

## Hazard Mitigation Field Operations Curriculum Revision Plan

A meeting was convened on July 25, 2014 to 1) complete a revision plan for the Hazard Mitigation (HM) Field Operations Curriculum for Federal Fiscal Years 2015 and 2016, and 2) to draft an initial concept for conducting training needs analysis to ensure the curriculum continues to address the organizational goals of the Federal Insurance & Mitigation Administration (FIMA) and the individual development needs of the HM disaster workforce. Meeting participants included, from FIMA Regional & Disaster Support Branch (R&DS), Daphne Thornton, Kim Wildasin, and Charlie Sanner; from Wightman & Associates, Gina Wightman. The meeting and this report fulfill requirements of Task 27 in Contract # HSFEHQ11-F-1616.

### Background

The HM Field Operations Curriculum refers to instruction, courseware, and job aids designed specifically for the Hazard Mitigation disaster workforce. The curriculum has been developed and revised through a mission-focused system initiated by FIMA R&DS in 2005 to meet evolving training needs of the HM Cadre. The system has flexed to absorb changes in FEMA doctrine, policy, programs, and technology, as well as new training opportunities created by the implementation of the FEMA Qualification System (FQS). R&DS and its training development contractors have utilized collaborative instructional systems design processes that integrate the knowledge and experience of FEMA Headquarters program managers, FEMA Regional program and disaster operations staff, both full time and Reservist HM disaster workforce employees, and professional Instructional Systems Designers.

### Meeting Findings

#### I. Revision and Development Plans for FY 2015 and 2016

The meeting began with a discussion about the current status of the HM Field Operations Curriculum, given the extensive level of training development that has occurred over the past three years to meet immediate needs defined by the FQS Qualification Sheets for HM Cadre staff. While most of the immediate training development needs will have been fulfilled by early FY 2015, there are ongoing needs for maintaining currency of the curriculum, and fewer needs for new development or conversion to web-based training. The decision was made to not address Mentoring Plans in this discussion because the process for implementing them has not been finalized.

#### ***Allow for additional offerings of new and newly revised courses prior to revision.***

The newest and newly revised instructor-led courses and independent study (IS) courseware have been delivered within the past year or are still in development. They will be offered in the field, and evaluation data collected, in a "pilot" phase before further revisions are made.

***Develop addenda for minor changes to existing instructor-led courses.***

HM Field Operations courses that have not been revised for more than one year are assessed for consistency with current FEMA doctrine, policies, and program currency. For instructor-led courses, necessary updates may be communicated via an addendum and/or a webinar to inform instructors of minor changes to incorporate into the course materials. This approach is not valid for web-based courses. The assessment will be made but if significant program or policy changes must be made to IS courses, they will have to be revised or temporarily “pulled” until a revision can be scheduled.

***Revise courses every two to three years.***

Web-based courses are scheduled for comprehensive review and revision every two years after initial development or conversion from instructor-led training. Instructor-led courses are revised every three years at a minimum. Generally all courses in a functional series will be revised in the same year to ensure consistency in the progression of training. For example, E/L/B 165, *HM Insurance in Disaster Operations*, will be revised in the same year as E/L/B 180, *Core Principles for Insurance Specialists*, unless an addendum or update will be adequate for the instructor-led course.

***Convert courses from instructor-led to web-based IS courses as appropriate.***

In FY 2014, four of the six introductory level function-specific workshops were converted to web-based training format and a new one was developed. Two of the courses in the workshop series, E/L/B 165, *HM Insurance in Disaster Operations*, and E/L/B 162, *HM Floodplain Management in Disaster Operations*, have not yet been converted. There is an immediate need to complete these conversions to maintain consistency of new Specialists training, namely completing E/L/B 207, *Introduction to Hazard Mitigation Field Operations*, followed by completion of the introductory functional training specific to a Specialist job title.

***Develop a new “train-the-trainer” for the HM management courses, separate from E/L/B 206, Conducting HM Field Operations Training***

E/L/B 206 is being revised in FY 2014. The original intent of the course was to provide a train-the-trainer for a limited number of HM Field Operations Courses. Because of the number of HM job titles (currently 49) the number of instructor-led courses has increased to a total of 12, in spite of efforts to maximize blended learning which has resulted in the development of, or conversion to, 14 web-based IS courses. The meeting participants discussed the difficulties that will exist in attempting to train instructors for all of the instructor-led courses in one train-the-trainer offering. In addition, the instructors for conducting the series of courses for HM managers (E/L/B 168, *HM Crew Leaders*; E/L/B 204, *HM Task Force Leaders*; and E/L/B 203, *HM Group Supervisors*) are not the same as those who will be asked to conduct Specialist level training. The decision was made to continue to address the Specialist level courses in E/L/B 206, using different tracks to address the function-specific differences between the courses. This creates the need to develop in 2015 a new course to train instructors for the HM management courses.

