



NJ Office of Emergency Management

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CODEY SENDS 173 ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL TO NEW ORLEANS

Deployment Will Allow Previously Deployed New Jersey Officers to Return Home; Will Continue New Jersey's Unprecedented Effort for New Orleans

(TRENTON) Directed by Acting Governor Richard J. Codey, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management sent 148 additional police officers and 25 additional hazmat personnel to New Orleans during several deployments on Saturday and Sunday.

Today and Tuesday, the total of 173 officers and hazmat technicians will settle into the self-contained base camp for New Jersey's "Operation LEAD" – the name given to New Jersey's unprecedented effort to handle police and other emergency services for New Orleans' Second Police District and other areas.

"The past weekend's deployments mean the brave first responders from New Jersey, those who set up this unprecedented base camp to serve New Orleans' Second Police District, can come back to the Garden State," Codey said. "Meanwhile, our long-term commitment to help the people affected by this disaster will continue. Our willingness to help each other is what makes America great. When New Jersey and New York were dealing with the devastation of 9-11, other states mobilized to help us. We are more than glad to return the favor."

The new deployment will allow most of the 189 police officers and hazmat technicians who left New Jersey on September 7, to return home. As currently planned, the State of New Jersey will make similar massive deployments about every two weeks, to relieve the New Jersey personnel who are helping with New Orleans' post-Katrina recovery efforts.

"Operation LEAD" stands for "Louisiana Emergency Assistance Detail." The officers who left this past weekend represent about 50 state, county and local departments from all across New Jersey.

"From all accounts, New Jersey's first responders have had a significant impact in New Orleans," said Attorney General Peter C. Harvey. "It's a testament to their training and character that they have been able to help the city and its citizens, and we are grateful for their courage, selflessness and dedication. We extend them our thanks as we do to our officers who are now heading into the disaster zone. We clearly have high expectations as well for their performance."

Colonel Rick Fuentes, Superintendent of New Jersey State Police and Director of the State Office of Emergency Management, said, "These brave men and women are helping secure an entire section of the City of New Orleans. I am extremely proud of the men and women we have sent down there, and I am proud of the many more from all across New Jersey who are waiting to be deployed as part of this long-term effort."

The past weekend's effort was the latest of several deployments by the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, to aid the states of Louisiana and Mississippi in their hurricane recovery efforts.

The previous deployments were as follows:

- On September 3, the State office of Emergency Management sent to Louisiana five water rescue teams comprised of 34 personnel from New Jersey Task Force One (the state's multi-purpose search and rescue team) the New Jersey State Police, the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office, and a mechanic from the State Department of Transportation. Those teams completed their mission September 14.
- On September 7, New Jersey sent a massive law enforcement task force to New Orleans, comprised of 153 police officers from across the Garden State. All but about 10 of those officers will begin returning to New Jersey today and tomorrow, as their replacements arrive from this weekend's deployment.
- Also on September 7, the State sent to New Orleans five decontamination units comprised of 36 hazmat personnel from Essex, Union and Morris counties. All but about five of those personnel will return to New Jersey as their replacements arrive from this weekend's deployment.
- On September 13, the State sent to Louisiana two hazmat teams comprised of 12 technicians from the Trenton and Cherry Hill fire departments. Those deployments are scheduled to last about 10 days.
- On September 8 and September 14, the State sent a total of three donations management specialists to the State of Mississippi, to help the state determine what resources will be needed as the recovery continues.

Directed by Codey, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management is standing by to provide additional fire, medical and other technical personnel and resources to the states affected by Hurricane Katrina, when those states request that help.

All such deployments are being made under the provisions of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) mutual aid agreement between the states.

To make these deployments possible the State Office of Emergency Management, led by Colonel Fuentes, Lieutenant Colonel William Malast, Major John Hunt, and Captain Jerome Hatfield, worked with groups representing the Department of Health and Senior Services, Department of Transportation, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, the State Fire Marshall, all 21 county offices of emergency management, all 21 county prosecutors and a host of other entities.

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