

Emergency Management Professional Development Working Group

Recommendations to the Texas Legislature

November 2020

Table of Contents

Overview	3
Executive Summary	4
EMPDWG Stakeholders	6
Timeline	9
Legislative Charges	11
Charge 1	11
Charge 2	11
Charge 3	11
Charge 4	11
EMPDWG Recommendations.....	13
EMQ Pre-requisites	14
Basic EMQ Level	14
Intermediate EMQ Level	14
Advanced EMQ Level	15
Reciprocity.....	15
Appendix 1 Tiered System	17
Appendix 2 Reciprocity	18
Higher Education	18
Emergency Management Certifications	18
TCOLE, TCFP and Other Disciplines	18
Appendix 3 Stakeholder Representation.....	19
Appendix 4 Legislation and Eye of the Storm Report	20
S.B. No. 6.....	20
H.B. 2305	25
Eye of the Storm	27

Overview

This section provides an overview of the Emergency Management Professional Development Working Group (EMPD) and the goals and objectives of this recommendation document.

Goal

To develop recommendations to the state legislature for a comprehensive emergency management professional development program in the state. The program will ensure emergency management professionals have met a standard in education, training, experience and knowledge of laws, rules, regulations and programs.

Concept Objectives

- Develop a path for emergency management professionals that is distinct from other professional certifications (i.e. fire, law enforcement, EMS).
- Develop emergency management professional standards, objectives and requirements.
- Draft recommendations to the state legislature.

Audience

- Local emergency management professionals
- State emergency management professionals
- Texas Emergency Management Advisory Committee (TEMAC) members
- Subcommittee working group members

Executive Summary

This section provides a summary of the Emergency Management Professional Development Working Group history, mission statement, and supporting legislation.

Mission

Pursuant to HB 2305 and SB 6 the mission of the Emergency Management Professional Development (EMPD) Working Group is to continue to advance the profession of emergency management in the state of Texas by recommending a baseline of qualifications for the individual emergency manager that can be achieved through a combination of experience, education and training, and core capabilities of local emergency management programs to ensure there is an adequate structure in place to appropriately serve our communities.

Summary

The field of emergency management (EM) in Texas is varied by the local emergency manager in the amount of professional training and years of EM service in a state this size. Although there are several EM training classes offered by various institutions and agencies nationwide, very few of them are specific to how the profession of EM is performed in Texas. It is left up to the instructor to add in anecdotal information about performing EM duties in Texas as they instruct the approved curriculum. Additionally, "real world" EM experience is important to decision making and will directly inform how efficiently and effectively an emergency management response is. As a result of this disparity in the state by those performing the function of EM at the local and state level, the 86th State of Texas Legislature requested that a working group be formed. The purpose of the working group is to develop a proposal on enhancing the training and credentialing of the emergency management professional as defined by the Texas Government Code Ch. 418.

The EMPD was formed, chaired by Chambers County Judge Jimmy Sylvia, to include EM practitioners from several different sized jurisdictions within the state of Texas. Additionally, interested state agencies were included in the working group to offer their opinions and experience in determining the appropriate recommendation to meet the mandate from the legislature.

Overall, among the active EMPD members, there is a total of 444 cumulative years of emergency management experience who worked diligently to assist in the creation of the EM recommendation to be submitted to the state by November of 2020 (Appendix 3).

The "draft" recommendations from the EMPD were placed online for 60 days on the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) website for public input. This allowed affected individuals from the around the state the opportunity to share their thoughts via a link on the webpage that were in turn distributed to all active EMPD members. For each EMPD meeting, a standing agenda item for each meeting was to review all input and a discussion occurred amongst the group to determine validity and weigh the merits of the

input for inclusion into the EMPD recommendations. No submitted comments were dismissed without discussion. It is the goal of the EMPD to represent all local municipal and county emergency managers, volunteer or paid, as defined by the Texas Government Code Ch. 418. Although to gain a unified consensus from all emergency managers on the EMPD recommendations is the goal, it is recognized that is not realistic. The main goal of the EMPD is to submit a recommendation that is achievable for most emergency managers performing the profession of EM at the local level that all emergency managers can abide by and the state will support.

The Emergency Management Professional Development Working Group will have a completed program proposal to the governor and Texas Legislature by November 1, 2020.

