

**Mitigating Unintended Consequences during Crises: Using Systems, Complexity and Structuration Theory to Improve Decision-Making Transparency**

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**ABSTRACT**

Emergency, disaster and business continuity management in the public and private sectors involve preparing for emergencies, re-establishing operations, mitigating losses, recovering from the event and returning to a sense of normalcy. As with any organization, decisions made during these trying times will impact the services provided by these enterprises. The challenge facing managers is developing procedures that allow supporting agencies to understand the decisions made during the crisis, thereby reducing the impact of unintended consequences and promote transparency of operations. The paper reviews the related literature on systems, complexity and structuration theory; and how they can be applied to decision-making with respect to emergency and disaster management challenges. The paper concludes with a model that can be adapted to any public or private sector organization for addressing disaster or emergency challenges.