**GOHSEP Updates, Director Casey Tingle**

GOHSEP Updates

* Director Tingle introduced John Gardner as the new Region 1 coordinator.
* Kay Keen, new hire for IA, working with volunteer agencies.
* PA and HM there are new hires, particularly for the south side of the state.
* Chase, new operations officer and Justin Gremillion is the new Plans Branch Chief in Preparedness Section.

Saltwater Intrusion

* This is an issue largely created by low flows on the Mississippi River. This is the second year in a row that this has been an issue for the lower Mississippi River. The question arises if this will be a more frequent occurrence than it has been, and if so what do we do about it beyond expensive and complicated temporary protective measures.
* Operationally, the latest projections are more favorable than the original projections.
* The Corps decided they could raise the underwater sill on the sides and still keep a narrow passage to allow one way navigation; this is particularly important due to harvest season. The Corps has evaluated the sill’s impact, and it has done a good job at slowing down the saltwater, and the saltwater making it across is less dense.
* Lower Plaquemines has been dealing with this issue since the middle of June. There are families that have actual damages to appliances and pipes, etc. There is no good evidence from EPA of what long term damage this saltwater does to water intake infrastructure.
* The Corps is handling the transport of water back and forth, the parishes are handling reservoir barges that can receive the water at intakes. Reverse osmosis machines are being contracted by the Corps and by individual parishes. GOHSEP is working with all four parishes with Corporate Endeavor Agreements (CEAs) in terms of cash flow to ensure cash is not hindering any efforts.
* Emergency declaration from FEMA has received lots of discussion; what does this mean for heat related emergency declarations going forward?
* Collin Arnold stated they will be moving forward with barging operations for Algiers intake.
* Water system issues are not going away. There is a lot of push to connect these water systems/consolidate small systems. It is important to know who the water systems operators are and to maintain situational awareness.

November Meeting (November 14, 2023)

* The idea is to have all parish OEP directors together, agenda items to be determined. Agenda items as of now:
  + New Administration Transition
  + Unique disasters (Wildfires, Saltwater Intrusion)
  + Invite Director Waskom to formally recognize him for his service
  + Earl Eues to brief on the FEMA Region 6 Regional Advisory Committee (Tony Robinson may be present.)
  + GOHSEP support of OHSEP director’s deploying to assist other OHSEP directors
* Open to feedback for other agenda items.

Legislative

* Open to legislative ideas from OHSEP Directors.
* GOHSEP struggling with how cyber emergency declarations are handled. We have been operating under the same emergency declaration from the early days of the state incident. GOHSEP will have to brief the next administration on what this looks like. Director Tingle would like to see cyber incidents handled the same way State Police handles HAZMAT incidents; if resources are needed then a declaration would be made.
* There has been a bill introduced to the House to break out FEMA as its own department level cabinet agency. This is about posturing for some other changes, and the bill might not have any passage. One of the components of the bill would be to set minimum requirements for who the FEMA administrator would be based on background and experience.
* There are pushes in other states to set minimum requirements for all emergency managers to standardize the profession.
* Texas is moving to a model where they send new hires through a training academy. Their training academy classes occur every six months or so…an offer was made to provide a certain number of seats to Louisiana with no charge for the training, but meals, travel, and lodging would have to be handled by the attendee’s agency.
* The regional directors discussed the various ways that they encourage training within their own agencies, such as allowing personnel the time to attend the Basic Academy Trainings and making sure a succession plan is in place.

May LEMC

* GOHSEP would like to know what agenda items and presentations parishes would like to see.
* The conference will be May 6-9 at the Golden Nugget in Lake Charles.
* Neal Fudge would like to do a full scale exercise at the tail end of the conference (Wednesday afternoon, Thursday).
* Winter workshop is still up in the air. If we do anything, it will be GOHSEP working with the Police Jury for a one day educational workshop.

**Public Assistance (PA) Updates, Lynn Browning**

* Immediate Needs Funding lifted on October 2nd. Since then 283 projects have been obligated for $136 million.
* Still have four FMAGs with open incident periods. Incident periods will likely begin closing which triggers programmatic deadlines. FEMA’s expectation is to have all documentation to write the grants within 9 months. Public Assistance section will begin scheduling bi-weekly touchpoints with affected agencies to make sure documentation is being gathered.
* Many parishes had fire departments that provided support and some had fire related costs that did not fall under the FMAGs; this funding will be handled by the state.
* RPA deadline of October 27th for Saltwater Intrusion; there will not be a lot of eligible applicants.
* Hurricane Ida change in FEMA leadership on November 9th; switching back to our local FEMA management group that we worked with on every other disaster.

