat as optional or an afterthought.

FEMA confirms the URA applies to projects funded through HMA programs. Applicants must offer relocation assistance whenever federal funds support projects that involuntarily displace individuals or businesses. Although many mitigation projects rely on voluntary participation, URA requirements apply automatically to tenants and to any project type—including acquisition, elevation, reconstruction, retrofits, flood risk reduction, or other infrastructure work—where displacement occurs. Temporary displacement (for example, tenants relocating during an elevation project) and permanent displacement both trigger obligations. In some cases, URA can even apply to displacement that occurred before the grant if it is tied to the project.

When URA Applies:

URA compliance is mandatory when both of the following conditions are met:

1. Federal funding – Any part of the project receives federal funding or assistance.
2. Involuntary displacement – The project forces people or businesses to relocate, temporarily or permanently.

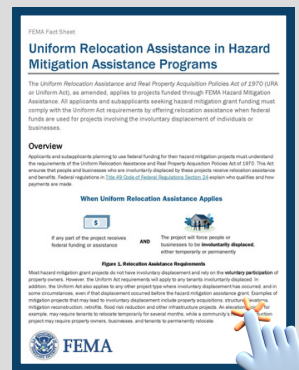
Assistance that Must Be Provided:

Where URA applies, recipients and subrecipients may need to deliver:

- Relocation advisory services
- Rental assistance
- Storage of household goods
- Moving costs
- Purchase assistance (rental assistance applied as a down payment)
- Housing of last resort

These benefits are not optional. They must be budgeted, documented, and delivered.

Download the FEMA Fact Sheet



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR ISC CLIENTS

- Budget impacts are real. Relocation benefits can meaningfully increase project costs, particularly for elevation, reconstruction, and infrastructure work. Estimate them early and build them into HMA budgets.
- Tenant impacts need early attention. Even when a property owner participates voluntarily, tenants may still be involuntarily displaced—triggering URA.
- Documentation expectations increase. Maintain thorough records of notices, advisory services, benefit calculations, payments, housing searches, and communications.
- Partnerships matter. Collaborate with housing agencies, nonprofits, and transportation departments to locate comparable housing and manage complex relocations.
- Projects may need different phasing. If temporary displacement is likely to exceed 12 months, prepare for permanent relocation.
- Pre-grant displacement must be evaluated. Review project history carefully; URA may still apply if earlier displacement is tied to the project.

BOTTOM LINE

URA compliance belongs at the front end of project design for any HMA project involving displacement—not as a late-stage add-on. Assess displacement risk early, budget relocation benefits upfront, document everything, build partnerships to support displaced individuals, and treat URA compliance as core project design.

ISC can assist with URA compliance planning, benefit estimation, documentation strategy, and integrating relocation assistance into HMA applications.

Disaster Resource Center

Free Tool Kits & Resources

Whether you are dealing with a declared disaster or need program guidance, ISC is there to help you.

Hazard-Specific Tool Kits



Disaster Resource Center



Best Practices Library

Industry Best Practices

Don't Let Disaster Strike Twice: Navigating the Complex World of Post-Disaster Funding



In the wake of a disaster, the road to recovery can be long and arduous. Applicants are often left to navigate a complex maze of requirements, deadlines, and paperwork, all while trying to rebuild their lives and communities. The consequences of not following proper protocol can be severe, leading to denied or de-obligated funds, leaving applicants without the resources they need to recover.



Written by [Name]

Integrated Solutions Consulting, Inc. (ISC) understands the

On-Call Expert Support



Announcing: Odysseus EM365 Ai

Establishing Ai Community Disaster Intelligence



Odysseus EM365 Ai Enhancements

The Odysseus EM365 platform, developed by Integrated Solutions Consulting (ISC), integrates a governed AI assistant designed to enhance emergency management practices while ensuring outputs are drawn exclusively from vetted, jurisdiction-specific sources such as regulatory databases, peer-reviewed research, and operational guidance. The AI operates within a controlled knowledge environment, avoiding unverified open internet data to maintain accuracy, compliance, and professional defensibility. By handling up to 90% of analytical and procedural tasks, it serves as a force multiplier for practitioners, supporting everything from plan customization to risk analysis, while human experts provide the critical 10% of judgment and oversight. Built on over two decades of ISC's expertise

across 7,000+ jurisdictions, EM365 transforms routine workflows into efficient, resilient processes that preserve institutional knowledge and mitigate liability risks in high-stakes scenarios.

The Odysseus EM365 AI builds upon the Community Vulnerability, Risk, and Resiliency (CVR2) model, a patent-pending, evidence-based framework that has served as the industry's leading risk assessment methodologies for the past 15 years. The CVR2's 4,500 evidence-based indicators and measurements of community vulnerability, risk, and resilience serve as a foundational framework for generating reliable community disaster intelligence.

Additionally, the EM365 AI framework is aligned with major federal and state regulatory requirements, evidence-based best practices, and industry standards in emergency management—including EMAP (ANSI/EMAP 5-2022), NFPA (e.g., 1600 and 1660), NWS StormReady, and ISO standards (e.g., 22320:2018)—to ensure all programmatic plans, strategies, assessments, and outputs are compliant and defensible. This generates tailored, auditable outputs that streamline accreditation processes, reduce liability risks, and support proactive alignment with evolving regulations, enhancing programmatic integrity and operational effectiveness across jurisdictions.

