



FEMA

FEMA National Advisory Council

March 4, 2015

Fleming Hall Building 1101, Jackson Barracks, New Orleans, Louisiana

MEETING NOTES

NAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE

| NAME | DISCIPLINE | PRESENT | ABSENT |
|--------------------------|---|---------|--------|
| Jim Featherstone, Chair | Emergency Management (Rep) | X | |
| Teresa Scott, Vice Chair | FEMA Administrator Selection (SGE) | X | |
| James Akerelrea | Elected Tribal Government Officials (Rep) | | X |
| Beth Armstrong | Standards Setting and Accrediting (Rep) | | X |
| Meloyde Batten-Mickens | FEMA Administrator Selection (SGE) | X | |
| Joseph Bolkcom | Elected State Government Officials (Rep) | | X |
| Sarita Chung | In-Patient Medical Providers (SGE) | X | |
| Mark Cooper | Emergency Management (Rep) | | X |
| Jeanne-Aimee De Marrais | FEMA Administrator Selection (SGE) | X | |
| Jerry Demings | Elected Local Government Officials (Rep) | X | |
| Gerard Dio | Emergency Response Providers (Rep) | X | |
| Nancy Dragani | Non-Elected State Government Officials (Rep) | X | |
| Scott Field | Non-Elected Local Government Officials (Rep) | X | |
| Lee Feldman | FEMA Administrator Selection (SGE) | X | |
| Jeffrey Hansen | Non-Elected Tribal Government Officials (Rep) | X | |
| Chris Howell | FEMA Administrator Selection (SGE) | X | |
| June Kailes | Access and Functional Needs (SGE) | X | |
| Emily Kidd | Emergency Medical Providers (SGE) | X | |
| Nim Kidd | FEMA Administrator Selection (SGE) | X | |
| Anne Kronenberg | Emergency Response Providers (SGE) | X | |
| Linda Langston | FEMA Administrator Selection (SGE) | X | |
| Christopher Littlewood | Disabilities (SGE) | X | |
| Suzet McKinney | Public Health (SGE) | X | |
| Gerald Parker | Health Scientists (SGE) | | X |
| Samantha Phillips | Emergency Management (Rep) | X | |
| Thomas Powers | Cyber Security (SGE) | | X |
| Richard Reed | FEMA Administrator Selection (SGE) | | X |
| Robert Salesses | U.S. Department of Defense—Ex Officio | | X |
| Pat Santos | Emergency Response Providers (Rep) | X | |
| Christopher Smith | Communications (SGE) | X | |
| Guy Swan | FEMA Administrator Selection (SGE) | X | |
| Fritz Wilson | Standards Setting and Accrediting (Rep) | X | |
| Phil Zarlengo | FEMA Administrator Selection (SGE) | X | |
| Daniel Zarrilli | Infrastructure Protection (SGE) | X | |

**Rep-Representative; SGE-Special Government Employee



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| NAME | TITLE |
|------------------------|---|
| Josh Batkin | Director, Office of External Affairs |
| Julie Bradford | Louisiana Recovery Office |
| Gwen Camp | Director, Individual and Community Preparedness Division |
| Jenny Campora | Louisiana Recovery Office |
| Michael Coen, Jr. | Chief of Staff |
| Amy Connolly | Louisiana Recovery Office |
| Michael Delman | Attorney Advisor, Office of Chief Counsel |
| Joshua Dozor | Director, Planning Division, Recovery Directorate |
| Lynette Fontenot | Louisiana Recovery Office |
| Craig Fugate | Administrator |
| Michael George | Advisor to the Administrator |
| Jonathan Hoyes | Director, National Disaster Recovery Planning Division |
| Keith LaFoucade | Security Specialist |
| Ryan Mast | Louisiana Recovery Office |
| Melanie Mitchel | Deputy Director, Louisiana Recovery Office |
| Joe Nimmich | Deputy Administrator |
| Charlotte Hyams Porter | Designated Federal Officer (DFO), National Advisory Council |
| Tony Robinson | Regional Administrator, Region VI |
| Stephen Stroud | Special Assistant to the Administrator |
| Rachael Weatherly | Assistant to the Chief of Staff |
| Avital Wenger | Senior Advisor, Office of the Administrator |
| Michael Womack | Director, Louisiana Recovery Office |
| Alexandra Woodruff | Alternate DFO, National Advisory Council |
| Elizabeth Zimmerman | Associate Administrator, Office of Response and Recovery |

