



FEMA e-News: Preparedness for the Private Sector

June 2017

REGION II - CARIBBEAN AREA DIVISION (CAD)

FEMA provides MET Seminar to PR Governor and Cabinet



PR Governor Ricardo Rosselló-Nevares, joined by FEMA Acting Regional Administrator John Rabin and CAD Director Alejandro De La Campa and other federal and state officials, takes part during the discussions at the MET Seminar. FEMA Photo by Bryan Figueroa.

In order to better prepare the new Puerto Rico government for an efficient response and recovery from an emergency or disaster, FEMA sponsored the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Mobile Education Team (MET) Executive Education Seminar for Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rosselló-Nevares and his cabinet that took place in San Juan, at the end of May.

More than 25 key officials, including the Governor, Secretaries of PR Department of Housing, Education, Family, and Health among others, engaged and provided local perspective on a facilitated discussion of the homeland security risks and challenges that the Government of Puerto Rico confronts. They talked

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USVI Government successfully led Vigilant Guard 2017 Exercise to conclusion



USVI Governor Kenneth Mapp joined VING Adjutant General BG Deborah Howell, VITEMA Director Mona Barnes, FEMA CAD Director Alejandro De La Campa, FEMA pre-designated Federal Coordinating Officer Bill Vogel, among other senior leadership during the VG-17. Photo from the USVI Governor's Office.

The US Virgin Islands Government conducted the final phase of the Vigilant Guard 2017 Full Scale Exercise (VG17) from May 15-19, 2017, that engaged territorial and federal resources into a response to an emergency event. VG17 is the largest exercise that the US Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) and the USVI National Guard (VING) has ever conducted.

The exercise started with the activation of the 31 sirens of the VITEMA Warning System, notifying residents and visitors throughout the territory, about the event. USVI Governor Kenneth Mapp joined VITEMA Director Mona Barnes, VING Adjutant General BG Deborah Howell, FEMA CAD Director Alejandro De La Campa,

FEMA pre-designated Federal Coordinating Officer Bill Vogel, among other senior leadership to discuss progressing situations and strategies to approach catastrophic emergency needs.

VG17 tested the ability of the territory to respond to a 7.5 magnitude earthquake and tsunami waves of

up to 20 feet. Throughout the VG17, territorial and federal participants jointly dealt with issues related to "extensive" infrastructure damages, which "produced" concurrent immediate response for mass casualties, search and rescue, debris removal, multiple hazardous material releases, and other similar operations.

All participating officials agreed on the mutual benefits of having interactions before any real event occurs, which facilitates the coordination among territorial and federal responding teams.

The USVI Government also tested its emergency information system, establishing a satellite and a main Joint Information Center (JIC) on St. Croix and St. Thomas respectively, holding press conferences, and providing continuous key messaging to the public throughout the exercise.

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Participating personnel benefitted of having interactions before a real event, which facilitates the coordination among territorial and federal responding teams. FEMA photo.



FEMA and Voluntary Agencies support Community with water donation

Officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), along with the Puerto Rico Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (Puerto Rico VOAD) announced today, the donation of 139 pallets (125,236 liters) of water to the PR Long Term Recovery Groups (PRLTRG) which will distribute it directly among community service organizations.

"In a collaborative effort with FEMA, the organizations encompassed under the Puerto Rico VOAD have identified individuals, families and organizations that will be aided immediately," said Alejandro De La Campa, FEMA Caribbean Area Division Director. "With this effort, we continue helping our communities, even when there is no emergency or disaster event occurring."

The PRLTRG are comprised of organizations that respond to humanitarian crises such as natural disasters, conflicts, among other situations, to save lives, relieve suffering and help



FEMA donated 139 pallets (125,236 liters) of water to the PRLTRG to distribute among community organizations. These pallets were part of the commodities warehoused at the FEMA Caribbean Distribution Center (DC), where assets are continuously replenished to ensure readiness for any emergency or disaster event that may occur in PR and/or the USVI. FEMA photo.

rebuild communities in the longer term. As Puerto Rico VOAD members, the PRLTRG also support the humanitarian needs of other VOAD member agencies such as faith-based, voluntary and community organizations.

