

Harris County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management

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DIRECTOR

What does the future hold for Emergency Management ?

We live in a Dynamic Threat Environment



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The world is changing in profound ways. These changes will significantly alter how the emergency management community will do its job in the future and will require creative and collaborative thinking and action. To begin considering future challenges and their potential impacts we need to understand how the world around us is changing, and how those changes may affect the future of emergency management.



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What could be our changing issues, trends, or other factors that could impact our future in emergency management over the next 10-15 years?



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Change in our climate:

Weather patterns

Water resources

Sea levels

New threats to human health



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Critical infrastructure:

Age of the infrastructure (bridges, dams, electrical grid, communications, roadways, etc.)

Supply chain and the demand upon it

Increase in interdependency



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Changing role of the individual:

Advances in technology that empower individuals by broadening access to information

New technologies create new communication challenges

Possibility of media gaps being created between “connected” and “non-connected” individuals

Virtual communities and groups

Growing expectations of “real time” information flow



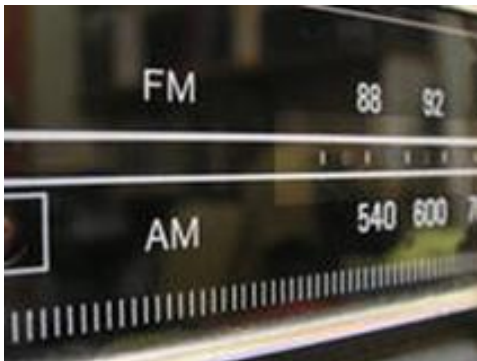
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Evolving terrorist threat:

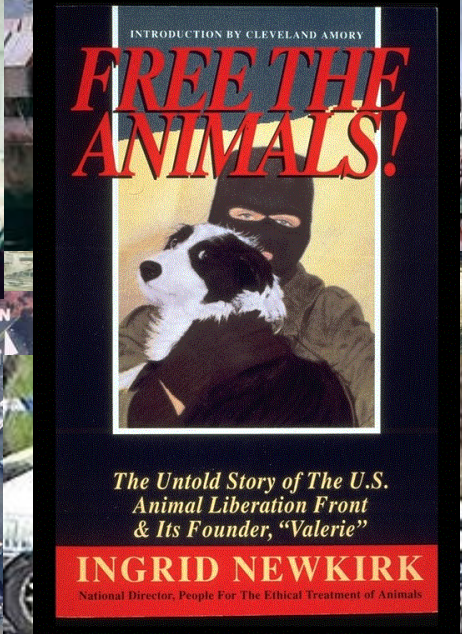
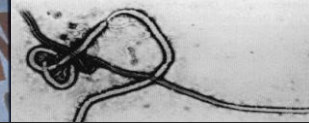
Terrorist are adaptive and are constantly learning and improving tactics and techniques

Growth of a domestic threat

Cyber security



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Demographic growth and change:

Increase in our population +15 to 25%

A more culturally and ethnically diverse population

A larger population age 65 or older

More densely populated areas, intercity, coastal, and suburban



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Government budgets:

Budget forecasts are constrained and could lead to challenges sustaining emergency and disaster management resources and capabilities

Impacts to capabilities and emergency management partners will further strain demands on emergency management



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In conclusion:

If we think more broadly, strategically, and over a longer timeframe it will help us;

Avoid “Strategic Surprises”

Promote information sharing to all partners

Understand what changes could affect us

Plan so as to more effectively operate in our future environment



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