




# Homeland Security

August 30, 2005

## MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

FROM: Michael Chertoff 

SUBJECT: Designation of Principal Federal Official for Hurricane Katrina

As you know, the President has established the "White House Task Force on Hurricane Katrina Response." He will meet with us tomorrow to launch this effort. The Department of Homeland Security, along with other Departments, will be part of the task force and will assist the Administration with its response to Hurricane Katrina.

In accordance with the guidance provided in the National Response Plan (NRP), I hereby declare Hurricane Katrina an Incident of National Significance and designate Michael Brown, Under Secretary for Emergency Preparedness and Response (EP&R), as the Principal Federal Official (PFO) for incident management purposes during the response and recovery operations for Hurricane Katrina.

As stated in the NRP, the PFO serves as my representative locally and coordinates Federal activities relevant to the response and recovery efforts. The specific roles and responsibilities of the PFO include:

- Ensuring overall coordination of Federal domestic incident management activities and resource allocation on scene;
- Ensuring seamless integration of Federal incident management activities in support of State, local, and tribal requirements;
- Providing strategic guidance to Federal entities and facilitating interagency conflict resolution, as necessary, to enable timely Federal assistance to State, local, and tribal authorities;
- Serving as a primary, although not exclusive, point of contact for Federal interface with State, local, and tribal government officials, the media, and the private sector for incident management;
- Providing real-time incident information, through the support of the on-scene Federal incident management structure, to the Secretary of Homeland Security through the Homeland Security Operations Center and the Interagency Incident Management Group, as required; and
- Coordinating the overall Federal public communications strategy at the State, local, and tribal levels.

The PFO does not impede nor impact the authorities of other Federal officials to coordinate directly with their department or agency chain of command or to execute their duties and responsibilities under law.

I am confident that Under Secretary Brown will provide the leadership necessary to ensure an effective and efficient incident response. I request that you provide him your fullest measure of support in the execution of these important responsibilities.

Please contact Bob Shea, Operations and Response Division Director, Operational Integration Staff, at 202-254-5278 or [Robert.shea@dhs.gov](mailto:Robert.shea@dhs.gov) with any questions.

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