

DOE hosts Clear Path II

Building on the success of last year's Clear Path exercise, on May 28, 2014 the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability (OE) conducted Clear Path II Pre-Hurricane Season Energy Emergency Response Forum and Exercise at Department of Energy (DOE) Headquarters. Clear Path II brought together representatives from the Federal, state, and local government, industry trade associations, and the energy sector to assess energy emergency response procedures and policies in an effort to identify best practices and determine areas in need of further improvement prior to the start of the 2014 Atlantic Hurricane season. The day-long event, which was developed by DOE, focused on communication processes, the flow of information across the response community, and the development of relationships that support a whole community approach to energy emergency response.



Left to right, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate; OE Assistant Secretary Patricia Hoffman; and Deputy Assistant to the President for Homeland Security Rand Beers during Clear Path II presentations.

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In her opening remarks, Patricia Hoffman, Assistant Secretary for the Energy Department's Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, stressed the importance of developing partnerships and coordination mechanisms in advance of an emergency to optimize resources and conduct more effective and efficient response operations. Daniel Poneman, Deputy Secretary of Energy, and Rand Beers, Deputy Assistant to the President for Homeland Security, provided the keynote addresses. Deputy Secretary Poneman provided an overview of the measures DOE has taken to improve its response to future events, such as incorporating the Department's field organizations into DOE's response team, and through the Office of Fossil Energy, developing the first federal regional refined petroleum product reserve containing gasoline. Mr. Beers mentioned the challenges of navigating the network of available Federal response services and emphasized that since the majority of our energy infrastructure is privately owned, public-private partnerships play an especially critical role in preparedness and response.

A moderated fireside chat with the Deputy Secretary and FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate provided an open forum for discussions on how to improve future energy emergency response efforts. An Executive Forum followed which included a Federal, State, and Private Sector Preparedness and Response Panel in which panel members shared the improvements their respective organizations had made since Hurricane Sandy, planning efforts for future emergencies, and areas where additional improvements are still needed.

Tom Roston, White House National Security Council, facilitated the afternoon tabletop exercise which featured a fictional Category 3 mid-Atlantic hurricane. The exercise was designed to test communications and information sharing between and among public and private sector stakeholders during three critical event phases—deployment, response, and restoration.



Assistant Secretary Patricia Hoffman delivering the opening remarks.

Since last year's Clear Path, DOE has made important strides in streamlining energy emergency response, most notably, through increased engagement with private sector energy owners and operators. While DOE has always worked closely with sector partners, the current enhanced level and quality of coordination has evolved into the new standard. Clear Path II was instrumental in further defining roles and responsibilities across the response community and in helping to foster a whole community approach to energy emergency response. To improve its readiness for future energy emergencies, OE will use the results of Clear Path II to continue refining its response mechanisms and enriching stakeholder coordination.



DOE Community Guidelines Offer Energy Solutions for Individuals and Businesses Before and After a Disaster

With the 2014 Atlantic hurricane season now underway, DOE's Community Guidelines for Energy Emergencies is an ideal resource to help evaluate preparedness and response before the power goes out.

The guidelines, which are available on OE's Web site, include tips to help conserve power and stay informed during an event, and provides emergency-planning resources designed to help a variety of stakeholders:

Individual homeowners will find guidance for responding to power outages and fuel shortages along with tips to help them prepare and recover power more quickly;

Business owners may obtain guidance and resources for developing business recovery plans, identifying critical suppliers and resources, and advanced planning practices to ensure business continuity during a fuel shortage; and

Local and community leaders may consult the guidelines to help them prepare for and respond to an energy emergency and to prepare for fuel shortages and natural gas disruptions.

The guidelines feature a section devoted to the selection and safe installation, operation, and maintenance of backup generators as well as ideas for alternative backup power options such as solar and windpower. If reconstruction is required after a disaster, the guidelines also include a checklist of important points to consider when choosing residential or commercial contractors to ensure work is completed by reliable, qualified, and licensed tradesmen.

Along with the guidelines, users can also find additional resources such as FEMA publications and helpful Web links including the Small Business Administration, the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), and FEMA's disasterassistance.gov and ready.gov Web sites.

Please visit <http://energy.gov/oe/community-guidelines-energy-emergencies> to view the guidelines.

DOE Conducts Annual Regional Coordinator Meeting

On April 16-17, 2014, OE conducted its 2014 Regional Coordinator Meeting at the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) in Morgantown, WV. DOE, as the designated Federal Sector-Specific Agency, is the lead Federal agency responsible for coordinating the Energy Sector's emergency preparedness requirements during federally declared disasters and also directs Emergency Support Function 12 (ESF-12-Energy) activities for the Energy Sector. OE is the Department's lead office for coordinating these responsibilities and in support of these requirements, a Primary and Alternate Regional Coordinator (RC) is assigned to each of the ten FEMA regions. The RCs serve as the primary points of contact for all energy-related activities within their respective region and develop in-depth knowledge of critical regional energy infrastructure and issues. The annual workshop provides the RCs with an opportunity to gather together to share best practices, examine regional successes and challenges, and gain a better understanding of both State and National-level policy requirements.

Anthony Lucas, Federal Program Manager; Jamie Clark, Regional Program Manager, Eastern Region; and John Ostrich, Regional Program Manager, Western Region, began the meeting with several important policy updates including DOE's newly-formed Energy Incident Management Council, a group chaired by the Deputy Secretary, designed to increase coordination across the Department during emergencies; and the integration of the Emergency Response Organization (ERO) and DOE's Emergency Operation Center (EOC). Additional presentations during the meeting focused on valuable lessons learned from the National Level Exercise (NLE) and Capstone exercise; a demonstration of EAGLE-I and system enhancements, and an overview of the ongoing efforts related to State Energy Assurance Plans and State and regional engagement.

As an important part of the greater Department-wide effort to build critical relationships at the State and regional level and across the energy sector, the Regional Coordinator program not only supports these efforts, but also ensures a more unified DOE presence nationwide.



OE Regional Coordinators during their annual meeting.