

**Tennessee Emergency Management Agency
and Related Commission and Compacts**

June 1999

Arthur A. Hayes, Jr., CPA
Director

Deborah V. Loveless, CPA
Assistant Director

Dena W. Winningham
Audit Manager

Jeff Solomon
In-Charge Auditor

Lisa A. Breen
Staff Auditor

Jane Russ
Editor

June 9, 1999

The Honorable John S. Wilder
Speaker of the Senate
The Honorable Jimmy Naifeh
Speaker of the House of Representatives
The Honorable Kenneth N. (Pete) Springer, Chair
Senate Committee on Government Operations
The Honorable Mike Kernell, Chair
House Committee on Government Operations
and
Members of the General Assembly
State Capitol
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Transmitted herewith is the performance audit of the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency and the related commission and compacts. This audit was conducted pursuant to the requirements of Section 4-29-111, *Tennessee Code Annotated*, the Tennessee Governmental Entity Review Law.

This report is intended to aid the Joint Government Operations Committee in its review to determine whether the agency and the related commission and compacts should be continued, restructured, or terminated.

Sincerely,

John G. Morgan
Comptroller of the Treasury

JGM/dw/rm
98/034

State of Tennessee

Audit Highlights

Comptroller of the Treasury

Division of State Audit

Performance Audit
**Tennessee Emergency Management Agency
and Related Commission and Compacts**
June 1999

AUDIT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the audit were to review the legislative mandates of the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency and the related commission and compacts and the extent to which they have carried out those mandates efficiently and effectively, and to make recommendations that might result in more efficient and effective operation of the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) and the related commission and compacts.

FINDINGS

Regional Office Monitoring of Local Contracts Should Be Improved

Regional office monitoring of counties' compliance with emergency management contracts is inconsistent and inadequate. Counties' responsibilities include developing an emergency operations plan, coordinating local response to emergencies, and completing a self-assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses. The degree to which the regional offices check contract compliance varies (page 10).

Improvements Needed in the Emergency Service Coordinator Program

Problems with the Emergency Service Coordinator program could hinder the program's effectiveness. The lack of available, appropriately equipped transportation and an up-to-date roster of coordinators could significantly slow response time (page 13).

OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

The audit also discusses the following issues: the Disaster Relief Commission, the Southern Regional Emergency Management Assistance Compact, the Civil Defense and Disaster Compact, the Interstate Earthquake Compact, the Title III Program, local emergency management program funding, training of local emergency management staff, and annual reports (page 4).

"Audit Highlights" is a summary of the audit report. To obtain the complete audit report which contains all findings, recommendations, and management comments, please contact

Comptroller of the Treasury, Division of State Audit
1500 James K. Polk Building, Nashville, TN 37243-0264
(615) 741-3697

**Performance Audit
Tennessee Emergency Management Agency
and
Related Commission and Compacts**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose and Authority of the Audit	1
Objectives of the Audit	1
Scope and Methodology of the Audit	1
Organization and Responsibilities	2
OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS	4
Disaster Relief Commission	4
Southern Regional Emergency Management Assistance Compact	5
Civil Defense and Disaster Compact	5
Interstate Earthquake Compact	6
Title III Program	6
Local Emergency Management Program Funding	7
Training	9
Annual Reports	10
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	10
1. Regional office monitoring of local contracts should be improved	10
2. Improvements are needed in the Emergency Service Coordinator program	13
RECOMMENDATIONS	15
Administrative	15

**Performance Audit
Tennessee Emergency Management Agency
and
Related Commission and Compacts**

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY OF THE AUDIT

This performance audit of the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) and the related commission and compacts was conducted pursuant to the Tennessee Governmental Entity Review Law, *Tennessee Code Annotated*, Title 4, Chapter 29. Under Section 4-29-221, TEMA, the Disaster Relief Commission, the Civil Defense and Disaster Compact, the Southern Regional Emergency Management Assistance Compact, and the Interstate Earthquake Compact are scheduled to terminate June 30, 2000. The Comptroller of the Treasury is authorized under Section 4-29-111 to conduct a performance audit and to report to the Joint Government Operations Committee of the General Assembly. The performance audit is intended to aid the committee in determining whether TEMA and the related commission and compacts should be continued, restructured, or terminated.