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

| NAME | TITLE/ORGANIZATION |
|-------------------|--|
| Hilton Burns | None provided |
| Allison L. Davis | CSRS, Inc. |
| Jillian Firnhaber | LookFar Idea Acceleration |
| Michael Gordon | MGordon Excavating, Inc. |
| Marlin N. Gusman | New Orleans Parish Sheriff |
| Monique Harden | Advocates for Environmental Human Rights |
| Brad Howard | City of New Orleans |
| Alom Johnson | Black and Veatch |
| Pam Marphis | Office of Congressman Steve Scalise |
| Mike Means | CB&I Federal Services |
| Dawn Ostrom | Fox News |
| Jim Pennison | Fox News |





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| Kenneth Pickering | New Orleans Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness |
| James Raby | W.L. Cohen Alumni Association |
| C. Hayne Rainey | City of New Orleans |
| Jim Schleifstein | Times-Picayune |
| Enix Smith | Office of Congressman Cedric Richmond |

MEETING SUMMARY

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am CST by Charlotte Hyams Porter, NAC DFO.

Call to Order and Roll Call

Charlotte Hyams Porter—NAC DFO, FEMA

- The meeting was called to order, whereupon each member introduced herself/himself to group.
- A few housekeeping items were mentioned.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Jim Featherstone—NAC Chair

- Jim Featherstone welcomed the NAC members and expressed appreciation for their participation in this week’s session.

Brigadier General Barry Keeling—Director of the Joint Staff, Louisiana National Guard

- As the NAC was established in 2006 after Hurricane Katrina, it is fitting that the NAC is meeting in New Orleans in advance of the 10-year anniversary. He understands the NAC’s purpose and appreciates the time and effort that has gone into managing the NAC. Thanked the NAC for conducting their meeting at the Jackson Barracks.

Pat Santos—NAC Member

- Pat introduced Mayor Mitch Landrieu, relaying that the Mayor is a no-nonsense, boots on the ground, hardworking kind of person based on his personal experience working with the Mayor.

Welcoming Remarks from Mayor

Mitch Landrieu—Mayor of New Orleans

- The LA National Guard was among first groups on the ground after Hurricane Katrina, where Jackson Barracks was up to 17 feet under water. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 took a major toll on the oil and gas industries, and then Hurricane Katrina further affected the economics of the area, especially as a tourist economy. Hurricanes Rita, Gustav, Ike, the BP oil spill, and Hurricane Isaac soon followed, making the area one that has experienced more disasters than any other area in the country.
- One of the lessons learned is the way that New Orleans has been able to come back, which was a group effort where citizens and professionals came together to assist in the response and recovery efforts.
- As Lt. Governor in the aftermath of Katrina, the Mayor conversed with several people whose phones went dead mid conversation, including a friend who was in Superdome and relayed that the roof was pulling off, and Junior Rodriguez of St. Bernard Parish who relayed that the water was rising and was not sure how they were going to get everyone out.
- New Orleans was as close to a near death experience as any city could experience. There were some opinions that the city should not come back, but its citizens knew that this area is dealing with unique problems that others did not understand. What happened was that citizens did not slink away and decided that they were not going to blame Hurricanes Katrina/Rita for all their problems. Instead, they saw an opportunity to build the city back better than ever before and demanded that they could provide input on the rebuilding efforts. None of that would have been possible without the help of President Obama, Congress, and the FEMA Administrator.
- After time, FEMA went from being a bad four-letter word to a good four-letter word. The question now is how New Orleans can help partner with the other federal agencies to recreate a city and civilization that actually makes sense. It requires





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coordination and getting to yes. The more prepared people are, the more forward leaning people are, then the more able they will be to handle future events.

