THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY LIFELINES

Between 2016 and 2019, an estimated 75% of Americans were impacted directly or indirectly by natural or manmade disasters. In response to these numerous unprecedented, multi–billion dollar disasters, the 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 times of emergency.

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 & Deployment.

DHS S&T and G&H International will examine and document the operational requirement that will 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.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Steering Committee and focus groups established to support requirements definition, module development, and initial pilot testing
- Development of Stabilization and Data Library

UPCOMING MILESTONES

- Establish Pilot Test Environment (Q4 FY23)
- CLSS Assessment Workshop with Idaho (Q4 FY23)
- CLSS Assessment Workshop with Alabama (Q4 FY23)
- Pilot Testing (Q4 FY24)

PERFORMERS/PARTNERS

- FEMA, Washington, DC
- G&H International, Washington, DC
- Central United States Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC), Memphis, TN