Typically, with six (6) months in advance, the manager of FEMA's Caribbean Distribution Center (DC Caribbean) notifies the availability of products for donation to the FEMA

Voluntary Agencies Liaison (VAL), who initiates the coordination process. The PRLTRG were chosen due to the nature of their community assistance program.

The donated water was part of the commodities warehoused at DC Caribbean, one of eight National Distribution Center, which holds emergency assets such as: thousands of liters of water, ready to eat meals, cots, and generators, among other emergency supplies. These assets are continuously replenished to ensure readiness for any emergency or disaster event that may require federal response in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.

While governments prepare for disaster response and recovery, FEMA encourages individuals, families and businesses to be proactive and get ready for any hazards in their communities. For additional information on emergency preparedness, please visit <http://www.fema.gov> and www.ready.gov.



Personnel from the Municipality of Ciales and FEMA's Caribbean Distribution Center (DC) loaded the pallets of the donated water for transportation. The DC Caribbean is one of eight National Distribution Center, which holds emergency assets such as: thousands of liters of water, ready to eat meals, cots, and generators, among other emergency supplies. FEMA photo.



New notification introduced during NWS PR Media Workshop



Roberto Garcia, Meteorologist in Charge, along with Ernesto Morales, Warning Coordinator and Ernesto Rodríguez, Science and Operations Coordinator welcomed the participants of the Workshop at the WFO in San Juan. FEMA Photo by Ernesto Rodríguez.

National Weather Service (NWS) officials of the Weather Forecast Office (WFO) in San Juan hosted their annual Media workshop and introduced new notification, among other products available to ensure adequate weather awareness for public messaging.

Beginning in 2017, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) may issue advisories, watches, and warnings for disturbances which are not a tropical cyclone yet, but that as potential tropical cyclones are likely to bring tropical storm or hurricane conditions to an area within 48 hours.

"Today, lives should not be lost as we are better informed. Media outlets and social media are some of our best liaisons to serve the public," explained Roberto Garcia, Meteorologist in Charge at the WFO in San

Juan. "Weather reporters and meteorologists serve well our communities when they provide accurate and timely information to the public. That enable us to carry on one of our main responsibilities, which is to safe life and property".

Ernesto Morales, Warning Coordinator, and Ernesto Rodríguez, Science and Operations Coordinator provided overviews of the NHC and NWS updated products, services

and warnings. The WFO in San Juan has personnel on duty 24 hours in three (3) shifts, ensuring that accurate and pertinent weather information is continuously available.

During the workshop, Dr. Pablo A. Méndez-Lázaro, Environmental Health Graduate Program Coordinator from the PR Medical Science Graduate School, presented the results of a collaborative study to analyze the heat vulnerability index to improve urban public health management in San Juan, Puerto Rico. A heat index report is among the products that the San Juan WFO produces on a daily basis.

Representatives from different Puerto Rico media outlets, Public Information Officers from PREMA and FEMA; several Science, Medical Science and Public Communication undergraduate and graduate students participated of this year workshop.



Representatives from different Puerto Rico media outlets, Public Information Officers from PREMA and FEMA; several Science, Medical Science and Public Communication undergraduate and graduate students participated of this year workshop. PREMA Photo.



Preparedness Planning for Your Business

To continue with the series on initial steps to develop a preparedness program, below you will find information related to the **Program Administration**. Remember that all this information is also available at [Ready Business](#).

Program Administration

A preparedness program should be reviewed periodically to ensure it meets the current needs of the business. Keep records on file for easy access. Lastly, where applicable, make note of any [laws, regulations](#) and other requirements that may have changed. Find more information on program administration [here](#).

