

## Section 6.0 – Plan Maintenance Procedures

The following requirement(s) are met throughout this section:

- §201.4(c)(5)(i): *[The Standard State Plan Maintenance Process **must** include an] established method and schedule for monitoring, evaluating, and updating the plan*

Note that **Section 6** pertains to the plan as whole and it defines the process by which SOEM, the DPC and its subsidiary agencies will monitor and maintain the plan. **Section 7** details how a specific project and/or activities outlined in the plan will be monitored from start to finish as local jurisdictions or state agencies undertake mitigation projects.

Past experience has demonstrated that the development and approval of a State Hazard Mitigation Plan is not an end goal or final destination, but it is actually the beginning of a process which must become an integral part of the daily operations within all State agencies. While the hazard mitigation efforts across New York State clearly show commitment from many State agencies and Jurisdictions, it is essential to make the evaluation, monitoring, and update process a priority and have these functions become routine administrative functions to fully achieve the State's mitigation objectives. In order to accomplish this, managerial commitment is a corner stone of a successful multi-faceted approach which includes identification of responsible parties, criteria used to evaluate the plan, and tools used in the evaluation and update process.

The Plan which was originally approved in 2005 proposed several procedures to monitor, evaluate, and update the plan within the prescribed timeframes set forth in regulation. However, an analysis of the past plan maintenance methodology revealed that the process was not specific enough and did not adequately incorporate accountability. The 2008 Plan made further changes to the plan maintenance procedures and focused on several essential elements:

- Establishment of a system that will make the update and monitoring process a seamless and active system.
- Administrative commitment and systems which assure appropriate plan maintenance.
- Renewed commitment at the agency and departmental level of all stake holders.
- Clearly defined responsibilities of key positions or parties.
- Procedures and reports to assure plan maintenance and monitoring of mitigation measures and projects across the State (also see **Section 7**).
- Creation of a calendar of events which will guide key stake holders, such as SOEM and the DPC, in monitoring the plan. The NYS Hazard Mitigation Plan will be a standing agenda item for the DPC and it will appear on the agenda of the SOEM senior Staff meeting at least twice per year.

The SOEM believes that the process developed in the 2008 Plan has been working effectively and therefore the SOEM intends to leave the same process in place for the 2011 Plan. The following sub-sections of this section describe the method and schedule for monitoring, evaluating, and updating the plan including how and what will be monitored and the criteria used to evaluate effectiveness.

## **6.1 – Plan Monitoring and Evaluation System**

In order to assure a more clearly-defined system of plan maintenance, a calendar of events, responsible parties and timelines are spelled out in **Table 6-1**. While several agencies and stakeholders across New York State will remain keenly interested in the outcomes of this Hazard Mitigation Plan, the primary responsibility for the plan will continue to rest with SOEM and with the DPC. Within both SOEM and the DPC there are existing programs, planning processes and initiatives that provide a logical forum for the activities and successful administration of the Plan. SOEM, in collaboration with key State agencies, has developed Plan monitoring and maintenance procedures designed to increase accountability, facilitate regular review and revisions to the Plan, and to ensure the Plan remains an active and useful tool in the State's mitigation efforts. Additionally, SOEM will continue to enhance the relationships developed with other agencies and organizations during this and future Plan development and updating activities.

Two essential outcomes are envisioned based upon the continued relationships with the other agencies and involved organizations: a clear indication of ways to combine agency resources to better enable the State to assist Local communities with mitigation activities; and an agreement between SOEM and these agencies and organizations concerning how best to track the implementation of mitigation measures. These measures will not be limited to funding and implementation of projects: documentation will also be requested for new or enhanced policies, programs, or regulations that support mitigation. For all mitigation actions, the Mitigation Chief, who oversees all mitigation planning and project activities within SOEM, will monitor:

- The system for reviewing and documenting progress in accomplishing the goals, objectives, and mitigation actions described in the plan.
- State agency participation as envisioned and specified in the plan.
- Activities that have been scheduled according to the timelines established in the plan and accomplishments related to these activities.
- Updating data, in a timely fashion, and documenting outcomes of the mitigation strategies and action items that have been planned.

**Table 6-1** provides a framework which sets timeframes for specific actions to take place in order to assure that the plan is monitored, evaluated, and updated.

## **6.2 – Plan Updating System**

SOEM is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Plan. Some databases which have been created during the development of the Plan will be regularly updated as

part of the Mitigation Section's routine activities. Databases that have been developed include the tracking of disaster related information, documenting the types and costs related to funded mitigation activities (by disaster and funding program), mitigation success stories, local plan databases, project reporting and project closeout, and completion timelines.

SOEM will conduct an informal yearly review of the Plan and the progress made toward achieving the listed planning goals, objectives, and action items. All pertinent information obtained during the year will be reviewed and documented by Mitigation Staff. The appropriate Plan sections will be revised as updated information becomes available. Examples of information that will be included in the plan updates are the databases referenced previously as well as information provided in local mitigation plans as they are approved.