OBJECTIVES OF THE AUDIT

The objectives of the audit were

1. to determine the authority and responsibility the General Assembly mandated to TEMA and the related commission and compacts,
2. to determine the extent to which legislative mandates have been met,
3. to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of TEMA's activities and programs, and
4. to recommend possible alternatives for legislative or administrative action that may result in more efficient and effective operations.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE AUDIT

Activities and procedures of TEMA and the related commission and compacts were reviewed for the period January 1994 to October 1998. This audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and included

1. review of applicable legislation, rules and regulations, and agency policies and procedures;
2. examination of the agency's files, reports, and other performance data;
3. review of performance audit and financial and compliance audit reports, and audit reports from other states and the federal government; and
4. interviews with agency staff, personnel in other agencies that work closely with the agency, staff from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), local government officials, and local emergency management agency officials.

ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 58-2-103, *Tennessee Code Annotated*, authorizes and directs the Governor to create the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) and include it in the Military Department. TEMA's mission is to protect and preserve life and property through the development and establishment of comprehensive emergency management policies and programs for all state and local levels. TEMA is also to develop and maintain an omnibus capability to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from any natural or technological emergency. As illustrated in the organizational chart (see page 3), TEMA is organized into four main divisions: Disaster Assistance, Training, Plans and Programs, and Operations.

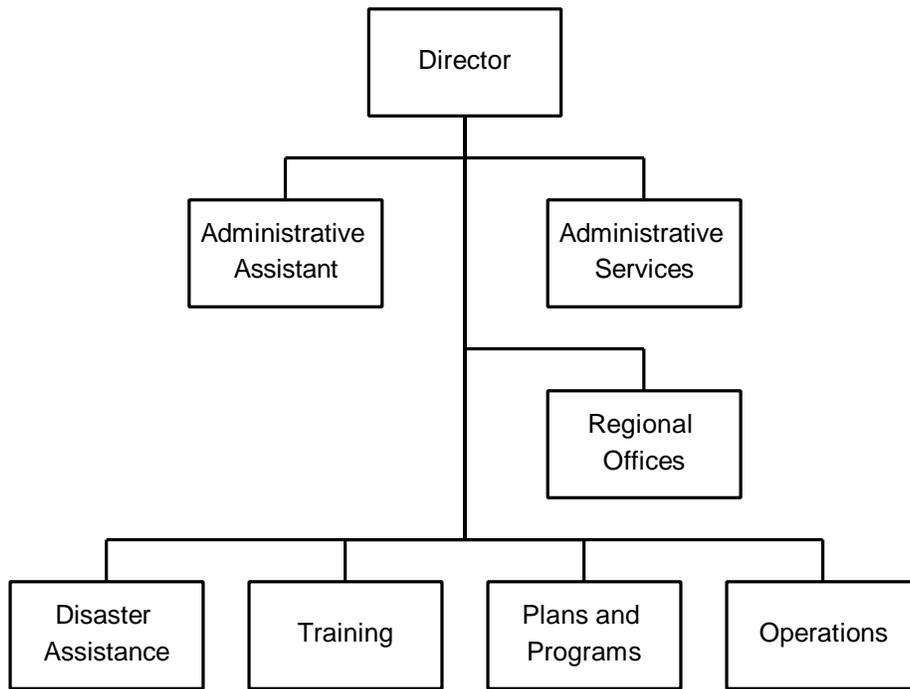
Disaster Assistance

This division administers the federal public assistance and hazard mitigation programs. The public assistance program directs federal funds to damaged areas after a disaster has been declared by the President. The hazard mitigation program identifies areas at risk of damage from disasters, such as floods, and then provides funding to reduce those risks.

Training

The Division of Training is responsible for emergency management and hazardous materials training and emergency drill exercises. This division arranges and coordinates the state's emergency management and hazardous materials training program across the state. Training is delivered through classroom instruction and independent study to local emergency management agency staff, local government officials, fire and police department personnel, and members of rescue squads. This training is also available for emergency service coordinators in state agencies. TEMA's training goal is to provide essential tools that can be used to aid in saving lives and property.

