

Talking Points for
David Paulison, Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency

Release of the National Preparedness Grant Guidance

Crystal City, VA
February 1, 2008

I am pleased to join Secretary Chertoff and my colleagues from TSA, Customs and Border Patrol and the Coast Guard to announce the roll-out of more than \$3 billion in grants that will be provided to our partners in tribal, state and local governments as well as in the private and non-profit sectors that will help all of us to better prepare and protect our country in the months and years to come.

I would like to focus today on DHS and FEMA's continued dedication to working with all of our partners both inside and out of government. DHS and FEMA are dedicated to developing "engaged partnerships" with our colleagues in local, state and tribal governments, with our partners in the private sector, and with the dedicated people working in non-profit and faith-based organizations. These grant programs are an important part of these "engaged partnerships."

FEMA is committed to working with our partners to use these resources where they can best prepare and protect our nation. These grants include programs that will protect critical infrastructure, like our ports, rail lines and roads. And so we will work with local port authorities, rail lines and bus companies to make sure these resources are fully and effectively utilized. The grants include programs to protect our cities and strengthen our borders. And so we will work with state and local governments, law enforcement and other first responders hand-in-hand to get funding on the ground where it can do the most good. And the grants include resources that can help our volunteers and others who want to help through programs such as our Citizen Corps.

We are committed to getting these resources out quickly to the people on the ground who can put them to work. With the more than \$3 billion we are announcing today, and the more than \$20 billion this Administration has already allocated to these grant programs, we are putting our money where our mouth is.

Let me just stress a few of the items that have already been mentioned:

First, the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program. We value the work done in the areas of prevention and protection through previous iterations of the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program.

This year, Congress specifically provided for an allocation methodology which requires that at least 25% of the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) and at least 25% of the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) be used for these important Law Enforcement Activities. This will result in a net increase of \$66 million in law enforcement grants and it will mean that more funding goes to states and cities where risk is higher.

Let me just stress that again: while this is not a specific stand-alone program this year, the law enforcement community will receive 25% of UASI and 25% of SHSGP funds – and therefore will receive more money than last year. State-based grant reporting will be reviewed by the GPD HQ staff to ensure that all States and Territories are in compliance with this requirement of the guidance.

Second, we are incorporating additional reforms and new programs that take into consideration new congressional guidance as well as input from our external stakeholders. Secretary Chertoff mentioned some of these changes such as the expanded Urban Area Security Initiative list, new formulas based on the 9-11 Commission's recommendations, and new programs in freight rail security and aimed at border protection.

And finally: the role of FEMA in administering these programs. Across the agency, our regional leaders and senior officials stand ready to help all of our partners to use these resources to reach their full potential. Our Assistant Administrator for Grants Programs, Ross Ashley, joined us last year from the non-profit sector while our Deputy Administrator for Preparedness, Dennis Schraeder, came from state government in Maryland. We have brought other communities into the fold to make sure their voices are heard, such as the law enforcement community with Chief Rick Dinse now serving as my Law Enforcement Advisor and senior leaders focused on small and rural states and on the disabled community.

As Secretary Chertoff mentioned, we continue to improve the process and accountability.

The establishment of FEMA's Grants Program Directorate will provide a one-stop shop for grants. The new office will help us to enhance fiduciary management as we standardize grants management policies, processes, reporting, and accountability across all FEMA grant programs

We're releasing grant guidance earlier to allow applicants more time to plan and apply for funding, so we can award the funds sooner.

We're continuing to emphasize customer service and interaction throughout the process, including providing a mid-term review.

Funds are being directed to enhance specific outcomes in areas such as strengthening preparedness planning and IED attack deterrence, prevention, and protection capabilities.

And based on the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act, the Department's regional offices will have an enhanced role in administering grant programs.

Once the guidance is released, applicants have 90 days to submit their applications. This is followed by a peer review process for a majority of the programs, during which subject matter experts in law enforcement, emergency management, and homeland security, as well as specialists at the federal, state and local levels will assess the applications. Following the application period, we will make allocation announcements within 90 days.

This is a strong process that will lead to strong results.

These men and women will continue to work with our partners as this process moves forward to insure that the process is transparent and swift. We look forward to the continued success of these programs in the future.

Thank you all for joining us today.