



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

**Federal Highway
Administration**

Order

Subject

FHWA EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM

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1910.2C	January 11, 2001	HOTO-1

- Par. 1. What is the purpose of this Order?
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4. What is the FHWA policy concerning emergency preparedness?
5. What are the roles and responsibilities of the FHWA offices?
6. What are the major program elements of the emergency preparedness program?

1. **What is the purpose of this Order?** This Order provides the necessary policies and guidance that will keep the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in an acceptable level of readiness in the event of an emergency. This Order describes the policies, procedures, and organization required to attain an acceptable level of readiness.
2. **Does this Order cancel an existing FHWA directive?** Yes. FHWA Order 1910.2B, FHWA Emergency Preparedness Program, dated October 21, 1997, is canceled.
3. **What is the authority for this Order?** The authority is based on Executive Order 12656, Assignment of Emergency Preparedness Responsibilities, dated November 18, 1988; and Department of Transportation (DOT) Order 1900.9, Department of Transportation (DOT) Emergency Management Policies and Programs, dated April 20, 2000.
4. **What is the FHWA policy concerning emergency preparedness?** It is essential that the FHWA be in a state of readiness to prepare for, endure, and recover from the effects of a disaster, whether natural or human-made, upon the Agency or on the Nation's highways. To ensure this state of readiness, all aspects of the emergency preparedness program are an integral part of FHWA's overall mission, functions, and responsibilities.

5. **What are the roles and responsibilities of the FHWA offices?**

a. **Headquarters**

- (1) The FHWA Emergency Coordinator, under the direction of the Program Manager, Operations Core Business Unit (CBU) (HOP) and the Director, Office of Transportation Operations (HOTO-1) shall:
 - (a) represent the FHWA Administrator, as directed, on all matters concerning emergency preparedness,
 - (b) develop and recommend policy and provide overall program direction related to the FHWA emergency preparedness program,
 - (c) coordinate emergency preparedness programs and activities with other organizations, particularly with the Office of Intelligence and Security (OIS), the Office of Emergency Transportation (OET), DOT Regional Emergency Transportation Coordinators (RETCOs), and the Military Traffic Management Command Transportation Engineering Agency (MTMCTEA),
 - (d) ensure implementation of program elements for the Washington Headquarters, as outlined in paragraph 6,
 - (e) maintain a reliable emergency communications system for the Agency,
 - (f) provide training to appropriate FHWA personnel on emergency preparedness matters, and
 - (g) coordinate FHWA resources in support of the DOT Crisis Management Center (CMC).
- (2) The CBU Program Managers and the Service Business Unit (SBU) Directors shall:
 - (a) be responsible for developing and implementing emergency preparedness policies and procedures within their respective organizations,
 - (b) support the FHWA Emergency Coordinator, as necessary, in developing emergency programs and procedures, and
 - (c) develop plans for continuing their respective essential uninterruptible functions, in the event that an emergency necessitates an evacuation of the worksite.

- b. **Field Offices.** The Directors of Field Services, Division Administrators, and Federal Lands Highway Division Engineers shall:
- (1) appoint two Emergency Coordinators (principal and alternate points of contact) for managing field office emergency preparedness programs,
 - (2) implement and support the program elements as outlined in paragraph 6, as applicable,
 - (3) develop emergency preparedness procedures and response plans within their respective organizations, in conjunction with FHWA Headquarters criteria,
 - (4) coordinate with and support the DOT RETCO and State Highway Agencies (SHA) in developing, exercising, and implementing emergency plans and programs, and
 - (5) provide funding for the designated emergency coordinators to attend FHWA emergency preparedness training on a periodic basis. The recommended training frequency is: (a) FHWA Emergency Preparedness Training Seminar - every 3 years, (b) DOT RETCO Training/Exercises - every 2 years. The principal and alternate emergency coordinators may attend training sessions on an alternating basis.

6. **What are the major program elements of the emergency preparedness program?** Program elements are special areas of interest to the FHWA in terms of emergency planning and response activities. Program elements may change from time to time, depending on FHWA emphasis areas; for example: national security issues, information flow, notification procedures, FHWA Strategic Plan initiatives, other agency programs, senior leadership priorities, etc. The following are FHWA's current program elements:

- a. **Emergency Communications.** The need for reliable communications before, during, and after an emergency or natural disaster is extremely important to the FHWA. The main purpose for collecting and reporting information is to keep the leadership and decisionmakers well informed so that they will be better prepared to make appropriate decisions when dealing with emergencies and natural disasters. It is very important to report accurate data on a timely basis. It is paramount that the FHWA be able to maintain continuous communication capability, even if conventional communications systems fail during an emergency or natural disaster. The FHWA maintains two systems of emergency communications: High Frequency (HF) Radios and Satellite Telephones. The role of FHWA field offices includes:
- (1) identifying points of contact at State and local levels, as appropriate, to establish effective and expedient sources of information,
 - (2) reporting information to FHWA Headquarters regarding significant

highway incidents, emergencies, disasters, and any other incident that may catch the interest of the national news media,

Note: It is extremely important to report the information on a timely basis.

