



**FEMA**

# Briefly

## Region V Newsletter

### **Public-Private Great Lakes Partnership Meets**

The inaugural meeting of the Great Lake Partnership Steering Committee was held March 23 at Region V. The steering committee formed last November provides a vehicle to direct the activities of the Great Lake Partnership, whose vision is to provide a “model for public-private collaboration to address critical infrastructure and related homeland and economic security issues. The partnership includes representation from all levels of the public sector and private business organizations representing all segments of the economy.

Regional Director Ed Buikema opened the meeting which focused on eliciting ideas and information from attendees on how the partnership should proceed. Draft vision, mission and objectives were presented to the group by Demetria Giannisis, President/CEO, Chicago Manufacturing Council. Participants were divided into four groups for hour long breakout groups. The groups discuss topics such as: Critical areas to the Great Lakes Region; How the Partnership should be structured; Protocols for communications; and Security and confidentiality issues. After the breakout sessions each group provided a summary of their discussions. Before adjourning, the committee identified next steps in the process to refine the Partnership’s objectives.



Business, industry and government leaders attended the Great Lakes Partnership for Infrastructure Protection meeting held March 23 at the Region V office.

## Region Plays Role in “Operation Heartland” Exercise

The 1st Army Defense Coordinating Officer Certification Exercise was held March 20-26, and included FEMA Regions II, IV and V. The Region V exercise scenario involved two mock earthquakes from the New Madrid Earthquake Fault and two after shocks. Illinois and Indiana participated in exercise play March 20-24. Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) Ron Sherman headed Illinois operations and Scott Wells, (Region VI) was FCO in Indiana. The FCOs will support the First Army Exercise by performing their normal disaster functions with the Defense Coordinating Officers, participating federal support functions, REPLO staff, and selected State staff. Regional Support Team (RST), and Regional Operations Center (ROC) exercise play began Saturday and Sunday, March 20-21, when the two mock earthquakes occurred. A small Response Operations Branch staff, and First Army Regional Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer (REPLO) were deployed to the ROC to commence Information and Planning activities. “It was a valuable exercise that helped us to sharpen our skills and clarify roles and responsibilities,” said Regional Director Ed Buikema. “It also helped increase our overall staff preparedness.”



(Left to Right) Dan Brown, Mary Jo Mullen, Bruce Pfaff and Jay Kinsley. Discuss issues and update status board at the Regional Operations Center during the Operation Heartland Exercise.

## Individual and Public Assistance Conference Held

State Partners, Region staff and Headquarters representatives attended a three day Individual Assistance/Public Assistance Conference at April 5-7 in the regional office. The purpose of the conference was to bring together the working groups to provide updates on policies and programs, discuss issues and concerns, and share knowledge. The conference began the afternoon of April 5 with remarks by Regional Director Ed Buikema, Region V Response and Recovery Division Director David Skarosi and Recovery Branch Chief Larry Bailey.

The first day’s activities included presentations on the National Response Plan, National Incident Management System, Emergency Management Assistance Compact and the DAE cadre. The conference then split into concurrent sessions with IA and PA representatives and staff working with their respective groups to discuss program and project specific issues.

## Region Hosts National Community Relations Workshop

Community Relations (CR) Cadre Managers from all ten FEMA regions held a workshop in Region V March 10-12 to discuss issues and exchange ideas. Also attending the workshop were Ted Monette and Geneva Coleman from HQ, FCOs Ron Sherman and Tito Hernandez, and DAEs John Shanahan and Rita Ramos. Topics of discussion ranged from policies and procedures governing CR to an exchange of ideas for strengthening the CR function. A highlight of the meetings was a presentation by Region VIII's Cadre Manager Ed Conley on lessons learned during Hurricane Isabel. A short film highlighted some of the major issues faced during the Isabel recovery and how Community Relations was utilized during the deployment.

Participants drafted a new mission statement for CR, discussed the role of field officers before, during and after disasters and clarified many issues regarding DAE equipment, deployment standards and processes. Regional Director Ed Buikema and FEMA Response and Recovery Division Director Dan Craig attended the latter portion of the workshop. Director Craig fielded questions from the participants and provided perspective on the CR role. "Community Relations is one of the most vital functions we perform," said Craig. "A comprehensive focused Community Relations effort can set the tone for the success of the entire disaster operation."



FEMA Response and Recovery Director Dan Craig (right) and Regional Director Ed Buikema attended the Community Relations Workshop.

### Mitigation Training Focuses On Region DAEs

Federal Insurance and Mitigation DAEs from throughout the Region met April 7-8 with Region staff to conduct training on mitigation. The sessions also covered a number of topics of interest to DAEs, including a review of policies and procedures, updates on mitigation programs and administrative procedures. A total of ten DAEs attended the two-day class. Mitigation staff designed and instructed the sessions.

### Mitigation continued...

The training covered a wide variety of topics including Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) protocol, state coordination and Disaster Field Office (DFO) operations. Staff also provided a HAZUS computer software demonstration and NEMIS database overview as part of the training.



Devonya Mims of Region ARP staff briefs mitigation DAEs on travel voucher procedures.