**Hazard Mitigation (HM) Updates, Sandra Dugas**

* Immediate Needs Funding lifted, so HMPG and Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) projects will begin to be obligated by FEMA.
* HM anticipates seeing the Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Fund program (STORM) award ($6.9 million). Also anticipate FY 2023 BRIC and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) to be released this week. That will put the application period from November to February or March.
* Ida HMPG applications due in GOHSEP Grants by October 21. Application period for FEMA ends November 21st, but need the applications early to review.

**Administration, Deputy Director Christina Dayries**

* FY23 EMPG released last week and FY23 EOC grant released to the three agencies awarded.
* Regional allocation priorities were discussed for the $110,000 per region. They will remain the same from FY 2022.
* Some projects from other regions include mini POD sites and a regional exercise.

**Emergency Management Updates, Melton Gaspard**

Operations

* All information about Saltwater Intrusion is on emergency.la.gov.
* Mel thanked directors for assisting local EOCs during wildfires.
* Mel pushed out email about statewide burn ban. Instructions for opting out are also going out. Agricultural burning can resume.
* FMAGs closed once fires 100% contained, so they will likely start closing. Some last week were deemed 100% contained.
* Calcasieu Parish Salt dome could result in sink hole. Information is not being disseminated due to legal reasons. Held off on putting out sitreps for this reason. Last call it was stated they would “manage the collapse”.
* WebEOC will have a new board; training to come mid-November or December. Come 2024, all new incidents should be entered on the new board. Some of the old information will live on the old board, so they will both stay up and running.
* Mel pushed out email regarding L8324 (Hurricane Preparedness Seminar for Decision Makers) to coastal parishes. The schedule for this year is ***“Gulf States: January 29‒February 2, 2024.”*** Louisiana only has 4 seats this year. Names need to be submitted by November 15th.
* Working with Louisiana Water Institute and SDMI on a Flood ID project. We need a storm to hit close to the basin from Galveston to Alabama to actually see algorithm in action.
* Watching the tropics; should be a rain event for Gulf Coast.

Training

* STEMS courses coming out
  + Wildland Urban Interface course offerings: October 21 and 22nd in Alexandria, October 28 and 29 in Baton Rouge, November 18 and 19 in Baton Rouge
  + Logistics Officer Job specific course coming out
  + Statewide Exercise “Cajun Kaleidoscope” April 15-19th, AAR in May.
  + All Hazards Incident Management Class 305- Calcasieu Parish open with 45 seats.
* Disability resources guide is on Get a Game Plan website. https://www.getagameplan.org/make-a-plan/individuals-with-disabilities/
* New Sitrep has been being released, looking for feedback. How is this going to look when several parishes are involved?
* Justin Gremillion working on updating parish planning guides.

**Homeland Security and Interoperability Updates, Matt Mckey**

Interoperability

* Starlinks are being pushed out to state agencies who have been identified to maintain possession of their own Starlink; the remainder will be maintained by Office of Technology Services.
* Starlink state contract and purchasing guidance has been pushed out to parishes.
* Jacob Chatfield is reaching out to parishes with MOUs to test IPAWs; also reaching out to those who do not have MOU.

Homeland Security

* Monitoring situation in Israel. Threat feeds have noted an uptick in bomb threats across the US; also noted that there have been 11 US citizens during the attack. The Fusion Center will begin posting updates. If you see something, say something.

Cybersecurity

* Louisiana Cyber Assurance program pushing to assist state and local entities with improving cyber security posture. Consists of three sub-programs:
  + Cyber Threat Analytics Center- similar to fusion center but for cybersecurity
  + Office of Cyber Readiness-performs cyber assessments to those who request them and provides a report of what the risks are
  + EDR Software rollout- Endpoint Detection and Response, think of this as the next generation of anti-virus software

\*Encouraging participation from local and state agencies in this program

* Working with a contractor to set up regional workshops to bring in all local/state entities to provide feedback for the cyber plan to submit projects for the FY2023 State and Local Cybersecurity Grant (SLCGP).
* SLCGP FY22, there was $3.6 million, SLCGP FY23 $8.4 million; 80% of the funding has to pass through locals.
* Requirements for all sub-recipients include the Nationwide Cybersecurity Review (NCSR) and CISAs proactive cyber hygiene subscriptions.
* Cyber awareness month is October. GOHSEP has put together a social media campaign; also working on a podcast and public service announcement.
* October 24th Physical and Cybersecurity for Critical Infrastructure training at GOHSEP. Follow up with Matt for more info.
* GOHSEP will be participating in a Cyber Summit at ULM on October 26th
* ESF-17 has had 12 responses this calendar year, both state and local represented in this number.
  + One of the State’s software vendors was compromised, so all LA residents who have had an ID or license have been compromised. Nextsteps.la.gov for more information on what to do now.
* Getagameplan.org has cybersecurity guidance as well.
* Please report any suspected or confirmed cyber-attacks to LA-SAFE.