- (3) using the DOT's Activation Information Management system as the primary means of reporting emergency highway incidents and other emergencies, and
- (4) initiating or participating in monthly call checks, using the emergency communications equipment (i.e., satellite telephones/HF radios).

b. **Continuity of Operations (COOP).** The FHWA Headquarters and each FHWA field office shall develop procedures to ensure the continuity of essential functions in any emergency. Developing these procedures should be aimed primarily at an incident such as an explosion, flood, earthquake, or high wind that would make the FHWA office inoperable. These procedures shall be documented in a COOP Plan. The overriding importance of a COOP plan is that it be concise and written in plain language to facilitate orderly action under extraordinary conditions. All office personnel should be provided a personal copy of the plan for familiarization. See the [FHWA Plain Language Website](#) for help with writing the plan in plain language. The role of FHWA field offices includes:

- (1) developing a COOP plan for their own office (by September 2001), and
- (2) developing and conducting annual training exercises to test the workability of the plan.

c. **National Security.** The FHWA National Security Strategic Goal is to improve the Nation's national defense mobility. To improve highway operations within the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) and STRAHNET connectors, the FHWA must ensure that adequate coordination procedures exist between military and civilian authorities for military deployments during national security emergencies. In addressing this challenge, the FHWA is committed to organizing and conducting coordination meetings with the appropriate military and State officials to discuss: (1) military deployment requirements, and (2) States' capabilities (including documented procedures) in support of military deployments. The role of FHWA Divisions includes:

- (1) organizing and conducting emergency preparedness meetings with military and State officials, and
- (2) ensuring that States have documented coordination procedures that adequately address military deployment coordination activities between military and civilian authorities.

Note: Guidance on the above was issued in the August 22, 2000, memorandum, signed by the Administrator, with the subject: Changes to the National Security Strategic Goal Initiative: Emergency Highway

Traffic Regulation (EHTR) Plans.

- d. **Information Technology.** As traffic and traveler information needs and requirements increase over time, the need for integrated and coordinated roadway information systems for managing traffic and providing traveler information becomes more urgent. During emergency situations, traffic and traveler requirements reach a critical point, especially during major evacuations, response and recovery operations, or national security emergencies. In this respect, the FHWA has a facilitation role in fostering the integration of information systems, such as rural intelligent transportation systems (ITS), weather information, and traveler information. These coordinated and integrated information systems would be beneficial to emergency managers, enforcement agencies, and travelers, and should be presented in a format that is useful and understandable by each of these user groups. This information would be shared, not only within State and local governments, but also among adjacent States. The role of FHWA field offices includes:
- (1) facilitating integration of emergency response and information technology activities within each office, as appropriate, and
 - (2) promoting ITS concepts and programs as requested by Headquarters.
- e. **Federal Response Plan (FRP).** The FRP, under Public Law 93-288, is based on the assumption that a significant disaster or emergency would overwhelm the capability of State and local governments to carry out the extensive emergency operations necessary to save lives and protect property. Resources from Federal departments and agencies, grouped into Emergency Support Functions (ESFs), are used to provide Federal response assistance to the State under the FRP. The DOT is assigned the primary responsibility for managing ESF-1: Transportation. The main purpose of ESF-1 is to assist other agencies and voluntary organizations by obtaining and coordinating transportation support capacity in response to their emergency response efforts. The Regional Emergency Transportation Coordinators (RETCOs) are the DOT field officials responsible for managing ESF-1 activities. Under DOT Order 1900.9, *DOT Emergency Management Policies and Programs*, dated April 20, 2000, the FHWA is required to support the RETCO program by providing staff support, as necessary. The role of FHWA field offices includes supporting the:

- (1) RETCO program. In this regard, FHWA personnel assigned or detailed to temporary emergency-response or emergency-management duties perform such functions on a primary or full-time basis until the emergency is terminated, or is relieved, with the concurrence of the RETCO, and
- (2) Regional Emergency Transportation Representative (RETREP), with activities such as:
 - (a) conducting road damage assessments,
 - (b) monitoring and analyzing traffic information to assist in the efficient and safe evacuation of threatened populations,
 - (c) providing emergency communication services,
 - (d) providing managerial and administrative services,
 - (e) identifying potential transportation assets and resources in the private sector,
 - (f) providing liaison with the SHA to determine points of ingress and egress, detours, and evacuation routes, and
 - (g) preparing situation reports and disseminating those reports to other DOT Administrations and Federal departments and agencies.

Kenneth R. Wykle
Administrator

Related Sites:

[Executive Order 12656](#)
[FHWA Plain Language Website](#)
[Public Law 93-288](#)