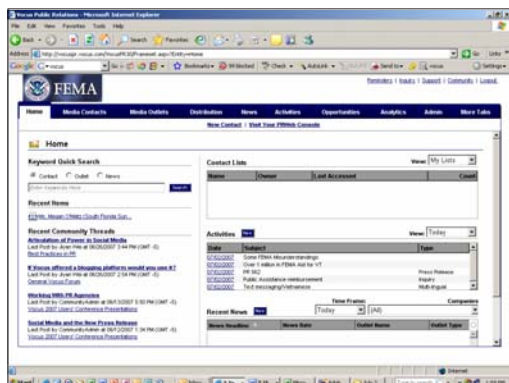




Are you Vocused?

by Alexandria Kirin, HQ



Many DAE's will remember the day when doing media relations in the field was about 20 percent talking to the media, 20 percent trying to find them, 20 percent figuring out how to send them information, 20 percent writing reports on them and 20 percent organizing all the paper from those reports.

Now with VOCUS, an online media management tool, tracking, sending and organizing is all done in once place in just a few easy steps.

All interaction between FEMA external affairs staff and the media is entered online into VOCUS. Though it may seem cumbersome at the onset of a disaster, the benefits of this program far outweigh the obstacles. As JFOs open and begin disseminating disaster-related messaging, media outlets may also receive information from regional offices and HQ which provides a broader or national perspective. VOCUS allows us to track all of this correspondence to identify trends and emerging issues so that we can ensure consistent messaging.

In addition, there are a number of other benefits derived from using VOCUS. These include:

- * Ease in developing media lists by county
- * Easy editing to update or add information to an existing inquiry (e.g. entering a response to an inquiry)
- * Ease in producing quick, on the spot, reports for leadership; including analytical information
- * Ability to enter call-outs, media visits and media attendance for a number of outlets with one VOCUS entry
- * Capability to enter, save, and update press releases and advisories prior to distribution

The HQ news desk runs a daily report called "News Desk Activity." The report is run at 5:00 (EST) and tracks the day's entries for inquiries, interview requests and interviews. This report is submitted to external affairs leadership and staff, as well as Bulletin News, a contracted clipping service. Bulletin News also imports FEMA clips into the News section within VOCUS.

Although VOCUS is primarily used for Public Affairs, the Agency is currently exploring ways to use a similar database in other parts of External Affairs, including Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs.

If you would like more information contact Alexandria Kirin or Ashley Small at the HQ News Desk (202-646-4600 or FEMA-News-Desk@dhs.gov) for a copy of the VOCUS SOP, to set up an account or to get more information on the training available.



Students work together on a group exercise. Photo by Kathy Cable

External Affairs Leadership Training

by Russ Edmonston, HQ DAE

A well-balanced cross section of regional external affairs cadre representatives were introduced to external affairs operational concepts at an Emergency Management Institute class held June 11-15 in Emmitsburg, Md.

In all, 23 external affairs cadre members – about seven from public affairs, about seven from community relations, about seven from congressional and two from intergovernmental – took the class.

Doug Welty, national public affairs cadre and training manager, said, "Our goal was to ensure that

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Doug Welty, Editor
Kathy Cable, Graphic Design

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EA Training, con't

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the external affairs cadre was well represented. As components of external affairs, we all need to learn to walk in each other shoes. This was the start of that learning process.”

The class went through an intensive orientation on the “New FEMA,” the ESF 15 Standard Operations Procedures, roles and responsibilities of an external affairs officer and staff, a review of the new units and job functions under external affairs (such as Planning and Products), and training in writing and presentation skills for each cadre - peppered with exercises to practice what was preached.

The four-day course taught at EMI is now being adapted into a two-day basic field overview course and should be available toward the middle of July, 2007, for presentation in the regions or at JFOs. The hope is, especially in the JFOs, the two-day class can be offered to all staff – including other programs areas, as well as other partners.

Overtime Policy

The Agency's overtime policy is located on the FEMA intranet at http://cio.fema.net/rm/dm/im/3200-1_011806.pdf for your review - but to summarize: All overtime, comp time or credit hours **must** be pre-approved.

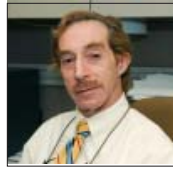
Supervisors must approve non-standard time before it is worked. Oral approval is acceptable in unforeseen circumstances, but as noted in the policy, if you receive oral approval, you must also obtain written approval prior to submitting your time in Quick Time.

In the JFOs, the overtime policy is set by the FCO. Be sure you know what hours have been authorized and approved **BEFORE** you work them. Even when overtime is approved, there are limitations.

Check with your supervisor and Admin/Finance support staff.

Concerns, Questions, Ideas, Opinions, Sharing

DAE Questions & Answers



*Phil Clark,
IGA Cadre Manager*

Q: *I have heard about this new IGA cadre. How do I join?*

A: Attend an HQ Intergovernmental briefing in a JFO, ask all the pertinent questions you can dream up and, if still interested, discuss your interest with your cadre manager.

