



Assistance to Texas through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) and National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (NVOAD)

As our nation looks to help those impacted by the devastation of Hurricane Harvey, some wonder how other states send help to the impacted areas. The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is a national mutual aid system coordinated by the states to share resources in times of need.

EMAC provides a legal structure adopted by the states in advance which cover liability protections and financial obligations within a controlled logistical system. The EMAC system **does not** permit self-deployment of resources. Deployment must be authorized by both the sending and receiving states.

EMAC does not apply to private sector or non-profit, charitable organizations which have their own procedures for providing aid.

Additionally, aid may be provided by the federal government, as is the case of Virginia's two Urban Search and Rescue teams, which have sent members as part of the FEMA federal system.

The state emergency managers are the controlling agents for all EMAC requests. Any requests must be authorized in advance. To reduce red tape, these can be verbal authorizations, with paperwork following.

How does it work? In order to use EMAC, the state requesting assistance must enact a Governor's declaration of emergency. As Virginia receives resource requests from other states, VDEM personnel evaluate the request, send out notifications to localities and state agencies to identify available resources and submit available resources back to the requesting state, work out logistics and manage reimbursements for resources deployed to assist.

To date, the State of Texas has not requested any EMAC resources to be deployed. In the coming days and weeks, I expect that requests for a wide array of recovery and government expertise will be requested. As during Hurricane Katrina's aftermath, this could take place over several months.

Please familiarize yourself with this process if you are interested in providing resources when they are requested. For more information on Virginia's EMAC program, visit <http://www.vaemergency.gov/emergency-management-community/emergency-management-resources/logistics/emergency-management-assistance-compact-emac>

Individuals and private organizations that wish to help can direct their resources to the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (NVOAD), at <https://www.nvoad.org/>