Tennessee Emergency Management Agency



Plans and Programs

The Division of Plans and Programs is involved in the planning aspects of TEMA's various programmatic areas:

- Disaster Assistance Program
- State and Local Assistance grants
- Earthquake preparedness
- Hazardous materials
- Urban search and rescue

The Plans and Programs Division also coordinates with FEMA to negotiate cooperative agreements, to report the state's progress in achieving goals, and to draw down federal grants.

Operations

The Division of Operations has responsibility for TEMA operations, communications, and the Title III program. The operations section primarily consists of the Nashville operations center which is staffed 24 hours a day. Situations that pose a threat to Tennessee citizens or property are brought to the operations center's attention via telephone, radio, fax machine, or a direct wire communication system between TEMA and the National Weather Service. The

communications section maintains all of TEMA's communication equipment. The Title III section is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, which is part of the federal Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986.

Related Commission and Compacts

The responsibilities and activities of the related commission and compacts are discussed in the Observations and Comments section below.

OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

The issues discussed below did not warrant findings but are included in this report because of their effect or potential effect on the operations of the agency and on the citizens of Tennessee.

DISASTER RELIEF COMMISSION

The Disaster Relief Commission was created by Section 58-2-504, *Tennessee Code Annotated*. It is responsible for the implementation, supervision, and administration of all disaster relief funds and other related activities, including but not limited to reviewing applications for disaster relief funds, declaring certain regions within the state disaster areas, granting disaster relief funds not to exceed \$1,000,000 per local disaster, and appointing a state coordinating officer to operate in the affected area. The commission's membership consists of the following:

1. The state emergency management director
2. One representative from the Office of the Governor
3. The Speakers of the House of Representatives and the Senate
4. Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House—one member from the majority party and one member from the minority party
5. Two members of the Senate appointed by the Lieutenant Governor—one member from the majority party and one member from the minority party
6. Three citizen members—one member from each grand division of the state, appointed by the Governor

Any political subdivision (county or municipality) can request a declaration by the commission if there is a local disaster such as a hurricane or tornado. The request must be based on a finding that the disaster is of sufficient severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the local governing body, that federal funds and emergency aid are not available, and that state emergency funding is necessary. Before a local government can receive disaster relief funds, the funds must be available in the contingency reserve account for civil defense-disaster relief. Funds will be made available to the commission by a majority vote of a committee composed of the State Treasurer, the Comptroller of the Treasury, and the Commissioner of Finance and Administration.

The commission was never formed. According to a TEMA official, there has never been an instance when a political subdivision could not obtain either federal or emergency assistance to aid in a localized disaster.

SOUTHERN REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE COMPACT

The authority for the Southern Regional Emergency Management Assistance Compact is established by *Tennessee Code Annotated*, Section 58-2-401 et seq. The purpose of this compact is to “provide for mutual assistance between the states entering into this compact in managing any emergency or disaster that is duly declared by the governor of the affected state(s), whether arising from natural disaster, technological hazard, man-made disaster, civil emergency aspects of resources shortages, community disorders, insurgency, or enemy attack.”

The compact has been activated twice. In 1994, the Tennessee Army National Guard provided Hopkinsville, Kentucky, with road graders and debris removal personnel after an ice storm overextended the Kentucky Army National Guard. In 1995, a Command and Control Administrative Team consisting of five TEMA Operations and Disaster Response personnel was sent to Gainesville, Florida, to serve as relief for the key decision-making personnel at the Florida State Emergency Operations Center after Hurricane Opal. The team also served as brokers to obtain air transport support from the Alabama and Mississippi Army National Guards.

CIVIL DEFENSE AND DISASTER COMPACT

The authority for the Civil Defense and Disaster Compact is established by *Tennessee Code Annotated*, Section 58-2-401 et seq. The purpose of this compact is to provide mutual aid among the states in meeting any emergency or disaster from enemy attack—sabotage, subversive acts, and direct attacks by bombs; shellfire; atomic, radiological, chemical, and bacteriological means; and other weapons. The Governor is authorized to execute this compact on behalf of the state in the event of an emergency. This compact has never been activated.