The EM365 Ai governed environment systematically configures the evidence-based knowledge and compliance standards into a system-of-systems architecture, providing a single platform that not only provides best-in-class technology but also a force multiplier that drives efficiencies and alleviates administrative burden. By integrating this robust analytical foundation into the EM365 platform's governed AI environment, the system ensures that AI-generated outputs are not only data-driven and jurisdictionally tailored but also scientifically defensible, enabling emergency managers to make informed decisions that enhance preparedness, response effectiveness, and long-term community resilience while minimizing reliance on unverified external sources.



D Y S S E U S

EM365-Ai

The EM365 AI assistant empowers local emergency managers by ensuring outputs are drawn exclusively from a library of 50,000 vetted, jurisdiction-specific sources, regulatory databases, peer-reviewed research, documented best practices and operational guidance.

#1 EM Ai Solution

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July 2026

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Preparedness Best Practices



Community Wildfire Protection Plans

Wildfire risk continues to grow across communities of every size. A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), as defined and authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (HFRA), provides a clear, collaborative, and prioritized path to reduce that risk. Effective CWPPs meet federal minimum requirements for collaboration, prioritized hazardous fuel reduction, and treatment of structural ignitability—while positioning communities for federal priority consideration and grant eligibility. Outdated, incomplete, or non-compliant plans leave communities exposed and weaker competitors for the funding needed to move from risk to resilience.

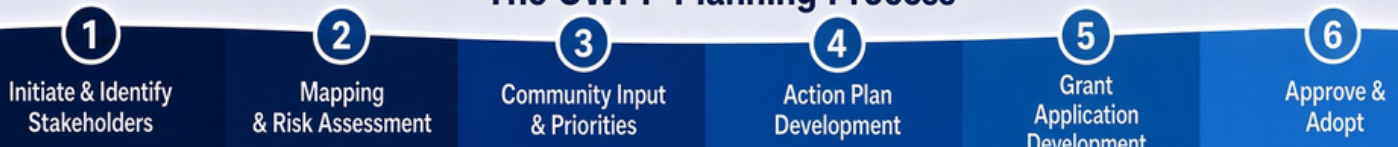
Six Critical Components of a Successful CWPP

	Meeting HFRA Minimum Requirements	A valid CWPP <u>must be collaboratively developed AND agreed to</u> by local government, the local fire department(s), and the State forestry agency, and must identify and prioritize fuel treatments while recommending reduction measures.
	Accurate Risk & Values-at-Risk Assessment	Strong plans rest on solid analysis of fuels, topography, fire history, structural vulnerability, critical infrastructure, and community assets so prioritization is defensible .
	Defensible Prioritization of Treatments	HFRA requires identification and ranking of hazardous fuel reduction areas and recommended treatment methods on both federal and non-federal land that protect at-risk communities and essential infrastructure.
	Structural Ignitability & Community Action	Plans <u>must recommend practical measures</u> homeowners and communities can take to reduce structure ignitability, supporting both individual responsibility and community-scale protection.
	Funding Alignment & Priority Consideration	A current, compliant CWPP strengthens grant applications for programs such as the Community Wildfire Defense Grant and other federal/state funding streams, giving communities greater influence over how projects are prioritized.
	Local Ownership & Long-Term Use	Plans developed through genuine collaboration are <u>far more likely to be implemented, updated, and used</u> to guide real risk-reduction work

Drive Community Wildfire Resilience



The CWPP Planning Process



Response Best Practices



Conduct Accurate and Timely Damage Assessments & Cost Estimates

Large-scale disasters demand rapid, accurate, and defensible documentation of damage. Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDAs), comprehensive damage inventories, and precise cost estimates form the foundation of successful FEMA Public Assistance (PA) applications, project formulation, and long-term recovery. Errors or delays at this stage can jeopardize funding, slow recovery, and expose communities to audit risk.

Why Accurate PDAs, Damage Inventories, and Cost Estimates Matter

- **Declaration Thresholds:** PDAs supply the data FEMA and states use to determine whether a major disaster declaration is warranted and which categories of assistance will be authorized.
- **Project Formulation:** Detailed damage descriptions, dimensions, and cost estimates become the basis for Project Worksheets (PWs) and fixed-cost estimates under the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act (SRIA).
- **Eligibility & Compliance:** Thorough documentation protects against de-obligation, supports 404/406 mitigation opportunities, and satisfies FEMA quality-review requirements.
- **Speed of Recovery:** Rapid, high-quality assessments allow communities to move from response into recovery without losing momentum or institutional knowledge.

