



**FEMA**

National Advisory Council

October 3, 2016

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

FROM: James Featherstone  
Chairman  
FEMA National Advisory Council

SUBJECT: Recommendations from the September 2016 NAC Meeting

The purpose of this memorandum is to forward the FEMA National Advisory Council (NAC) recommendations from the September 2016 meeting in Arlington, VA for your consideration.

The NAC met in a public session to review the progress of its three standing subcommittees and one ad hoc subcommittee since its last meeting in May 2016 and to discuss and deliberate any potential recommendations set forth by its subcommittees.

Through discussions and deliberations, the NAC concurred to submit 15 recommendations to you in the following areas: Insurance Adjuster Training and Certification, Federal Rapid Response in Medical Countermeasure Distribution, Lifesaving Techniques in Bystander and Community Emergency Response Team Materials, Integration of People with Disabilities, Communication with Regional and State Partners, and Spontaneous Volunteers.

**I. Insurance Adjuster Training and Certification (2 recommendations)**

**Issue #1:** A key component of a successful flood insurance program is to maintain the confidence of survivors. This is accomplished by ensuring that adjusters have the training and tools to handle claims in a just-in-time environment. However, complaints of adjusters not consistently following standards emerged after Superstorm Sandy; and many adjusters who are called upon to do flood adjusting only do so on an irregular basis, causing skills to lapse or become out-of-date.

**Recommendation 2017-1:** FEMA should implement enhanced standards and guidance for all levels of adjusters resulting in a new FEMA-administered certification program for flood insurance adjusters to raise the level of practice within the adjuster community and standardize adjusting practices after a flood event. This certification would include training in advance of a flood, and include a mandatory just-in-time training component before any flood adjusters go out into the field for a new flood event. This certification would also be time-limited (five years maximum) before it had to be renewed. This should be a national standard for a national program.

**Issue #2:** Training is required by the Write Your Own (WYO) insurance companies. FEMA does not adequately audit WYO companies to ensure adjuster compliance with FEMA requirements. The subcommittee needs to determine if the Direct Servicing Agent is audited for its required training of adjusters. There are currently no testing requirements for adjusters.

**Recommendation 2017-2:** FEMA should conduct regular evaluations and testing of adjusters employed by WYO companies to ensure they maintain standard competencies over time as part of the certification and renewal process.

## **II. Federal Rapid Response in Medical Countermeasure Distribution (5 recommendations)**

**Issue #3:** FEMA plays a critical role in coordinating federal agencies to enhance the nation's biodefense strategy. Executive Order 13527 directs federal departments to establish federal capability for the timely provision of medical countermeasures (MCM) following a biological attack. FEMA's specific role has been regional planning to support state and local authorities in the MCM mission. The following recommendations are based on consultation with FEMA and other subject matter experts (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state, local) on challenges towards improving the operational integrity of these efforts.

**Recommendation 2017-3:** FEMA should utilize and instruct regional offices to work with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) regional counterparts to ensure all have a working and operationally sound medical countermeasure plan as validated by the CDC MCM Operational Readiness Review (ORR) tool with the results reported back to the FEMA Administrator.

**Recommendation 2017-4:** FEMA should establish a taskforce with CDC's Division of State and Local Readiness and Strategic National Stockpile to assess FEMA's ability to provide more timely logistics and transportation support during an event of public health significance.

**Recommendation 2017-5:** FEMA should conduct an assessment to determine the status of federal MCM stockpiles to determine gaps in protection for the federal workforce. This will provide appropriate information on available MCM levels that may need to be filled by state and local stockpiles.

**Recommendation 2017-6:** FEMA should work with national Federal Executive Boards (FEB) to establish a policy around FEB collaboration with state and local officials to develop closed Points of Distribution (PODs) for federal workers and their families to ensure continuity of federal government during biological events. This should be completed within one year.

**Recommendation 2017-7:** FEMA should lead an effort to collaborate with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to develop a policy allowing federal staff, upon receipt of their MCMs, to augment state and local dispensing efforts.

### **III. Lifesaving Techniques in Bystander and Community Emergency Response Team Materials (1 recommendation)**

**Issue #4:** We believe there is a lack of inclusion of current lifesaving techniques in FEMA's bystander and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training programs.

**Recommendation 2017-8:** FEMA courses or training, whether newly developed or revised, instructing bystanders or laypersons on lifesaving measures should include specific instruction on the safety and proper use of bleeding control techniques (e.g., tourniquets, hemostatic dressings, and direct pressure compression), hands only CPR, and AED devices. While FEMA's role is not to develop such instruction, FEMA should aggregate, incorporate, and disseminate consistent messaging regarding this instruction.

### **IV. Integration of People With Disabilities (1 recommendation)**

**Issue #5:** Integration of people with disabilities remains an unresolved issue for response and recovery excellence.

**Recommendation 2017-9:** FEMA should encourage DHS to establish Center(s) of Excellence to provide state of the art training and education to emergency management partners in integration of the whole community in emergency management. This should include training in inclusion of people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, to include children and the elderly.

### **V. Communication with Regional and State Partners (1 recommendation)**

**Issue #6:** Various FEMA programs bypass the Regional Administrators and regional offices, thus creating an environment where FEMA headquarters work directly with state or local partners.

**Recommendation 2017-10:** FEMA should ensure that Regional Administrators are informed when all headquarters-administered activities are occurring in their region. The Regional Administrator should then let the relevant State Director know.

### **VI. Spontaneous Volunteers (5 recommendations)**

**Issue #7:** What are the best ways to use, manage, integrate and support spontaneous volunteers?

**Recommendation 2017-11:** FEMA should study best practices concerning spontaneous volunteer management and, subsequently, develop guidance for program templates for spontaneous volunteer operations to enable people to quickly and efficiently integrate into the response and recovery. This should include the vetting of skilled and unskilled volunteers.

**Recommendation 2017-12:** FEMA should develop guidance on the identification of a formal position in the emergency management system at the state, local, tribal, territorial and federal levels with the responsibility to facilitate and coordinate use of spontaneous volunteers.

**Recommendation 2017-13:** FEMA should develop training for first responders on how to integrate spontaneous volunteers into emergency operations.

**Recommendation 2017-14:** FEMA, working with NEMA, should compile a list of Good Samaritan laws that will serve as a catalog of potential liability concerns for spontaneous volunteer operations.

**Recommendation 2017-15:** FEMA should develop guidance clarifying the eligibility and documentation of affiliated and unaffiliated volunteer time to match the non-federal cost share in the Public Assistance Grant Program.