Q: *Can I do IGA as a regional DAE or do I have to join the HQ cadre?*

A: Qualified, interested regional DAEs can get IGA titles in addition to their primary titles. These DAEs would remain in their regional cadres, and they are more likely to be called first for their primary jobs than for IGA.

Q: *What if I really like IGA and want to concentrate on it?*

A: HQ has an IGA cadre. Members of this cadre also may acquire secondary titles in other areas, but they most likely would be called first for IGA.

International



U.S. and Russia Sign Extension for Emergency Management Agreement

by Lauren Traczykowski, HQ

On Tuesday, June 26, 2007, the United States and the Russian Federation updated and renewed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on cooperation in natural and man-made technological emergency prevention and response. In the original 1996 MOU, FEMA and the Russian Ministry of Civil Defense, Extraordinary Situations and Disaster Relief (EMERCOM of Russia) were named the executive agents for their respective countries. Since 1996, the U.S. and Russia have met on an annual/biannual basis to develop yearly work plans and examine the progress towards joint emergency management goals.

Over the past 11 years, FEMA and EMERCOM have exchanged best practices and lessons learned. In recent years, EMERCOM sent delegates to Baton Rouge, Louisiana to participate in a multi-country exchange of best practices based on Hurricane Katrina. A National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) expert and a representative from FEMA's Office of International Affairs also participated in the Ad Hoc Group on Civil Emergencies meet-

ing in September 2006, in Moscow, Russia to examine medical consequence management issues.

“Good communication, observing each country's training methods, joint exercise and sharing best practices, help us solve common problems and improve our emergency preparedness and relief operations,” Ambassador William Burns, U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation, stated in his formal remarks. Ambassador Burns signed the MOU extension for the United States and First Deputy Minister Ruslan Khadzhimelovich Tsalikov, of EMERCOM, signed for the Russian Federation.

The relationship between FEMA and EMERCOM continues to be productive and informative. FEMA looks forward to building on the eleven year relationship and expects continued collaboration over the next ten years.

**Does ADD have your correct phone numbers and contact information?
If you are not sure, CALL!**

Mitigation Outreach Extends to External Affairs



Jay Michaud (left) and Leroy Ingram (right) explain retrofitting techniques to a local resident. Photos by Anita Westervelt

Mitigation Outreach Coordinator, Jay Michaud, FEMA Region 8, saw a need, acted on it, and now is coordinator of one of the most innovative and responsive programs getting disaster information to those who need it - when they need it.

The need was how to get mitigation information to people before they begin their repairs after a disaster. The solution was to partner with home supply stores where people shopping to fix disaster damaged homes would go, before they might consider visiting a Disaster Recovery Center.

The key to this sort of outreach, according to Michaud, is to take an active step in talking to the customers.

“My teams don’t sit behind a table full of literature,” Michaud said, “they stand next to it and actively speak to each customer walking in the store.”

The retailers cooperate by placing the teams inside the front entrance of the stores. Many Lowes, Home Depot and independent hardware stores in New York, Florida, Mississippi, West Virginia and Texas have participated with Michaud’s teams in the past

by Anita Westervelt, DAE Region 6

five years.

The teams have booklets, brochures and how-to information on retrofitting buildings, elevating utilities, the National Flood Insurance Program, safety clean-up tips and how to get help with other disaster-related questions. They can meet with more than a thousand people a week and assist not just disaster victims, but anyone wanting the offered information.

Not only do the teams give information, they also collect information about local trends and share that with External Affairs who, in turn, can aptly tailor messaging. The program is a favorite of media and readily picked up by both print and television, further promoting FEMA assistance information.

Michaud has expanded the outreach to include un-staffed display stations at a variety of locations throughout

disaster areas, extending outreach when staffing is critical. The displays offer the same literature as the home supply stores and are re-stocked weekly.

As a result of New York’s mid-April 2007 nor’easter declaration, mitigation outreach teams have staffed 12 stores and approached more than 43,000 people.



Jay advises the Mitigation team., Photo by Anita Westervelt

Building a New Cadre

by Phil Clark,
IGA National Cadre Manager

Intergovernmental Affairs is a new area for DAE deployment.

Headquarters is building an Intergovernmental Affairs DAE cadre, and also is offering supplemental IGA titles to interested, qualified regional DAEs.

IGA needs effective management skills, strong oral- and written-communications ability, a thorough understanding of government structure and processes and a strong grasp of FEMA programs. Candidates must have received at least the HQ basic IGA briefing, completed one officially sanctioned IGA deployment as trainees and been recommended by their JFO supervisors before receiving IGA titles.

Three IGA titles currently appear in ADD: assistant external affairs officer for Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA lead), IGA specialist/unit leader and IGA specialist.

HQ has conducted Intergovernmental Affairs field training in JFOs in Regions I, V, VI, VII and X.