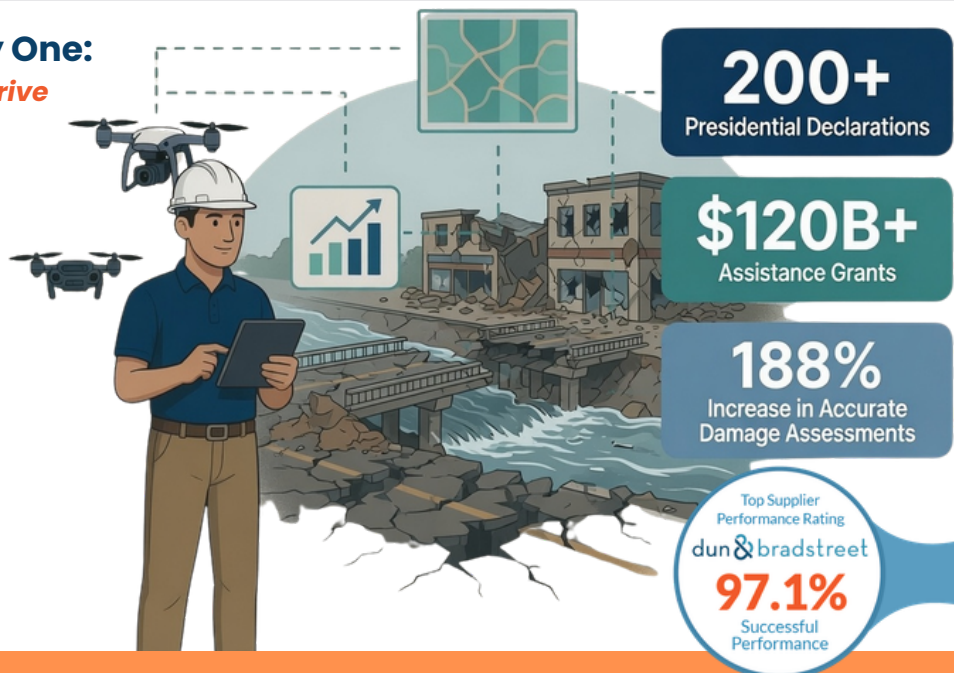
Don't Jeopardize Funds – FEMA's Expedited Timelines for Reporting Damages & Costs

FEMA is tightening timelines for reporting damages and submitting Damage Inventories and cost estimates under the Public Assistance program, including the common 60-day window after the Recovery Scoping Meeting and proposed reforms that would **impose firmer deadlines** on subrecipients with faster FEMA review clocks. These compressed requirements force local governments and other subrecipients to rapidly complete site inspections, document damages, and developing **defensible estimates**, often while still managing active response operations, creating significant capacity strain. Missing the shortened windows *risks delayed or reduced funding, incomplete project formulation, and greater audit exposure.*

Accurate Documentation from Day One:

How ISC Experience, Expertise & Innovation Drive Recovery Success

Accurate damage documentation and cost estimating at the outset of a disaster is the single greatest predictor of recovery success. ISC bridges three decades of proven field experience with advanced technologies to help subrecipients meet FEMA's compressed reporting timelines without sacrificing quality or eligibility. By rapidly delivering thorough, defensible inventories and estimates, ISC enables communities to stay ahead of deadlines, maximize funding, and protect against de-obligation risks.



Response Best Practices



OUR DAMAGE ASSESSMENT & COST ESTIMATING SERVICES

- * **Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDA)**
Rapid mobilization of experienced field teams to support joint local/state/FEMA PDAs. We collect, validate, and package damage data that meets FEMA declaration thresholds and supports both Public and Individual Assistance pathways.
- * **Damage Inventory & Documentation**
Systematic identification and cataloging of damaged facilities, infrastructure, and eligible sites. We produce complete damage descriptions and dimensions (DDD) that form the foundation of Project Worksheets and fixed-cost estimates.
- * **Cost Estimating & Project Formulation**
Parametric and detailed cost estimates for Category A–G work. Our estimators apply FEMA-accepted methodologies, documented unit costs, and construction means-and-methods knowledge to produce efficient, traceable, and defensible estimates
- * **360° & Drone-Enabled Assessments**
Licensed drone pilots and recovery specialists capture high-resolution aerial imagery and 360-degree panoramic records of damaged facilities and communities—creating permanent, court-ready documentation in minutes.
- * **GIS Response Mapping & Impact Analysis**
Spatial analysis, community impact mapping, and visualization tools that accelerate situational awareness, resource prioritization, and briefings to elected officials and FEMA.
- * **Cost Recovery & Disaster Engineering Support**
Identification of costs eligible under FEMA PA, Section 404/406 Hazard Mitigation, and other federal programs. Our disaster engineer experts flag opportunities and pitfalls early so communities maximize funding while remaining audit-ready

~ **Accurate damage documentation and cost estimating at the outset of a disaster is the single greatest predictor of recovery success** ~

OUR INNOVATIONS

360 Degree Damage Inventory Windshield Survey

With the introduction of new FEMA program timelines and opportunities, documenting your disaster damages has never been more important. Being able to show your community before and after the



devastation is critical in securing vital disaster assistance funding and advocating to FEMA and others well after the disaster has left the mainstream news cycle. With our 360 Degree Damage Windshield Survey, communities can not only conduct detailed street-level damage assessments of their community within hours but also document the before/after the disaster for future reference. This new technology serves as a best practice for securing disaster assistance funding for your community.



D Y S S E U S[™] EM365

DISASTER SITE INSPECTION TOOL

ASSESS, LOG, AND MANAGE DISASTER DAMAGES, COST ESTIMATES, AND FEMA GRANTS IN REAL-TIME

The Odysseus™ EM365 offers a ready-to-use application for real-time damage assessments, log site-specific damage inventory, and document detailed cost estimates. The application is customizable, mobile friendly, and integrated with the GMT to streamline disaster recovery and the FEMA reimbursement process.