*Briefly is published by DHS/FEMA Region V Office Of The Regional Director, 536 S. Clark St. Chicago, IL 60605. Comments or suggestions may be sent to [vincent.davis@dhs.gov](mailto:vincent.davis@dhs.gov)*



## State/Federal Workshop Focuses On Public Affairs Challenges

The Region hosted its annual State/Federal Agency Public Affairs Workshop April 13-14 at the Region office. Public Information Officers (PIO) from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota and Ohio attended, along with 22 other federal and state counterparts. The workshop began April 13<sup>th</sup> with remarks by Regional Director Ed Buikema, who provided an overview of the current DHS structure. The first day's agenda included a review of the National Response Plan (NRP) and Incident Response System (ICS) provided by Sean O'Leary of Region V National Preparedness Division. Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Shelly Stellwagen, Deputy Director, Public Affairs NORAD, U.S. Northern Command, discussed the military's involvement in disaster response. LTC Stellwagen briefed the workshop participants on assets the military may provide, and the process for requesting those assets during a disaster response. Captain (CPT) Jeff Karonis, Director of Incident Communications, DHS Public Affairs explained the Incident Communications Emergency Plan. He discussed when and how the plan should be used and how it will affect states and federal agencies during specific types of disaster events.

Communication with the public during criminal cases was the subject of a panel discussion led by Marilu Cabrera, Public Affairs Officer, DHS Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Also on the panel were Frank Bochte, Public Affairs, FBI Chicago and Randall Samborn, Public Affairs, U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern Illinois. The panel facilitated a discussion about the issues surrounding sensitivities when issuing information that may jeopardize a criminal case.

Day two of the workshop featured a case study of the 2003 Blackout and the issues of coordinating PIO messages following the emergency. Michael Dekker, New York City Office of Emergency Management and Rob Glen, Ohio Emergency Management discussed first actions and how they responded to the initial event from a public affairs perspective. Lieutenant Antonio Soliz, U.S. Coast Guard 9<sup>th</sup> District and Elissa Speizman, Environmental Protection Agency provided an overview of Joint Information Center (JIC) challenges. They discussed the message of the day concept and ways to coordinate joint press conferences when principal speakers are not co-located.

LTC Robert Saxon, 1st Army, led a JIC exercise. The exercise play involved PIO actions and issues surrounding a mock earthquake in the New Madrid Fault that affected multiple states. Injects in the exercise included a terrorist event, power blackout, and extensive communications issues within some of the affected areas. Region V Federal Coordinating Officer Ron Sherman participated in the JIC exercise, coordinating segments involving Disaster Field Office actions. The exercise play involved PIO actions and issues surrounding a mock earthquake in the New Madrid Fault that affected multiple states. Injects in the exercise included a terrorist event, power blackout, and extensive communications issues within some of the affected areas.

The workshop concluded with a briefing by Rob Hoffman, Director of Business Development for World Business Chicago. Mr. Hoffman outlined the importance of the Great Lakes region's infrastructure protection to the global economy. He provided statistics that show the region is third in the world in gross product, exceeded only by Japan and the rest of the United States combined. Mr. Hoffman reiterated the importance of effective communication and quick recovery following a major disaster or act of terrorism. Region Public Affairs Officer Linda Sacia hosted the workshop which was organized and sponsored by the RISC Sub-committee on Public Affairs.



Rob Hoffman, Director of Business Development for World Business Chicago, addresses the State/Federal PIO Workshop.

## Ohio Community Receives \$2.5 Million Mitigation Grant

On April 6, Michael D. Brown, Under Secretary for Emergency Preparedness and Response, announced the release of \$26 million in Pre-Disaster Mitigation Competitive (PDM-C) Grant Program funds to states, territories, and federally recognized tribes for pre-disaster mitigation activities. The PDM-C grant awards made by Under Secretary Brown included \$2.5 million for the City of Fairfield, Ohio for a voluntary program to acquire 23 residential structures in the Crystal/Banker Drive area.

The grant program is a Presidential initiative, administered by FEMA for pre-disaster mitigation planning and projects primarily addressing natural hazards. Regional Director Edward G. Buikema presented the award to Fairfield officials at a ceremony held on April 6. He noted that these types of mitigation projects are a top priority. “Reducing future disaster costs by eliminating repetitive flood losses in any flood prone area is a wise use of tax payer dollars”, said Buikema.

Fairfield Vice Mayor Steve Miller said, “The city has experienced numerous flooding events over the last several years and this grant will enable us to reduce personal property losses through a voluntary acquisition program of structures in the floodplain. It will also help us reduce our dependency on federal funding from flooding that might occur in the future.”

The Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA) will partner with Fairfield and administer the FEMA grant. “I am excited that Ohio EMA has a part in the development, funding and administration of this project that offers an opportunity for a new start for many families,” said Ohio EMA Executive Director Dale Shipley.



Regional Director Ed Buikema (far left) presents a check for \$2,578,845 to officials attending the PDM-C check presentation ceremony. Joining Director Buikema (left to right) are Dale Shipley, Executive Director, Ohio EMA, Gary Cates, Speaker Pro-Temp, Ohio House of Representatives, Steve Miller, Vice Mayor, City of Fairfield, Arthur E. Pizzano, Fairfield City Manager and Jim Turner, Fairfield City Engineer.