

Music (00:07):

Ketsa. "Mission Ready." Raising Frequency, <https://freemusicarchive.org/static>.

Trudy (00:09):

Welcome to Hotwash. I'm Trudy.

Christine (00:11):

And I'm Christine. We're emergency management and public health professionals...

Trudy (00:16):

Nerds talking about law and policy of emergencies. On the 10th and final episode of hotwash, season one, Christine and Trudy conduct a hotwash on the podcast. Hotwash, what are the strengths and weaknesses? What are our lessons learned? It's very meta.

Music (00:40):

Ketsa. "Mission Ready." Raising Frequency, <https://freemusicarchive.org/static>.

Christine (00:42):

Oh my goodness. Trudy, we are incredibly nerdy. And just want to reiterate that, but I really appreciate the, we are doing a meta episode. I did my college senior thesis on metafiction.

Trudy (00:56):

So now you just took the nerd to a whole new level. All right. So we're going to do a hotwash today of our podcast because.

Christine (01:04):

Remind me what a hot wash is?

Trudy (01:07):

A hotwash traditionally, Christine, is the conversation that happens after an exercise where the participants of the exercise just have a real quick, almost debriefing kind of conversation about what were the strengths of the response and the exercise. What were the weaknesses? It can be pretty wide ranging conversation, which is a good format for us. But you can also talk about the lessons learned. And the idea is in the moment is when you have those ideas closest to your mind, and that's what we're going to do about the podcast, because can you believe it this is our 10th episode and the end of season one.

Christine (01:45):

So technically this is our 11th episode.

Trudy (01:49):

That's true. It is what, what was our 10th episode? Cause this is, I think this goes well with the hotwash.

Christine (01:56):

We previously recorded a different episode around mass fatality management, both Trudy and I have done a significant amount of mass fatality management planning for clients. And we recorded the episode and while it was informative, it was a very tough conversation to have, particularly at this moment. Which on the one hand makes it incredibly important, I guess.

Trudy ([02:18](#)):

But it was very tough. And I think you and I both approach a lot of things with a certain level of humor just in general. And so in having the conversation about mass fatality planning, especially with it being an issue in the news, it was a very somber, somber Is that the right word, episode?

Christine ([02:36](#)):

Yeah. So I think we might try to tackle this topic again in our next season.

Trudy ([02:41](#)):

Yeah. And I think one of the lessons learned from that for me was that...

Christine ([02:45](#)):

We're already skipping.

Trudy ([02:46](#)):

I know, I'm sorry. Sorry. There's so many things that we want to talk about, but it can be hard to make sure that we're putting it in the right context when you're recording something. You know, most of the time conversations out of context and a podcast is no different, but it's a little, it is a little bit different because you're not sure who you're talking to and the sense that your podcast goes out and who's going to listen to it.

Christine ([03:10](#)):

So getting back to the basic format of a hotwash and you mentioned exercises, but a hot wash should also occur after real world events and emergencies.

Trudy ([03:19](#)):

Absolutely.

Christine ([03:20](#)):

And so the goal of a hot wash is to sort of sum up what we just did while also talking about ways we can do better next time.

Trudy ([03:28](#)):

Incorporating those lessons learned into going forward.

Christine ([03:32](#)):

That was right.

Trudy ([03:33](#)):

For those of you who can't see me, I just made a dubious face about my own grammar choices. Okay. So what about our strengths? What do we think we did well?

Christine ([03:43](#)):

I think that we are incredibly fortunate to have such amazing colleagues, who are placed some very interesting client sites. Who've done a lot of real world work on all aspects of emergency management and public health emergency preparedness. We have colleagues to draw from who have done planning, preparedness mitigation, response and recovery on a variety of real world and exercises. Here's my dubious face about that. There's just a wealth of knowledge at our fingertips. Fingertips, our zoom calls.

Trudy ([04:17](#)):

Our virtual fingertips? Yeah, no, I think that's true. We have an incredible depth and breadth of knowledge just within the center. And we were very fortunate that some of them agreed to talk to us.

Christine ([04:32](#)):

We're fortunate that they're still talking to us. I think as a field, we do really well learning from the experiences of others. We don't all have the same, you know, emergencies and exercises. We don't all have the same focuses. Our jurisdictions are oftentimes very different, but we have the capacity, and we do so frequently, learn from what others have done, learn what to do and also what not to do in some cases. I think it's the colleagues who I've heard from who say, gosh, we really screwed this up this time. I think it's some of the bravest conversation I've ever heard because admitting you didn't do as well as you could've done.

Trudy ([05:09](#)):

It's the only way to get it better, but it is very hard to do just like a mass fatality episode that we attempted to, to create. It was very hard to do. It's very important, but you have to have honest conversations for things to get better.

