




January 9, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR: R. David Paulison
Administrator

FROM: Dr. G. Kemble Bennett 
Chairman, National Advisory Council

SUBJECT: National Advisory Council (NAC) Recommendations:
Public/Private Partnerships

The purpose of this memorandum is to transmit the recommendations of the National Advisory Council to the FEMA Administrator regarding public/private partnerships. These recommendations were approved by the NAC at its December 10-11, 2008 meeting in Dallas, Texas.

Executive Summary

1.0 Introduction

In establishing the National Advisory Council (NAC), the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) (PL 109-295) decreed that the NAC “shall incorporate State, local, and tribal government and private sector input in the development and revision of the national preparedness goal, the national preparedness system, the National Incident Management System, the National Response Plan, and other related plans and strategies.”

The NAC formed a subcommittee to review partnerships between public and private entities and obtain input from external stakeholders. During the December 10-11, 2008 meeting of the NAC, the Public/Private Partnerships Subcommittee presented the following recommendations to the NAC which were unanimously approved for submission to the Administrator for his review and consideration.

2.0 Key Conclusions and Recommendations

The Public/Private Partnerships Subcommittee, with the help of NEMA, conducted a survey to determine current and best practices in partnerships across the country. The survey was completed by 34 State Emergency Managers and the results, along with input from various NAC members, guided the subcommittee in developing recommendations that were unanimously approved by the National Advisory Council.

The National Advisory Council is pleased to offer the following recommendations to the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

2.1 Recommendation 1:

FEMA should strongly urge state Emergency Management Agencies to establish a private sector liaison position in the State EOC based on best practices.

The subcommittee believes that State emergency operations centers (SEOC) should accommodate a private sector liaison (PSL) position during incidents. The PSL would collect information from and disseminate information to private sector partners. The PSL would also be able to assist the SEOC in identifying private sector resources that may aid in disaster response and recovery.

The subcommittee believes the PSL should meet certain criteria and follow an approved process for the role.

2.2 Recommendation 2:

Each FEMA region should provide detailed (unclassified) Situation Reports to approved private sector representatives.

Several FEMA regions assemble and distribute a daily and incident-based situation (awareness) report (SitRep) that contains weather warnings, watches, and advisories; unclassified information regarding current threats; and other unclassified information regarding incidents within the region, and nation if warranted.

The private sector is currently allowed to receive SitReps in some FEMA regions, but not all. The subcommittee agrees that the information contained in the SitReps is sensitive and should not be available to the general public; however, private sector partners should have access to the reports with the approval of the FEMA Region.

The FEMA Region 1 Situation Report is an example of the minimum level of information that should be provided to the approved private sector representatives.

2.3 Recommendation 3:

FEMA Public Sector Office should take the lead in helping existing efforts become better coordinated, including identifying best practices.

The survey respondents described some existing best practices for public/private sector partnerships. Some States have an Emergency Support Function (ESF) for business and industry (e.g., ESF-18 in a couple of States); some include the private sector in exercises and participate in private sector exercises; and some have private sector conferences/roundtables.

The subcommittee believes the FEMA Private Sector Office (PSO) should actively coordinate the partnerships between States and the private sector. The PSO should also focus on identifying best practices and promoting them throughout the nation.