

### THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY LIFELINES

The unprecedented increase of [severe weather](#), man-made risks, and complex threats to communities nationwide, presents significant challenges to the nation's emergency managers. As the number of incidents continues to rise, so does the sheer amount of data agencies have at their disposal. On average, 3.4 million adults in the United States are impacted directly or indirectly by natural disasters. In response to these numerous unprecedented, multi-billion dollar disasters, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) developed the [Community Lifeline Status System \(CLSS\)](#), in collaboration with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to support state-level [Community Lifeline \(CL\)](#) reporting requirements. The CL construct is a framework that provides emergency management agencies (EMAs) with a reporting structure for establishing incident stabilization. It allows FEMA and EMAs to better determine where to deploy limited, critical resources and to which entities, including states, localities, tribal nations, and territories (SLTT), during emergencies.

FEMA has identified eight focus areas (lifelines) under the CL framework; these include: Safety and Security; Food, Hydration, Shelter; Health and Medical; Energy (Power & Fuel); Communications; Transportation; Hazardous Materials; and Water Systems.

### THE OBJECTIVE OF CLSS

The CLSS effort will provide the emergency management community with a comprehensive, systematic approach to lifeline status planning, monitoring, and reporting. It is an iterative multi-year project that will be tested and operationalized for use by SLTT EMAs and FEMA.

### CLSS WAY-AHEAD

The CLSS project is divided into the following tasks: Project Management; Operational Requirements Documentation; System Design; System Development; Test and Evaluation; and Transition and Deployment.

DHS S&T and the contract performer, G&H International, will examine and document the operational requirements necessary to support successful development and implementation of the CLSS. The CLSS Steering Committee will oversee the development of the CLSS throughout the

period of performance. Option years will be used to refine, enhance, and implement the CLSS.

A lifeline enables the continuous operation of **critical government and business functions** and is **essential to human health and safety or economic security**.



### PROJECT IMPACT

- CL reporting is difficult to quantify at the federal level. States are empowered to make status selections without providing key decision indicators or evidence. The CLSS will facilitate a data-driven approach to support standards-based reporting across areas impacted by the disaster.
- Final deployment of the CLSS is expected to reduce the effort to complete lifeline status updates while also providing relevant evidence supporting the status selection through real-time data sharing.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Established Steering Committee and focus groups
  - Supports requirements definition, module development, and pilot testing
- Developed stabilization and data library

### MILESTONES

- Cascadia Multi-state Exercise with Idaho, Oregon, and FEMA (Q3 FY23)
- Real-world user testing during 2024 (solar eclipse) (FY24)
- State Pilot Testing; Florida Department of Emergency Management utilized CLSS in a Functional Exercise (Q3 FY24)
- County Pilot Testing with Miami-Dade County (Q2 FY24)
- Prototype Deployment to state of Maryland servers (Q4 FY24)
- Multi-state exercise with Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware (Q1 FY25)

### PERFORMERS/PARTNERS

- FEMA, Washington, DC
- G&H International, Washington, DC
- Central U.S. Earthquake Consortium, Memphis, TN