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Demo**



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Recovery Best Practices



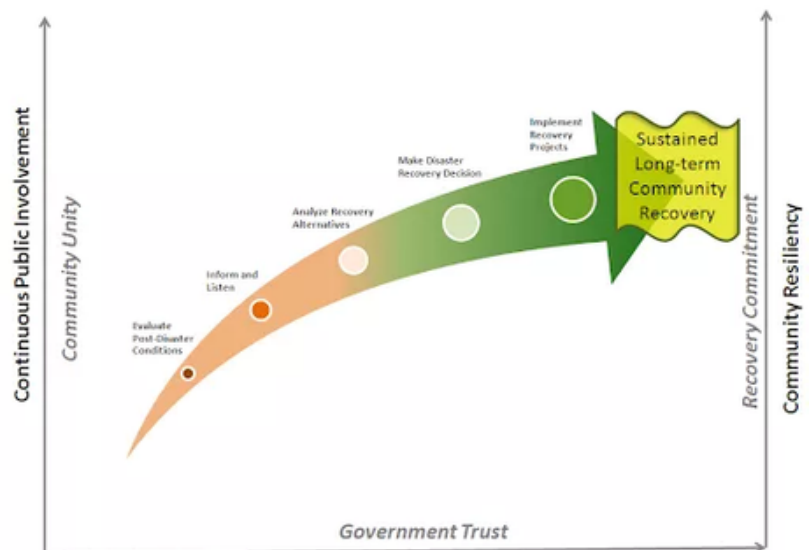
Community Disaster Recovery Success Series

Part 1 of 11: Establish Recovery Governance that Expands the Window of Opportunities

Our everyday decisions are governed by processes and routines that assist us in identifying the problem, determining strategies to resolve the problem, evaluating these alternatives, choosing the best alternative, and then implementing the resolution. These procedures and routines are carried out by organizations that offer consistency, commitment, and confidence in the decision-making process. After disaster, these processes and routines may be disrupted or may not be set up to adequately handle the litany of complex post-disaster recovery issues. A defined and shared pre-disaster process for managing disaster recovery activities and coordinating with local, regional, state and federal partners is paramount to community recovery success.

Unlike the tactical incident strategies that are paramount to managing information and resources during the response phase, community disaster recovery is an organic and inductive process that fosters community unity and an open autonomy that promotes effective decision-making that benefits the majority. The disaster process goes through a period called 'Communitas' where disaster-stricken communities take on a shared identity of "disaster victim" and establish a sense of equality between community groups that otherwise take opposing views. During this period, conditions are optimal for community unity, empowerment, and agreement. Research has shown that social trust in government becomes a symbolic token to a community, can extend the period of 'Communitas', and facilitate an effective community recovery decision-making process.

A united community will strengthen the potential for agreement on difficult disaster recovery issues and facilitate a sustained commitment between otherwise divergent parties. Building a mutual understanding between conflicted parties will reduce controversial engagements and increase efforts to resolve issues collaboratively with a shared understanding and respect. A community that maintains a sense of unity will enable community recovery decision-makers to be increasingly sensitized to the public concerns. A united community will begin to see the long-term recovery organization as a trusted and focal agent, elevating its status and maintaining its credibility and legitimacy within the community.



The net result will be an organization that can assist communities with the immediate evaluation of post-disaster conditions and needs; outreach efforts that will inform, listen to, and resolve potential conflict with the community; thorough and unbiased analysis of the benefits and challenges recovery alternatives; processes that will facilitate accurate disaster recovery decisions; and track the implementation of recovery projects and offer corrective actions if necessary.

(Continued on Next Page...)

Recovery Best Practices

Continued...



Community Disaster Recovery Success Series

Establish Recovery Governance that Expands the Window of Opportunities (continued)

Committed and structured governance would result in a rational system for efficient and effective long-term community recovery. A defined and open decision-making process will provide organizational legitimacy and improve the quality of decisions being made. Decisions will be made in a timely manner and based on a well-informed organization and public. Independent decisions may appear quick and easy, but often they meet public resistance causing increased cost and project implementation delays, if not project termination. A committed and structured long-term community recovery structure will prevent uninformed and unilateral decisions and provide an open forum to discuss potential regulatory and budgetary challenges to implementing a project. The organization, as well as the public, take ownership in the decision and ultimately increase the ease of implementing the project.

Read more on the Community Disaster Recovery Success Series.

[Part 1: Establish a Recovery Governance](#)

[Part 3: Disaster Recovery Committee Coordination](#)

[Part 4: Thoroughly Assess Impacts & Needs](#)

[Part 5: Importance of Community Outreach](#)

[Part 6: Be Prepared for Disaster Recovery](#)

[Part 7: Take Advantage of Grant Opportunities](#)

[Part 8: Disaster Recovery Funding Strategy](#)

[Part 9: Autonomous & Inclusive Decision-Making](#)

[Part 10: Track and Report Recovery Success](#)

[Part 11: Measure Betterment & Resiliency](#)



D Y S S E U S

EM365

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Maximize Vital Community Disaster Recovery Funds



Odysseus Features for Disaster Grant Management Solutions



Mitigation Best Practices



Elevate Hazard Risk with Community Vulnerabilities Analysis

Past disaster events, both natural and manmade, seem to indicate that disasters are not problems that can be viewed or solved as isolated instances, but instead stem from the complexity of disasters and the intricate relationships society shares with both its natural and constructed environments. In other words, disasters are social constructs and that large-scale hazard events exacerbate the preexisting conditions of the community. This understanding provides clarity that a community's threat and hazard risks is a function not only of a community's core capabilities and potential hazard impacts but also provides support that consideration must be made to evaluate the community's pre-disaster conditions that either heighten or reduce its vulnerability to disaster. When disasters do happen, they have a cascading impact on a community and its residents, essential services, and critical assets. These direct and cascading impacts from disaster are increasing because our communities are becoming increasingly complex and interconnected. This fundamental finding of community risk was described by Dr. Denis Mileti in 1999 and illustrated in the following diagram.

