

THE EVOLVING FACE OF EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT
IN THE CITY OF SEATAC



Pat Lowery
Emergency Management Coordinator

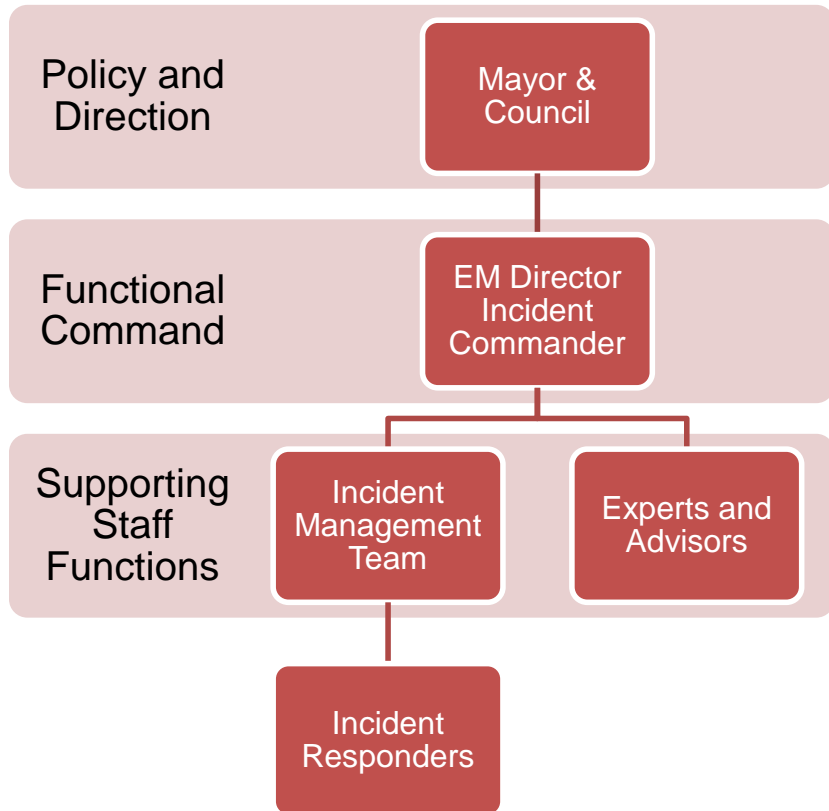
“so what is Emergency Management”

- A system of management and response to hazardous or disaster events.
- The **proactive** functions
 - Education
 - Physical preparation
 - Hazard mitigation
- The **reactive** functions
 - Define
 - Strategize
 - Respond
 - Evaluate and adjust as needed
 - Recover

