



May 6, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Craig Fugate
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency

FROM: James Featherstone 
Chairman
National Advisory Council

SUBJECT: Recommendations from March 19, 2014 Meeting

The purpose of this memorandum is to forward the National Advisory Council's (NAC) recommendations from the March 19, 2014, meeting in Philadelphia for your consideration.

The NAC met in a public session to review the progress of its three subcommittees since its conference call in December 2013 and deliberate any potential recommendations set forth by these subcommittees.

Through discussions and deliberations, the NAC concurred to submit two recommendations to the Administrator related to Response and Recovery: 1) Regional Response and Recovery Capability and 2) Tracking and Storage of Mutual Aid Agreements. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Regional Response & Recovery Capability

Issue: Federal response and recovery systems are based on transactions and driven by requirements during time of need. Government resources alone cannot meet all the needs of those affected by an event. A whole community approach (individuals, communities, the private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, and all levels of government) can address gaps in capabilities. Established relationships and partnerships ensure that available resources are coordinated in advance of an event.

Recommendation: FEMA should maximize existing mechanisms to continue to implement the National Disaster Recovery Framework and the National Response Framework, to engage and educate the whole community on response and recovery capabilities and resources, and to create lasting relationships:

- a. Re-examine agendas, participants, and outcomes of the existing regional committees and councils, including but not limited to the Regional Interagency Steering Committees (RISC) and Regional Advisory Councils (RAC), to identify participants and gaps in participation.
- b. Ensure the composition of participants includes representatives from Federal, state, local, tribal levels of government, and representatives from faith-based, nonprofit, private sector and volunteer organizations.
- c. For those who are included but not engaged, determine how to re-engage them and encourage their participation in order to accomplish the purpose of implementing the national strategies.

2. Tracking and Storage of Mutual Aid Agreements

Issue: Response and recovery resources are identified in mutual aid agreements, memorandum of understanding or memorandum of agreement between states, tribes and local jurisdictions. The location and status of these documents is critical to response and recovery efforts. Communications and other

interactions between tribal governments, states, counties and other local units of government may be intermittent at best. State and local jurisdictions may not have the knowledge or awareness of communications protocols or special considerations when coordinating with tribal governments located in their state or adjacent to their communities.

Recommendation: FEMA should encourage state, local, tribal, and territorial entities to conduct a thorough review of all of their agreements (mutual aid agreements, memorandum of understanding or memorandum of agreement between states, tribes, locals, private and nonprofit sectors, and faith based and community organizations). Before such a review takes place, FEMA should encourage the National Emergency Management Association, International Association of Emergency Managers, and other stakeholder associations to develop guidance and criteria, such as the elements of these types of agreements, to ensure that there is uniformity in these agreements.

- a. Establish a comprehensive management system for mutual aid agreements for governments at the lowest level and community to access electronically or manually.
- b. As a result of the review, conduct a gap analysis to identify new agreements for development.
- c. Eliminate duplicate agreements or revise and update expired agreements as needed.

The National Advisory Council is grateful for the opportunity to provide these recommendations to you and the Agency for your consideration and looks forward to the next opportunity.