EMPDWG Stakeholders

This section provides the Emergency Management Professional Development Working Group and Sub-committee members

Agency	Title	Name
Chambers County	County Judge Working Group Chair	Hon. Judge Jimmy Sylvia
City of Arlington	Emergency Management Administrator Subcommittee Chair	Irish Hancock
City of Austin Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management	Director	Juan Ortiz
City of Austin	Senior Public Information Officer	Bryce Bencivengo
City of Corpus Christi	Emergency Management Coordinator	Billy Delgado
City of Fort Worth	Emergency Management Coordinator	Maribel Martinez-Mejia
City of Houston	Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator	Melanie Bartis
City of Houston	Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator	Chris Perkins
City of New Braunfels	Emergency Management Coordinator	Andrew Cardiel
City of Plano	Director of Emergency Management	Carrie Reyes
City of Port Arthur	Deputy Fire Chief/ Deputy EMC	Louie Havens
Brazoria County	Emergency Management Coordinator	Steve Rosa
Chambers County	Executive Assistant	Lauren VanDeventer
Comal County	Emergency Management Coordinator	Jeff Kelley

Harris County OEM	Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator	Francisco Sánchez, Jr.
Harris County OEM	Homeland Security & Emergency Management Coordinator	Mark Sloan
Harris County Fire Marshal's Office	Assistant Chief of Emergency Operations	Bob Royall
Hidalgo County	Emergency Management Coordinator	Ricardo Saldaña
Hopkins County	Fire Chief	Andy Endsley
Hopkins County	County Judge	Hon. Judge Robert Newsom
Lubbock County	Emergency Management Coordinator	Clint Thetford
Tarrant County	Emergency Management Coordinator	David McCurdy
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission	Regional Preparedness Planner	Emily Nolte
Parker County	Emergency Management Officer	Hon. Kit Marshall
Texas Association of Counties	Legislative Manager	Aurora Flores
State Agencies		
DPS	Major- Texas Highway Patrol	Rhonda Lawson
DSHS	Director Response and Recovery Unit	Michelle Petraitis
STRAC	Executive Director	Eric Epley
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension	AgriLife Extension Director of the Disaster Assessment and Recovery Team	Monty Dozier, Ph.D
TCOLE	Deputy Chief and Director of Credentialing/Field Services	Kenneth Merchant
TDEM	Chief, Vice Chancellor Texas A&M University System	Nim Kidd
TDEM	Deputy Chief for Preparedness and Response	Mike Miller
TDEM	Deputy Chief for Recovery and Mitigation	Suzannah Jones
TDEM	Chief Operating Officer	Chuck Phinney
TDEM	Assistant Chief- Region 1	Joshua Roberts

TDEM	Assistant Chief- Region 2	Shaun Miller
TDEM	Assistant Chief- Region 3	Tony Pena
TDEM	Assistant Chief- Region 4	David Marquez
TDEM	Assistant Chief- Region 5	Brandi Ashby-Fisher
TDEM	Assistant Chief- Region 6	Jay Hall
TDEM	Division Chief for Preparedness	Gabby Stermolle
TDEM	Section Chief	Eric Shuey
TDEM	Unit Chief, Operations	Manny Magos
TDEM	Training Unit Supervisor	Paul Hahn
TDEM	Sr. Reconciliation Accountant	William Sederholm
TDLR	Director of Licensing	Dede McEachern
TEEX	Search-and-Rescue Coordinator, Texas Task Force One	Warren Weidler
TEEX	Agency Director	David Coatney
TEEX	Director, Texas Task Force One	Jeff Saunders
TEEX	Director, National Emergency Response and Recovery Training Center	Hank Lawson
University of North Texas	Professor and Chair of Emergency Management and Disaster Science	Gary Webb, Ph.D
Other Organizations		
McClennan Community College	Emergency & Risk Management Coordinator	Frank Patterson
Suncoast Resources	Assistant Director of Emergency Response	Michael Alanis

Timeline

This section provides the EMPD timeline of activities.

Item	Deadline	Remarks
Working Group Selected	March 2019	
First Working Group Meeting	March 13, 2019	
Quarterly Working Group Meeting	April 15, 2019	TDEM Conference, San Antonio
Laws Signed by the Governor	June 10 & June 13, 2019	
Working Group Meeting	August 21, 2019	
Working Group Meeting	September 24-25, 2019	
Working Group Meeting	October 29-30, 2019	
Working Group Meeting	November 13, 2019	
TEMAC Meeting	November 14, 2019	Texas Emergency Management Advisory Committee, Austin
EMPD Working Group Meeting	December 3-4, 2019	Emergency Management Professional Development Working Group, Austin
TARC	February 5-7, 2020	Texas Association of Regional Councils TARC/Homeland Security Association of Texas Meeting
EMAT and TEMAC	February 24, 2020	Emergency Management Association of Texas, San Marcos
Final Briefing to Committee	May 2020	Virtual meeting
Comment Period Open	June 20 –August 1, 2020	
Comment Period Closed	August 1, 2020	
Working Group Creates Final Draft	August 20 - September 20, 2020	
TML	August 2020	Texas Municipal League

Final Draft prepared for Committee Review	September 30, 2020	Draft Recommendations to Legislature
Committee Approval	October 10, 2020	Final Report Delivered to TDEM
Submission to Legislature	November 1, 2020	Final Report Delivered to Legislature
TAC Meeting	November 1, 2020	Texas Association of Counties

Legislative Charges

This section describes the charges of the Emergency Management Professional Development Working Group outlined in SB 6 and HB 2305. The working group shall submit the proposal to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, and members of the legislature no later than November 1, 2020.

