

# RARET's coalition-based model: Addressing complex life-sustaining transportation during emergencies

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## ABSTRACT

Emergencies intensify existing vulnerabilities and create new ones for people in their impact areas. In the case of transportation, for example, disasters have the capacity to isolate individuals from the services on which they rely not for only their health and wellbeing, but for their very lives. This paper discusses the Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation (RARET) — a coalition-based model created to address non-life-saving transportation coordination needs during emergencies. RARET focuses on the provision of life-sustaining transportation, serving vulnerable individuals who may require first-responder assistance if their unaddressed needs remain unmet. Using examples from the COVID-19

pandemic as well as seasonal and regional disasters, the paper highlights how leveraging a coalition built to break down the sector and geographical silos leads to better outcomes for the public and bolsters regional resiliency. The paper underlines how the novel nature of RARET delivers ongoing process improvements via a new emergency transportation provider network. Lastly, the paper suggests methods to adapt this model to other jurisdictions.

**Keywords:** transportation, coalition, emergency, accessibility, mobility, disability

## INTRODUCTION

Coalitions provide a vehicle for cross-sector organisations and individuals to form an alliance to enact change as a unified force. They can bridge gaps in perspective, geography and expertise by sharing knowledge, skills and best practices to identify solutions that best meet the community's needs. A coalition-based model provides a framework from which direct relationships between agencies and communities can be built, supported and/or supplemented. As highlighted in research from sectors like public health, partnerships between community-based organisations are crucial when it comes to identifying and addressing the needs of a community.<sup>1</sup> This approach can be applied to other sectors and can

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include groups beyond community-based organisations.

In the Puget Sound region of Washington State, mobility managers lead coalitions that support the coordination and improvement of conventional, non-emergency transportation needs, such as advocating for needed bus routes. The Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation (RARET) exists to complement these mobility coalitions by addressing the transportation needs of communities during emergencies, particularly those people with specialised transportation needs including but not limited to people with disabilities. These emergencies can vary in scope and frequency. Commonly, extreme weather related disasters are the most relevant to the coalition's work, but low-frequency events like floods and earthquakes are also addressed.

## RARET OVERVIEW

RARET is one of six coalitions led by the Mobility Management team at Hopelink. Hopelink is a nonprofit organisation based in King County that offers a variety of community-based programmes to achieve the vision of a community free from poverty. Hopelink's Mobility Management team serves as the formal mobility managers for King County and seeks to coordinate, educate and advocate for improved mobility solutions for people in Central Puget Sound. Having a mobility management team as the home of a coalition like RARET provides a strong foundation of regional transportation knowledge and connections. This facilitates mobility problem-solving and the ability to marshal transportation subject matter expertise with ease.

RARET is an organised collection of emergency managers, mobility managers, transportation providers, human service

agencies and community advocates who pilot key strategies to increase the critical transportation services available to populations with access and functional needs during emergencies or disasters. For RARET's purposes, 'access and functional needs' refers to individuals with and without disabilities, who may need additional assistance because of a condition that may limit their ability to act in an emergency. This can include older adults, people with disabilities, English-language learners, and even people who cannot drive.

As the State of Washington's Disability Mobility Initiative makes clear, 'by assuming everyone can choose to drive, emergency response plans leave many people out'.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, 'a quarter of [Washington]'s population is unable to drive. It's unacceptable for our needs to be completely overlooked and it does not bode well for future crises'. This is underscored by the National Council on Disabilities in their report, 'The Impacts of Extreme Weather Events on People with Disabilities',<sup>3</sup> which highlights instances where people with disabilities experienced worse outcomes due to inadequate planning and/or insufficient resources. For example, when Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, 9,800 special needs students found themselves without transportation to attend school, beyond what their families could provide. The disproportionate impact of emergency events on those with access and functional needs is, unfortunately, well established. As the report also observes, the fact that 'seventy per cent of people who are deaf and evacuated reported living in unsanitary conditions a month after the disaster compared with only 7 per cent of evacuees who are not deaf underscores the scale of the problem a widespread emergency in the Central Puget Sound would present'.

