UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

OFFICE OF OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH

National Severe Storms Laboratory
120 David L. Boren Blvd.
Norman, OK 73072

April 15, 2022

Hello Emergency Managers:

We are seeking Emergency Managers to help us test two new tools that have potential to help NWS forecasters provide better decision support. If you are interested, please consider applying to participate in additional weeks of the 2021 Brief Vulnerability Overview Tool Tabletop Exercise in the Hazardous Weather Testbed (HWT). The testbed is a joint project of the NOAA National Weather Service and the NOAA National Severe Storms Laboratory to help foster collaboration between research and operations to test and evaluate emerging technologies and science. A summary of our project is on the second page of this letter.

Our project will take place during the week of September 19-23 and October 3-7 and will be conducted remotely. We would be grateful to anyone who can commit to **one full week**. Details about the research participation will be provided to those who are selected.

If you'd like to apply, please fill out our online form!

Please fill out the form by **August 8**, as candidates will be selected shortly thereafter. We are seeking Emergency Managers interested in working through simulated severe weather cases and actively engaging with researchers and forecasters. If selected, you will also contribute to group discussions and complete surveys concerning how you would use this experimental information to do your job, thus helping us develop a new severe weather warning paradigm. Emergency Managers play a critical role in the severe weather preparation and warning response process, and your input is valuable.

Sincerely,

Kodi L. Berry, Ph.D,
FACETs Program Lead, NOAA National Severe Storms Laboratory

Brief Vulnerability Overview Tool (BVOT) Tabletop Exercise in

NOAA's Hazardous Weather Testbed

WHAT – NOAA is currently funding research on a number of forecast products and techniques that might better provide a continuous flow of useful information to support emergency manager's needs before and during severe weather. There are significant challenges in transitioning science advancements, however, to assure that they are helpful to emergency managers and their local decision-making partners. This project tests two tools for forecasters and will simulate end-to-end severe weather communication through realistic scenarios. Participants will work through six total cases on Tuesday through Thursday (one case each morning or afternoon). In each case, forecasters will prepare and deliver two decision-support briefings, then issue warnings and provide warning-related decision support. EMs will react to this information in a tabletop exercise manner, working through decisions and actions they would normally take given the information provided. EMs will be asked to help create injects to provide realism and help us further test the utility of the experimental data.

WHO – We are seeking a diverse set of emergency managers and are seeking to have four EMs participating at all times during each experiment week. We are interested in having at least four EMs from Mississippi, with remaining EMs from anywhere in the U.S. We hope that everyone who feels interested will apply.

WHY – For each severe weather simulation, EMs will receive and react to severe weather briefings and severe thunderstorm and tornado warning information. Feedback from this evaluation will be used to understand the risks and opportunities of these concepts before they are further developed for NWS offices nationwide.

WHEN – This project will be conducted virtually September 19-23 and October 3-7. We are grateful to anyone who can commit for a full week, which is how we would normally run our experiments.

For more information on one of our experimental tools, see our recent conference presentations:
- American Meteorological Society: Communicating about High Impact Weather: Warnings and Understanding Your Audience, in the 13th Symposium on Societal Applications: Policy, Research and Practice: https://ams.confex.com/ams/98Annual/webprogram/Paper328223.html