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Resilience Report

Brief insights and the latest innovations in emergency management and health security.

This week's Resilience Report takes a look at how to manage and maximize the use of disaster volunteers. We also examine the new National Terrorism Advisory System Bulletin, the end of the Atlantic hurricane season, and hospital emergency preparedness. Finally, we celebrate the U.S. World Cup victory and International Day of Persons with Disabilities.



Terrorism Threats to the U.S.

- On Wednesday, DHS issued a new [National Terrorism Advisory System Bulletin](#) that describes that the U.S. remains in a heightened threat environment. This comes on the heels of a recent [Senate Report](#) that reviews federal response to domestic terrorism, describes the spread of extremist content on social media, and provides recommendations to mitigate deficiencies.

The End of the Atlantic Hurricane Season

- As the Atlantic hurricane season ended on November 30, state officials in Florida have convened [a select committee](#) to look at lessons learned from Hurricane Ian. Experts argue that many deaths were [preventable](#). Recapping the 2022 season, some metrics suggest the hurricane season was [fairly average](#), however, what 2022 “may have lacked in quantity it far exceeded in impact.”

The Latest in Hospital Emergency Preparedness

- While COVID-19 has caused hospitals to [revamp](#) some of their emergency preparedness procedures, other hazards and threats also face hospitals and broader health systems. Hurricane Ian, for example, [exposed weaknesses](#) in the ability of some hospitals to evacuate patients quickly, which experts say is troubling considering that some facilities do not have the infrastructure to withstand a direct hit from a major hurricane.



SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT: MANAGING EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERS

Community volunteering typically [increases](#) during the holidays, and in the spirit of the season we are taking a closer look at managing emergency volunteers. Volunteers in emergency situations provide critical support to jurisdictions with limited personnel and resources, but navigating the world of disaster volunteers, especially Spontaneous or Unaffiliated Volunteers, can be a little complicated.

- Affiliated volunteers work through programs like a local [Community Emergency Response Team \(CERT\)](#), the [American Red Cross](#), or a Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and may or may not have formal training. Their relationship with an organizational body makes them critical components of the emergency management system. For example, [Maricopa County Department of Public Health's MRC](#) received [numerous national awards](#) for its groundbreaking work during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- However, many people are unaware of how to participate in these volunteer opportunities, making them more likely to show up as spontaneous volunteers. [Spontaneous or unaffiliated volunteers](#) are individuals who are not part of a recognized agency and are often motivated to provide support following a disaster. Because they are not part of the emergency management system, their support is often [underutilized](#) and can even burden first responders.
- Internal and external stakeholders should play roles in coordinating volunteer resources in advance so that first responders can concentrate on their duties while also ensuring an equitable volunteer corps that addresses the needs of the Whole Community.

Maximizing Use of Volunteers

How can you help your community maximize its use of volunteer support? Several of our recent projects with local jurisdictions have revealed some strategies to ensure that affiliated and unaffiliated volunteers are included in planning considerations.

- **[Recommendation #1: Conduct a gap analysis of existing volunteer plans and procedures.](#)** Survey your agency's existing plans and identify additional resources for support like this [Emergency Volunteer Toolkit](#) or this [guide](#) on effective use of unaffiliated volunteers. A gap analysis can help identify missing resources, unnecessary barriers to volunteering, or credentialing necessities that should be included in a Disaster Volunteer Management Plan.

- **Recommendation #2: Assemble a Disaster Volunteer Management Plan.** Coordinating volunteer support in the aftermath of a disaster is a complex process. A formalized plan can organize internal and external stakeholders by clearly defining roles and responsibilities. This ensures comprehensive use of all resources during response and recovery. The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) has a [guide](#) with national principles and ConOps for managing unaffiliated volunteers.
- **Recommendation #3: Consider Involving External Groups in the Process.** Community organizations and faith-based groups can provide critical insight into how best to help their communities and engage neighbors to participate as well-organized volunteers. These groups can also help conduct outreach to marginalized groups and provide input on prioritizing equitable volunteering.



USA! USA! USA!

- The U.S. Men's National Team (USMNT) won a [hard-fought victory](#) against Iran in a nearly 100-minute game on Wednesday, advancing the team to the round of 16. The USMNT needed a win to avoid ending their World Cup chances. The team, which has [never won a World Cup](#), faces the Netherlands tomorrow (a Saturday game might help [worker productivity!](#)).

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

- Tomorrow also marks the [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#), an annual observance that began in 1992 with a UN resolution. The day promotes the importance of inclusion and is intended to celebrate and support those with disabilities. Here's some [suggestions](#) on inclusion initiatives in the workplace.

Tinsel, Trees, and Trends!

- Now that Thanksgiving is over, it's officially time to kick off the holiday season, and what better place to start than with decorations. Check out [this year's trends](#) for seasonal decor. [Nostalgia](#) is in this year, as are [bold colors](#). And we know it's still early in the month, but it wouldn't be the holidays without [cookies!](#)



We're Here to Support You

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