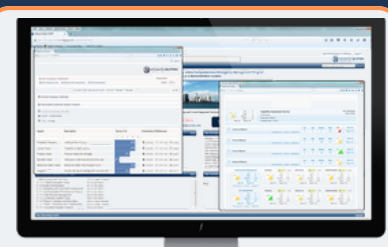
Disasters are symptoms of broader and more basic problems. Many disaster losses – rather than stemming from unexpected events – are the predictable result of interactions among three major systems: the physical environment, which includes hazardous events; the social and demographic characteristics of the communities that experience them; and the buildings, roads, bridges, and other components of the constructed environment. (Mileti, 1999).



It is commonly recognized throughout the field of emergency management that the THIRA provides a core foundation of a comprehensive emergency management program and a framework to guide and inform preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation efforts for all hazard threats. It should be noted, however, that a THIRA that is supported by a thorough risk assessment and vulnerability analysis has much greater usefulness than a simple output of hazard risk prioritization and projected capability needs. The information and data that informs the risk analysis process should be used to support, serve as a reference, or even validate program and operational considerations; and, should ultimately improve the decision making of those involved in comprehensive emergency management activities. Additionally, a comprehensive risk assessment and vulnerability analysis should offer efficiency by providing a strategy that is scalable, flexible, and compliant with state and federal grant, administrative programs, or legal requirements that guide program measures and activities.

EM365 CVR2 Tool

The Odysseus EM365 software comes with a robust database as well as geospatial and scientific analysis tools to comprehensively assess a community's unique vulnerabilities and hazard risks.



[Learn More About the CVR2](#)

The Community Vulnerability Risk, & Resiliency (CVR2) tool provides a systematic method to analyze over 4,500 evidence-based indicators and measurement of community vulnerabilities, capabilities, mitigation, and hazard risks. The CVR2 goes beyond FEMA's National Risk Map and provides context for accurate and relevant comprehensive EM strategies.

Disaster News

Current FEMA Disaster Declarations: July 2026

July 2026 saw elevated activity driven by Super Typhoon Bavi in the Western Pacific, significant flooding in Texas, continued recovery from spring severe weather, and a sharp rise in wildfire-related Fire Management Assistance Grants across the West. Emergency declarations provided rapid support for response, while major disaster approvals for earlier incidents continued and new FMAGs helped contain fires threatening communities.



FEMA

New emergency declarations (EM series):

- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (EM-3647-MP): Emergency declaration on July 3, 2026, for Typhoon Bavi (incident period beginning July 2, 2026, and continuing). This authorized emergency protective measures and direct federal assistance at 75% federal cost share across Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and the Northern Islands.
- Guam (EM-3648-GU): Emergency declaration on July 3, 2026, for Super Typhoon Bavi. Pre-positioned teams and resources supported protective measures ahead of and during the storm.
- Texas (EM-3649-TX): Emergency declaration on July 18, 2026, for flooding beginning July 12, 2026, and continuing. Covered numerous counties (including Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Blanco, Brewster, Comal, Crockett, and others in central and southern Texas), authorizing emergency protective measures and direct federal assistance.

Major disaster declarations (DR series) and related actions focused on both new and lingering impacts. Key July activity included announcements and support tied to prior spring events (e.g., Mississippi severe storms from May), while Super Typhoon Bavi's impacts later supported a major disaster declaration (DR-4931-MP, announced early August for the July 4–12 incident period, with Individual Assistance for Rota and Public Assistance for affected islands). West Virginia severe storms and flooding (July 21–22) also progressed toward major disaster support.

These FMAGs provided up to 75% federal cost share for eligible firefighting costs on fires threatening to become major disasters. Fire Management Assistance declarations (FM series) increased markedly as Western wildfire activity intensified:

- Colorado: Willow Fire and related incidents (early July approvals building on late-June activity).
- Oregon: Lower Dry Creek Fire (declared around July 16), Akawa Butte Fire (July 23), and Grasshopper Fire (July 25).
- Washington: Kaiser Canyon Fire (July 17), Signal Peak and Ransier Fires (late July), and Modrite Fire (July 30, on Colville Reservation lands).
- California: Dove Fire (July 26).
- Hawaii: Kawaihae Road Fire (July 26).

July highlighted the dual pressures of tropical cyclone response in the Pacific territories and the escalating Western wildfire season, alongside ongoing recovery from earlier severe weather and flooding. For emergency management professionals, these declarations reinforce the importance of rapid damage assessments, pre-positioning, and coordination across Public Assistance, Individual Assistance, and Fire Management Assistance programs.

**Emergency
Management and
Disaster Recovery:
Building a More
Resilient Future**

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Industry Innovations



DYSSSEUS™ EM365 Ai

672%

INCREASE IN
PROGRAM EFFICIENCY

300^x

STAKEHOLDER
COLLABORATION

99%

REGULATORY &
PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

54^x

RETURN ON
INVESTMENT

97%

PERFORMANCE
RATING

The Industry's First Comprehensive Emergency and Disaster Program Management Software

Odysseus™ offers a suite of tools and systems designed, dedicated to the efficient management of comprehensive disaster and emergency management programs. The union of technological and programmatic features offers organizations an efficient and effective method to systematically design, develop, maintain, and continually improve all elements of a comprehensive emergency management program.



