



Facilitator:
Soraya Sutherlin, CEM

CEO, Emergency
Management Safety
Partners



State and Local Emergency Management Panel
12 August
10:15 - 11:30 am



Credit: Aaron K. Yoshino

James Barros
Administrator
Hawaii Emergency
Management
Agency (HIEMA)



Talmadge Magno
Administrator
Hawaii County
Civil Defense
Agency (HCCDA)



Amos Lonokailua-
Hewett
Administrator
Maui Emergency
Management
Agency (MEMA)

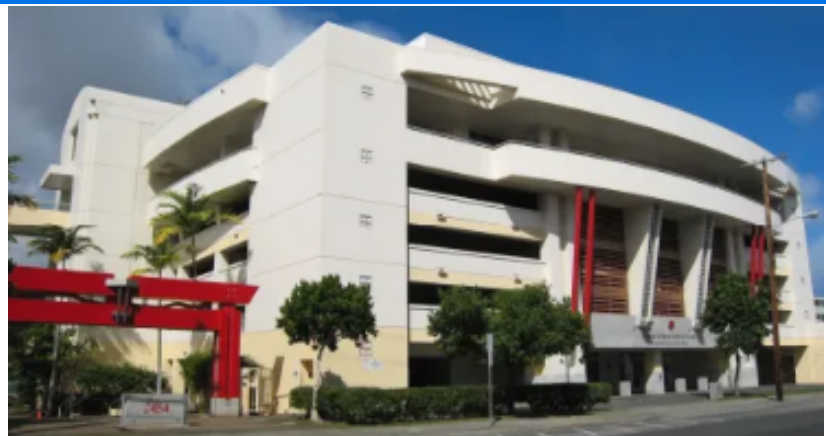


Dr. Randal Collins,
CEM
Director
City and County of
Honolulu
Department of
Emergency
Management (DEM)



Elton Ushio
Administrator
Kaua'i Emergency
Management
Agency (KEMA)

IAEM-USA Region 9 Symposium
August 12, 2025
“Adaptation and Innovation:
Shaping the Future of Emergency Management in Region 9”
Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii





Soraya Sutherlin
CEO, Emergency Management Safety Partners

Soraya Sutherlin is a nationally recognized expert in emergency management and crisis communications with over two decades of experience leading public safety initiatives across government, education, and nonprofit sectors. As CEO of Emergency Management Safety Partners (EMSP), Soraya specializes in crisis communications—helping communities, schools, and organizations develop clear, effective messaging strategies and scalable response plans grounded in real-world emergencies.

She previously served as the Public Information Officer for the U.S. Secret Service – Los Angeles Field Office, where she managed critical communications for high-profile National Special Security Events and large-scale incident responses. Soraya is also the architect of the award-winning Alert SouthBay regional alert and warning program, uniting 15 jurisdictions to deliver clear, coordinated public safety messaging.

Soraya is known for her hands-on approach, combining field-tested training with policy expertise to drive systems change. She frequently speaks at state and national conferences, including CESA, IAEM, and other national events, and advises school districts and public agencies on crisis communications, emergency operations planning, disaster response and recovery, and community engagement.

She holds a Master's in Public Administration from California State University, Long Beach, and is a Certified Emergency Manager, a California Professional Emergency Manager, and an authorized Outreach Instructor with the California Specialized Training Institute.



JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Colonel (Retired) James DS. Barros assumed the role of Administrator for the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA) on February 1, 2023. With a distinguished 32-year career in the Hawai'i Army National Guard (HIARNG), including 22 years in active service, he brings extensive experience in emergency management and response and recovery.

With a leadership style that emphasizes empathy and inclusion, Barros is resolutely focused on enhancing the safety and well-being of Hawai'i's kama'āina (residents) and ensuring that communities are not only prepared for disasters but also empowered to thrive in the face of adversity. His extensive background and leadership in the state's emergency management enterprise uniquely positions him to effectively guide HIEMA in strengthening the safety and resilience of Hawai'i, benefiting both its residents and visitors alike. Under his stewardship, HIEMA is postured to implement comprehensive strategies that bolster community preparedness and response capabilities throughout the state.

Prior to his appointment, Barros served as the Chief of the Joint Staff for the Hawai'i National Guard's COVID-19 Joint Task Force, leading an impressive contingent of nearly 1,400 personnel. This task force played a crucial role in supporting the state's preparation and response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

From 2017-2019, Barros served as the Director for Joint Domestic Operations (DOMOPS) for the Hawai'i National Guard (HING), where he supported state operations during various emergency responses, including the devastating Kaua'i floods, the Hawai'i Island lava eruptions, and wildfires on Maui. He was also involved in the preparation for and response to Hurricanes Lane, Norman, and Olivia.

During his tenure in the HING Joint Staff, Barros expanded international collaborations with state partners in the Philippines and Indonesia. He established the Combined Task Force (CTF) 501, which included Urban Search and Rescue teams from Hawai'i, the Philippines, and Indonesia, and facilitated joint training exercise focused on complex rescue operations.



