



# National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

COOPERATION | COMMUNICATION | COORDINATION | COLLABORATION

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## National VOAD and the National Donations Management Network (NDMN)

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) – August 27, 2010

The Board of Directors of National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster voted unanimously last week to seek out or create a new donations management toolset for the use of the disaster non-profit sector. The long and deliberate discussions leading up to the vote included full participation from the state liaisons to the Board: Steve Cain, INVOAD; Mike Manning, LAVOAD; and Jane Prinz, VAVOAD.

We know this decision is of particular interest to you, the chairs of the state and territory VOADs, and we hope the FAQs below answers some of the first questions we know you and your members have arising from this decision.

#### Background

1. Q: **Why did the Board of National VOAD take this step?**

A: The Board feels it is the responsibility of the non-profit sector agencies, and not governments or contractor representatives, to manage charitable contributions, including those that have been handled through the NDMN in recent years. The Board recognizes that the National VOAD community is now capable of handling this issue itself.

2. Q: **Why make this announcement now?**

A: The debate on whether the NDMN meets the needs of the non-profit and faith-based communities has been going on for several years without resolution; meanwhile, agencies are already exploring alternative systems and we find ourselves no nearer to a good solution that does not conflict with our agencies' own missions. The Board felt it was time to end the confusion and set a strategic direction for National VOAD and our sector.

## **Immediate Impact**

3. Q: **What does this mean for my State/Territory VOAD right now?**

A: No change is imminent. We are not asking or expecting the State/Territory VOADs or any agencies or affiliates of national organizations to change anything in terms of the way they are currently working with their State Donations Management Plan or the web-based NDMN tool.

4. Q: **Will this change how I work with my state's NDMN administrator?**

A: No, not at this time. If your state NDMN administrators have any questions or concerns beyond what is addressed in this FAQ, please invite them to call James McGowan at National VOAD at (703) 778-5088.

5. Q: **Will National VOAD continue to support the NDMN?**

A: National VOAD intends to continue to provide support for the NDMN until such time as we have a viable alternative available for our national and state/territory members.

6. Q: **Will FEMA and the Regional VALs still support the NDMN?**

A: We have been assured by FEMA that they will continue to support the states, state non-profits and the national non-profits with tools to manage unsolicited donated goods and unaffiliated volunteer services. The NDMN is the tool they are currently supporting and will continue doing so for the foreseeable future.

7. Q: **What if there is a large national disaster this year?**

A: Agencies and state VOADs should use whatever tools they feel are necessary to carry out their missions, including the NDMN.

## **Future State:**

8. Q: **What are the next steps National VOAD is planning?**

A: As we said in our letter of August 20, National VOAD will hold several meetings and calls in the coming months related to the process of finding a new means of handling inter-agency sharing of donations. The Board is forming a Task Force to lead this work, and it will include state VOAD representatives, as well as stakeholders from non-VOAD communities such as state emergency management officials, logistics experts, and donors. The Task Force will work closely with several existing National VOAD Committees, such as Donations Management, as well as our State Advisory Council.

9. Q: **Is there a new system already being created?**

A: Not at this time. The Task Force and any working groups it creates will look at all the options available to us – as long as they are responsive to the needs of the non-profit agencies and our donors first.

10. Q: **Will the State/Territory VOADs be involved in planning for a new system?**

A: The State/Territory VOADs will be asked to participate in the Board's Task Force as principle members to provide their input and needed expertise throughout the process.

11. Q: **Will any future National VOAD donations program interface with existing programs?**

A: Yes; the Board expects and intends that any future systems be capable of interfacing and sharing information with other donations systems used by our broader community.