



March 3, 2009

Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) Funding

Issue: The Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG) should be maintained as a separate all-hazard program focused on capacity building for all-hazards preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation at the state and local levels. All disasters start and end at the local level, which emphasizes the importance of building this capacity at the local level. Funding from (EMPG) frequently makes a difference as to whether or not a qualified person is present to perform these duties in a local jurisdiction. The historically documented shortfall in these funds needs to continue to be addressed. EMPG was appropriated at \$315 million in FY 09, and maintained as a separate account.

Action Requested: Increase the funding to \$487 million to address the historically documented short fall as indicated by the NEMA biennial report.

The program is authorized at \$680 million in PL 110-53. EMPG is fundamentally different from Homeland Security grants; therefore it is necessary to continue it as a separate account. The authorization of EMPG is purposefully broad to allow jurisdictions to focus their attention on customizing capabilities for each local jurisdiction. FEMA's guidance should not try to make one size fit all. We urge that the FEMA guidance is written so as to allow maximum flexibility in meeting the specific capability requirements within each local jurisdiction.

- The program has been under funded for decades and remains so today with local emergency management programs significantly “over-matching” the available EMPG allocations.
- Katrina and Rita demonstrated that effective response and recovery efforts are critically dependent on a robust system of coordination and preparedness by agencies at all levels of government and the private sector. History has repeatedly shown that only through a comprehensive and integrated Emergency Management system do we have any hope of dealing with catastrophic disasters like Katrina. .
- EMPG, called “the backbone of the nation’s emergency management system” in an Appropriations Conference Report, constitutes the only source of direct federal funding for state and local governments to provide basic emergency coordination and planning capabilities including those related to homeland security. The program supports state and local initiatives for planning, training, exercise, public education, as well as response and recovery coordination during actual events.
- Unlike any of the Homeland Security grants, EMPG is cost-shared.

Implementing Legislation to Strengthen FEMA

Issue: IAEM-USA strongly supports full implementation of PL 109-205, the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) of 2006. In order to fully implement PKEMRA, we believe the following actions need to occur:

- Return to established emergency management doctrine – all hazards, integrated, all phases (preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery). All elements of preparedness must be returned to FEMA to comply with PKEMRA.
- Ensure that the FEMA Administrator has the maximum amount of access to the White House.
- Ensure FEMA is clearly responsible for the coordination of the Federal response to disasters.
- Ensure local emergency managers have meaningful participation in the FEMA policy development process.
- Revise Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5 and Homeland Security Presidential Directive-8 to conform to the requirements of PKEMRA.
- Eliminate the artificial distinction between Incident Management and Emergency Management (as exemplified by the Office of Operations Coordination) as a mechanism to avoid the requirements of PKEMRA.
- Abolish the position of the Principal Federal Official (PFO) as it leads to confusion.

Action Requested: IAEM-USA urges Congress to continue to insist on implementation of PKEMRA reforms to strengthen FEMA.

Emergency Management Institute

Issue: The Emergency Management Institute (EMI) provides vitally needed training to State and local government emergency managers through on-site classes and distance learning. This “crown jewel” of emergency management training and doctrine has suffered from lack of funding and loss of focus on the primary objectives of the Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS).

- A renewed focus on continuing education for professional emergency managers is vital. EMI core curriculum, including the Master Trainer Program, E-Courses and G-Courses are essential to the professional development of career emergency managers and to support state level training programs.
- We are in the process of assessing the key emergency management part of the EMI curriculum to identify courses that need to be updated or developed. The amount of funding required for this function will be shared when determined.
- Additional personnel will be required to handle the increased workload associated with the updating of existing courses and development of new courses including an executive development curriculum.
- EMI is also in need of technology upgrades in the amount of \$3.5 million.
- We continue to support the highly successful Emergency Management Higher Education Program at EMI which provides a source of degreed emergency management practitioners as well as establishing and maintaining the essential collaboration between practitioners and the academic and research disciplines so essential to a comprehensive approach to emergency management.

Action Requested: IAEM-USA appreciates the additional \$1.253 million in EMI funding provided by Congress in FY 2009. We urge Congress to provide the needed additional funding to update the key emergency management courses of the EMI curriculum and support technology upgrades.

Mitigation Grant Programs

Issue: IAEM supports both pre and post disaster hazard mitigation

Action Requested: The PDM program will sunset on September 30, 2009. IAEM urges reauthorization and appropriate funding for the program.

National Weather Service (NWS)

Issue: The National Weather Service (NWS) has provided critical life-saving weather warnings and information for 139 years and the recent levels of adverse events compels the need for its full staffing, leading edge science, and technology.

Background: Two-thirds of the NWS Operations Budget is for labor. Pay raises and other pay-related costs compounded by non-labor inflationary increases (i.e., leases, communications, and utilities) have not been fully funded and have caused dangerous budget erosion that accelerates each year it is not addressed. As a result the agency is forced to increase vacancies (labor lapse), and to make other cutbacks in critical community preparedness activities, training, systems/office maintenance, equipment replacements etc.

Action Requested:

- Fully fund the NWS including all science and technology infusions.
- Provide an additional \$26.1 million to the NWS recurring budget under the line item “local forecasts and warning” to begin addressing personnel shortfall issues.
- Lower the “tax” (overhead charges) that NOAA levies on the NWS.

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The USA Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers is a non-profit organization of over 4,000 emergency management professionals from state and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business and the nonprofit sector in the United States and in other countries. Most of our members are U.S. city and county emergency managers who perform the crucial function of coordinating and integrating the efforts at the local level to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters including terrorist attacks. Our membership includes emergency managers from large urban areas as well as rural areas. IAEM-USA is the largest organization of professional emergency managers in the nation.