Christine ([05:22](#)):

Is that a commentary on our current political climate?

Trudy ([05:26](#)):

It's true in all and all areas. All aspects of life. Yes. What are some other strengths?

Christine ([05:32](#)):

No, it's your turn.

Trudy ([05:33](#)):

Oh, it's my turn. So I think this is kind of similar to what you were saying, but I, one of the things that I love and one of the listeners, one of the things that we're all on this podcast about is that we're actually quite passionate about this field. And I think that we bring that. I hope that that comes through the podcast, but I think that Christina and I have that passion for the field, but the people that we talk to are also very, I mean, they believe in this. So I think it makes for really good conversations. I hope it makes for really good conversations.

Christine ([06:06](#)):

Well, I enjoy the conversations. You enjoy them. And our guests do.

Trudy ([06:10](#)):

So we're going to call it a success. Yeah. So I think that's one of our strengths and this season, Christine and I have emailed, you know, articles to each other and we've emailed questions to each other. And we brainstorm about what we're going to talk about. We already have a list of ideas for next season. And I think, you know, I hope that comes across to everyone that this is something, you know, it's a really interesting field, but we also really love it. You know, we started this COVID-19 two episodes before we were working from home.

Christine ([06:41](#)):

I think we only did one.

Trudy ([06:42](#)):

Was it only one? And we had reported the second decided we needed to rerecord and then we were home. So we were figuring out, we were just starting to figure out the technology in person. And then we got to figure it out at home.

Christine ([06:56](#)):

That was also going to be my third strength. The technology out there for all sorts of virtual and remote communication for work for play or just connectedness is amazing. And I'm really glad that we got to use that and not age out of technology.

Trudy ([07:14](#)):

It's a goal. It's a goal. You know, I think a lot of people in this time are saying that about technology, the ability to sort of pick up for certain jobs in certain sectors from home has been pretty remarkable and just not possible 10 years ago.

Christine ([07:28](#)):

But we also recognize the privilege that we can do this from home.

Trudy ([07:31](#)):

So then let's talk about this can be, you know, some people say weaknesses, some people say areas for improvement either way. It's the same idea.

Christine ([07:39](#)):

It's constructive criticism. It's not meant to be judgmental. It's just sort of an honest assessment of what we've done.

Trudy ([07:45](#)):

It's a safe environment for honesty.

Christine ([07:48](#)):

Well, at least between the two of us between the two of us, I don't know if the internet.

Trudy ([07:53](#)):

Okay. So weaknesses,

Christine ([07:55](#)):

I think we have struggled some with speaking of technology, some of the sound quality, as much as the, there is some amazing technology out there. We are not experts in that.

Trudy ([08:11](#)):

Although kudos to you because you've been doing all the sound editing quite a, quite a big deal, and you don't have a background in that.

Christine ([08:19](#)):

No, I am a curious amateur. So I think it's occasionally been kind of in even just the fact that we've been able to bring so many people together and have these conversations and it is still listenable is amazing, but that's an area where we can improve moving forward.

Trudy ([08:39](#)):

And I will say this about me, but I think one of my weaknesses is getting comfortable in the format. I think that's gotten better as the season has gone on, but sort of figuring out the best way to do it so that we are having a conversation, but then recognizing there's a little more structure to it and being comfortable in that format.

Christine ([09:00](#)):

So one of your other hats is professor. You are Professor Henson, have you found it to be a difficult transition from the classroom format organization, setting with students to this, this podcast format.

Trudy ([09:15](#)):

in some ways, but mostly because as a professor, what I do is I stand in front of the class and ask questions and then just stare at them into answers. So that's my comfort zone. And there's always a few that are like, they were really put their hand up, like fine I'll break. So yeah, in some ways it's very different from that. Although since everything class-wise is online now, in some ways it feels very similar because I sit down in front of my computer staring less effective. It is well because a lot of people don't have their cameras on.

Christine ([09:46](#)):

So I guess another area that I have struggled with is finding an appropriate line with tone and like how far we want to get into some things. As we discussed before with mass fatality management, but also we've talked about a lot of this as though it, we do this planning and this work happens outside of a political realm and that is not the case. There are politics, even in, at a local level. Politics really does shape these decisions and this, these planning efforts and what you can say sometimes in a way that we haven't really talked about.

Trudy ([10:21](#)):

And we haven't talked about it because of politics, politics. Yeah. I mean, that's another one of those conversations. That's really hard to say it's out there. And most people in some ways acknowledged that that's underlying some of the decisions. I think one of the challenges with doing this podcast is recognizing, as we've been talking about some of these issues, that there are strengths and weaknesses in the field of emergency management and public health emergency preparedness, and how do you craft those conversations in a way that's constructive, but keeps the conversation happening. So you don't, you don't want to alienate anyone or cut off the conversation because as we said, the conversation is important.