Charge 1

Assess the training and credentials necessary for emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and any other emergency management personnel to effectively oversee the response to and recovery from a disaster.

Assess the training and credentials necessary for emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and other emergency management personnel on the state or local level to effectively oversee the response to and recovery from a disaster, including reviewing current required training courses.

Charge 2

Review training courses that are required for emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and any other emergency management personnel in this state on September 1, 2019.

Charge 3

Consult with institutions of higher education as defined by Section 61.003, Education Code, on the development of degree programs in emergency management in addition to the programs that exist in this state on September 1, 2019.

Consult with institutions of higher education, as defined by Section 61.003, Education Code, on the development of degree programs in emergency management in addition to the programs that exist in this state on the effective date of this Act.

Charge 4

In conducting the assessment required by Subsection (c)(1), the work group shall consider:

- Whether the differences in geography, population, and critical infrastructure between emergency management directors' or emergency management coordinators' jurisdictions warrant different levels of training and credentialing
- Whether the legislature should enact laws requiring an emergency management director or emergency management coordinator to participate in emergency management training and credentialing before overseeing the response to and recovery from a disaster
- Whether to include in any recommended emergency management training under Subdivision (2) information on disaster finance, damage assessment, disaster contracting, debris management, and the skills needed to participate in federal emergency management programs

- Whether to implement incentives for emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and any other emergency management personnel to complete additional training and continuing education
- Proposals for paying the cost for training for emergency management directors and emergency management coordinators that is more rigorous than the training required by law for the directors and coordinators on September 1, 2019.

EMPDWG Recommendations

This section provides the Emergency Management Professional Development Working Group members' recommendations to the Texas State Legislature and Texas Governor.

As outlined in Texas Government Code 418, these recommendations apply to all emergency management directors (county judge or mayor) and/or their appointed emergency management coordinators, and emergency management professionals as directed by their emergency management agency.

The EMPD members discussed several aspects of being an emergency manager at the local level and focused on the Emergency Management Qualifications (EMQ) that ensure the person performing the job is competent. It was determined that two factors were important:

1. Years of experience performing the profession of EM at the local and state level
 - a. This will be documented on the TDEM-147 signed by the chief elected official (CEO) annually of the jurisdiction appointing the emergency manager.
 - b. EMPD recommends that a TDEM-147(b) be created by the TDEM, to be signed and submitted to TDEM by the local jurisdiction's Emergency Management Agency (EMA), to denote additional EM staff members not normally submitted on the TDEM-147.
 - c. The emergency manager will be responsible for submitting required documentation to the state agency responsible for managing and administering the EMQ credential
 - d. Addressing previous years of experience beyond the adoption of legislation. (placeholder)

2. Amount of training the individual has acquired with an emphasis on continuing to expand that level of training while appointed as a local emergency manager or serving in the emergency management agency at the local or state level.
 - a. EM courses should be developed to be Texas specific for the subject matter being taught
 - b. EM courses should be offered frequently throughout the year
 - c. EM courses should be offered frequently within every region in the state
 - d. EM courses should be free of charge to attend
 - e. EM courses should be a mix of online training and in-class training
 - f. FEMA courses may qualify
 - g. The emergency manager will be responsible for submitting required documentation to the state agency responsible for managing and administering the EMQ credential
 - h. EMPD recognizes that state staff may have to be increased to accommodate the increased number of training classes that would be needed to meet these

recommendations and to facilitate the training regionally throughout the state

Additionally, it was recognized that there needed to be different levels of EMQ that incorporated the amount of EM training an individual has taken as well as the length of time performing the EM profession at the local level.

EMQ Pre-requisites

To be eligible to be appointed as an emergency manager that would be documented on the TDEM-147; it is recommended there needs to be some understanding of the profession of emergency management. It was agreed upon that the emergency manager must have completed and passed the pre-requisites of IS-100, IS-200, IS-700 and IS-800. Those pre-requisites at the very minimum ensure the new emergency manager is aware of EM concepts that will be instrumental in the decision making and execution of their duties.

