



# 2025 Illinois Homeland Security Advisory Council Annual Report

Presented to the Office of the Governor March 1, 2026



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March 1, 2026

The Honorable JB Pritzker  
Governor  
State of Illinois

Dear Governor Pritzker,

It is my honor as Homeland Security Advisor to present the Illinois Homeland Security Advisory Council (IL-HSAC) Annual Report for 2025. This annual report serves as both a reflection and a guidepost for the homeland security mission of our state. With the continued support of the Governor's office, state partner agencies, and local agencies, IEMA-OHS is working to continually strengthen preparedness and resilience for everyone in Illinois.

Illinois is home to 12.8 million residents who live and work in mid-sized cities, suburbs, small towns, and rural communities. Illinois is comprised of 102 counties including Cook County, the second largest in the country, and Chicago, the third largest city in the country.

The IL-HSAC itself is comprised of over 150 volunteers representing more than 70 private and public organizations around the state of Illinois who serve as subject matter experts to the Governor's office. This council aims each year to fulfill the mission "to support the State of Illinois' goals of a safe and secure place to live and thrive."

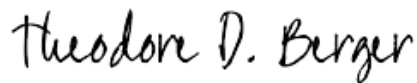
As changes to our climate continue, extreme weather events are increasing in frequency. Illinoisans are suffering the impacts of severe storms, urban and rural flash floods, riverine flooding across major waterways, heat waves, and winter storms. In 2025, Illinois was one of the leading states in the country for tornadoes. Earthquakes are also a formidable concern, as the southern part of our state is situated between the Wabash Valley and New Madrid Seismic Zones.

Illinois is home to nationally significant critical infrastructure, including nuclear power reactors, multi-modal transportation hubs, and agricultural production. While we are proud of the capabilities we've established in Illinois and grateful for our scalable capacity to address minor disasters at the local and state level through mutual aid, we recognize the instability in federal funding sources creates significant gaps in our ability to ensure these systems remain strong. Federal reductions to the state Homeland Security Grant Program and Emergency Management Preparedness Grants severely degrade Illinois' ability to support the capabilities and programs that build local and state resilience.

As the threat environment becomes more complex, and federal policy and the funding environment remain uncertain, the State must lead collaborative initiatives that strengthen preparedness and increase resilience of the critical infrastructure people rely on every day for safety, health, and survival. The Governor and the Illinois General Assembly have provided leadership by increasing funding from \$7.5M to 10M for the Preparedness and Response Grant Program (PAR), which is dedicated to supporting and sustaining State of Illinois homeland security initiatives.

In this dynamic environment, we must remain agile in our homeland security strategy to ensure we address risk. Throughout the report, the committees have detailed the impacts of federal grant reductions. We are grateful for the continued support and amazing work of our IL-HSAC members and partners in the face of a changing financial and threat landscape.

Across each of these drivers in our work, there remains a common thread that residents, visitors, and communities are safer when local, state, tribal, and federal government and other public and private organizations work together. By collaborating, we can continue to strengthen security and preparedness for natural and human-caused disasters, including threats to homeland security and cybersecurity.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theodore D. Berger". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Theodore" being more prominent than the last name "Berger".

Theodore "Ted" Berger

Homeland Security Advisor

Acting Director, Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security

# Table of Contents

|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Overview . . . . .                  | 1  |
| Executive Summary . . . . .         | 4  |
| Committee Reports                   |    |
| Critical Infrastructure. . . . .    | 8  |
| Communications . . . . .            | 9  |
| Cybersecurity . . . . .             | 14 |
| Emergency Management . . . . .      | 15 |
| Fire Mutual Aid. . . . .            | 16 |
| Law Enforcement Mutual Aid. . . . . | 27 |
| Public Health . . . . .             | 36 |
| Urban Area. . . . .                 | 38 |
| Appendix                            |    |
| Grant Funding. . . . .              | 50 |

# IL-HSAC Overview

The Illinois Homeland Security Advisory Council (IL-HSAC) was created by Executive Order 2023-3 on April 18, 2023. It replaced the long-standing Illinois Terrorism Task Force (ITTF), which was created by Executive Order in 2000.

The IL-HSAC serves as an advisory body to the Governor, the Governor's Homeland Security Advisor, and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security (IEMA-OHS). It provides recommendations and guidance on homeland security strategy and funding priorities.

Through a diverse partnership of local, state, and federal government representatives, as well as private and non-governmental organizations, IL-HSAC focuses on establishing and maintaining long-term strategic solutions to the threats of terrorism and all hazards.

The IL-HSAC also serves as the state homeland security strategic planning body for the implementation of U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), other federal preparedness, and state preparedness grant programs. It counsels the Homeland Security Advisor on issues related to the application and appropriate use of grant funds. As the DHS State Administrative Agency, IEMA-OHS is responsible for the management, administration and allocation of federal preparedness funds to subrecipients.

The membership of the IL-HSAC is widely varied. It is made up of more than 70 member organizations – both public and private – comprising approximately 150 individuals. Each member organization is assigned to at least one of the following HSAC committees:

- Communications
- Critical Infrastructure
- Cybersecurity
- Emergency Management
- Fire Services Mutual Aid
- Law Enforcement Mutual Aid
- Public Health
- Urban Area

## Illinois Homeland Security Advisory Council Membership

- Ameren
- American Public Works Association
- American Red Cross
- American Water
- Associated Fire Fighters of Illinois
- Aurora University
- Cities of Bloomington-Normal
- Cities of Champaign-Urbana
- City of Chicago
- City of Joliet
- City of Naperville
- City of Peoria
- City of Quincy
- City of Rockford
- City of Springfield
- Collaborative Healthcare Urgency Group

Cook County Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security  
DuPage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management  
Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police  
Illinois Association of County Engineers  
Illinois Association of Public Health Administrators  
Illinois Association of School Administrators  
Illinois Association of School Boards  
Illinois Board of Higher Education  
Illinois Campus Law Enforcement Administrators  
Illinois Coalition of Community Blood Centers  
Illinois College of Emergency Physicians  
Illinois Commerce Commission  
Illinois Community College Board  
Illinois Coroners and Medical Examiners Association  
Illinois Council of Code Administrators  
Illinois Department of Agriculture  
Illinois Department of Central Management Services  
Illinois Department of Corrections  
Illinois Department of Human Services  
Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology  
Illinois Department of Military Affairs  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
Illinois Department of Public Health  
Illinois Department of Transportation  
Illinois Department on Aging  
Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security  
Illinois Emergency Services Management Association  
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency  
Illinois Firefighters Association  
Illinois Fire Chiefs Association  
Illinois Fire Service Institute  
Illinois Health and Hospital Association  
Illinois Incident Management System  
Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System  
Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board  
Illinois Medical Emergency Response Team  
Illinois Public Health Mutual Aid System  
Illinois Public Works Mutual Aid Network  
Illinois School Psychologists Association  
Illinois School Resource Officers Association  
Illinois Sheriffs' Association  
Illinois State Board of Elections  
Illinois State Police  
Illinois Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee  
Lake County Emergency Management Agency  
Logan County Emergency Management Agency  
McHenry County Emergency Management Agency  
Metro East (St. Clair-Madison)  
Mid-West Truckers Association  
Mutual Aid Box Alarm System  
Nicor Gas

Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal  
Ogle County Emergency Management Agency  
Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas  
Quad Cities (Moline-East Moline-Rock Island)  
Regional Superintendents of Schools  
Secretary of State Police  
Will County Emergency Management Agency



# Executive Summary

This report highlights the work of the Illinois Homeland Security Advisory Council (IL-HSAC) in 2025 and outlines priorities for 2026 and beyond, reflecting a unified vision of resilience, preparedness, and collaboration.

Illinois faces increasingly complex risks, including threats to homeland security and cybersecurity, requiring integrated strategies across government, private sector, and community partners. Through coordinated planning and resource allocation, IL-HSAC has strengthened the state's ability to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from all hazards. Furthermore, the IL-HSAC remains committed to ensuring that baseline capabilities are equitably available to local stakeholders while also ensuring the availability of advanced technical tools and mutual aid resources to which individual jurisdictions may not otherwise have access.

## 2025 Accomplishments

In 2025, IL-HSAC committees advanced statewide preparedness by providing funding recommendations for initiatives that strengthened operational capabilities, supported emergency response, and expanded critical services to communities throughout Illinois.

- **Critical Infrastructure Committee** recommended initiatives that supported five Illinois Public Works Mutual Aid Network activations, delivered significant cost savings to communities, expanded training, and developed a new geographic information system-based debris management tool for 2026.
- **Communications Committee** recommended initiatives that improved interoperability through new training products, launched the statewide Information and Communication Technology Branch Certification Program, and conducted a multistate communications exercise strengthening cross-border coordination.
- **Cybersecurity Committee** recommended initiatives that strengthened the statewide cyber posture by training local governments and schools, deployed Endpoint Detection and Response to over 38,000 endpoints, expanded Cyber Navigator support, and helped stakeholders avoid millions in incident recovery costs.
- **Emergency Management Committee** recommended initiatives that upgraded command vehicles, acquired flood response equipment, increased emergency management training, and expanded statewide coordination.
- **Fire Mutual Aid Committee** recommended initiatives that delivered extensive National Incident Management System and technical rescue training statewide, improved specialized response capabilities, and contributed directly to successful rescue operations.
- **Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Committee** recommended initiatives that coordinated statewide mutual aid for more than 900 agencies; completed thousands of support activities; demonstrated tactical chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive response capability; produced high value intelligence products; and delivered more than 46,000 hours of specialized training.
- **Public Health Committee** recommended initiatives that strengthened medical surge capability through equipment training for Illinois Medical Response Team members, conducted Narcan and Stop the Bleed training programs, conducted a major deployment exercise, and upgraded hospital communications.

- **Urban Area Committee** recommended initiatives that enhanced regional cybersecurity, expanded mass notification and situational awareness systems, supported soft target protection projects, and provided extensive training and exercise opportunities to first responders and community members.

## **Impacts of 2025 Federal Funding Reductions**

The IL-HSAC has faced a challenging year for federal grant funding. For federal fiscal year 2025, Illinois was awarded \$10,419,556 from the FFY25 State Homeland Security Program, a \$2,085,863 reduction from the FFY24 allocation, and the Urban Areas Security Initiative award was \$33,479,819 for FFY25, a \$25,915,559 reduction from the FFY24 allocation. The IL-HSAC has worked to prioritize homeland security needs for the state; however, these reductions mean that some initiatives are unfunded, which has impacts on the state's preparedness and response capabilities.

Across all IL-HSAC committees, several shared concerns emerged in 2025. Rising operational demands, driven by more frequent severe weather, expanding cyber threats, and increasingly complex incidents are straining statewide capabilities. Growing unmanned aerial system threats, ranging from surveillance to disruption of critical infrastructure and public events, emphasize the need for improved detection, intelligence sharing, and coordinated preparedness across public safety agencies.

Many committees reported unstable or declining funding, aging or outdated equipment, and persistent staffing shortages, especially for volunteer dependent or specialized teams. Growing interoperability needs and widening cybersecurity gaps were also noted, along with increasing pressure on mutual aid networks as requests for assistance continue to rise. Together, these concerns point to the need for sustained investment, modernization, and strengthened statewide coordination.

## **Looking Ahead: Illinois Homeland Security Strategic Priorities**

The state's homeland security objectives aim to manage complex risks and strengthen resilience, so residents and the critical systems they rely on can withstand and recover from disruptions. Illinois' risk and threat environment is changing rapidly, shaped by increasingly severe weather events, cyber threats, infrastructure dependencies, changes in federal support, and complex challenges that cross jurisdictional boundaries. Illinois is also committed to being a national leader in preparedness and response for chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive incidents. These evolving conditions require the state to strengthen and adapt its strategic goals to remain effective in managing risk and recognizing that preparedness at the state and local levels is a key component of national security.

In response to this changing environment, five focus areas guide planning for homeland security strategic priorities: resilient communities, secure critical infrastructure, proactive risk and threat visibility, integrated cybersecurity and homeland security, and an agile homeland security enterprise. These focus areas aim to expand coordination, enhance information sharing, prioritize finite resources, and build capabilities that can evolve as threats do, ensuring Illinois is prepared not only for today's risks, but also for those on the horizon.

- **Resilient Communities:** Building resilient communities begins with strong partnerships with local leaders, schools, faith-based organizations, and other community groups to strengthen safety and preparedness across public spaces. Resilience is built through efforts such as preparedness initiatives, improving access to training and planning resources, ensuring interoperable communications, and modernizing public alert and warning systems.

- **Secure Critical Infrastructure:** Collaboration is vital to safeguarding critical infrastructure in all sectors, and especially sectors such as energy, communications, healthcare, transportation, and water, which provide the essential services communities depend on each day. Understanding interdependencies, supporting coordinated preparedness efforts, and mutual aid are central to ensuring critical services can be stabilized and restored quickly during disruptions. Through these shared efforts, partners enhance the reliability and resilience of the systems that sustain daily life.
- **Proactive Risk & Threat Visibility:** Improving visibility into risks and emerging threats is rooted in trusted, collaborative information sharing among partners. Strengthening information-sharing networks, improving analytic capabilities, and building shared situational awareness all depend on transparent relationships and respect for the communities we serve. By maintaining open communication and working together to understand evolving risks, partners can proactively address issues and support actions that lead to improved outcomes.
- **Integrated Cybersecurity and Homeland Security:** Effective risk management requires that cybersecurity be embedded throughout all homeland security and emergency preparedness efforts. Aligning cyber and physical security, strengthening readiness, and enhancing shared capabilities all contribute to protecting public safety, critical infrastructure, and essential services.
- **Agile Homeland Security Enterprise:** To be effective in a rapidly changing strategic environment, the homeland security enterprise, which includes all public and private sector partners that contribute to preparedness and security efforts, must be able to adapt and work collaboratively across disciplines. A commitment to stewardship of resources is essential, ensuring that investments and capabilities are prioritized. By working together and remaining ready to adjust as conditions shift, the enterprise can respond effectively to new challenges and maintain readiness across the state.

