

FEMA National Advisory Council Meeting
Public Teleconference
November 10, 2010

This Executive Summary, submitted pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), contains a summary of the activities that took place during the National Advisory Council (NAC) teleconference on November 10, 2010. The complete transcript may be requested at FEMA-NAC@dhs.gov.

DRAFT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NAC Members Present:

Jim Featherstone, NAC Chair	Russ Decker	David Miller
Don Dunbar, NAC Vice Chair	Nancy Dragani	Ken Miller
Beth Armstrong	Lee Feldman	Adora Obi Nweze
David Barron	Jane Halliburton	Michael J. Phillips
Joseph Becker	John Hines	Chuck Ramsey
Joseph Bruno	Chuck Kearns	Teresa Scott
Steve Cassidy	Larry Larson	Kevin Yeskey
Bob Connors	David Markenson	
Mark A. Cooper	Sue Mencer	

FEMA Staff Present:

Breese Eddy, Deputy Designated Federal Officer
Corey Gruber, Assistant Administrator of FEMA National Preparedness Directorate
Keith Holtermann, Director of FEMA National Exercise Division
Brian Marko, Exercise Program Specialist
Nicholas DeJesse, DHS/FEMA Region III, National Preparedness Division
Blair Hyde, DHS/FEMA Region III, National Preparedness Division
Susan Koshgarian, FEMA Legislative Affairs Division
Jim Hardy, Program Analyst, Future Planning Branch, FEMA-Response Directorate
Thomas Balint, Associate Chief Counsel
Robert Schweitzer, Executive Officer National Preparedness Directorate

Meeting:

The teleconference was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Breese Eddy, NAC Deputy Designated Federal Officer (DFO). The meeting was opened and presided over by Jim Featherstone, NAC Chair.

Call to Order and Roll Call: Breese Eddy, NAC Deputy DFO

- As stated in the Federal Register Notice for this meeting, members of the public wishing to offer comment were asked to do so in writing by November 3rd. The NAC Office received no comments.

Opening Remarks: Jim Featherstone, NAC Chair

- This teleconference is open to the public and meeting notes will be posted on the FEMA NAC website.

- Today's agenda included a briefing from Corey Gruber, the Assistant Administrator for National Preparedness, on revisions to the National Exercise Program; followed by a Report Out from the Preparedness & Protection Subcommittee given by Russ Decker; and the remainder of the time will be used to ask questions, discuss the proposed recommendations, finalize any recommendations we would like to send to Administrator Fugate.

Briefing: National Exercise Program Revision: Corey Gruber, National Preparedness Directorate

- The Secretary of Homeland Security directed the FEMA Administrator to initiate a 90-day effort to revise and improve the National Exercise Program (NEP) in a memo dated August 17, 2010. The Secretary's mandate called for building upon existing aspects of the program, but adopting a progressive structure that incorporates the principles of realism, agility, and collaboration. The revised NEP must better serve its stakeholders and provide an effective mechanism to prepare and test the entire homeland security enterprise against common objectives that reflect national priorities.
- The following concepts are under consideration for the NEP revision:
 - Scope: The NEP will encompass a series of exercises of all types (i.e., drills, tabletops, modeling and simulation, no-notice/limited notice events, functional, full-scale, etc.) for participants at all levels (i.e., Federal, State, local, tribal, territorial, private sector).
 - Progressive: The two-year cycle will be progressive as it looks at wide variety of exercises, linked to a common set of objectives, and over time this cycle increases in challenge and complexity. The full cycle will start in January 2013.
 - Objectives: The NEP will be an objectives-driven program, with the Primary Objectives of each two-year cycle being set by the Secretary, the FEMA Administrator, and the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism. The NEP will leverage existing exercises that are consistent with the objectives determined by leadership.
 - Collaborative: The NEP will actively incorporate Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial partners and private sector stakeholders in the planning, conduct, and evaluation of each two-year cycle. Where appropriate, the planning process will be shortened to accommodate a larger volume of exercises.
 - Realism: Each two-year cycle will feature an increased number of no-notice/limited-notice exercises, with exercise play driven more by player actions than scripted injects, where possible.
 - Readiness: All NEP exercises will reflect current risk assessments.
 - Capstone: Each NEP two-year cycle will culminate in a comprehensive, full-scale, intergovernmental exercise that will address the Primary Objectives of the given cycle.
 - Evaluation: The evaluation of NEP exercises will focus on the rapid, agile development of corrective actions and lessons learned that can both quickly improve the performance of exercise participants and inform broader assessments of national preparedness.

