

Texas Baptist Men responsible for both disaster relief and recovery

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Texas Baptist Men, the missions organization that pioneered Baptist disaster relief ministries more than four decades ago, soon also will assume responsibility for long-term disaster recovery—a program handled in recent years by the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The executive committee of the TBM executive board unanimously approved a memorandum of understanding between TBM and the BGCT to accept all duties related to disaster recovery, effective Nov. 1.



Mickey Lenamon BGCT Executive Board administrative staff leaders approached TBM about placing disaster recovery under its disaster relief umbrella, TBM Executive Director Mickey Lenamon said.

“It’s a natural fit and a logical progression,” Lenamon said. “We are excited about the opportunities this presents.”

In addition to offering a coordinated response to individuals and communities affected by a disaster, the move also provides TBM expanded

opportunities to involve churches in hands-on ministry.

David Hardage, executive director of the BGCT Executive Board, likewise praised the decision.

“BGCT has long enjoyed a valuable relationship with TBM,” Hardage said. Bringing together disaster relief and recovery under TBM’s direction “only strengthens” that relationship, he added.

“It also eliminates confusion in our churches and streamlines assistance to those in need,” Hardage said.

Under the agreement, the BGCT will help TBM establish an annual disaster relief offering it will promote in Texas Baptist churches in the summer, starting in 2017. The BGCT will give its disaster recovery trailer and van to TBM, to add to its disaster relief fleet.

Two BGCT staff members who work as disaster recovery specialists—Marla Bearden and Gerald Davis—will be offered the opportunity to work for TBM, with the BGCT continuing to provide their salary and benefits for one year.

The BGCT will continue its Bounce program to involve students in disaster recovery, and TBM will provide shower units, food-service teams and other support for Bounce projects when possible.

The BGCT will give TBM all disaster relief funds it receives, and TBM will provide the BGCT up to \$10,000 per year for Bounce projects and up to \$10,000 per year for rapid-response disaster grants to churches and associations.

Unlike most states, where disaster relief and other men’s ministries operate as a department of the state Baptist convention, TBM is a separate self-governing nonprofit organization.

However, the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board relates to state conventions. So, the BGCT will request national disaster relief funds from the mission board on TBM's behalf.