



## **EMAC Primer**

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### **About EMAC**

The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is a mutual aid agreement or compact between states and territories to provide personnel and equipment assistance during governor declared states of emergency. Signed into law in 1996, the compact was initiated by the late Florida Governor Lawton Chiles after the devastation of Hurricane Andrew. The mission of EMAC is to maintain a system to facilitate the efficient and effective sharing of resources among member states during times of disaster. EMAC, as defined by its Articles, is a legally binding contractual agreement among parties that is enforceable by law and constitutes reimbursements processes as well as liability coverage. The Articles define: EMAC's purpose, member state responsibilities, limitations of the agreement, license and permit recognition across member states, liability arrangements, compensation, reimbursement, and implementation requirements. While EMAC has national procedures and guidelines, the manner in which it is run within a state varies from state to state.

Legislation has been passed in all 50 states and territories including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands to enact EMAC. This expansive network allows for governmental FlaWARN members to access and provide resources during disasters in a way that ensures liability and prompt reimbursement. Florida assists other states through EMAC when they are impacted by disaster. Emergency management, health professionals, law enforcement and other governmental resources are sent when requested.

In 2005, FlaWARN took part in one of the largest mutual aid responses in the history of the United States, Hurricane Katrina. FlaWARN sent water and wastewater personnel to assist Mississippi as part of a massive multi-discipline effort. History was made during Hurricane Katrina when many water and wastewater operators were sent across the state lines under

EMAC for the first time ever. Valuable lessons from the response effort have been captured to streamline processes for the future. Depending on the scope of the disaster, the reimbursement process can be from a few months to years. Streamlining the processes within FlaWARN is important and every member of FlaWARN should keep explicit records when taking part in an EMAC mission. One of the important advantages of deploying under an EMAC is that it establishes a legal foundation for liability and reimbursement. Terms of the mission are agreed upon when signing the Request for Assistance or REQ-A. Reimbursable expenses include the loss, damage or expense incurred in the operation of equipment and expenses incurred in the providing of services to the requesting state.

Another important aspect covered under EMAC is credentialing. Licenses and certifications of the Assisting State are recognized by the Requesting State (Article V). The Assisting State workers are considered agents of the Requesting State for tort liability and immunity purposes. No Assisting State or its officers or employees rendering aid are liable on account of any act or omission in good faith (Article VI). Each member state is responsible for the payment of compensation and death benefits of their own members of emergency forces in the same manner and terms as if the injury or death were sustained in their own state. (Article VII)

### **The REQ-A**

The terms of the assistance are set forth in the EMAC Request for Assistance form, also known as the REQ-A. The Requesting State is responsible for reimbursement based on the mutually agreed upon estimated costs on the REQ-A. A member of the state's emergency management agency is designated to facilitate the signing and execution of the REQ-A. In Florida, the Mutual Aid Branch (MAB) Director at the Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) is responsible for the facilitation of the REQ-A. A REQ-A is required for each mission assignment. Individuals or teams and their equipment may be sent on a single mission. Missions are typically two weeks with two days of travel however, they can be as short a week or longer than two weeks depending on the mission type. Resource typing and as much detail of the makeup of a team should be provided to the MAB Director for inclusion in the REQ-A in order to assure that the needs of the requesting state have been met. As a state requesting assistance, resource typing should be used to request water sector and utility resources.

The MAB will contact FlaWARN when assistance is requested following a disaster. FlaWARN will then solicit for responders and cost estimates should be executed based on the information requested by the MAB. Once the estimates are complete, they will be sent to the MAB for inclusion in the REQ-A. The MAB will then obtain the signatures from authorized signatories and Section II of the REQ-A will be sent to the Requesting State for final signatures and approval, rejection or negotiation. Utility manager's work closely with the FlaWARN steering committee to determine what personnel and equipment are needed for each team and the

estimated costs associated with the mission. Once all three sections of the REQ-A have been signed, a copy will be sent to the Team Leader and will be posted in EM Constellation for viewing by ESF 10. The REQ-A will be used to access the impact area and should be carried by the travelers. The REQ-A also:

- Identifies the arrival staging area, duty station and point of contact (POC)
- Verifies that you are on an official EMAC mission
- Includes all cost estimates for personnel, equipment, supplies and travel
- Identifies any special considerations (working location, living conditions and safety concerns)
- Is the contract for services under which team members operate

When FlaWARN members are deployed under EMAC, they are sent by the FDEM as an agent of the State of Florida to the Requesting State. FlaWARN utility workers will be functioning under the supervision of the Requesting State.

