




April 24, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR: Nancy Ward
Acting Administrator

FROM: G. Kemble Bennett
Chairman
National Advisory Council 

SUBJECT: Recommendations on Urban Search and Rescue

At its April 15-16, 2009 meeting in Washington, DC, the National Advisory Council (NAC) discussed, deliberated, and voted to submit the following recommendations to the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regarding Urban Search and Rescue.

The purpose of this memo is to convey the NAC's recommendations regarding coordination and partnership between the National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Chiefs and FEMA. As a result of the work of the NAC's US&R Working Group over the past eight months, the NAC developed the following five recommendations. The NAC recommends to FEMA that the following actions be incorporated into an enhanced partnership between the National US&R team leadership and FEMA US&R Program Office.

Recommendations:

These recommendations were drafted and approved with the end objective being to provide more direct contact between US&R and FEMA and continuing the strong partnership between US&R and sponsoring agencies.

1. Create an Urban Search and Rescue Strategic Group to become part of the FEMA Program Office decision making process.
 - a. Membership on the Strategic Group shall include:
 - i. FEMA Program Office representative
 - ii. 3 Sponsoring Agency Chiefs
 - iii. National Task Force Leader representative
 - iv. 3 Task Force Leaders
 - v. US&R Operations Work Group Chair
 - b. The recommended Strategic Group integration into the FEMA Program Office decision making process is set out on the **flow chart** below.
2. Establish regular meetings between the Strategic Group, Emergency Support Function ESF 9 Search and Rescue partners, and the Department of Defense.
3. Continue to send US&R representatives to State US&R Alliance conferences.
4. US&R Chiefs are encouraged to independently continue legislative efforts.
5. NAC US&R Working Group will provide oversight of the formation and initial operations of the Strategic Group.

FEMA US&R Decision Process

