



## James Waskom

Director of GOHSEP

James Waskom was appointed by Governor John Bel Edwards on January 11, 2016 as the **Director** of the **Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness** (GOHSEP). Through GOHSEP, Director Waskom is responsible for **homeland security** and **emergency** and **disaster preparedness** and **response** for the State of Louisiana. His office coordinates the State's activities to **prepare** for – **prevent** where possible – **respond** to, **recover** from and **mitigate** against emergencies or disaster events.

Director Waskom is a retired Colonel in the U.S. Army who served the United States for 33 years, including three combat tours during Operations Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom/New Dawn, totaling 30 months in a combat zone. During that time, he was the leader of two organizations directly responsible for the safety and welfare of more than 50,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, Department of Defense civilians and foreign national workers. He previously owned his own law firm and practiced in the Acadiana region. He worked as a contract attorney with 15th Judicial District Court's Indigent Defender's Office. He is a former prosecutor in the 19th Judicial District and Inspector General of the Louisiana National Guard. He has a Master of Strategic Studies, MSS from the United States Army War College, a Juris Doctor, Law from Louisiana State University and is a Licensed Attorney.

As Director of GOHSEP and in carrying out his responsibilities for homeland security and emergency and disaster response and recovery, Waskom **coordinates** the activities of *all* agencies and organizations within the State and maintains **liaison** and **cooperates** with agencies and organizations of **other States** and of the **Federal Government**.

He acts on behalf of the Governor in the event of an emergency or disaster as **Deputy Incident Commander** of the **Unified Command Group** (UCG). He is appointed by the Governor as the **Homeland Security Advisor** (HSA) for Louisiana and the **Governor's Authorized Representative** (GAR) with FEMA. He directs the activities of statewide interoperability

projects and serves on the **Regional Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness Directors Subcommittee**(Regional Directors Subcommittee).

Under his leadership, GOHSEP is managing approximately **\$18 billion** in Federal grants and more than 4,800 applicants involved in FEMA's grant programs for more than 35,000 separate projects