Laws and Regulations

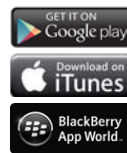
- Federal, state and local laws and regulations define minimum requirements for emergency management and business continuity.
- Requirements may apply to industries that are part of our nation's "critical infrastructure." These industries range from financial services to energy. Regulations may require emergency planning, business continuity plans, information technology disaster recovery plans, cyber/information security, physical and operational security and other issues.
- Other industries must comply with regulations because of their use of hazardous chemicals or their hazardous operations.
- Most buildings must be built in accordance with building, life safety and fire codes. These codes specify requirements for building construction, occupant warning systems, exits and protection systems designed to get people safely out of a building during an emergency. Some buildings may require higher levels of protection because of their size, height (e.g., high-rise buildings) or the number of occupants they house (e.g., public assembly facilities such as theaters).
- Facilities that manufacture, treat, store or dispose of highly hazardous chemicals must comply with environmental regulations. Chemical facilities that pose a pollution threat to water resources also must comply with environmental regulations.
- Regulations may differ by jurisdiction (city, town, county, parish or state). If you are developing a program for multiple facilities located in different jurisdictions, you need to identify applicable regulations by facility location.

FEMA E-News is a newsletter produced by FEMA's Region II Caribbean Area Division External Affairs Division and includes information of available federal and state resources to assist businesses and employees in Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands in improving their preparedness when faced with any natural or man-made risk. To subscribe or cancel your subscription or send your comments, questions, or ideas for articles contact delyris.aquino-santiago@fema.dhs.gov or call 787.296.3560.

The FEMA App contains preparedness information for different types of disasters, an interactive checklist for emergency kits, information on how to stay safe and recover after a disaster, FEMA Disaster Recovery Center locations (one-stop centers where disaster survivors can access key relief services) and Shelters, general ways the public can get involved before and after a disaster, and the FEMA blog.

You can also download the app via text messaging:

- If you have an Apple device: Text APPLE to 43362 (4FEMA)
- If you have an Android device: Text ANDROID to 43362 (4FEMA)



- If you have a Blackberry device: Text BLACKBERRY to 43362 (4FEMA)

If you use text messaging, *standard message and data rates apply*. Learn more about [our text messages](#).

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IRS Website Provides Tools to Help Small Businesses Understand Employment Taxes



The Internal Revenue Service reminds small businesses of the many free products available to help them understand and comply with the law. Products ranging from online calculators, printable calendars, step-by-step guides and a series of educational webinars are all available on IRS.gov.

Federal law requires most employers to withhold federal taxes from their employees' wages. IRS tools can help small businesses understand some of the requirements for withholding, reporting, and paying employment taxes. The IRS website, IRS.gov, provides easily accessible information and guides on what forms employers should use as well as how and when to deposit and report employment taxes.

Federal Income Tax- Small businesses first need to figure out how much tax to withhold. Small business employers can better understand the process by starting with an employee's Form W-4 and the withholding tables described in Publication 15, Employer's Tax Guide.

Social Security and Medicare Taxes - Most employers also withhold social security and Medicare taxes from employees' wages and deposit them along with the employers' matching share. In 2013, employers became responsible for withholding the Additional Medicare Tax on wages that exceed a threshold amount. There is no employer match for the Addition-

al Medicare Tax and certain types of wages and compensation are not subject to withholding.

Federal Unemployment (FUTA)

Tax- Employers report and pay FUTA tax separately from other taxes. Employees do not pay this tax or have it withheld from their pay. Businesses pay FUTA taxes from their own funds.



Depositing Employment Taxes-

Generally, employers pay employment taxes by making federal tax deposits through the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS). The amount of taxes withheld during a prior one-year period determines when to make the deposits. Publication 3151-A, The ABCs of FTDs: Resource Guide for Understanding Federal Tax Deposits and the IRS Tax Calendar for Businesses and Self-Employed are helpful tools.

Failure to make a timely deposit can mean being subject to a failure-to-deposit penalty of up to 15 percent. But the penalty can be waived if an employer has a history of filing required returns and making tax pay-

ments on time. For more information, see the Penalty Relief Due to First Time Penalty Abatement page on IRS.gov.

Reporting Employment Taxes -

Generally, employers report wages and compensation paid to an employee by filing the required forms with the IRS. E-filing Forms 940, 941, 943, 944 and 945 is an easy, secure and accurate way to file employment tax forms. Employers filing quarterly tax returns with an estimated total of \$1,000 or less for the calendar year may now request to file Form 944 annually instead. At the end of the year, the employer must provide employees with Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement, to report wages, tips and other compensation. Small businesses file Forms W-2 and Form W-3, Transmittal of Wage and Tax Statements, with the Social Security Administration and if required, state or local tax departments.