Given that the tri-county region of Snohomish, King and Pierce Counties,



Figure 1 Map of Washington State, showing RARET's operational area — the tri-county region of Snohomish, King and Pierce Counties

Source: RARET (2020) 'RARET Resiliency Roundtable' meeting materials, Slide 10, available at: <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/RARET%20Resiliency%20Roundtable%20PowerPoint%20FINAL.pdf> (accessed 23rd November, 2023)

whose combined populations number roughly 4 million (Figure 1), is home to a sizable and known population of non-drivers, RARET is mindful of this disparity.<sup>4</sup>

The geography in this region ranges from the Cascade Mountains, the rural and suburban floodplains of the Snoqualmie Valley, the large cities of Tacoma, Everett and Seattle, to the island communities of Vashon and Fox Island. All these territories sit astride seismic fault lines, and some communities sit in the shadows of volcanoes, making the region susceptible to both earthquakes and volcanic activity.

Faced with this array of communities, with their linguistic, cultural, geographic

and financial diversity, assembling a varied group of partners into a coalition is a necessary undertaking. Accordingly, careful consideration must be taken to bring in a range of perspectives to offer the greatest level of institutional knowledge, subject matter expertise, mobilisable resources and perspectives from those with lived experiences. From a coalition standpoint, RARET seeks to facilitate a number of goals, including gap analyses, partnership building, general preparedness, resource development, cross-sector communication and response coordination when necessary. To this end, the coalition is composed of emergency managers,

transportation providers, mobility managers, human service agencies and community advocates representing King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties. While this cross-section does not encapsulate every niche RARET partners occupy, it demonstrates the breadth of voices at the table.

Conventional transportation coordination efforts typically see responding agencies engage in a direct agreement with a transportation provider, often the largest transit agency in the region, to facilitate transportation needs in the event of a disaster. These relationships are fruitful and will solve most transportation needs during emergency response efforts. However, not every disaster rises to the level for this direct relationship to activate, and this partnership tends not to be designed to serve the needs of agencies or organisations that are not direct parties to the agreement or whose disaster may not meet the necessary criteria to activate an emergency management agency.

As such, RARET exists to build a group of partners, through a coalition-based model to augment and enhance these existing relationships. RARET aims to increase the potency of these direct relationships, help groups establish their direct relationships when appropriate, broaden the range of tools available to respond to events, and navigate the difficult intersections of different political and geographical boundaries. For example, RARET might support partners in collaborating to develop emergency plans and procedures, allowing for cross-sector or cross-regional coordination and uniformity. In this way, key players better understand one another's roles and expectations during heightened conditions. This increase in predictability can expedite actions, which ultimately can have a positive impact on the community being served.

## **ANATOMY OF AN EMERGENCY-FOCUSED MOBILITY COALITION**

The framework of this model requires a few key components. At its core there must be a coordinating and facilitating party. This entity builds agendas, recruits partners, facilitates meeting spaces, maintains coalition-wide situational awareness and generally organises the group so it can work towards the shared goals. In RARET's case, this role is fulfilled by a full-time programme supervisor who is designated to oversee the coalition and is supported by Hopelink's management team.

Diving into the anatomy of this coalition-based model, RARET requires a number of key partnerships to respond effectively to emergency events and prevent gaps in response efforts. One such partnership would be mobility management. Local mobility management expertise, beyond the more regionally focused RARET full-time staff, enhances the regional transportation subject matter expertise and enables non-emergency follow-up to emergency transportation coordination events. As each county has a designated mobility manager, it is crucial for a multi-county coalition such as RARET to involve each mobility manager and ensure there is no duplication of efforts.

Another essential component of this model is participation and support from transportation providers. Transportation providers are a key as they provide services and have firsthand knowledge of the transportation landscape. This knowledge can prove invaluable to efforts around sharing best practices and identifying needs. Should coordination needs arise, RARET works with these providers to determine what resources can fit the needs of clients impacted by these events; without their participation, the efforts of such a coalition would be largely fruitless.

Lastly, and no less vital, are the emergency management partners. These

agencies, particularly those at the county level, often lead the response to emergency events. Their access to the local agencies that have direct contact with end users is vital in coordination efforts. At a broader level, their expertise offers guidance for partners looking to increase their resiliency to disaster events. Being a multi-county effort saves vital time by allowing partners to call on existing connections when their own capacity is exhausted.

This trifecta of emergency management, transportation providers and mobility managers serves as the core framework that RARET response efforts are constructed around by forming an alliance. These partners serve to facilitate this essential function of RARET. In the event of an emergency, these partners would provide the coalition with the means to mobilise necessary resources.

