

USING TECHNOLOGY TO AID BUSINESS CONTINUITY PRE AND POST DISASTER

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ABSTRACT:

A large number, some 40%, of small and medium sized businesses in the United States fail to recover after being hit by a hurricane or other disaster (Protecting Your Business, 2013). Factors that contribute to businesses closing post disasters include but are not limited to lack of awareness, lack of communication and education on best business continuity practices, and information sharing post disaster; these factors can largely be classified into preparedness and recovery factors. Florida State University in collaboration with the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) has developed two tools that aim to mitigate factors that contribute to business failure in small to medium sized business. This paper will present the *Mind your Business: The Florida Business Continuity Initiative* and the *Florida Virtual Business Emergency Operations Center*. Mind your Business is designed to increase awareness and education on business continuity and planning pre-disaster. The Florida Virtual Business Emergency Operations Center (FLVBEOC) is a portal that aids communication and the sharing of information between Emergency Support Function 18 (ESF18) within FDEM and private sector representatives with an emphasis on the response and recovery periods following a disaster. The FLVBEOC was tested during the Spring 2014 Panhandle Flooding in which 26 counties in North Florida had state level emergency declarations. This paper presents the results of this initial test and discusses future enhancements for the system.

KEYWORDS:

Business Continuity, Emergency Management, Public-Private Partnership

References

Protecting Your Businesses. (2013, March 1). Retrieved July 14, 2014, from <http://www.fema.gov/protecting-your-businesses>