INTERSTATE EARTHQUAKE COMPACT

The authority for the Interstate Earthquake Compact is established by *Tennessee Code Annotated*, Section 58-2-701. The purpose of this compact is to provide mutual aid among the states in meeting any emergency or disaster caused by earthquakes or other seismic disturbances. The Governor is authorized to execute this compact on behalf of the state but has never exercised this authority.

TITLE III PROGRAM

The federal Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) was passed in 1986. Among its provisions, Title III, the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), establishes requirements for industry and for federal, state, and local governments regarding emergency planning and reporting of hazardous and toxic chemicals. The community right-to-know provisions in EPCRA help increase the public's awareness about the presence of hazardous chemicals in their communities and releases of these chemicals into the environment. The act requires facilities that manufacture, use, or store hazardous chemicals on site in excess of specified quantities to report information on those chemicals and their facilities. The reporting requirements under the act require a facility to submit an emergency and hazardous chemical inventory form to various entities such as local fire departments, local emergency planning councils, and TEMA.

EPCRA requires the Governor of each state to appoint a state emergency response council. In compliance with EPCRA, the Governor created the Tennessee Emergency Response Council by executive order in April 1987. TEMA, with the advice and consent of the council, was designated to administer the Title III program. The state council designated each county as a planning district and appointed a Local Emergency Planning Council in each county. The local councils are required to complete a number of tasks: establish rules, give public notice of their activities, establish procedures for handling public requests for information, and develop an emergency response plan. The state council, however, does not direct and control the local councils and some local councils are inactive. Also, TEMA does not identify facilities that are not reporting.

Identification of Title III Facilities

TEMA has not developed a system to identify those facilities that fall under Title III regulations. Without a way to identify facilities that are supposed to be reporting, TEMA has no assurances that it, the local councils, and local fire departments have adequate information about where hazardous and toxic chemicals are stored in communities. Currently, TEMA depends on companies to self-report through the mail and maintains hardcopy files. The public has access to this information by appointment, or TEMA will mail information upon request.

TEMA could cross reference Standard Industrial Codes (SIC) self-reported by businesses to the SIC manual to identify companies that have similar processes. The Department of Environment and Conservation has information on hazardous waste constituents (individual chemicals in hazardous waste) generated by businesses. TEMA could review this information to determine if these constituents are the same chemicals that must be reported under Title III.

Pursuing noncompliant facilities could be a way to improve local emergency management programs. For example, in settlements of environmental enforcement cases, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires the alleged violator to maintain compliance with federal laws and regulations and to pay a civil penalty. In some cases, the final settlement penalty will be lower for a violator who agrees to perform a supplemental environmental project (SEP) such as providing the local emergency management agency equipment or computers. If EPA approves the SEP, the facility's civil penalty will be reduced and emergency management capabilities would improve.

Inactive Local Emergency Planning Councils

Some local emergency planning councils do not appear active. Interviews with committee chairpersons and regional directors reveal that the membership of many councils is not consistent with statutory requirements and that local officials are not providing support. One exception appears to be the Knoxville/Knox County committee that has a strong, active membership and meets frequently. The lack of industry in some counties was one reason given for some inactive committees. TEMA may want to consider changing the local councils' jurisdictional areas from single counties to larger, multicounty jurisdictions, especially in rural areas.

Lack of TERC Direction and Control

Although Title III requires the Tennessee Emergency Response Council (TERC) to supervise and coordinate the activities of the local committees, the council has not met in the past three years. The state council consists of the Director of TEMA, the Commissioner of Health, and the Commissioner of Labor. TEMA management stated that there are no requirements for meetings and that no funds were allocated to support the state council. Title III also requires the state council to review plans submitted by the local committees. The council has not reviewed plans, but the Director of TEMA, who is also the chair of the council, has approved plans from eight counties in the last three years. Five to six plans are approved each year; new plans are required every 10 years.

LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FUNDING

TEMA uses the State-Local Assistance grant (referred to as the SLA-50) from FEMA to fund local emergency management programs. Approximately two-thirds of this grant is passed through TEMA to the local programs. TEMA distributed \$876,702 in grant funds in federal

fiscal year 1997 and \$906,720 in federal fiscal year 1998. Not all counties receive funding: 49 counties received funding in fiscal year 1998, ranging from \$2,600 for Lauderdale County to \$84,000 for Shelby County.

