

REGION 2 BI-WEEKLY

Volume 1, Issue 23

Aug. 14, 2009

Jobs with Watch; IMAT Changes Top Thursday's 'All Hands' Meeting

New positions resulting from a decision to expand the R2 Watch operation to 24/7 and changes in the structure of the Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) topped the news from Acting Regional Administrator Mike Moriarty at our second "All Hands" meeting Thursday morning.

Mike explained that seven new positions will be created when RRCC Watch moves from single 12-hour shifts to two, 12-hour daily shifts in the near future and he noted that the openings represent a good opportunity for "lateral movement" within the Region, and a chance to "cross-pollinate your skill set."

Acting Director of Operations Dug Salley explained that the positions are open to all Regional staff, but DAEs will have to wait until the vacancies are posted online and compete through the USAJobs website. Between night differential and holiday pay, a typical G12 employee might increase his or her annual salary by about \$8,000, Dug said. "Bear in mind, however, that everyone will be working some weekends," and shifts will rotate monthly. He also stressed that conscientious attendance is a must. "Dependability is the key."

Mike noted that the move will establish a Level 3 RRCC, greatly improve situational awareness, provide better overall monitoring of Regional incidents, and produce intelligence beyond weather-related concerns.

Interested candidates are urged to act quickly as the "window" for filling these positions is tight. Staffers must be at the same pay grade (G12 or G13) as the new position and receive the approval of their current division director, as well as the Operations Division director. Dug said the first step is to discuss career plans with your division director.

Changes in the structure of IMAT are primarily the result of budget constraints, Mike noted. "We simply cannot afford a permanent, 15-member IMAT

team." New FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate is also stressing "balancing resources" and does not believe that the agency can establish permanent IMAT teams through all 10 regions, Mike said. Dug explained that the IMAT will be reduced to four permanent management positions—Team leader, Logistical Section Chief, Operations Section Chief, and the Planning Section Chief—while other IMAT staffers will be part of the team on a "collateral duty basis," whereby teams will be formed as the need arises. Existing team members will be re-assigned to other divisions, but will be on call to fill out an IMAT team when the situation requires.

Mike also announced that the Region will establish four-member PanFlu teams in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands to better coordinate information with our partners on pandemics like the H1N1 virus, also known as "swine flu." Since Regional staffers are as vulnerable to pandemics as the general population, the PanFlu teams will be staffed "three deep" to ensure coverage, he said.

IT Specialist Kirk Henderson provided a brief primer on procedures for connecting to the region's Virtual Private Network (VPN) from home and kudos for years of service went to six staffers with Kimberley Rizzo (30 years) and Angeles Thompson (20 years) leading the list. Fifteen staffers were acknowledged for participating in the Rising Storm exercise and Caribbean Area Division Director praised six CAD staffers for exceptional work.

Finally, new Fire Warden Pat Mason gave staffers a comprehensive overview of important fire safety procedures, gamely following what may have been an unprecedented introduction to the subject featuring a video clip of Jim Carrey's classic, "Fire Marshall Bill," from the 1990s television show, *In Living Color*.

FUSION CENTER STARTS TO JELL

Region II's National Preparedness Division (NPD) and DHS's Office of Intelligence and Analysis (DHS I+A) jointly hosted a Fusion Center Workshop last week to enhance our Region's state and local partners' ability to share information and intelligence. DHS has provided personnel, technical assistance, funding and training to build the capabilities necessary to initiate and operate the Fusion Centers. The July 29th conference was one of a national series mandated by HQ.

Region II's Dean Matthews was the workshop's main facilitator. Participants included New Jersey State Police Regional Operations and Intelligence Center (ROIC), and the New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC). Puerto Rico has built and equipped a Fusion Center that will come on line by the end of the year. PREMA's Roger Owens attended. Eric Kennedy of DHS I+A phoned in to give an update on the Fusion Centers nationally.

Larry O'Reilly, Deputy Federal Preparedness Coordinator, gave a presentation on the Regional organization, and more in-depth presentation was provided by Jose DosSantos, which highlighted the Disaster Operations Division, the Regional Watch Desk, and the RRCC.

It will be primarily through the Watch that most interaction and information sharing with the Fusion Centers will occur. For the benefit of the FEMA personnel assembled, John Beal of DHS I+A explained the Fusion Center missions, organization, and processes. The final presentation was given by Alan Leidner of Booz Allen Hamilton and Brian Shumon of RII who spoke about Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) capabilities and Data Set sharing opportunities.

The balance of the afternoon was devoted to guided discussions in the following areas: Expanding regional collaboration, information needs, priorities, and sharing opportunities, and GIS capabilities and uses. Attendees committed to future meetings to further develop collaborative opportunities and protocols for the more efficient sharing of information.

FACES OF THE REGION



Megan Jadrosich

Megan is Mitigation's new Environmental Officer. She'll be reviewing FEMA's actions, and the actions of those receiving federal grants, to ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations.

Megan comes to FEMA after serving 10 years as a Project Manager and Environmental Planner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District (upstairs on floor 21). At the Corps, she managed civil works construction, storm damage risk reduction and ecosystem restoration feasibility studies, as well as harbor programs and emergency operation rehabilitation projects.

Her most recent projects at the Corps involved beneficial use of dredged material from New York Harbor to construct marsh islands in Jamaica Bay, and bulkhead construction for a future waterfront park in Newark on the Passaic River. She is a certified Project Management Professional.

Her environmental expertise is in wetlands conservation and restoration, which was the focus of her graduate studies at UMASS-Amherst. At the Corps, one of her proudest accomplishments was the planning and construction of a 130-acre multi-purpose habitat mitigation and park recreation site on the Raritan River in NJ.

Megan appreciates the warm reception she's gotten since joining FEMA. The biggest surprise on switching federal agencies? How much of the agency's work is done by the dedicated and FEMA-flexible Disaster Reserve Workforce

Off duty, Megan enjoys outdoor activities, and travel with family and friends.

LEANING FORWARD...



With PDA tours in upstate New York following a weekend storm and flooding, and three tropical depressions brewing off the coast of Africa, the RRCC was activated Friday. Phil Parr lead an IMAT team to the Caribbean. ♦



Panel discussion of state, local and federal partners at last week's meeting of the Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC). The meeting focused on ESF-6 Mass Care. The keynote speaker was Michael Whitehead, Mass Care Coordinator for the state of Florida.