Click Here to
Learn More About Our
Innovative Technology

EM Innovations in Work

Odysseus™ EM-365

Statewide Comprehensive EM Program Management

State Emergency Management Agencies

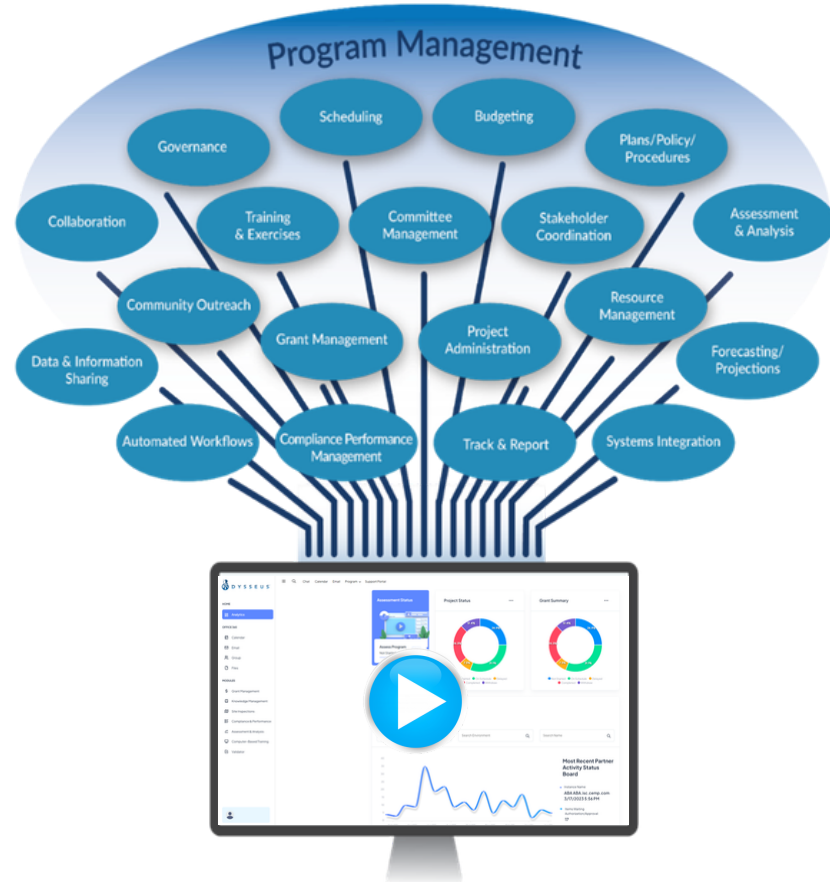
Although they provide much needed resources and capabilities during the time of a crisis or disaster, a State emergency management agency's (EMA) operational focus extends far beyond the response phase of an incident. The reality is that the success of a State EMA's response operation is intimately related to its ability to systematically track, guide, direct, monitor, manage, and administer all aspects of a comprehensive emergency management program across all state agency, county and municipal government partners, regional authorities, and other stakeholders.



Although the value is unmeasurable, many states think that coordinating a statewide comprehensive emergency management program would be a formidable task that would require significant resources. That's not true anymore.

Odysseus™ offers state emergency management agencies a software solution for managing a unified statewide comprehensive emergency management program. Odysseus™ "system-of-systems" architecture gives state EMA's a force multiplier to manage EMA program requirements statewide.

Designed by our team of leading emergency managers and software technicians, Odysseus™ offers a unique State EMA program management platform. It is a program management tool and allows for the full integration of other incident management software programs.



EM Innovations in Work

Odysseus™ EM-365

Statewide Comprehensive EM Program Management

Comprehensive EM Features

Preparedness Programs

- Planning Management
- Training Management
- Exercise Management
- Continuity of Operations
- Community Outreach
- Program Evaluation
- Program Compliance
- Project Reporting & Tracking
- Grant Management

Response Programs

- Incident Action Planning
- Situational Awareness Sharing
- Ops & Incident Reporting
- After-Action Review Analysis
- Preliminary Damage Assessments
- Cost & Expense Tracking
- Information Sharing

