

# The Federal Manager

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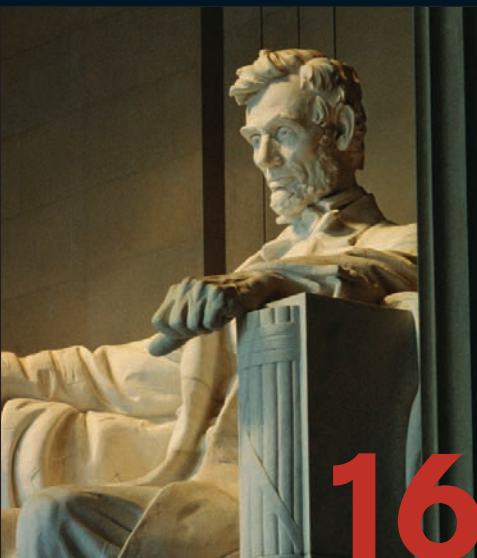
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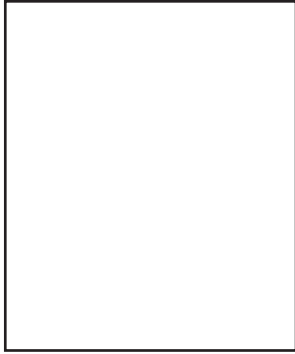
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### FMA Corporate Partners



The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program™

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*FMA National President  
Darryl Perkinson*

## A Heartfelt Good-bye, a Recap of the Convention and a Look Towards the Future

Let me begin this message by thanking our outgoing Executive Director, Thomas Richards, for his service to the Association over the past three years. Thomas is leaving FMA to pursue his passion on Capitol Hill. In his new role as Professional Staff, he will be working for the Subcommittee chaired by our great friend and supporter, the Honorable Daniel Akaka (D-Haw.). There is never a good time to lose an excellent employee, let alone a confidant, which is

what Thomas has been to me this past year. I wish Thomas all the best in his new position and look forward to working with him in the future.

The recently concluded 69th annual National Convention is a testament to the wonderful and professional staff we have in Washington. Under the leadership of Thomas and the dedication and knowledge of the National Office staff, we experienced another highly successful event in Arlington. As the events unfolded at the Convention, the delegates engaged in several discussions regarding the future of the Association. From the inspirational words of Senator Akaka on our opening day, to the words of wisdom shared by Office of Personnel Management Director Linda Springer, the entire event flowed with coordination and synchronization moving FMA to the fore.

The delegates in attendance, both new and veteran, took part in several activities resulting in an energetic crowd. Membership discussions and Web site training provided an opportunity for members to exchange ideas and thoughts of how we can improve our internal communication. In our pre- and post-convention sessions, the General Executive Board (GEB) discussed retention, recruitment, and targets of opportunity for chapter and agency expansion. The discussions that took place at the FMA-PAC reception indicated that our *Connecting with Government* exchanges with Members of Congress made for an outstanding day.

In terms of resolutions, the delegates approved adjusting the distribution of our rebate system, as well as an increase in organization dues in line with the past three years of cost of living percentages. These decisions will allow us to better serve our members and remain competitive.

As we prepare to meet in San Francisco in August for the 16th Mid-Year Conference, I challenge you to build on the momentum generated by the Convention. The GEB is currently setting up meetings with the Federal Executive Board in San Francisco and will be meeting in Hawaii to focus on recruitment. In addition, headway has been made with the Department of Homeland Security, as delegates from the headquarters of DHS, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the Border Patrol shared their desire for FMA to become an association of choice for managers in those agencies.

In closing, I would like to thank our members for the opportunity to represent you. The challenges before us will only continue to grow as Congress battles domestic and international policy and concerns. As such, we must ensure our issues are on the minds of legislators; a role which must be fulfilled on the grassroots level. Small victories have already been realized which can clearly be seen as a result of FMA's testimony and advocacy. With so many experts in our Association, I will also undoubtedly rely on you for your input and guidance to help advance our legislative agenda. It is very reassuring to know that I can count on your advice and counsel. I look forward to seeing you in San Francisco. ■

