

## **Peter Gaynor**

### **Acting Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency**

#### **Speaker Bio:**

Peter Gaynor was confirmed by the Senate on October 11, 2018 as the Deputy Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Since March 8, 2019 he has been serving as the Acting Administrator.

Gaynor was appointed director of Rhode Island's Emergency Management Agency by Governor Gina Raimondo in January 2015 where he advised the governor on emergency management policy and served as the principal liaison between FEMA and local emergency management offices throughout Rhode Island. With extensive experience in coordinating response and recovery efforts for evacuations, he oversaw blizzards, floods, tropical storms, public health emergencies, mass care, special events and school safety. During his tenure, the agency responded to numerous small and large disasters, including one presidentially declared disaster and the management of at least seven pre-existing active federal disasters.

In addition, he served as the policy advisor to the Governor on emergency management matters and served as the liaison between FEMA and all local emergency management offices throughout the State. He was also the Chair of the State Interoperable Communications Committee, the State Emergency Response Commission, and was Vice Chair of the State Emergency Management Advisory Committee. He served as a Commissioner and a member for the Program Review Committee for the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) which fosters excellence and accountability in emergency management and homeland security programs across the nation.

Deputy Administrator Gaynor has more than ten years of experience in emergency management. He previously served as the Director of the Providence Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) & Office of Homeland Security from March 2008 to December 2014, where he was the only Certified Emergency Manager assigned as

a municipal emergency manager within the State of Rhode Island. As Director of PEMA, he was responsible for ensuring the planning and operations of the agency, coordinating community exercise programs, managing the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and advising the Mayor of the City of Providence on local government emergency operations. During his tenure, at both the State of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency City of Providence, he oversaw the multiple response and recovery operations as well as managing numerous federally declared disasters.

Under Pete Gaynor's leadership, PEMA became the first municipality in the United States to receive accreditation from EMAP in 2010. During October 2017, the State of Rhode Island became the 36th state to be EMAP accredited, making him the first emergency management Director to be awarded EMAP accreditation at both the local and state levels. During January 2018, he led the effort to be the first state in the nation recognized as having every municipality in the State of Rhode Island designated as StormReady.

He was awarded the International Association of Emergency Managers USA & Global Partners in Preparedness Award for Operation SMART EXIT, a planned full-scale evacuation of several high-rise commercial buildings in Downtown Providence, RI.

Prior to his experience as an emergency manager, Director Gaynor served for 26 years as an enlisted Marine and Infantry Officer in the United States Marine Corps. During his tour in the Marines, he was assigned as the Executive Officer responsible for the security of Presidential Retreat, Camp David; was assigned as the Head of Plans, Policy, & Operations at the Headquarters Marine Corps during the September 11, 2001 attacks; and was deployed in support of Iraqi Freedom with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, where he coordinated combat operations in the Al-Anbar Province of Iraq for Multi-National and Marine forces.

Deputy Administrator Gaynor received a Bachelor's degree in History from Rhode Island College and a Master's degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from

the Naval War College in Newport, RI. He is also a recent graduate of the Center for Homeland Defense and Security's Executive Leaders Program.