

NEWS



CONTACT: AMY CARRUTH, PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR
MEMA Newsline

(601) 352-9100
1-800-441-6362

Date: September 17, 2002

SUBJECT: MEMA Receives Department of Justice Grants

(Jackson) – The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency received \$4.2 million from the Department of Justice for enhancement of the State’s Domestic Preparedness Strategic Plan, which outlines how MS will allocate Federal funding to address the needs identified through this process. This money is separate from the money that will be received for Homeland Security. This money is from Federal Fiscal Year 2002 and **was applied for prior to September 11, 2001**. In addition to FY02 money, MEMA has recently received \$1.7 million from the Department of Justice for Federal Fiscal Year 2000 and 2001.

All the money from the Department of Justice will be used for the purchase of first responder equipment for the ten Regional Response Teams that MEMA has been in the process of developing and equipping since 1999. The money will also be used in costs related to planning, conducting, and evaluating weapons of mass destruction (WMD) exercises, such as the Bioterrorism exercises MEMA is conducting throughout the State in 2002. The next Bioterrorism exercise will be on October 9th in Jackson.

Additional plans for the \$4.2 million include equipping a State HAZMAT Response Team to assist the Regional Response Teams if additional assistance is needed in an event; establish 24 hour warning points in every county to ensure operational information can be passed on to the counties as soon as it is received at the State level; and to purchase decontamination equipment for the State.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of the Federal money must be passed on directly to the local governments. Only twenty-five (25%) will remain at the State level for administrative costs associated with conducting the exercises and personnel.