

**MEMAC Videoconference
Remarks for Colonel Sturdivant**

The presentation you will hear today from the Michigan State Police Emergency Management Division will explain the concept of the MEMAC in detail. It is our goal that this compact reflects your needs and issues at the local level, and that it is practical, legal, and “user-friendly.”

By virtue of my appointment as Director of the Michigan Department of State Police, I also serve as State Fire Marshal and State Director of Emergency Management. Under Executive Order 2003-6, Governor Granholm also designated me as State Director of Homeland Security. It is in this role that I strongly support the concept of a statewide assistance compact for local political subdivisions.

As you know, all emergencies and disasters begin and have the greatest impact at the local level. Local first responders and government officials will be on the scene dealing with the crisis long before any state or federal assistance arrives. No jurisdiction can afford to maintain all the staffing, equipment, and other resources that would be necessary to respond to every possible hazard—especially catastrophic disasters such as the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

When an incident overwhelms local capabilities, state resources can be mobilized to assist local jurisdictions. Under our existing system, the Michigan State Police Emergency Management Division coordinates the state’s response and serves as the point of contact for local communities during emergencies and disasters. The MSP Emergency Management Division also has a well-established system for requesting federal assistance when the combined resources of state and local governments prove inadequate.

While this system works, it does take precious time to institute and may not address all the immediate needs that local officials face during a major incident. In some instances, emergencies may not qualify for state or federal assistance and local jurisdictions will need an efficient system with a preplanned process for helping each other.

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Proposed under the authority of the Michigan Emergency Management Act and modeled after similar compacts in other states, the Michigan Emergency Management Assistance Compact underwent extensive reviews and revisions by statewide associations representing public safety, as well as county and local governments. The final draft has been reviewed and approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency Region five, the State Attorney General's Office, and the Governor's Office.

This compact applies not only to terrorist attacks, but also to the full-range of both man-made and natural hazards. It does not replace or supersede existing state and federal disaster assistance programs, nor the local fire service or law enforcement mutual aid agreements that many of you have already established.

Most of all, it does not affect local control of personnel and other resources during an emergency. Its intent is to cover those events, jurisdictions, and essential services not otherwise covered by written mutual aid agreements, regardless of whether state or federal disaster assistance is available.

This compact is a highly effective tool for sheriffs, police chiefs, fire chiefs, and other local government officials responsible for public health and safety. Having this compact in place is also an essential element of our overall State Homeland Security Strategy.

One lesson we learned from September 11th is that an effective response to an act of terrorism or any large-scale emergency requires teamwork between local, county, state, and federal agencies. The more communities that agree to participate, the more prepared we will be to respond to the challenges that await us.

Thank you for giving this proposal serious consideration, and I welcome any feedback you may have after hearing this presentation today.