Our homeland security efforts in Illinois will continue to prioritize integrated planning, capability development, and resource optimization to maintain a secure and resilient state while being responsible with state funding. Strategic investments in cybersecurity, interoperable communications, and mutual aid systems will remain essential as threats grow more complex and funding landscapes shift.

# **IL-HSAC Committee Reports**

# Communications Committee

*The Illinois Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) is the Communications Committee for the Homeland Security Advisory Council.*

*The purpose of the SIEC is to improve public safety communications interoperability in the State of Illinois by managing all public safety interoperable communications within the State of Illinois pursuant to the authority given by ILCS 2615/10 (Public Safety Radio Interoperability).*

## Key Accomplishments in 2025

- ✓ Two training videos completed by a workgroup under the SIEC Technology Subcommittee and posted to the IEMA-OHS Division of Statewide Interoperability website. Feedback showed an increase in understanding on how to request interoperability talk groups and a decrease in the number of manhours needed to process request in the IEMA-OHS Operation Center.
- ✓ Completion and approval of the Illinois Information Communications and Technology (ICT) Branch Certification Program. Implementation is in 2026. Process will make sure all ICT branch personnel are current on training and will allow for a more efficient and effective response to incidents in Illinois.
- ✓ Tri-State Communications Tabletop Exercise (TTX) between Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois. This exercise brought together three states to test cross-border communications. It tested policies, procedures and identified shortfalls, identifying areas in need of improved public safety communications, thus allowing a more effective response to incidents that affect more than one state.
- ✓ IEMA-OHS Communications Platform will allow IEMA-OHS Emergency Communications Section to more effectively provide communications to state level responses.

## Planned Activities for 2026

- Update the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP). This plan is updated every 2-3 years.
- Establish governance for cross-border interoperability with Iowa, Missouri and Indiana.
- Identify ways to fund access to STARCOM21, the statewide communications platform.

## Emerging Threats

- Securing public safety communications. The encryption of public safety communications is essential for protecting sensitive data, enhancing operational efficiency, and mitigating cyber threats. As technology evolves, maintaining secure communication channels will be critical for the safety and effectiveness of public safety agencies.
- Lack of true statewide interoperability. An interoperable communications system facilitates real-time, uninterrupted information exchange between disparate entities using varied equipment and networks. This capability extends beyond simple voice communication, encompassing the transmission of data, images, and video across platforms used by public safety and governmental organizations. True interoperability means an officer on one radio system can effortlessly converse with a firefighter on a completely different system without requiring manual patches.

## Funding Needs or Shortfalls

- Training and exercises: Joint training and large-scale exercises are necessary to ensure that personnel are proficient in using the shared systems and adhering to the common protocols under high-stress conditions. This non-technical preparation validates both the technological infrastructure and the established governance structures by testing them in realistic scenarios. Without robust organizational coordination, even the most advanced radio systems and standards cannot guarantee effective multi-agency communication.
- Updating outdated communications equipment: Most equipment does not meet current standards and protocols. P25 specifies the common air interface, ensuring that radios operating in the very high frequency (VHF) and ultra-high frequency (UHF) bands can communicate regardless of the manufacturer. These standards mandate specific voice codecs to ensure voice clarity and interoperability across all P25-compliant systems. Encryption standards are also incorporated to maintain the security and integrity of sensitive communications. The use of Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) protects voice and data transmissions from unauthorized interception. These detailed technical specifications ensure that data formats are common and understandable across different networks.
- Cross-border Interoperability: Cross-border interoperability in public safety communications is crucial for effective emergency response. It allows different jurisdictions to share vital information in real time during crises, such as natural disasters or large-scale emergencies. This capability ensures that first responders from various areas can coordinate their efforts efficiently, reducing response times and improving overall situational awareness.

## Critical Infrastructure Committee

*The CI Committee's mission is to identify, assess, and support the strengthening and maintaining of secure, functioning, and resilient critical infrastructure and key resources of the state, based on current threat and vulnerability assessments, in partnership with the private sector. This is achieved through leveraging strategic partnerships among the Illinois Public Works Mutual Aid Network, Illinois Department of Transportation, IEMA-OHS, and mutual aid organizations across the state. During disasters, these relationships enable efficient communication and coordination for response, mitigation, and recovery efforts.*

### Key Accomplishments in 2025

- ✓ IPWMAN Duty Officers and staff managed five IPWAN activations. A total of 131 responders from 35 responding agencies assisted five requesting agencies in disaster mitigation efforts across Illinois.

*Note: Local-to-local aid requests are not currently tracked.*

| Dates                                                                    | Requesting Agency    | Event Type | Actions Performed    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------|----------------------|
| April 6 – 14                                                             | Massac County        | Flooding   | Sandbag Machine Loan |
| May 23 – June 4                                                          | Williamson County    | Tornado    | Debris Removal       |
| August 17 – 25                                                           | Village of Cary      | Tornado    | Debris Removal       |
| August 21                                                                | City of Aurora       | Tornado    | Debris Removal       |
| August 25 – 27                                                           | Village of Algonquin | Tornado    | Debris Removal       |
| <b>Total value of 2025 IPWMAN responses – \$ 227,480.26*</b>             |                      |            |                      |
| *Based on actual responder rates of pay and current FEMA Equipment Rates |                      |            |                      |



- ✓ Due to IPWMAN's coordination, requesting member agencies were able to respond effectively, resulting in more than one million dollars in cost savings for Illinois citizens. These savings represent expenses that would otherwise have been incurred if contractors had been hired to perform the same work, which was completed at no cost to the requesting agencies.
- ✓ Continued funding allowed IPWMAN to maintain an executive director, which would not be possible without funding recommended by the HSAC. The executive director oversees the day-to-day operations of IPWMAN, cooperates with IPWMAN duty officers to coordinate IPWMAN activations, represents IPWMAN at meetings and serves on multiple committees, including as co-chair of the HSAC Critical Infrastructure Committee.
- ✓ IPWMAN staff conducted three in-person duty officer training sessions as continuing education for the organization's frontline contact personnel. These sessions provided 40 hours of training for IPWMAN duty officers.
- ✓ IDOT's Technology Transfer Program held five "New Highway Commissioners Training" sessions across Illinois, providing training to more than 250 in-person attendees and over 400 virtual participants, including IPWMAN staff.
- ✓ The 2026 IPWMAN Annual Conference was held in October 2025, with 135 attendees from 60 member agencies, over 20 public works-related educational sessions, 24 speakers, and a keynote address by IEMA-OHS Director Ted Berger, highlighting the importance of IPWMAN within Illinois' Emergency Operations Plan.
- ✓ In partnership with the IEMA-OHS GIS Department, IPWMAN staff and volunteers are developing a GIS solution using Esri software for debris management. This system will provide real-time data to emergency managers through an incident dashboard, including responder locations, number of loads hauled, and number of debris piles during each IPWMAN activation. Rollout is anticipated in the spring of 2026.
- ✓ IPWMAN initiated a reorganization to become an intergovernmental agency. To date, nearly half of the member agencies have executed the updated IPWMAN Mutual Aid Agreement. Upon reaching the 50 percent participation threshold, IPWMAN will begin operating as an intergovernmental agency.
- ✓ In early 2025, IPWMAN invested several thousand dollars in a database system to support member agency contacts, membership investment invoicing and tracking, mass communications (including the IPWMAN quarterly newsletter), event management, and inventory of member agencies' response team capabilities.



## 2026 Initiatives/Goals

- Spring 2026: complete and test the new debris management application, with rollout to member agencies at the annual IPWMAN conference. Training will be developed for the IPWMAN command staff focused on the use of this solution.
- Summer 2026: add one additional full-time staff member to support both administrative and operational functions.

- Due to uncertainty surrounding federal funding, IPWMAN will begin evaluating and proposing an increase to the annual membership investment.
- Finalize the development of comprehensive 1-year, 2-year, 5-year, and 10-year strategic plans.
- IPWMAN has initiated a monthly “Safety Snapshot” communication to member agencies.
- A working group has been established to review and update the IPWMAN Operations Plan to more accurately reflect current response processes. Training will be developed and shared with member agencies based on the updated plan.
- Seek approval of the current Mission Ready Package by IEMA-OHS as well as update and obtain approval of the Mission Support Team Agreement with IEMA-OHS.
- Implement technology solutions to support file sharing and collaboration, project management, inventory of IPWMAN-owned assets, and other identified needs.
- Develop and execute training for a large-scale, statewide activation involving multiple assets from multiple member agencies, including associated logistics.
- IPWMAN will continue to attend partner organizations’ conferences and training summits to educate member and non-member agencies on IPWMAN capabilities and the value of membership.



## Emerging Threats

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported that in 2024, Illinois experienced approximately 126 tornadoes, ranking fourth nationally behind Nebraska (~131), Iowa (~131), and Texas (~169). In 2025, NOAA reported that Illinois ranked second nationally, behind Texas (~162), with approximately 146 tornadoes. As these debris-generating events increase, IPWMAN membership continues to grow, and changes to the IEMA Act may place additional operational demands on member agencies. As a result, agencies may find themselves overtaxed, making sustained response efforts increasingly difficult. Specialized debris-management equipment is expensive and in limited supply, particularly in central and southern Illinois. It is likely that the number of IPWMAN responses will continue to increase, requiring careful coordination and prioritization of available assets and personnel.

In 2025, Illinois also experienced multiple low-magnitude earthquakes (approximately magnitude 2–3), including an event near Lerna/Neoga that reached an estimated magnitude



3.3–3.5. While none of these events resulted in an IPWMAN response, it is only a matter of time before IPWMAN is requested to assist one or more communities impacted by activity within Illinois’ two seismic zones. A major earthquake would require significant IPWMAN resources not only for recovery operations, but also to support search and rescue efforts and the restoration of critical infrastructure, including utilities and transportation systems. Mobilizing the equipment and personnel necessary for such a response would present substantial logistical challenges and would require coordination with multiple governmental and nongovernmental partners.

Additionally, civil unrest is occurring with greater frequency nationwide and affected Illinois in 2025. News coverage increasingly shows incidents involving protests where barrier walls and other protective measures—often installed by public works crews—are required. In many cases, public works personnel are also responsible for restoring affected areas after these events. As public works employees are first responders, they are increasingly being called upon to respond to incidents that fall outside traditional public works roles. As these “out-of-the-box” events become more common, targeted training will be necessary. This training should address topics such as evidence preservation, personal safety and self-defense, operating safely in warm and hot zones, and mental health and stress management.

## Funding Needs or Shortfalls

IPWMAN is prepared to assist any member agency with the coordination of resources, logistics, and operational support during response activities. However, IPWMAN does not own response equipment, aside from limited basic supplies intended to support initial operations. IPWMAN currently employs one full-time executive director, a part-time planning and training coordinator, one contractor, and one part-time administrative specialist. IPWMAN does not employ dedicated response personnel and relies entirely on the voluntary participation of staff from member agencies during activations.

As noted earlier in this report, IPWMAN collects approximately \$90,000 annually in membership investments. Without continued federal and state funding, IPWMAN would be unable to operate at a level that allows it to make a meaningful and effective difference when activated by a member agency or the State of Illinois.



Staffing limitations have been—and will continue to be—a significant constraint on IPWMAN’s ability to expand its presence and capabilities statewide. Being staffed by one full-time employee and two part-time positions does not allow sufficient capacity to regularly travel throughout Illinois to promote IPWMAN, nor to consistently support activations occurring in central or southern Illinois. IPWMAN has developed a staffing plan that is dependent upon continued federal and state funding and includes the addition of one full-time branch chief and two to three part-time branch chiefs/SEOC agency representatives. Establishing these positions would allow IPWMAN to provide equitable representation across the entire state—not solely the northern region where current staff reside—and to deliver immediate, well-coordinated assistance using properly trained personnel, resulting in safer and more efficient response operations.

For a variety of operational and financial reasons, IPWMAN has taken the position that it does not intend to own heavy equipment. This equipment is readily available through rental companies and can be obtained when needed. Instead, IPWMAN has identified the potential purchase of equipment attachments—such as brooms, grapples, and forks—as well as equipment trailers. These trailers could be staged in a manner similar to other mutual aid assets and towed by a member agency vehicle to a rental facility, where appropriate equipment could be loaded for deployment anywhere in Illinois or nationally under an Emergency Management Assistance Compact activation.

IPWMAN could, however, benefit from owning a limited number of multipurpose response/prime mover vehicles. These vehicles would allow IPWMAN command staff to respond to incidents using agency-owned equipment (rather than personal vehicles) that would be properly outfitted with emergency warning lights, communications equipment, and command-support capabilities. The vehicles would also carry tools for minor vehicle and equipment repairs and, if appropriately sized, could be used to transport existing IPWMAN response trailers that contain supplies necessary to mitigate most disaster types.

At present, IPWMAN does not maintain a physical facility, and all staff operate from home offices. IPWMAN recognizes that a facility is not currently essential and that facilities bring additional recurring costs such as utilities, communications services, and maintenance. However, if funding were secured to purchase response vehicles and equipment, a small, multipurpose facility may become necessary for equipment storage. Such a facility would also provide office space for current and future staff and—most importantly—a dedicated room for training sessions and meetings. This space could function as an IPWMAN emergency operations center when needed and could also be made available to member agencies as a backup emergency operations center. The facility itself would represent a shared asset available to all member agencies should the need arise.



# Cybersecurity Committee

*The Cybersecurity Committee focuses on aligning available homeland security funds and projects with best practices outlined in the Center for Internet Security Critical Security Controls to mature local cybersecurity posture as much as possible.*

## Key accomplishments in 2025

- ✓ Conducted three workshops for local units of government and schools resulting in 24 entities receiving technical endpoint security training. Participants in the workshops gained the following insights/skills:
  - Ability to identify at-risk IT infrastructure (servers, laptops/desktops, hardware peripherals, etc.) that does not have security tooling in place (AV protection, vulnerability patching, etc.)
  - Ability to take action to remediate at-risk IT infrastructure - hardening IT systems against potential cyber attacks
  - Knowledge of Common Vulnerability Scoring System (CVSS) and how to use CVSS to prioritize potential vulnerabilities in their IT infrastructure
  - Steps to take to remediate these CVSS-prioritized vulnerabilities
  - Knowledge of network scanning best practices - how to identify subnets, how to classify IT assets, and additional procedural best practices
- ✓ Deployed endpoint detection and response (EDR) software to 38,465 endpoints (computers and servers) across 298 local units of governments and 145 school districts. Endpoint security is vital for protecting organizational networks and sensitive data from cyber threats, ensuring compliance with regulations, and protecting the resiliency of government services.
- ✓ The State of Illinois Security Operation Center (COS), in partnership with the state's managed security services provider delivered 24/7 monitoring to locals.
- ✓ Expanded the existing Cyber Navigator program (which was a previous Homeland Security Grant Program investment) to serve K-12 school districts utilizing toolsets funded with HSGP and State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program funding.
  - Navigators added 298 K-12 school districts to the grant-funded endpoint protection program.
- ✓ 619 security incidents were reported and resolved from local units of government and K-12 school districts. Historically, 63% of incidents are true positives, and with an average (and conservative) recovery cost of \$50,000 per incident, this program supported \$19.5 million in cost avoidance this year.