Basic EMQ Level

Once the new emergency manager is appointed, and has not achieved an EMQ Level previously, they should be required to achieve the Basic EMQ Level within 12 months of their date of appointment. Within 30 days of appointment, one (or both) of the following courses must be completed: IS-230.D Fundamentals of Emergency Management (FEMA) or G-200 - Texas Public Officials Workshop (TDEM). Additionally, the emergency manager must attain 40 hours of EM training from the list of approved EM courses to meet the Basic EMQ Level requirement (APPENDIX 1). It is the determination of the jurisdiction if they are to require a certain EMQ level to be eligible for the EM position or if they will allow an individual to start with only the EMQ pre-requisites and work toward the EMQ level required by the hiring jurisdiction. For every jurisdiction in the state of Texas, the minimum is that their emergency manager, as denoted on the TDEM-147, be at the Basic EMQ level within 12 months. Additionally, for each year the emergency manager is serving the jurisdiction, they are required to continue to expand their knowledge in EM and should seek a minimum of 8 hours of Continuing Education (CE) credit. It is the hope of the EMPD that the training classes the emergency manager chooses to take annually for CE credit are to meet the EM educational requirements of the next EMQ level. The Emergency Manager will be responsible for submitting required documentation to the state agency responsible for managing and administering the EMQ credential in meeting the Basic EMQ Level standards, as well as maintaining compliance with the annual CE requirement.

Intermediate EMQ Level

For the emergency manager seeking the Intermediate EMQ Level, the recommendation is for the emergency manager to have 5 years of documented EM experience. Additionally, the emergency manager must attain 200 hours of EM training from the list of approved

EM courses to meet the Intermediate EMQ Level requirement (Appendix 1). Once the Intermediate EMQ Level has been achieved, for each year the emergency manager is employed by the jurisdiction, they are required to continue to expand their knowledge in EM and should seek a minimum of 8 hours of CE credit. It is the hope of the EMPD that the training classes the emergency manager takes annually for CE credit is to meet the EM educational requirements of the next EMQ level. The emergency manager will be responsible for submitting required documentation to the State agency responsible for managing and administering the EMQ credential in meeting the Intermediate EMQ Level standards as well as being in compliance with the annual CE requirement.

Advanced EMQ Level

For the emergency manager seeking the Advanced EMQ Level, the recommendation is for the emergency manager to have 10 years of documented EM experience. Additionally, the emergency manager must attain 400 hours of EM training from the list of approved EM courses to meet the Advanced EMQ Level requirement (Appendix 1). Once the Advanced EMQ Level has been achieved, for each year the emergency manager is serving the jurisdiction, they are required to continue to expand their knowledge in EM and should seek a minimum of 8 hours of CE credit. The emergency manager will be responsible for submitting required documentation to the state agency responsible for managing and administering the EMQ credential in meeting the Advanced EMQ Level standards, as well as maintaining compliance with the annual CE requirement.

Reciprocity

The emergency management professional may elect to seek out, or may already obtain, additional certifications in the field of EM. The certifications assist the emergency manager in broadening their knowledge in the field of EM as well other areas of professional development. They may or may not contain specific training that is specific to performing EM in the state of Texas, but must be recognized as a contributor to the overall body of knowledge that an emergency manager will utilize when performing EM in their daily routine as well as in emergency conditions at the local level. It is the recommendation of the EMPD to recognize approved EM certifications and award a maximum of 150 credit hours toward the EMQ training requirement for EM certifications the emergency manager may have achieved (Appendix 2).

As with EM certifications, college degrees are equally important in the development and knowledge of an emergency management practitioner. Theory of EM and other fields of study are as important as knowledge gained through real life situations and incidents. It is the recommendation of the EMPD to recognize these degrees from accredited higher learning institutions and award credit years towards EM years of service in meeting the EMQ requirement (Appendix 2).

Each credit, whether for EM training hours or EM years of service, will be recognized when reconciling the total for years or hours for the emergency manager in meeting the EMQ levels of Intermediate or Advanced.

All emergency managers, as defined by the Texas Government Code Ch. 418, are required to meet the Basic EMQ Level without reciprocity being a factor.

The emergency manager will be responsible for submitting required documentation to the state agency responsible for managing and administering the EMQ credential for credit towards the EMQ requirement.

Appendix 1 Tiered System

This section provides a recommendation for three tiers of professional development as part of the EMPD working group's recommendations.