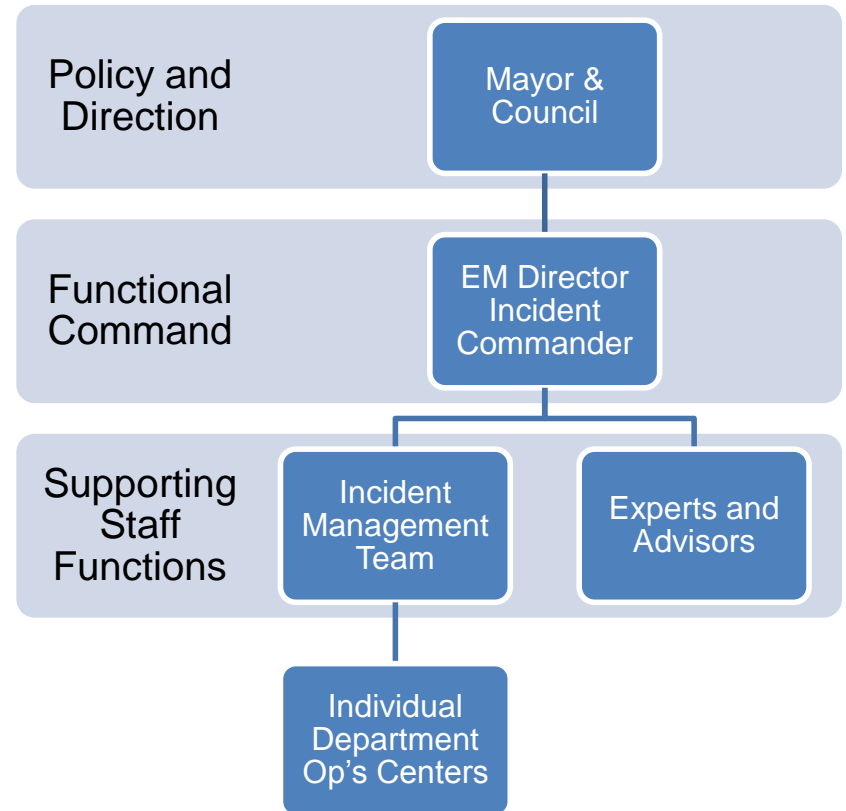


It's all in the style

Incident Command



Incident Coordination



the underpinnings of our program

- **Resources**

- A top-of-the-line Emergency Coordination Center.
- Up to date technology.
- Connections to highly function support tools including;
 - Washington State WebEOC
 - CodeRED

- **Procedures**

- Some of our reference manuals have been brought up to date.
- Regulatory plans are being submitted in a timely manner.

- **Staff**

- With limited human resources, we make the most of the people we have.
- Nearly half of our staff have some experience.
- We are working to build a stronger cadre of local / regional partners.

- **Training**

- The “do’s” express readiness to use their training.
- The “don’ts” are eager to get the training.

taking the next steps

Areas for Improvement and Change

Physical resources including;

- Expanding our mapping capabilities within the ECC.
- Improve and expand our portable radio system.

Human resources including:

- Increasing the number of trained staff.
- Developing a more robust training and skills model.
- Creation of an Emergency Planning Committee within our staff.

taking the next steps

Areas for Improvement and Change

Planning directives include;

- Development of a mass sheltering plan.
- Completion of a debris management plan.
- Start discussions regarding community recovery strategies.

Event-based ECC sustainability including:

- Moving toward operational redundancy with other RFA – E/M programs.
- Creating more opportunities for cross-training with our volunteer HAM radio team.

Looking ahead

Readiness promotes effectiveness

Our program's internal objectives include:

- Provide staff with information for personal preparedness during a disaster or community emergency.
- Develop and provide each employee with a better understanding of his / her role representing the City during a community emergency.
- Promote staff knowledge and confidence in their ability to participate as a part of our emergency management team.

Looking ahead

Readiness promotes effectiveness

Our program's community objectives include:

- Providing community members with a better understanding of their role during a disaster or community-wide emergency.
- Establish more diverse methods for disseminating information to the community during a disaster or emergency.
- Develop functional relationships with our community stakeholders.
- Build community confidence in the City's ability to respond to and support the community during a disaster or emergency.

Planning becomes practice...the SR530 Slide

“the greatest natural disaster to confront our State since Mount St. Helens”



Observations from the SR530 Slide

- **Day One:**
 - **The initial scope of the disaster was impossible to recognize;**
 - Nothing like this had ever been experienced.
 - Nothing like this had been predicted.
 - **Everything that could be brought into the response was.**
 - **The magnitude of the disaster quickly outstripped the resources available.**

These factors are not unique to this event.

Observations from the SR530 Slide

Challenges were considerable;

- Dismal search conditions on the ground.
- Health and safety of emergency workers.
 - The looming hillside above.
 - Presence of hazardous materials.
- Ever changing weather conditions.
- Access to area sharply curtailed (1 road in and out).

Observations from the SR530 Slide

Event priorities were established...

- Rescue, then recovery of victims.
- Keeping local residents apprised of progress in a compassionate and responsive manner.
- Re-establishing communications and transportation through the affected area.
- Re-booting the local economy quickly and efficiently.

These objectives have helped guide the long-term response.

Observations from the SR530 Slide

As the week rolled on...

- Snohomish County established three command centers.
- In support, regional ICS geared up to support the work in Snohomish County.
- Regional agencies proactively assembled a wide range of resources and deployed them as requested.

Intra-agency cooperation has been a crucial factor.

Some numbers from the SR530 Slide

As of today:

- *33 confirmed dead, 12 remain missing.*
- *43 homes were damaged or destroyed by the slide, another 6 by the resulting pool of river water trapped behind the slide.*
- *Debris covers about 1 square mile and is up to 70 feet deep.*
- *Over 1000 responders have actively searched the site in 40' squares, using dogs, probe sticks, technology and manual labor.*
- *Another 400 responders have staffed the Command centers.*

Response costs alone have eclipsed \$4,000,000.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

Thank you