FlaWARN Steering Committee members will be in contact with the Requesting State WARN leadership to ensure that the personnel best suited to the needs are sent.

### **EMAC Deployment Tips**

The mission order is issued by the Requesting State to responders that are deploying to provide assistance agreed upon in the REQ-A. A copy must be kept with the team at all times as it serves proof that you are on an official EMAC Mission.

### **Things to do before you deploy**

- Read the relevant chapters (chapters 8 – 14) of the FlaWARN Best Management Practices which cover mutual aid response activities.
- Pack accordingly with rain gear and extra shoes and boots. Take all the personal care items, especially medicine; you will need for an extended trip.
- Be sure all immunizations are up to date.

### **When you arrive**

When workers arrive at the designated area they must check in with the Requesting State contact and get updated information on the mission. After checking in at the staging area, report to the MAB at [eoc-mutualaid@em.myflorida.com](mailto:eoc-mutualaid@em.myflorida.com), as well at (850) 921-0413 or (850) 921-0223 and email [info@flawarn.org](mailto:info@flawarn.org) as well as your local utility. If the emergency is as catastrophic as Katrina, FlaWARN will have an onsite coordinator to assist in communication

between states. Document the assistance you provide each day, for example the number and location of lift stations you pumped or provided generators.

### **Changes to conditions**

If there are changes to the deployment conditions or your work assignment does not reflect the REQ-A, this must be reported to the mutual aid branch so that an amended REQ-A can be executed. FlaWARN members stationed at the EOC in Tallahassee will work with the mutual aid branch to ensure that changes have been made. Costs outside of the mission may not be reimbursed. Examples of changes to deployment conditions include:

- assisting utilities not covered in the REQ-A
- extension of deployment
- assistance provided
- terms and conditions change at any time

### **Payment**

The best way to make sure your utility is reimbursed for all legitimate expenses is to properly document anticipated expenses in the cost estimation of the mission which is completed in Section II of the REQ-A . Upon returning to your utility, compile all documentation (that supports mission expenses) which includes documentation of payment including payroll logs. Be sure all documentation is signed and dated by the traveler. Put the EMAC number on all documentation.

Per the EMAC Financial Reimbursement Training Module, if the expense item is stated in the mission documentation you need a receipt. If the expense item is not in the mission documentation, you may not be reimbursed.

### **R-2 Form**

The R-2 Form is used to summarize the costs for assistance provided by an individual within a state providing assistance to another state under EMAC. A single R-2 form will be completed for each individual deployed with cost-supporting documents. FDEM FA will be forwarding all critical information and dates to utilities to assist in reimbursement. It is advisable for utilities to start completing the R-2 form and gathering all supporting documentation as soon as the mission is completed.

For FlaWARN members, a copy of the R-2 form will be submitted to FlaWARN administration and forwarded as a group to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which is the lead agency for ESF10 under which FlaWARN operates at the EOC during emergencies. The ESF10 chief will be reviewing the completed R-2 forms for completeness before the R-2 is

signed and sent to the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) Finance and Administration Section.

FDEM will then complete the R-1 which acts as an invoice for all the services provided, using the information provided in the individual R-2 forms and forward to the Requesting State. The reimbursement will then go to the State of Florida to be distributed back to the organization of origin where the governmental service provider is employed. Reimbursements are not sent to individuals.

### **Cost supporting documents to include with R-2 Form**

- Timesheets signed by authorized person
- Work records
- Payroll documents
- Travel Expense reports/vouchers
- State or utility warrants/checks
- Receipts or invoices for authorized equipment
- Photos to support damaged equipment
- Mileage logs
- Local/State travel policies and procedures

Thank you for volunteering to assist your fellow citizens. Your assistance and support is greatly appreciated by all those in need.

### **Resources used to compile this Primer include:**

*Emergency Management Assistance Compact Operations Pre-Course Assignment*, May 2005

*Being Deployed Under EMAC? What you need to know*, NEMA pamphlet

*Interstate Mutual Aid and Assistance: EMAC tips for the Water Sector*, Office of Water (4608T),

EPA 817-F-07-012, [www.epa.gov/watersecurity](http://www.epa.gov/watersecurity), October 2007

EMAC: The Cornerstone of Mutual Aid Training Module: Financial Reimbursement, June 2008