- Even though the Mayor was complimented for coming back and getting in a boat to help with the rescue effort, this was actually a failure on the government's part.
- The country is getting much better at responding to terrorist attacks. Lessons learned from 9/11 included no clear command of control and no interoperability. Individuals have become much better at planning and being prepared on the response side. They want to be better at knowing and predicting events.
- The Mayor encouraged the NAC members to visualize what New Orleans was before the storms and look at what it is now, as it provides a great example of how we can build back better.
- The education system and health care are two of the greatest stories of this disaster. The idea of lump sum funding came, providing flexibility and opportunity for certainty, clarity, and forward vision. The City of New Orleans took that opportunity to be innovative and create a health network with combined medical services. New Orleans now has two hospitals that will transform the state of healthcare in Louisiana. The education's charter network was redesigned, which closed the achievement gap between children of color and others.
- New Orleans is building a brand new airport, reworking infrastructure for the New Orleans Sewage & Water Board, and redesigning the public housing network to take care of low-income people in New Orleans.
- "We recognize we still have challenges but we have come together to focus on common ground and focus on partnership, collaboration, breaking down stove pipes, getting a way to yes, and getting everyone at the table. Resilience and connectivity between people and communities gives you strength to survive and build back in the face of disaster, and it is about social cohesion that brings people together. Communication, coordination, interoperability, command and control are the things that make things work and will make America great. If we do those things, we will be in much better position to fight back when unexpected things come our way."

Introduction and Welcome to FEMA Region VI

Tony Robinson—Regional Administrator, Region VI, FEMA

- Tony Robinson welcomed the NAC on behalf of FEMA Region VI staff whose main office is in Denton, TX with satellite recovery offices in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, LA. He thanked the General and his staff at the Jackson Barracks for hosting the March 2015 NAC meeting.
- Mr. Robinson is a career FEMA employee who started as an intern in 1987. Working with FEMA is the most rewarding thing he has done. Even though the time after Hurricane Katrina was difficult and FEMA was treated harshly, Administrator Fugate has helped to restore the Agency.
- He presented some demographics of Region VI. Region VI has over 500,000 square miles of land and 503 counties and parishes. Eighteen percent of the population is below the poverty level, and 14 percent of the population identified as non-institutionalized with disabilities. There are 29 border crossings, 26 of which are in Texas. This was significant last year with the unaccompanied minors issue, and Region VI is working with state and local partners on impact of the borders.
- Region VI has 68 federally recognized tribes, most residing in New Mexico and Oklahoma. Last year, three tribes submitted Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessments.
- Two of the nation's largest ports—number one port in South Louisiana and number two in Houston—are heavily involved in petro chemical and grain imports into the U.S., creating a significant economic impact along the Gulf Coast.
- The Region's top threats are severe storms, tornadoes, flooding, and hurricanes. From 2000 to 2014, a federal declaration was submitted on average every 85 days, but states and locals respond to much more. Texas has \$35 million in repetitive federal declarations, and Oklahoma and Arkansas have yearlong continuous threats. Disaster declarations are evenly distributed across the states, with New Mexico having the least. There are two significant upcoming anniversaries—the 20th Anniversary of Oklahoma City Bombing and the 10th Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina.
- The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 laid out requirements for the Administrator, resulting in many successes, such as the succession planning and lessons learned about evacuations and sheltering. The efforts continue today as Region VI works closely with state, federal, and local counterparts and private non-profits.
- Mr. Robinson emphasized that FEMA cannot do what they do alone and recognized the partnership with both the FEMA Regional Advisory Councils (RAC) and the NAC in the post-Katrina environment, as they provide feedback and input on the focus at the regional and national levels. The RAC was in New Orleans a couple of weeks ago, and one thing Region VI would like to see is information sharing between the two bodies to ensure they are complementing, not competing, with each other.



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- Additionally, Region VI has partnerships with the FBI, the states, locals, and private nonprofits. The FBI has an office within Region VI, and a Weapons of Mass Destruction Coordinator has a place to reside in the Region VI office to work on planning and exercise efforts. Region VI will be working with states to have them nominate local governments along with the tribes so FEMA can conduct terrorism training with the local community, particularly in Oklahoma where there is significant oil and gas exploration.

