



FEMA

Fact Sheet

August 2008

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAMS

To further enhance disaster response capabilities and provide for the three national-level response teams and regional-level emergency response “strike” teams required in the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006, FEMA is developing a next generation of rapidly deployable emergency response teams known as Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT). These teams are designed to rapidly deploy to an incident or incident-threatened venue to provide a forward federal presence and lead a prompt, effective, coordinated and integrated federal and inter-jurisdictional response in support of state, tribal, and local emergency management officials. The teams support the initial establishment of a unified command and provide situational awareness for federal and state decision-makers crucial to determining the level and type of immediate federal support that may be required. When not deployed, the teams are responsible for building and maintaining a close working relationship with regional, state, tribal, and local emergency management officials, federal partners, and the private sector to support planning, training, exercising, and other activities in preparation for disaster response.

The IMATs have the capability to establish an effective on-scene federal presence within 12-hours of notification and can be self-sufficient for a minimum of 48 hours. The national-level teams consist of 26 staff members and regional teams consist of 15 staff members. IMATs are led by experienced, senior-level emergency managers and staffed with a core of permanent full-time employees, unlike FEMA’s Emergency Response Teams (ERT), which are staffed on a collateral duty basis. Both national and regional-level teams can be augmented with additional staff from other departments and agencies as needed and are supported by FEMA’s Mobile Emergency Response Support elements. The teams are fully compliant with NIMS and ICS and will train and exercise as a unit. For more significant disaster events, a national-level team will lead the federal response, supported by regional-level teams.

The new IMATs will subsume the mission and capabilities of the existing ERTs and their mission and capabilities will incorporate similar leadership structures, emergency management doctrine, and operational communications concepts. Two national and three regional teams have already been established and establishment of the remaining teams will be completed during the next three years.

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