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### FMA Magazine Staff

#### **Publisher**

Darryl A. Perkinson

#### **Co-Editor**

Thomas Richards

#### **Co-Editor**

Jessica Klement

#### **Contributors**

Justin Grabelle

Marissa Rivera

John LaBombard

#### **Editorial Board**

Patricia A. Spade

John C. Priolo

Sherman G. Williams

#### **Advertising Manager**

Thomas Richards

#### **Circulation Coordinator**

Marissa Rivera

#### **Graphic Design and Production**

digit design and InTech Group

---

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#### **The Federal Manager**

1641 Prince Street

Alexandria, VA 22314-2818

Tel: (703) 683-8700 • Fax: (703) 683-8707

E-mail: [info@fedmanagers.org](mailto:info@fedmanagers.org)

Web address: [www.fedmanagers.org](http://www.fedmanagers.org)

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### Article Submission

All materials submitted to *The Federal Manager* should pertain to public service managers. Copy should be double-spaced, no longer than 10 pages. Color photographs, 35 mm color slides, charts, or other illustrations should be included if possible. Text should be submitted on compact disc, labeled with type of software and name of file. Also include a biography of the author.

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# EPA EMERGENCY RESPONSE

## KEEPING UP WITH TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is probably not the first Agency that comes to mind when thinking about response to national emergencies. However, EPA has been responding to environmental emergencies, including accidental chemical, oil, and radiological releases for over 30 years. EPA's Emergency Response Program provides quick responses and removal activities related to the release of oil and hazardous substances wherever they occur. There are about 30,000 hazardous materials and oil incidents reported every year. EPA responds to about 300 of these annually and assists state and local authorities in response to another 500 events. These responses are implemented through EPA's 10 Regional offices throughout the United States. The Agency's 250 response personnel, called On-Scene Coordinators, have the experience and

delegated authority to manage incident response. They receive 24/7 scientific and engineering support and have access to state of the art technology.

EPA's 30 years of experience has made it uniquely qualified to handle any number of the scenarios resulting from catastrophic events. In recent years, the United States has faced unprecedented challenges in responding to nationally significant incidents, including the World Trade Center and Pentagon terrorist attacks, the anthrax responses, the Columbia Space Shuttle recovery, and most recently Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. EPA has been called upon to clean up buildings exposed to anthrax, organize and collect pieces of the Columbia Space Shuttle, and even assist in the rescue of hundreds of victims during the Katrina Response. Moving forward, the Agency is taking the steps necessary to remain on the

cutting edge of response while at the same time evolving to address new and potential threats. This process has led the Agency to re-examine its overall approach to emergency response.

With a government-wide focus on homeland security, there was a recognition that EPA's role had to expand beyond the traditional hazardous materials emergency response program and include a greater focus on potential for terrorism. This role would also need Agency-wide participation. EPA would need to transform its emergency response program from one that primarily conducted Superfund emergency removal activities to one that is able to meet the challenge of multiple Incidents of National Significance (INSs), while at the same time maintaining an effective

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# EPA EMERGENCY RESPONSE

*EPA Emergency Response  
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Superfund removal program.

In 2003, EPA created its Office of Homeland Security to lead and coordinate homeland security activities and policy development across all program areas. This new office serves as the point of contact for the Department of Homeland Security and the White House Office of Homeland Security and oversees the implementation of a number of tasks assigned to EPA under recent Homeland



*An EPA responder takes water samples at a trailer park on the Gulf Coast.*

Security Presidential Directives. For example, EPA is the lead Agency for the federal initiative on water security. Most recently in 2005, a new Associate Administrator for Homeland Security within the Office of the Administrator was designated to oversee the activities of the office. In the event of an INS, he serves as the Agency Director of Emergency Operations in coordination with the relevant program offices.

While all EPA program offices were affected by the Agency's new role in Homeland Security, the programs most affected were those dealing with emergency response.

EPA's emergency response program is located in the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER). In 2004, OSWER reorganized to centralize the majority of the emergency response functions under a single office — the Office of Emergency Management (OEM). OEM integrates the functions of the former Superfund Emergency Response Program, Oil Spill Prevention Program, and the Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office. The Agency Emergency Coordinator in OSWER is tasked with working across the Agency to assure effective preparedness and response.