Discussion with FEMA Administrator

Craig Fugate—Administrator, FEMA

- Administrator Fugate discussed the staffing of FEMA's Regional Administrators in terms of finding the right balance between political and career senior executive service (SES) employees.
- Congress just passed full DHS funding. Overall, FEMA is pleased with budget; it was only the immigration riders that prevented the smooth passage of the budget. The only delayed item affecting regions was the grants; FEMA is only now starting to roll out grant guidance. Additionally, the delay in DHS funding almost affected training at EMI and a scheduled nuclear exercise.
- FEMA was vocal about the potential effects of a DHS shutdown and iterated that it would be a big deal, which helped inform Congress' decision to pass a budget for DHS. Grants are a big deal; people being paid are a big deal. When furloughing permanent employees, the people who approve everything related to a disaster are furloughed, and the staff that can actually work can only go as far as they can until it requires interaction with a permanent employee. Administrator Fugate added that the threat of a furlough did not have a positive impact on staff morale.

Question and Answer with the Administrator

NAC Question: Please expand on the Emergency Management Preparedness Grants (EMPG).

- All grant lines are stable. However, at one point there was \$7 billion of obligated but unused funds, which provided a potential place for Congress to cut funds. Thus, FEMA worked with state and local government to identify and use these funds.
- Based on the Agency's performance of cutting back funds, the DHS Secretary granted an extension for the period of performance from two to three years. The longer performance period enables local jurisdictions to plan for and fund the best projects, as the shorter timeframe encouraged spending the funds whether or not the project was good.
- Another thing in the President's budget is pre-disaster mitigation. Pre-disaster mitigation had been zeroed out because FEMA could not get enough money. However, the Administration has increased this budget item, as it aligns with the President's initiative of resiliency.
- The Agency is continuing to see Disaster Relief Fund balances being used for other things outside FEMA. This is due to lower disaster averages. However, the Administrator warned that we have to be cautious of surge force funding in the event of a disaster. This concern, as well as the concern about whether Disaster Relief Funds should be part of our base budget, was discussed with Congress.

NAC Question: Are there any other comments from the Administrator?

- Yes, on the topic of resiliency, when trying to debate something so complex with so many factors, it goes back to how we always have looked at rebuilding after disasters. We use experiences and data to calculate risk, but looking back does not always incorporate the future. Things are unstable, as they are always changing. For example, cyber events were not a factor twenty years ago. We need to incorporate future factors into emergency management.
- When we do not look forward, we increase risk and loss. An example of this is after Irene. A hospital's basement flooded during Irene, resulting in lost oxygen tanks, as they were stored in the basement. The hospital received a hazard mitigation grant and installed watertight walls in the basement up to one foot above the base flood elevation. Then, during Hurricane Sandy, the water overtopped walls and re-flooded. Even though the hospital mitigated to one foot above the base flood elevation, federal dollars were lost because calculations were based on experience, not on potential for the future.
- Practices for risk reduction are always based upon the past 100 years; however, now we are looking at how we can look at future risk when we talk to appropriators and others and develop appropriate codes and standards. Some areas of codes and standards authorize us to enable states and locals to build safe rooms and schools, which was done in Oklahoma. Other areas are not so clear-cut and still challenging.

NAC Question: One of the biggest issues we face is the return of economic development in areas that are high risk. Is there a counter balance in asking how we weigh future risk with the need for economic investments?





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- With Sandy, we found different communities used different standards. The recent Presidential Executive Order required all federal facilities to be two feet above the floodplain for non-critical facilities and three feet for critical. We want to ensure that when we are building with federal dollars we are building back better into the design.

NAC Question: Does building back better assume that there has been a disaster response?

- The President's Executive Order does not tie the requirement to disasters but ties it to agency funding. We are sensitive to communities that are not at risk, but we also want to ensure that we are building back to a higher standard moving forward. We as a Nation have to make decisions about future investments.

NAC Question: Does the Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) process do what it was intended to do?

- THIRA started the self-assessment process, which is the best - although not perfect - tool we have that provides indicators to the community. We are starting to see trend-line data and what preparedness across the country looks like. The THIRA provides insight to a state's investments, what states and tribes are identifying as their risks. The challenge now is to use the THIRA to drive national exercises.
- We are starting to see improvements in planning and capacity building, which were areas of improvement after Hurricane Katrina. The first generation of THIRA identified investments; the second generation drives future exercises and enables us to approach Congress with evidence of what needs to be funded, and demonstrates emerging focus areas.

