



FEMA

## PRACTICE NOTE

### Field Training: Federal Emergency Management Agency Region VII's Deployment of a Training Team after a Disaster

#### PRACTICE

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region VII deployed its Disaster Field Training Operation (DFTO) to the Area Field Office (AFO) immediately after a tornado struck Greensburg, Kansas, in May 2007. This enabled trainers to gain a greater awareness of the nature of the disaster response, to conduct a detailed assessment of training needs, and to plan field training accordingly.

#### DESCRIPTION

A series of tornadoes battered southwest Kansas in early May 2007. On the evening of Friday, May 4, 2007, a 1.7-mile wide F5 super cell tornado hit Greensburg, Kansas, with winds in excess of 200 miles per hour. The tornado devastated 95% of Greensburg, causing 10 fatalities and massive destruction to public and private property. Federal, state, and local government and non-governmental entities worked together to coordinate response and recovery efforts.

Greensburg is located in Kiowa County in south-central Kansas. It has a population of approximately 1,500. FEMA Region VII is headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, and is responsible for Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.

FEMA Region VII immediately established an AFO in Greensburg to coordinate response operations and deployed a DFTO training unit lead to conduct onsite training at the AFO. Two weeks later, FEMA Region VII established a JFO in Wichita to supplement the AFO. Disaster assistance employees (DAE) from Region VII and other regions deployed to the AFO and JFO to assist in the response effort. DAEs filled various response roles, including management.

The DFTO provides onsite training opportunities to assist field staff members in performing their job functions.

DFTO trainers conducted an in-depth assessment of the training needs of the DAEs and other responders from state and local governments before the JFO became operational. Trainers made contact with local responders and learned more about the disaster zone and the nature of the incident response. The DFTO trainers believed that their prompt deployment after response operations began allowed them to create effective, incident-specific training courses for the DAEs. They successfully assembled a well-rounded team that could address the complicated technological and management issues that the DAEs and other responders faced.

DAEs are temporary federal employees authorized to assist FEMA in disaster response and recovery operations.

**CITATION**

Lessons Learned Information Sharing. *The Federal Emergency Management Agency Response to the Greensburg, Kansas, May 4, 2007, Tornado After-Action Report*. 12 Dec 2008.

<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=39054>

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