Council Discussion:

- Appreciate the progressive aspect of the exercises increasing in complexity, scale and intensity.
- The Administrator has discussed the priority is to stabilize the situation within the first 72 hours, but this is just the first phase of the priority. Subsequent phases will look beyond the first 72 hours. There will be series of exercises, tabletops, and workshops that lead up to the NLE 2011 and relate to the May NLE scenario. Interest in exercises that go beyond the period of the first 72 hours, as well as examining issues on critical infrastructure, such as energy.
- Recovery efforts will likely focus on immediate jobs and responsibilities, so there needs to be somebody who has a sense of the bigger picture. In the exercises someone needs to focus sustaining the effort in the next week, the next month, and next year while others focus on the first few days.
- Members suggested that every exercise should have a community of effort component and how to look at shared resources and recovery in the long term. Part of an exercise should test capability of government by engaging all levels of government—the unity of effort goes across the spectrum.
- From the perspective of an emergency manager in a small community, unity of effort is right on target, as all players in a small community are needed in a disaster. *Cooperation* should be replaced with *unity of effort*.

Preparedness & Protection Subcommittee Report: Russ Decker, Subcommittee Chair

- Roll call conducted and confirmed the presence of a quorum.
- The Preparedness & Protection Subcommittee held a teleconference on October 29, 2010 to discuss the NEP and prepare recommendations to present to the full Council:
- Overall the subcommittee supports the direction that the NEP revisions are heading but had questions and comments. Some may need to be addressed in the NEP, while others may be part of the Implementation Plan.
 - Need to include diversity of scale in terms of city size, state size, local and tribal. This would also necessitate further examination of the forms of government involved.
 - Significant outreach will be needed to address concerns about having FEMA evaluate state, territorial, tribal, and local exercises.
 - Need for integration of various funding silos and exercises, such as pods or bio watches. This will improve efficiency and consistency in mission.
- The questions laid out to the NAC in the NEP Issue Paper were discussed and it was determined that this input would feed into the Implementation Plan rather than the policy document.
- NAC recommendations for discussion and Council decision include:
 - Recommendation 1: The Council agrees with the overall focus and direction of the revisions to the National Exercise Program (NEP) and particularly the emphasis on realism and integrating communities of varying sizes.
 - Recommendation 2: The Council recommends the NEP embrace fully and wholeheartedly the whole of community concept, including, but not limited to, the public, private, and non-profit segments of the community.

- Recommendation 3: FEMA should closely examine the issue of stratification and choose words carefully as certain terms, such as evaluate, may cause concern and reduce involvement at the tribal and local level. The revised NEP is a voluntary program and we can all benefit from participating. Ensure some exercise planning targets regions and small communities and small cities in addition to large cities.
- Recommendation 4: There is significant variety within each local government as to its structure and who has emergency management responsibilities. This reality needs to be reflected in the language used in the NEP. For example, use of the term *Mayoral* should be replaced with *local government*.
- The Council will provide additional recommendations and feedback based on the questions raised in the NEP issue paper provided by FEMA in the coming months to inform the development of the NEP Implementation Plan, which should be moved forth with the same deliberate speed of the NEP revision process.

Council Discussion:

- Today's charge was to give overall approval or disapproval of the concept. NAC will have an opportunity to provide input on the implementation phase. The timeframe for the implementation plan is still in development.
- The NAC reached a consensus and decided to share the concepts discussed today with the FEMA Administrator.
- Members strongly support the discussion about diversity of scale and paying close attention to the vocabulary used. The NAC recommends that the NEP program full-heartedly embrace the whole of community concept and include but not limited to nonprofits and private and public sectors.

Closing Remarks: Jim Featherstone, NAC Chair

- These recommendations on the National Exercise Program will be transmitted to the FEMA Administrator.
- The next NAC public teleconference will be held on December 16, 2010 at 2:00 pm Eastern to discuss the National Disaster Housing Task Force's (NDHTF) Practitioner's Guide to Disaster Housing.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 pm by Breese Eddy, Deputy DFO.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the forgoing minutes are accurate and complete.



Jim Featherstone
Chairman
National Advisory Council