## 2026 Initiatives/Goals

The committee will continue to prioritize EDR protection to election authorities and to assist local governments and critical infrastructure in identifying and mitigating areas of risk.

- Create training or workshop opportunities to expand technical skills for local IT staff.
- Look to identify ways the state can assist/replace lost MS-ISAC services.
- Publish/share policy templates as well as incident response playbook and processes with locals.

## Emerging Threats

While not a new risk, several hundred local units of government leveraged MS-ISAC for several different types of cybersecurity services. The lack of federal funding created a gap for local units of government who leveraged free or reduced pricing MS-ISAC for cybersecurity support services.

## Funding Needs or Shortfalls

Capability gaps created by changes in federal funding for MS-ISAC services include, but are not limited to:

- Threat intelligence bulletins and feeds
- Secure DNS resolution

## Emergency Management Committee

*The Emergency Management Committee is dedicated to the stewardship of emergency management and preparedness as part of the Illinois Homeland Security Advisory Council and Strategy. The committee develops recommendations for strategic guidance, funding, and intergovernmental stakeholder collaboration to improve the state's resilience and preparedness to mitigate, respond to, and recover from all-hazard disasters.*

### Key accomplishments in 2025

| Activity                                                              | Impact/Outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Command Vehicle upgrades and acquisition                              | Initiated upgrades and repair (\$57,000 in 2025) of multiple components of 13 emergency management command vehicles, enabling regional response capabilities supporting approximately 30 counties. Acquired two multi-purpose vehicles for IEMA-OHS to support state operational deployments.                           |
| Flood fighting equipment acquisition                                  | Ordered 3 high-volume floodwater pump systems and 3 sandbagging machines to support statewide requests for support.                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Emergency Management Training                                         | Conducted 7 emergency management training sessions for approximately 50 local personnel supporting multiple jurisdictions.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Support to Illinois Emergency Services Management Association (IESMA) | Supported a new full-time position for IESMA to coordinate administrative, training, and other outreach activities in support of all 119 Emergency Services Disaster Agencies and other partners. Also supported IESMA's annual training summit to provide professional development opportunities to the same partners. |

### 2026 Initiatives/Goals

- Adjusting EM Committee schedule and processes to better align with HSAC schedule for project proposal, review, and prioritization.
- Foster improved integration of EM and mutual aid capability planning, tracking, and investment.
- Develop input for HSAC bylaws updates, focusing on committee rules and processes.



## Emerging Threats

The biggest risk to disaster preparedness and resilience is the uncertainty of federal funding and program support. The Emergency Management Preparedness Grant directly supports local emergency management programs, as well as mutual aid capabilities that are critical to disaster response. With the threat of fewer available federal resources for disaster response, Illinois must consider other funding and resourcing solutions.

## Funding Needs or Shortfalls

Pending EM Committee reviews of actual project nominations, the overall priorities for funding include staffing support to mutual aid organizations, tracking systems for resource capabilities, training programs for non-Incident Command System skills, and investments to update/replace existing command post vehicles and equipment.

## Fire Mutual Aid Committee

*The mission of the Fire Mutual Aid Committee is to define, develop and implement a statewide response capability and training strategy that prepares Mutual Aid Box Alarm System response teams and local responders to operate against all hazards locally, statewide, regionally and nationally and to prepare elected and appointed officials to serve as emergency response leaders and managers using the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Particular emphasis is placed on ensuring training programs support the Illinois Homeland Security Strategy and a whole-community approach to response and capability development as well as ensuring efficient and effective use of increasingly limited resources. The committee focuses on developing an interdisciplinary command and control capacity to organize and direct complex interagency response within NIMS.*

*The Illinois Fire Service institute provides accessible, hands-on training that aligns with NIMS principles and includes specialized courses to improve statewide interoperability and technical rescue skills, as well as defensive and offensive capabilities for hazardous materials responses, leading to state and national certification. Due to funding cuts, the training focus has shifted from live-fire training, leadership development, and decision-making toward hands-on technical rescue, hazardous materials disciplines, and active threat command and control. High-priority courses targeting complex, low-frequency, high-risk incidents.*

## Mutual Aid Box Alarm System

Illinois' Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS-IL) is a statewide, inter-governmental mutual aid network supporting over 1,100 fire departments and EMS agencies across Illinois and neighboring states. Organized into 69 divisions within seven regions, MABAS coordinates resources for large-scale emergencies such as fires, natural disasters, special rescue, and hazardous materials incidents. It also oversees specialized response teams, including 29 Hazardous Materials Response Teams, 29 Technical Rescue Teams, 17 Water Rescue Teams, and the Illinois Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue Team, all staffed by trained fire service personnel with support from civilian technical assistants. Without adequate state or federal funding to provide operational and capital equipment replacement, Illinois will be without a coordinated response capability to these situations.

Illinois MABAS ensures statewide availability of specialized disaster response by leveraging grant funding to provide training, equipment, vehicles, and maintenance that would otherwise



exceed local jurisdictions' budgets. Departments supply personnel, who local departments have paid for and provided training in basic firefighter, hazardous materials, and technical rescue, while MABAS facilitates grant-funded certification training to meet additional team membership requirements, ensuring experience, proficiency, and equal access for both volunteer and career firefighters in all areas of Illinois.

Through partnerships with organizations such as the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security (IEMA-OHS), Cook County Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security (Cook County EMRS), Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS), Illinois Public Works Mutual Aid Network (IPWMAN), and Illinois Emergency Services Management Association (IESMA), MABAS maintains Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to enhance communication, resource sharing, and disaster preparedness. Standardized operations are guided by core governance documents, including the Policies and Procedures Manual, Field Operating Guide, and Preparedness Workbook, fostering resilience and preparedness through strategic planning and collaboration.

Illinois Task Force 1 – Urban Search and Rescue Task Force: Illinois MABAS is the authority having jurisdiction and sponsoring agency for Illinois Task Force 1 (IL-TF 1). Based at the MABAS Readiness Center in Wheeling (Cook County), IL-TF 1 is aligned with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Incident Management System (NIMS) typing as a Type I Urban Search and Rescue Task Force. A US&R Task Force is a multi-disciplined organization which conducts search, rescue, and recovery in technical rescue disciplines, including structural collapse, rope rescue, vehicle extrication, machinery extrication, confined space (permit-required, non-cave, non-mine), trench, excavation, water operations, and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives defensive operations in a US&R environment. IL-TF 1 is an Illinois Mobile Support Team and is considered an Illinois Weapons of Mass Destruction response team. It can deploy to in-state and out-of-state incidents.



IL-TF 1 is trained and equipped to respond to support its various mission response types. It is funded through federal preparedness funds and other state funding sources.

## Key Accomplishments in 2025 - MABAS

- ✓ In 2025 MABAS Hazardous Materials Response Teams responded to 33 rescue incidents statewide.

MABAS maintains 29 statewide deployable hazardous materials response teams, positioned in each region of the state. This resource type is an organized group of hazardous materials technicians who respond to HAZMAT incidents, including those involving weapons of mass destruction. As Mobile Support Teams (MST), they are considered Illinois WMD response teams. MABAS coordinates with the State WMD Team (SWMDT) to integrate fire HAZMAT support for law enforcement WMD training and response efforts.

In order to meet criteria to maintain statewide deployable status, a MABAS HAZMAT team must maintain a minimum roster of 20 qualified personnel. Team responses include 10 personnel minimally trained to OSHA/NFPA Hazardous Material Technician level training. Based on a team's location in the state, federal preparedness grant funding is used for initial baseline training for members on a HAZMAT training roster. The teams respond with rescue equipment provided by MABAS through federal grant funds augmented by agency and divisionally purchased equipment.



Through funding from the Securing the Cities program, Chicago, as part of a phased plan, has partnered with MABAS to augment the training and radiological detection capabilities for HAZMAT teams statewide.

To supplement HAZMAT decontamination, MABAS maintains 25 statewide decontamination vehicles.

- ✓ In 2025 MABAS Technical Rescue Teams responded to 18 rescue incidents statewide

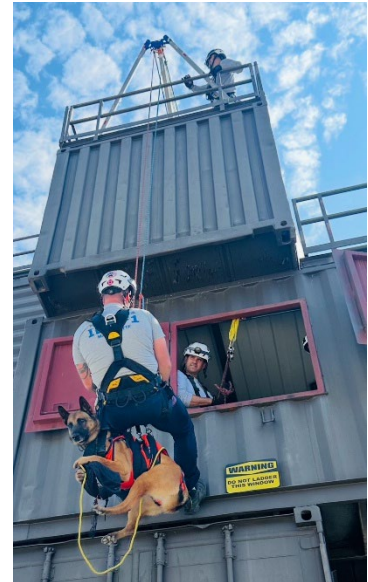
MABAS maintains 29 statewide deployable TRTs positioned in each region of the state. This resource type is trained and equipped to respond to support rescue operations for incidents involving surface, below-grade, elevated, confined space, mass transportation, and damaged or collapsed structures. MABAS TRTs are aligned with the FEMA NIMS resource typing for a Structural Collapse Rescue Team and Structural Collapse Search Team. As Mobile Support Teams, they are considered Illinois WMD response teams. In order to meet criteria to maintain statewide deployable status, a TRT must maintain a minimum roster of 20 qualified personnel. Team responses include 10 personnel minimally trained to the NFPA 1006 Technician Level training for confined space, rope, structural collapse and trench rescue. Based on a team's location in the state, federal preparedness grant funding is used for initial baseline training for members on a TRTs training roster. The teams respond with rescue equipment provided by MABAS through federal grant funds augmented by agency and divisionally purchased equipment.

- ✓ In 2025 MABAS Water Rescue Teams responded to 40 rescue incidents statewide.

MABAS maintains various water rescue teams that can conduct coordinated search and rescue operations in surface, sub-surface (dive) and ice and swiftwater environments. MABAS' water rescue teams are recognized as Mobile Support Teams (MST). To meet criteria to maintain statewide deployable status, water rescue teams must maintain minimum roster size based on their team capability responses. Personnel are minimally trained to the NFPA 1006 Technician Level training for their water rescue capability.

Surface Water Rescue – MABAS recognized surface water rescue teams are aligned with the FEMA NIMS resources typing as Stillwater/Flood Search and Rescue Teams or Swiftwater/Flood Teams. MABAS surface water capability:

- In state flood response – 11 divisional teams
- In state swiftwater/flood response – 5 divisional teams
- In state/out of state swiftwater/flood response – 2 (Note: MABAS is the sponsoring agency for both of these teams)
  - US&R – Illinois Task Force 1 (IL-TF 1) water component (UASI/SHGP funding)
  - Swiftwater – Illinois Water Rescue 1 (IL-WR 1) (UASI funding)
- Sub-surface – MABAS recognizes 16 sub-surface or dive teams



- Resources – MABAS maintains water rescue equipment assigned to the various water rescue teams, including inflatable and rigid hull boats with motors on trailers, sector scan sonars, side scan sonars and remote operated underwater vehicle.
- ✓ Supported multi-division and interdivisional emergency responses, including tornado response (in 2025 Illinois had the most tornados in the country), train derailments, haz mat incidents, severe weather, flooding, fires, and water rescues. Although often lost in the discussions of major national disaster deployments and statewide incidents, these day-to-day multi-divisional, inter-divisional, and intra-divisional emergency responses reinforce MABAS' role as the statewide emergency response coordination backbone.
- ✓ Worked with IEMA-OHS on multiple EMAC requests, including a Texas EMAC deployment (July 11-26) involving Illinois Task Force 1, followed by AAR completion, reimbursement processing, and return-to-readiness actions completed by Q3.
- ✓ Provided sustained Unified Command (UC) support for the Broadview incident (Oct – Dec), including daily or recurring coordination calls, multi-agency staffing, and MABAS LNO support, demonstrating extended-duration operational management capability.



- ✓ Coordinated operational support for major planned events including the Chicago Marathon, Pride-related events, NASCAR event, and other large public gatherings, deploying ambulances, decontamination assets, command staff, and communications support without service degradation.
- ✓ Maintained operational readiness of Illinois Task Force 1 through domestic EMAC deployment, multiple training cycles, and participation in national-level assessments, conferences, and EMAP/US&R standard activities.
- ✓ Expanded and sustained Illinois Water Rescue with new member onboarding; swiftwater, flood boat, and NIMS-aligned training; and multi-division water exercises
- ✓ Supported 75 Technical Rescue, HAZMAT, and Water Rescue statewide teams, including training status reviews, equipment distribution, and regional coordination, strengthening local-to-state integration.

| <b>Special Rescue<br/>State Certification Course</b> | <b>Rescue Team Personnel<br/>Completed</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Confined Space Ops                                   | 12                                         |
| Confined Space Tech                                  | 27                                         |
| Hazmat Tech                                          | 13                                         |
| Rope Tech                                            | 20                                         |
| Structural Collapse Ops                              | 17                                         |
| Structural Collapse Tech                             | 36                                         |
| Trench Ops                                           | 6                                          |
| Trench Tech                                          | 9                                          |

- ✓ Completed or advanced multiple Illinois Emergency Operations Plan (IEOP) annexes, including Search & Rescue, Firefighting, Recovery, Health/Medical, Mass Care, Evacuation, and Public Safety, improving statewide preparedness alignment.
- ✓ Played a lead technical role in Cook County EOP, THIRA, and HIRA updates, reviewing and shaping hazard-specific annexes for wildfire, nuclear, HAZMAT, terrorism, and mass evacuation scenarios.
- ✓ Advanced Mass Transit Emergency Planning Guidelines through multi-agency stakeholder review and regional rollout, closing a long-standing planning gap.
- ✓ Improved statewide asset visibility and accountability through grant-funded equipment tracking initiatives, Salamander inventory modernization, and GIS-based resource location integration.
- ✓ Distributed and replaced critical response equipment, including decon kits, watercraft, gas monitors, shoring kits, communications assets, and rescue equipment, directly increasing deployable capacity.
- ✓ Maintained the aging statewide fleet of 11 air support units, 16 double deck boat trailers, 82 generator light towers, four mobile support units, eight mobile ventilation units, the morgue truck, 71 utility terrain vehicles, 106 Western Shelter tent systems (with various trailer configurations), two fuel trailers and various utility and tow vehicles to support IL-TF 1 and other special operations needs.
- ✓ Maintained continuous engagement with federal and national partners, including FEMA, EMAC, IEMA-OHS, SUSAR, EMAP, IAFC, DHS, and FBI, ensuring Illinois remains fully integrated into national response frameworks.
- ✓ Led or facilitated recurring interstate coordination, including MABAS interstate meetings and cross-border operations, strengthening regional mutual aid reliability.

