



201 Park Washington Court
Falls Church, VA 22046-4527



Contact: Dawn Shiley-Danzeisen
IAEM Communications Director
Shiley@iaem.com
Direct: 571-481-8657

News Release

IAEM Meets with DHS as Comment Period Ends to Discuss Opportunities to Improve the National Response Framework

October 25, 2007 (Falls Church, Va.) – Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) leaders met with key stakeholder, IAEM, on Tuesday, as part of a series of continuing discussions on opportunities to improve the National Response Framework (NRF). DHS Deputy Secretary Michael Jackson, FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison and FEMA Deputy Administrator Harvey Johnson participated in the meeting immediately prior to Paulison's departure for the California firestorms.

The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), represented by Second Vice President Russ Decker, CEM and Executive Director Beth Armstrong, MAM, CAE, presented a series of suggestions to strengthen and support the Nation Response Framework (NRF), generated from IAEM membership. This meeting was the culmination of several weeks of discussion between IAEM and FEMA on a range of suggestions received from state and local emergency managers and first responders on the NRF.

As preparations are made to finalize the NRF, IAEM suggested ways to address the concerns expressed by local emergency management professionals, such as:

- DHS should ensure that the NRF is consistent with the Post-Katrina Reform Act, particularly the authority and responsibilities.
- Local plans should be made according to Hazard Identification and Risk Analyses (HIRAs). The NRF lists 15 scenarios; additional planning would incorporate only those scenarios that actually apply to the local jurisdiction. (Federal planning, of course, should maintain a disciplined focus on all of the 15 scenarios.)
- State and local emergency managers should be notified when ESF/playbook changes occur.
- A decision should be made on whether tribal nations will be treated as a local or state entity in the disaster process.

Paulison commended IAEM for taking a leadership role to ensure that a dialogue is maintained between DHS and stakeholders, and stated that "IAEM's willingness to be constructive during this process has not gone unnoticed."

The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) is a non-profit organization consisting of nearly 4,000 emergency management professionals from local, state and the federal governments, military, private industry, and volunteer organizations. 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.

NOTE: Photo of the meeting is available upon request.

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