



Denver Alliance for Response

Follow up Survey Report

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In August 2010, a survey was created and sent to the 85 participants that had attended the Denver Alliance for Response Forum sponsored by Heritage Preservation, and held at the Denver Public Library on September 25, 2009.

The Denver Alliance for Response Advisory Committee sent the survey to attendees and their organizations in order to discover what has happened since the Denver Forum. The results, reported here, will be shared with advisory committee members to help in planning next steps; shared with all attendees, and uploaded to the Heritage Preservation website.

Nine questions were put to those attending the forum. Twenty-five institutions or 29% of attendees took the survey.

The demographics of respondents are that 48% of those answering the survey came from libraries, 20% from museums, 12% from archives, 8% from an art, cultural or historical agency. A combined 12% of respondents came from law enforcement, emergency management and fire, or EMS departments. 16% or 4 people identified themselves as "other."

The survey defined the organization types that attendees might work for as: Municipal, County, State, Federal, nonprofit 501(c)(3), College or University, Corporation or Other. 24% of respondents identified themselves as working for county governments; an additional 24% said colleges or universities. Another 40% of respondents work for either municipalities, 20%, or nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations, 20%. A total of 12% of respondents, or 3 people said they work for some other kind of organization.

The first non-demographic question was:

3. Please rate your change in behavior in the following areas as a result of participating in Colorado's Alliance for Response Forum						
	No Change	Some Change	Big Change	Don't Know	N/A	Response Count
Implementation or creation of disaster plan	12.0% (3)	60.0% (15)	12.0% (3)	8.0% (2)	8.0% (2)	25
Re-allocation of resources for planning & mitigation	47.8% (11)	43.5% (10)	0.0% (0)	8.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	23
Development of protocols for local emergency management	24.0% (6)	52.0% (13)	12.0% (3)	12.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	25
Contact between local cultural resources and Emergency First Responders	12.0% (3)	52.0% (13)	20.0% (5)	16.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	25
Emergency First Responders: New considerations for working with cultural institutions during emergencies	13.6% (3)	18.2% (4)	18.2% (4)	18.2% (4)	31.8% (7)	22
Cooperating with emergency responders and cultural institutions on disaster projects	25.0% (6)	37.5% (9)	16.7% (4)	20.8% (5)	0.0% (0)	24
				answered question		25
				skipped question		0

The second question was: “What new facts or ideas have you taken from the Alliance for Response Forum to share with your colleagues? What have you shared?” 18 respondents gave a wide variety of answers, including:

1. Requirements for power and security as sites.
2. Linked cultural people and FEMA and emergency managers at my table through email, projects, training and co-wrote two grants. We are working on important questions such as, "How do we find each other, What do you do, how can we work together, what do you need from us to do your job?"
3. having an "open house" for emergency responders- getting our priority collections identified both internally and so that they can be found easily in case of an emergency-
4. We gained new insights into what first responders need and how they can further help the institution. The implementation process is considerable in a large

institution. The above responses in no way reflect on the workshop's effectiveness in creating alliances and change. Big machines move very slow.

5. Importance of building relationships with First Responders.
6. Closer connection with county agencies. Hope to be able to collaborate on training session
7. We needed to re-evaluate and update our plans.
8. We shared the major issues we discussed at the conference with fellow staff. We have a better understanding of what the needs are for disaster preparedness.
9. Still have to ask the local firefighters for their ideas on where we should store our unique items in the collection (of local interest).
10. Reviewed the program with supervisors.
11. More than anything I was encouraged to continue my involvement with Emergency Management groups locally. The Campus group is the first priority level of my involvement.
12. We now have better info about how emergency first responders work (and why our emergency manager feels that we don't need to plan out all our scenarios, but just be ready to do what is needed if a disaster strikes).
13. how to deal with public during police investigation was new learning experience.
14. The need for communication between first responders and cultural heritage staff.
15. Since attending this Forum, I no longer work at the museum that I went for. I do know that I had already developed and submitted a Disaster Plan and Emergency Response before the Forum but do not know if anything has been accomplished with it/changes made since I have been gone now for a year.
16. We realized that we didn't have anything in place. Very worrisome but opened eyes and doors.
17. We simulated a water disaster at a staff meeting to demonstrate the need to act quickly in case of an emergency.
18. We have revised our emergency response plans.

The next question, "What ideas have you implemented" yielded some of the most interesting information.

1. Talked about requirements for power and security at sites.
2. Linked with FEMA representatives at my table and responded to FEMA declared emergency in region 8. Worked with Emergency Manager at my table to identify four areas we could work together to find answers to questions we identified at Alliance for Response. Co-wrote and received a grant to research, write a white paper (when we find the answers to the four questions) and co-train groups from the museum, library and cultural side with 1st responders and emergency managers. Hands-on training at host institutions will be in 2011. Planned and implemented funding to conduct risk assessment in museums with conservators and emergency manager. Researched FEMA website and online training to teach

myself the path to for historic and cultural groups to be included in the local, state, and regional Hazard Mitigation Planning phases. Researched and found the FEMA Collection Policy that states what institutions must do in advance to qualify for funds in a FEMA declared emergency. Currently working with the board and museum of a small museum to Implement this process and test the steps. Results will be written in an information paper and shared.

