

## **Disaster Preparedness Program**

### **Strategic Plan FY22-26**

#### **Introduction:**

The NOAA National Ocean Service (NOS) Disaster Preparedness Program (DPP) is a division-level program under the Office of Response and Restoration and includes the NOAA Gulf of Mexico Disaster Response Center (DRC) in Mobile, AL. Together, the DPP and the DRC serve a vital role for NOS's preparedness and Continuity of Operations planning to include coordinating operational capabilities and information from across NOS, across NOAA, and with core partners. We work to secure NOS safety and mission success and ensure that commerce, communities, and natural resources can recover from any threat or disaster as quickly as possible.

NOS has made enhancing program capacity a core objective, from assessing and mitigating risks to personnel, mission, and infrastructure from disasters through robust mission response to coastal storms and other threats and disasters such as major oil spills. The DPP acts as the emergency management organization for NOS. As such, during the response phase, we serve as a key point for NOS coordination efforts, identifying logistical needs and collecting data for situational awareness for NOS leadership and the NOAA Homeland Security Program Office. Capacity building of NOS staff, improving disaster readiness, and supporting response and recovery are additional focus elements of the DPP.

The DRC is a weather-hardened facility and establishes an unprecedented regional presence for the Gulf of Mexico region. As part of the DPP, the DRC acts as a hub in the Gulf of Mexico for enhancing coordination and preparedness capabilities by hosting and/or sponsoring planning meetings, workshops, training courses, and exercises. The DRC can also support incident command post functions, disaster coordination, and equipment staging during actual events.

Our FY22-26 Strategic Plan includes input from key partners and program leadership. It retains all of the previous goals, but includes some additions, expansions, and clarifications. This strategic plan includes the addition of recovery to our core focus areas. Though we have supported this in our previous plan, it was not specifically called out. In addition, we recognize the expansion of the regional coordination role for DPP and support for After Action Reporting. Some goals have been redefined to improve cohesion with their supporting objectives.

The purpose of this strategic plan is to clearly define and focus DPP initiatives over the next five years.

#### **DPP Vision:**

NOAA and coastal communities are safer through optimal disaster preparation, response, and recovery.

#### **DPP Mission:**

To ensure NOS, partners, and coastal communities are able to effectively prepare for, respond to, and

recover from all hazards, including coastal disasters.

**DPP Goals:**

1. Capacity Building

**Goal Statement:** Build NOS and partner capacity through delivering and facilitating training and exercises that increase readiness for all-hazard response and recovery operations, fostering a robust cadre of knowledgeable responders.

Objective 1 – Training: Develop, deliver, and evaluate a relevant preparedness and response training program that supports NOS and partner operations. Provide internal support and leadership to improve OR&R training.

Objective 2 – Exercises: Design and execute a comprehensive, multi-year exercise program designed to improve NOS's and our partners' preparedness, response, and recovery posture. Provide leadership within OR&R to ensure common understanding of divisional response and support roles and exercise OR&R preparedness.

Objective 3 – Risk Mitigation: Facilitate workshops and forums designed to inform and enhance science, tools, and/or decision making for disaster response and recovery.

Objective 4 – Deepen the Bench: Ensure a safe and qualified cadre of response, preparedness, and recovery specialists.

2. Coordination and Communication

**Goal Statement:** Promote coordination and facilitate communication by connecting stakeholders and targeted outreach/inreach, especially in underrepresented communities.

Objective 1 – Intra-agency Coordination: Support information flow and activities coordinated throughout NOAA (including Homeland Security Program Office [HSPO] and NOS Senior Leadership) on preparedness, response and recovery.

Objective 2 – Regional Coordination: Enhance regional preparedness to all NOAA regions through collaboration with NOAA Regional Teams, state and local partners, and other federal partners to foster resilient regions.

Objective 3 – Partner Coordination: Maintain and strengthen preparedness, response, and recovery coordination with external partners and stakeholders.

Objective 4 – Outreach: Elevate DPP recognition and visibility through strategic outreach initiatives that enhance program awareness within NOAA and build support with external partners including representatives of Congress.

3. Continuous Improvement

**Goal Statement:** Ensure an optimal NOS response and recovery posture through rigorous evaluation and improvement.

Objective 1 - Lessons Learned: Conduct formal post-incident and post-exercise After-Action Reviews (AARs) to enhance NOS's response and recovery posture for future all-hazards events.

Objective 2 - Continuous Improvement: Facilitate a robust documentation and tracking of Continuous Improvement (AAR) items/activities that are identified for remediation/improvement.

Objective 3 - Resources and Tool Development: Develop, maintain, and augment resources and tools that advance emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.

Objective 4 – Planning Ahead: Identify emerging threats, readiness gaps, and areas for improvement as well as leading COOP and contingency planning for NOS.

#### 4. Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Support

**Goal Statement:** Facilitate response and recovery for all-hazards events through logistical, planning, and operational support.

Objective 1 – Disaster Response Center: Maintain the DRC to support emergency operations and function as an effective training and meeting facility.

Objective 2 – Incident Response - Facilitate post-incident support, situational awareness and response coordination of NOS personnel, mission and infrastructure.

Objective 3 - Recovery: Facilitate recovery through collaboration and coordination on economic and environmental impacts.

Objective 4 - Preparedness Support and Partnerships: Provide support to OR&R, NOS, and NOAA partners to enhance disaster readiness through partnerships, projects and continuity planning.

#### 5. Disaster Preparedness Program Development

**Goal Statement:** The DPP is an evolving program focused on its mission, strategic outreach, and professional growth.

Objective 1 – Program Growth: Develop an effective program through strategic planning, identification of funding opportunities, detail opportunities, internships, and partnerships.

Objective 2 – Program Evaluation: Evaluate the program's success towards meeting objectives on an annual basis and ensure that the program has milestones that contribute towards OR&R and NOS goals.

Objective 3 – Professional Development: Ensure all DPP staff receive professional development opportunities that provide mutual benefit for the employee and the program.

Objective 4 - Diversity and Inclusion: Foster the values of diversity and inclusion within DPP by encouraging participation in D&I groups and events, our hiring practices, and our program culture.