The Technical Mapping Advisory Council (TMAC)

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Overview

The Technical Mapping Advisory Council (TMAC) is a Federal advisory committee established to review and make recommendations to FEMA on matters related to the national flood mapping program authorized under the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012.

The national flood mapping program provides flood maps to inform communities about the local flood risk and help set minimum floodplain standards so communities may build safely and resiliently. The Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) established under the program help determine the cost of National Flood Insurance Program flood insurance which helps property owners to financially protect themselves against flooding.

The TMAC will review the national flood mapping activities authorized under the law and prepare recommendations to the FEMA Administrator. The TMAC will also produce a report on the impacts of climate sciences and future conditions and how they may be incorporated into the mapping program.

TMAC Membership Requirements

The TMAC includes representatives from Federal, state, local and private sector organizations as mandated in The Biggert Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012. The legislation requires certain Federal Government departments and agencies to be represented, and requires the FEMA Administrator appoint members from 16 specific member categories.

The designated Federal members include:

- The FEMA Administrator (or the designee thereof);

- The Secretary of the Interior (or the designee thereof);
- The Secretary of Agriculture (or the designee thereof); and
- The Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere (or the designee thereof).

The additional 16 members appointed by the FEMA Administrator consist of:

- A member of a recognized professional surveying association or organization;
- A member of a recognized professional mapping association or organization;
- A member of a recognized professional engineering association or organization;
- A member of a recognized professional association or organization representing flood hazard determination firms;
- A representative of the United States Geological Survey;
- A representative of a recognized professional association or organization representing State geographic information;
- A representative of State national flood insurance coordination offices;
- A representative of the Corps of Engineers;
- A member of a recognized regional flood and storm water management organization;
- Two (2) representatives of different State government agencies that have entered into cooperating technical partnerships with the Administrator and have demonstrated the capability to produce flood insurance rate maps;
- Two (2) representatives of different local government agencies that have entered into cooperating technical partnerships with the Administrator and have demonstrated the capability to produce flood insurance maps;
- A member of a recognized floodplain management association or organization;
- A member of a recognized risk management association or organization; and
- A State Mitigation Officer

Required Qualifications

Members must be appointed based on their demonstrated knowledge and competence regarding surveying, cartography, remote sensing, geographic information systems, or the technical aspects of preparing and using flood insurance rate maps. And, the membership of the Council must have a balance of Federal, State, local and private members, with geographic diversity, including

representation from areas with coastline on the Gulf of Mexico and other States containing areas identified by the Administrator as at high risk for flooding or as areas having special flood hazards.

Nomination, Appointment and Term of Service

The Council is a Federal advisory committee governed under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Per requirements, nominations were solicited through various professional organizations and a public submission process, published in the Federal Register. To establish the TMAC as a Federal advisory committee, the FEMA Administrator selected the most qualified candidates submitted in each membership category, ensuring that, together, the nominees provided a balance of geographically-diverse professional opinions from a mix of State, local, and private sector organizations. Following a rigorous vetting process, FEMA announced the membership and establishment of the Council in July 2014. TMAC members serve either one to two year terms, at the discretion of the Administrator, to allow refresh and ensure the expert input required. When new members must be appointed, the same process will be followed and a Federal Register Notice will be published to solicit public submissions, per FACA requirements.

Subject Matter Experts

Subject Matter Experts may also be invited to present before the Technical Mapping Advisory Council. In addition to the expertise of TMAC members, these Subject Matter Experts are a critical component of TMAC and will be requested by the TMAC membership. Examples of expected Subject Matter Experts include Tribal experts, Climate science experts, and other experts not directly represented by the membership.

TMAC Meetings

As a Federal advisory committee, TMAC business meetings and discussions are open to the public and members of the public will have an opportunity to submit comments for the TMAC’s consideration. The TMAC will likely conduct three virtual and three in-person meetings within its first year, with the first in-person

meeting set to occur in September 2014. Notice of meetings will appear in the Federal Register several weeks prior to the start date. The Federal Register can be viewed at www.federalregister.gov. Pre-registration for meetings is required and all comments must be submitted in writing prior to the deadline; information on both items will appear in the Federal Register notice. (Note: Meetings may be closed to the public if required and justified.)

TMAC Recommendations and Reports

TMAC is required to make recommendations to the FEMA Administrator on:

1. How to improve, in a cost-effective manner, the (a) accuracy, general quality, ease of use, and distribution and dissemination of Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and risk data; and (b) performance metrics and milestones required to effectively and efficiently map flood risk areas in the United States;
2. Mapping standards and guidelines for (a) Flood Insurance Rate Maps; and (b) data accuracy, data quality, data currency, and data eligibility;
3. How to maintain, on an ongoing basis, Flood Insurance Rate Maps and flood risk identification;
4. Procedures for delegating mapping activities to State and local mapping partners;
5. (a) Methods for improving interagency and intergovernmental coordination on flood mapping and flood risk determination; and (b) a funding strategy to leverage and coordinate budgets and expenditures across Federal agencies

Per the authorizing legislation, TMAC must additionally develop recommendations on how to ensure that Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) incorporate the best available climate science to assess flood risks and ensure that FEMA uses the best available methodology to consider the impact of the rise in sea level and future development on flood risk. Per new requirements added upon passage of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014, the TMAC must also develop a review report related to flood mapping in support of the NFIP.

For more information, visit fema.gov/TMAC or contact: FEMA-TMAC@fema.dhs.gov