FEMA: Getting Real II
Promising Practices in Inclusive Emergency Management For the Whole Community

September 12–14, 2011
Arlington, VA

Sign Language Interpreter Strike Teams
People with disabilities must be given information that is comparable in content and detail to that given to the general public. It must also be accessible, understandable and timely.
Auxiliary aids and services may be needed to ensure effective communication. These resources may include pen and paper; sign language interpreters through on-site or video; and interpretation aids for people who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities. People who are blind, deaf-blind, have low vision, or have cognitive or intellectual disabilities may need large print information or people to assist with reading and filling out forms.
EVACUATIONS AND SHELTERING

- Accessible Shelter Listings
- Who is responsible for accommodations in shelters?
  - Red Cross
  - Local Government
36% of shelters had trained personnel
54% of shelters had no MOUs with service providing agencies i.e. food, water, generators, assistive equipment, etc.
80% of shelters had no TTYs available
No sign language interpreters or personal care attendants were available
CERT trainings for interpreters since 1997
2003 LAWA funding for DOD initiative
Executive Order 13347 – 6/2004
9/12/2008, 10/12/2008, 11/14/2008
CITY OF LOS ANGELES– CERT 2011
Efforts to date –

NOV. 2009 – Georgia Coalition for Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with disabilities and Elderly Persons

RID Emergency Management Working Group

Nov. 2010 – Georgia RID conference

APRIL 2011 – began providing technical assistance to FEMA in Georgia and Alabama

July 2011 – GEMINI proposal approved
MOTION C2009.5 – That RID establish an ad hoc committee to develop a position paper to address the issues Interpreters face during emergencies/disasters and non-declared local emergencies/disasters.

(submitted RID Region V)
RID EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP – 2010 – 2011

- ANGELA M KAUFMAN (CA), CHAIR
- KATHLEEN ALEXANDER (MO)*
- MISTIE OWENS (TX)
- RICK POPE (GA)*
- TOMINA SCHWENKE (GA)*
- TERRI SCHISLER (FL)
- STEPHANIE KENT (MA)
- JANET BAILEY – RID GAP*
History and Context
Overview
Self–Preparedness
Training, Education and Credentialing
Pre–Credentialing and Self Deployment
Public Health Emergencies
Volunteer or Contractor
Mental Health Issues
Conclusion
RID MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INTERPRETING

- November 2010
- All RID members via RID website
- 345 Responses
- Not all Responses complete
HAVE YOU EVER INTERPRETED IN A MAJOR DISASTER SITUATION?

- Yes: 64
- No: 281

Total Number of Respondents: 345
WHAT TYPES OF DISASTERS DID YOU INTERPRET FOR?

Total Number of Respondents: 175
TIME FRAME FOR EACH INTERPRETED DISASTER

- Tornado: was for one day, 10 hours.
- Hurricane Ike: Houston, 2009: approximately 3 weeks. 1 week before and two after in shelters.
- Suicide by cop: for deaf man and after for many community members, meetings with police department at local deaf club, volunteer interpreters 24/7 for over a week.
- Major snow blizzard: evening local news everyday for a week, one hour a night.
- Major hurricane: Total of about 24 hours over 3 days to deaf blind individual
- Earthquake: interpreted radio announcements, One hour max
WERE YOU PAID TO INTERPRET?

- 9/11: on assignment in community college class at the time of event
- Happened as a result of my being with deaf at the time of event. The schools hired me in the first two incidents and an interpreter agency paid me to interpret in the medical situation.
- staff interpreter for the state and this was part of my job duties.
- employed by a state commission for the Deaf and hard of hearing, was sent by them, agreement that they would provide the interpreters.
- news agency
- I was contacted by friends and asked to come interpret. There was no formal system.
- was called personally by the Red Cross and other agencies that know me as a certified interpreter in the area.
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AFTER WORKING?

- YES: 75, 91%
- NO: 7, 9%

82 RESPONSES
Were you debriefed?

- Yes: 9, 13%
- No: 62, 87%
WERE YOU DEBRIEFED?

- It would have been nice to unload those heavy emotions with a trained counselor after working all of those hours interpreting very descriptive and depressing issues. I honestly cried in my car for 30 minutes before I felt strong enough to drive home that day. No one asked me if I was all right.

- Support came solely via my interpreting team. We all wished there was a chance to debrief on a more professional level.

- It's not just disasters. Sometimes we interpret in VRS for situations that hit too close to home – with death, illness, etc – and that we are not prepared for.

- The American Red Cross provided mental health support for all people involved, not specific to interpreting.

- Red Cross Mental Health workers were ill equipped to deal with the vicarious trauma that interpreters face.
OBSTACLES Faced WHILE INTERPRETING IN THE DISASTER

- Logistical: 29
- Emotional: 27
- Physical: 17
- Other: 11
- Financial: 5
- Medical: 5

Total Number of Respondents: 94
REQUESTED FEEDBACK FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING PROTOCOLS

- Interpreters were at the FEMA center in 8-hour shifts but the Deaf community was not notified that we were there or when we were there. During the entire two weeks, I interpreted once. I was told by staff that several Deaf individuals had shown up at times when no interpreter was scheduled to be there, i.e. early mornings or late evenings. Therefore, limited service was actually provided.

- I was asked to provide input into the making of a brochure "What to do in a Disaster if you are Disabled"

- Being self deployed, there was no option for this. I did debrief with a colleague.
DO YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY PLAN, EVACUATION PLAN AND EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT?

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<tr>
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<th>YES</th>
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<td>121</td>
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FLORIDA RID INITIATIVE

- Jan 2011 – Responded to Florida Division of Emergency Management request for info on increasing numbers of available interpreters
- Fla. RID invited to join RID working group
- Collaboratively drafted proposal for training Florida interpreters
- Oct. 1, 2011 – Fla. RID to host seminar on disaster response interpreting, Tampa
NATIONAL REGISTRY OF INTERPRETERS FOR THE DEAF

- Governmental Affairs Program
- Emergency Management Working Group
- Affiliate Chapters
- Specialist Certification in Emergency Management
- National Association of the Deaf
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