Additional partnerships add valuable input into the preparation and review components of RARET's emergency work. For example, partners who specialise in serving groups such as individuals with disabilities, organisations serving those who are experiencing homelessness, human services, city and state agencies and even private individuals, allow additional best practices to be crafted and shared to ensure partners are prepared to meet the needs of the broadest possible group of clients during an emergency. One such partner, Jim House of the Coalition for Inclusive Emergency Planning (CIEP), has in personal correspondence noted that, 'properly defined, the coalition model used by RARET can be a successful plan because it includes "The Whole Community" that engages stakeholders that may or may not be transportation providers, but also include end users and people who work with the end users'. To this end, 'RARET has frequently collaborated with the Coalition on Inclusive

Emergency Planning (CIEP), a statewide advisory group with the Washington State Council on Independent Living, that focuses on Access and Functional Needs (AFN) with a network of local and national subject matter experts'. Their presence allows all partners to benefit from their well-rounded perspectives. Furthermore, transportation has been identified as 'one of the top five core areas for AFN as a critical need for people in marginalised communities to survive a disaster'. RARET therefore contends that these partners' participation in the coalition provides a tangible value-add to their own work and wellbeing.

Integrating these additional types of partners into the model allows RARET to effectively assess gaps prior to an event and to learn lessons from incident response. Including these partners enhances the quality of content offered by the model. To this end, Tyler Verda of Snohomish County Human Services has privately commented that 'RARET has been a great resource in helping us foster cross-sector and regional partnerships'. As a testament to the utility of these spaces, Tyler notes that working with RARET provides the opportunity 'to learn from regional partners working in the nexus of transit, emergency management, public health, and human services'. The combined participation of these diverse organisations and individuals allows the coalition to centre voices with the most expertise on a given topic while concocting a plan to address it. This enables the coalition to provide value for all partners.

### **ACCESSIBILITY, CULTURE AND INCLUSIVITY AS CORNERSTONES**

This model is more than just the partners in the attendance list; it is the inclusive and accessible space built for them to engage with. This is meant both in the practical

sense as well as from the cultural, accessibility and inclusive planning perspective. The resources and meeting spaces produced by a coalition-based model should be constructed in a way where all partners can participate equitably as they desire. In RARET's case, with its tri-county footprint, that includes selecting convenient meeting spaces and offering virtual options whenever possible. This ensures rural providers at the edge of the region can participate in the same manner as the largest transit agency in the centre. Additionally, ensuring partners can request accessible accommodations and meeting any requirements posed helps ensure no viewpoints are excluded from the crafting of best practices. Accordingly, Hopelink Mobility's Inclusive Planning Toolkit guarantees no partner is on the outside looking in.<sup>5</sup>

The culture of the group is also significant to the success of the model. With so many partners with so many viewpoints there comes an inherent risk of conflict. Setting unified goals for the intention of the space to be collaborative, as well as repeated guidance on the best way to frame discussions with an emphasis on improvement, lends itself to a space where partners are eager to share. In this way, the coalition grows organically via positive word-of-mouth testimonials from respected partners.

However, simply building an inclusive space is no guarantee that partners will commit time to the model immediately. The full-time organiser of the group is obligated to build trusting relationships with each partner. This means meeting with them one on one, showing up to external meeting spaces and contributing toward partner projects and initiatives. These efforts engender reciprocity from partners, helping them get their feet through the door of the inclusive space that the coalition has built.

## MODEL APPLICATIONS

With these partnerships in place, how does this coalition model function practically? The typical RARET functions fall into a few categories, as demonstrated in Figure 2. The first is situational awareness. Partners are on the RARET distribution list and sent a monthly newsletter and important information when extreme circumstances arise. These tools allow coalition partners of all types to access current, relevant information. This situational awareness can lead into preparation work as RARET offers tools and training to interested partners.

Coalition work is typically comprised of opportunities for collaborating via RARET meeting spaces. Primarily, partners will find the most utility in the tri-county coalition meeting. These meetings currently occur bi-monthly, take place virtually, and provide a place to host discussions, highlight best practices, share tools and collaboratively brainstorm with partners across professional and geographic barriers. Additionally, RARET offers more irregular collaborative meeting spaces. Recently, RARET has promoted standalone virtual meetings mainly intended for deep dives on useful tools or a particular practice. As another example, RARET facilitated coordination meetings as needed during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the early stages of the pandemic, this involved bi-weekly coordination meetings to support the region in understanding and addressing the rapidly changing needs of the community and providers.

