

## **Bruce Lockwood, CEM**

### **Senior Manager, Planning and Preparedness, Senior Manager, Response, IEM**

#### **Speaker Bio:**

Bruce Lockwood, CEM, is a seasoned public safety and emergency management professional with more than three decades of experience in fire service leadership, emergency medical services, and emergency management. A retired Fire Chief and paramedic, he has led organizations through complex incidents, large-scale emergencies, and long-term recovery efforts, emphasizing preparedness, coordination, and people-focused leadership.

As a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM), Bruce applies real-world experience to planning, mitigation, response, and recovery. He has worked closely with municipal leaders, regional partners, and multidisciplinary teams to strengthen community resilience, improve operational readiness, and translate lessons learned into practical, actionable plans.

Bruce is a strong advocate for professional development, mental health awareness, and sustainable work-life balance within the public safety profession. He is also a writer and speaker focused on leadership, resilience, and the human impact of a career in emergency services and continues to support the field through mentoring and education.

#### **Presentation:**

### **Dear Younger Me**

### **Lessons for Public Safety from an Older, Wiser You**

Emergency management is a profession defined by long hours, sustained stress, and constant responsibility. While we spend significant time strengthening systems, plans, and community resilience, far less attention is paid to the long-term resilience of the professionals doing the work. Dear Younger Me is a practitioner focused session that addresses this gap by examining how personal well-being, boundaries, and family stability directly impact preparedness and leadership

effectiveness. Drawing on experience across emergency management, the fire service, and EMS, this presentation is framed as a candid “letter” to the next generation, and a reflection for those already deep into their careers. Through personal experiences, the session explores cumulative stress, burnout, identity beyond the job, and the strain high-demand careers place on families and relationships. This session ties directly to the conference theme by reframing preparedness as a long journey rather than a single event. Just as emergency managers chart courses and anchor plans in resilience, professionals must intentionally sustain themselves over years of crisis work. A workforce that is burned out or emotionally depleted cannot remain resilient, regardless of how strong plans appear on paper. Participants will leave with practical, experience-based strategies they can apply immediately to support personal resilience, set healthy boundaries, and sustain effectiveness throughout the full arc of their careers.