NAC Question: What is the relationship between FEMA and NORTHCOM?

- FEMA's relationship with NORTHCOM is much better now. We found that the liaison positions at NORTHCOM were weak and FEMA was not part of the team. We decided to imbed upper level managers at NORTHCOM and FEMA to ensure both sides were actively engaged in the daily activities. This personnel change has improved command and control elements.

NAC Question: Can you address the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the recent *60-Minutes* segment? Has it hurt FEMA's image and reputation? What are the long-term issues related to that?

- The *60-Minutes* segment feeds into perceptions that we are incompetent. Despite all of FEMA's accomplishments, we are seen through the lens of the NFIP program, and it is not pretty.
- The problem is that we ran the flood insurance program like an insurance program, and in the insurance industry, it is advantageous to reduce the amounts of payouts. However with NFIP, the write your own (WYO) policies treated insurance like other insurance agencies, and there was no penalty to underpaying. We have to deal with the contractual agreements with the WYOs that handle those policies. My direction is that if we owe it, we pay it and there is no incentive for us not to pay. The cost of litigation is not worthwhile. If this was our program, we could go in and pay it. This is an interesting situation because we found ourselves on the outside working through people who were writing out claims. We have requested that the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) inspect the program. We are trying to settle things through mediation.
- We have made some personnel changes in FIMA, such as assigning the Deputy Associate Administrator for Insurance position to Brad Kieserman. There may be more personnel changes. We are looking into whether we should take over more policies directly so that there is no one between us and compliance on the flood insurance program.
- We need to address the NFIP and change its structure. The most important question is how you run a program that protects both the taxpayers and policyholders.

NAC Question: At the September 2014 NAC meeting, you mentioned simplifying Individual Assistance. What are your thoughts on doing something similar for Public Assistance?

- We are using authorities provided by the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act (SRIA) to simplify Public Assistance. There is fear associated with this in Oklahoma and other states. The first time we used it was dealing with Irene legacy issues. We were able to treat it almost like a block grant to build projects around function and are no longer constrained by cost. We can use estimates that provide continuous flexibility. Region VI is using its Public Assistance alternate project options provided under SRIA retroactively due to the part of the legislation that allows SRIA to apply to projects where construction has not yet started. The changes to the process should make things easier and more simplified for the applicants. We are now at a point where the OIG is reviewing it so that we can be sure that goals are achieved without sacrificing institutional integrity.
- One challenge is state and local government compliance with federal procurement laws. In order to ensure compliance and avoid issues with the OIG, we provide federal contracting staff to review state and local contracts.

NAC Question: Will FEMA continue to take on roles under Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5 for situations like the unaccompanied children and Ebola?

- These roles for FEMA were actually authorized under Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8) and the Homeland Security Act of 2002. The Homeland Security Act does not restrict FEMA to the Stafford Act. FEMA has supported non-Stafford Act activities since the shuttle disaster. FEMA's role under the Stafford Act is clearly defined with its own funding source.



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However, under Fund 90, we can only do what is authorized. It is likely that FEMA will continue to be a central coordinator in the future, as DHS needs coordination among agencies as a response capability. FEMA's permanent work is not funded through the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF), which provides for the coordination role. We have to be careful of duplication of efforts. When supporting other agencies, such as during Haiti, we sent approximately 600 people to Haiti under USAID's authorization and funding.

NAC Question: What is FEMA's role in cyber-attacks?

- In responding to cyber-attacks, the first step is to secure resources, the second step is to ensure we can operate in a cyber-environment, and the third step is to continue with our traditional role. In the traditional role, the Stafford Act applies to physical impacts. However, cyber-attacks will likely not have physical impacts; it is more likely that major infrastructure will be disrupted. The question is about spending money to fix a system when there is no physical damage. Emergency declarations can support physical damage but are much less clear when it comes to compromised data systems or financial losses. The Stafford Act does not address financial situations. We need to make sure that we can respond and operate. We need to practice consequence management.
- This topic should be discussed by the NAC.
- Cyber-attacks did not pose a significant risk 20 years ago. That is where we are at with the federal response role. It would be helpful to talk to state and local governments to ask what they see as the gaps.

