

**TITLE** Disaster Response Operations: Analysis of Risk Taking, Leadership and Battlefield Promotions

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**OBJECTIVE** The purpose of the project was to uncover the leadership traits, risk-taking and demographic factors associated with battlefield promotions.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The population for this study consisted of approximately 50 American Red Cross (ARC) Disaster Mental Health (DMH) leaders across the United States. Ten men and 23 women (66% response rate) completed the Leadership Practices Inventory, Calvert Risk Attitudes Inventory (Calvert, 1993), and provided demographic information and disaster battlefield experiences. Most of the participants were 60 years of age or older (82%), Caucasian (97%), married (67%), with no children at home (97%), retired (67%), holding a master's degree (54%) or doctoral degree (30%), either a licensed psychologist (33%) or licensed clinical social worker (24%), and years working with the Red Cross was fairly evenly spread (6-10 years 21%; 11-15 years 21%; 16-20 years 24%; 21-29 years 21%; and 30+ years 12%). Eighty-two percent had been battlefield promoted and 58% had battlefield promoted another ARC colleague. Eighty-eight percent indicated they had taken a Red Cross Disaster class in the past year, and six had been deployed in 1-5 national responses, six in 6-10 responses, six in 11-15 responses, five in 16-20 responses, three in 21-40 responses, and seven in 41+ responses. Cronbach alpha for the overall LPI was 0.937.

### **KEY FINDINGS**

The leadership practices reported as used most frequently were Enable, Encourage, and Model, followed by Challenge and Inspire. No significant correlations were found between any of the five leadership practices "been battlefield promoted" although the correlation was significant between Enable and "battlefield promoted a colleague."