Prerequisites

- Completion of NIMS/ICS independent study courses:
 - IS100
 - IS200
 - IS700
 - IS800

Basic (Required Level [Pre-requisites IS100/IS200/IS700/IS800*or equivalent])

- No years of EM experience required
- Must take within **30 days** of appointment one of the following:
 - IS-230.D Fundamentals of Emergency Management (FEMA)
 - G-200 - Texas Public Officials Workshop (TDEM)
- 40 hours of EM training
- Must obtain training within 12 months of hire/appointment date by jurisdiction/agency
- 8 hours of continuing education required per year

Intermediate (Optional Level)

- Minimum 5 years of EM experience
- Completion of FEMA Professional Development Series (PDS)
- 200 hours of EM training classes
 - Training from both TDEM and FEMA may qualify
- Higher education can substitute for EM years of service requirement
- EM certifications (i.e. TEM, CEM, etc.) can supplement EM training hours requirement
- 8 hours of continuing education required per year

Advanced (Optional Level)

- Minimum 10 years of EM experience
- Completion of FEMA /TDEM Advanced Professional Development Series (APS)
- 400 hours of EM training classes
 - Training from both TDEM and FEMA may qualify
- Higher education can substitute for EM years of service requirement
- EM certifications (i.e. TEM, CEM, etc.) can supplement EM training hours requirement
- 8 hours of continuing education required per year

Appendix 2 Reciprocity

This section describes proposed reciprocity for higher education and emergency management professional certifications to meet the EMQs as recommended by this working group.

Maximum higher education years will not exceed four years of service credit.

Higher Education

Associate degree=1 year toward EM years of service requirement

Bachelor's Degree=2 years toward EM years of service requirement

Masters/PhD Degree=4 years toward EM years of service requirement

Continuing education credits from law enforcement, fire service, EMS/medical services and other disciplines may be used for reciprocity on a case by case basis.

Emergency Management Certifications (TEM/CEM/ etc.)

150 hours credit toward EM training requirement. This is a one-time credit and will not exceed 150 hours credit toward EM training. This credit will not be increased beyond 150 hours with numerous EM or professional certifications.

TCOLE, TCFP and Other Disciplines

Training credits from law enforcement, fire service, EMS/medical services and other disciplines may be used for reciprocity on a case by case basis.

Appendix 3 Stakeholder Representation

This section describes the Emergency Management Professional Development Working Group regional representation.

Jurisdictions	Population
Chambers County (Chair)	25,000 - 50,000
City of Arlington (Subcommittee Chair)	250,000 - 500,000
City of Austin	500,000 - 1,000,000
City of Corpus Christi	250,000 - 500,000
City of Ft. Worth	500,000 - 1,000,000
City of Houston	1,000,000 - 3,000,000
City of New Braunfels	50,000-100,000
City of Plano	250,000 - 500,000
City of Port Arthur	50,000 - 100,000
Brazoria County	250,000 - 500,000
Comal County	100,000 - 250,000
Harris County	3,000,000 - 5,000,000
Hidalgo County	500,000 - 1,000,000
Hopkins County	25,000 - 50,000
Lubbock County	250,000 - 500,000
Parker County	100,000 - 250,000
Tarrant County	1,000,000 - 3,000,000

Appendix 4 Legislation and Eye of the Storm Report

This section describes the legislation passed in the 86th Texas Legislature that mandated the creation of this working group and the recommendations from the Eye of the Storm report as developed by the Governor’s Commission to Rebuild Texas.

S.B. No. 6

AN ACT

relating to emergency and disaster management, response, and recovery.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 418.005, Government Code, is amended by adding Subsection (c-1) to read as follows:

(c-1) The training course provided under this section related to the emergency management responsibilities of officers of political subdivisions must include training based on the disaster response guide as required by Section 418.054(b).

SECTION 2. Subchapter C, Chapter 418, Government Code, is amended by adding Sections 418.054, 418.055, 418.056, and 418.057 to read as follows:

Sec. 418.054. DISASTER RESPONSE GUIDE. (a) The division shall develop a model guide for local officials regarding disaster response and recovery. The guide must provide a comprehensive approach to disaster recovery by local officials and include information on:

- (1) contracting for debris removal;
- (2) obtaining federal disaster funding;
- (3) coordinating the availability and construction of short-term and long-term housing; and
- (4) obtaining assistance from local, state, and federal volunteer organizations.

(b) The division, in coordination with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, shall provide training based on the disaster response guide as a part of the emergency management training course provided under Section 418.005.

Sec. 418.055. CATASTROPHIC DEBRIS MANAGEMENT PLAN AND TRAINING. (a) The division, in consultation with any other state agencies selected by the division, shall develop a catastrophic debris management plan and model guide for use by political subdivisions in the event of a disaster.

(b) The plan must:

- (1) provide a guide for clearance and disposal of debris caused by a disaster, including information on preparing for debris removal before a disaster; and
- (2) include:
 - (A) provisions for the use of trench burners and air curtain incinerators of vegetative debris, including identifying sources of equipment for use immediately following a disaster; and
 - (B) contracting standards and a model contract for use in procuring debris removal services following a disaster.
- (c) The division shall consult with the comptroller about including a contract for debris removal services on the schedule of multiple award contracts developed under Subchapter I, Chapter 2155, or in another cooperative purchasing program administered by the comptroller.
- (d) The Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, in coordination with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, shall establish a training program for state agencies and political subdivisions on the use of trench burners in debris removal.