Many DAEs who have taken this training have great FEMA experience. Some are fully qualified, even expert, in other cadres. Valuable as this experience is to IGA, it doesn’t cover all IGA functions. IGA field operations differ from the other External Affairs components, so, to some extent, we are developing a fully-trained IGA group from scratch. Agency leadership requires that we provide a level playing field throughout the agency, so job titles and proficiency ratings mean the same thing everywhere. Consequently, IGADAEs start as specialist trainees. They can be promoted thereafter, based on performance.

Several regional DAEs have made the transition to IGA specialist, unit leaders and leads. Other regional DAEs who might like to work within IGA should discuss their interest with their cadre managers.

Preparing a Congressional Brief

by Jaime Cook, Congressional HQ DAE

Congressional Affairs conducts a wide range of briefings and presentations throughout the course of a disaster recovery operation. Some will require detailed preparation, such as the initial JFO Congressional Briefing, or the first office visit briefing, while others will be more spontaneous and tailored to the particular needs of the office(s).

An initial Congressional Briefing recently occurred in Sen. Edward Kennedy's office in Boston, Massachusetts, where five Congressional Offices were represented and six others participated via teleconference.

FEMA Congressional Affairs specialists, Jaime Cook and Charlie Kohler, first coordinated the date, time, and location of the briefing by giving the senior Senator the option to host it. With the assistance of the Planning Section, they prepared all SCO/FCO-approved materials and handouts. Because this briefing was intended to serve multiple locations, they mailed out the briefing books to Congressional offices beforehand and e-mailed an electronic version as a follow-up.

After opening remarks from the Deputy SCO, the FCO, Michael Parker, conducted the operational and program briefing which lasted about 30 minutes, followed by a question and answer session. Program area experts were also available to provide their support.

After the briefing, Jamie and Charlie contacted all represented offices and thanked them individually for their attendance and partnership.

Community Relations (CR)

Heroic Actions of CR DAEs

by Geneva Coleman, CR National Cadre Manager

An elderly man, smoking a cigarette in his hotel room while oxygen was in use, caused a small fire and needed to be evacuated. Chad McCormack and Susan Peterson, both part of a FEMA Community Relations team assessing flood damage in Missouri, smelled smoke shortly after returning to their hotel and became concerned.

They began investigating with another resident on the floor and located the room, with smoke billowing from under the doorway and a fire alarm ringing. A hotel employee opened the door, and the FEMA CR field specialists quickly moved the disabled man out of the room. The hotel manager, also investigating the cause of the alarm, extinguished a small carpet fire and smoldering garbage can in the room.

The elderly man suffered burns to the face and singed hair. While waiting for medical personnel, the elderly man said he had been released from the hospital the prior evening, along with the oxygen tank.

His condition was unknown as of this writing, but the Fire Department expressed their gratitude to Susan and Chad for their unselfish efforts. Your FEMA family is proud of you!

On the Web

- ◆ DAE Info Site, Back issues of "On Call" <http://www.fema.gov/pao/daeinfo.shtm>
- ◆ National Travel Web Site <http://nationaltravelsystems.com/>
- ◆ National Emergency Training Center Admissions Database to view your completed courses <http://netctraind1.fema.net/tias/>
- ◆ Public Affairs Resource Library <https://interactive.dhs.gov>

Travel Vouchers

Tips for doing your travel vouchers

- ◆ File within 5 days of end of trip
- ◆ File every 2 weeks at JFO
- ◆ Make an appointment at JFO
- ◆ Prepare your receipts
- ◆ Use Direct Deposit

Receipts attached are:

- ◆ Common carrier
- ◆ TMC Travel fee on itinerary
- ◆ Zero-balanced lodging receipt
- ◆ Rental car receipt
- ◆ ATM Fee
- ◆ Expenses over \$75

Split Pay expenses paid directly to Citibank

- ◆ Common carrier
- ◆ TMC Travel fee on itinerary
- ◆ Lodging and lodging tax
- ◆ Rental car
- ◆ ATM fee

Split Pay expenses paid to traveler's personal account

- ◆ M&IE (meals)
- ◆ Mileage (POV only)
- ◆ Phone calls
- ◆ Transportation (gas, public transit, taxi, parking fee)
- ◆ Other (excess baggage, laundry and other official expenses)

You are responsible for paying your Citibank account. You can check your account with Citibank online at <http://www.cards.citidirect.com> (your client code is "DHS") You will need to set up a user name and password with Citibank. Contact your travel manager for questions.

Training

Mandatory training for all FEMA employees includes:

- ◆ **Take once, online:** ICS-100, ICS-200, ICS-700, ICS-800
- ◆ Customer Service, usually offered at the JFOs, every four years.

Done once a year, online:

- ◆ Equal Rights
- ◆ Sexual Harrassment
- ◆ Diversity training
- ◆ Ethics
- ◆ IT Security

To check your training history, go to <http://netctraind1.fema.net/tias>