



Updating Title 35 has been a KEMA (Keystone Emergency Management Association) project dating back to 2005 when KEMA hosted a joint workshop with the PEMA. The goal of the workshop was to develop a plan to re-write Title 35, The Emergency Management Services Code, and Act 227 of 2002, the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act, which among other things formalized the nine Regional Task Forces across the Commonwealth.

The following are areas of concern that need addressed in the Title 35 re-write.

Regionalization

Regionalization of Emergency Services has been a topic of discussion over the past several years with the every ending decrease in funding at all levels of government and the decline in volunteers willing to serve their community. The re-write of title 35 needs to address the basis and direction for regionalization (intergovernmental cooperation) of the emergency management activities while still allowing for municipal oversight. Regionalization can be a key to leverage the volunteer community, and increase the ability to leverage funding.

Worker's Compensation

There is a need to provide for more comprehensive Worker's Compensation coverage for the Duly Enrolled Emergency Management Volunteers. Many of our emergency management programs rely heavily on volunteers, routinely putting their own personal safety on the line to meet the public safety needs of their community. We must ensure that these individuals and their families are protected in case of an injury or death. This would include volunteer members of Specialized Regional Task Force Teams.

Duties and Responsibilities

There needs to be detailed language that clarifies the Power and Duties of the County Emergency Management Programs and the Local Emergency Management Programs. It needs to increase the expected professionalism of the emergency management program, while maintaining expectations that can still be reasonably met and carried out.

State Act 227

Look at combining State Act 227 – The Counter Terrorism Planning, Preparedness & Response Act of December 2002 with Title 35. To strengthen and enhance the coordination of the Regional Task Force concept and to eliminate references to “terrorism” and counterterrorism” and instead refer to “all hazards”.



Information Sharing

There is a need to address the collection, validation and prompt sharing of all-hazards information to public entities. This is a key element in the planning and preparedness process for Better Disaster Consequence Management.

Planning

Language needs to be added that strengthens the planning and exercise process for dependent care facilities. The expectations for planning and exercise of school plans needs to be clearly define, and to include language that plans are in place for all educational venues, (public, parochial, private).

The overarching goal for the re-write of Title 35 is to provide a more efficient and effective way for the Commonwealth and local government to prepare for and respond to all-hazard disasters. KEMA stands ready to work with all parties involved in meeting this goal.

I look forward to working with you on this important project.

Roy Shipley, President
KEMA