



FEMA

NOV 24 2009

Dr. G. Kemble Bennett
Office of Vice Chancellor
Texas A&M University
301 Wisenbaker Engineering Research Center
College Station, Texas 77843

Dear Dr. Bennett:

Thank you for your letter, dated August 7, 2009, regarding the National Advisory Council (NAC) recommendations on promoting public/private partnerships. The letter makes two recommendations, summarized here, along with my response.

Recommendation 1: FEMA should develop the capacity to share the contacts and relationships that they are developing at the national level with the Private Sector to be available to state and local emergency managers. The information of those state and local emergency managers can also be made available to those Private Sector contacts.

I believe that the private sector is a crucial part of our national response team. FEMA is currently working to bring the public and private sectors together throughout the emergency management cycle at the policy and program levels. In response to your specific recommendation, I have outlined some areas we will consider going forward, as well as current efforts.

To start, I strongly support connections between the operational Federal government players and their private sector counterparts – a practice that I found worked well when I was in Florida. I will ask FEMA divisions that currently work with private sector organizations to look for opportunities to introduce these organizations to their counterparts in public-sector emergency management. Although it may not always be practical or desirable for headquarters programs to reach past FEMA regions to other levels of government, there may be opportunities to connect stakeholders to the Regions, and through them, to the State, tribal, territorial, and local levels as appropriate. I also encourage public and private sector emergency managers to support and work through existing structures that have been established to connect these professionals, such as the public private partnership committees of the National Emergency Management Association and the International Association of Emergency Managers. It is important to note that we are just beginning to build our private sector engagement capabilities in the FEMA regional offices, so support will continue from existing resources in FEMA headquarters until the regions are fully able to take on this new role.

In reference to the second part of your recommendation, I am pleased to offer a more immediate solution as state level emergency management contacts and some local resources are currently available on FEMA.gov and Ready.gov (<http://www.fema.gov/about/contact/statedr> and

Dr. G. Kemble Bennett

Page Two

NOV 24 2009

<http://www.ready.gov/america/local/index>). Moving forward, we will provide this information more prominently on the FEMA private sector portal as well. Our private sector office will also be working to share information with state and local governments.

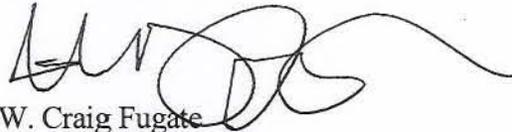
Recommendation 2: The Subcommittee recommends that Public/Private Partnership be made a priority by revising the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) grant guidance language.

The Fiscal Year 2009 HSGP grant guidance and application kit states that “developing public/private sector partnership emergency response, assessment, and resource sharing plans” is an allowable cost within the “developing and enhancing plans and protocols” category.

I appreciate your feedback on the idea of adding the Public/Private Partnership as a separate priority within the FY 2010 HSGP guidance package. I agree that these partnerships are critical to the success of the national response team and our success as a nation. The Department is currently reviewing a number of proposed priorities and will soon make a decision on which priorities will be included in the FY 2010 package. We can follow up with you in the future to brief you on the process for how determinations were made on the overall national funding priorities.

I look forward to working with you in the coming year as we continue to build a cohesive national response team that fully leverages all of the capabilities of citizens, private sector and nonprofit organizations, and government at all levels.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Craig Fugate', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

W. Craig Fugate
Administrator