

# Interagency Emergency Operations Support: Lessons Learned



# OUTLINE

NEMA / EMAC

Event Background

Engagement/Mobilization

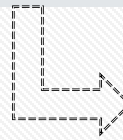
Execution

Lessons Learned



**NEMA / EMAC**

# NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

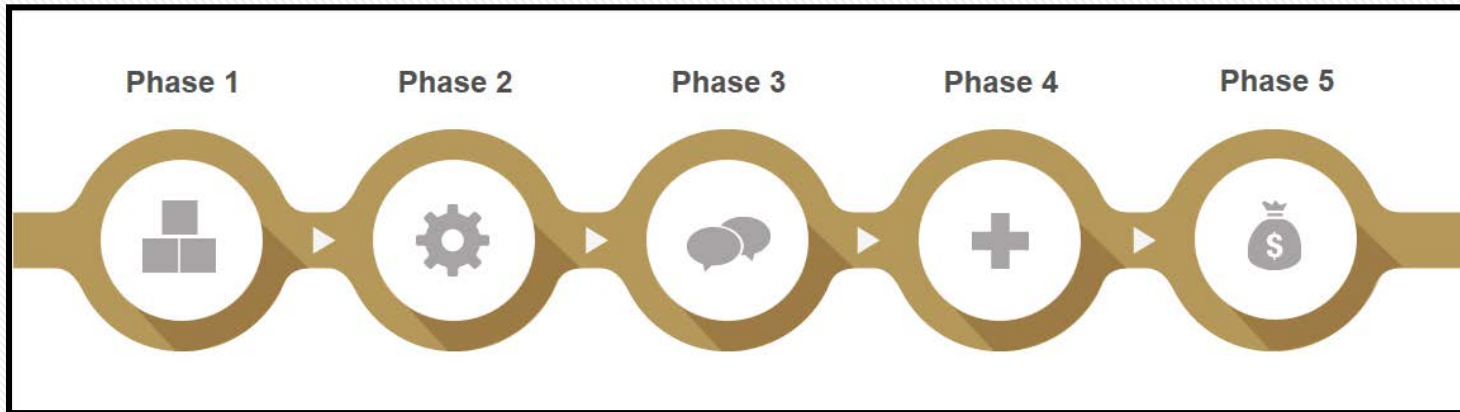


- EMAC is the first national disaster–relief compact since the Civil Defense and Disaster Compact of 1950 to be ratified by Congress
- EMAC offers assistance during governor-declared states of emergency through a responsive, straightforward system that allows states to send personnel, equipment, and commodities to help disaster relief efforts in other states
- Through EMAC, states are able to join forces and help one another when they need it the most: whenever disaster strikes!

Source: <http://www.emacweb.org/index.php/learnaboutemac/what-is-emac>

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE COMPACT

## The EMAC Process



Phase 1 – Pre event preparation

Phase 2 – Activation

Phase 3 – Request & Offer

Phase 4 – Response

Phase 5 – Reimbursement



# **Event Background**

# NEWS COVERAGE OF THE STORM



By: Doyle Rice,  
USA TODAY  
8:48 a.m. EST  
November 20, 2014

## EPIC SNOWSTORM ON TRACK TO SET A RECORD IN BUFFALO

## The New York Times

Snow Piles Up in Buffalo Area,  
With More Expected; at Least 7 Die  
By JEFF Z. KLEIN and MARC NOV. 19, 2014



