

Emergency Preparedness

ISSUE: The Maritime Administration coordinates preparedness, response, and recovery efforts in the maritime arena, including outreach to other government departments and agencies and private sector stakeholders, during times of emergency.

ACTION NEEDED: None – For Information Only

BACKGROUND:

- The Maritime Administration’s Office of Emergency Preparedness plans for and coordinates activities involving the utilization of civilian assets in support of the movement of U.S. armed forces and in response to domestic natural and manmade disasters or emergencies.
- Disaster relief missions closely parallel the RRF’s military support mission. RRF ships have inherent capabilities needed to support recovery efforts. These include petroleum or potable water storage, large areas suitable for shelters or field-grade hospitals, electrical power generation capability, emergency communications, dining facilities, command and control platforms and room to carry large equipment. These vessels and crews proved their worth during the immediate aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- The Office of Emergency Preparedness operates with limited staff, both at headquarters and in the field. Consequently, its field activities must be accomplished in collaboration with the Maritime Administration’s Gateway Offices, in particular on those matters involving outreach to stakeholders and in disaster response and recovery efforts (e.g., hurricane response).
- Field staff coordinate with and support the response activities of DOT’s mission as lead agency in the Emergency Support Function One (ESF-1) of the National Response Framework.
- Plans and implementation activities (including training and exercises) are coordinated with the Department of Transportation (DOT) and its other modal administrations, other federal departments and agencies, and with private sector stakeholders.
- In the past, MARAD created, and held in readiness, an organizational structure (the National Shipping Authority [NSA]) to be used solely in connection with providing support to a military contingency – relying in part on authority derived from the Defense Production Act of 1950. That structure is being revamped and updated for use in any emergency where its use would be appropriate.
- The Office of Emergency Preparedness serves as the U.S. representative to NATO’s Planning Board for Ocean Shipping (PBOS) as well as providing Secretariat support for PBOS. This organization is responsible for developing plans for the provision of civilian strategic sealift to support Allied military operations.

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