



FEMA

National Advisory Council

August 21, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Craig Fugate
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency

FROM: James Featherstone 
Chairman
National Advisory Council

SUBJECT: Recommendations from July 12, 2012 Meeting

The purpose of this memorandum is to forward the National Advisory Council's (NAC) recommendations from the July 12, 2012 meeting in Washington, DC for your consideration.

The Council met in a public session to review the progress of its four subcommittees since its meeting in February 2012 and deliberate potential recommendations set forth by the subcommittees. The NAC appreciated the opportunity to engage one-on-one with you during the public session.

Through discussions and deliberations, the NAC concurred to forward thirteen recommendations on the following issues:

PPD-8 Program Office

- National Frameworks and Operational plans (Recommendation 1)

Federal Insurance & Mitigation Administration

- THIRA and Grants Alignment (Recommendation 2)

Office of Policy and Program Analysis

- Strategic Foresight Initiative (Recommendations 3-6)
- Tribal Disaster Declaration Policy (Recommendation 7)
- Memorandums of Understanding (Recommendation 8)

Office of Response & Recovery

- National Incident Management System (Recommendation 9)
- Reservist Program (Recommendations 10-12)

National Preparedness Directorate

- Emergency Management Institute (Recommendation 13)

PPD-8 PROGRAM OFFICE

National Frameworks and Operational plans

1. **Recommendation:** When sharing the five National Frameworks with non-federal partners (state, tribal, local, and territorial) FEMA should make a conscientious effort to: explain their expectations of the rollout, bring the appropriate strategic partners and operational people to the table, and engage in substantive discussion on how to operationalize the frameworks and how it will impact partners—focus on dialogue, not marketing.

Background: This recommendation responds to the method for which the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) was rolled out—with town hall meetings. The subcommittee suggests that the rollout include dialogue, instead of the “talking heads” approach. The NAC suggests that FEMA identify the goal of what is to be accomplished by the rollout and share this with the audience.

FEDERAL INSURANCE & MITIGATION ADMINISTRATION

THIRA and Grants Alignment

2. **Recommendation:** As DHS moves toward the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review (QHSR), the all-hazards approach for the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) should be consistent and align to the all-hazards criteria for grants eligibility. This may require a review of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 in order to allow states and locals to access grants and ensure an all-hazards approach.

Background: The move from Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) to THIRA was a move from a science based approach to a subjective approach. Traditionally, awarded grants have tied to a terrorism event, and the NAC is concerned that it will be difficult to award grants for activities that are not directly tied to terrorism. The QHSR provides an opportunity to assess and ensure an all-hazards approach for grants.

OFFICE OF POLICY AND PROGRAM ANALYSIS

Strategic Foresight Initiative

3. **Recommendation:** FEMA should develop a web portal to support Strategic Foresight Initiative (SFI) and to include links to best practices and lessons learned.

Background: The SFI should be the central clearing house for research as it establishes a research agenda for the field of emergency management. Best practices and lessons learned have resulted from the SFI, and this data should be easily accessible to FEMA's partners through an online web portal.

4. **Recommendation:** FEMA should develop practical applications to drive the SFI at the local level so that it becomes relevant to locals, possibly include incentives.

Background: While the SFI is a great initiative, the messages and applications of the SFI need to reach a widespread audience. FEMA should take a bottom up approach to make the SFI more practical and relevant at the local level. This can be done by pursuing branding and marketing opportunities that focus on substance and value added at local level. By engaging a broader base of active community members, the SFI message will grow organically and cultivate ambassadors from the local level.

5. **Recommendation:** FEMA should establish the SFI as a primary doctrine and pivotal point for research. The FEMA Think Tank, as an established platform, is a means to communicate research and the SFI.

Background: As a forum to discuss innovative ways for improving the emergency management system with the whole community, the FEMA Think Tank is a great platform to pioneer the SFI research and questions. FEMA should ensure to align the SFI with each FEMA Think Tank.

6. **Recommendation:** FEMA should identify quick wins for the SFI to help establish its credibility and relevance.