Media & Public Relations

NEWS  
RELEASE

**Pa. Turnpike Assisting  
With Snow Removal Effort  
in Buffalo, New York**



## NBC NEWS

**BUFFALO, WESTERN NEW YORK  
BURIED BY ANOTHER WAVE OF SNOW**



# NEWS COVERAGE OF THE STORM



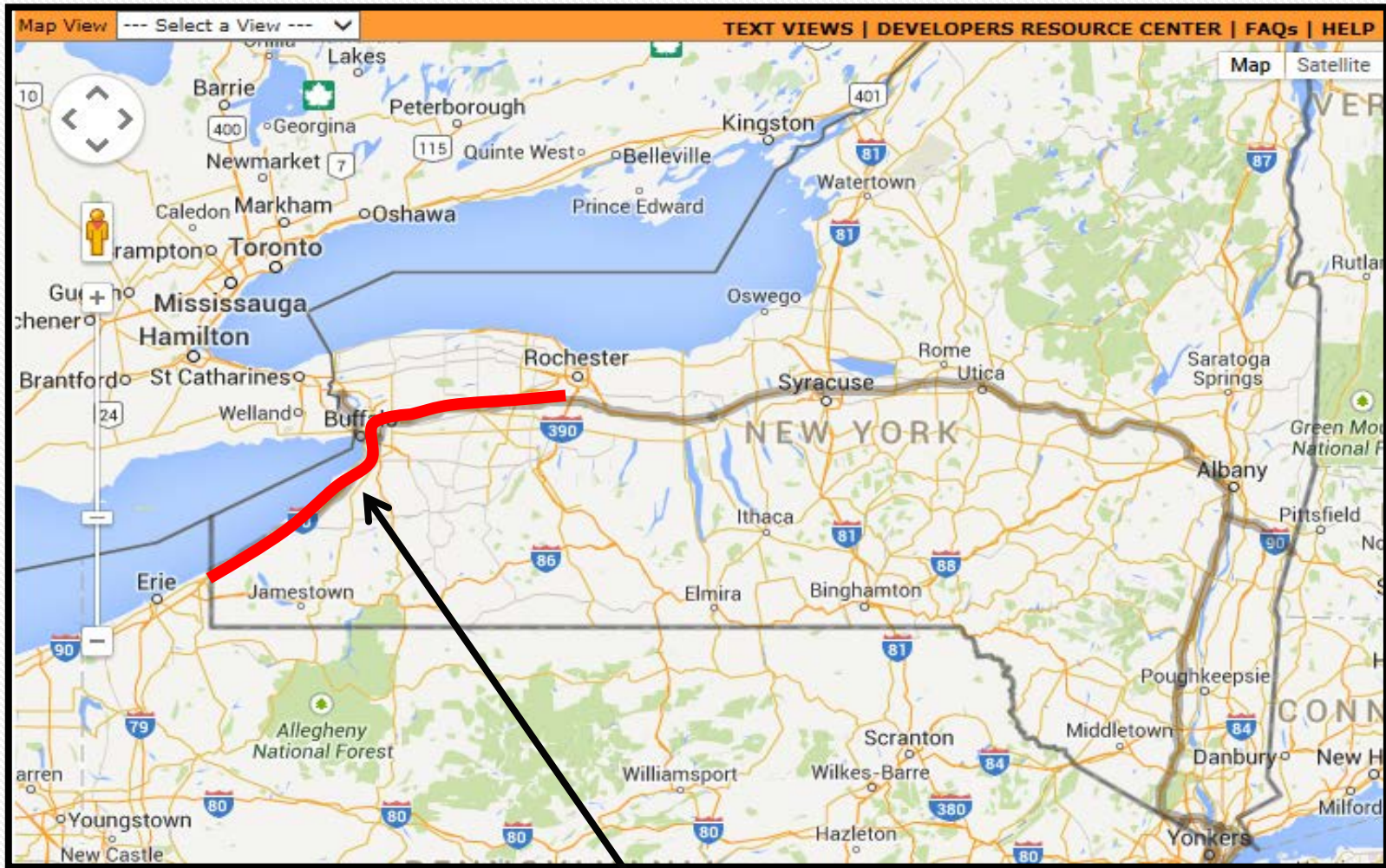


# STORM DETAILS

- November 2014 – Buffalo, New York  
⇒ **88" snow in 4 days**
- February 2015 – Boston Massachusetts  
⇒ **75" snow in 40 days**
- All roadways within Buffalo area (including the New York State Thruway) became impassable and vehicles were stranded
- Buffalo Bills had to relocate game to Detroit's Ford Field



# STORM DETAILS



A 132-mile section of the New York State Thruway (Interstate 90) from exits 46 through 61 was forced to shut down for a couple of days.





# STORM DETAILS



Weather Map



# **Engagement & Mobilization**

# The photo that started it all in Buffalo...



8:00 AM – Wednesday November 18, 2014

# ENGAGEMENT

**WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 18, 2014**

**8:00 AM** – PTC COO contacts CEO

- CEO says, “Do you think we should help?”
- COO contacts Director of Traffic Engineering & Operations
- Director contacts New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA)

**8:30 AM** – NYSTA Director of Maintenance & Operations, “**How soon can you get here?**”

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PTC took 5 loader mounted SnoGo blowers and one OshKosh self propelled blower.





