

IAEM-USA Requests for
Consideration by the President-elect
Dec. 8, 2008



- Require meaningful qualifications for the next Administrator of FEMA, in excess of those outlined in PL 109-295. In addition, senior leadership within FEMA should be experienced in emergency management. Some of the qualifications to consider for the next Administrator should include:
 - Demonstrated experience in Comprehensive Emergency Management (mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery) preferably at the state or local government level.
 - The people skills and ability to lead up and down – as well as the respect of his/her peers.
 - Ability to inspire internal employees and external partners – to gain the trust and confidence of employees, other departments, Congress, and citizens at large.
 - Proven ability and experience in working with Congress.
 - An excellent communicator and an innovator who is willing to consider new and exciting ways to accomplish the mission.
 - A leader who views the role of FEMA as a partner with state and local stakeholders.
 - Ability to tap into the physical sciences, social sciences, and other academic communities.

- Continue to build emergency management capability at the state and local levels by including an appropriate budget number for Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) in the FY 2010 budget. The total need is \$487 million¹. The FY 2009 appropriation is \$315 million. EMPG has been referred to as “the backbone” of local government emergency management. It is not a homeland security grant, and it has a cost share – requiring partnerships to be negotiated between State and local governments and the federal government.

- FEMA should be made an independent agency reporting directly to the President with a Director designated as a member of the cabinet. The core mission of DHS is to prevent the next terrorism attack and secure our borders. The core mission of FEMA is to deal with the consequences of all hazards, including those from a terrorist attack, should prevention fail. Having both these missions present in one agency has been compared to requiring soldiers to be diplomats, according to Mike Walker. “Currently at DHS, it is like requiring the Department of Defense to do both war-fighting and diplomacy. While soldiers often have to be diplomats, they will not win wars if they lose focus on defeating the enemy on the battlefield. The missions of the Department of State and the Department of Defense could never be combined. Neither should have crisis and consequence management².” We recognize that removing FEMA from DHS will need to be done carefully. All of the functions of the emergency management cycle (mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery) must remain intact within FEMA.

¹ \$487 Million figure is derived from the Biennial Survey of the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA).

² Mike Walker, former acting Secretary of the Army and Deputy Director of FEMA.

- Focus attention on encouraging a culture of preparedness by building a nation of survivors and not victims.
- Maintain access for IAEM to senior leadership within FEMA. We would request that priority be given to continuing the dialogue between FEMA and state and local practitioners. We would also encourage communication between the DHS Secretary and the emergency management community in both state and local governments.

Our recommendations for actions to be considered within the first 100 days:

1. Revise HSPD 5 and HSPD 8 to be in conformance with PL 109-295, the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA).
2. Formally eliminate the position of the Principal Federal Official.
3. Clarify the role of the military versus state and local governments in disasters.
4. Delay the implementation of the Integrated Planning System (IPS) until further review can make sure it meets the needs of customers.
5. Direct that the artificial distinction between Incident Management and Emergency Management (as exemplified by the Office of Operations Coordination) be eliminated as a mechanism to avoid the requirements of PL 109-295, the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act.
6. Reinstate the Administrator of FEMA as a designated member of his cabinet.
7. Return the Emergency Management Institute to its former position as the “crown jewel” of emergency management training. This can be accomplished by increasing the funding to allow updates of existing courses and creation of new courses to help state and local emergency managers. In addition, re-creation of the EMI Board of Visitors would serve to focus the resources of EMI on the importance of continuing education in the emergency management field.
8. Maintain access to senior leadership within FEMA for State and local constituencies. Programs and initiatives should be reviewed to be sure that they serve the mission of improving disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation at the local level.

The International Association of Emergency Managers has over 4,200 members including emergency management professionals at the 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 has consistently promoted the goals of saving lives and protecting property during emergencies and disasters since its founding in 1952 as the U.S. Civil Defense Council.