Lastly, and most infrequently, there are opportunities for RARET partners to attend in-person or hybrid meetings, which typically serve as exercises, roundtables or project-specific events. Where an emergency event, such as extreme weather, requires RARET's support, additional functionalities are engaged. These

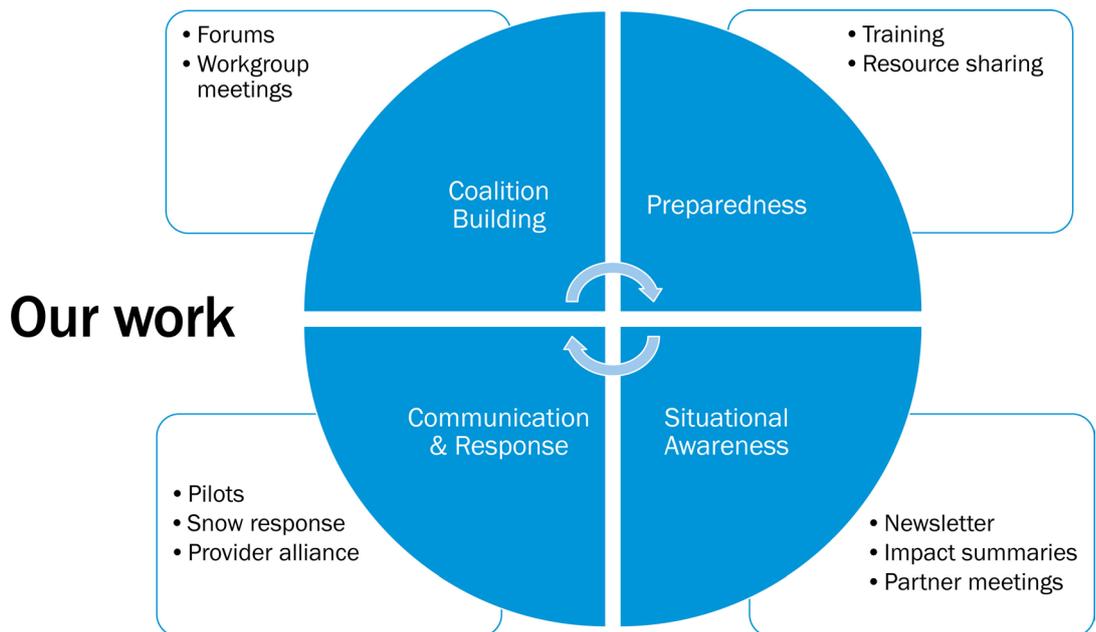


Figure 2 The four main areas of RARET's work, along with examples

Source: RARET (2020) 'RARET Resiliency Roundtable' meeting materials, Slide 11, available at: <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/RARET%20Resiliency%20Roundtable%20PowerPoint%20FINAL.pdf> (accessed 23rd November, 2023)

functionalities can vary depending on the emergency, but often include facilitating coordination efforts, highlighting resources, providing incident-specific situational awareness. Once the facts of any situation are gathered, RARET will either join or host coordination e-mails and calls for relevant partners to collaborate, should that be determined necessary either by an external partner or by RARET itself.

Emergency scenarios can be examined to see how the pieces work together. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, presented a unique challenge to the coalition due to its severity, its reach and its duration, with all RARET processes affected by the crisis. At the most basic function of RARET, information sharing and situational awareness, COVID-19 would prompt the launch of weekly impact summaries (see, for example, Figure 3). These would replace the newsletter for most of the public health

emergency as a more frequent informative resource. These summaries would allow all transportation providers in the region with a way to communicate changes in their policies.