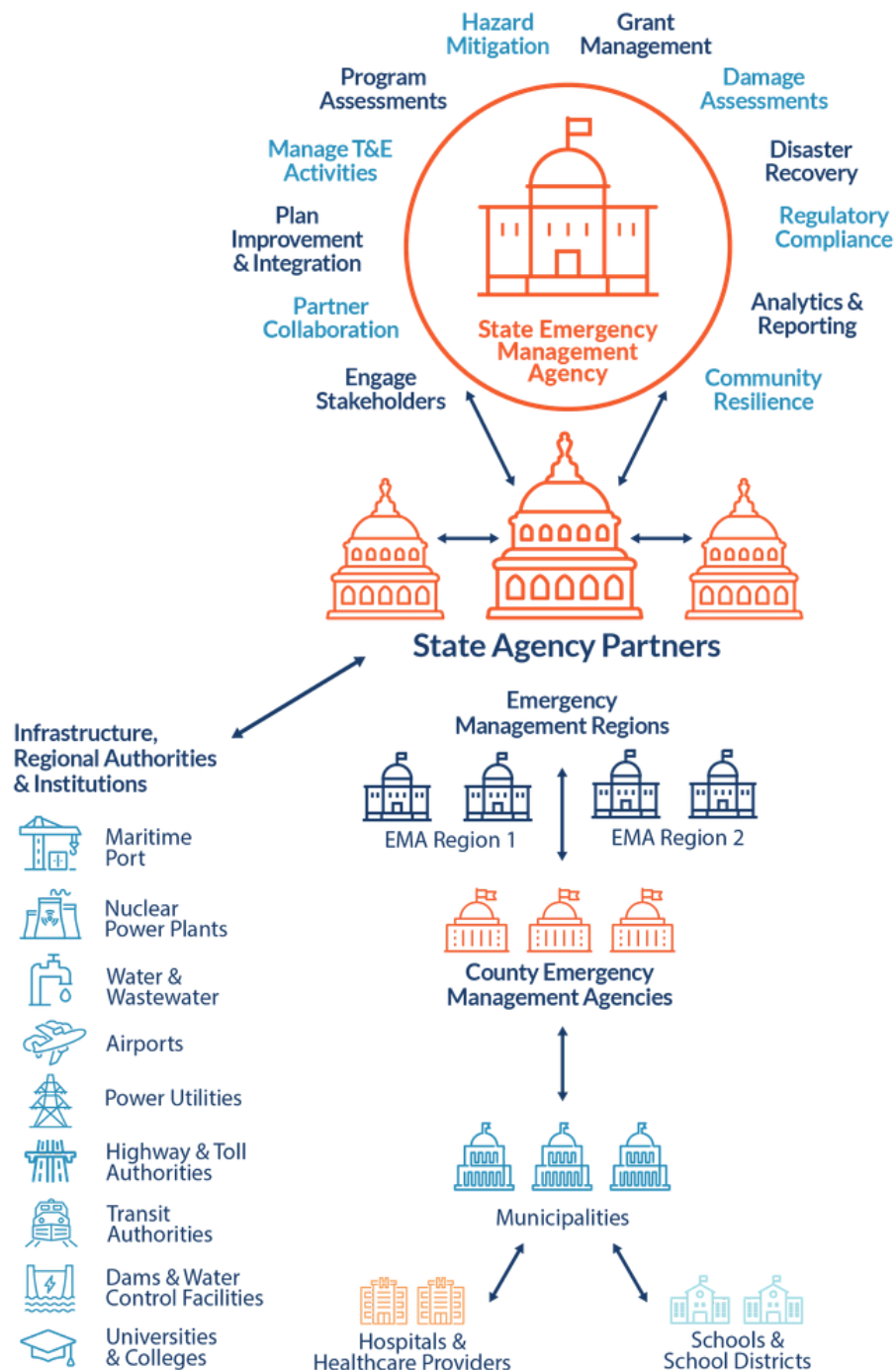
Recovery Programs

- Damage Assessments
- Debris Monitoring
- FEMA Public Assistance
- FEMA Individual Assistance
- HUD CDBG-DR
- Recovery Project Tracking
- Closeout & Audits

Mitigation Programs

- Mitigation Planning
- Risk Assessments
- Federal Cost Share Tracking
- Grant & Project Management

System-of-Systems Comprehensive EM Network



[Click Here to Learn More](#)

ODYSSEUS™ IN WORK

Hazard Mitigation Program Management *Elevate Your Community Disaster Resiliency*

Odysseus Features for Hazard Mitigation Program Solutions



Features

- Track Plan Development & Update
- Create Efficiencies with Plan Maintenance
- Track In-Kind Match Effort Contributions
- Mitigation Committee Management Tools
- Assess Hazard Mitigation Opportunities
- Real Time Tracking of Mitigation Grant Funds
- Interactive Mapping & Hazard Modeling
- Streamline Multi-Jurisdictional Planning
- Mitigation Crosswalk Compliance Metrics
- Track Mitigation Plan Participation
- Manage & Track Progress of Community Mitigation Projects
- Train Staff on FEMA Mitigation Requirements and Drive Accountability
- Maximize Federal Funding Possibilities
- Identify Mitigation Funding Gaps
- Adaptable and Customizable to Meet Your Needs
- Increase Hazard Mitigation Program Efficiency

Case Studies



Cook County Hazard Mitigation Program	
# of Participating Jurisdictions	134
# of Hazard Mitigation Grant Projects Managed by Odysseus GMT	2,015
Total FEMA Mitigation Grants	\$416 M
Total Value of Projects	\$2.8 B

Cook County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

- 136 Participating Jurisdictions
- 230% Increase in HMP Participation
- 2,015 Mitigation Projects Identified
- \$400+ Million in FEMA HMGP Grants
- \$2.8+ Billion in Pre-Disaster Mitigation Actions
- 100% FEMA Compliant
- Completed in Less Than 5 Months

[Click Here to Learn More About](#)

[Schedule a Demo](#)

Building a More Resilient Future



INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS
CONSULTING

**Click Below to Learn How We
Build a More Resilient Future**



ABOUT US

Integrated Solutions Consulting is a professional services firm focused on developing and implementing comprehensive crisis and consequence management solutions. We are a team of innovative problem-solvers that combine experience and evidence-based knowledge to deliver practical, best practice results across multiple industries to make communities safer and more resilient

Top Supplier
Performance Rating
dun & bradstreet
97.1%
Successful
Performance

We help our clients by providing comprehensive emergency management consulting services that use data-driven research, sophisticated crisis modeling and seasoned consultants to help our clients manage unexpected emergency and disaster situations.