NAC Question: What do states need for a disaster declaration for a cyber-attack?

- Under an emergency declaration, there is more flexibility. For major disaster declarations, the damage has to be more clearly defined.
- As I mentioned to the House Homeland Security Committee, the Stafford Act responds well to some disasters but not others, such as a geomagnetic storm or disease outbreaks, where there would be huge losses that would likely not be eligible. We need the intent of Congress; we are not necessarily looking to grow FEMA's financial burden under the Stafford Act but we need to do more to ensure that the utilities invested under the Stafford Act are correctly directed.
- The Homeland Security Act is much more open ended. On the one hand, we are authorized to be responsive to all hazards, but on the other hand, our major funding source is much defined as to what it considers a major disaster. Our attorneys are looking into what we could and could not do in various scenarios in order to share this info with Congress. One question is whether, for some of the emergencies, we would be able to respond under an emergency declaration and utilize our capabilities to act and assign resources in certain events. We want to prevent misconceptions on FEMA's authorities.

NAC Question: Do you have a voice in Congress to assist you in discussing these issues?

- Yes, Chairman of the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Bill Shuster, is a good friend who has brought up some of these issues and is looking at draft legislation. There is always the balance of not wanting the Stafford Act to open up to all disasters and understanding the intent of Congress. Should FEMA's responsibilities under the Stafford Act be broadened, does that increase the Agency's exposure in a way that would change the whole dynamic?

NAC Question: On the topic of preparedness and prepare-a-thons, what mechanism do you have to demonstrate that efforts have been successful?

- Gwen Camp, Director of Individual and Community Preparedness Division, will present more on this subject. If you do not have metrics, all you can do is guess. Gwen has developed some very good metrics and surveys beyond the simple "are you prepared" question and this data is available online. She is also working on tailored preparedness efforts for different demographics, as they differ by area.
- Preparedness is always the most underfunded element of our organization and lacks leadership. However, Gwen was promoted, as a political SES.

NAC Question: How do you change habits for those that live in high-risk areas?

- We cannot. People are not ready to pay for the actual cost of risk, and raising flood insurance rates to actuarially sound rates drives people out of their homes.
- We continue to build homes in high-risk areas. When you talk to local officials, you see all the factors involved with the economy, housing market, and depreciation. Theoretically, the cost of risk should be high enough to encourage change. When the government is involved in flood insurance, there is more pressure to keep rates low, which actually perpetuates the current situation. As a government-run program, the NFIP is restrictive and only covers actual losses. Privatizing the program could be different. We are looking into privatizing the NFIP, as the private industry may be able to charge rates that would allow rates to be underwritten under Biggert Waters.
- Part of risk transference is asking how we ensure that more and more of risk is borne by the private sector. People do not like it because they will pay more, but otherwise you are not reducing risk. If you take out payouts for Hurricane Katrina and



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Hurricane Sandy, the program actually works well. The NFIP was never designed to absorb that kind of shock from large-scale events.

