This past October a long, arduous process was met with its jubilant end when the Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management (CCOEM) was officially accredited by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP).

CCOEM is the first local EMA in the state of Ohio (and only 23rd in the Nation) to receive the coveted accreditation.

Established in 1997, EMAP is an independent non-profit organization that fosters excellence and accountability in emergency management programs through measurable standards of excellence.

CCOEM initiated the EMAP process more than two years ago. Since then CCOEM evaluated all of its programs, identified areas for improvement, and implemented measures to correct deficiencies.

CCOEM’s on-site assessment occurred June 15-19. During which time staff participated in interviews, substantiated proofs of compliance, and demonstrated how CCOEM met or exceeded all of the EMAP standards.

Following the on-site assessment, the assessors provided their findings to the EMAP Program Review Committee (PRC). The PRC reviewed the findings and made their recommendation for CCOEM’s accreditation to the EMAP Commission during their October 2015 session.

In keeping with EMAP requirements, CCOEM will seek re-accreditation in five years.
Incident Resource Inventory System (IRIS) is a free resource inventory tool provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Preparedness Directorate (NPD). This software enables response officials to record resources in a database and to search for and identify specific resources for incident response and mutual aid planning and use. The Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management (CCOEM) will roll this system out to all 59 municipalities in Cuyahoga County. The expectation is to identify resources from fire, police and service departments in each jurisdiction, catalog these resources and keep them up to date. The goal is to have a resource database that can be accessed quickly in the event additional resources are needed during emergencies. Over the next few months, CCOEM will conduct workshops to teach Emergency Coordinators how to use the system. Additional information will be sent as the workshops are scheduled.
Cuyahoga County ESF Readiness Program

During periods of emergency or disaster, the primary role of the Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management (CCOEM) is to support the Incident Commander (IC) by providing direct assistance and by obtaining additional resources.

In performing these duties CCOEM is assisted by representatives and subject matter experts from pre-identified Emergency Support Function (ESF) agencies. The dedicated support of ESF agencies – especially the support of ESF lead agencies – is critical to CCOEM’s efforts to assist IC’s.

To perform effectively in an activated EOC, ESF lead agency personnel must be familiar with the plans, procedures, and processes being used at the EOC. To assist ESF personnel in preparing to participate successfully in EOC operations, CCOEM has created an ESF readiness program.

The ESF readiness program is based on CCOEM’s internal staff training program and is intended to provide all potential EOC personnel with the baseline knowledge and skills necessary to work successfully with emergency management professionals both within the EOC and within supporting agencies.

Implementation:

Each ESF lead agency is requested to identify at least three key staff members who would be assigned to the county EOC in times of emergency or disaster. Each of these designated staff members should complete the ESF readiness program.

This readiness program includes a combination of online courses, classroom training, communications training, credentialing, and exercise participation, and are as follows:

- Five Independent Study (online) Incident Command System (ICS) courses:
  - ICS 100: Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS)
  - ICS 700: National Incident Management System (NIMS)
  - ICS 800: National Response Framework
  - ICS 701: NIMS Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS)
  - ICS 706: NIMS Intrastate Mutual Aid

- Two EOC Operations classroom courses:
  - G-191 ICS/EOC Interface (1-day)
  - G-775 EOC Management and Operations (2-days)

- Three Communications training sessions:
  - Knowledge Center incident management software

Exercises are prepared and conducted by CCOEM. Exercises specifically designed for ESF participation are conducted at least twice each year. In addition, Full-Scale Exercises and Functional Exercises conducted in support of specialty teams or other agencies often require activation of the County EOC, and these exercises are also opportunities for ESF agencies.

For information on classroom training, communications training, and exercise opportunities, contact OEM at 443-5700 or by e-mail at ema@cuyahogacounty.us
Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annex Workshops

Ohio Revised Code requires Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management (CCOEM) to create and maintain the Cuyahoga County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), which includes 15 Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes. A critical part of this process involves coordinating with the ESF agencies to review and update their respective roles and responsibilities within the 15 ESF Annexes.

To begin the update process, CCOEM recently held two ESF Annex workshops on November 24, 2015 and again on December 17, 2015. We invited each ESF agency to attend one of the workshops to outline the update process for each of the ESF Annexes.

Workshop attendees were provided information on the ESF review process and updates to CCOEM operations, such as the build out of the county EOC, recommended ESF training, and ESF-specific information regarding the upcoming Republican National Convention.

Our goal is to have each of the ESF Annexes updated and completed by March 2016. If your agency has any questions about your ESF Annexes, please contact us at 216-443-5700.

RNC Update

With six months remaining before the Republican National Convention (RNC) in Cleveland, planning for the event is moving ahead.

An executive steering committee and 23 functional subcommittees are meeting regularly to develop plans and coordinate agency operations in support of this major event. The Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management (CCOEM) is currently participating on seven subcommittees: Consequence Management, Crisis Management, Training, Public Information, Credentialing, Interagency, Communications and Technology, Infrastructure, and Maritime Security.

The Consequence Management subcommittee is co-chaired by the Secret Service and by FEMA, and their main focus is on developing a comprehensive consequence management plan for the RNC.

The sub-committee is also developing a list of the various operations centers that will be in use during the convention. Agencies that will be operating EOCs include FEMA, the CCOEM, and the City of Cleveland Emergency Management. A key task over the next few weeks will be to understand what these various centers will do, how they will be staffed, and how they will communicate.

At CCOEM we expect to activate our Emergency Operations Center during the RNC. At this time we are still developing a staffing plan and will contact ESF agencies in the coming months.

As plans become more clear, CCOEM will share the information with our partner agencies.
The mission of the Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management is to protect lives, property and the economy of Cuyahoga County through preparedness, planning, and effective response to natural disasters, man-made catastrophes, and emergencies.

Congratulations

Monique Witherspoon won the 2014 Biowatch Award for Excellence for Public Health and Preparedness, Public Information

Following is an excerpt from Monique’s award: Monique Witherspoon is a long standing partner of the BioWatch Program. She has been a member of the Cleveland, OH BioWatch Advisory Committee for almost a decade and has provided subject matter expertise in public information/risk communication. Monique has a long history as a member of both the BioWatch Program Public Information and Risk Communication Workgroup and National Workshop Planning Group.

Gary Garnet Selected as Meteorologist-in-Charge of NWS Cleveland

Gary Garnet has served the National Weather Service for over twenty six years. Since starting his career in 1989, Gary has held many positions including: Intern in Charleston, South Carolina, General Forecaster in Charleston, West Virginia, Science Operations Officer in Grand Rapids, Michigan and, most recently sixteen years as the Warning Coordination Meteorologist in Cleveland, Ohio. Gary has served periods as the Acting Meteorologist in Charge at NWS Cleveland and briefly at NWS Pittsburgh.

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Walter Topp
Administrator
216-443-5904
wtopp@cuyahogacounty.us

Justin Bechtel
Operations and Exercise Manager
216-443-3765
jbechtel@cuyahogacounty.us

Mark Christie
Plans Manager
216-443-5683
mchristie@cuyahogacounty.us

310 W. Lakeside Avenue,
795A
Cleveland, OH 44113
Phone: 216-443-5700
Fax: 216-443-4923
ema@cuyahogacounty.us