# ENGAGEMENT

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2015**

## **Pennsylvania EMA contacted by Massachusetts EMA**

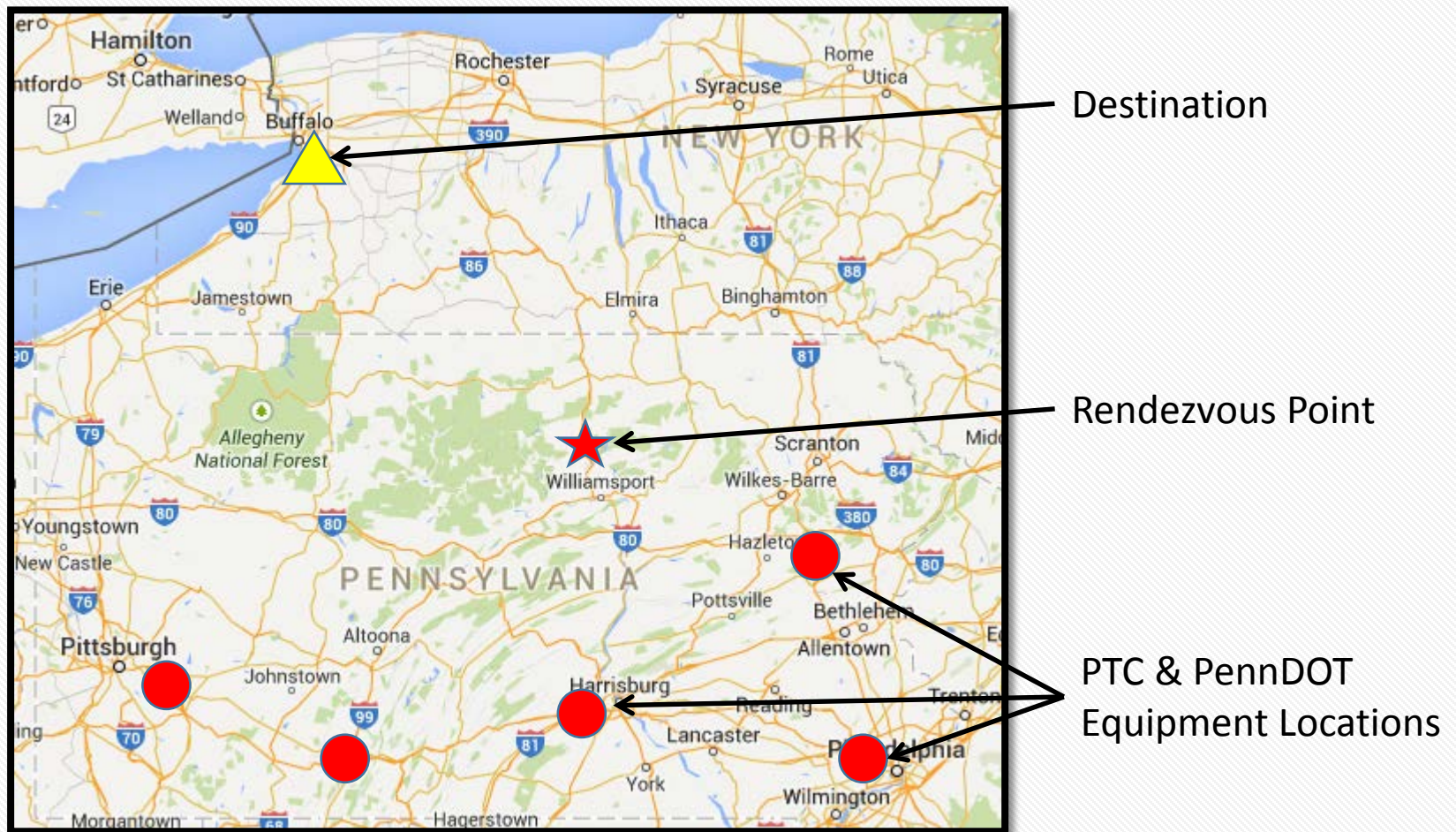
- Assistance requested dump trucks and backhoes
- PTC completed REQ-A (Request for Assistance) form

PTC took 5 dump trucks and 5 backhoes to Boston.





