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Major General Michael T. McGuire
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For Immediate Release
May 17, 2018

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Earthquake exercise tests emergency response capabilities
Families are reminded to prepare for all hazards

PHOENIX – More than 1,000 players from 75 federal, state, local and tribal government agencies, private sector and voluntary organizations, will participate in Arizona’s National Mass Care Exercise, May 21-24, 2018.

Arizona’s National Mass Care Exercise begins with a catastrophic earthquake in southern California that triggers a notional migration of 400,000 people to Arizona, straining mass care capabilities statewide. Exercise players will tackle a variety of issues including: mass shelter and feeding operations; medical surge; reunification procedures; resource requests and prioritization; information sharing; and notifications.

The Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) has been at the heart of the National Mass Care Exercise planning and coordination for nearly a year.

“Planning provides a valuable opportunity to understand agency-specific roles, responsibilities and capabilities,” said Wendy Smith-Reeve, DEMA’s Deputy Director. “Exercising together ensures the whole community is better prepared, regardless of the triggering event.”

The State Emergency Operations Center along with many county, tribal and municipal emergency operations centers will activate during the exercise to test activation procedures and trained staff.

Arizona is the fifth state to host the National Mass Care Exercise, which supports the National Mass Care Strategy to ensure agencies can work together to meet the needs of catastrophic incidents.

Exercises are a good reminder to the public to take steps to prepare for an emergency: create a family communication plan; build a 72-hour emergency supplies kit; and be informed of what hazards may occur in your community. The Arizona Emergency Information Network <https://ein.az.gov/> is a valuable resource for preparedness and hazard information.

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Media interested in covering the exercise are invited to Papago Park Military Reservation the morning of May 22. Visuals include American Red Cross and Arizona Humane Society temporary shelter operations established on the baseball field, animal intake and AHS’ 60-foot hospital on wheels, steps for personal preparedness and the Mass Care Task Force. Please RSVP to Judy Kioski, 602-509-5216, judy.kioski@azdema.gov by 5:00, May 21, 2018.