



News Release

**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®

Mississippi Valley Division

cemvd-pa@mvd02.usace.army.mil

Release #: 99-16

Contact: Bobbie Galford

For Release: December 3, 1999

Phone: 601-634-5760

Readiness 2000

VICKSBURG, Miss., December 3, 1999 -- Although emergency management may not be the first thing that comes to mind when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) is mentioned, it is a mission that is vital to the nation and one MVD takes very seriously.

In addition to their other missions of navigation, flood protection and environmental stewardship, MVD also maintains a strong emergency management capability to assist the public in responding to and recovering from floods, hurricanes and other natural disasters.

An initiative called Readiness 2000 (R2K) was recently implemented Corps-wide and it is revolutionizing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Readiness/Emergency Management program. R2K is a new way of doing business that focuses on division-wide or Corps-wide response.

R2K recognizes that a single district cannot plan for and respond to all of the missions a large disaster could bring to their geographical area. Therefore, a method was developed to employ engineer resources on a corporate scale utilizing pre-designated response teams from multiple Corps divisions and districts, as needed. These pre-designated teams are called Planning and Response Teams, or PRTs, and they constitute the foundation of R2K.

-more-

2-2-2 READINESS

Before R2K, each district planned for the full array of disaster missions. Under R2K, each Corps district is assigned a specific mission. Corps-wide, there are a total of 43 Planning and Response Teams responsible for providing ice, water, emergency power, debris removal, temporary housing, emergency access, temporary roofing and structural safety assessment. MVD has PRTs for all of these missions except for emergency access and structural safety assessment.

The Headquarters, Corps of Engineers, response to recent hurricanes and tropical storms prove R2K works. Boundaries between divisions and districts were transparent as every division in the Corps came together to provide a unified and rapid response.

In September, when Hurricane Floyd moved inland causing extensive damage to the Carolinas and coastal states northward, three MVD teams deployed: The Vicksburg District's water team deployed to New York District and Memphis District's emergency power team along with Rock Island's ice team deployed to Wilmington District. All were deployed for two weeks and provided valuable assistance to the local district offices.

The primary measure of success for the Corps in disaster response is the ability to rapidly provide effective, efficient support under the Federal Response Plan to the states, localities and victims of large disasters. Leaders in FEMA and the Corps have had a chance to evaluate the R2K response and determined that the results exceeded expectations.

The initiatives of Readiness 2000 have been tested and will be further refined based on lessons learned and feedback from FEMA. The recent events solidified the R2K concepts and confirmed that the Corps was better prepared than ever to provide critical life support and recovery assistance to disaster victims. This unified response will be the key to responding to major disasters in the future.

OTHER R2K FEATURES

While the PRT initiative is the cornerstone of R2K, there are other features that contribute to the success

of the R2K program:

- **Readiness Support Center** -- Under R2K, the Corps has redirected the Earthquake Preparedness Center of Expertise in San Francisco to manage the Training, Exercise, Evaluation and Corrective Action program. The center is now called the Readiness Support Center (RSC). The RSC is now pursuing lessons learned so the Corps can build on R2K successes and correct problems.

- **Deployable Tactical Operation System** -- Another R2K feature is the Deployable Tactical Operation Systems (DTOS). DTOSs are mobile platforms (trailers and vehicles) that deploy early to provide the initial working space and reliable communications that is crucial to a quick disaster response.

- **Logistics Emergency Response Teams (LERT)** -- Corps logistics personnel support R2K and are critical to success. The LERT support the mobilization and staging areas (managing generators, ice, water, etc.). Logistics personnel are also PRT members and have been key players in training and exercises.

- **Pre-scripted Mission Assignments** -- As an R2K initiative, FEMA and the Corps drafted mission assignments which may be issued prior to actual event occurrence. The initial mission language and funding amounts are determined in advance and the early assignments help ensure timely delivery of goods and services.

- **Advance Contracting Initiative (ACI)** -- To speed delivery of goods and services, the Corps has awarded contracts for debris removal and disposal, and emergency power, ice, and water. These contracts are awarded following normal contracting procedures and ensure that contractor resources may be employed with a very minimal time delay. The contracts combine an initial "requirements" feature for limited delivery levels followed by an indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity exercise option.

BACKGROUND

There are two primary authorities for the Corps' disaster response and recovery efforts: the Stafford Act and Public Law 84-99.

The principal federal authority for providing disaster relief is the Stafford Act. Under its authority, when a state governor requests assistance, and the president determines an emergency exists, the Federal response is directed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the Federal Response Plan (FRP).

The FRP specifies federal agency roles and responsibilities in responding to disasters. The Corps is the lead agency for the FRP's Emergency Support Function #3 (ESF-3), "Public Works and Engineering." ESF-3 includes providing potable water and ice, emergency power, debris clearance and management, temporary housing, temporary roofing, and structural safety assessments. The Corps also provides support in the functional areas like energy, urban search and rescue, and transportation.

The Corps may also provide disaster response and support under Flood Control and Coastal Emergency (PL 84-99). For example, when there is imminent threat of unusual flooding, the Corps may provide temporary advanced measures to protect life and property, i.e., temporary levees or emergency contracting. Or the Corps may participate in flood fighting in support of state and local efforts. Also under PL 84-99, the Corps may be involved in rehabilitating certain flood control structures damaged by flood events.

The Corps may at times provide emergency water assistance. For example, after Tropical Storm Charley floods contaminated water sources in Del Rio, the Corps provided thousands of gallons of potable water under PL 84-99 authorities. This assistance began even before the president declared a disaster.