See *Understanding Employment Taxes and Employment Taxes* on IRS.gov for more.



FEMA provides MET Seminar to PR Governor and... cont.



FEMA Region II Acting Regional Administrator John Rabin and FEMA CAD Director Alejandro De La Campa listen to PR Governor Ricardo Rosselló-Nevarés as he mentions some of his main concerns regarding emergency situations in Puerto Rico. FEMA Photo by Bryan Figueroa.

Continued from front page

about their roles, responsibilities, key decisions, and actions in view of homeland security mission areas that include prevention, protection, response, and recovery.

FEMA Region II Acting Regional Administrator John Rabin, along with former Acting Deputy Administrator Kenneth Rathje and FEMA CAD Director Alejandro De La Campa expanded on the operational roles that require coordination among local and federal

agencies. FEMA leadership emphasized the importance of building and strengthening work partnerships ahead of time, as mutual respect and trust would be essential if lives are at stake during an emergency or disaster.

Governor Rosselló and his staff welcomed the lessons learned and mentioned to be interested in continue participating in similar engagements to increase their knowledge.

The MET, which is part of the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) conducts the Executive Education Seminars to prepare senior level state and local officials to examine, define and meet the challenges homeland security poses for state, city or urban area strategic planning, policy development and organizational design.



PR Governor Ricardo Rossello-Nevarés and his Cabinet actively participated of the roundtable discussions during the Seminar. These discussions sought the identification of homeland security issues, to help strengthen PR government capability to plan for, prevent, respond to and recover from catastrophic events and terrorism. FEMA Photo by Bryan Figueroa.



USVI Government successfully led VG-17... cont.

Continued from page 2

The US Northern Command and the National Guard Bureau sponsor the Vigilant Guard program, which gives states and territories the opportunity to improve emergency coordination with their federal and military partners. VITEMA and the USVING lead the series of exercises that concluded with the VG 2017.



FEMA, VITEMA and DCE personnel discuss potential situations and identified resources to manage a response operation in the USVI. FEMA photo.



VING personnel put in practice riot control techniques to manage "impromptu" protesters in POD locations. FEMA photo.



The USVI Joint Information Center disseminated information to the public and handled media inquiries, among other functions. FEMA photo.



USVI National Guard deployed all type of resources to address needs identified throughout the territory. FEMA photo.



Territorial and Federal authorities established Points of Distribution to hand commodities to drivers in different area throughout the territory. FEMA photo.



Governor Mapp presented his priorities and concerns to territorial, federal and military leadership during the exercise. Photo from the Governor's Office.



2017 Workshop Series

Co-hosted by FEMA and FLASH



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At this Workshop, you will:

Identify Your Risk

Learn about business continuity, disaster response, and the cost benefit of preparing for an earthquake and power outage.

Develop a Plan

Identify preparedness and mitigation actions needed to ensure safety and business continuity. Complete assessments and begin planning for retrofit projects

Take Action

Work with other business, community, and local leaders to discuss your response to an earthquake and a widespread power outage.

Get QuakeSmart®!

WHAT

Ready Business QuakeSmart & Power Outage Preparedness Workshop

WHEN

Tuesday, August 8, 2017
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Registration Opens at 8:30 a.m.

WHERE

Embassy Suites by Hilton San Juan Hotel & Casino
8000 Tartak Street,
Carolina PR 00979

HOW

Register [here](http://www.quakesmartcommunity.org) for this free workshop or visit www.quakesmartcommunity.org.
For questions contact Barbara@flash.org. Lunch will be included.



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WHAT

Ready Business QuakeSmart & Power Outage Preparedness Workshop

WHEN

Thursday, August 10, 2017
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Registration Opens at 8:30 a.m.

WHERE

Holiday Inn Mayaguez & Tropical Casino
2701 Hwy. 2
Mayagüez, Puerto Rico 00680

HOW

Register [here](http://www.quakesmartcommunity.org) for this free workshop or visit www.quakesmartcommunity.org.
For questions contact Barbara@flash.org. Lunch will be included.