**Counties Receiving Federal Grants
Fiscal Year 1998**



West Tennessee Region	Grant Amount
Carroll	\$ 15,500
Henderson	10,000
Crockett	5,260
Dyer	7,500
Fayette	10,000
Gibson	14,000
Haywood	18,250
Henderson	6,800
Henry	5,000
Lauderdale	2,600
Madison	23,810
McNairy	13,760
Obion	15,970
Shelby	84,000
Tipton	14,800
Weakley	<u>10,000</u>
Total for each region	\$257,250

Middle Tennessee Region	Grant Amount
Bedford	\$ 14,910
Cheatham	15,940
Coffee	14,060
Davidson	65,075
Dickson	10,050
Franklin	15,150
Lawrence	16,910
Lincoln	18,350
Marshall	12,210
Montgomery	28,710
Putnam	27,140
Rutherford	17,220
Warren	8,880
Williamson	23,760
Wilson	<u>6,025</u>
Total for each region	\$294,390

East Tennessee Region	Grant Amount
Anderson	\$ 8,000
Blount	14,000
Bradley	23,540
Carter	20,450
Cocke	9,000
Cumberland	18,850
Greene	16,410
Hamblen	6,000
Hamilton	68,110
Jefferson	15,990
Johnson	5,320
Knox	55,110
Loudon	14,760
McMinn	13,380
Scott	6,780
Sullivan	26,050
Unicoi	7,030
Washington	<u>26,300</u>
Total for each region	\$355,080

TEMA established minimum requirements a county had to meet before it could receive a grant—a full-time emergency management director, matching funds for the grant, and an emergency operating plan. Those counties that chose not to meet the criteria are not now given the opportunity to receive a grant since federal funding has not increased and is not expected to. TEMA generally awards the same counties the same amount of funding year after year as long as they comply with the scope of services in their contracts. On occasion, TEMA has suspended funding of programs that did not comply with their contracts.

A county's degree of preparedness and its ability to manage emergency situations is affected by the amount of funding it receives. Some TEMA officials agree that counties receiving grants are generally better prepared to deal with emergency situations. Generally, when a disaster occurs in one of the unfunded counties, TEMA has to become more directly involved in managing the emergency.

Funding is not the only variable that affects preparedness. There are other factors to consider such as the qualifications of the local emergency management director, the involvement of local elected officials, the number of staff, and training.

TRAINING

TEMA plans and coordinates emergency management training for local emergency management agency staff across Tennessee. These classes taught by private contractors are provided at no charge. TEMA offers training under the following categories:

- Independent study program through the Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Professional Training
- Radiological Issues
- Hazardous Materials

The auditors interviewed the three regional TEMA directors and 12 local emergency management agency officials that receive State-Local Assistance grants. Although most of those interviewed rated TEMA's training as adequate, some believed that TEMA needed to offer more advanced training and to provide more specific (county/state) training. TEMA uses some FEMA standardized courses that tend to be general in nature and may not meet county-specific needs.

TEMA needs to encourage local emergency management to take advantage of advanced classes such as the higher education initiative at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. The university is offering a Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Services Management with a concentration in Emergency Systems Management. Other training available to local officials includes courses offered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and on-site courses at

FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI). EMI courses are offered at minimal or no cost to the participants.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Forty-nine counties receive emergency management grant funds from TEMA. The contract agreements between TEMA and the counties require that the grantee prepare and submit, within nine months after the close of the reporting period, an annual report of its activities funded under the grant. The annual report is supposed to be submitted to TEMA, the Comptroller of the Treasury, and the Commissioner of Finance and Administration. According to officials from these agencies, counties do not file the annual reports. TEMA needs to ensure grantees fulfill contract terms.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Regional Office Monitoring of Local Contracts Should Be Improved

