



FEMA

DEC 8 2009

Dr. G. Kemble Bennett  
Chairman  
FEMA National Advisory Council  
Texas A&M Engineering Research Center  
College Station, TX 77843

Dear Dr Bennett:

Thank you for your inquiry dated August 11, 2009, to the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), on behalf of FEMA's National Advisory Council (NAC). You forwarded a recommendation on behalf of the NAC for FEMA to review and revise the Mitigation Policy, MRR-2-09-1: Hazard Mitigation Assistance for Safe Rooms. Specifically, the NAC requests that FEMA re-examine MRR-2-09-1 to ensure it adequately addresses the unique needs and nature of special populations as they relate to the dual-use of facilities and hazard mitigation time of protection policy requirements.

At this time, FEMA is reviewing this Policy with regard to how we may further accommodate identified needs through the authorities available under the Stafford Act. FEMA is also reviewing the Safe Room recommendations included in the August 12, 2009 report from the National Council on Disability "Effective Emergency Management: Making Improvements for Communities and People with Disabilities" as a part of a larger review of the Agency's focus on the additional needs of children and adults with disabilities before, during and after disasters.

With regard to the Council's request for a status on the potential creation of Regional Disability Coordinator positions in the ten FEMA Regional Offices, I believe there is merit to this idea as a part of an Agency-wide, integrated approach to meeting the needs of what is usually a significant portion of any local population.

FEMA is currently taking a top to bottom look at the best way to ensure that the preparedness, response and recovery needs of children and adults with disabilities are served by the Agency. Over the next several months the option of creating Regional Coordinator positions will be carefully considered along with other approaches.

The goal is to expand and improve capacity for our Regional Offices to provide support to our states to integrate rather than further stove piping the needs of children and adults with disabilities as a secondary, separate or special responsibility. All options for achieving this goal are under review.

FEMA has already begun meeting with the designated points of contact for disability issues in each of the regions, which will play an important part in this review, as well.

Chairman Dr. G. Kemble Bennett

DEC 8 2009

Page 2

I hope this information is helpful to you. We greatly appreciate the Council's expertise and commitment to FEMA. I look forward to future recommendations and continuing our collaborative efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Craig Fugate', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

W. Craig Fugate  
Administrator