

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND BUDGET ISSUES RELATED TO EMERGENCY AND DISASTER RESPONSE *-EXERCISE DISCUSSION ISSUES-*

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Budget or policy issues can impose limitations on emergency response and disaster recovery. The EM/IC has the responsibility to his team and community to address these issues clearly and convey any resource and support needs to their governing board. The following exercise and discussion issues may help you better understand the local budgetary and purchasing issues may have on your community. Please refer to the Chelsea County budget policies and Exercise Budget in crafting your thoughts and responses.

- **Exercise Issue 1:** The agency with jurisdiction is Chelsea County with the County Sheriff indicating a clear chain of responsibility under State law. He is proposing to execute a DoA with a Type III IMT with an operational period budget of \$1.5 million. The DoA is executed on behalf of the County by the Sheriff.

***Discussion:*** While the Sheriff indicates that he is executing the DoA on behalf of the County the IC should seek clarification that the budget for the operational period is supported by the Sheriff. The Sheriff may, or may not, have the authority to commit County funds. Review the Chelsea County budget policies and determine if there is a clear budget authority for the DoA. What questions would you pose to the Sheriff to clarify the budgetary authority issue? What might be the outcome if the actual DoA spending authority, pursuant to Chelsea County budget policy were determined to be \$25,000? What approach might you take to cure this issue?

- **Exercise Issue 2:** The Chelsea County Emergency Manager is supporting a local Type 4 IMT in the EOC (as the EOC Manager) during a flood event. The local IC calls for a critical resource that exceeds his spending authority with his local agency and its resource capability. The EM agrees to support the request at a cost of \$55,000.

***Discussion:*** The local EM needs to clearly understand local budget policies and his/her explicit spending authority. What is the EM's spending authority pursuant to Chelsea County policy? If the EM commits \$55,000 for the resource, what level of approval is necessary for the authorization of this expenditure? How might that approval be secured?

- **Exercise Issue 3:** The Chelsea County Manager is not available to make the decision regarding the \$55,000 expenditure. What steps might the EOC Manager need to take to secure approval of this key resource need? *(Please note that Chelsea County does not*

*have a policy stating that an unauthorized expenditure is the personal responsibility of the employee. The County Personnel Guide though clearly states that no employee may expend or commit County resources without prior authorization pursuant to County Policy.)*

**Discussion:** The EM must be familiar with Chelsea County EOP authorities and local COOP policies. Can the If the County Manager is not available, who might be next in command to issue resource acquisition approval? Can this approval be issued by the Sheriff or a County Commissioner?

- **Exercise Issue 4:** The Chelsea County EOP indicates that certain policies may be modified during an emergency or disaster. What standing County budget policies may stand in the way of effective response by the County?

**Discussion:** Chelsea County has budget authority limits and requirements for competitive bids. What budget policies must the EM have clearance to vacate during an emergency? How might that authority be granted in the initial stages of response? How might you address these issues in an Emergency-Disaster Declaration?

- **Exercise Issue 5:** The Chelsea County Commissioners have indicated that they wish the County Manager and EM to prepare an Emergency & Disaster Authorization Resolution (EDAR) to be enacted within the next few months. What elements of County budget policy would you seek to have temporarily vacated during a declared emergency or disaster? What process might be utilized to facilitate resource acquisition during the initial operating period prior to a declaration? How would you incorporate the provisions of the EDAR into the County EOP?

**Discussion:** Emergency Managers must look closely at the policies and procedures that might constrain their ability to implement their EOP. In Chelsea County, those constrains include spending authorities, bid requirements, appropriation and budget hearing procedures and meeting notice requirements. Who might be on your team to meet the Commissioners request?

- **Exercise Issue 6:** How might the EDAR affect Chelsea County's qualification for Public Assistance in the event of a Presidential Disaster Declaration?

**Discussion:** The budget policies of Chelsea County remain in effect during a Presidential Declaration. If Chelsea Count does not have standing policy overrides in place their Public Assistance eligibility determination cold be affected by their failure to follow standard policy during disaster response and recovery.