Sec. 418.056. WET DEBRIS STUDY GROUP. (a) In this section, "study group" means the wet debris study group established under this section.

- (b) The wet debris study group is established and composed of representatives of the division, any other state agencies selected by the division, and local and federal governmental entities.
- (c) The chief of the division serves as chair of the study group.
- (d) The study group shall study issues related to preventing the creation of wet debris and best practices for clearing wet debris following a disaster, including:
 - (1) the creation of maintenance programs for bodies of water in this state;
 - (2) issues related to the clearance of wet debris on private property following a disaster; and
 - (3) potential sources of funding for the clearance of wet debris following a disaster.
- (e) Not later than November 1, 2020, the study group shall submit a report containing recommendations on the issues described by Subsection (d) to each member of the legislature.
- (f) The study group is abolished and this section expires January 1, 2021.

Sec. 418.057. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WORK GROUP. (a) In this section:

- (1) "Emergency management director" and "emergency management coordinator" mean the director and coordinator, respectively, designated under Section 418.1015.
- (2) "Work group" means the work group established under this section.
- (b) The division shall establish a work group of persons knowledgeable on emergency management to study and develop a proposal for enhancing the training and credentialing

of emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and any other emergency management personnel.

(c) As part of the study and proposal under Subsection (b), the work group shall:

(1) assess the training and credentials necessary for emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and any other emergency management personnel to effectively oversee the response to and recovery from a disaster;

(2) review training courses that are required for emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and any other emergency management personnel in this state on September 1, 2019; and

(3) consult with institutions of higher education as defined by Section 61.003, Education Code, on the development of degree programs in emergency management in addition to the programs that exist in this state on September 1, 2019.

(d) In conducting the assessment required by Subsection (c)(1), the work group shall consider:

(1) whether the differences in geography, population, and critical infrastructure between emergency management directors' or emergency management coordinators' jurisdictions warrant different levels of training and credentialing;

(2) whether the legislature should enact laws requiring an emergency management director or emergency management coordinator to participate in emergency management training and credentialing before overseeing the response to and recovery from a disaster;

(3) whether to include in any recommended emergency management training under Subdivision (2) information on disaster finance, damage assessment, disaster contracting, debris management, and the skills needed to participate in federal emergency management programs;

(4) whether to implement incentives for emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and any other emergency management personnel to complete additional training and continuing education; and

(5) proposals for paying the cost for training for emergency management directors and emergency management coordinators that is more rigorous than the training required by law for the directors and coordinators on September 1, 2019.

(e) Not later than November 1, 2020, the work group shall submit the proposal required under this section to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and members of the legislature.

(f) The work group is abolished and this section expires January 1, 2021.

SECTION 3. Chapter 418, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter C-1 to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER C-1. DISASTER RECOVERY LOAN PROGRAM

Sec. 418.061. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Account" means the disaster recovery loan account created under Section 418.066.

(2) "Eligible political subdivision" means a county, municipality, or school district that meets the qualifications prescribed by Section 418.062.

Sec. 418.062. ELIGIBILITY FOR LOAN. A political subdivision may apply to the division for a loan under this subchapter if:

(1) the political subdivision:

(A) is located wholly or partly in an area declared to be a disaster area by the governor or the president of the United States; and

(B) before applying to the division for a loan under this subchapter:

(i) has submitted to the division, within 15 days of the date of its adoption by the governing body of the political subdivision, the political subdivision's operating budget for the most recent fiscal year; and

(ii) has submitted an application for a loan from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's community disaster loan program;

(2) an assessment of damages due to the disaster for which the declaration was made has been conducted in the political subdivision; and

(3) the division, in consultation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, determines that the estimated cost to rebuild the political subdivision's infrastructure damaged in the disaster is greater than 50 percent of the political subdivision's total revenue for the current year as shown in the most recent operating budget of the political subdivision submitted to the division under this section.

Sec. 418.063. DISASTER RECOVERY LOAN PROGRAM. The division by rule shall establish a loan program to use money from the account to provide short-term loans for disaster recovery projects to eligible political subdivisions.

Sec. 418.064. LOANS. (a) A loan made from the account must be subject to the following conditions:

(1) the loan must be made at or below market interest rates for a term not to exceed 10 years; and

(2) the loan proceeds must be expended by the eligible political subdivision solely for disaster recovery projects.

(b) The comptroller shall credit to the account all principal and interest payments on a loan from the account.

(c) If the term of a loan from the account exceeds two years, the state auditor shall, on the second anniversary of the date on which the eligible political subdivision received the loan, conduct a limited audit of the political subdivision to determine whether the political subdivision has the ability to repay the loan under the terms of the loan. The division may forgive a loan made to an eligible political subdivision if the state auditor determines that the political subdivision is unable to repay the loan. The state auditor's participation under this subsection is subject to approval by the legislative audit committee for inclusion in the audit plan under Section 321.013(c).