These would allow the constantly shifting pandemic transportation landscape to become readable for RARET partners, allowing them to make informed decisions. In the context of RARET's obligation to provide a level of situational awareness for partners, this was the only solution that could practically accommodate the frequent policy changes in the opening stages of the pandemic response. Partners could reference the latest impact summary to obtain a snapshot of where transportation policies stood at that moment of COVID-19 response. RARET would later use this knowledge of the COVID-19 transportation landscape to draft the language of the public-facing COVID-19 Transportation

## King County

### King County Metro: 206-553-3000

*Operation Updates: Metro is currently installing mask dispensers on another 200 buses. In total, Metro will have installed dispensers on more than 340 buses by Dec. 14. The routes were prioritized for mask dispenser installation based on ridership, crowding concerns, and operator reports of mask non-compliance. Mask usage among bus and shuttle passengers increased to 88% during the week of Nov. 23. Find more information [here](#). (Website, 12/7).*

- Metro reinstated fares on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Follow [this link](#) for more information on how to reload your ORCA card from home or in your neighborhood. King County Metro has developed guidance which provides information for

*Figure 3 Snippet from an impact summary, illustrating of how the tool provided situational awareness — in this case by highlighting updates from the transit provider, King County Metro*

Source: RARET (2020) 'COVID-19 Weekly Transportation Impact Summary: November 24th – December 7th', available at: <https://mailchi.mp/7901c2791c3d/raret-covid-19-weekly-impact-summary-december-7th?e=ec01cc89b1> (accessed 23rd November, 2023)

Resources page on FindARide.org. This webpage typically serves as a reference guide for transportation resources across the region, with this new page on the site dedicated to resources specific to the COVID-19 response. This tool, now post-pandemic, proved popular for individuals and assistors seeking access to resources like COVID testing or trying to identify non-ambulance providers capable of moving COVID-19 positive individuals.

To provide additional, localised venues for problem solving within the RARET network during the pandemic, the coalition would host bi-weekly check-ins for each of the three Central Puget Sound counties to offer a hands-on place to

collaborate. These would serve as a crucial place for many partners to have cross-sector collaboration during a time of rapid policy change. For example, SHAG, a senior living organisation, had meal delivery needs that arose due to COVID-19 restrictions. The local RARET check-ins would provide a space where a SHAG representative could connect with Catholic Community Services to provide a solution via their volunteer transportation programme. The RARET coordinator would be mobilised to attend multiple public-health-led meetings, ensuring transportation subject matter expertise was present. These results helped RARET advocate for non-driver access to COVID-19 vaccination sites by

advocating for accessible options to drive-through only sites.

COVID-19 was a frequent topic in RARET workgroup meetings, as even regular RARET topics such as cold-weather response would now have a new COVID-19 dimension for partners to discuss and share. Each of these process changes for COVID-19 would see RARET trying to find the best way to enable partners inside the coalition. Proper partnerships established beforehand, via the coalition model, enabled the sharing of information, practices and collaborative problem solving, leading to tangible results in the Central Puget Sound region.

While COVID-19 represents an extreme on the spectrum of RARET incident responses, most emergency responses require a much lower degree of mobilisation yet still leverage those same partnerships facilitated by the coalition model. In most cases, an informal group of partners is convened based on their proximity to the request and their perceived level of capability to respond. This is usually sufficient to pair a requesting party with a group of partners who have the resources to address the need. Typically, these types of responses involve something like urgent medical appointments, which would be very grave to miss but are not direct trips to the emergency room. This is unsurprising as we know that transportation is a barrier to medical appointment access. Notably, in one study of 200 children with a history of missed appointments, 51 per cent of parents identified transportation barriers as the primary reason for missing clinic appointments.<sup>6</sup> Emergencies can exacerbate this gap. For example, during wildfires in the rural areas around Skykomish,<sup>7</sup> the King County Office of Emergency Management enquired about transportation options for those isolated by the closure of westbound

US Highway 2. The goal was to identify transportation solutions for residents whose primary transportation route was replaced by an alternate route that could take over three hours, one-way. These residents had medical appointments which, while not life-saving emergencies, were essential to their continued health and wellbeing. Such a request did not require the complete reconfiguring of RARET's processes like COVID-19; instead RARET notified an informal group of partners based on capability and geographical proximity to the incident. This made it possible to secure an out-of-county volunteer via our Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) contact. Without Mobility Management and WSDOT connections, such an external contact would have been impossible to secure. Additionally, RARET had King County-based partners such as King County Metro Access paratransit and Hopelink Non-Emergency Medical Transportation partners to whom clients could transfer if needed. This example demonstrates how *ad hoc* action groups of RARET partners are mobilised to address emergency transportation coordination requests. These examples, from the highest level of catastrophe such as a global pandemic, to a more localised emergency like a rural wildfire, demonstrate how this coalition-based model mobilises the right partners to address emergencies.

