

## **Governor's Exercise and Planning Preparedness Initiative**

In response to the destruction to public service infrastructure across the state from Tropical Storm Irene and the October Nor'easter the Governor had the State Emergency Management Director [CT Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP), Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS)] develop a comprehensive ***Proposed Process for Enhancement of State Preparedness Planning*** to improve information-sharing during an emergency between state and local officials, and the utility providers. Specifically, the Initiative will set a number of goals regarding emergency planning and exercise that must be accomplished by September 1, 2012. The managers of the Initiative have already begun the process of gathering work groups composed of state, local, federal, and private sector partners, include technical experts from the public utilities, to reach these goals.

### [Action plan composed by State Emergency Management Director Hackett](#)

The OCC has been designated one of the Lead Agencies in the **Governor's Exercise and Planning Preparedness Initiative** which will bring together various experts to identify issues, procedures, and policies necessary to assist in the creation of an energy and utilities annex to the State Response Plan, as well as an energy and utilities annex template for the Local Emergency Operations Plan.

It is anticipated that Consumer Counsel will work with PURA to lead public utility response groups just as the Task Force Leaders did during the recent storms. These groups will coordinate all emergency management efforts at the local, state, and private sector level to create a smoother and more complete communications flow between the utilities, public service companies, municipalities and the state.

As Consumer Counsel Katz has noted:

OCC appreciates the opportunity to participate in this committee by bringing its consumer perspective and methods to address consumer experiences, needs, and concerns is important to the process. Our office has a team of experts on electric, natural gas, water, and telecommunications issues that we can draw on in this process. Additionally, the OCC also has contacts with all the public utilities, including the electric, natural gas, water, telephone, and cable providers in this state from its years of regulatory and legal practice

before the DPUC, now PURA. I would like to work with my staff and with DESPP-DEMHS to establish a defined role for us at the OCC, because while we are small (only 13 in total), we do have expertise that seems pertinent to many different emergency situations.

This Initiative provides clear, specific guidance on the inter-related roles and responsibilities of state and local officials, and the private sector, including utilities, in mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery, particularly in utility disruption events.

It was clear and expressed in the various reports and studies that have emerged since the fall storms that the public sector emergency response planning at the state and local levels had not adequately focused on actions needed in a significant power outage and assignment of responsibilities in mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery in utility disruption events. More specifically, it was demonstrated that while state and local plans call for reports from power companies, they do not address multi-agency actions or coordination needed to address energy disruption.

The OCC will be central to the Initiative's efforts through specific **Emergency Support Function (ESF) Groups**, notably charged by the Governor with developing local emergency operations plans templates to strengthen the state and local government emergency processes, known formally as the "State Response Framework."

**ESF 12 Energy/Utilities Work Group** which will address enhance planning and communications, and will become a permanent committee of the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS), CT Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Advisory Council in accordance with the process provided to the Governor in response to the Witt Report.

and

**ESF 2 Communications Work Group**, which will bring together subject matter experts to address technical data sharing and communications issues identified Initiative. The specific subject areas requiring the expertise of the state's Broadband Policy & Programs Coordinator, an OCC staff principal attorney, include the **Governor's Exercise and Planning Preparedness Initiative - Technology Work Group**, which has a series of groups reporting to it to fulfill the Governor's charge, specifically,

**GIS Working Group** (Geospatial Information Systems), which will review and Update of GIS data, working with State GIS Council and PURA, convene, including utilities, to enhance GIS information flow from utilities to state and local emergency operations centers; to that end, the Governor has specifically charged OPM to lead and synthesize GIS information and work with DESPP-DEMHS to implement its use and to coordinate with the Critical Infrastructure staff of DESPP-DEMHS to work collaboratively with OPM and relevant stakeholders.

**WebEOC Technology Work Group**

Review and Enhancement of the state's existing virtual Internet Emergency Operations Center WebEOC to provide enhanced technical real-time interface among private, state and local government partners, focused on addressing the current configuration and use of the Connecticut WebEOC installation.

**Statewide Public Safety Executive Interoperability**

**Communications Committee** which DESPP-DEMHS plans to use to expand the role of the existing **Interoperable Communications Work Group** to coordinate and enhance emergency public communications restoration.

The state's Broadband Coordinator will be the principal in applying to the federal Department of Commerce through the Public Safety Spectrum section of H.R. 3630 Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, recently signed by President Obama to obtain millions of dollars for the state to tap into a \$7 billion grant program to fund to build out and manage the build out of a nationwide public safety broadband network (PSBN), and to obtain Connecticut's share of a \$135 million grant program to assist state and local planning and implementation of the PSBN establish a First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet).

The OCC is also involved with the management of the **Exercise Work Group**, which will accomplish Governor Malloy's initiative of a real-time exercise involving local and state agencies, as well as utilities, by September 1st. The first task is to bring together various experts to coordinate existing exercise planning in order to create an overall exercise plan that will meet the Governor's goal.