



FEMA

APR 10 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: All FEMA Employees

FROM: R. David Paulison
Administrator 

SUBJECT: The New FEMA Reserve Workforce Program

Today I am pleased to announce a major milestone in our effort to shape FEMA into the Nation's preeminent emergency management and preparedness agency. We have established the Disaster Reserve Workforce Division (DRWD), with staff whose primary mission will be to better prepare our Disaster Assistance Employee (DAE) workforce for response to all-hazards emergency management.

Our Reservists represent the front line of mission success. The new program model is the result of a 2007 strategic assessment built around the Agency's desire to better support this force, and the need to provide a robust and consistently professional workforce that stands strong and ready for all disaster events.

The DRWD will support our Reserve workforce through a centralized framework that strengthens force readiness, coordinates the direction and management of DAE resources, and guides the professional development of DAE members. DRWD staff will be dedicated to implementing and managing fundamental and holistic changes that serve both the Agency mission and the workforce.

The new office has reached its initial operating capability. Within the next two years, DRWD will be comprised of three branches: a Readiness Branch, a Deployment Branch and a Program Branch. However, as we work towards achieving this long-range capability, DAE program transformation is already in motion.

Donna M. Dannels, a member of FEMA's Senior Executive Service Corps, accepted my appointment as Director of the DRWD and is leading the transformation.

Philip Nowak, formerly a program manager with the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, recently joined FEMA as the Deputy Director.

DRWD initiatives are being coordinated with the Human Capital Division, EMI, each Directorate and their Cadre Managers, and other key stakeholders who provide critical DAE program support.

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I have approved the establishment of one 2-year CORE position in each region dedicated to support the regional Cadre Managers.

A working legislative group has begun preparing legislative language I intend to propose to improve the training and range of benefits needed to sustain the Reserve program over time.

A multi-year budget initiative is under development, including requests to increase FEMA's base funding beginning in FY2010, along with startup funding in FY2008 and 2009.

IT and database systems enhancements are in development and will aim to automate many reporting and deployment steps that now require manual input.

A stakeholder advisory group is being established with representation from cadre management, program management, program support elements, regions and the disaster workforce itself.

A communication roadmap is being constructed to ensure equal and on-going availability of program-specific and Agency-wide information to all stakeholders, including the non-deployed Reservist.

I want to thank the Disaster Workforce Management section for its work with the DAE program over the past several years and its support now as that section and program management are transitioned to the new DRWD. The steps necessary to implement transformation to the new workforce model represent a collaborative long-term investment in the reserve program and a long-term commitment in time to reach the Agency's goal – an institutionalized program that ensures front-line readiness when disasters strike.

Official roll-out of the new DRWD took place at the March 25-27 Cadre Managers' Workshop in Emmitsburg. A report highlighting the program and supporting workforce elements will be released soon.

If you would like to provide feedback or comments, please email your response to:
FEMA-DRWD-Program@dhs.gov.