#### **LIMITATIONS AND ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODEL**

RARET's model is not without room for improvement. In its current form, RARET relies on *ad hoc* partner engagement during emergency events, rather than formalised, pre-assigned partner roles and responsibilities during crisis events. Geography and capacity, as understood by

the coalition organiser and their mobility management partners, are the primary determinants for which partners are brought into transportation coordination response efforts. While in practice this has led to positive outcomes, there are shortcomings to this approach. The *ad hoc* nature means there is a lack of clear roles and responsibilities for partners. When an emergency transportation coordination need arises, agencies may have their own plans and procedures rather than a clearly defined set of processes and procedures from RARET on how to handle these incidents. Additionally, partner willingness, capacity and restrictions may not be readily apparent to all partners involved in the request. This can translate to a lack of current knowledge from non-transportation provider partners, like emergency management. This can pose a barrier to identifying the appropriate partnership to expedite a solution.

RARET has identified a solution to this concern and is beginning the rollout of its Emergency Transportation Provider Network (ETPN) project. The goal of the ETPN is to increase the availability of transportation for special needs populations during adverse weather or emergencies by having a collective regional network of providers in Snohomish, King and Pierce Counties. It seeks to formalise procedures and increase the predictability of transportation provider operations during heightened conditions. A formalised network will mean the *ad hoc* transportation coordination during emergency responses will be replaced with a unified and organised one. RARET's assessment is that such a formalisation will produce a network of partners better equipped to coordinate emergency transportation. This improvement aims for faster outcomes for clients, a lower burden on first responders, and partners with more tools and trainings at their disposal.

This will require an alliance of transportation providers, emergency managers, partners outside of the formal ETPN network and government officials working together to coordinate this effort. Many of these partners are already collaborating within RARET's existing coalition-based model, and this project aims to codify that relationship into something more concrete. The ETPN is centred on four guiding principles: flexibility, cross-sector collaboration, punctual communication and accessibility.<sup>8</sup> While these core tenets are typically embraced by RARET partners, having a formal entity practising these ideas is intended to provide the network with the impetus to share best practices across the region. This project also aims to provide value to partners beyond better coordination during emergencies. Collaboratively developed resources for information gathering, training and other best practices will create streamlined processes and give partners resources to prepare better for different emergencies. The project looks not only to plug an existing gap left from the *ad hoc* approach but also add value to partners by creating ongoing, well-defined relationships between partners. Zooming out to view this project alongside RARET as it exists today, it is designed to fit within RARET's larger framework. RARET will still engage in all its normal activities but will leverage formalised ETPN roles and responsibilities for incident response as well as training and resource development. With this project in its nascent stages, time will tell what impact the ETPN efforts to formalise processes will have. RARET aims to develop certain tools, such as a standardised rider information collection form, to increase the value-added of such a network and making it more attractive to partners. RARET suspects this effort will eventually lead to the more formalised network standing as a best practice.

