



## Book Review

David A. McEntire, *Disaster Response and Recovery: Strategies and Tactics for Resilience* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2015), 560 pages, \$69.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-1186-7302-7.

Reviewed by Dr. Joshua Sinai, Senior Analyst, Kiernan Group Holdings.

This excellent and practitioner-oriented textbook's objective is to provide a comprehensive and detailed account of the spectrum of disasters challenging homeland security and effective strategies and tactics to recover from them in a resilient manner. The book's 13 chapters begin by covering topics such as types of disasters (ranging from natural hazards, technological hazards, to man-made hazards, such as mass shootings and terrorism); the actors that play a role in responding to disasters (ranging from the public sector, the private sector, to the nonprofit sector, such as the Red Cross and faith-based organizations); and anticipating human behavior responses during disasters (including the role of media and myths and exaggerations in exacerbating such responses).

The chapters then shift to identifying various approaches to managing disasters, such as what the author terms "the traditional model" (e.g., civil defense, command and control, bureaucratic, or emergency service perspective) and "the professional model," which is based on emergency managers leading "interdependent organizational operations," which are an "all-hazard, networking, collaborative, problem-solving, or public administration model." (page 114) The strength of the latter model is that "Because of the unique nature of disaster, no single individual, group, or organization can respond alone," so "an all-hazard approach to emergency management" is required. (pages 115-116).

Other chapters discuss topics such as implementing initial response measures (including issuing warnings and types of warning systems that are issued), managing evacuation, and sheltering. Also discussed are the procedures and measures to care for the injured, dead, and distraught; managing public information, donations, and volunteers to assist in disaster relief; methodologies to assess damages; issuing disaster declarations (including factors for determining such declarations); the types of debris produced by disasters and how to deal with them; promoting recovery and mitigating the impacts of disasters, including providing emergency and permanent assistance to victims, including victims with special needs, such as disabled populations; and the importance of minimizing possibilities for fraud in claims for damages. Other related issues include harnessing organizational measures to manage disasters at the local, state and federal levels, including using technologies, such as geographical information systems (GIS) to manage disaster relief operations.

Chapter 12, "Foreseeing the Future: Prior Lessons, Unrecognized Threats and Rising Vulnerability," is especially pertinent – particularly following the catastrophic mass shooting attack in Las Vegas on October 1, 2017. This is due to the fact, as the author insightfully notes, that "As an emergency manager, you must not only foster resilience before, during, and after the current disasters you are confronted with. It is vital that you think critically about how to

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improve response and recovery in the future we want. You must realize that disasters are on the rise in terms of frequency and impact. This disturbing fact suggests that we will have to deal more effectively with the complex nature of technological disasters. Furthermore, you will need to understand how to deal with violent activity and take precautionary steps to protect your personnel and community during and after terrorist attacks. There are also new or unrecognized hazards that threaten us...Vulnerability is also increasing around the world, and it is your job to help everyone in the community to take steps to reverse such trends. You must have an understanding of the factors that will have a bearing on future disasters if you are to respond to and recovery from them successfully.” (page 395).

As a textbook, each chapter begins with a “Starting Point” that outlines learning points, goals and outcomes. The chapters are then sprinkled throughout with call out boxes and tables, and conclude with a summary, key terms, summary questions, review questions, and applying the chapters’ topics to real world scenarios.

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