

**NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
DRAFT POSITION PAPER**

**Funding Authorization for
Emergency Management Assistance Compact**

Background: In October 2006, Congress authorized FEMA to obligate up to \$4 million in grants in fiscal year 2008 to support Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) operations and coordination activities but no funds were appropriated.¹ In May of 2007, Congress appropriated \$2.5 million to FEMA for interstate mutual aid agreements.² EMAC is currently operating with a \$1,005,000 grant for this fiscal year. Funding has been used for administrative support of EMAC, focus on intrastate mutual aid agreements and systems with the goal of developing a unified mutual aid system, enhancements to the EMAC Operations System whereby all resources deployed under the Compact are tracked from when it is requested until reimbursement is paid, and other action items identified the 2004 and 2005 after action reports.

EMAC Improvements: NEMA is the administrator of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), the state-to-state mutual aid system referenced as a key achievement and best practice to be built upon in many of the reports on Hurricane Katrina. EMAC is not a perfect system and strives to achieve continuous improvement. NEMA's members are proud of the success of the system and support initiatives to bolster operational response and elevate awareness of how EMAC works. EMAC has a strategic plan to put lessons learned into practice. The After-Action process from Hurricane Katrina allowed EMAC to examine how to improve the system after unprecedented disasters and an unparalleled growth in the use of the system.

Examples of improvements put into place in the past two years as a result of lessons learned are outlined below.

- First, since education on EMAC among all levels of government was identified as a key need, NEMA has been working with the emergency response disciplines to provide EMAC education and training including developing specialized briefing materials for specific disciplines that they can use within their own discipline.
- Second, NEMA has established an EMAC Advisory Group that is working to better integrate mutual aid partners into the EMAC system before future disasters occur. The group includes representatives from state and local elected officials associations, the National Guard Bureau, emergency responder associations, public utility associations, the private sector, and DHS/FEMA and CDC. The discussions and interactions of this group will serve to assist in adding local government assets to the scope of resources and other disciplines that can be readily deployed through the EMAC system.
- Third, EMAC has developed a full-time training capability to provide varies types and levels of training for state and local emergency responders, federal partners and other mutual aid stakeholders. This will facilitate the further integration of EMAC in federal, state, and local plans and exercises.
- Fourth, EMAC has evolved in the tracking of resources through advancements to its information and resource management system developed by NEMA. We

¹ Pub L. No. 109-295, title VI, §661, 120 Stat. 1335, 1432-33 (October 3, 2006)

² Pub L. No. 110-29, title III, ch.5, 121 Stat. 112, 142 (May 25, 2007)

are working towards an integrated system to allow for swifter approvals from the requesting and responding states, which will ultimately allow for improved tracking and faster response to requests for assistance.

- Finally, states are engaged in developing their own resource typed mission packages and EMAC is involved in assisting with responsibilities set in both the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act and the Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act for resource typing and credentialing.

Discussion: While homeland security grants and Emergency Management Performance Grants are helping to build capabilities, the National Homeland Security Strategy, the National Preparedness Guidelines, the National Response Framework and other federal policies count on the fact that mutual aid is going to be put to use in a disaster. The support of EMAC is critical to helping offset the costs of disasters and building costly infrastructure at the federal level that could sit unused until a disaster. In order to meet the ever-growing need for and reliance on interstate mutual aid, NEMA is seeking \$4 million every three years to continue to build EMAC capabilities.

Recommendation: The National Emergency Management Association supports inclusion of an annual budget line item in DHS/FEMA to continue to build EMAC capabilities, assist in training and education, resource typing, credentialing, information and resource management, and sustaining the EMAC system at a high readiness level for 24/7 activation when a disaster occurs. Including a budget line item for building and maintaining EMAC capabilities and our nation's mutual aid system in the DHS budget will help to address these specific actions to improve the nation's mutual aid system.

Moved:

Disposition:

Seconded:

Authenticated: _____
NEMA Secretary

NEMA 2008 Mid-Year Conference, March 8-13, 2008, Washington, DC