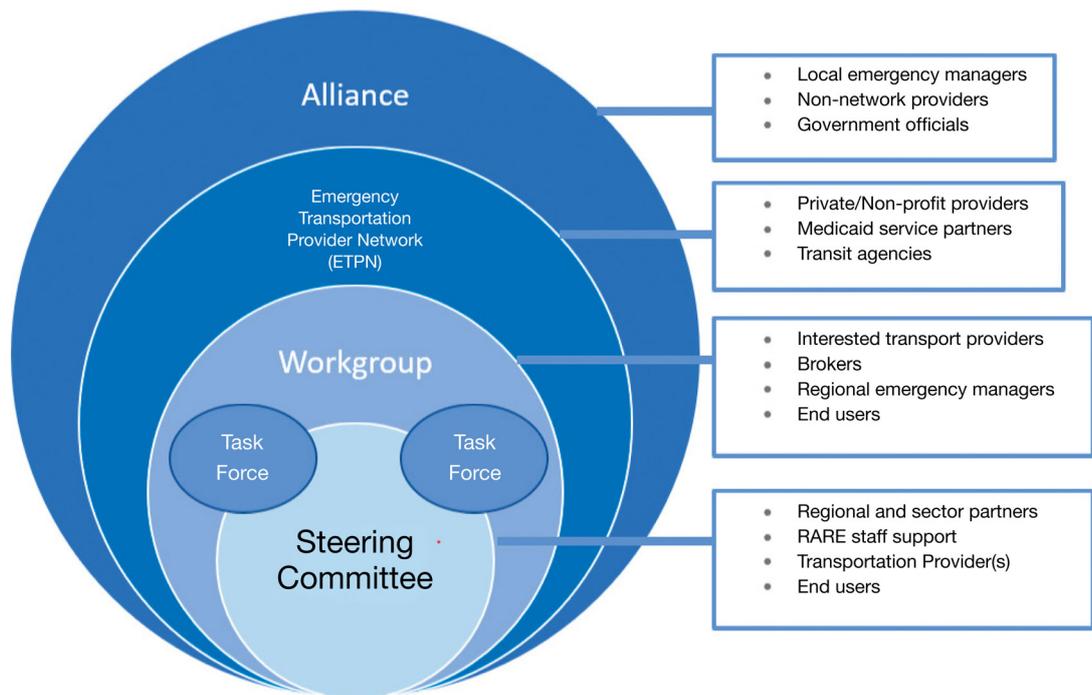


Figure 4 A map of RARET's structure, with different levels of participation for partners to engage with

Source: Draft ETPN Charter and MOU, internal file

## RECOMMENDATIONS

ETPN is a vision for the future of RARET and is just one of the potential avenues that a coalition-based approach to the coordination of emergency transportation might take. Were groups in other geographies to adopt such a model, it could well take a different form. For example, the programme supervisor could theoretically be housed within a different type of organisation. For groups with little mobility management expertise, connecting with large organisations like the National Center for Mobility Management for resources is a good place to start. Nevertheless, it is recommended that any group adopting this model should retain certain key features that enable its effectiveness. Most notably, this means a strong and diverse partner base, with emergency management, mobility

management and transportation providers all having a seat at the table. Indeed, the participation of these partners should be foundational. Collaborating with human service agencies, community advocates, accessibility experts and city and state agencies will bring collective benefits. The legwork to obtain buy-in from these partners can be done through personalised outreach work that considers their capacity and clearly articulates the value-add of participation in the coalition. Optimal results are transportation coordination solutions that take advantage of training sessions and best practices derived from subject matter experts, and provide a right-sized, accessible solution to clients in quick fashion. Those working in accessibility often refer to the phrase 'nothing about us, without us',<sup>9</sup> which has emphasised importance due to the elevated risks

faced during disasters,<sup>10</sup> and transportation should be no exception to the application of that mantra.

The second foundational step is to build a collaborative culture. During emergencies, more than at any other time, this culture must be strong yet flexible, honest yet compassionate, decisive and receptive to feedback. As partners will understand, an emergency eclipses those who confront it; this sense of collective mission will result in positive outcomes for both those affected by and those encountering the crisis. Leaning on resources and best practices from subject matter experts on accessibility, to create a space where all can participate and share their expertise, is crucial.

Finally, to offer the greatest value to partners, it is crucial to build an understanding of the local emergency landscape, by working with emergency management partners and local advocates. This includes seasonal events like harsh winters and lower frequency risks like earthquakes. Once this emergency landscape is mapped, the organiser can begin to organise the necessary training, connect with relevant subject matter experts and set agendas for meetings that meet the needs of partner groups. Partners can vary in size and capacity from region to region, particularly in the case of emergency and mobility management, so working directly with partners to gauge capacity to interface with the coalition and their own needs is crucial. Assessing the coalition's scope of work in this context becomes another essential task. What does an emergency mean for this coalition? Is something too big or too small to fall under its mandate? Is something like a homelessness crisis too broad for such a coalition to tackle? These are questions only the organiser and their partners can answer to find the right solution for their particular region and their own capacity.

## CONCLUSION

Emergency transportation coordination is a recurring concern through emergencies of all magnitudes. The varied needs of individuals with access challenges, exacerbated by adverse conditions, present a challenge that is difficult to navigate without transportation partners and a direct link with mobility managers who can identify the optimal partnership for a task. A coalition-based model, like RARET in the Pacific Northwest, offers a space where these partners can share and develop best practices, coordinate emergency response and analyse where improvements can be made. Jurisdictions looking to adopt a similar approach would do well to have at least one full-time member of staff assigned to organise the group, secure participation of key partner groups, and build an accessible and collaborative area where partners and subject matter experts can share and provide feedback in a healthy manner.

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