

Press Release



Leaders Share Disaster Response Experience

For Immediate Release – October 29, 2009

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security Leadership Fellows Program recently solicited Plaquemines Parish President Billy Nungesser to sit on a panel with other state and local leaders to discuss ways to serve communities more efficiently during disasters. Others on the panel include FEMA's Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office Director Tony Russell, Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff Marlin Gusman, Louisiana Recovery Authority Executive Director Paul Rainwater, and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness Deputy Director Mark Riley.

The panel discussion allowed dozens of DHS Fellows to speak and question top recovery partners in Louisiana about effective partnerships – what works, what doesn't work, and how to build strong relationships that help mission performance. Some of the objectives of the meeting included recognizing long-range outcomes versus short-term gains when negotiating.

"Parish President Nungesser was invited to discuss how the parish is able to partner effectively with colleagues in both state and federal agencies," said Diane Freeman, Associate Manager for Government Transformation at the Partnership for Public Service. "The DHS Fellows were studying how to develop partnerships and coalitions as leaders within their own agencies. This opportunity to hear from local leaders allowed the DHS Fellows to hear best practices and lessons learned in disaster response and recovery."

"Tony Russell's efforts in Plaquemines have been outstanding," said President Nungesser. "We have a great working relationship with the new staff on the ground for FEMA and with Paul Rainwater with the LRA, and were glad to contribute."



PHOTO (left to right): FEMA's Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office Acting Director Tony Russell, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness Deputy Director Mark Riley, Plaquemines Parish President Billy Nungesser, Louisiana Recovery Authority Executive Director Paul Rainwater, and Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff Marlin Gusman.