Every second year, following FEMA approval/re-approval of the State Mitigation Plan, SOEM will conduct a formal review of the Plan. Consultations with pertinent State agencies or organizations will be conducted to evaluate implementation progress and obtain information required to update the Plan and keep it current. For example, agencies will be asked to report on their progress in accomplishing assigned projects with an emphasis on measurable outcomes; informing on capital projects that have mitigation benefits whether or not mitigation was the primary reason for implementation; new or enhanced policies, programs, and regulations. In particular, quantifiable information gathered from State agencies may include, but not be limited to, funding amounts, community technical assistance totals, local plan development totals, advancements in natural hazard analysis, vulnerability assessments and regulations or policies that support mitigation programmatic development and descriptions of mitigation property protection and infrastructure projects.

Although the planning process and coordination among the various State agencies will be on-going, the formal review process will include an official reactivation of the Planning Committee annually following the date of FEMA plan approval/re-approval. All of the information gathered at the various planning meetings will be combined into the revised Plan and submitted to FEMA for review and approval.

**Table 6-1: Plan Maintenance**

| TARGET DATE                     | RESPONSIBLE PARTY  | OUTCOME  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| January of each year            | Chief of Mitigation Planning   | Annually send a formal letter with a plan review checklist and status report as appropriate to each stakeholder. Checklists and status reports shall be collected and a Status Report generated for all agencies.<br><b>Triennial Update:</b> At the second year from approval, indicate the significance and publish the meeting schedule for the 3 year plan update meetings. Planning Committee shall be formed and a Working Group organized. A planning calendar shall be set and several meetings shall be held in order to accomplish the plan update and to meet planning requirements |
| March/April of each year        | Chief of Mitigation Planning, SOEM Deputy Directors and Director, Regional Directors | At a regularly scheduled meeting of Senior Staff, the NYS Hazard Mitigation Plan will be on the agenda, and the Status Report will be reviewed and recommendations will be gathered and documented. Items of interest or concern shall be followed up on.  |
| May / June of each year         | Chief of Mitigation Planning, SOEM Director  | Schedule a meeting of the DPC and ensure that Hazard Mitigation Planning and the State Hazard Mitigation Plan are standing items on the agenda. Review the Status Report and list recommendations.<br><b>Triennial Update:</b> Provide the DPC member agencies with opportunity for input to the plan update process, distribute update questionnaires. Set timelines for responses. Assure plan update resources are in place and accountability systems are in place.  |
| August – September Of each year | Chief of Mitigation Planning, SOEM Deputy Directors and Director, Regional Director  | At a regularly scheduled meeting of the Senior Staff, The NYS Hazard Mitigation Plan will be on the agenda, and the status report reviewed and recommendations will be gathered and documented. Items of interest or concern shall be reviewed further.  |
| October-December Of each year   | Chief of Mitigation Planning, Director of SOEM                                       | Summarize the hazard events of the year, and also the comments / feedback of the Status reports. Distribute materials to DPC member agencies and other stakeholders across the state.<br><b>Triennial Update:</b> Take actions to get public/ stakeholder comment on the draft plan. Target October 1 <sup>st</sup> for the submission of a first Draft to FEMA. December 1 <sup>st</sup> for final draft submission.  |

### 6.2.1 -- Plan Evaluation Criterion

SOEM will hold meetings or distribute status report questionnaires annually during the approval period of the plan. The target audience will be stake holders across the state, DPC member agencies, selected Local governmental groups and other public or private groups that are active in the hazard mitigation field. As meetings are held or questionnaires are developed, the main focus of effort will be directed toward the following evaluative items:

- The nature and magnitude of the State's hazards.
- An update of the baseline data, incorporation of additional data from Local plans.
- Progress toward mitigation goals and action items and elimination of obstacles preventing progress, and an evaluation as to whether the goals and objectives still address current and expected conditions; and if not, what goals and objectives should be deleted or added.
- Whether current resources are appropriate for implementation of the Plan.
- Agency participation in statewide mitigation efforts.
- Have mitigation actions been integrated into the day to day operations of government so that the impact of hazards are reduced or eliminated for new development and for existing structures.
- Challenges to implementing the Plan.

Information gathered from meetings and status report questionnaires shall be used to modify or update the State Plan as well as to initiate administrative actions which would provide assistance to agencies or jurisdictions that are experiencing difficulties. A Status Report will serve to document the findings of this evaluative process. Some of the administrative actions could include: Educational programs for the public or governmental representatives; investigation into funding sources which may remedy problems or allow initiation of mitigation projects; research into possible short term or long term solutions; modification of existing legislation, policies, or plans; technical assistance and advocacy for legislative initiatives.