## 2026 Initiatives & Goals – MABAS

- Modernize statewide resource visibility and readiness tracking
- Implement a unified approach to resource typing, availability, and status reporting (WebEOC, GIS Hub, Salamander) to improve decision-making, EMAC readiness, and interagency coordination.
- Strengthen interoperable and resilient communications capabilities

- Prioritize redundant communications solutions (HF, satellite, deployable internet, Starlink) and validate performance through statewide communications stress-test exercises.
- Expand wildfire and wildland-urban interface readiness
- Enhance Illinois wildfire preparedness through training, interagency coordination with IDNR, and development of deployable wildfire strike team concepts and operational playbooks.
- Institutionalize EMAC mission management as a standing capability
- Formalize EMAC deployment processes—including mobilization, mission support, reimbursement, and return-to-readiness—and exercise interstate deployment workflows in preparation for future activations.
- Develop a long-duration Unified Command support model
- Establish scalable staffing, liaison, planning, and documentation support to sustain extended multi-agency incidents requiring weeks or months of coordination.
- Advance mass transit and high-visibility event preparedness
- Finalize and implement the Mass Transit Emergency Planning Guideline and standardize operational frameworks for major planned events and complex urban incidents.
- Enhance hazardous materials, rail, and CBRN operational readiness
- Focus on rail corridor incidents, HAZMAT surge capability, and CBRN coordination through targeted exercises, LEPC engagement, and updated response playbooks.
- Sustain and modernize specialty team capabilities statewide
- Improve lifecycle management for US&R, water rescue, technical rescue, and HAZMAT teams through readiness metrics, preventive maintenance, and standardized sustainment benchmarks.
- Align MABAS capabilities with THIRA/SPR planning and investments
- Position MABAS as an operational bridge between planning and response by mapping assets and teams to state and county core capabilities and identified gaps.
- Prepare for funding volatility and increasing EMS system strain
- Anticipate reduced federal homeland security grant funding by emphasizing shared resources, regional solutions, cost-recovery awareness, and data-driven justification for future investments.

## **Evolving Risks Likely to Impact Illinois Fire Service & MABAS**

- Potential reductions in federal homeland security grant programs may constrain training, equipment replacement, exercise programs, and specialty team sustainability leading to a capability reduction.
- Climate-driven extreme weather is producing more frequent, longer-duration incidents involving flooding, severe storms, extreme heat, winter weather, and an expanding wildfire risk profile.
- Rail, pipeline, and industrial hazardous materials events—including emerging CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline infrastructure—present high-consequence, multi-jurisdictional response challenges.

- Lithium-ion battery and energy storage system incidents are increasing in frequency and complexity, requiring extended operations, advanced monitoring, and specialized responder training.
- Wildfire incidents—including wildland-urban interface exposure and interstate wildfire deployments—are increasingly likely to impact Illinois fire service resources and mutual aid systems.
- Operational communications resilience is a critical dependency; redundant systems such as HF and satellite communications are increasingly essential for statewide coordination.
- Agencies continue to modernize digital fireground communications to improve interoperability and responder safety, while sustained investment in legacy VHF analog systems remains essential for statewide mutual aid, rural coverage, and operational redundancy when digital networks are degraded or unavailable.
- Long-duration incidents demand supplemental resources, sustained liaison staffing, battle rhythm management, and multi-agency governance structures. This is critical as these events are occurring in smaller communities that become more reliant on sustained mutual aid to meet basic service needs.

Collectively, these trends indicate a shift toward continuous statewide readiness rather than episodic mutual aid activation, reinforcing MABAS’ role as a permanent operational coordination framework.

## How Funding Shortfalls May Affect MABAS Capabilities

| Specialized Capability       | Essential Function                                                                      | Current Risk                                                                                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) | Large-scale disaster response (building collapse, mass casualty incidents)              | Inability to maintain certification and replace specialized lifting/shorting tools           |
| Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) | Containments and mitigation of chemical, biological, and radiological threats statewide | Retirement of diagnostic equipment and protective suits, leading to deactivation of teams    |
| Technical Rescue Teams (TRT) | High-angle rope rescues, trench collapses, confined space, and swift-water emergencies  | Apparatus deterioration and failure to procure high-cost life-safety rigging and air systems |
| Dive/Water Rescue Teams      | Statewide water rescue and recovery operations in rivers, lakes, and disaster zones     | Inadequate funding for specialized sonar, underwater communication, and vessel maintenance   |

Over the years, federal grant funding has steadily decreased, has had terms change, become “frozen,” or otherwise interrupted. MABAS serves as the State of Illinois singular mutual aid network, coordinating fire, EMS, and specialized rescue across all 102 Illinois counties. MABAS needs reliable and consistent funding to continue to provide the mutual aid and emergency services that has made MABAS, and Illinois, the national model of mutual aid that other states strive to achieve.



## Illinois Fire Service Institute Current Priorities

- National Incident Management System (NIMS) training for incident command and interoperability.
- Active Shooter Incident Management (ASIM) and School Safety & Violent Event Incident Management (SSAVEIM), and Standard Response Protocol (SRP) and Standard Reunification Method (SRM) for integrated law enforcement, fire, EMS, and school response.
- Special Operations Training Programs (SOTP):
  - Rope Rescue (Awareness and Operations, and Technician)
  - Confined Space Rescue (Awareness and Operations, and Technician)
  - Trench Rescue (Awareness and Operations, and Technician)
  - Structural Collapse Rescue (Awareness and Operations, and Technician)
  - Hazardous Materials (Awareness and Operations, and Technician)

These programs provide certification-level training and practical exercises critical for mutual aid teams and statewide deployment.

## Key Activities and Accomplishments in 2025 – IFSI

- ✓ Conducted 105 NIMS Courses, resulting in 3,040 local officials, firefighters, law enforcement, school officials, and public works officials trained.

NIMS courses include Active Shooter Incident Management Basic, School Safety and Violent Event Incident Management (Reunification), Active Shooter Incident Management Advanced, Standard Response (SRP) Protocol and Standard Response Method, All Hazards Incident Commander, All Hazards Incident Management Team, All Hazards Liaison Officer, All Hazards Logistics Section Chief, All Hazards Operations Section Chief, All Hazards Planning Section Chief, All Hazards Resources & Demobilization Unit Leaders, All Hazards Situation Unit Leader, ICS 100, ICS 300, ICS 400, and ICS 700.

IFSI's NIMS training builds a common operating picture across agencies, accelerates plan refinement (especially for reunification), and improves confidence in coordinated responses, with SSAVEIM generating the most widely applied, cross-disciplinary learning among school and public safety partners. Post-training surveys indicate an increase in cross-agency incident coordination and the intention to implement ASIM principles at the department level (e.g., ICS role clarity, staged resources, warm-zone operations). SSAVEIM post-training surveys showed an increase in school safety planning and reunification readiness, with students indicating they will apply SSAVEIM concepts to district plans and exercises. SRP/SRM Reunification Exercise post-training surveys showed an increase in operational reunification competence, with students planning to conduct reunification drills and pre-stage locations, staff, and logistics.



*"ASIM/SSAVEIM has greatly strengthened how we work together as a region... a shared language, clear expectations, and a well-defined structure... building a regional safety network that supports mutual aid, consistent procedures, and coordinated response efforts."* — Mary Vogt, Superintendent, Bement CUSD #5

*"The best part of the ASIM – Advanced course was... hands-on application... getting fire personnel to work collaboratively with law enforcement."* — Heidi Olsen, Deputy Fire Chief, Crystal Lake Fire Rescue

*"Because staff and first responders were trained in the same communication and response framework... actions were coordinated across agencies... critical decisions were made without delay... measurable improvements in response times, situational awareness, and interagency trust."* — Kim Lohse, Assistant Superintendent, Addison D#4

*"ASIM and SSAVEIM have provided our personnel with a shared ICS-based framework... measurably improved coordination... strengthened our coordination with local school districts."* — Troy Musolf, Commander, Wheeling PD

*"After completing the training, we realized gaps... sparked meaningful discussions... led to a county mutual aid agreement and a shared reunification site."* — Ryan McTague, Superintendent, McHenry H.S. D#156

- ✓ IFSI conducted 169 SOTP courses, training 4,970 students.

Special Operations Training Program (SOTP) includes Rope Rescue Awareness and Operations, Rope Technician, Confined Space Rescue Awareness and Operations, Confined Space Technician, Trench Rescue Awareness and Operations, Trench Technician, Structural Collapse Awareness and Operations, Structural Collapse Technician, Common Passenger Vehicle Rescue, Heavy Vehicle Rescue, Responder Intervention Team Rescue Technician (RIT), Responder Intervention Team (RIT) Chief, Hazardous Materials Awareness, Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations, Hazardous Materials Technician, Hazardous Materials Incident Command.

SOTP courses have had a transformational impact on Illinois fire service readiness and response. Participant feedback demonstrates overwhelmingly positive outcomes in response capabilities, confidence under stress, and command-level decision-making during high-risk, low-frequency events such as technical rescue, hazmat incidents, and firefighter maydays. These courses are widely regarded as the most challenging and valuable training experiences in participants' careers, with direct application to departmental policies, operational procedures, and cultural change toward firefighter safety.



*"During a recent fire in a fully involved mobile home, members of our department were able to make a successful rescue of a victim under heavy fire conditions. Coordinated rescue operations like these result from intensive training and preparation. Training received at the Illinois Fire Service Institute undoubtedly played a huge part in the rescue. Being able to receive high-quality training in a realistic, live-fire environment makes rescues like this possible when every second matters."* - Jim Vaughn, Assistant Chief, Normal Fire Department

*"I am writing to share the recent success of the Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI) Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) program within the St. Louis Fire Department.*

*In December 2025, the STLFD experienced two separate incidents where "Maydays" were called. In both cases, the RIT was deployed with very positive outcomes. These successful rescues were a direct result of the rigorous training provided to both the RIT members and the firefighters calling for help.*

*As an IFSI instructor, I have seen firsthand how our RIT program saves lives. Recently, 40 STLFD firefighters attended an eight-hour IFSI RIT course in O'Fallon, IL. These members then facilitated department-wide training throughout October and November 2025. The first Mayday occurred just 27 days after this training was completed.*

*Feedback from the involved firefighters and the Battalion Chief confirmed that the rescue efforts were successful because the teams reverted to the specific skills and procedures taught through the IFSI program. While it is difficult to quantify every life saved by this curriculum, it is clear that this program saved two St. Louis firefighters in less than 30 days. This training works and remains a vital investment for the fire service."* – Cody Carpenter, St. Louis FD

## IFSI Priorities for Calendar Year 2026

- Expanding NIMS-based interoperability training to strengthen command and coordination across agencies.
- Scaling ASIM and SSAVEIM courses to address active shooter and school violence threats.
- Delivering technical rescue programs to maintain NFPA-compliant capabilities for Rope, Confined Space, Trench, Structural Collapse, and Hazardous Materials.
- Enhancing regional mutual aid readiness through scenario-based exercises and credentialing for specialized teams.

## New or Evolving Risks

- Workforce turnover: Leadership and interoperability gaps risk slowing coordinated response during large-scale incidents.
- Urban growth, industrial hazards, and infrastructure vulnerabilities: Increased need for specialized rescue capabilities.
- Complexity of incidents: Increased frequency of multi-hazard events (CBRNE, structural collapse, severe weather) demands advanced technical rescue skills.
- School violence and active shooter threats: Necessitate integrated ASIM/SSAVEIM, and SRP and SRM training for fire, law enforcement, and mutual aid partners.

## Impact of Decreased Funding

Following the reduction from \$2,281,590 (with UASI support) to \$1,370,969 and no UASI funding, along with the previous years' funding reductions and the increases in costs for materials and supplies, per diem, and hotel, IFSI has eliminated grant-funded delivery of the following:

- Live-Fire Training – Engine Company Operations, Truck Company Operations, Advanced Breathing Apparatus Specialist, Search Techniques for the Fireground, Fireground Company Officer School, Fireground Command Officer School.
- Leadership Development and Decision-Making

- Common Passenger Vehicle and Heavy Vehicle Rescue courses.
- CY26 is the last year IFSI will offer Responder Intervention Team Rescue Technician and Responder Intervention Team Chief grant-funded deliveries.

The reduction in funding will also affect all training offered by IFSI across the state, as IFSI develops additional courses based on the skills and drills from the live-fire grant-funded training provided to volunteer first responders.

- Reduced foundational and specialized training will create gaps in readiness for day-to-day operations and complex incidents.
- Mutual aid interoperability will weaken, as fewer responders share common frameworks and certifications.
- Specialized teams could lose validation, impacting statewide deployment for technical rescue and hazardous materials events.
- Other courses will be affected: It limits feeder pathways into advanced courses (e.g., technical rescue technician-level programs), unraveling the structured progression that Illinois has built for responder development.
- Local departments will bear the cost, shifting expenses from state-supported programs to municipal budgets, creating inequity and reducing participation.

