



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

## NEWS from Fire Fighters

1750 NEW YORK AVE NW WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006 • WWW.IAFF.ORG

For Immediate Release  
April 9, 2008

Contact: Bill Glanz  
202 824-1566  
202 329-5856 (cell)

# FEMA Finally Agrees to Pay Gulf Coast Communities for Hurricane-Related Overtime of Fire Fighters

## *Senator Landrieu's Efforts Loosen up Funding to Reimburse Communities*

Washington, D.C. – International Association of Fire Fighters General President Harold A. Schaitberger today issued this statement on the decision by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to reimburse hurricane-affected communities for the overtime that fire fighters worked in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005:

“First responders stepped up and worked tirelessly in adverse conditions to help victims of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita stranded by flood waters. Their communities did the right thing by paying fire fighters for every hour they worked.

“Unfortunately, FEMA’s arcane rules allowed the agency to reimburse communities for just eight hours of overtime a day for each fire fighter. But first responders worked around the clock in their flood-ravaged parishes, town and cities in the Gulf Coast to rescue those who were stranded and get them to safety.

“This agreement to reimburse communities is fair, even if it’s long overdue, and the IAFF was proud to work with Senator Mary Landrieu in this fight,” President Schaitberger said.

FEMA agreed on March 24 to repay Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, fire departments for about \$542,000 in overtime pay accumulated during the first 14 days after Hurricane Katrina. But there were no other agreements in place until now to reimburse other cities for overtime costs.

With the overtime issue resolved, more challenges remain.

“Finding funding to rebuild fire stations – especially in Saint Bernard Parish – destroyed by the August 2005 hurricane and ensuring that first responders who were exposed to toxic flood waters and other environmental hazards continue to receive medical monitoring and the necessary medical treatment are needs that must be met by the federal government,” President Schaitberger said.

*The International Association of Fire Fighters, headquartered in Washington, DC, represents more than 288,000 full-time professional fire fighters and paramedics who provide emergency medical response to 80 percent of the population in the United States and Canada. More information is available at [www.iaff.org](http://www.iaff.org)*

###