Hurricane Katrina: Ten Years of Progress

Mike Womack—Executive Director, Louisiana Recovery Office

- Mike Womack introduced himself and provided his background. Director Womack has worked on Hurricane Katrina recovery for almost 10 years, first in Mississippi as the State Director, and now in his current position for two years as the Director for the Louisiana Recovery Office. He presented pictures demonstrating Hurricane Katrina's impact on the New Orleans metropolitan area in the first days and weeks following the storm. Director Womack then presented slides highlighting Hurricane Katrina recovery facts. After a decade, people tend to forget the level of destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina. When people ask why recovery in Louisiana is not finished, these slides are a good reminder of the level of devastation.
- Some history of the Louisiana Recovery Office: at its peak, over 2,500 FEMA employees were deployed throughout Louisiana with 6,273 employees helping with the recovery efforts.
- FEMA-coordinated response efforts included 265 mission assignments to 27 federal agencies; Urban Search and Rescue teams rescued over 6,500 survivors by air and another 2,500 by boat; and 50,000 patients treated by the Disaster Medical Assistance Teams.
- At the peak of Temporary Housing, 92,530 temporary housing units were dispersed throughout Louisiana and 50,000 in Mississippi. The last unit was deactivated on March 8, 2012.
- Individual Assistance funding totaled over \$6 billion to nearly one million individuals and households, compared to Individual Assistance funding for Hurricane Sandy, which equaled \$1 million in New York and \$400 million in New Jersey.
- Sandy may approach the cost of Katrina, but the impact on individual citizens for Katrina appears to be much more. Katrina scattered Gulf Coast residents, many of them hundreds of miles from home. FEMA received more than 1.3 million applications for aid from people spread across 50 states.
- Total Public Assistance funding for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita was \$12.3 billion. Of this, the New Orleans Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness dispersed \$9.7 billion or 79 percent of the total. The purpose of Public Assistance funding is to return a facility to its pre-disaster function and capacity and to rebuild a more resilient community.
- For Debris Removal efforts, FEMA funded the removal of more than 111 million cubic yards of debris, which would fill the Superdome more than 20 times.
- Public Assistance provided \$3.78 billion for education facilities, enabling entire school districts to be rebuilt in multiple parishes. FEMA funded the reconstruction of three major correctional facilities in Southeast Louisiana. Of these, Plaquemines and Orleans Parish prisons are scheduled to open in 2015. Twenty-five libraries and 100 community centers were repaired or rebuilt. Since 2012, FEMA has joined local residents in reopening 13 libraries and community centers.
- Public Assistance has provided \$2.5 billion to repair and rebuild health care facilities. In 2014, Plaquemines Parish Medical Center began serving residents who previously drove up to an hour for health services.
- Flooding caused severe damage to entire roadway and subsurface infrastructure systems in five parishes. In the city of New Orleans, Public Assistance provided over \$997 million for road, water, and sewerage system repairs.
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding allocated for Katrina-Rita was \$1.86 billion. The Office of Community Development has a \$750 million program that primarily handles elevations. Over 68,000 homes presented maximum flood insurance claims because of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. HMGP is approaching 10,000 home elevations funded throughout Louisiana, and nearly 1,000 repetitive loss properties were mitigated.
- Major Hazard Mitigation projects for Louisiana include the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans Power Plant Retrofit Project, which is the largest HMGP grant award in the Agency's history. The project will help prevent future disruptions in the city's water, sewerage, and drainage systems.
- The outlook for 2015 includes the obligation of an additional \$258 million in Public Assistance funding, the completion of over 250 public facilities, the obligation of \$250 million in HMGP funding, and the closeout of 1,200 projects.

Question and Answer with Mike Womack

NAC Question: Why did so many Katrina survivors evacuate to Southern California?

- This migration may be related to the location of friends and family of the survivors. Tony Robinson noted that there was a large evacuee population in Houston, TX, where some evacuees ended up making Houston their permanent home.





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NAC Question: Have you experienced audits from the OIG that recommended de-obligations.? If so, how does the FEMA Region handle it?

- There have been dozens of OIG audits recommending de-obligation of funds, and FEMA has de-obligated some but not all. There has been one major piece of legislation - the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA), and an additional three or four other pieces of related legislation. Lessons learned have been a model for the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act (SRIA). Tony Robinson commented that FEMA has been actively engaged and has a good dialogue with OIG. Last year, out of 16 audits, 14 were in Region VI.

Subcommittee Report-Outs

Note: Members of the public were given the opportunity to comment after each subcommittee report-out. Each speaker was limited to three minutes. The names and summaries are those of the individual and are included in the notes for record-keeping purposes only. DHS, FEMA, and the NAC do not endorse any comments from members of the public.

Nancy Dragani—Chair, Federal Insurance & Mitigation Subcommittee

- **Subcommittee Mission:** To advise and provide recommendations to the FEMA National Advisory Council on strategies to lessen the loss of life and property from the impact of disasters; and ensuring through deliberation and promulgation of recommendations that representation, awareness, engagement, and integration of the whole community and FEMA's strategic goals are addressed.

CHARGES

Charge 1: Provide input on the reauthorization of NFIP in 2017:

- Explore other models of insurance in order to meet the goal of a self-sustaining flood insurance program.
- Continue to monitor the Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act, specifically the affordability study that the National Academy of Science is conducting.

Charge 2: Review, evaluate, and provide feedback on Strategy 4.2.3: Reshape funding agreements with states, tribal governments, and localities to expand cost sharing and deductibles.

