FEMA

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
AND
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY,
FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

1. PARTIES: The parties to this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

2. PURPOSE: This MOU is to set forth an agreement between OPM and FEMA to better define the role of the Federal Executive Boards (FEB) in emergency preparedness activities, and to enhance collaboration on emergency preparedness activities in geographical areas where FEBs and FEMA have responsibilities.

3. BACKGROUND: The FEBs, established by the 1961 Presidential Directive, are a forum for communication and collaboration among Federal agencies outside of Washington, DC. The need for effective coordination among the field activities of Federal departments and agencies is critical. Approximately 88 percent of all Federal employees work outside the National Capital area. Federal programs have impact largely through the actions of the field representatives of those departments and agencies. In addition, local Federal representatives are the principal contact with the Federal Government for most citizens of the United States. FEBs are organized and function under the authority of the Director of OPM, and for the purpose of this document, the FEBs are considered organizations within the OPM structure.

4. AUTHORITY: This MOU is authorized by section 1103 of title 5, United States Code, Functions of the Director (OPM); Part 960 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, Administrative Personnel, Federal Executive Boards; The National Response Framework, January 2008; National Continuity Policy Implementation Plan, September 2007; and Federal Continuity Directive 1, February 2008.

5. DEFINITIONS:

CONTINUITY - An uninterrupted ability to provide services and support, while maintaining organizational viability, before, during, and after an event.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS - An effort within individual organizations (e.g., Federal executive branch departments and agencies) to ensure that Mission Essential Functions continue to be performed during a wide range of emergencies, including localized acts of nature, accidents, and technological or attack-related emergencies.

CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT - A coordinated effort within each branch of government (e.g., the Federal Government's executive branch) to ensure that National Essential Functions continue to be performed during a Catastrophic Emergency.

FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARDS - A forum, established by Presidential Directive in 1961, for communication and collaboration among Federal agencies outside of Washington, DC, utilized to help coordinate the field activities of Federal departments and agencies primarily in our Nation's larger cities. With approximately 88% of all Federal employees working outside of the National Capital Region, the national network of 28 FEBs serves as a cornerstone for strategic partnership in government.

NATIONAL RESPONSE FRAMEWORK - A guide for conducting comprehensive, national, all-hazards incident management. The National Response Framework (NRF) incorporates public and private-sector participation at all levels, from Federal agencies to the State and community level, and also emphasizes the importance of personal preparedness by individuals and their families.

NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - HSPD-5 directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and administer a National Incident Management System (NIMS) to integrate effective practices in emergency preparedness and response into a comprehensive national framework for incident management. The NIMS will enable responders at all levels to work together more effectively to manage domestic incidents no matter what the cause, size or complexity. NIMS benefits include a unified approach to incident management; standard command and management structures; and emphasis on preparedness, mutual aid, and resource management.

REGIONAL INTERAGENCY STEERING COMMITTEE – A committee within each FEMA Regional Office, consisting of representatives from the departments and agencies who staff the Emergency Support Function positions within the Regional Response Coordination Center, which meets to discuss matters affecting that particular FEMA region. The committee meets on a quarterly basis.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES:

a) Recognizing their specific roles, OPM, FEMA and the FEBs will strengthen their existing teamwork in the area of Continuity activities by working together, and with member agencies, on the dissemination of Continuity guidance and the development, training, and exercising of Continuity plans with member departments and agencies.

b) OPM, FEMA and the FEBs will work together on development and implementation of appropriate processes for dissemination of emergency preparedness information, accommodating the unique hazard-specific requirements of different regions of the country. The parties will work together in the dissemination of information prior to, during, and following a pandemic flu outbreak and its impact on Federal Government operations.

c) OPM, FEMA and the FEBs will work together in carrying out their respective roles in the promotion of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Framework (NRF).

d) OPM, FEMA and the FEBs will institutionalize the relationship between the FEBs and the

FEMA Regions. This shall include the FEB Executive Directors being invited to participate in the quarterly Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meetings and the FEMA Regional Continuity Managers being invited to the emergency preparedness activities conducted by the FEBs.

e) OPM, FEMA and the FEBs will work together to coordinate the role of the FEBs in disaster operations as described in the National Response Framework (NRF).

f) OPM, FEMA and the FEBs will develop a plan to implement the FEB responsibilities outlined in the National Continuity Policy Implementation Plan (NCPIP).

g) OPM, FEMA and FEBs will endeavor to meet at least semi-annually for the first two years, once the MOU is signed, and then annually thereafter to review the activities conducted and materials provided under this MOU and seek out additional opportunities to enhance this relationship.

7. REPORTING: Annual report from FEBs to OPM summarizing the coordinated activities of the past year. OPM will share reports with FEMA on a regular basis to identify improvements needed and coordinate future activity planning.

8. POINTS OF CONTACT:

OPM
Paula L. Bridgham
Director for Federal Executive Board Operations
HCLMSA/HCIA
U.S. Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20415
Office: (202) 606-1251
Fax: (202) 606-1798
Email: paula.bridgham@opm.gov

FEMA
Rex E. Wamsley
Director, National Continuity of Operations Division
National Continuity Programs Directorate, FEMA
500 C Street, SW, Room 515
Washington, DC 20472
Office: (202) 646-2897
Fax: (202) 646-4020
Email: rex.wamsley@dhs.gov

9. OTHER PROVISIONS: Nothing in this MOU is intended to conflict with current law or regulation or the directives of FEMA or OPM. If a term in this memorandum is inconsistent with such authority, then the term shall be invalid, but the remaining terms and conditions of this memorandum shall remain in full force and effect. All agreements and commitments set forth in this MOU are subject to availability of funds.

10. EFFECTIVE DATE. The terms of this MOU become effective on the date of the final signature of the parties.

11. MODIFICATION. The terms of this MOU may be modified upon the mutual written consent of the parties.

12. TERMINATION. This MOU will remain in effect indefinitely. The MOU may be terminated with a 30-day written notice submitted by either party.

APPROVED BY:

FOR FEMA:

R. DAVID PAULISON
Administrator

Date: 8/1/08

FOR OPM:

for LMS

LINDA M. SPRINGER
Director

, Deputy Director OPM

Date: 8/1/08