**The following table represents the plan for maintaining the HM Field Operations Curriculum in FY 2015 and 2016.**

E/L/B = Instructor-led course; IS = Web-based Independent Study course

R= Revision; C= Conversion from E/L/B to IS; A= Addendum or webinar to provide updates

N= New Development P= Pilot offerings of a new or revised course being conducted

Course #	Instructor-Led Course Name	Hours	FY15	FY16
E/L/B 157	Core Principles for HM CEO Specialists	24	R	A
E/L/B 158	Core Principles for HM Community Planner Spec.	24	R	A
E/L/B 166	Core Principles for HM PDA Specialists	12	P	R
E/L/B 167	Core Principles for HM HPA Specialists	32	P	R
E/L/B 168	HM Crew Leader Course	32	P	R
E/L/B 180	Core Principles for HM Insurance Specialists	24	R	A
E/L/B 203	HM Group Supervisor Course	32	P	R
E/L/B 204	HM Task Force Leader Course	32	P	R
E/L/B 206	Conducting HM Field Operations Training (Spec.)	32	P	R
TBD	Conducting HM Field Operations Managers Training	24 (Est)	N	P (Est)
E/L/B 207	Introduction to HM Field Operations	32	R	A
E/L/B 272	Managing the Floodplain Post Disaster	24	R	A
E/L/B 285	Providing Post-Disaster Substantial Damage Technical Assistance to Communities	8	A	R
	Total Contact Hours for Revision		128	180
	Total Contact Hours for Addendums Only		8	128
	Total Contact Hours for New Development		24 (Est)	-
	Total Contact Hours in in Pilot Offerings		172	24 (Est)
	Total Contact Hours	332	332	324
Course #	Independent Study Course Name	Hours	FY15	FY16
IS 159	HM Management Support in Disaster Operations	2	P	R
IS 160	HM CEO in Disaster Operations	2	P	R
IS 161	HM Planning in Disaster Operations	2.5	R	-
E/L/B 162	HM Floodplain Management in Disaster Operations	8*	C	P*
IS 163	HM Grants in Disaster Operations	2.5	P	R
IS 164	HM HPA in Disaster Operations	2.5	P	R
E/L/B 165	HM Insurance in Disaster Operations	8*	C	P*
IS 319	Mitigation Basics for HM Staff: Tornado	1	R	-
IS 320	Mitigation Basics for HM Staff: Wildfire	1	R	-
IS 321	Mitigation Basics for HM Staff: Hurricane	1	R	-
IS 322	Mitigation Basics for HM Staff: Flood	1	R	-
IS 323	Mitigation Basics for HM Staff: Earthquake	1	R	-
IS 284	Using the SDE Tool (SDE 2.0)	3	P	R
IS 390	Hazard Mitigation in Disaster Operations	1	P	R
	<b>Total Contact Hours for Revision</b>		<b>7.5</b>	<b>13</b>
	<b>Total Contact Hours for Conversion</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Total Contact Hours in in Pilot Phase</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>5*</b>
	<b>Total Contact Hours No Action</b>			<b>7.5</b>
	<b>Total Contact Hours</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>25.5*</b>

\*8 hours of workshop will convert to approximately 2.5 hours of web based training

## II. Training Needs Analysis

The second major topic for discussion was an overall analysis of HM disaster workforce training needs.

The practice of Instructional Systems Design involves ongoing evaluation and revision of training to ensure that the needs of the organization and the target audience continue to be met. The Background section of this report explained that the HM Field Operations Curriculum has consistently flexed to meet changing requirements. However, the Curriculum is approaching ten years in existence, and the FEMA Qualification System has been implemented for almost two full years. FIMA R&DS has expressed a need for an overall analysis to determine:

- Do the Required Training courses described in the HM Cadre Qualification Sheets represent the best strategy to enable employees to gain knowledge and skills to demonstrate required tasks in the HM Cadre Position Task Books (PTBs)?
- Are the courses in the current HM Field Operations Curriculum and the related program training enabling the target audience to demonstrate PTB tasks?
- Are the courses in the current HM Field Operations Curriculum and the related program training enabling the target audience to perform tasks described in their position Task Lists in the HM Field Operations Guide (HMFOG)?
- What changes are recommended to ensure that the HM Field Operations Curriculum and other mitigation courses address both organizational priorities and individual development needs for an effective HM disaster workforce?

The approach to answering these broad questions has to begin by defining what a successfully trained HM Cadre will look like. These will be defined by several factors, all of which may be changing prior, or simultaneous, to the analysis.

- FQS HM Cadre position titles and progression paths
- FQS HM Cadre Position Task Books
- HM JFO Concept of Operations (HM ConOPs)
- HM Field Operations Guide (HMFOG), including Tasks Lists describing responsibilities of each position, to reflect the revised HM ConOPs

Once the ideal “end state” has been defined, a variety of methods can be used to assess selected courses against the standards. Steps to completing this assessment may include but are not limited to:

- For all or selected positions, compare learning objectives of existing Required Training courses to PTB tasks and to the HMFOG Task Lists
- Determine if there exist overlap or “holes” in training available to meet PTB or job requirements
- Determine if learning objectives reflect FEMA/FIMA doctrine and priorities

- Collect job performance data on staff who have received training
- Survey staff who have completed training regarding value of that training in demonstrating PTB tasks and/or performing on the job

This data will be used to develop a report on existing gaps between training needs and available/required training. Based on the gap analysis and other factors such as FIMA priorities, disaster activity, and available resources, solutions to bridging any training gaps can be developed.