#### Consequences:

- Loss of statewide grant-funded training network that previously ensured equitable access for all Illinois First Responders.
- Transfer of training costs to local departments, creating financial strain and limiting participation.
- Reduced readiness for day-to-day operations and special operations responses, weakening local and state response capabilities.
- Lower validation of specialized mutual aid teams, impacting deployment for complex incidents.
- Capability gaps in technical rescue disciplines, increasing operational risk during high-risk, low-frequency events.

The FMAC's 2026 strategy focuses on maintaining core NIMS-based interoperability, ASIM/SSAVEIM integration, and technical rescue to sustain specialized response capabilities, command-and-control development, and interoperability through course deliveries. However, continued funding shortfalls threaten to unravel years of progress, diminish statewide readiness, and compromise the safety of responders and communities.

# Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Committee

*The mission of the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Committee (LEMAC) is to define, develop and implement a statewide strategy for the prevention, mitigation, and response to the threat of foreign or domestic terrorism. LEMAC focuses on planning, training and equipping state and local law enforcement agencies, including specially trained and equipped regional and state response teams. The Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS) is the organization charged with administering the statewide law enforcement mutual aid system.*

## Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System

ILEAS is a consortium of over 900 local law enforcement agencies established pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Illinois (Ill. Const. Art. VII, sec. 10), the Illinois Intergovernmental Cooperation Act (5 ILCS 220/1 et seq.), the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act (745 ILCS 10/7-101 et seq.) and the Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS 5/11-1-2.1). ILEAS was created post 9/11 in 2003 after the State of Illinois asked the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police and Illinois Sheriff's Association to join the state to create a statewide law enforcement mutual aid organization. At the time, the concept of statewide cooperation and organization of law enforcement assets and departments was completely new. Even now, ILEAS remains the standard that other states emulate when modeling their own plans and capabilities.

ILEAS is the largest, most effective law enforcement mutual aid organization in the United States today. Every Illinois county is a member, as well as nearly 900 other departments and municipalities, ensuring statewide coverage for all possible responses. These groups represent the core membership, which also includes state and federal partners, colleges and universities, transportation groups such as railroads, and other private entities with recognized law enforcement departments and authorizations. ILEAS is specifically designed to serve the citizens of Illinois during any type of disaster or emergency and to respond to domestic and foreign terror threats. No agency can handle every possible incident that may fall within their jurisdiction. Even the city of Chicago at times has found it necessary and beneficial to reach out to ILEAS for asset and manpower assistance.

ILEAS provides incredible financial value to the State of Illinois that far exceeds the actual grant funds that are involved. It would be impossible for the state to duplicate that value without incurring an enormous expense because of the structure associated with state employment and purchasing.

In post 9/11 days when the federal government was distributing huge grant awards to the states to start homeland security initiatives, Illinois used this opportunity to create a lasting and robust mutual aid system that includes fire and law enforcement. While fire service mutual aid is a bit more common, ILEAS is the only known statewide law enforcement mutual aid organization in the nation. The ability for a chief or sheriff in need to pick up the phone, dial one number, and outline how many personnel and what equipment they need is an invaluable asset. "Strength Through Cooperation" has always been the ILEAS motto and has proven to be its greatest accomplishment.





- ILEAS acts as a single point of contact and liaison for all member agencies, representing nearly 98% of sworn personnel. ILEAS also purchases, distributes, maintains, inventories and reports on every homeland security grant purchased piece of equipment.
- ILEAS members have all signed an approved mutual aid agreement reinforcing their commitment to mutual aid and assuring that when they respond, they do so without expectation of reimbursement – “I will help you today, because you may help me tomorrow.”
- ILEAS has the authority to enter into agreements with other public agencies, including public agencies of other states, which has been done numerous times on behalf of the State of Illinois.
- ILEAS’ coordination and professionalization of five Weapons of Mass Destruction Special Response Teams, 11 Mobile Field Force teams, and cooperation with eight EOD groups allows for statewide coverage and standardization of response and training.
- ILEAS is committed to providing training to all designated team members through a dedicated cadre of professional operators and commanders. By having a single approved curriculum that is required for all personnel, operational units can be built and combined to any required size with no limitations on their capabilities – all in a state-of-the-art facility centrally located in-state.
- ILEAS works closely with IEMA-OHS communications and the statewide interoperability coordinator to purchase and distribute state-of-the-art equipment, vehicles and tools necessary to assist with statewide interoperability.
- ILEAS currently manages grant funding in cooperation with the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority implementing the Less Lethal Alternatives for Law Enforcement program. Borne from the Safe-T Act, this program helps reduce lethal force encounters between police and citizen of the state through classroom training and less lethal device purchasing.
- ILEAS offers a single emergency request number and dispatch point for anyone in the state to be able to request any resource they may need with a single call and know that help will be on the way as quickly as possible.
- The best way to invest tax dollars is to coordinate sharing and consolidation of resources across the state so that everyone has access to the same level of response should the need arise.

## Key Activities and Accomplishments in 2025 – ILEAS

- ✓ The ILEAS CAR plan system of notification and response is the backbone of ILEAS. When an agency has been overwhelmed and can no longer meet its own needs, it must reach out for help. ILEAS is how that is done.
  - Nine regional planning coordinators cover eight regions across Illinois, visiting each law enforcement agency in the state to ensure that contact information is current and update information on personnel and assets each department can offer during times of need.
  - In 2025, RPCs were involved in 3,470 different actions, exercises, meetings or visits serving members.
  - During the past 12 months, Illinois communities requested mutual aid assistance 114 times because their resources were exceeded.

- RPCs are part of every exercise and planning meeting of significance and are able to liaison between all local, regional, county and state organizations to meet current and future needs. While a disaster may be the first exposure for the current administration or department, the ILEAS RPC is a highly experienced source of advice and assistance without subverting the incident command in place.
  - A custom tracking program allows ILEAS to document thousands of activities performed by the RPCs in service of Illinois agencies. That information can then be compiled, reported and memorialized in order to provide a long-term record of need and response for every agency and department in the state.
- ✓ The ILEAS training center opened in 2008 and serves two major functions. After an initial \$3 million renovation and upgrade, the facility has served as the home offices and site for all ILEAS activities. In 2022, the Illinois General Assembly allocated an additional \$3 million dollars that was utilized to further improve and expand the classroom and practical use areas of the 65,000-square-foot building and surrounding grounds. Today there are nine classroom and breakout spaces along with a huge auditorium and large laboratory-type learning workspace. The facility boasts an auditorium able to handle more than 100 trainees completely immersed in modern technical capabilities. Our largest space has been reserved in cooperation with the local MTU to provide indoor controlled tactical city wall training for simulated tactical operations as well as for classroom use and realism.
- In 2025, 5911 total attendees participated in over 46,803 training hours. Many of these individuals represent first responder agencies from Illinois and surrounding states.
  - Since 2008, there have been well over 600,000 training hours for 87,000 students.
  - ILEAS training staff and cadre are highly sought after professionals in their fields of expertise: basic SWAT and refresher courses, ballistic shield award and instructor classes (initiated post Uvalde), WMD response course, and less lethal operator course. Are all examples of the specialized training provided by ILEAS.
- It is extremely important that team personnel receive the highest quality validated training to not only ensure officer safety but also ensure that the rights of citizens are continuously safeguarded and protected.
- ✓ Weapons of Mass Destruction/Special Response Teams: Beyond the capabilities normally associated with a traditional SWAT team, members of WMD teams are additionally trained to operate in contaminated environments. ILEAS currently supports five fully equipped and validated WMD teams while also assisting the Springfield Police Department tactical team given its role in the state capitol. Each WMD/SRT operator is highly trained in both advanced tactics and the intricacies associated with responding and performing under extremely difficult circumstances. Working very closely with the Northern Illinois Police Alarm System Emergency Services Teams and the Illinois State Police Weapons of Mass



Destruction TRT, ILEAS is an important tool in the State of Illinois' overall plan to protect citizens from this unique but highly dangerous potential threat.

ILEAS supports these teams by providing standardized training to all future and current members. Standard Operating Procedures adhered to by training cadre and team commanders ensure that in the event of large-scale activations or the possibility of a complex coordinated disaster or attack that spans traditional jurisdictional boundaries, all team members can work seamlessly together without fail.

In addition to their base mission, many of the SRTs serve as their agency and regional SWAT units for elevated risks that require advanced skills.

- In 2025, ILEAS Special Teams responded to over 173 of the requests for activations made to team commanders. Not all requests are approved – only those that rise to a level requiring the special capabilities of the team requested.
- While there were no activations for WMD type calls, there have been times when the skills and equipment used for that purpose can also be utilized when dealing with certain drugs such as fentanyl.
- There were 54 reported SRT callouts in 2025, nearly all for high-risk warrant service or for armed and barricaded subjects that were especially dangerous.
- ILEAS SRT is also utilized in overwatch and Quick Reactionary Force (QRF) during many high-risk target events.

- ✓ Mobile Field Forces (MFF): ILEAS supports 10 MFF Teams to include close coordination with the NIPAS MFF Team and the Illinois State Police. These teams ideally comprise at least 35-45 members each from agencies across the state. Like the SRTs, MFF members are highly trained and expected to demonstrate their capabilities routinely during periodic in-house training and bi-annual



validation exercises overseen by subject matter experts. Their mission includes the mandate that they protect citizens and property in a manner that does not infringe on the constitutional rights of persons wishing to exercise those privileges.

Because of the makeup of the MFFs, they are recognized by IEMA-OHS as a NIMS-defined Patrol Strike Team. Meaning that entire teams, or groups of squads and teams, can be combined and deployed to a stricken area and immediately serve as a mobile police force, complete with its own command element, chain of command, communications and standard operating procedures. This pre-coordination is vital when a disaster strikes and there is little to no time available to start a response from scratch. ILEAS allows Illinois to hit the ground running whether they are responding inside or outside the state during mutual aid requests.

- In 2025, MFF teams were mobilized and responded to over 33 incidents that involved some type of citizen protests.

- Last year, ILEAS MFF units participated in the Republican National Convention EMAC response in support of the Illinois activation to Wisconsin. ILEAS also supported the Democratic National Convention in Chicago with a force of 253 local MFF officers.
  - Other event-oriented activations included parades, funerals, dignitary protection, commencements and QRF activations for high interest officer involved charging, trials and sentencing announcements.
- ✓ Explosives, Ordnance Disposal Teams: ILEAS does not manage or specifically organize EOD teams. The FBI is responsible for the training and certification that goes along with that capability. Instead, ILEAS has taken on the role of organizer, giving these teams a place where they can all come together to exchange ideas and best practices. Years ago, ILEAS acted as the fiduciary that allowed each EOD team to acquire an ANDROS robot, an expense that only a rare number of teams could ever conceive of incurring. Since then, ILEAS has provided x-rays, mini-core robots, bomb suits and de-activation units when funds have been available. ILEAS also hosts a quarterly meeting for all teams at the training center to discuss trends and needs.
- In 2025, EOD teams reported 66 calls for intervention.
  - Callouts included ordnance recovery, bomb threats, fireworks recovery, dignitary protection and ammo disposal.



- ✓ Statewide Communications and Interoperability: The ILEAS comms staff works closely with IEMA-OHS personnel to maintain and monitor the 13 current unified command posts, along with nine ITECS units and vehicles. ILEAS is currently managing the buildout for two additional Rapid COMM response vehicles in partnership with DuPage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, increasing the capabilities and response profile for the state during future disasters and emergencies. ILEAS communications staff have responded to every recent state disaster and emergency. During the deployment to the DNC and RNC, it was ILEAS comms staff that solved interoperability conflicts allowing personnel to effectively communicate with all agencies required. The nature of mutual aid will always create situations that require professional communication experts to solve the inevitable problems of interoperability. This program is vital to the mission of IEMA-OHS and ILEAS.

- ILEAS is working closely with IEMA-OHS to invest heavily in preventative maintenance for all communications vehicles and equipment, beginning with the 13 Unified Command Posts.
- Rather than purchase new equipment, funds are be used to refurbish and extend the life of important vehicles, thereby saving millions in replacement costs.
- ILEAS is working with the SWIC to evaluate and upgrade Starcom accessibility in each of the 102 counties in Illinois. By having Starcom in the various PSAPs across the state,





a level of total interoperability will be possible in Illinois during times of emergency and response.

- ILEAS Communications has completed a number of projects that ensure emergency resilience regardless of conditions, including the HF radio deployment. ILEAS will continue to purchase and replace cache radios that are pre-staged across the state to allow for quick response during crisis.

## Key Activities and Accomplishments in 2025 – Statewide Terrorism Intelligence Center

- ✓ Produced and disseminated 878 intelligence documents/notifications that were shared with STIC’s law enforcement and public safety partners. These documents and notifications provide public safety officials with threat-based need-to-know information necessary to make critical decisions that protect individuals and critical infrastructure sites.
- ✓ Prepared and delivered 47 presentations to 4,320 law enforcement and public safety partners.
- ✓ Responded to 18,993 requests for information from local, state and federal law enforcement partners, as well as public safety partners.
- ✓ Received information about 2,718 special events planned throughout the state. Upon request, additional information was provided to law enforcement and public safety partners as it related to the event and any potential threats that could impact the event.
- ✓ STIC hosted 150 law enforcement and public safety partners at its first ever Threat Liaison Officer Summit in Joliet.

## STIC 2026 Initiatives/Goals

- Engage with real-time crime centers.
- Host another TLO Summit for law enforcement and public safety partners.
- Hire a Cybersecurity Intelligence Officer.
- Hire two terrorism research specialists.

## Funding needs or shortfalls

- STIC continues to rely on the Homeland Security Grant Program for the funds necessary to operate the center. In calendar year 2026, there are no unfunded projects.
- Currently, FFY25 HSGP funds have not been distributed to states and urban areas. At this time, STIC has not received any FFY25 grant funds, and it is unknown if any will be received before the grant’s projected end date, Sept. 30, 2026. Going forward, there is uncertainty of the receipt of any HSGP funding following FFY25. STIC is reliant on these funds for personnel, equipment, and training and would not be able to operate without this funding.



