

Press Office

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Press Release

September 12, 2005

STATEMENT BY HOMELAND SECURITY SECRETARY MICHAEL CHERTOFF

Today, Mike Brown submitted to the President his resignation as Under Secretary for Emergency Preparedness and Response and Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Mike managed over 160 disasters during his tenure at FEMA, and his service in those disasters has been commended by many. He has done everything he possibly could to coordinate the federal response to the unprecedented challenge posed by Hurricane Katrina and the New Orleans levee breach. He is a good man, and I personally appreciate his work and his commitment.

Even during this time of change, the important work of FEMA must continue. Today, the President announced his intention to designate Chief David Paulison, Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration within FEMA, to serve as Acting Under Secretary for Emergency Preparedness and Response. Chief Paulison will also serve as acting director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Chief Paulison has over 30 years of experience in emergency management, working his way up the ranks from firefighter to Chief of the Miami-Dade County fire and rescue department. He is a former president of the International Association of Fire Chiefs and also served on a Defense Sciences Board advisory group providing local emergency response expertise to the military. I appreciate his willingness to take on the vital task of leading FEMA during this challenging time.

In the days ahead, I expect to make additional appointments to the FEMA team, including a permanent deputy director to augment the resources available to assist with FEMA's vital mission.