Christine ([10:58](#)):

So I think at one point in the conversation we had with Lisa about recovery, we were sort of talking about how emergency management and response and public health emergency preparedness happens during these moments in time when agencies and partners and just people maybe are going through these stressful times and maybe not at their best. I think it's really important that in the field that we are invited into these situations with organizations and partners that we do remain nonjudgmental.

Trudy ([11:31](#)):

You know, there's a lot of times where we talk about emergency managers and public health emergency preparedness and response, and we talk about them as responders, right. But what often gets overlooked is a lot of times these people are also personally being affected by the disaster or whatever they're responding to and they are showing up and reporting to work, even though they be affected in the same way that the public has been affected. And I think that also reminds me of one of, one of the things I'm proud about the season is that we have really, I think, done a good job focusing on the mental health aspect of all of these issues, because that's something that I just think can't be underestimated in emergency management and is a conversation that I think is becoming more and more commonplace.

Christine ([12:16](#)):

Yeah. I would say if we're moving on to sort of lessons learned, that's definitely one of the themes with the mental health aspect of supporting any folks, you know, in this situation. And just in terms of COVID-19, as we discussed, it's everyone, it's a whole community recovery that needs to occur. But another aspect of supporting your staff is also being realistic about staffing sustainability. And I know how difficult that is when there just aren't there are no backups. There is no one standing in the wings. There's no one, wait, what's the phrase waiting in the wings. So I think that's where managers need to be really careful about the expectations they place on their staffers. If I know that I've only got these two people, I really can't have them working 80 hours a week for the next year and a half.

Trudy ([13:06](#)):

I think the biggest thing is just that we have so much, we can learn from everyone around us and being open to those conversations. You asked me earlier about being a professor. And when we were starting with this pandemic back in January, I was teaching and I had a class and I teach a class on public health emergencies. And so we were discussing these topics as these things were happening globally. A lot of my students are traditional law students. They did their undergrad, they've come straight to law school. And I could tell as the semester went on that some of them were really struggling and, you know, and having conversations with them, I find out some of them are looking after their grandparents. Some of them have taken in their siblings because their parents are particularly vulnerable. Some of them are teaching, you know, their siblings, their courses, while the students themselves are trying to finish

school and graduate. The power of conversation is so important and how much we can learn from everyone.

Christine ([14:01](#)):

During our last episode, we talked about centering the voices of the people we're attempting to plan for. I misspoke because we're not, we shouldn't be approaching this as planning for anyone. We should be planning with them. And so bringing the people to the table is your job, but that should be your primary job. I think oftentimes in this field, it's sort of like a secret club. Every individual out there is their own first responder.

Trudy ([14:26](#)):

So that brings us to some of the things that we've already been thinking about for season two. One of those topics is a more robust discussion. That's a consulting word, so sorry. But a discussion more in depth discussion about the resilience of communities and individual resilience and how we can incorporate that better into emergency management.

Christine ([14:49](#)):

Yeah. I think there are a ton of different aspects of emergency management and public health emergency preparedness that we didn't really even touch on in this season. One of the interesting sort of niche areas is international emergency management. And that sometimes sort of falls into the realm of what's known as like Homeland security. Yeah. So hopefully we can bring in some people to talk about that. So, and I know a final thing to look forward to for our next season is possibly new jingle from "Sound Hubby". Shout out to sound hubby.

Trudy ([15:25](#)):

Here's hoping. And also I think we're moving forward with are not aging out of technology. We are getting an RSS feed for our podcast. We're going to be available on different. I don't even know what they're called. Podcasts.

Christine ([15:38](#)):

Platforms.

Trudy ([15:39](#)):

Platforms, they're available in different platforms.

Christine ([15:42](#)):

Just the way that you said that makes us sound incredibly old. So thank you, Trudy, for participating in the Hotwash, it's been incredibly fun and I have enjoyed co-hosting with, you co-producing, and developing with you. It's been great. Co-zooming. Yes.

Trudy ([15:59](#)):

Yeah, I agree. It's been a lot of fun and I want to thank all of our guests too, for being a part of the conversation and for putting up with Christine and my shenanigans, most of which Christine edits out.

Christine ([16:10](#)):

There will not be a blooper episode. I don't believe that would be approved. So thanks for listening and join us next season.

Music ([16:33](#)):

Ketsa. "Mission Ready." Raising Frequency, <https://freemusicarchive.org/static>.