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Governor Branstad establishes task force to oversee recovery from this summer's disasters

Branstad seeks collaboration after requesting and receiving three Presidential Disaster Declarations in 2014

DES MOINES — Gov. Terry E. Branstad has established a task force to oversee the state's long-term recovery from damage caused by this summer's severe storms. The task force was established after a summer in which Iowa requested and received three Presidential Major Disaster Declarations from President Barack Obama. In total 57 counties were affected by hail, heavy rains, flooding, tornadoes and damaging winds.

"As we work with communities and citizens impacted by this summer's disasters it's important that we bring to bear all available resources," said Branstad. "In a summer in which Iowa requested and received three Presidential Disaster Declarations, I brought together this task force to ensure recovery work is carried out as quickly and efficiently as possible."

The 2014 Long-Term Disaster Recovery Task Force, comprised of representatives from state and federal governments and the private sector, had its first meeting today at the State Emergency Operations Center in Johnston. Mark Schouten, director of the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, is serving as the chair of the task force.

"Governor Branstad recognizes the need to coordinate and leverage the expertise and resources each member of this task force can bring to the table to aid in the state's long-term recovery from these three disasters," said Schouten. "Collaboration is key to ensuring citizens and communities affected by these disasters have the tools they need to recover."

The task force is charged with providing an overall network of assistance to support immediate and long-term recovery resources for communities and citizens affected by three separate disasters in June and July that included high winds, tornadoes, heavy rains, hail and flooding. The work of the task force will include identifying available

resources and ensuring that local officials and citizens have knowledge of and access to these resources.

Representatives from more than 25 organizations participated in the first task force meeting. The task force formed four working groups in order to make an in-depth examination of recovery issues and available resources in the areas of housing, transportation, utilities and flood risk management.

For information on the task force, including participating agencies and meeting schedule, please visit www.homelandsecurity.iowa.gov.

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