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Doctrine Made Operational

How ALIGN Brings CPG 101 and the National Preparedness System to the Private Sector

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CPG 101 and the National Preparedness System (NPS) represent the most thorough emergency planning discipline ever built at national scale. Developed by FEMA and refined through decades of real-world disaster response, they define how the United States prepares for, responds to, and recovers from incidents of any type and any scale. Every state and local emergency operations plan built to federal standards traces its architecture to these frameworks.

They were designed for government actors.

Private sector organizations, operating under ISO 22301, FINRA Rule 4370, industry continuity standards, or internally developed programs, function largely outside the CPG 101 and NPS network. This is not incidental: the frameworks were built for state and local governments, tribal nations, and federal agencies. Private sector organizations have no clear path in. The result is continuity programs built on thinner analysis, tested against scenarios that do not reflect real conditions, and cut off from the government resources they will need when an incident actually happens.

ALIGN closes this gap. Built directly on CPG 101 and the National Preparedness System, ALIGN translates federal planning practice into a working approach for private sector organizations. It makes the most field-tested planning discipline available to organizations that need it most and have never had a clear way to access it.

CPG 101 and the National Preparedness System: What They Require

CPG 101 provides a six-step planning process for emergency operations plan development: (1) Form a Collaborative Planning Team, (2) Understand the Situation, (3) Determine Goals and Objectives, (4) Plan Development, (5) Plan Preparation, Review, and Approval, and (6) Plan Implementation and Maintenance. The process is designed to ensure plans are built collaboratively, grounded in the actual threat environment, and maintained as living operational documents, not produced once and shelved.

The National Preparedness System provides the overarching structure for building national preparedness through six core elements: Identify

and Assess Risk, Estimate Capability Requirements, Build and Sustain Capabilities, Plan to Deliver Capabilities, Validate Capabilities, and Review and Update. Together, CPG 101 and the NPS form a capability-based, hazard-driven approach that recognizes private sector organizations as important community partners. But neither framework provides a clear path for private sector organizations to actually plug in.

The ALIGN – CPG 101 / NPS Crosswalk

ALIGN PHASE	CPG 101 STEP / NPS ELEMENT	ALIGNMENT DESCRIPTION
A — Assess Diagnose	CPG 101 Steps 2–3 NPS Element 1: Identify & Assess Risk	Threat landscape and risk mapping applies CPG 101's requirement to understand the situation before planning begins and NPS's risk identification element. Structured decision architecture analysis reveals organizational vulnerabilities the government planning process does not cover for private sector actors.
L — Link Coordinate	CPG 101 Step 1: Collaborative Planning Team NPS Element 4: Plan to Deliver Capabilities	Connecting private sector continuity programs to ESF structures, public-private partnership frameworks, and coalition planning applies CPG 101's collaborative planning team concept across sectoral boundaries, integrating organizations into the planning network CPG 101 explicitly recognizes but does not provide private sector actors a systematic entry point into.
I — Integrate Build	CPG 101 Steps 4–5: Plan Development,	Operational redesign of decision rights, procedures, and RTO/RPO-aligned

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	Preparation & Review NPS Element 3: Build & Sustain Capabilities	playbooks corresponds directly to CPG 101's plan development steps and NPS's capability-building requirement, producing plans that function as decision systems under stress, not documents that describe intended behavior.
G — Generate Stress Test	NPS Element 5: Validate Capabilities (HSEEP-aligned)	HSEEP-informed exercises scored against a structured maturity framework apply NPS's capability validation element with government-grade discipline, testing plans against realistic scenarios built from publicly available government planning information about power restoration, transportation, and telecommunications recovery.
N — Normalize Sustain	CPG 101 Step 6: Plan Implementation & Maintenance NPS Element 6: Review & Update	Prioritized corrective actions, training cadence, and maturity benchmarking map directly to CPG 101's plan maintenance requirement and NPS's review-and-update element, with integration into government planning cycles so that private sector continuity programs remain

ALIGN PHASE

CPG 101 STEP /
NPS ELEMENT

ALIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

current with the emergency management network they depend on.

Where ALIGN Goes Further: Five Private-Sector Differentiators

1. Hazard-Based Planning Discipline

C PG 101 grounds every emergency plan in the actual threat environment, not assumptions about what might happen. ALIGN imports this discipline directly through the Assess phase's threat and hazard analysis, replacing the assumption-based planning that dominates private sector continuity programs with an evidence-based approach that identifies which hazards actually drive planning priorities.

2. Capability-Based Program Design

The NPS is organized around core capabilities, not documents. ALIGN carries this orientation into private sector programs, designing organizations around what they can actually do under stress rather than what their plans state they intend to do. The shift from plan-based to capability-based design is the most consequential difference between compliant continuity programs and ones that hold when activation is real.

3. Whole-Community Integration

CPG 101 explicitly frames the private sector as a critical partner in community resilience but provides no structured pathway for private organizations to participate. ALIGN's Link phase builds that pathway, connecting private sector organizations to ESF structures, healthcare coalitions, utility coordination frameworks, and public-private partnership mechanisms before they are needed.

4. HSEEP-Informed Exercise Design

A LIGN's Generate Stress phase applies FEMA's Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) standards to private sector exercise design, bringing the same evaluative discipline that government exercise programs apply to capability validation. Exercises are designed to surface gaps, not confirm readiness. Results are scored against a maturity framework.

5. Government Planning Cycle Integration

C PG 101 plans are designed to be maintained in alignment with community planning cycles. ALIGN's Normalize phase integrates private sector continuity programs into those same cycles, ensuring that the organization's plans are updated when government resource assumptions change, when ESF structures are revised, and when community coalition partners update their own frameworks.

Conclusion

CPG 101 and the National Preparedness System represent the gold standard for emergency planning discipline, a framework proven across decades and disasters. What the framework has never had is a structured translation into private sector continuity practice.

ALIGN is that translation. The doctrine was already written. What private sector organizations have lacked is an approach designed to put it to work, built around the operating realities, regulatory obligations, and resource constraints of organizations that are not governments but cannot afford to operate as though government planning does not affect them.

ABOUT SENTINEL RESILIENCE PARTNERS

Sentinel Resilience Partners is a strategic advisory firm specializing in emergency management, crisis preparedness, continuity of operations, and resilience consulting. ALIGN engagements are structured at four tiers: Audit, Build, Validate, and Sustain.

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