

*Press Office*

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**  
500 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20472



**FEMA**

## **Fiscal Year 2008 Citizen Corps National Emergency Technology Guard Pilot Program (NET Guard) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### **What is the purpose of the FY 2008 Citizen Corps NET Guard Pilot Program?**

Following authorization in the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the NET Guard program concept was developed through a DHS scoping initiative and work group involving stakeholders and potential partners including state and local government representatives, emergency managers, potential private sector partners and DHS divisions. DHS/FEMA will use the NET Guard Pilot Program to test and further evaluate and develop the NET Guard program concept as a potential Citizen Corps Program.

Through the NET Guard Pilot Program, FEMA will further develop the program concept and tools for local communities and private sector entities to build NET Guard teams of volunteers with information technology (IT) and communications expertise to assist states and localities in responding to and recovering from incidents that cause significant damage or destruction to IT and communications infrastructure. The teams will be local assets, managed at the local level, and deployed in response to a request from local or state authorities. As envisioned, NET Guard teams will be established and maintained by governmental or private sector sponsors, or both, under the overall umbrella of the local FEMA-registered Citizen Corps program.

Developing and documenting the partnerships and models to implement NET Guard are key aspects of the Pilot Program. Pilots will be expected to identify and recruit partners in the community to participate in NET Guard team development, to document successful outreach and partnership agreements and to recommend national NET Guard program governance and partnership models. Pilots will recruit partners including public sector, private sector, higher educational and other non-governmental organizations that will contribute IT and communications expertise, volunteer personnel, donated equipment, or other goods and services.

### **What is the concept of the NET GUARD program?**

The NET Guard Program concept is to assist local communities in preparing for, responding to and recovering from incidents that cause damage or destruction to information systems and communications infrastructure through the use of local teams of volunteers with relevant

expertise. The NET Guard Program is envisioned as a means to provide emergency, temporary reconstitution of IT and communications systems, or installation of emergency, temporary IT and communications systems, primarily for governmental entities and private non-profit entities performing essential services. NET Guard is envisioned as part of the Citizen Corps grassroots network of local volunteer teams, organized in partnership among local emergency management and government responders, non-profit, for profit, and other non-governmental entities, and affiliated with local Citizen Corps Councils. The teams will be local assets, managed at the local level, and deployed in response to a request from local or state authorities. Since the program concept also views the NET Guard Program as a means to surge additional IT and communications resources into impacted areas, teams could be incorporated into regional mutual aid and assistance agreements.

### **What are some examples of what NET Guard Volunteer Teams would do?**

Examples of the functions that would be performed by NET Guard Teams are included in the solicitation Program Description. The solicitation can be found at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov). Identification of functions and capabilities for the Pilot Teams is one of the key program requirements for the Pilots.

NET Guard teams may assist local communities in temporarily reconstituting voice, data, and other IT and communications systems for governmental entities, private non-profit entities performing governmental functions, and private sector entities providing essential services. NET Guard teams may also assist local communities in establishing basic voice, data, and other IT and communications systems for use by individuals affected by significant incidents who temporarily come under the care of government.

NET Guard teams **will not** respond to cyber incidents that require real-time network response, nor engage in full repair or reconstruction of public and private sector proprietary information management systems or other IT and communications systems. NET Guard team activities also **will not** substitute for advance planning for contingencies, risk management and disaster recovery activities by local governments or non-governmental entities.

### **Who was eligible to apply for and receive funds from the FY 2008 Citizen Corps NET Guard Pilot Program?**

As the basis for determining that applicants demonstrated the knowledge, skills and abilities required to conduct this pilot testing, to be eligible to apply under this solicitation, applicants were required to meet the following criteria:

- Applicants must be the local government entity responsible for emergency management including development of the Emergency Operations Plan, e.g., the Office of Emergency Management and/or Emergency Management and Homeland Security.
- Applicants must be a jurisdiction located in one of the urban areas designated by the 2008 DHS Urban Area Security Initiatives (UASI).
- Applicants must have a Citizen Corps Council and program activity managed through the jurisdiction's Office of Emergency Management or local elected leadership.

- Applicants must have three or more Citizen Corps Partner Programs sponsored by their government jurisdiction (e.g., Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Fire Corps, Neighborhood Watch/USAonWatch, and Volunteers in Police Service).
- Applicants must have deployed jurisdiction resources through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).
- Applicants must have used private, for profit entity resources provided on a voluntary basis in a disaster response or recovery activity.
- Applicants must have the signed agreement of participation by the jurisdiction's office responsible for disaster-related communications and IT functions (i.e., the lead office for Emergency Support Function #2-Communications).

**How much funding will pilots receive?**

Each of the four pilots will be awarded \$80,000 for a total of \$320,000.

**What is the FY 2008 Citizen Corps NET Guard Pilot Program period of performance?**

The period of performance will be for twelve (12) months from Oct. 1, 2008 to Sept. 30, 2009.

**How were applications evaluated?**

FEMA verified compliance with eligibility criteria identified in the application kit. As described in the solicitation, a review panel of FEMA and DHS subject matter experts evaluated eligible applications and made selections based on 1) the quality of the program narrative and budget proposals; 2) the anticipated quality of the pilot program as a basis for national promulgation; and 3) geographic distribution to include highly qualified applicants from the Western, Central, and Eastern regions of the United States.

**When were the awards announced?**

Awards were announced on Sept. 16, 2008.

**How will the results of the 12 month pilots be used?**

DHS/FEMA will use the NET Guard pilot program to test, further evaluate and develop the NET Guard program concept as a potential Citizen Corps Program. Following this pilot phase, FEMA intends to utilize funds in FY 2009 for further program development and administration, incorporating lessons learned.