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## **REGION 10 BULLETIN NO: 08-44**

Subject: Resources for Emergency Evacuation of Transportation Disadvantaged Populations

Program Area: United We Ride

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Several recent disasters, including the Atlantic and Gulf Coast hurricanes as well as floods in the Midwest and wildfires in California, have reminded us of the prevalence of natural and man-made hazards across the United States. Public and human service transportation providers, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and State Departments of Transportation (State DOTs) played important roles in these recent incidents. At the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), we believe these organizations can help build disaster-resilient communities and may be able to provide valuable services in future emergencies that require the evacuation of transit-dependent populations.

The FTA and the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (United We Ride) has been promoting collaboration so that transit providers, emergency managers, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders can work together effectively during emergencies. We are writing to inform you of products that provide guidance and technical assistance concerning the role of public transportation in emergencies. These links contain a list of research reports, Federal government guidance documents, training opportunities, and mutual aid programs that may be of interest.

- The Transportation Research Board (TRB) Special Report #294, "***The Role of Public Transportation in Emergency Evacuation,***" published July 2008. This report discusses the roles that transit systems can play in accommodating the evacuation, egress, and ingress of people from and to critical locations in times of emergency. The report focuses on major incidents that could necessitate a partial to full evacuation of the central business district or other large portion of an urban area. This report can be found at [http://trb.org/news/blurbs\\_detail.asp?id=9264](http://trb.org/news/blurbs_detail.asp?id=9264).
- The National Cooperative Highway Research Program Research Results Digest #326, "***State Public Transportation Division Involvement in State Emergency Planning, Response, and Recovery,***" published May 2008. This research documents existing and best policies and practices of state transit divisions pertaining to whether related emergencies. It identifies lessons learned from recent emergencies, and key issues

associated with the involvement of state public transit divisions. This report can be found at [http://www.trb.org/news/blurbs\\_detail.asp?ID=9047](http://www.trb.org/news/blurbs_detail.asp?ID=9047).

- Peer exchange series on state and metropolitan transportation planning issues, Meeting 3, ***“Disaster Response and Transportation Planning,”*** published September 2007. This peer exchange sought to identify ways in which disaster response could be more effectively integrated into State Department of Transportation (DOT) and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) transportation planning. Proceedings of this peer exchange can be found at [http://www.trb.org/news/blurbs\\_detail.asp?id=8295](http://www.trb.org/news/blurbs_detail.asp?id=8295).
- Milligan & Company, ***“Transportation Equity in Emergencies: A Review of the Practices of State Departments of Transportation, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and Transit Agencies in 20 Metropolitan Areas,”*** published May 2007. This report was commissioned on behalf of FTA to review the extent to which transit providers, MPOs, and state DOTs in selected metropolitan areas in the United States and Puerto Rico are identifying and addressing the needs of populations that may be especially vulnerable in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. The report includes Geographic Information System (GIS) maps of twenty metropolitan regions that highlight concentrations of populations that may need evacuation assistance in an emergency, with overlays of the transit service area in these regions. See [http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/civil\\_rights\\_6343.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/civil_rights_6343.html).

### Federal Guidance

- FTA ***Disaster Response and Recovery Manual for Transit Agencies***, published August 2006. This document provides best practices and links to specific resources for transit agencies concerning emergency preparedness, disaster response and disaster recovery. It can be found at <http://transit-safety.volpe.dot.gov/Publications>.
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) ***Routes to Effective Evacuation Planning Primer Series*** (publication ongoing). The primers in this series provide guidance on technical assistance on specific aspects of evacuation planning, including communicating with the public using traveler information systems, managing pedestrian evacuations, and using highways during evacuation operations for events with no-notice and with advance notice. The primer series can be found at <http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/opssecurity/>.
- FHWA ***Primer on Evacuation of Populations with Special Mobility Needs*** (anticipated publication in the fall of 2008). This publication will focus on those who need additional assistance in evacuating an area, particularly people with disabilities, the aging, those living in congregate or residential care facilities, and companion animals. The primer will be published at <http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/opssecurity/>.
- FHWA reports: ***“Common Issues and Best Practices in Emergency Transportation Operations Preparedness and Response,”*** (published 2005). These reports consolidate common issues and identify best practices that were derived from workshops organized by FHWA on Transportation Operations Preparedness and Response in 30 regions across the United States. The reports can be found at <http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/opssecurity/>.

- DOT ***Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities Website*** (publication ongoing). This website contains useful emergency transportation information and resources for individuals with disabilities, their families, caregivers, and transportation and service providers. Resources cover a range of topics including providing accessible transportation services during and after a disaster or an emergency, safe and accessible evacuation from transit systems, and community transportation assistance programs. See <http://www.emergencyprep.dot.gov>.

### Training Opportunities

- FTA/National Transit Institute ***Connecting Communities Public Transportation Emergency Preparedness Workshops*** (courses are ongoing). These workshops are designed to coordinate the assets and specialized resources of transit and transportation systems with their local, county, and state response and emergency management agencies. Interoperability and maximum resource utilization in the event of a natural disaster, terrorist incident, or other emergency is of the utmost importance for a community or region's effective response. See URL: <http://www.connectingcommunities.net>.

### Mutual Aid Programs

- American Public Transportation Association (APTA) ***Emergency Response Preparedness Program***. This program is designed to assist transit systems, their cities, regions, and states with emergency evacuation and temporary transit needs that may arise from hurricanes or other emergencies. See <http://www.apta.com/services/emergency/>.

### Additional Guidance

- The National Consortium on Human Services Transportation, ***“Strategies in Emergency Preparedness for Transportation-Dependent Populations,”*** and ***“Transportation and Emergency Preparedness Checklist,”*** (published December 2006). These papers highlight essential strategies for providing safe and efficient transportation for persons requiring mobility assistance in the event of an emergency. See <http://www.emergencyprep.dot.gov>.

We appreciate your efforts to facilitate the safe and efficient transportation of people, particularly those for whom community and public transportation is their primary means of mobility, during emergencies and we encourage you to contact FTA if you are seeking guidance or technical assistance in this area. For more information, please feel free to contact Region 10's John Witmer at 206-220-7964, email [john.witmer@dot.gov](mailto:john.witmer@dot.gov) or FTA's United We Ride team at (202) 366-4040, email [FTA.UWR@dot.gov](mailto:FTA.UWR@dot.gov).

Sincerely,



R.F. Krochalis  
Regional Administrator