In 2003, the EPA Administrator introduced a new National Approach to Response (NAR) to increase preparedness for the possibility of multiple, simultaneous INSs across several EPA Regions. This multifaceted mechanism included a new management approach designed to bring together and ensure efficient use of emergency response assets within the Agency, and to create a consistent approach across the Regions. The NAR also recognized that an effective response requires participation from the entire Agency, not just those offices traditionally responsible for emergency response activities. For example, the Office of Water, the Office of Air and Radiation, and the Office of Acquisition



*EPA oversaw the sorting and safe disposal of hazardous waste during the response to Hurricane Katrina.*

and Resource Management all contribute important skills and expertise.

Clearly defined roles were specified for field operations, Regional Offices and Headquarters. Each of the Regions was designated as support to another Region creating a network of teams that could train together for more effective coordination. Internal mechanisms were created to facilitate coordination and information sharing among the various offices, both during preparedness and response modes. These mechanisms include:

- Regional Incident Coordinating Teams—These regional teams provide cross-program resources and technical support for the response. They also provide a regional forum for resolution of management objectives and policy issues.
- National Incident Coordinating Team—This team is made up of senior representatives from each of the Headquarters Offices, as well as a representative from any impacted region. The team functions both in preparedness and emergency response roles. During a response, it coordinates resources, resolves issues and keeps fully informed of activities relating to the response.
- EPA's Policy Coordinating Committee—This committee is convened by the EPA Administrator during a major emergency response. It includes all appropriate Assistant and Associate Administrators and Regional Administrators, and provides



*EPA, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality managed their joint Katrina response from the Unified Command Post in Metairie, Louisiana.*

for exchange of information among Agency Senior officials so that they can address significant Agency and inter-Agency policy issues.

The NAR was also designed to complement the emerging government wide National Response Plan (NRP) and National Incident Management System (NIMS). Under the NRP, EPA is the coordinator, along with the U.S. Coast Guard for the Emergency Support Function #10-Oil and Hazardous Materials Response and is a support Agency for a number of other emergency support functions. EPA was one of the first agencies to adopt the Incident Command System (ICS) which is now required under NIMS. By the end of 2004, all 250 EPA On-Scene Coordinators and several hundred other Agency personnel were fully trained in ICS. EPA had also recruited about 600 personnel Agency-wide into a Response Support Corps (RSC). These staff proved invaluable during the response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

The more experience the Agency gains through its national response activities, the more its priorities continue to change and grow. In 2001, EPA responded to

anthrax contamination at over 30 facilities including Capitol Hill Offices and postal facilities. On-Scene Coordinators assisted in sampling of air and surfaces to determine the presence and extent of contamination; evaluation of decontamination alternatives; design and implementation of decontamination plans; and facilitation of waste disposal. These responses involved the support and coordination of numerous agencies and unprecedented levels of effort.

It became clear that the EPA needed a dedicated National Decontamination Team (NDT) to build upon EPA's experience in decontamination and support the country's homeland security efforts. A 15-member team is now in place and is dedicated to providing decontamination expertise related to chemical, biological, and radiological contaminants that can be used as Weapons of Mass Destruction. Working closely with other EPA special teams, and other agencies and research organizations, the NDT provides scientific support and technical expertise for decontamination of buildings, building contents, public infrastructure (including

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## EPA's Region 5 has made emergency preparedness a top priority:

- Regional Administrator Mary A. Gade has created a new Homeland Security advisory position to coordinate all of the Region's emergency preparedness efforts.
- All Region 5 managers have been trained in the Incident Command System, and more than 1,000 Region 5 employees have received Internal Preparedness training. Region 5 has also enhanced its field response effort through Incident Management Team training and exercises, with the goal of creating a deeper pool of trained responders.
- The Region recently completed a comprehensive review of all Homeland Security work and developed a work plan to address gaps.
- Region 5 is taking a leadership role within EPA for planning and implementation of the 10,000-participant Spill of National Significance (SONS) '07 oil spill exercise. The Regional Administrator will be an active player in SONS and will lead the entire Region 5 management team in exercise play.
- To address water security, the Region developed a Water Emergency Response Team.
- The Region has upgraded Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans and continues to work on systems that allow key managers to telework.

