

Press Release



PLAQUEMINES SHERIFF'S DETENTION CENTER RECEIVES \$56.6 MILLION

For Immediate Release – October 27, 2009

Earlier today, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) met with officials from the Plaquemines Parish Sheriff's Office and announced nearly **\$56.6 million** in additional public assistance support for the construction of the community's new detention center.

"Hurricane Katrina completely devastated the Plaquemines Parish community, including destroying the Plaquemines Sheriff's Detention Center," said FEMA's Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office Acting Director Tony Russell. "Currently, only land remains at the former site of the facility, and the additional funding that we have provided supports the Sheriff's goal to rebuild a brand new facility that will better withstand potential future storms."

During Katrina, a storm surge of approximately 25 feet struck the single-story, 800-bed detention center and caused severe destruction to the facility's primarily steel structure, masonry enclosure walls, interior finish and mechanical and electrical systems. These damages rendered the building 98 percent destroyed, making it eligible for replacement funding under FEMA's Public Assistance Program.

"The rebuilding of our Detention Center, which was completely destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, is the result of excellent cooperation through FEMA, the state and the Sheriff's Office," said Plaquemines Parish Sheriff Jiff Hingle. "This facility will not only provide an economic stimulus for our Parish, along with additional job opportunities for our citizens, but allow us to provide education and rehabilitation services for those incarcerated."

Based on the Sheriff Office's proposed design, the new detention center will be built back on the same 70-acre lot as before the storm and with the same inmate holding capacity, but it will be constructed at an elevation of 18-feet above the ground. Functional spaces at the new detention center will include a public lobby for visitors; administration and intake offices; medical, inmate and facility service areas; and an exercise area for inmates.

"Restoring basic infrastructure at an elevated level shows that Plaquemines Parish officials are building back their communities safer, smarter and stronger," said Paul Rainwater, executive director of the Louisiana Recovery Authority.

To date, including the recent \$56.6 million check, FEMA has provided a total of **\$74.9 million** for the demolition and removal of the pre-Katrina Plaquemines Sheriff's Detention Center and its reconstruction.

When FEMA approves projects through its supplemental Public Assistance grant, the funds are transferred to a federal Smartlink account. Once the funds have reached this account, the applicant can request reimbursement from the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) for eligible work completed. Obligated funds may change over time as the project worksheet is a living grant that is often adjusted as bids come in and scope of work is aligned.



Plaquemines Parish Sheriff "Jiff" Hingle accepts a symbolic check for more than \$56 million from Louisiana Recovery Authority's Executive Director Paul Rainwater, Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness's Deputy Director for Disaster Recovery Mark DeBosier and Federal Emergency Management Agency's Acting Director Tony Russell. The money will fund the construction of a new detention center to replace one destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.