Finding

The regional office monitoring of counties' compliance with emergency management contracts is inconsistent and inadequate. For fiscal year 1998, TEMA provided \$906,720 to 49 Tennessee counties. (For more information on how TEMA awards grants and which counties received them, see page 7.) To receive a grant, local governments must provide a 50 percent match and agree to several stipulations outlined in the contract. The scope of services was the same for all 49 counties despite the significant differences in how much funding each county received. Grantee responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Provide TEMA regional offices a list of proposed objectives for the year
- Provide a Basic Emergency Operations Plan (BEOP)
- Develop standard operating procedures to support the BEOP
- Ensure staff are enrolled in the FEMA independent study courses
- Ensure the emergency management director has completed or enrolled in professional development courses offered by TEMA
- Coordinate local response for local emergencies

- Establish a local government interagency hazard mitigation committee to plan the development and implementation of a strategic mitigation plan
- Complete a self-assessment of local capabilities to identify strengths and weaknesses
- Develop a system to manage donated goods
- Increase the capability to deliver response and recovery services to disaster victims more rapidly and efficiently

TEMA is responsible for providing technical assistance as necessary and for monitoring and evaluating program goals, objectives, and results.

Regional Oversight

The three regional offices are responsible for ensuring local governments comply with contractual agreements. However, each regional office oversees the local programs differently.

East. East Tennessee regional office staff use a review checklist to oversee how the local emergency management agencies are performing. The checklist does not adequately cover all items outlined in the contract such as (1) self-assessments of local capabilities and (2) increased capability to deliver response and recovery services to disaster victims. Moreover, the local emergency management directors, not TEMA, complete the review checklists. Rather, the local emergency management directors are allowed to self-report information related to their performance.

Middle. This region uses no formal monitoring tools or written documents to assess local emergency management agencies' compliance with the contracts. Instead, TEMA staff rely on conversations with local directors and personal observation.

West. The West Tennessee region has the most formalized, systematic method for overseeing local programs. Because the central office provided no guidance on how to oversee the local programs, West Tennessee staff developed a checklist that addresses most of the responsibilities mentioned in the contract. Area coordinators use the checklists and conduct on-site monitoring visits every quarter. Information on how each county is performing its contractual responsibilities is maintained in the regional office. The regional director tracks each county and takes corrective action if a county falls more than two quarters behind in meeting its responsibilities.

The regional offices' failure to adequately monitor local program operations has at least two consequences. First, some of the counties' basic emergency operations plans and standard operating procedures (required by their contracts) may be inadequate. Several staff interviewed revealed that some counties simply adopt generic, model plans without making them county specific. Second, not ensuring counties complete self-assessments (as required by the contract) limits management's ability to evaluate the counties' strengths and weaknesses.

Recommendation

TEMA's regional offices should develop a comprehensive checklist addressing contract responsibilities and use the checklist in monitoring all grants to help ensure that counties are in compliance.

Management's Comment

We partially concur. The central office staff works through the regional offices to deliver programs to the local government. The Region Director and his staff are the ones who determine if a local government is in compliance with the contract that has been jointly developed and approved between the central office staff and the regions. Each region has different threats and emphasis. In West Tennessee the primary threat is earthquakes, in Middle Tennessee it is transportation and weather, and in East Tennessee it is technological hazards. Therefore, it is difficult to have one set of standards to fit all local governments.

The regional offices review the local requests for funding and make recommendations on who is funded and who is not. The central staff function is to support the regions by getting as much funding as possible and to set up the administrative program to get the funds to the regions. The central office staff tells the regions how much money is available and what conditions must be met to receive funds, but the regions make the recommendation on who gets funds and how much of the available funds each local should receive.

The central office staff receives a report from the regions on a six-month basis on the accomplishment of the local governments within their region for that period. It is the function of the regional staffs to determine if the locals are meeting their objectives and to judge the results.

The Basic Emergency Operations Plan of the county is approved at the central staff level. The central office staff has developed a guide or outline that each county plan must follow. If a county receives SLA funding then the county is responsible for developing their plan. Once the plan is developed in draft it is forwarded through the region to the planning staff for review and approval. For non-SLA or unfunded counties, the planning staff is responsible for working through the region with the local government to develop a plan for that county. The counties are responsible for reviewing and updating their plans annually. Regions are responsible for ensuring that the annual review is accomplished. The planning staff works through the local plans on a four-year cycle.