Background: Quick wins help establish national credibility and relevance. The NAC suggests that the SFI team identify and tackle the quick wins first. In addition, FEMA should articulate the top three strategic needs that tie in with PPD-8 and the core capabilities.

Tribal Disaster Declaration Policy

7. **Recommendation:** FEMA should involve and brief the NAC throughout the new tribal policy making, which will allow tribes to directly request Presidential disaster declarations and federal assistance. If and when this becomes policy, FEMA should work with the NAC on developing the implementation plan for the new policy.

Background: With this proposed new legislation, there will be policy changes and regulations required for the tribes. The NAC would like to stay involved and provide assistance in the development of these new policies. The NAC continues to support the amendments to the Stafford Act.

Memorandums of Understanding

8. **Recommendation:** While the NAC encourages and supports FEMA's partnerships, the previous Public Engagement & Mission Support Subcommittee's charge number 4 regarding Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs), should be removed as it does not fall under the purview of the NAC.

OFFICE OF RESPONSE & RECOVERY

National Incident Management System

9. **Recommendation:** The NAC recommends that FEMA utilize the upcoming NIMS revision rollout to clarify various topics such as: what "NIMS compliant" means; overarching issues on NIMS vs. Incident Command System (ICS); and, distinctly show any differences between the NIMS revisions through proper implementation, marketing, and communications to states, tribes, territories and local jurisdictions, taking into consideration the whole of community. The NAC further recommends that FEMA provide the NAC with the marketing and implementation plans for comment prior to the roll out.

Background: FEMA should identify the purpose of the rollout whether it is a marketing effort, a rollout effort, awareness effort or functional training to present a tool for users. There is confusion about who the audience is for the "rollouts", who sets the rules, and what the Federal government's expectations are for state and local governments. The scope and application are unclear in the NIMS documents; hospitals and public health are not included in them. Therefore some public hospitals are not NIMS compliant. The definition for NIMS compliance is also unclear.

Reservist Program

10. **Recommendation:** The NAC recommends that FEMA explore partnerships to allow state, tribal, local, and NGO employees to train for deployment in the reservist program. This will enhance the capabilities at the state, tribal, and local level, as well as expand the national reservist capacity.

Background: The benefits of providing the opportunity for employees of non-federal organizations to train as reservists is exponential for both parties. The employees receive training and development; the community gets skilled resources that can be employed locally; FEMA expands its reservist's workforce.

11. **Recommendation:** The process and methodology used in developing the FEMA Qualification System (FQS) should be documented and made available so that other entities (especially NGOs) can learn from the best practices and lessons learned.

12. **Recommendation:** Long term strategic goals and implications of the FQS need to be identified, addressed and communicated so that the external application of the FQS is not systematically limited or prohibited from being applied externally.

Background: The NAC is concerned that FEMA is focused on just internal development and implementation of the FQS. From the FQS presentation at the meeting, the NAC understands FQS is in the beginning stage and was developed to fix an internal problem; however, the NAC recommends FEMA strategize and think about the long term implications and goals of FQS taking into account whole community.

NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS DIRECTORATE

Emergency Management Institute

13. **Recommendation:** The NAC supports and recommends that the proposed mid-level training of the Emergency Management Professional Program or EMPP (previously known as EMTES) focus on the five mission areas of PPD-8 (Prevent, Protect, Respond, Recover and Mitigate) through crosswalk and curriculum. Additionally, during the development and delivery, the NAC recommends that FEMA bring forward specific questions or challenges to the NAC.

Background: The Emergency Management Institute (EMI) has begun the Executive Level Managerial course. After receiving a presentation from Keith Holtermann, it appeared the middle level course was still in development and FEMA did not have final direction on the course. There are important issues that mid-level managers should be tackling and the mid-level training should focus on the 5 mission areas of PPD-8 and have frameworks linked to them. The NAC would like FEMA to target specific areas on how the NAC can best advise.

The National Advisory Council is grateful for the opportunity to provide these recommendations to you and FEMA for your consideration and look forward to the next opportunity this October.