Evacuations may be required for many reasons in response to a variety of hazards, from floods, fires or hurricanes to terrorist activity. A community may have substantial notice for an evacuation, as in the case of a hurricane or some flooding events, or may have little to no notice. In any event, an evacuation is traumatic for the individual involved, presents a challenge for emergency managers, law enforcement and other first responders to implement and enforce, and represents a major strain on a host of transportation resources. All modes of transportation can play a significant role in supporting (or impeding) an evacuation event, advance planning, development of partnerships, coordination, and testing of potential strategies for different types and scales of events can make a huge difference in the effectiveness of an actual evacuation which can save lives.

Most transportation operators personnel who deal with traffic and emergency incidents on a regular basis are already familiar with the National Incident Management System and other emergency management protocols. However, many transportation staff and managers who can play an important role in planning for evacuation, such as planners and movers, may lack familiarity with emergency operations and ways of doing things.

Principal Investigator: Deborah Matheny The Louis Berger Group

The guide establishes specific steps tailored to transportation agencies, to assist them in defining their potential and critical roles in any evacuation event. It aids them in communicating those resources, roles and constraints to local emergency managers, in advance of need. Recommended steps and tools guide transportation leaders through the process of establishing critical relationships and developing evacuation plans. The “Workshop in a Box”, in Additional Resources, will assist anyone in convening a series of workshops around the topic of evacuation and can be easily adapted to other topics.