2. Improvements are needed in the Emergency Service Coordinator program

Finding

Problems with the Emergency Service Coordinator (ESC) program could hinder the program's effectiveness. The lack of available, appropriately equipped transportation and an up-to-date roster of ESCs could significantly slow response time.

Commissioners of state departments or state agency heads are responsible for appointing the ESCs as their representatives in the event of an emergency. The ESCs have the authority to coordinate and direct all emergency response functions and services as appropriate and as specified in the department's or agency's portion of the Tennessee Emergency Management Plan. Under executive orders issued in 1987 and 1998, each state executive department, agency, or bureau is required to provide its primary ESC with transportation, emergency communications, pagers, and any other emergency equipment necessary to perform his or her duties. The ESCs are on call to the state emergency operations center 24 hours a day and are expected to perform the following duties:

- Aid in the coordination of state resources/assets for emergency situations
- Develop and maintain necessary plans
- Maintain the standard operating procedures for their departments or agencies
- Represent their departments or agencies at regularly scheduled meetings

When an emergency situation occurs, either the ESCs are activated and must report to the state emergency operations center or they are expected to provide their expert advice and assistance to TEMA via telephone.

The auditors interviewed seven of the state's 41 primary ESCs and four of the 38 alternates and several TEMA officials to determine whether the requirements in the executive order regarding ESCs are being met. For the most part, the ESCs have the authority to obligate their agencies' resources, are able to place priority on their emergency duties, and are provided with emergency equipment.

Transportation

Apparently, adequate transportation is sometimes a problem. Some ESCs do not have an assigned vehicle and have to request one from their agencies' or the state's motor pool when needed to respond to an emergency. If the motor pool is closed or a car is not available, ESCs may not be able to respond in a timely manner. Generally, pool vehicles do not have the necessary emergency equipment installed. In addition, some ESCs who use their personal vehicle have reported not being reimbursed for mileage. If the ESCs are not provided with

adequate transportation, their response time in aiding citizens and state agency personnel during emergencies could be slowed.

Roster

TEMA's roster of ESCs was not up-to-date. In several instances, the ESCs listed on the roster had retired, were on extended sick leave, or were no longer the department's designated ESC. In these cases, the ESC position was vacant, filled by another person, or temporarily filled by the alternate. Three ESCs indicated that departments have to notify TEMA several times before changes to the roster are made. Not maintaining a current ESC roster increases the time it takes to contact the appropriate people during emergencies and could result in loss of life and property.

Recommendation

TEMA should work with state agencies to ensure their Emergency Service Coordinators are provided adequate transportation. TEMA should review the ESC roster periodically to ensure its accuracy.

Management's Comment

We do concur with the audit finding concerning Emergency Service Coordinators (ESCs). The Governor has authorized each state agency to appoint for its department an Emergency Service Coordinator. ESCs are to respond to the State Emergency Operations Center when any emergency occurs that requires the Operations Center to be activated. These ESCs are on call seven days a week, 24 hours a day. All ESCs must have a pager and a radio-equipped vehicle assigned to them so they will be able to respond at any time. This vehicle must have a (B) assignment so the ESC can take the vehicle home at night. The ESCs' department must assume the cost of the pager, car, and radio. This is in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 17.

As of April 30, 1999, only a few departments in state government have fully complied with this requirement.

We partially concur with the finding concerning the roster because even though it is TEMA's responsibility to ensure the rosters are kept up-to-date, it is the ESC's responsibility to notify TEMA of changes. There are some ESCs who never show up for the monthly ESC meetings held at the State Emergency Operations Center. Keeping the roster up-to-date should be a team effort between TEMA and other state departments.

We are currently making monthly calls to ensure the rosters are kept up-to-date. We are also asking the ESCs to report changes during the monthly meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE

The Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) and the related commission and compacts should address the following areas to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations.

1. TEMA's regional offices should develop a comprehensive checklist addressing contract responsibilities and use the checklist in monitoring all grants to help ensure counties are in compliance.
2. TEMA should work with state agencies to ensure their Emergency Service Coordinators are provided with adequate transportation. TEMA should review the ESC roster periodically to ensure its accuracy.