



FEMA

March 13, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mitigation Division Directors
Regions I - X

FROM: Douglas A. Bellomo, P.E., Director
Risk Analysis Division

SUBJECT: Procedure Memorandum No. 48 - Protocol for Contractors
Who Use and /or Order Paper Flood Insurance Maps and
Map Products.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 31, 2009

Background: Converting the NFIP paper map inventory to digital products and moving to digital delivery via the Internet was a key goal for Flood Map Modernization (Map Mod). In an effort to achieve that goal, FEMA issued a policy in November 2007 titled "Use of Digital Flood Hazard Data" which clarified the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) approach to the implementation of section 107 of Public Law 108-264, 118 Stat. 724 (2004) (<http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=3235>). This new policy will accomplish the following:

- Enable significant advantages in capability, precision, and cost for users who are able to use digital geospatial data products;
- Reduce costs associated with paper map production, handling and storage;
- Encourage the use of quality local data to make administration of the NFIP more efficient and effective; and
- Enable stakeholders who have already adopted digital technology to use it for NFIP purposes.

In addition to the issuance of the policy, FEMA's complete inventory of digital flood map images (FIRM Scans), the release of the new National Flood Hazard Layer product, and a suite of tools and users' guides for handling digital flood data have enabled FEMA to accomplish the Map Mod goal of transforming paper map products to digital format and delivery via the internet.

Issue: FEMA currently distributes both paper and digital flood hazard information products. FEMA has achieved an 80 percent reduction in the number of flood maps distributed in paper form even though the production of new map panels has increased by 350 percent during Map Modernization. FEMA's primary product has shifted from paper

maps to online delivery of scanned maps, revisions, and amendments through the Map Service Center.

FEMA's goal is to distribute only digital forms of flood hazard information. Completing this transition to digital products is a significant accomplishment for FEMA's flood hazard map products and distribution under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Replacing paper map products with digital versions will save money, reduce duplication in FEMA's flood hazard data products, and provide users with more powerful and flexible tools. By making this change, the flood hazard mapping program expects to save \$3 million to \$5 million annually.

FEMA recently announced that, beginning on October 1, 2009, FEMA will provide a single paper copy of each new map and flood insurance study report to each mapped community, and will end all other distribution of paper maps and reports. Distribution of products to all other customers will be in digital form only. FEMA will continue to provide free digital map products and data to Federal, State, Tribal, and local NFIP stakeholders. FEMA will charge all other customers for digital data based on our existing fee schedule.

Action Taken: As part of the transition to digital products, this memorandum changes FEMA's policy for providing paper products to contractors:

- After March 31, 2009, the Map Service Center will charge FEMA contractors for paper maps.
- Starting on October 1, 2009, only digital products will be available to FEMA contractors.

FEMA will continue to provide digital products to contractors at no charge during and after this transition.

Contractors who use paper maps and reports in the study process should start planning now to transition to digital maps and reports. Information about the new digital tools are available through the FEMA Map Service Center <http://msc.fema.gov>.

FEMA is working on the issues of the map production impacts of this decision, and additional information will be forthcoming regarding changes in deliverables at LFD and other operational impacts.

cc: See Distribution List

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