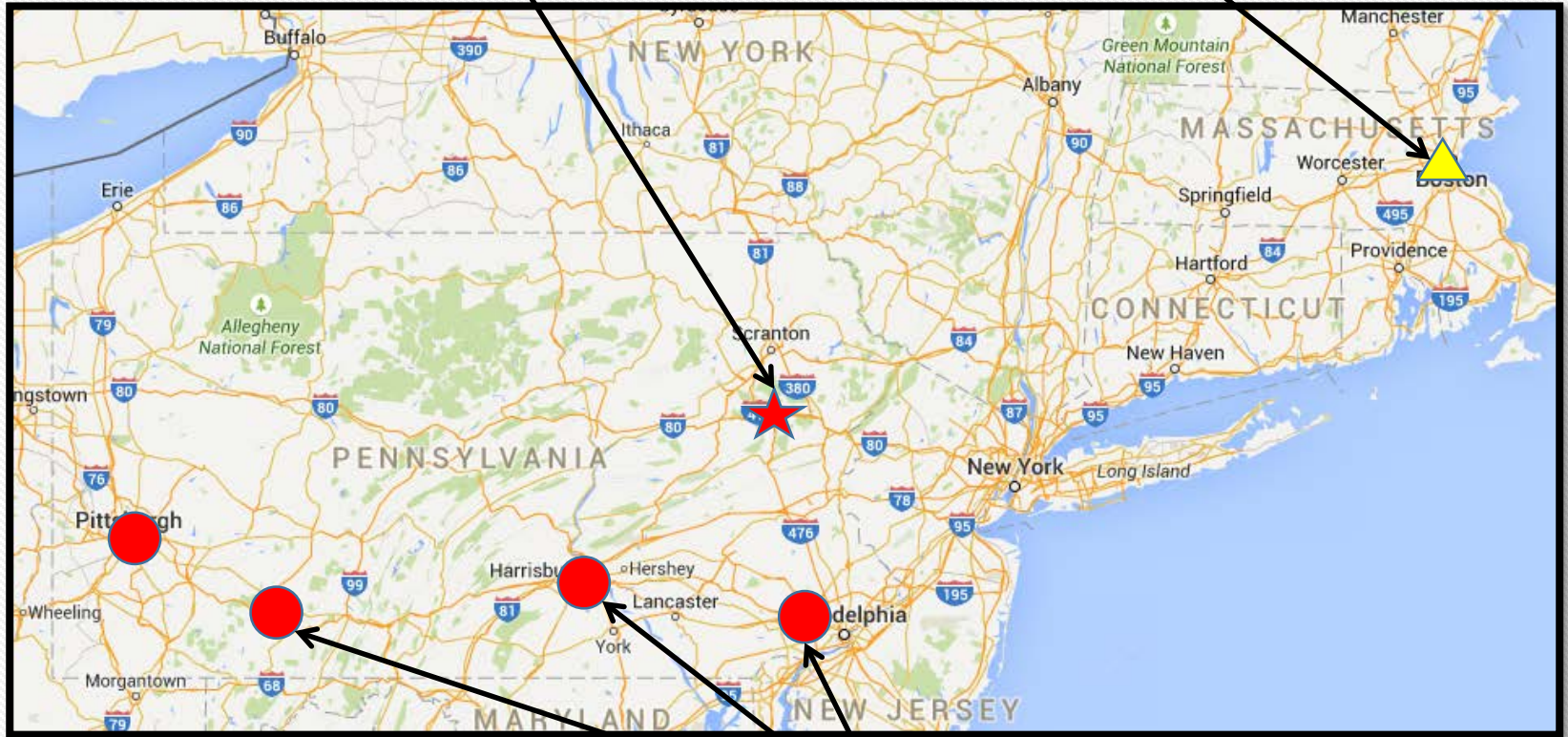
# MOBILIZATION



# MOBILIZATION

Rendezvous Point

Destination



PTC Equipment  
Locations



# **Execution**



# EXECUTION

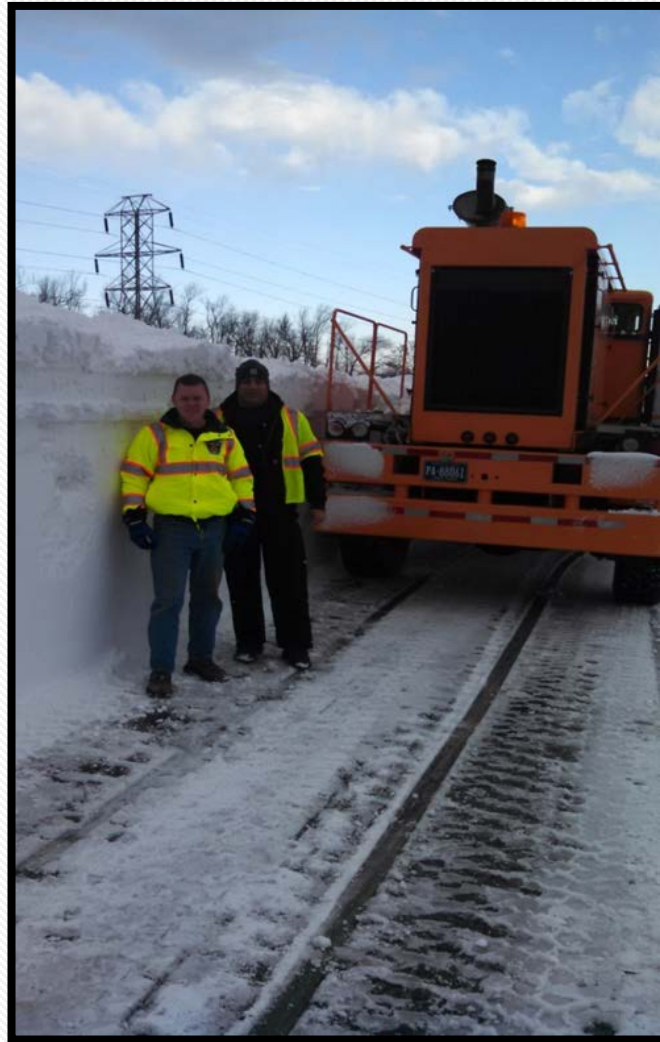


# EXECUTION



Uncovering a Toyota Prius ...

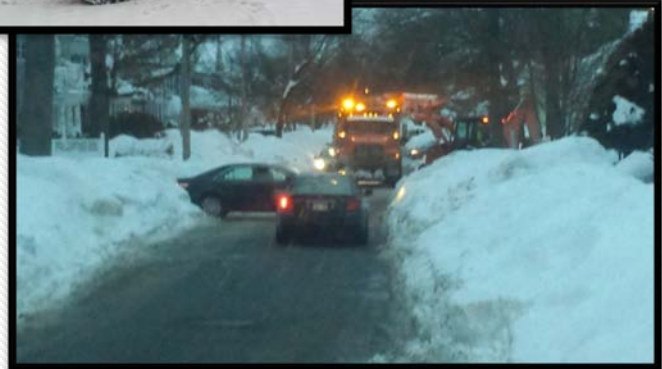
# EXECUTION



What 7' of snow looks like ...



# EXECUTION





# CHALLENGES – BUFFALO

- Snow was wet and heavy and chutes were plugging up
  - In locations where wide open, side discharge was used
  - Some locations with noise walls, dump trucks drove next to blowers
- There were plow trains, police escorts, national guard, contractors dump trucks and PTC equipment all on the roadway made for difficult operations
  - Because the roadway was closed, vehicles were allowed to drive the opposite direction, made things more challenging
- Very few restaurants, gas stations and stores open
  - Refueling and getting food was a challenge
  - Fuel deliveries were not made as expected to supply areas
- PTC IT Department did an update which wiped out emails on smart phones
- Roadway opening announced – had to get equipment off the road by 3:00 PM

# CHALLENGES – BOSTON

- Working in a city environment
  - Operators had to be very careful and mindful of surroundings
  - Traffic & pedestrians were present
- Equipment
  - Cold temperatures, trucks froze up the first night
  - Could have been more effective with different equipment
- Mission locations
  - Not familiar with the area made it difficult finding mission locations
- Snow farms
  - Distance to snow farms made turn around times over 1 hour
- Unnecessary travel
  - Time spent driving from staging area to mission location
  - Mission locations changed



# **Lessons Learned**

# LESSONS LEARNED

- Did not coordinate with PEMA soon enough (Buffalo)
- Have enough equipment and employees to be self sufficient
- Take a list of equipment with license plate numbers and list of employees with phone numbers
- Have one point of contact for mission (incident commander)
- Identify staging area large enough ahead of time is important
- Having extra vehicles available to shuttle operators back and forth to/from the hotel
- Mobile to Mobile communication / smart phones worked well

# LESSONS LEARNED

- Increase P-card spending limits and remove out-of-state restrictions
- Pre-deployment meeting at rendezvous point
- Be aware of union personnel rules, hours, restrictions, scheduling, etc.
- Plan fuel stops for convoy along the way to destination
- Having someone familiar with area is helpful
- Take into account on-site communications (radios)
- Perform After Action Review upon return from mission
- Have internal IT support available 24/7 for any issues that arise



# Questions?

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