CA CERT FOG vs. Yellow CERT FEMA FOG Comparison

1) For the purposes of this evaluation, I first looked at the two tables of contents and compared them. Then I went thru each FOG page by page and looked for things covered in one but not in the other. Next I looked at how each subject was covered in each FOG and compared their detail and completeness. Finally I looked at the PA FOG and examined how it fit in with the other two.

2) First Impressions:

   a) The CA FOG is slightly smaller in dimensions (5.5"x3.75" vs. 7"x4.5") and contains 83 pages vs. 93 for the FEMA FOG. However the last 22 pages of the FEMA FOG contain no information and are just for user notes, contacts, etc. There is only one page, the last one, in the CA FOG for user notes, contacts, etc. CA FOG uses a vertical flip chart page format while FEMA FOG uses a horizontal book page format, both spiral bound for ease in keeping pages open.

   b) The CA FOG is full color on glossy paper (which I assume is water resistant) and contains real photos, while the FEMA FOG is all black on white pages which are "Rite in the Rain" paper and contains only drawn diagrams.

   c) The CA FOG has a color coded table of contents with color coded stepped tabbed pages for each section while the FEMA FOG has a table of contents with section tabs on the edge of the pages. Easier to find topics in the CA FOG.

   d) It is difficult to do a side by side comparison of the major sections of both FOGs because some topics covered under one section of one guide are covered under a different named section in the other guide and sometimes subjects are split up in the FEMA FOG.

3) Major sections of the two FOGs are:

CA CERT FOG	FEMA CERT FOG
CERT Resource Tools	CERT Quick Reference FOG
Fire Suppression	Disaster Preparedness
Search and Rescue	Disaster Medical Operations
Medical Operations	Fire Fighting and Hazardous Materials
Disaster Psychology	Search and Rescue Operations
	Expedient Flood Training
	Disaster Review Sheets
	CERT Organization

The subject groupings and organization of the CA FOG I found easier to use and more inclusive of the topic. Things in the CERT Quick Reference FOG of the FEMA FOG were separated from the main subjects so if you wanted to review a complete subject you had to look in two places. The CA FOG has everything on one subject in one place.

4) Some examples of different treatment of subjects in the CA and FEMA Fogs are cribbing is covered under Search and Rescue in the CA FOG while it is covered under the CERT Quick Reference FOG section of the FEMA FOG. Similarly the 9 step size-up process is covered three times in the CA FOG (simply called "Size up" with no mention of the number "9" although they do have all 9 steps), under CERT Resource Tools, Fire Suppression and Search and Rescue. In the FEMA FOG it is covered under Disaster Preparedness (using the number "9" in the title) and Search and Rescue Operations.

5) Building Marking is different in the two FOGs. In the 3 o'clock quadrant, FEMA FOG says only "Hazards" while CA FOG says only "Areas Searched". We teach that both of these items go in the 3 O'clock quadrant. In the 6 o'clock quadrant FEMA FOG says tally only victims still inside (living and dead) while CA FOG says tally all victims found, living and dead and where victims removed have been taken (the way we teach it). Also, in the FEMA FOG, the building marking is found in 2 places (inside cover and page R-9), and the two do not completely agree.

6) Does one FOG cover things not in the other and vice versa? The simple answer is yes. Here is a summary the differences:

   a) Topics covered in the CA FOG, but not in the FEMA FOG are:

      i) Radio Use
      ii) Activation and Mobilization
      iii) Fire Size Up
      iv) Exterior Search Methods
      v) Establishing a Treatment Site
      vi) Head to Toe Assessment

   b) Topics covered in the FEMA FOG but not in the CA FOG are:

      i) Team Well Being – more targeted to large CERT Teams
      ii) Structural and non Structural Mitigation
      iii) Blood borne Pathogen Safety Procedures
      iv) Glove Use and Hand Protection
      v) Components of the Respiratory System
      vi) Types of Bleeding (Arterial, Venous, Capillary)
      vii) Fire Triangle
      viii) Search and Rescue Priorities, Goals, Resources
      ix) Specific information on Disaster types under "Disaster Review Sheets" (Terrorism, Earthquakes, Floods Excessive Heat, Hurricanes, Landslides, Severe Thunderstorms, Tornadoes Tsunamis, Volcanoes, Winter Storms)

7) For those sections of both the CA and FEMA FOGs which cover the same subjects, which does a better job?

   a) Topics covered more completely or better in the CA FOG are:

      i)   Fire Fighting – more complete better and all in one section not split into two places. Fire Triangle is excluded however, which would have been helpful.

      ii)   Disaster Psychology – more complete and better

      iii) Sandbagging – more complete and better instructions, although there are more diagrams in the FEMA FOG

      iv) Hazmat – better detail with colored placards

      v)   Medical Operations – much more complete and better. Includes Triage, Head-to-Toe Assessment and establishing a treatment site. Does not include several things (see above 5-b-iv, v, vi) which are probably not critically omitted.

      vi) Search and Rescue Operations – better and more complete. Building marking and Leveraging/Cribbing are also included in this section of the CA FOG, whereas these are both in separate sections of the FEMA FOG. Cribbing Safety Person is not mentioned in the CA FOG (maybe implied that Group Leader is also watching safety), and in the FEMA FOG is listed as an additional team member. Not mentioned in the CA FOG are Search and Rescue Priorities, Goals, Resources (see above 5-b-vii) which are important.

b) Topics covered more completely or better in the FEMA FOG are:

      i)   Incident Command System – more complete and better description of the ICS with details of each role, appropriate for large team Incident Commands for major disasters. Perhaps overkill for ESV organization as we do it in Palo Alto

      ii)   Hazmat diagrams – more complete, 12 placards vs. 8 in CA FOG

8) How does the PA CERT FOG fit with these other two FOGs?

a) Includes many things specific to Palo Alto ESV operations not included in either the CA or FEMA FOGs

b) Priorities and Mission are covered which are not covered in the CA FOG

c) Covers activation and CERT Operations as done in Palo Alto

d) Provides more detail for SAR Group Organization and Operations than is covered in either CA or FEMA FOGs

e) Clarifies Cribbing organization, team member duties, commands and safety. Cribbing team is the same as CA FOG with safety covered by the Team Leader or optional separate Safety Person

f) Radio use is covered in more detail than in CA FOG. Radio use is not covered in FEMA FOG

9) Conclusions:

a) If we have to choose between the CA FOG and the yellow FEMA FOG, I endorse the CA FOG.

b) If cost were not an issue, having both CA and FEMA FOGs in the CERT backpack would be good.

c) There is no need to change anything in the PA CERT FOG at this time. If we go exclusively with the CA and PA FOGs in the future, we may want to consider adding information to the PA FOG which covers some of the topics in above paragraph 6-b.

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