3. more informal behind the scenes tours of our facilities including storage for local police and fire
4. Moving to create maps/info for first responders regarding collection/locations of priority items.
5. I personally joined our local (Laramie, Wyoming) Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT) and was notified last month by a reverse--911 message that help was needed to fill sandbags for flooding that was impacting homes. Next time maybe the museum will need that kind of help!!!
6. Closer connection with county agencies. Sharing floor plans w/priority collections and egress routes listed
7. Put a secondary server in another location in place. Outlined additional updates to plans.
8.but we haven't implemented anything new. This is due to the reasons mentioned in question #6, below.
9. We have filled in the PReP form, purchased wet/dry vacs and are working toward adding to our current emergency preparedness plan.
10. More systematic approach to water damage incidents
11. At the Univ. of Colorado Boulder the "permanent collections" members (libraries, museums, archives) have organized themselves into a group. Emergency planning has been foremost of our organizing idea. We are organized into an ESF (Emergency Support Function) with the campus Emergency Management organization along with historic preservation of our structures.
12. Continuing to work on our plan. Trying to figure out if the County risk managers will allow us to do a pre-agreement with a service company.
13. trying to work with other cultural institutions on the same university campus in a collaborative manner in the emergency preparedness
14. Very little.
15. See answer to question number 4.
16. We have started a preservation plan, looking for funding for a preservation/disaster staff. More staff is being involved in disaster conferences.
17. revisiting our auditorium as a safe shelter

We wanted to find out if changes have not occurred—what what barriers did participants face? Not surprisingly budgeting, staff turnover, and lack of time seemed to

be the largest obstacles. But a number of the 18 respondents also mentioned the education of administration as to the importance of disaster planning as a need.

Two comments are especially worth noting.

“Overworked staff without the time or money to put into the effort. I learned from other conference attendees how important it is to have table-top drills and full-scale drills with first-responders, after a thorough institutional plan is developed. It was hard for me to communicate to my superiors how important it is to allocate time and resources to do that.”

“As we are a small library and archives within a larger digital science data center, our needs are not a priority yet at the institution. It is still an uphill battle to convince administration to include non-digital items in the larger disaster plan. Therefore we still maintain our own separate disaster plan for the library and archives.”

And a very positive comment that was unexpected:

“I have been working on this topic 20 some years and find the Alliance for Response one-day workshop helped connect people and resources almost immediately. Barriers that have been in place for years came down because the right people were at the table in the right atmosphere of cooperation.”

We asked respondents if they have “followed up with any of the contacts made at the Forum” and 52% indicated that yes, they have. But when asked: “Have you collaborated with your local emergency management/response agencies and/or cultural heritage institutions as a result of the information presented or contacts made at this forum?” 56%, an even higher number said yes, they have. Implied is that some people went back and followed up with emergency personnel and heritage institutions locally that were not in attendance at the Forum, which speaks to the Alliance for Response Forum having a larger impact than just those that attended initially.

And finally, we asked: “Now, 11 months later, what are the most urgent steps necessary for your organization in terms of disaster preparedness?”

1. Coordination and support.
2. Sorry, we can barely catch our breath at it is, and disaster preparedness fell to the bottom of the list (although we felt we were fairly well prepared before, so we hope that will do if anything befalls us).
3. We service small, rural and tribal libraries, museums and cultural properties. We have professionally trained people conducting risk assessments, teaching disaster preparedness planning and response. We require Alliance for Response to organize trainers, professional risk assessors in our area and to lead a regional resource network that is open to everyone.

4. just getting them to remember we're here and we're different from other places
5. Recognizing the need for a system wide plan, and inter-departmental participation.
6. Have a meeting with the local first responders regarding an annex to the Libraries and what improvements could be made and develop a rapport with both sides of the staff.
7. Write an emergency management plan. Through the Wyoming Museum Training Network, we obtained some state funding (Wyoming) to deliver services to some Wyoming museums that could include EM planning, and am applying for more funding to do the same with my own institution.
8. Training!, either table top or hands-on
9. We coordinated with local law enforcement in San Francisco and did a mock exercise during our 12th Annual Conference.
10. Getting time to do everything!
11. Making contingency plans for disasters and further educating our staff on these plans. We also implemented further emergency training of our staff.
12. We're still faced with updating our disaster plan as an organization and making it effective. The outline is there, the names/numbers of contacts, the practicing protocol w/staff is not there.
13. Sitting down and filling in the details of the areas our plan does not adequately address largely pertaining to collection recovery.
14. Creation of a multi-agency coordination system.
15. Right now, we need to wait for campus emergency management to get reorganized due to personnel changes. The outcome of this will determine if we should continue with the work and the directions we have taken thus far. At that point I hope our network can get some formal recognition as an established and important campus group.
16. We need to figure out how to share local resources and get the library up and running quickly after a disaster.
17. test the plan and run a disaster drill to make sure the plan works including all staff
18. Communication and continuity in the face of staffing cuts and turnover.
19. The current museum that I work for has an extensive disaster preparedness plan with documents online in the shared drive and flip charts in every division and office. Since they currently do not have a building, the disaster preparedness plan will be on hold and most likely modified for the new building. We have one in place for the warehouse and that is the most critical area for the museum to focus on right now. My position here is contract through the end of the month. Hopefully, I will be able to implement these steps at the next museum I work at.
20. We are planning to keep working on the program and getting more people within the institution involved.

21. To implement and practice using a disaster plan that includes the entire data center.

22. We still need to finalize our response plan

In conclusion, clearly there is much more to do, but it appears as though the Forum had a strong and positive impact in the community. Since the Forum there have been two WESTPAS workshops in Colorado and both have been well attended. The partnerships that are in their infancy will need additional coordinated nurturing and it will be up to the Advisory Committee to come up with some creative ways to continue raising the profile of disaster planning and response in the Denver metro area. Disasters like the Four Mile canyon fire in the Boulder area over Labor Day weekend offer compelling, immediate opportunities to raise awareness and may be useful in spurring institutions to action—with the right promotion. That is something the Committee will take under consideration.