Sec. 418.065. APPLICATION FOR LOAN. The division shall develop and implement an application process for a loan under this subchapter. At a minimum, the application must include:

- (1) a description of the disaster recovery project for which the applicant is requesting the loan;
- (2) an estimate of the total cost of the project;
- (3) a statement of the amount of federal money that the applicant will receive for the project, or, if that information is not available on the date the applicant submits the application, an estimate of the amount of that money; and
- (4) evidence that the applicant has staff, policies, and procedures in place adequate to complete the project.

Sec. 418.066. CREATION OF ACCOUNT. (a) The disaster recovery loan account is created as an account in the general revenue fund with the comptroller, to be administered by the division.

(b) Money in the account may be used only to provide short-term loans to eligible political subdivisions in the manner provided by this subchapter.

(c) The account consists of:

- (1) money appropriated, credited, or transferred to the account by the legislature;
- (2) money received by the comptroller for the repayment of a loan made from the account;
- (3) gifts or grants contributed to the account; and
- (4) interest earned on deposits and investments of the account.

Sec. 418.067. RULES. The division shall adopt rules to implement and administer this subchapter. The rules adopted by the division to implement this subchapter must include the development of a form on which a political subdivision may electronically submit its budget to the division.

SECTION 4. (a) In this section:

- (1) "Commission" means the Health and Human Services Commission.
- (2) "Division" means the Texas Division of Emergency Management.

(b) The commission and the division shall conduct a study to determine the feasibility of developing:

- (1) a single intake form that would compile all information needed to obtain disaster assistance from multiple state and federal programs for an individual who needs assistance as a result of a disaster; and
- (2) an automated intake system for collecting the information.

(c) The commission and the division shall coordinate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other appropriate state and federal agencies to conduct the study under Subsection (b) of this section. The commission and the division must determine whether the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other appropriate state and federal agencies will accept the single intake form.

(d) Not later than September 1, 2020, the commission and the division shall prepare and submit a written report to the legislature containing the findings of the study conducted under Subsection (b) of this section and any recommendations to the legislature.

(e) This section expires January 1, 2021.

SECTION 5. Not later than January 1, 2020, the Texas Division of Emergency Management shall develop the catastrophic debris management plan and model guide required by Section 418.055, Government Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 6. The Texas Division of Emergency Management is required to implement Subchapter C-1, Chapter 418, Government Code, as added by this Act, only if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose. If the legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that purpose, the division may, but is not required to, implement that subchapter using other appropriations available for that purpose.

SECTION 7. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

H.B. 2305

AN ACT

relating to a work group on enhancing the training and credentialing of emergency management personnel.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS. In this Act:

- (1) "Disaster" has the meaning assigned by Section 418.004, Government Code.
- (2) "Emergency management director" and "emergency management coordinator" mean the director and coordinator, respectively, designated under Section 418.1015, Government Code.
- (3) "Work group" means the work group established under Section 2 of this Act.

SECTION 2. WORK GROUP. The Texas Division of Emergency Management shall establish a work group of persons knowledgeable on emergency management to study and develop a proposal for enhancing the training and credentialing of emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and other emergency management personnel on the state or local level.

SECTION 3. STUDY AND PROPOSAL. (a) As part of the study and proposal under Section 2 of this Act, the work group shall:

- (1) assess the training and credentials necessary for emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and other emergency management personnel on

the state or local level to effectively oversee the response to and recovery from a disaster, including reviewing current required training courses; and

(2) consult with institutions of higher education, as defined by Section 61.003, Education Code, on the development of degree programs in emergency management in addition to the programs that exist in this state on the effective date of this Act.

(b) In conducting the assessment required by Subsection (a)(1) of this section, the work group shall consider:

(1) whether the differences in geography, population, and critical infrastructure between emergency management directors' or emergency management coordinators' jurisdictions warrant different levels of training and credentialing;

(2) whether the legislature should enact laws requiring an emergency management director or emergency management coordinator to participate in emergency management training and credentialing before overseeing the response to and recovery from a disaster;

(3) whether to include in any training required under Subdivision (2) of this subsection information on disaster finance, damage assessment, disaster contracting, debris management, and skills needed to participate in federal emergency management programs;

(4) whether to implement incentives for emergency management directors, emergency management coordinators, and any other emergency management personnel to complete additional training and continuing education; and

(5) proposals for paying the cost for training for emergency management directors and emergency management coordinators that is more rigorous than the training required by law for the directors and coordinators on the effective date of this Act.

