

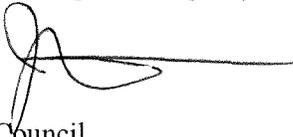


FEMA

National Advisory Council

October 15, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: W. Craig Fugate
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency

FROM: James Featherstone 
Chairman
National Advisory Council

SUBJECT: Recommendations from September 2014 NAC Meeting

The purpose of this memorandum is to forward the National Advisory Council's (NAC) recommendations from the September 2014 meeting in Los Angeles, CA for your consideration.

The NAC met in a public session to review the progress of its three subcommittees and one working group since its last meeting in March 2014 and to deliberate any potential recommendations set forth by these subcommittees.

Through discussions and deliberations, the NAC concurred to submit five recommendations to the Administrator related to collaboration with public works and non-profit organizations, translating lessons observed into lessons learned, and federal procurement education and outreach. The recommendations are as follows:

Collaboration with Public Works and Non-Profit Organizations

Issue: There is a lack of involvement of non-traditional responders, such as volunteer groups, non-profit agencies, and public works entities, at the local level in planning, training, and exercising opportunities. This lack of involvement has resulted in disjointed, delayed, and sometimes duplicative response efforts. While many FEMA-provided training courses encourage multidisciplinary and multijurisdictional training, in practice, these courses are being delivered primarily to the traditional response groups of emergency managers, police, and fire.

Recommendation 1: FEMA should review the process of integrating volunteer groups and non-profit agencies into ongoing preparedness planning and disaster relief efforts. By implementing the practice of regularly scheduled group meetings with key non-profit organizations and federal partners and by integrating pre-planned relief efforts into operational response plans and exercising those plans with partner volunteer and non-profit agencies, FEMA can improve collaboration with these groups in anticipation of the next disaster.

Recommendation 2: FEMA should advance improvement in relations between response agencies at the local level by encouraging the inclusion of public works entities in planning, training, and exercising opportunities at the federal level, specifically with FEMA-provided training and exercises activities. The goal is to develop a universal recognition within the practice of emergency management of the public works sector as a responder. All FEMA-provided training and exercising should encourage cross-disciplinary involvement to increase opportunities for public works agencies to engage with other public safety personnel and public officials that make decisions regarding funding for training, exercising, and resources. Many public safety responders have no knowledge of the resources and skills that their local

public works partners may bring to emergency management. The inclusive cross-disciplinary training and exercises will promote the relationships that are needed to allow a more effective and coordinated response.

Translating Lessons Observed into Lessons Learned

Issue: Preparedness is improved by enabling continuous improvement among the whole community through the development and sharing of knowledge and experience. While lessons learned are disseminated because of national and local exercises as well as actual events, the following questions remain:

- Are lessons learned being produced by and actively disseminated to the various stakeholder groups within the whole community?
- Are FEMA's stakeholders reviewing lessons learned and incorporating those lessons learned as best practices into their respective preparedness plans?
- Is the quality of lessons learned being sufficiently evaluated?

The NAC recognizes that while it is not FEMA's responsibility to ensure that lessons are actually *learned* by the whole community, the value of these lessons should be measured to determine whether essential stakeholders are receiving and using them to improve their respective preparedness and response plans. The NAC identified the Lessons Learned Information Sharing (LLIS.gov) as an area, or specific platform, through which FEMA can improve upon the measurement and translation of lessons observed into lessons learned.

Recommendation 3: FEMA should undertake a review of the LLIS.gov system that includes but is not limited to the following items:

1. A study to determine the usability, effectiveness, and the extent of penetration, or outreach, of the LLIS.gov system into stakeholder communities;
2. Measurement, if applicable, of lessons learned in LLIS.gov that are incorporated into the various plans of similarly situated communities, organizations, or other stakeholders in significant events;
3. Periodic systematic evaluations of lessons learned which are posted to the LLIS.gov system to identify and communicate common deficiencies and best practices in preparedness and response plans;
4. Assessment of dissemination mechanisms for identifying and "pushing out" those lessons learned from large disasters with national level significance; and
5. Outreach sessions that are utilized to review any recognized "promising" practices as well as identify emerging trends.

Federal Procurement Education and Outreach

Issue: The National Business Emergency Operations Center (NBEOC) serves as FEMA's clearinghouse for information sharing between public and private sector stakeholders regarding emergency management matters in support of Emergency Support Function (ESF) 15 of the National Response Framework (NRF). While the NBEOC is a valuable concept, it is still new in development and implementation. Contracting related issues between public and private sector partners continues to be a challenge during recovery and disaster closeouts.

During disasters, affected areas may need the support of the private sector through "just-in-time" logistics or unanticipated needs requiring resource that are not covered by existing contracts. Procurement laws at all levels of government may have significant impacts on a business, potentially leading to federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial contracting compliance issues. A local emergency declaration oftentimes waives local procurement rules associated with bidding procedures. A state emergency declaration oftentimes waives state procurement rules as well as other provisions, orders, or rules that would in any

way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in responding to or recovering from a disaster. There needs to be a similar provision at the federal level during times of emergency.

Recommendation 4: The NAC requests that the FEMA Administrator direct FEMA's Office of the Chief Procurement Officer (OCPO), in coordination with the NBEOC, to establish a program with state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and the private sector (both for-profit and non-profit entities) to educate them on promising practices in contracting before, during, and after a disaster. This education and outreach campaign should include a toolkit which includes a FEMA-developed template based on best practices on gubernatorial proclamations that temporarily waive the state's procurement laws that invoke contractor status, allowing timely coordination of resources and a robust private industry response in the period immediately after a disaster. FEMA should also work with major associations such as the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) and the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) as well as the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) and other emergency management entities in this education process.

Recommendation 5: To better leverage private sector support, the NAC requests the FEMA Administrator work with the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) to define and obtain flexibility in the federal procurement regulations during declared emergencies and/or disasters, and continuity of contracts and services throughout response and recovery, at any level (federal, state, local, tribal, territorial).

The NAC appreciates your support and the opportunity to engage in frank discussions with you, as it develops recommendations for your consideration.