



#### **4/10/2020 Business and Infrastructure Partners Call on COVID-19 - FEMA's OB31**

On Friday, April 10, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Office of Business, Industry, Infrastructure, and Integration (OB31) held a business and infrastructure partners call concerning the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). A recording of the call will be made available on the [NBEOC Dashboard](#). This call will be held every Monday and Friday at 3 PM EST. Mr. Craig Manfield, a Logistics Management Specialist at FEMA, moderated the call. Mr. Rob Glen, Director of FEMA's OB31, said listeners would hear updates from the Community-Based Testing Task Force, the Supply Chain Task Force, the Supply Chain Analysis Network, the National Joint Information Center, and updates from FEMA Regions and Two and Ten.

Mr. Dana Arms with the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) provided an update on CISA activities. CISA is currently working to refine guidance to aid state decision-makers in determining which members of the critical infrastructure workforce are considered essential. Mr. Arms also announced that CISA is working with Mexico to prevent the spread of COVID-19 across the U.S.-Mexican border (while maintaining cross-border trade) and with foreign intelligence communities to prevent coronavirus-related cybersecurity incidents. According to Mr. Arms, shortly after the CARES Act was passed, DHS observed an uptick in malware, ransomware, and phishing attacks related to COVID-19. Finally, Mr. Arms indicated that CISA is working across the Department of Homeland Security to implement the temporary final rule entitled "[Prioritization and Allocation of Certain Scarce or Threatened Health and Medical Resources for Domestic Use.](#)"

#### **United States Northern Command/North American Aerospace Defense Command**

Mr. Bob Sommers from the United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD/NORTHCOM) provided an update on Department of Defense (DoD) COVID-19 activities. According to Mr. Sommers, NORAD/NORTHCOM is working to synchronize military activity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic across the United States. So far, all 50 states have activated their National Guard components and military personnel are working alongside civilian healthcare providers, and in some cases augmenting civilian hospital staff.

#### **Supply Chain Analysis Network**

Gene Shearer, FEMA's Supply Chain Analysis Network (SCAN) Program Manager, provided an update on SCAN. SCAN is currently working to analyze and evaluate grocery supply chains, which are stressed due to hoarding behavior and excess demand. Many producers are manufacturing a smaller number of stock-keeping units and focusing on producing one or two products within a

brand. Mr. Shearer assured attendees that while some stores may not carry the same broad range of products consumers are used to, the grocery supply chain is facing only minimal shortages of products.

### **Community-Based Testing Task Force Update**

FEMA and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) have supported the development of testing sites. Shawn Cropper from the Community-Based Testing Task Force stated that the task force screened 84,000 individuals and tested 77,000 individuals, 20 percent of which were COVID-19 positive. The task force is currently working to create testing models which use low levels of personal protective equipment (PPE), promote the use of self-swabbing, and reduce biomedical waste.

### **Supply Chain Task Force Update**

The Supply Chain Task Force is focused on acceleration, expansion, preservation, and allocation of the supply chain. Mr. Abe Gunn from Supply Chain Task Force provided an update. According to Mr. Gunn, FEMA is working to accelerate the supply of PPE to priority areas. As part of the agency's "air-bridge" initiative, commercial flights are being booked to bring critical medical equipment back into the United States and FEMA is entering into voluntary agreements with medical equipment distributors to ensure that PPE is sent to COVID-19 hotspots. The task force is also working to return used ventilators to HHS to be disinfected and reallocated, in addition to acquiring decontamination units for N95 respirators. FEMA is also working with private sector stakeholders to increase production capabilities and forge partnerships through the Defense Production Act.

Mr. Gunn stated that high unemployment rates have created operational concerns for food banks, and the agency is working with the Food and Drug Administration to ensure they can continue to operate during the pandemic. To address supply concerns, FEMA is providing limited amounts of shelf-stable meals to foodbanks.

Mr. Gunn concluded his remarks by stating that Carbon Dioxide production is down by 25 to 30 percent and will decrease to 50 percent. Carbon Dioxide is used by a number of food processing facilities and public water supplies.

### **National Joint Information Center**

A representative from the National Joint Information Center drew attention to their rumor control page. FEMA clarified that the agency has not seized PPE.

### **FEMA Regional Update**

A representative from FEMA Region Three provided an update. The region includes the District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. FEMA Region Three recently launched an online platform for companies to submit information about their abilities to provide bedding and bath materials, personal hygiene products, office supplies, custodial equipment, and durable medical equipment. The State of Maryland's Business Operations Center

is working to obtain N95 respirators, surgical masks and gowns, face shields, full-body protective equipment, disinfectant wipes, and hand sanitizer.

A representative from FEMA Region Ten provided an update on COVID-19 activity in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. FEMA Region Ten faces a high level on unemployment and agency officials are working to address food scarcity, increased reliance on nutrition programs such as SNAP and WIC, and demands for PPE. The State of Alaska faces special concerns, as 75 percent of their communities are isolated and only accessible via boat or plane. Additionally, Alaska has limited healthcare capabilities, seasonal industries where workers cannot practice social distancing, and food supply chain concerns due to short growing seasons. Alaska's government is working to move agricultural products through Canada or via water to address supply chain shortages.

### **Questions & Answers**

Can affected industries reach out to FEMA for PPE if vendors cannot fulfil orders?

- No. FEMA works with the private sector to facilitate the delivery of PPE to states.

Is FEMA compelling distilleries to manufacture hand sanitizer?

- No. FEMA has not compelled distilleries to manufacture hand sanitizer.