

# California State Emergency Response Commission

(2013-2018)

## Strategic Plan



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**MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR**

I am pleased to present the California State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) 2013-2018 Strategic Plan (Plan). This Plan outlines the vision, mission, values, goals and objectives critical to coordinate and supervise implementation of the federal hazardous materials Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) within California.

The vision of the SERC is to promote emergency response planning and community awareness by ensuring and overseeing the implementation of EPCRA, with the goal of assuring protection for the citizens, property, and the environment of the State of California. The SERC shall maintain an open forum to consider ideas from the public and private interest while promoting a comprehensive and effective hazardous materials program.

Add more after completing all the other sections of the Strategic Plan.

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### I. Vision

The vision of the SERC is to promote emergency response planning and community awareness by ensuring and overseeing the implementation of EPCRA, with the goal of assuring protection for the citizens, property, and the environment of the State of California. The SERC shall maintain an open forum to consider ideas from the public and private interest while promoting a comprehensive and effective hazardous materials program.

### II. Mission

The mission of the SERC is to coordinate and supervise implementation of the federal hazardous materials Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) within California. This includes federal programs to prevent, mitigate, and enhance responses to hazardous material emergencies and ensure public availability of appropriate chemical information as prescribed by law. The membership of the SERC is defined in EO W-40-93.

### III. Core Values

The Core values of the SERC are:

- **Duty:** The SERC will maintain the highest ethical and professional standards in carrying out its duties and responsibilities. Honesty and integrity will be the hallmark of the SERC and be conveyed, internally and externally, through word – as well as deed.
- **Respect:** The SERC will build and value meaningful partnerships and embrace diversity. Teamwork will be encouraged to enlist and empower the public to offer original perspectives to hazmat emergency response community awareness, planning, and training.
- **Commitment:** Through a consistent approach, the SERC will promote a safe and prepared California with strong leadership and meaningful partnerships.

### IV. Five Guiding Principles

The five guiding principles form the foundation of everything the SERC does. They are “constants” in every plan it creates and decision it makes.

- Promote and support the implementation of EPCRA and its intent working closely with our the people of California, industry, regulators, emergency responders, and other stakeholders
- Promote and support local hazmat community awareness, and emergency response planning and training
- Promote and provide a public platform to encourage hazmat emergency response community awareness, planning, and training
- Promote and support HazMat Multiagency communication, awareness, planning, and training
- Promote the protection of the State of California’s citizens, property, and environment

### V. Purpose

The purpose of the SERC is to:

- Enhance public safety and environmental protection through efficient implementation of hazardous material emergency planning and community right-to-know laws
- Designate local emergency planning districts and appoint a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and members for each district
- Supervise and coordinate the activities of the LEPCs
- Coordinate other state agency activities in the area of hazardous materials emergency planning and community right-to-know laws to ensure legal and jurisdictional autonomy of each of these agencies is preserved
- Promote, assist, and guide local, regional, and state government activities to integrate hazardous materials emergency planning and accident prevention programs in order to prevent unnecessary overlaps
- Establish procedures for receiving, processing and providing information to the public on hazardous materials
- Review LEPC regional emergency plans and make recommendations to LEPC on revisions of the plan that may be necessary to ensure coordination of such plan with regional emergency plans of other LEPCs
- Receive verbal and written follow-up emergency notifications of the release of extremely hazardous substances or hazardous chemicals
- Provide a forum for the consideration of ideas and concerns of public and private interest in the implementation of hazardous material emergency planning and accident prevention programs
- Provide a mechanism for timely review and processing of requests for hazardous material information legally available to the public.

### VI. SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

This SWOT analysis identifies the SERC's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats based on its past and present operations:

Questions to ask:

Positives/Strengths

- What are the SERCs advantages, in terms of people, physical resources, and finances?
- What does the SERC do well?
- What activities or processes have been met with success?
- Forums for LEPCs and Public?

Negatives/Weaknesses

- What could be improved in the SERC in terms of staffing, physical resources, funding?

- What activities and processes lack effectiveness or are poorly done?
- Funding of Activities?

Positives/Opportunities

- What possibilities exist to support or help the SERC effort-- in the environment, the people it serves, or the people who conduct the work of the SERC?
- What local, national or international trends draw interest to the SERC?
- Is a social change or demographic pattern favorable to the SERC's goal?
- Is a new funding source available?
- Have changes in policies made something easier?
- Do changes in technology hold new promise?

Negatives/Threats

- What obstacles do the SERC face that hinder its efforts in the environment, the people to serve, or the people (CUPAs, Cal OES, LEPCs, and SERC members) who conduct the work of it?
- What local, national or international trends favor interest in other or competing programs?
- Is a social change or demographic pattern harmful to the SERC goal?
- Is the financial situation changing?
- Have changes in policies made something more difficult?
- Is changing technology threatening the SERC's effectiveness?

Considerations:

Positives/Strengths

- HazMat Disclosure; California Environmental Reporting System (CERS)
- SERC/LEPCs Websites
  - Announcements
  - Public Outreach
  - Public Information Requests
- Guidance Information
- HMEP Grant Administration Planning and Training
- Funding
  - General
  - Unified Program
  - HMEP
- CUPAs are the field LEPC Members implementing and enforcing EPCRA (HazMat disclosure/ spill reporting/hazmat emergency planning) at the local level
- State (Cal OES) and local (CUPAs) Public Information requests procedures

### Negatives/Weaknesses

- Implementation of EPCRA minimal without SERC meeting
- No Spill notification follow-up
- SERC Leadership for the state and LEPCs
- Stabilizing LEPCs membership
- Non-standardized LEPC administrative Services. LEPCs independently supervise and coordinate their activities based on their needs to varying degrees
- No regional emergency plan review and comment mechanism. Most LEPCs lack a plan or a current one. Continual debate to replace regional plans with the CUPAs HazMat Area Plans. Meets intent and more community localized emergency planning
- Minimal Public Relations
- Outdated Guidance Information
- Un-measurable updates and follow-ups on HazMat spill verbal reporting to Cal OES to ensure the public's health and safety and protection of the environment and private property
- Not sponsoring and supporting regional exercises
- Lacking an appropriate avenue for SERC/LEPC legislative review and comment
- Name of CA SERC - Chemical Emergency Planning and Response Commission (CEPRC). All other states named SERC. Causes confusion
- Is SERC Membership appropriate for current state government structure/organization?
- Statewide HazMat Training Coordination
- No SERC by-laws

### Positives/Opportunities

- How to implement the specifics of EPCRA are left to the states discretion
- Study and learn from the HazMat Climate (Commodity Flow, Hazard Analyses, and Spill data)
- Amend CA EPCRA laws and regulations
- Standardize LEPCs with flexibility to meet state and regional specific needs
- EF-10 development
- Community Events/Workshops to enhance the prevention of, response to and recovery from HazMat incidents

### Negatives/Threats

- EPCRA implementation in the public eye due to hazmat disasters like West Texas

### VII. Strategic Goals, Objectives and Action Items

Determine the Strategic Goals and Objectives by analyzing the past and present SERC Operations strengths and weaknesses and considering future opportunities and threats.

Goals:

- Determine SERC Membership
- Finalize a SERC Charter
- Finalize a SERC Strategic Plan
- Finalize SERC By-laws
- Standardize LEPCs Roles & Responsibilities
- Standardize LEPC By-laws

Objectives

Action Items

### VIII. Evaluation

Once every 4-6 years, the Strategic Plan needs to be re-evaluated to determine its relevancy.