(c) Not later than November 1, 2020, the work group shall submit the proposal required under this section to:

(1) members of the legislature; and

(2) the governor.

SECTION 4. EXPIRATION. The work group is abolished and this Act expires January 1, 2021.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

Eye of the Storm

<https://www.rebuildtexas.today/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2018/12/12-11-18-EYE-OF-THE-STORM-digital.pdf>

The five mission areas of emergency management include prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery. These five areas serve as an aid in best organizing and coordinating preparedness for all disasters. All of the mission areas are extensively interrelated and support FEMA's National Preparedness Goal. Preparedness in all of the mission areas is required for a strong and effective emergency management program.

Course material at FEMA's Emergency Management Institute defines preparedness as "... pre-impact activities that establish a state of readiness to respond to extreme events that could affect the community." The description goes on to say that "... emergency preparedness is achieved by planning, training, equipping, and exercising the emergency response organization." These activities should be maintained in each of the five mission areas. In keeping with this definition, this section looks first at the state's efforts to train emergency management personnel. It also examines other steps in effective preparedness for future disasters, such as having critical emergency management agreements in place before the onset of a disaster, and the importance of establishing a smoothly functioning partnership with the federal government. Recognizing the significance of technology to the future of disaster management, the chapter also reviews some ways to improve this aspect of emergency preparedness. The chapter ends with a discussion of the importance of a well-informed public to escape the destructive power of future disasters like Harvey.

Training

Texas' local jurisdictions responded very differently to Hurricane Harvey. Some communities, primarily larger ones, displayed sophistication in their response and recovery functions and were staffed with full-time and trained emergency personnel. Many smaller communities were not as well prepared due to insufficient planning, resources, training, or experience managing an event of Harvey's magnitude. To improve emergency response and recovery, the state needs to do everything it can to raise the overall level of preparation by city and county officials and personnel who will deal with future emergencies. Ideally, given the serious nature of emergency management, an emergency management training framework would include some sort of tiered scheme. Those tiers would be based on different levels of management responsibility, the critical nature of facilities in a manager's jurisdiction, or other criteria. This structure is already in place for law enforcement and fire personnel. The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement administers state-required licensing and certification for peace officers, corrections officers, jailers, and other law enforcement personnel, and regulates training. Likewise, the Commission on Fire Protection sets standards for certifying and equipping paid fire service personnel, tests to those standards, and regulates training provided. In comparison, Texas law sets up a skeletal framework for emergency management training. The law only requires three hours of training for certain personnel approved by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). Among these individuals are an "elected law enforcement officer or county judge, or an appointed public officer of the state or of a political subdivision" who has emergency management responsibilities. The law contains no enforcement mechanism or penalty for jurisdictions that do not comply with these provisions. Noncompliance does not affect the validity of actions the state or local jurisdictions may have taken.

Although the law is not prescriptive, local officials and emergency personnel have a variety of emergency management training opportunities available to them. State and federal entities such as TDEM, the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) and FEMA offer training, as do private associations and other groups at the state and national level. Course offerings cover many aspects of emergency preparedness such as incident management and response, first response, rescue, communications, crisis preparedness, mitigation, recovery, and community resilience. Emergency management personnel have pointed out gaps in Texas' emergency management course offerings. Training is almost exclusively focused on response, with less concentration on recovery. Earlier chapters of the report highlighted weaknesses in recovery compared to response. Better training and preparation are important for local jurisdictions to more effectively engage with recovery programs. Recovery related training currently available does not train or educate to the degree needed to carry out some required actions or duties, such as disaster finance or debris management. During forums with local officials held by TDEM in the wake of Hurricane Harvey, local communities' elected leaders, public officials, and their staffs frequently voiced a desire for more training in emergency management and, more specifically, the recovery process. One suggestion discussed was establishing a credentialing program for emergency management professionals. A program of this type could set up requirements and job descriptions for various levels of emergency personnel. This review did not canvass each state's laws to determine requirements for certification. In general, and from information gathered from Texas professionals and other sources, few, if any state's law mandates a range of licensing or certification requirements for specific emergency management positions. However, national, state, and local associations or state agency departments do offer certification programs of various types and levels, and entities hiring emergency management personnel may require specific certifications. In Texas, the Emergency Management Association of Texas administers a certification program, available to members of the Association. In addition, some academic institutions offer emergency management degrees. While these courses are worthwhile and useful, they vary widely in location and content and do not offer the comprehensive, targeted approach that is needed to address the training concerns raised after Harvey.

Given the storm-prone nature of Texas and the varying skill levels of emergency managers noted during Harvey, it is clear the state needs to think through a coordinated approach to emergency management training available to a widespread audience. This training should result in demonstrated proficiency for emergency management professionals with different levels of responsibility and different duties, whether by certification or licensing tiers or some other means.