## Testimonials from stakeholders

*“STIC was requested to help locate a missing autistic teenage girl. Through coordination with STIC, local law enforcement was able to safely locate the girl who was in the company of adult male not known to the victim’s family.”*



*“Passenger on a traffic stop was not wearing his seatbelt, and I suspected he was giving a false name. After exhausting every resource I had available on the stop, I reached out to STIC to gather more information. Within 10 minutes I had the subjects real name, and he had an active warrant. Charges were filed with the state’s attorney’s office and are pending at the time of this survey. Only regret I have is not reaching out sooner as the fast response from STIC would have resulted in an arrest that night versus filing charges at a later date. Very satisfied with the fast response and work up from analyst and will reach out sooner next time if I find myself in a similar scenario.”*

*“STIC was able to assist in pulling license plate readers (LPRs) for an individual indicted on 1st Degree Homicide in Colorado. LPR information provided confirmation that the suspect had swapped license plates on the known vehicle for him. Assisted in locating the correct vehicle for the suspect who was ultimately apprehended in Arizona when the grand jury indictment and arrest warrant went through. Thank you for your assistance!”*

*“We contact STIC after opening every case. The records you provide are invaluable part of every one of our cases. The records STIC provides allows us to identify our subjects and provide valuable information regarding their criminal background, residence(s), driving histories, etc. It would be extremely difficult for our task force to operate without the services you provide.”*

## Key Activities and Accomplishments in 2025 – Illinois State Police Special Operations Command (SOCOM)

- ✓ During Calendar Year 2025, the Illinois State Police State Weapons of Mass Destruction Team demonstrated tactical chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) capability in support of SOCOM and statewide public safety missions. The team executed 28 validated operations across 37 operational days, delivered high level training in coordination with federal partners, and continued transitioning from a niche response element into a force multiplying, tactical CBRNE asset fully integrated with ISP SWAT, JHIT, and interagency partners.



SWMDT operations and training in 2025 focused on three core priorities:

- Operational integration of CBRNE and radiological response into SWAT and Joint Hazard Assessment Team missions
- Radiological detection, containment, and decontamination proficiency in populated and high-risk environments
- Sustainability, achieved through in-house training development aligned with OSHA HAZWOPER standards and federal best practices

These efforts directly support SOCOM objectives of preparedness, force protection, consequence management, and interoperability during complex threat incidents involving CBRNE hazards.

- ✓ SWMDT Operational Activity Summary – 2025

Total Operations: 28

Operational Days: 37

Major Event/Pre-Planned Protective Operations: 16

Threat Response/Suspicious Package/ Hazard Assists: 9

Non-Preplanned Support Operations: 3

SWMDT provided sustained support to state significant events, federal protective missions, and rapid response hazard incidents across Illinois, with a concentration in the Chicago metropolitan area under the Secure the Cities (STC) mission set.

Key supported events included:

- State of the State Address and General Assembly functions
- Chicago Marathon
- Lollapalooza
- NASCAR Chicago Street Race and Illinois 300
- Chicago Pride Parade
- Air & Water Show
- Illinois State Fair – Governor’s Day
- New Year’s Eve – Navy Pier



In addition to planned protective operations, SWMDT responded to multiple suspicious package, white powder, and exposure incidents, providing rapid hazard assessment, containment guidance, and decontamination support to ISP and local partners.

Operational Highlights:

- Consistent integration of SWMDT personnel into Joint Hazard Assessment Teams during high-risk operations
  - Rapid deployment capability for radiological and chemical hazard incidents
  - Effective coordination with ISP SWAT (Red, White, Blue, Silver) during tactical operations involving potential contamination threats
- ✓ Radiological Security Awareness & Response Exercise (RSARex); April 29-May 1, 2025 | Decatur, IL; Federal Partner: DOE/NNSA Office of Radiological Security
- Approximately 42 ISP SWAT officers participated in this radiological train-the-trainer and scenario-based exercise focused on:
- Radiological threat recognition
  - Personal radiation detector (PRD) employment
  - Tactical containment and safety perimeter establishment
  - Fixed and mobile source scenarios

The exercise validated ISP’s ability to integrate radiation protection fundamentals: time, distance, and shielding into tactical law enforcement operations and established a scalable training foundation for statewide dissemination.

- ✓ Curious Disintegration – Radiological Training Exercise; Nov. 4–5, 2025, Chicago, IL
- Participants: ISP SWAT, ISP JHIT, FBI Bomb Squad
- This multi-agency exercise reinforced radiological detection and response in dense urban environments. Scenarios included:
- Crowd-based radiological source identification
  - Establishment of a 2 mR/hr radiation perimeter
  - Gross decontamination procedures
  - Tactical movement under radiological constraints

This exercise demonstrated strong radiological proficiency, disciplined movement in contaminated environments, and effective interoperability with federal bomb technicians. The exercise also informed future integration of robotics and UAS assets.

- ✓ Joint FBI Bomb Squad Training – IED/Explosives Operations; Dec, 16, 2025, South Chicago Heights, IL

This training focused on SWAT bomb technician integration during simulated IED incidents, emphasizing:

- Tactical movement in IED environments
- Bomb technician security and coordination
- Explosives lab awareness and secondary hazard recognition
- Interagency terminology alignment

The exercise enhanced operational discipline, improved exposure minimization, and reinforced shared terminology critical to joint counter-IED operations.

- ✓ In 2025, SWMDT initiated development of an in-house Tactical Operations in CBRNE program designed to meet OSHA HAZWOPER (29 CFR 1910.120) requirements for all SWAT and JHIT personnel assigned to the WMD mission. Additional focus areas included:
  - Scenario-based crawl, walk, run training
  - Command, control, and communications under CBRNE conditions
  - Decision making in contaminated and uncertain environments

This effort represents a shift toward self-sustaining training capability, reducing reliance on external providers while improving consistency and compliance.

- ✓ In 2025, SWMDT formally joined the BioWatch-Chicago program, expanding ISP participation in national biological detection and early warning efforts. Activities included:
  - Laboratory site visits to understand sample processing and chain of custody procedures
  - Coordination with public health and laboratory partners

Additionally, SWMDT assisted Illinois MABAS with Primary and Secondary Screener Training at the ICAT Training Center in Decatur, supporting:

- Standardized screening procedures across fire and hazmat agencies
- Improved interoperability between ISP, MABAS, and regional partners
- These efforts further positioned SWMDT as a state-level integrator for biological and CBRNE detection capabilities.

## 2026 Initiatives & Operational Planning

In 2026, the State Weapons of Mass Destruction Team will prioritize the onboarding and training of seven newly assigned ISP SWAT personnel in tactical CBRNE response, ensuring mission continuity and operational depth. In parallel, SOCOM will focus on sustaining existing mission capabilities amid budget reductions, emphasizing internal training and equipment maintenance due to decreasing grant funding and project approvals. As several mission essential systems approach end of service life, SWMDT will assess lifecycle extension, maintenance strategies, and phased replacement options to preserve readiness without degrading response capability.

# Public Health Committee

*The mission of the Public Health Committee is to develop strategic policy and support operational planning for statewide Public Health and Medical Services (ESF-8) preparedness, response and recovery capabilities. Furthermore, the committee incorporates Mass Care, Emergency Assistance Housing, and Human Services (ESF-6) and Agriculture and Natural Resources (ESF-11) missions into all applicable ESF-8 preparedness, response and recovery considerations. The committee is tasked with addressing multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency communication barriers, coordination issues, and equipment, technology, planning and training needs to better support Illinois ESF-6, 8, and 11 systems for all hazards.*

## Key Accomplishments in 2025

| ACTIVITY                                                                                                                     | IMPACT/OUTCOME                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Conducted 8 trainings for Illinois Medical Emergency Response Team (IMERT) members focusing on various equipment operations. | 8 trainings for team members focused on operation of equipment. including a vital sign monitoring system that can continuously monitor up to 10 patients at one time. Additional areas of focus included communication devices and convoy operations. 70 participants. Evaluations mentioned increased confidence in operating equipment. |
| Conducted 1 STOP the Bleed Training for members                                                                              | In collaboration with the Kane Co. Health Department, added the administration of Narcan to the STOP the Bleed curriculum. 10 participants reported in evaluations an increased confidence in addressing life threatening bleeds and the administration of Narcan.                                                                        |
| Conducted 4 trainings on the administration of Narcan.                                                                       | 4 trainings attended by 37 team members. Participants were provided doses of Narcan to put in their own response kits. Evaluations indicated that participants felt more confident in the administration of Narcan.                                                                                                                       |
| Conducted a Deployment Operations Exercise.                                                                                  | The multi-day Deployment Operations Exercise included the deployment of personnel, trucks, trailers, medical equipment, and supplies. Then set up an Alternate Care Site at Fort Massac in Metropolis. 17 members participated. All                                                                                                       |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | expressed an appreciation of the value of participating in operations in the field.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Purchased, programmed, and delivered new STARCOM21 Desktop Mobile Radios to all hospitals in Regions 3,6,7, & 10. Training was provided to a representative of each hospital in person at their Regional Coalition Meeting. | Aging radios were replaced with new units that meet the SIEC standards, including the SWIT. Better awareness of equipment and template use has been demonstrated through monthly drills and use of the radios during planned and unplanned communications outages. |

## 2026 Initiatives/Goals

- Further develop telehealth applications for disaster medical response to include access by hospitals and emergency management for situational awareness.
- Maintain IMERT membership, equipment and supplies and conduct team trainings and participate in multi-agency exercises.
- Protect schools and campuses from threats and hazards: Continue to access both the online School Nurse Emergency Care (SNEC) training as well as conducting the three-day in-person SNEC courses in at least eight locations within the state to address the educational needs of school nurses in their day-to-day emergency readiness as well as disaster preparedness.
- Interoperable training and education: Update the following pediatric disaster specific educational modules and resources to assure these trainings and guidelines remain consistent with current evidence/standards: 1) Caring for Children During Disasters: Incorporating Children into Exercises; 2) Caring for Children During Disasters: Identifying, Tracking, and Reunifying Unaccompanied Minors; 3) Pediatric and Neonatal Care Guidelines; 4) Children with Special Health Care Needs Quick Reference Guide; 5) Pediatric Mock Code Toolkit; and 6) Child Abuse and Neglect Policy & Procedure Guidelines/Toolkit.

## Funding needs or shortfalls

- Funding for additional STARCOM21 desktop mobile radios and training.
- Funding for additional training and education.
- Funding for IMERT.



# Urban Area Committee

*The Urban Area Committee, comprised of members from the City of Chicago and Cook County, represents the Urban Area Working Group (UAWG). The core function of the Urban Area Committee is to support the Urban Area's ability to prevent, protect, respond, mitigate the effects of, and recover from acts of terrorism and other major disasters. The UAWG is the senior policy advisory body for the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) program. UASI works to formalize the approach to critical issues such as grants management and administration responsibilities as well as funding allocation methodologies. The Urban Area is committed to working closely with local, regional, state and federal partners to achieve seamless integration and complementary missions. Integration and collaboration are necessary for the Urban Area to effectively and efficiently accomplish its mission of keeping property secure and preserving regional safety.*

## 2025 Key Activities

### ***Enhancing cybersecurity***

- ✓ Cook County Information Security Office's (ISO) security information event managers processed a total of 232,568,205,951 auditable events. Of the total events monitored, 2,569 events required analysts to triage the incident, and 452 incident tickets were opened because of these investigations and other known malicious activity.
- ✓ Starting in January 2025, ISO Operations began working closely with the Cook County Clerk's office in their role as the chief election authority for more than 120 towns and villages in suburban Cook County. Through close coordination across agencies, the 2025 Consolidated Primary Election (Feb. 25, 2025) and Consolidated Election (April 1, 2025) occurred with no cyber related incidents or noted malicious traffic on any of the election infrastructure monitored.
- ✓ Cook County ISO completed security control assessments and continuous monitoring assessments against the Cook County Information Security Framework. The ISO team completed 11 total assessments comprised of 71 interview sessions covering 123 control domains assessing 1,857 controls.
- ✓ Cook County's Information Security Working Group completed five policies that make up the Cook County Generative Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework. The policies align with the NIST AI Risk Management Framework and provide specific guidance for agencies to manage and mitigate risk associated with newly developed Generative Artificial Intelligence capability in Cook County information systems.
- ✓ Cook County ISO facilitated a Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise on June 10, 2025, as part of the incident response training and testing program with all Cook County agencies.
- ✓ Cook County Information Security Office celebrated Cyber Security Awareness Month in October. The ISO team sent out weekly cyber newsletters, moderated a cyber-focused discussion, hosted a weekly cyber trivia game, and handed out flyers on privacy and security to employees and residents.
- ✓ Cook County ISO updated the FY25 cybersecurity training model, working closely with all agencies to support cyber hygiene. The model includes additional training specifically for those who have enhanced privileges or system administrator rights.
- ✓ Cook County ISO completed 27 unique vendor risk assessments during the year and provided the reports to senior officials outlining the open-source intelligence risk identified.

- ✓ The City of Chicago's Information Security Office operated four positions/personnel funded by UASI grant funds, which are critical to securing the city's networked computing infrastructure, both information technologies and operational technologies.
- ✓ Chicago ISO launched a security awareness training campaign for city employees in the fourth quarter of 2025.
- ✓ Chicago ISO continued to maintain the first phase of a security solution for the City's Department of Water Management Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition environment with a primary use case of asset management. Planned expansion was delayed to 2026.
- ✓ Chicago ISO continued to build out and mature NIST Cyber Security Framework based controls.
- ✓ Chicago ISO continued to leverage and build out capabilities on the city's governance, risk and compliance toolset, allowing for the digitization and automation of previously paper-based GRC activities.
- ✓ Chicago ISO continued to develop and strengthen its Vulnerability Management program through growing the scanning and agent footprint. The remediation program matured in partnering with IT and application stakeholders.
- ✓ The Chicago Public Safety Information Technology Division continued to bolster the city's public safety cybersecurity and communications capabilities in 2025. A key achievement was the ongoing enhancement of cybersecurity measures through the implementation of endpoint and edge controls in both on-premises and cloud environments. This was critical to the city's ongoing efforts to transition the public safety departments to a more mobile network environment.
- ✓ The transition to newer next-generation firewall technologies will enhance the protection of the public safety IT network and bolster network reliability for first responders. The Chicago Office of Public Safety Administration achieved this by capitalizing on the City of Chicago's existing expertise with Palo Alto systems.
- ✓ Chicago Public Safety's ongoing commitment to improving and expanding cyber capabilities includes protecting critical infrastructure and implementing NIST Cyber Security Framework-based Controls beyond the core public safety network. This initiative safeguards critical networks such as City of Chicago cameras, Computer-Aided Dispatch System, 911 systems, and radio-related networks, ensuring up-to-date firewall protections.

