

# REGION 2 BI-WEEKLY

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## CATASTROPHIC PLANNING TOPS AGENDA OF RAC AND RISC MEETINGS

The Regional Advisory Council (RAC) met in Puerto Rico last week, bringing together state, territorial and federal stakeholders to address identified shortfalls in emergency planning in the Caribbean area. Regional Administrator Lynn Canton and Deputy Regional Administrator Michael Moriarty attended the meeting, highlighting the high priority the Region places on RAC partnership and initiatives in the Caribbean Area Division (CAD).

A presentation on Hawaii's *Catastrophic Hurricane Planning* process provided a template for a catastrophic plan for an island community. The presentation, provided by HQ Operations Specialist Tom Breslin, deeply resonated with officials from the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, as it explicitly detailed island-specific challenges, including supply-chain issues that the CAD will likely face. Attendees agreed that a viable response to a catastrophic scenario needs the engagement of not only all jurisdictions but also the private sector and residents with disabilities, citing FEMA's Whole of Community framework as a model for planning outreach.

Response Division Director Dug Salley, right, advanced this approach with the announcement that Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands had received a DHS grant to create a joint Commonwealth-Federal Operations Plans (OPLANS) for the response to, and recovery from, an earthquake and tsunami scenario affecting the islands within the CAD.

Within six weeks, a contractor will be named and a planning team – made up of all the Emergency Support Functions (to cover everything from 'response' to 'survivor needs'), Region II's Defense Coordinating Officer, VITEMA and PREMA officials – will be on site. The Plan itself will focus on the first 72 hours after the event through Day 7, Salley said, and after review, Salley anticipates the Plan will be validated by an exercise as early as September 2012.

Catastrophic planning likewise topped the agenda of the three-day meeting of the Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) in Fort Monmouth this week, where the Response Division worked to coordinate the Emergency Support Functions of the federal family to build on the planning done by the Regional Catastrophic Planning Group, whose plan covers the Northern New Jersey-New York metropolitan area.

Day 1 provided an introduction to the FEMA planning process, a highly structured, results-driven program that relies on multi-agency and external partners to serve on a Collaborative Planning Team and the various Integrated Working Groups. Together, the planning teams and working groups will identify objectives and recommend courses of action.

Day 2 of the RISC meeting featured two distinct breakout sessions: One planned for a Category 3 hurricane in the USVI, and the second how to respond to an Improvised Nuclear Device (IND). During these breakout sessions the Response Division's Lead Planners facilitated the creation of mission statements and the identification of goals and objectives for each of these planning projects. The mission statement details *what* the plan must accomplish to achieve success. The lead planners then facilitated the development of Plan Objectives, which identified what must be done to successfully respond to the consequences of the incident, and to reach the desired end.

The final day of the RISC meeting provided attendees with a brief-out on the breakout sessions, and a presentations by the Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group on the new technology available to support the Region's response to a catastrophic event.



# RESTORING THE PAST

In FEMA's world, Public Assistance disasters don't often enjoy the same cachet as declarations that include Individual Assistance, but in the US Virgin Islands, a recent PA disaster highlights a storied past.

The storms and floods of DR-1949-VI washed out an area adjacent to Fort Frederik, the 18<sup>th</sup> century Danish fortress that defended the coast of St. Croix from pirates. The area had previously been identified as an archaeological site and historic cemetery. A project worksheet was written for this, and another for the restoration of an historic stone wall (see below) that lined both sides of the Lagrange Ghut, a stream that channeled rainwater from the upland, colonial capital



Frederiksted into the sea.

Last month, Environmental/Historic Preservation Section Team Lead Charles Bello gave a presentation at the St. Croix Archaeological Society in Christiansted, St. Croix explaining the work, and detailing its compliance with historic and environmental regulations. In fact, the presentation itself was required by the National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106 review) which mandates public outreach prior to the repair of sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places if they have applied for Public Assistance under a presidential disaster declaration. The underlying rationale being that residents need to know their patrimony is being protected.

The St. Croix Archaeological Society is a Non-Profit Educational Society dedicated to the scientific study of both the Pre-Columbian and European settlement of the island of St. Croix.

A large crowd attended the FEMA presentation and there was a lively question and answer period, suggesting both a vibrant interest in local history and that some PA disasters enjoy a higher profile than others.

# AN OLD PROGRAM; ITS NEWEST FACE

By Natasha Henry

**Q:** What do Marshall Mabry, Julia Roberts, Kevin Malone, Louis Eswood, and Paul Tashjian have in common?

**A:** They all started their FEMA careers as interns.

The goal of the Region II Internship Program is to develop a pipeline of talented, young professionals by fostering awareness of the needs, challenges, and career opportunities in the complex field of emergency management. "Interns are the future leaders of emergency management," RA Lynn Canton says. "They bring a vibrant energy, a dynamic perspective, and new technologies – such as social media – to the workplace. These innovations and their enthusiasm have the ability to transform the field."

Currently, the Region's interns are recruited through their schools and at internship fairs. After submitting a resume and interviewing, placements are made by matching the student's area of interest to a FEMA division. Each division requesting an intern must submit a detailed work plan to ensure the match is mutually beneficial. If your division would like to host an intern, please contact Sean Waters ([Sean.Waters@dhs.gov](mailto:Sean.Waters@dhs.gov)), Russell Fox ([Russell.Fox@dhs.gov](mailto:Russell.Fox@dhs.gov)), or me, ([Natasha.Henry@dhs.gov](mailto:Natasha.Henry@dhs.gov)) for more details. (I also started an intern.)

The Region's first intern in 2011 is **Chantel Hamilton**, right.

**School:** NYU, Steinhardt Graduate School of Culture, Education, and Human Development

**Degree:** Masters in Public Health, (Expected May 2011)

**Division:** PNP Assigned to: Pandemic Preparedness, and Family Support Annex

of the Continuity of Operations plan.

**What I want from FEMA:** I hope to learn about disaster preparedness and how it relates to community public health planning and policy.

**Fun Fact:** I have a class B Commercial Driver's License, and drove transit buses for two years

