

Note: The recommendations in this subcommittee report out are potential recommendations to FEMA as presented by the subcommittee to the NAC in a public meeting; only the recommendations discussed, deliberated, and voted on by the NAC will be forwarded to the FEMA Administrator in a memo.

# Federal Emergency Management Agency

National Advisory Council (NAC) Meeting

Response & Recovery Subcommittee

Report Out

September 17, 2014

Chair: Nim Kidd

Vice Chair: Richard Reed



## Subcommittee Mission

To advise and provide recommendations to the FEMA National Advisory Council on strategic issues relating to FEMA's disaster response and recovery efforts, and to help develop FEMA's initiatives in these areas (ex. NDHS, NDRF, NIMS, NRF); and ensuring through deliberation and promulgation of recommendations that representation, awareness, engagement, and integration of the whole community and FEMA's strategic goals are addressed.



## Charges

1. Examine issues related to how the whole community plans, trains and is educated for the response to and recovery from natural, manmade and accidental disasters;
2. Give specific attention to those response and recovery efforts/issues occurring during initial response, within the first seventy-two hours, and through long-term recovery;
3. Continue to examine how the private sector and non profit organizations can become more actively engaged in response and recovery efforts;
4. Continue to review current and emerging response and recovery efforts, to include pilot programs, modifications to existing programs, and identification of new and best practices.



## Issues

- Issue 1: FEMA Communication with Local/State/Tribal Officials
- Issue 2: Policy Clarity During Damage Assessment Process
- Issue 3: Recovery Training
- Issue 4: Personnel Local Awareness
- Issue 5: Fatality Management CONOPS



## Issue 1: FEMA Communications with Local/State/Tribal Officials

- FEMA is doing an excellent job of arriving to disaster areas quickly. However, communication between FEMA and local/state/tribal officials continues to experience delays. This creates confusion among local/state/tribal officials, as well as the public. Consequences of this may include unsustainable public expectations and the possibility of legitimate FEMA personnel being questioned by local authorities over fraud concerns.

### Recommendation 1

- FEMA should ensure local/state/tribal officials are promptly notified when any FEMA affiliated personnel arrive, prior to any field activity occurring. This includes notification about federal and contract personnel who may arrive prior to a declaration.



## Issue 2: Policy Clarity During Damage Assessment Process

- Confusion continues to exist during damage assessments over what costs are eligible for coverage. Unclear or contradictory statements by project leads can exacerbate this confusion.

### Recommendation 2

- FEMA should seek mechanisms for improving upon communication clarity during the damage assessment process. This includes potentially developing or increasing communication related training opportunities for project leads and just in time training for ground personnel.



### Issue 3: Recovery Training

- Most training courses available today focus on either preparedness or response. However, recovery represents an area where many local and state officials may spend a significant portion of their time and energy. Increased training opportunities would help these officials successfully navigate the recovery process.

### Recommendation 3

- FEMA should seek to increase the number and availability of pre- and post-incident recovery related training courses.



### Issue 4: Personnel Local Awareness

- Personnel responding to a disaster are often faced with a steep learning curve as they attempt to familiarize themselves with the affected local/state/tribal jurisdiction. Having tools readily accessible for personnel prior to travel could help increase their overall effectiveness once deployed.

### Recommendation 4

- FEMA should develop a template to assist personnel responding to a disaster who travel to new jurisdictions. A short term solution may include the development of a guide for each state that detail laws, regulations, policies, and other considerations that may impact emergency management activities. A longer-term solution may include new training opportunities covering state/local/tribal or regional considerations.



## Issue 5: Fatality Management Services

- For three years in a row, the National Preparedness Report cited Fatality Management as the number one capability gap. Management of fatalities is a local responsibility in the United States and procedures and authorities vary widely by local jurisdictions. Societal, cultural, and religious demands drive requirements that may challenge standard Mass Fatality Management (MFM) protocols.

### Recommendation 5

- FEMA and HHS should cooperatively develop a Mass Fatality Management Concept of Operations (CONOPS) involving state/local/tribal representatives in the development process.



## Next Steps

- *Non-Stafford Act Events*