### ***Enhancing information/intelligence sharing and analysis***

- ✓ The Chicago Fusion Center continued to renew technology licenses for a diverse toolset of applications utilized to develop and distribute various opensource intelligence products and manage mass notifications.
- ✓ The Chicago Police Department (CPD) Crime Prevention and Information Center (CPIC) — the urban area's designated fusion center — utilized UASI funds to improve and sustain its capabilities that provide relevant and timely intelligence by strengthening its collaborative relationships with federal, state and local partners.
- ✓ Chicago Fusion Center personnel, including command staff and analysts, were supported with virtual and in-person training in compliance with baseline fusion center performance measures outlined in the UASI NOFO. This included participation in several regional and national fusion center conferences that focused on fusion center privacy considerations, open-source investigations, security assessment certifications and other essential skills.

- ✓ The Fusion Center Counterterrorism Section continued to conduct monthly and quarterly Terrorism Liaison Officer meetings to discuss related topics that included:
  - Current trends, tactics and procedures domestic terrorist utilize
  - Intelligence reporting on foreign terrorist organizations
  - Case studies on recently arrested offenders for funding terrorist organizations
  - Intelligence reporting on current opioid recoveries/arrests/investigations
  - Opensource intelligence reporting on foreign terrorist organizations
  - Intelligence reporting on racial motivated violent extremist
  - Information and reporting on cyberterrorism
- ✓ Chicago Public Safety IT continued to refresh, update and maintain public safety radios for the Chicago police and fire departments to meet P25 standards. The P25 system has progressively integrated the city's radios into a unified, secure and encrypted system, enhancing interoperability with neighboring public safety entities and leading to a net positive ROI by reducing dependence on external vendors.
- ✓ PSIT also completed the installation of upgraded backend infrastructure, new fiber cabling, and new security cameras and license plate readers in the lower portions of Wacker Drive, Randolph Street, and Columbus Drive, improving network connectivity and optimizing data pathways.
- ✓ Cook County's Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security (EMRS) continues to operate and grow its Emergency Operations Center, which first opened in 2015 to serve as the countywide coordination facility for managing critical incidents and disasters. The EOC is equipped with technology solutions allowing virtual participation necessitated by pandemic conditions.
- ✓ Cook County EMRS used its open-architecture mass notification system to provide alerts to departments and bureaus within Cook County government, sister agencies, and client jurisdictions. Alerts can be sent by text, email, or voice messaging to public safety stakeholders and county employees regarding ongoing response and coordination activities through a blanket or geo-coded effort.
- ✓ Cook County EMRS continues to invest in the WebEOC system, which helped create municipal status boards and lifelines status boards for emerging and evolving events impacting participating municipal governments, allowing EMRS to maintain situational awareness and make resource support decisions as needed.
- ✓ Cook County EMRS continues to invest in and broaden its capabilities to assist municipalities and county residents by using the Everbridge Mass Notification system. During 2025, the system was used to communicate with public safety stakeholders and Cook County employees regarding response activities, inclement weather, and other potential threats including 247 daily situation reports, 148 situational awareness updates and 169 text message alerts to the public
- ✓ Cook County EMRS continues to operate mobile asset communications systems, including satellite and repeater access, allowing for an enhanced communication capability to support municipal partners during evolving incidents.

***Enhancing the protection of soft targets/crowded places***

- ✓ Cook County EMRS provided ongoing support to suburban municipalities involved in hardening security infrastructure or purchasing security equipment. Over \$2.6 million in

subgrants was awarded to 19 different suburban communities and government partners. The focus for many of the awards was the purchase of anti-vehicle barriers, drone technology and first-responder focused training to protect crowds and high-profile targets.

- ✓ Cook County EMRS allocated a total of \$1,510,460 in UASI funding to support subrecipients' public safety priorities through the acquisition of key assets, including public safety-rated drones (\$56,257), enhanced radio equipment (\$762,729), installation of security camera systems (\$275,506), and new or upgraded emergency response vehicles (\$147,263).
- ✓ Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC) continued to expand the coverage of marked light poles along the city's lakefront under its pole marking project. The expansion has included various lakefront locations north and south of DuSable/Lake Shore Drive that have been identified as additional locations where city residents and guests have been known to congregate and, as such, may become soft targets.
- ✓ Chicago OEMC completed the purchase of mass casualty kits as part of the Safe Chicago initiative that includes the installation of mass casualty bleeding control kits and AEDs in an increasing number of public facilities in the city.
- ✓ OEMC's capability to respond to and manage incidents was bolstered with the purchase of various types of response and emergency management vehicles and supplies, including two F250 response vehicles, three Explorer SUVs, and an F450-based equipment and tool truck, in addition to a 1000-gallon water distribution trailer and various towing supplies that will allow the vehicles to tow trailers equipped with a diverse set of tow hitches.
- ✓ OEMC also completed the purchase of additional deployable beam gates, connector cables, signage, and replacement parts that will be utilized during large scale events. This purchase represents the city's emphasis on ensuring that soft targets and crowded places across the city are afforded layered protection from the use of vehicles as a weapon.
- ✓ Chicago Fire Department (CFD) initiated the formation of a Tactical Medical Response Unit comprised of CFD paramedics. With UASI funding, CFD established protocols, initiated training, and began equipping members. This specialized unit of CFD EMS members will be available to respond to mass casualty incidents, building collapse requiring search and rescue response, special events, active threat, and other high threat/high consequence incidents where a higher level of care may be needed.
- ✓ CFD continued to conduct specialized training for its front-line personnel as well as special operations teams. These courses included supporting the mobile Simulation Training Lab that provided on-site training and demonstrations for CFD personnel at fire houses for mass casualty and other specialized responses. Special operations teams received additional certification trainings that allowed CFD members to be deployable national assets trained and equipped to conduct specialized rescues for terrorism incidents, mass casualty events from active shooter, IEDs, vehicle ramming, vertical (high-rise) terrorism, weapons of mass destruction incidents, and fire used as a weapon. Courses included Swift Water Rescue, Field Force Extrication, Public Safety Sampling, Emergency Medical Response to WMD and All-Hazard Incidents, Hazmat IC, Hazmat Tech B, Below Grade Tunnel, Vehicle and Machinery Operations, Vehicle and Machinery Technician, Responder Intervention Team, Confined Space, Trench Tech/Ops, Collapse Tech/Ops, Rope Tech/Ops, and Public Safety Diver Instructor, among others. In 2025 CFD opened special operations training to EMS staff to further enhance its response capabilities to mass casualty, special events and other terrorism incidents.
- ✓ Chicago Fire also utilized UASI funds to enhance its response capabilities to mass casualty, high threat/high consequence incidents, and other terrorism related responses through

equipment purchases including Special Operations Unit PPE, extrication tools, confined space rescue kits, and WMD/HAZMAT detection devices.

- ✓ With UASI funding, CFD conducted a large-scale joint tabletop exercise to discuss a response to a radiological mass casualty incident within Chicago. Operation Vista Forge brought together local, state and federal partners in a joint effort by CFD and US Army NORTHCOM to enhance coordinated response efforts across all levels of government and the private sector following a high consequence, mass casualty event. Many of CFD's UASI partners participated in this event, including OEMC, CPD, CPDH, Cook County DMERS, IEMA-OHS, ISP, DoD, FBI, DOE, USCG, private sector and other mutual aid partners.
- ✓ CFD purchased a new mass casualty response bus for patient treatment and care. This response vehicle will be deployed to special events and mass casualty incidents to provide immediate treatment and care onsite.
- ✓ CFD purchased two mini-pumper fire apparatus. These small fire engines are deployed to special events for their maneuverability through crowded spaces to support fire responses.
- ✓ The Active Shooter Exercise Program jointly conducted by the Chicago fire and police departments conducted a functional exercise with the staff of Willis Tower.
- ✓ Chicago Police Department (CPD) specialized response teams maintained and improved on their homeland security and counter terrorism response capability through the purchase of new equipment and training.
- ✓ Chicago SWAT continued its equipment replacement cycle for tactical robots, breaching tools, PPE, and dive gear. Grant funds were also used to provide the SWAT team with training courses, including a customized sniper course and updates to counter-suicide bomber response and interdiction.
- ✓ The purchase of three new armored rescue vehicles to increase SWAT capability to safely address multiple active threat incidents was completed this year.
- ✓ The Chicago Bomb Squad took possession of three response vehicles that allow Chicago explosives technicians to respond faster to calls for service. Each vehicle is equipped with the necessary tools to address and mitigate suspected explosive devices, including a bomb suit, a portable x-ray, disruptors, and hand tools.
- ✓ Chicago Explosives Detection Canine Teams funded through UASI purchased two new explosives detection canines to replace dogs retiring this year. The unit also completed a replacement cycle for eight EDCT response vehicles. UASI funds continued to support weekly canine maintenance and annual certification training for all EDCTs, as well as large-venue joint training with CPD SWAT and the Bomb Squad.

### ***Combating domestic violent extremism***

- ✓ Chicago Fire Department continued its Simulation Laboratory and Mobile Laboratory training programs for its members. The Sim Lab is academy-based and provides CFD members with CBRNE training. The Mobile Lab enhances members' skills training for mass casualty incidents, including the use of tourniquets, clotting materials, triaging procedures, and focused interventions. For this, the training team goes to CFD firehouses to conduct training refreshers.
- ✓ The Chicago Police Department provide its detectives with training and licenses for digital forensic technologies aimed at enhancing its attribution capabilities. CPD also continued its replacement program for expiring Air Purifying Respirators (APRs) issued to front-line personnel by distributing new APRs and filters. CPD collaborated with Chicago Public Safety



IT to continue upgrades and maintenance of CPD's CLEAR System, which provides the backbone of the Urban Area's enterprise-wide criminal information capabilities.

- ✓ Cook County EMRS facilitated 22 first-responder focused trainings for 762 attendees.
- ✓ Cook County EMRS hosted four FBI Terrorism Officer Liaison Trainings, attended by 292 law enforcement personnel from federal, state and local enforcement agencies.

### ***Enhancing community preparedness and resilience***

- ✓ Cook County EMRS participated in 187 community engagement and preparedness outreach events throughout the year, providing preparedness and safety-oriented messaging to thousands of festival and event attendees.
- ✓ The EMRS Preparedness team hosted the second annual EMRS Training and Preparedness Summit with 155 participants representing 71 municipalities and organizations.
- ✓ In partnership with the City of Chicago, EMRS updated its Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), which involved assessing and planning for the hazards and threats posing the greatest risk to the combined statistical area. As part of the THIRA process, the Urban Area performs security site analysis and surveillance operations of identified critical infrastructure and key resources.
- ✓ Cook County EMRS created its first Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA). The HIRA focuses on potential hazards to infrastructure or assets to mitigate damages during widespread incidents. HIRA is a list of hazards validated by subject matter experts that identifies components of consequence analysis. The primary objective is to review various risk assessment with subject matter experts that create documented work with a risk methodology selection.
- ✓ Cook County EMRS hosted two and participated in six cross-discipline tabletop and full-scale emergency response exercises:
  - EMRS
    - EOC Activation Exercise
    - New Trier Severe Weather Exercise
  - Cross-Discipline Participation
    - Cybersecurity
    - Norridge Active Shooter
    - University of Illinois-Chicago Active Shooter
    - Hazardous Material Release: Rosemont, Illinois (LEPC)
    - Glenbrook School District 225 Reunification Exercise
    - Orland Winter Storm Exercise
- ✓ Cook County EMRS conducted 71 training events during which 2,186 individuals received approximately 21,700 hours of training.
- ✓ In partnership with Cook County, the City of Chicago updated its Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), which involved assessing and planning for the hazards and threats posing the greatest risk to the combined statistical area. As part of the THIRA process, the Urban Area performs security site analysis and surveillance operations of identified critical infrastructure and key resources. The Urban Area also completed the FEMA Stakeholder Preparedness Report and worked with the Illinois Capability Assessment tool to properly analyze the county's response capabilities.

- ✓ Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC) replenished its emergency ration stockpile by purchasing 2,089 16-meal MRE cases and enhanced community preparedness engagement by implementing its IronHeart Public Safety Campaign for National Preparedness Month by purchasing Ironheart campaign materials for CTA buses.
- ✓ Chicago OEMC hosted a Whole Community Training Summit in Champaign in October. The events featured general sessions and break-out discussions from experts in the emergency management community. Topics covered included how recent technology advancements can help emergency management, incident planning, and interoperability; improving interagency cooperation; personal and community resiliency; and best practices for various public safety special teams, among others. Objectives are to continue engagement with stakeholders, provide essential training, share best practices, provide a forum for networking, and gain a better understanding of the changing needs of the various sectors.

