The importance of process over technology in emergency preparedness and response

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Presenter biography

Eddie J. Ferguson has over two decades of leadership in emergency management and crisis communications, to include strategic planning, policy creation, and process improvement. He has had corporate, military, and diplomatic positions that have helped him develop a broad vision, cross cultural leadership style, and the ability to merge emergency risk management and corporate business objectives. He has led global teams of emergency response planners, and regional security managers. He is focused on integrating emergency management and security objectives into risk management programs. Mr. Ferguson currently Serves as Corporate Security Lead, with responsibility for all aspects of corporate level emergency preparedness and emergency response communications in 23 countries, to include vulnerability assessments, continuity of operations planning, natural and manmade disaster exercise planning, policy and procedure creation, exercise scheduling, and crisis communications.

Prior to entering the civilian sector, Eddie Ferguson served for 23 years in the US Air Force where he managed intelligence operations and emergency communications across the globe. At his last assignment at the U.S. Embassy Defense Attaché Office in Rome, Italy he assisted with emergency communications during evacuations in Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt during the Arab Spring. He also coordinated international efforts to quickly move military and civilian assets into the region during high tension recovery efforts. Eddie Ferguson is passionate about crisis communications and emergency management, and looks forward to new challenges in the coming years.

Presentation abstract

There are many aspects to emergency preparedness and response, and it's easy to get lost when building a program from the ground up. There is a vast array of governing entities around the world that you may have to communicate with, various internal communications hurdles that you may encounter, different communications methods for different stakeholders, and a whole host of technologies to compete for your attention. Choosing which direction to go can be daunting. Whether you are just starting out, or you have an established program that could use some improvement, it's always good to start with the basics.

Having good processes is a critical component to any solid emergency preparedness and response plan. Being able to communicate across a broad spectrum of mediums, and to a wide range of stakeholders can significantly improve your response capabilities. Once you have good processes in place, new tools and technologies can be used to improve your program. Today, we'll discuss one program within Albemarle where we use good processes to quickly communicate with our senior leadership teams.