Talmadge Magno
Administrator, Hawaii County Civil Defense Agency

Talmadge Magno serves as Administrator of the Hawai'i County Civil Defense Agency, where he oversees the county's comprehensive emergency management programs, encompassing prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. With more than 30 years of public service, he has led coordinated responses to some of Hawai'i Island's most significant natural disasters. As Incident Commander during the 2018 Kīlauea Lower East Rift Zone Eruption and the 2022 Mauna Loa Eruption, he directed complex, multi-agency operations to protect lives, infrastructure, and natural resources.

Talmadge holds a B.A. in Geography from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and brings a deep understanding of the island's dynamic geology and cultural landscape to his work. Prior to joining Hawai'i County Civil Defense Agency, he completed a distinguished 30-year career with the National Park Service, serving at parks across the country. His final post was as Chief Ranger at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, where he led law enforcement, emergency response, and visitor safety operations in one of the nation's most active volcanic regions.

A graduate of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center for Land Management Agencies, Talmadge combines field-proven leadership with a strong commitment to interagency collaboration and community resilience. His diverse experience makes him a vital resource in advancing public safety and disaster preparedness in Hawai'i County.



Emergency Management Administrator
Maui Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

Amos Lonokailua-Hewett is the Administrator of the Maui Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), appointed on January 1, 2024. A seasoned fire officer and emergency management leader with over 30 years of public safety service, he has held key leadership roles in fire suppression, emergency operations, training, and disaster preparedness across Maui County.

A retired Battalion Chief with the Maui Fire Department, Amos managed complex multi-agency responses across three islands and led major initiatives in training program development, accreditation, and strategic planning for the fire department. He gained statewide recognition as Incident Commander during the 2018 Hurricane Lane wildfires, earning multiple honors for his leadership, including “Hometown Hero” by Hawaii News Now and induction into the Maui High School Foundation’s Hall of Honor.

Following his retirement from the fire service, Amos founded Waihona Emergency & Training Consultants LLC, where he designed fire recruit training academies, delivered fire officer and fire services instructor certification programs, including live fire instructor certification. He also supported wildfire training and technical rescue training to nature conservancy entities.

Amos holds a Master of Science in Public Administration (Emergency Services Management) and a Bachelor of Science in Fire Administration from Columbia Southern University. He is also a Kumu Hula, having received formal training in traditional Hawaiian chant, dance, and language. This cultural background shapes his culturally grounded approach to leadership and resilience.

Amos’s extensive certifications include Pro Board qualifications in fire officer and instructor roles, as well as specialized training in wildland fire, hazardous materials, and incident command. Recognized for his humility, work ethic, and strategic insight, Amos leads MEMA with a profound sense of kuleana (responsibility) to safeguard the people, natural resources, and cultural integrity of Maui County.



Dr. Randal Collins, CEM
Director of Emergency Management
City and County of Honolulu
Department of Emergency Management (DEM)

Dr. Randal Collins is the Director of Emergency Management for the City and County of Honolulu, where he leads comprehensive resilience initiatives for one of the nation's most dynamic and diverse urban environments. With over three decades of leadership in emergency management and public safety, Dr. Collins brings unparalleled experience from across municipal, county, state, private, and nonprofit sectors.

He previously served as the Emergency Management Senior Manager for NEOM, the futuristic smart city development in Saudi Arabia, where he built foundational crisis response systems and was honored as an Excellence Ambassador for innovation and leadership. Dr. Collins is also the longstanding President of the All-Hazards Incident Management Teams Association, a national voice for policy and training standards in disaster response.

His past roles include National Director of American Humane Animal Rescue, leadership positions with Southern California Edison and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, and senior emergency management roles with the cities of Indianapolis and El Segundo. A U.S. Marine Corps veteran, Dr. Collins served as a Staff Sergeant and Scout-Sniper Platoon Sergeant, deploying globally during his 12 years of service.

Dr. Collins earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from the University of Indianapolis and both an Executive Master of Leadership and a Doctor of Education in Organizational Change and Leadership from the University of Southern California. He is a Certified Emergency Manager and an active member of the International Association of Emergency Managers, the National Emergency Management Association, the Marine Corps Association, and the U.S. Marine Scout-Sniper Association.

A published author and sought-after speaker, Dr. Collins contributes to the field through journal articles, book chapters, and international presentations. He is deeply committed to advancing the profession through education, innovation, and servant leadership.



Elton Ushio

Emergency Management Administrator Kaua'i
Emergency Management Agency County of Kaua'i

Elton Ushio has served as the Administrator of the Kaua'i Emergency Management Agency (KEMA) since 2015. He joined the agency in 2003 and previously held positions as Grant Coordinator, Plans and Operations Officer, and Civil Defense Manager.

He brings over 30 years of service in local government, beginning in 1993 when he was hired by the County of Kaua'i to manage a federal disaster recovery grant following Hurricane Iniki.

During his tenure with KEMA, the agency and island have faced multiple FEMA-declared Major Disasters and other significant emergencies. Notable events include the Ka Loko Dam breach, FEMA DR-4365 (the April 2018 floods and landslides that set a U.S. 24-hour rainfall record of 49.69 inches), and the unprecedented DR-4510-HI COVID-19 pandemic disaster.

A lifelong resident of Kaua'i, Elton is a graduate of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and Kaua'i High and Intermediate School. In his free time, he enjoys Kendo, hunting, fishing, diving, and managing his family ranch.