### ***Maintaining statewide mutual aid***

- ✓ As in previous years, the City of Chicago renewed MOUs with collar jurisdictions as well as universities and agencies that operate within city limits for radio operations to enhance interoperability. These MOUs contribute to the ongoing assessment of interoperability needs and ensure these agencies have the proper channels to communicate with the city with no additional comms coordination required in the event of a large-scale incident.
- ✓ Chicago is part of the MABAS and ILEAS response plans and continues use of the public safety radio cache. The cache is used frequently to enhance public safety communication around large-scale events throughout the city. These radios facilitate interoperable communications among Cook County's 134 municipalities, which can be called upon to supply personnel during an event. This ensures the capacity for timely communications in support of security, situational awareness and operations for emergency personnel.
- ✓ MABAS: Support, Training, Equipment and Exercise
  - Provided mandatory skills training for 219 members of the USAR Team in 2025.
  - July 11-26, the IL-TF1 Urban Search and Rescue Team was deployed as a 39-person Type 3 Team to Texas for the severe flash floods.
  - Provided training on radiation detection equipment in Decatur, Illinois, in an effort to expand the Primary and Secondary Screener Program.
  - Sept. 16, 2025, provided Urban Search and Rescue vehicle display equipment support at the Cook County EMRS Preparedness Fair.
  - Oct. 20, 2025, supported the mobilization exercise in Stratton State Park, Morris, Illinois, on the Illinois River, a joint Illinois Water Rescue, IL-TF1, Divisional boat team and drone team, for the water and SARCOP drill.
  - Nov. 10-11, 2025, Urban Search and Rescue supported component-specific training for 19 members at the National Urban Search and Rescue Conference.
  - Feb. 7- 8, 2025, UASI provided communications equipment utilized at Frozen Prairie Statewide Communications Exercise.
  - Aug. 6, 2025, Chicago and Suburban Cook County Local Emergency Planning Committee's Hazardous Materials Transportation Response Functional Exercise in Rosemont, Illinois.
  - Aug. 8-9, 2025, Prairie Voice Statewide Communication Exercise

- Oct. 20-21, 2025, Water Rescue 24-hour Mobilization Exercise, Illinois River, Morris, Illinois – three teams (IL WR1 with 19 attendees, Drone Team with eight attendees, and IL TF1 with 12 personnel)
- Five monthly water rescue trainings:
  - Wheeling, July 30, 2025, 15 attendees
  - Highland Park, Aug. 12, 2025, 26 attendees
  - Willow Springs, Aug. 28, 2025, 30 attendees
  - Yorkville, July 29, 2025, 23 attendees
  - Deerfield, Sept. 22, 2025, 38 attendees
- Flood Rescue and Swiftwater Boat Operations – Oregon, Illinois (Rock River), Sept. 29 – Oct. 1, 2025, 15 attendees
- ✓ Orland Fire Protection District
  - Six courses offered to Cook County first responders: two law enforcement courses, three emergency medicine courses, one company fire officer; 117 students trained
- ✓ Prairie State
  - Four courses offered: specialized rescue hazardous materials courses, company fire officer, compact passenger vehicle rescue, NIMS/ICS; 52 students trained

## 2026 Initiatives and Goals

- Strengthen Cook County EMRS internal policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure resiliency
- Build a culture of readiness through municipal partnerships and enhanced information sharing
- Ensure a prepared Cook County through municipal and resident engagement

### *Enhancing cybersecurity capabilities*

In 2026, the Chicago ISO is targeting a number of cybersecurity initiatives, many of which are ongoing efforts:

- Addressing opportunities for process improvement in Identity & Access Management
- Enhancing the deployment of a security solution for the city's Department of Water Management (DWM) Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) environment.
- Building out and maturing the city's NIST Cyber Security Framework based controls with foci in Identity & Access Management, Threat Management and Security Operations.
- Continuing to refresh the city's cybersecurity toolset.
- Continuing to place a focus on the cybersecurity controls protecting the city's critical infrastructure components.
- Host tabletop exercises to drill and prepare for cyber incidents with a focus on the cyber resilient enterprise.
- Chicago Public Safety IT will continue to collaborate with the city's Department of Technology and Innovation INFOSEC department to focus on a holistic approach to vulnerability management and to align this effort with the state's emphasis on enhancing cybersecurity capabilities.

- Chicago PSIT will continue to expand the installation of the new firewalls and ensure the protection and functionality of critical infrastructure and core capabilities against cyber threats.
- The retirement of legacy applications and outdated IT infrastructure across public safety domains will continue to be a Chicago PSIT priority in 2026. Continued support through UASI funding will allow PSIT to replace and upgrade the hardware and software infrastructure to ensure resilience, redundancy, long-term sustainability, and alignment with the state's goal of protecting critical infrastructure and key resources.
- The procurement and upgrading of radio assets and infrastructure, including new dispatch consoles at the Chicago OEMC, is ongoing. The partial replacements improved the capability to manage and support large scale events. This effort reflects the state's goals of improving homeland security coordination, communications and the protection of critical infrastructure.
- The effort to improve the availability of Chicago Operation Virtual Shield public safety cameras will continue in 2026 by prioritizing the expansion of the city's camera network with license plate readers as well as the replacement and repair of cameras and the support backend infrastructure. This initiative supports the state's goals in terms of intelligence/information sharing and prevention of domestic and foreign terrorism/targeted violence.
- Chicago Public Safety IT objectives for 2026 closely align with the overarching goals of the Urban Area's strategy, focusing on cybersecurity, system modernization, network resilience, advanced communication systems, and enhanced surveillance infrastructure to ensure public safety and preparedness against various threats.

#### *Enhancing information/intelligence sharing and analysis*

- The Urban Area will continue to enhance information sharing capabilities across all sectors including public, private and nonprofit. This includes but is not limited to utilization of internet-based information sharing tools and capabilities, agency-to-agency collaboration and communication, and operational coordination. A key priority of the Urban Area is to build a strategic information sharing program that incorporates the numerous capabilities currently utilized by the Urban Area.
- The Chicago Fusion Center will continue to implement Fusion Center Refresh Project at the Public Safety Headquarters building by replacing end-of-life video control and signal distribution equipment as well as replacing the raised floor that has been used for more than eight years. The uninterruptible power supply for the CPIC floor is also expected to be replaced in 2026.
- New relevant training for Chicago Fusion Center staff is also being identified for 2026, to include the impact of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence on Fusion Center operations.

#### *Enhancing the protection of soft targets/crowded places*

- Chicago Public Safety IT will continue to expand its network of safety cameras and License Plate Readers to remaining critical locations within the city. PSIT will also continue the camera backhaul infrastructure replacement program to account for the additional cameras and increased definition, as well as performing camera replacements on aging devices and network equipment. The radio replacement program is also expected to continue replacing end-of-life handheld radios that are unable to incorporate newer technologies. The ongoing modernization of the radio backhaul infrastructure will continue the transition from outdated copper circuits to digital systems.

- The Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications anticipates completing the purchase of FAA-compliant drones to replace its current fleet. The pole marking project will continue to be expanded this year into areas north and south of the central downtown area that have been identified as congregate locations for various events. A meeting with federal stakeholders has allowed OEMC to clarify and determine gaps in its mass care stockpile. In 2026, it anticipates continuing the purchase of additional quantities of MREs, cots, and hygiene kits for a mass care response to a human-caused or natural disaster.
- The Chicago Police Department expects the delivery of a new command bus for the Bureau of Counterterrorism in Q3 2026. This new command bus will increase CPD's multiple incident management capabilities for both planned and unplanned incidents.
- Chicago Police specialized teams will continue to replace and upgrade equipment by purchasing replacement explosives detection canines to replace retiring dogs, NVGs, tactical sUAS, tactical communications systems, a large platform robot, and ongoing leadership training for SWAT team leaders. Additional purchases of WMD SCBAs, portable x-ray devices, and response vehicles for EDCTs and the Bomb Squad will ensure that all specialized unit members have the appropriate equipment for responding to terrorism incidents. Certifications for Chicago Police Explosives Detection Canine Teams will be renewed through regular training and participation in large venue drills and exercises.
- Chicago Fire Department Special Operations Teams will continue to be deployable assets and will be trained in a diverse set of specialized rescue scenarios associated with terrorism incidents, including vehicle ramming, vertical terrorism, and the use of fire as a weapon. Fire Suppression and EMS units will also be leveraged and trained through the Mobile Lab program. Specialized extrication equipment such as rescue saws and grinders will be purchased for all CFD front line units to ensure that all teams are sufficiently equipped to address mass casualty and/or multi-incident response scenarios. Specialized teams will be receiving newer model gas meters, ventilation fans and additional thermal imaging cameras, in addition to other HAZMAT detection gear. The Simulation Training Lab will continue the replacement cycle for end-of-life equipment and purchase new mannequins, airway management trainers, cameras, and other training equipment.
- Through the UASI program, CFD will initiate planning for the Vista Forge Full-Scale Exercise. This is a continuation of the Vista Forge TTX that was conducted in September 2025, bringing together assets from local, state and federal partners to test its coordination, communications and plans for a radiological mass-casualty incident in downtown Chicago.
- Also through the UASI program, CFD will plan and conduct a large-scale urban search and rescue full-scale exercise in a simulated building collapse environment. CFD will bring together citywide and mutual aid partners, including OEMC, CPD, CDOT, Water Department and MABAS, to test established plans and procedures to respond to a USAR mission including coordination, communications, victim rescue, fire/CBRN response, and treatment.
- CFD will continue building on the foundation capabilities of the newly formed Tactical Medical Response Unit. CFD anticipates additional training and equipment needs in 2026.



- CFD will continue to enhance its response capabilities to mass casualty incidents through the implementation of a field response whole blood delivery program by trained paramedics.

#### *Combating domestic violent extremism*

- The Chicago Police Department will continue to sustain its video forensics capabilities through new and refresher training for investigators. Similarly, additional new respirators and related supplies will be purchased using the new technical equipment and protective contract, which will allow CPD to continue the replacement cycle of CPD's respirators for all eligible sworn personnel.
- Chicago Public Safety IT will continue to retire additional legacy applications and end-of-life backend IT equipment that supports the Chicago Police CLEAR System. In its place, PSIT will utilize UASI funds to purchase new servers and other services to maintain and upgrade the system. In conjunction with CPD, PSIT will continue conducting a detailed analysis of the system to address long-term sustainment.

#### *Enhancing community preparedness and resilience*

- Chicago OEMC will continue to provide training classes for new CERT personnel. Work will be ongoing and aimed at impartially assessing and guiding this program to ensure that all of Chicago's communities have the necessary emergency resources available. This also expands the volunteer network and allows OEMC to engage more closely with south and westside communities.
- As a component of Chicago OEMC's Whole Community efforts, a new plan for hosting whole community training summits will be developed. This is aligned with OEMC's strategic planning for the next cycle of summits from 2025-2027 and will create a consortium of emergency management partners to assist with subject matter expertise and best practices for future conferences.
- In 2026, Chicago OEMC will continue expansion of the Safe Chicago program, to include equipping government operated fleet vehicles with Safe Chicago kits, branching out into the nonprofit and private sectors with additional partnerships focusing on schools, cultural properties, street organizations, etc. These efforts are in addition to ongoing training for government employees and partners and expanding public education work to promote life safety equipment.

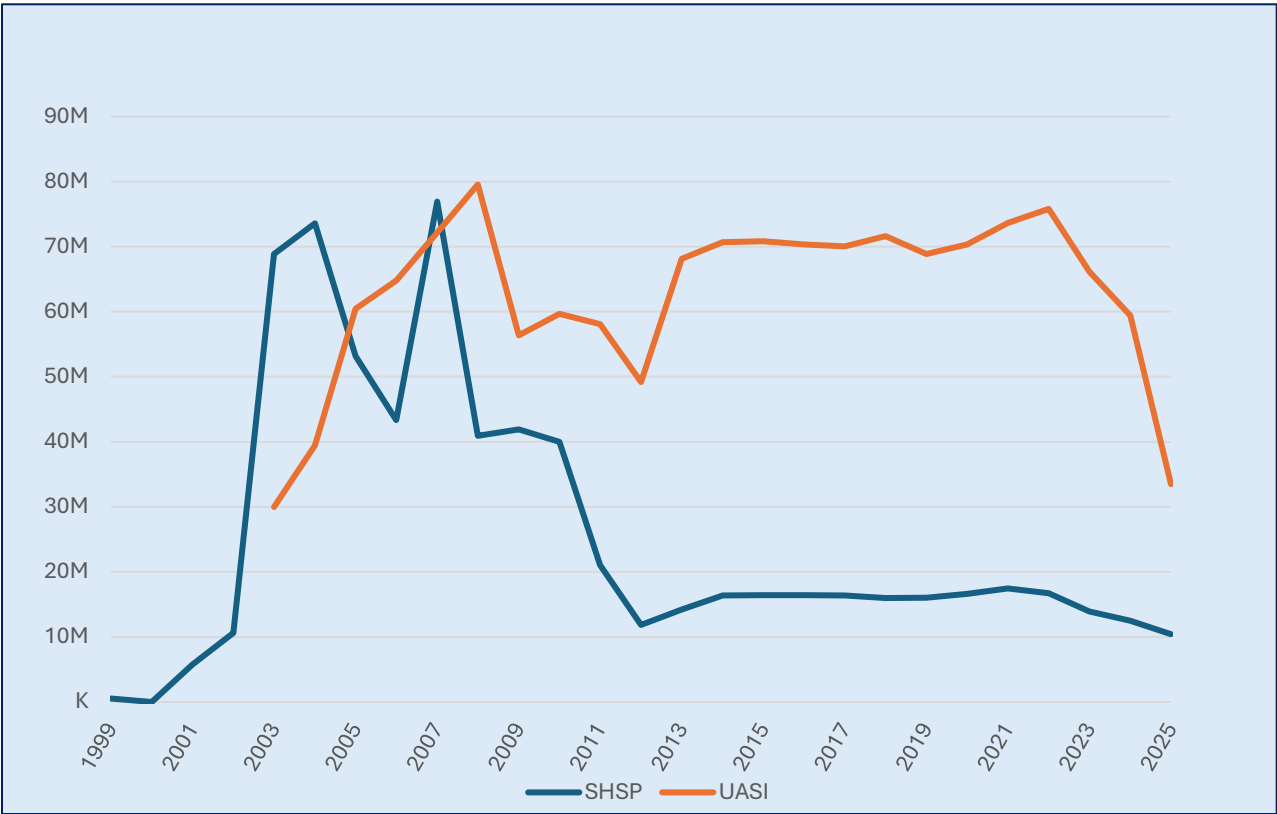
#### *Maintain statewide mutual aid*

- In 2026, the City of Chicago will continue to work towards a more robust inventory management system for the region to allow for better visibility of available assets and inform future purchasing needs. The Urban Area will partner with MABAS in these efforts and leverage the necessary platforms.

# Appendix

# Homeland Security Funding in Illinois

## State Homeland Security Program and Urban Areas Security Initiative



## State Preparedness and Response Grant