Expertise: Disaster Recovery

ISC's Knowledge, Expertise, & Performance

Over the past three decades, ISC has worked with FEMA, state, and municipal clients to mobilize thousands of highly qualified technical staff to the most significant disasters in U.S. history, to EOCs and JFOs across the country. Under our contracts to provide professional technical disaster recovery services and navigating the statutory authorities of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, we have been instrumental in assisting our clients with identifying, administering, and managing tens of billions of dollars in federal disaster assistance funding.

▶ OUR PROGRAM & KNOWLEDGE CAPABILITIES:

- FEMA Public Assistance Program Management
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
- FEMA Individual Assistance Program Support
- FEMA Fire Management Assistance Grants
- FEMA Community Disaster Loans
- FEMA Section 428 Alternative Public Assistance Program
- HUD Community Development Block Grant Program Management
- Federal Highway Administration Emergency Relief (FHWA)
- National Flood Insurance Program
- State Managed Catastrophic Relief Fund Programs
- US Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance Loan Program
- USDA Farm Service Agency Disaster Assistance Program

ISC offers our clients a unique blend of emergency management professionals with expertise in disaster recovery operations and disaster assistance programs. Our team has supported local governments, states, tribal nations, and non-government organizations on a litany of disaster recovery operations, disaster assistance programs, community disaster recovery planning, and other special disaster recovery projects around the nation.



[Learn More About Our Disaster Recovery Services](#)



Although disasters are devastating and disruptive, it is important to recognize that every disaster brings about opportunity for communities to improve their conditions and to build a more resilient future. The better communities prepare for disaster, the better they can capitalize on the opportunity to break the disaster cycle.

Contracting Made Easy!

ISC offers numerous competitively procured – and federally compliant – contract vehicles across the Nation. Contracting with ISC takes only minutes.

[Learn More About Our Contract Vehicles](#)

Building Resilient Futures for Ports

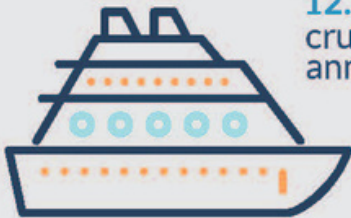
Port Vulnerabilities and Cascading Impacts

Since Sept. 11, 2001, much of the national focus on ports' preparedness has been on preventing potential acts of terror and the multitude of active hurricane seasons. The COVID-19 pandemic renewed focus on how to protect ports from a diversity of threats, including natural disasters and infectious disease outbreaks. Our airport and maritime port infrastructure are an intricate system supported by waterway, road, and rail systems to create a network of inland and coastal ports. Any disruption of this system will have cascading impacts to the local, regional, national, and possibly international economy as well as a multitude of sectors, critical infrastructure, and community lifelines.

Today, U.S. maritime ports & waterways handle more than **2 billion tons** of domestic import/export cargo

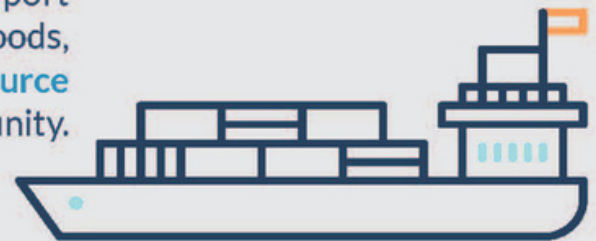
&

12.7 million cruise passengers annually.



U.S. airports handle more than **1 billion passengers** & **22.5 million tons** of domestic freight annually.

Although the core functionality of a port is to transport passengers and goods, ports also serve as a **primary source** of **revenue and jobs** for a community.



The market economy for airport and maritime ports is expected to exceed **\$110 billion** in the coming decade.



ABOUT US

Integrated Solutions Consulting is a professional services firm focused on developing and implementing comprehensive crisis and consequence management solutions. We are a team of innovative problem-solvers that combine experience and evidence-based knowledge to deliver practical, best practice results across multiple industries to make communities safer and more resilient.



Building Resilient Futures for Ports

Continued...

Ports -A Critical Community Lifeline

Airports and seaports are gateways to commercial travel as well as domestic and international trade, connecting the United States to the world.

ISC Responds to Maritime Ports After Disaster



After Hurricane Laura, ISC conducted damage assessments and assisted port clients through the FEMA disaster assistance process to recover hundreds of millions in damages.

ISC Conducts Assessments to Develop Plans

ISC conducted vulnerability and risk assessments with Miami International Airport and Port Miami. These assessments were integrated into comprehensive emergency response plans.



Our Approach to Comprehensive Emergency Management Programs for Ports

For even the most resilient ports, the possibility of an incident occurring that impacts vital business operations is a real and constant threat. Emergency management programs for ports is more than being able to rapidly respond to an incident. It is an ongoing process of protection/prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation that adheres to regulatory requirements and begins well before a crisis or disaster hits.

Our approach to Port emergency management is comprehensive, coordinated, and integrated, and supported by a team of port engineers and emergency management specialists that deliver decades of experience. Our expertise is unmatched.