*Region 5 is EPA's largest region covering Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.*

## In Response to Hurricane Katrina, EPA, in coordination with Federal, State, and local partners:

- Conducted environmental monitoring and sampling of water, air, floodwater and residual sediment resulting in more than 400,000 analyses.
- Responded to approximately 70 emergency situations to address chemical spills, fires, and other emergencies causing an immediate public threat.
- Played a key role in the removal of over 118 million cubic yards of debris.
- Assisted in the proper handling and recycling of over 380,000 large appliances (refrigerators, freezers, and air conditioners). If laid end to end, these appliances would stretch from Baton Rouge to Dallas.
- Collected and recycled over 649,000 electronic goods to save important landfill space and ensure the reuse of metal components.
- Addressed approximately 900 public and parochial school chemistry classrooms and removed chemicals and other equipment from 130 chemistry laboratory classrooms to ensure safe schools for returning students.
- Assessed approximately 4,000 water systems to determine their viability after the storms.

### *EPA Emergency Response continued from page 5*

waste/drinking water systems, chemical plants, power plants, food processing facilities, and mass transit facilities such as airports, bus and subway systems), agriculture, and associated environmental media (air, soil and water). Specialized expertise, such as biochemistry, microbiology and medicine, health physics, toxicology, HVAC engineering, and industrial hygiene, is available to assist local, state and national agencies supporting hazardous substance response and remedial operations.

The Agency also expanded the capabilities of its existing Environmental Response Team (ERT), and extended its reach by opening an additional ERT office in Las Vegas, NV. The ERT is responsible for providing technical and logistical expertise in responding to oil spills, hazardous substance emergencies, long-term remedial activities, and potential releases of biological and chemical agents. Currently its capabilities include air surveillance, geophysical surveying, underwater diving, homeland security, risk assessment, and analytical support. In addition, the ERT provides training to first responders, such as local fire fighters



*EPA staging area for hazardous waste collection during Hurricane Katrina response.*

and other emergency personnel, on all aspects of emergency response and readiness.

In addition to EPA's focus on improving its specialized expertise, it has also continued to concentrate on improving its overall approach to emergency response. After the most recent response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, several priorities were added or expanded to strengthen the Agency's implementation and planning efforts. EPA has identified 14 priority areas under the NAR. These priorities are crucial to the Agency's success in meeting its internal targets, as well as the requirements set by DHS. Below is a discussion of a few of the priority areas.

## TRAINING

EPA has developed a national Incident Command System (ICS) training program and an exercise program consistent with DHS standards. The ICS training program includes basic and advanced ICS training for response personnel, executive level ICS training for management, and ICS general awareness level training for RSC personnel who are typically non-emergency EPA employees. The training itself and the training requirements undergo regular revisions based on lessons learned in recent responses and changing DHS requirements.



*EPA employees collecting household hazardous wastes in Louisiana.*



*EPA Emergency Response Team in Louisiana.*

## EXERCISE

EPA is working with its regional offices to develop a three-year exercise strategy that is consistent with DHS exercise objectives and meets regional needs. EPA's exercise program places a strong focus on participation with state and local authorities, as well as supporting government-wide efforts, including the national "TOPOFF" exercise program which engages every level of a government response.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

EPA is currently developing a new Health and Safety Manual to ensure the most current health and safety programs are in place for emergency responders and properly tracked. This is of primary importance to protect EPA responders who must deal with hazardous conditions in the course of fulfilling their responsibilities.

## RISK COMMUNICATION

EPA puts a high value on making information available to the public in an understandable and timely manner. The agency is currently in the process of developing a plan that establishes its official internal process for coordinating public informa-

tion in order to make the communication process more effective and efficient during a major emergency event. The plan complements the DHS plan for external affairs.

EPA's emergency response programs are evaluated on an annual basis to measure

progress towards its preparedness goals. The evaluation program, called Core ER, was created in 1998 to promote consistency across Regions in emergency response preparedness by establishing baseline standards and a checklist of criteria for 10 critical elements of the Emergency Response Program. Core ER is now being expanded to address Agency-wide implementation of EPA's National Approach to Response (NAR).

Employees across the EPA are preparing and training for the next national emergency, whether from natural causes or terrorism. And while it is unclear what the future will bring, EPA's emergency response foundation is strong enough and flexible enough to manage the challenges ahead.

For more information on EPA's various programs, please visit: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov). ■



*Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality collecting water samples.*