



## Media Release

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### **FEMA Review Council Recommendations Reinforce Need for National Emergency Management Standards - A Gap Already Addressed by EMAP**

**FALLS CHURCH, VA** - The Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) recognizes the significant work of the FEMA Review Council in developing its final report and recommendations to strengthen the nation's disaster preparedness, response, and recovery framework.

Among the Council's key recommendations is the **adoption of national capability standards** to support a system where disaster response is locally executed, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments are responsible for management, with federal support. The Council's findings regarding fragmentation, inefficiency, and inconsistent capabilities across jurisdictions directly reinforce the need for a unified, standards-based approach to emergency management.

For more than two decades, EMAP has addressed this need through its **ANSI-accredited Emergency Management Standard and its Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Standard, each providing a comprehensive, measurable framework defining programmatic and operational capabilities required for effective emergency management.**

Through a rigorous accreditation process, including self-assessment, documentation review, and peer evaluation, EMAP ensures that Programs and US&R Resources demonstrate verified compliance with nationally recognized standards of excellence. By requiring demonstrated proof of compliance, EMAP ensures accountability by validating that both emergency management Programs and operational response teams are not only structured effectively, but capable of delivering measurable outcomes in real-world incidents.

As the Council identifies the need to reduce fragmentation, eliminate duplication, and improve consistency across state, local, tribal, and territorial systems, EMAP accreditation offers an established and proven pathway to achieve these outcomes. EMAP's framework supports state, local, tribal, and territorial leadership by establishing clear, measurable expectations for capability while enabling flexibility in how those capabilities are achieved. This approach ensures that Tribal Nations, states, local jurisdictions, and territorial governments are empowered with measurable capability expectations while maintaining flexibility to address unique governance structures, authorities, and risks.

"The FEMA Review Council's recommendation affirms what the emergency management community has long recognized, the need for a consistent, capability-based national framework," said EMAP Commission Chair Ms. Jody Ferguson, "EMAP currently provides this critical framework. The Standards established by EMAP allow emergency management Programs and US&R Teams to demonstrate measurable capabilities, align their operations with national expectations, and maintain sustained readiness. All of this is ensured through a validated and proven accreditation process, supporting the ongoing efforts to enhance emergency preparedness across the nation."

EMAP's Emergency Management Standard evaluates Programs across 17 core areas, including planning, resource management, communications, training, and administration. The US&R Standard establishes minimum performance criteria for the administration, operations, and logistical readiness of US&R Resources, serving as a comprehensive framework for continuous improvement and accreditation of operational response capabilities. Together, these Standards support integration, interoperability, and coordinated response across jurisdictions.

Designed to support integration and interoperability across jurisdictions, EMAP's Standards are applicable to local, tribal, territorial, regional, state, federal, and private sector entities. The US&R Standard aligns with national and international systems, including the FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Response System, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), the State Urban Search and Rescue (SUSAR) Alliance, and the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG),

reinforcing a consistent, capability-based approach to operational readiness and interstate mutual aid coordination.

EMAP's Emergency Management Standard is implemented nationwide and applied internationally across multiple jurisdictions, including Canada; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Dubai, United Arab Emirates; Kuwait; and the British Virgin Islands, a British Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom.

The Standards have been successfully adopted across a diverse range of sectors, including institutions of higher education, international governments, and critical infrastructure and private sector organizations. Accredited Programs include leading universities such as Florida International University, University of Alabama, and Tufts University; international jurisdictions such as the Government of the British Virgin Islands and the City of Ottawa, Ontario; and major U.S. organizations including Amtrak, DC Water, and the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority.

EMAP also accredits US&R Resources across multiple states and capability levels, including Type 1, Type 2, and Type 4 teams such as Alabama Task Force 1, Texas Task Force 2, New Jersey Task Force 1, Illinois Task Force 1, Florida Task Forces 3 and 5, and South Carolina Task Force 4. This breadth of accreditation demonstrates EMAP's ability to validate operational readiness across varying mission requirements and response environments.

Across the United States, EMAP-accredited Programs and US&R Resources are actively implemented at the state, local, tribal, and territorial levels, demonstrating established, sustained participation in a national, capability-based framework.

This level of adoption demonstrates that EMAP's Standards are already scalable, adaptable, and already functioning as a model for consistent, capability-based emergency management across diverse systems.

In addition to accredited Programs, EMAP's Standards are actively being implemented by a broad and growing group of emergency management organizations across the United States and internationally, including state agencies, Tribal Nations, major metropolitan jurisdictions, counties, critical infrastructure entities, and private sector partners. This level of engagement reflects growing national demand for a consistent, capability-based framework and further demonstrates EMAP's role in shaping the future of emergency management practice.

EMAP's framework directly addresses the Council's call for national capability standards by providing an established, validated system already in use across jurisdictions and sectors. Without a consistent, standards-based framework, fragmentation and variability in capability will continue to challenge coordinated national response efforts.

Together, EMAP's Standards, accreditation framework, and expanding implementation demonstrate that a national, capability-based approach to emergency management is not only achievable, it is already in practice.

With the FEMA Review Council's final report approved and advancing to the President and federal leadership, EMAP encourages FEMA, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and federal policymakers to **leverage and build upon ANSI-accredited EMAP Standards** as the foundation for national capability development, supporting the Council's broader objective of creating a more efficient, accountable, and capability-driven system.

EMAP remains committed to supporting emergency management Programs nationwide and stands ready to assist in advancing a consistent, capability-driven approach to national preparedness.