

2.16 CONSEQUENCE ANALYSIS

The EMAP standard for a HIRA requires the state program to include a consequence analysis for hazards identified in state HIRAs. The consequence analysis should consider the impact on the public; responders; continuity of operations including delivery of services; property, facilities and infrastructure; the environment; the economic condition of the state, and public confidence in the state's governance.

Impact on the public

Based on the HIRA in the SOHMP, there is neither record of a historical event or impacts as identified in the vulnerability analysis that would be considered catastrophic from a statewide perspective. Historically, other than emerging disease/pandemic outbreaks, hazard events in Ohio tend to be moderate in size – possibly approaching widespread, but not necessarily rising to the level of catastrophic. Three natural hazard events that may have a broader impact on the public would be a large earthquake on the New Madrid fault, a statewide blizzard (such as the blizzard of 1978) or a widespread flood (Great Flood of 1913). Still, the impacts on the public from these three events would be moderate. Perhaps the hazard with the greatest impact on the public (in terms of numbers of individuals adversely affected) would be an emerging disease/pandemic outbreak or a terrorism event that included a nuclear dispersion device.

Impact on responders

Because it is unlikely that hazard event would be widespread enough in Ohio to be “catastrophic,” existing mutual aid mechanisms and the ability to exercise Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), should be sufficient to handle any hazard event. The exception to this may be an emerging disease/pandemic outbreak.

Continuity of Operations (COOP)

Communities and the State of Ohio continually develop and update COOP plans in the event facilities and/or agencies are impacted. State agencies also maintain disaster recovery plans which are largely IT focused. It is expected that affected agencies would exercise their COOP plans as appropriate. Private sector businesses are encouraged to develop business continuity plans, but they are not mandated by the state.

Property, facilities, and infrastructure

The SOHMP has attempted to collect and create risk assessments and vulnerability analyses for the different hazards it profiled. One note of caution in utilizing these data is that aggregate dollar damage amounts and facilities affected by a multi-county region are for purposes of comparison in the SOHMP only. The SOHMP does not imply that a whole region would actually have an event occur where the maximum damages are sustained in all of the counties identified in the region.

Environment

Certainly any hazard event has the potential for environmental impact. Flood events for example may result in pollution of streams and rivers due to combined sewage overflows and a tornado/wind event will disperse materials, trash and debris over a widespread area. A drought may affect the environment in a different way by drying up wetlands, and weakening/killing trees and forestlands. The three hazards that have a significant potential for environmental impact are: nuclear detonation/dispersion, emerging disease/pandemic outbreak, and flooding.

Economic condition of the state

Because most hazards in Ohio would not result in a statewide catastrophe, the economic impacts, while potentially severe, would be recoverable. Also, Ohio has a diverse economy even though there are areas where certain segments of the economy are concentrated (manufacturing in Cleveland/Akron/Youngstown for example). From a geographic perspective, an event that would affect the greater Cleveland, Columbus, or Cincinnati area would have a greater impact than would a hazard affecting other areas of the state. Similarly, an invasive species or pest that would affect the corn or soybean crop statewide, or a drought might result in a more widespread deterioration of the economic condition of the state. Finally, an event affecting Columbus as it is the seat of state government could have a significant impact as centralized processing of payments to citizens for a variety of programs could be interrupted.

Public confidence in state governance

As has been demonstrated in catastrophic events in other states and countries, public confidence in state governance is tightly linked to the government's response to a hazard event. Even in more regionalized or local disasters this is the case although the effect of the disaster on public confidence is similarly regionalized or localized. The hazards most likely to have a widespread effect on public confidence in state governance are those that either have the probability of statewide effect (drought, blizzards), those that have a high impact or consequence (terrorism, nuclear detonation/dispersion, emerging disease/pandemic outbreak) and those that have a short speed of onset (terrorism).