Charge 3: Provide input on the implementation of Priority #4 in the FEMA Strategic Plan 2014-2018:

- Investigate how the National Risk Reduction effort and climate change adaptation impact mitigation.
- Review and provide recommendations on the consolidation of the variety of risk assessments.
- Provide recommendations on how to provide the public with understandable risk assessments.
- Explore options for the integration of public assistance and mitigation programs, not limited to sections 404 and 406
- Explore the interagency integration at the federal level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Since the September 2014 NAC meeting, the Subcommittee focused on sub-charges b and d of charge 3. The Subcommittee did not address charges 1 and 2 during this period.

Issue 1—Research consolidation of mitigation best practices: Disaster research has exposed numerous negative issues and best practices from around the world involving mitigation efforts. However, many community decision makers have either not had access to or are unable to spend time exploring the data. Emergency Management personnel and political decision makers should have quick and easily understood access to this social science data in order to make sound decisions when attempting to mitigate hazards.

- **Recommendation 1:** FEMA should work closely with organizations like the Natural Hazards Center and the National Science Foundation to assess and gather best practices through research that has been conducted throughout the social science community relating to disaster mitigation. FEMA should consolidate this information and distribute to state, tribal, and local emergency management personnel through avenues, such as NEMA, IAEM, the Regional offices and the FEMA.gov and/or HSDL.org websites.

Issue 2—Consolidation and alignment of risk/vulnerability assessment tools, including HIRAs and the THIRA: Confusion exists in the emergency management profession around the relationship between Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) and the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) tool promulgated by FEMA. This problem is compounded by a lack of training and guidance on risk assessment procedures and tools.

- **Recommendation 2:** FEMA should review the risk assessment process and provide additional guidance and training to state, tribal, and local emergency managers.





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- FEMA should develop additional guidance to state, local, tribal, and territorial emergency managers on tools and methodologies for conducting detailed, data-driven risk assessments.
- FEMA should develop and deliver training on how to conduct a risk assessment.
- FEMA should better identify how each jurisdictional level of THIRA feeds into the next, allowing for a more transparent process at all levels.
- FEMA should assess the THIRA process to determine if the assessment is accomplishing the goal of determining where the capability gaps exist within the Nation.
- If the THIRA is effective, FEMA should consider renaming the THIRA to reflect better its intent to assess capabilities versus hazard identification and risk assessments.

Issue 3—Clarifying and leveraging 404/406 mitigation opportunities: The lack of integration between the 404 Hazard Mitigation Funding and 406 Hazard Mitigation Funding (attached to eligible PA projects) creates challenges with effectively mitigating against future damage.

- **Recommendation 3:** Develop a specified training track at the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) for Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Officers (available to all levels of government). This would allow Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Office staff to cultivate a greater understanding of how the programs can protect against future loss.
- **Recommendation 4:** Refine the 404 and 406 processes to capitalize on efficiencies of an informed PA and HMO workforce – applying the federal support in a manner that is expeditious, and responsible: As part of this refinement, FEMA should:
 - Consider policy and regulatory changes that will support the integration of the 404 and 406 programs.
 - Ensure that sufficient personnel are provided post-disaster to help state, local, tribal and territorial jurisdictions best utilize 404 and 406 opportunities. Specifically, FEMA should deploy Hazard Mitigation specialists in tandem with Public Assistance specialists.
 - FEMA should consider collapsing the PA (406) and Mitigation (404) skill sets into one position type under FQS.
- **Recommendation 5:** FEMA should revise the Hazard Mitigation Plan process to include the following:
 - FEMA should include pre-identified 406 projects as part of the HIRA for state, local, tribal, and territorial jurisdictions.
 - FEMA should require a disaster specific Administration Plan for mitigation, similar to Public Assistance, that identifies process, timelines, and priorities.
- **Recommendation 6:** FEMA should revise the Public Assistance worksheet to place a stronger emphasis on hazard mitigation funding (both 404 and 406).

Discussion

- The phrase “shovel ready projects” needs to be clarified, as this term may be defined differently by organizations and agencies. The Subcommittee defined the term to mean identified projects in the planning stage, not projects with completed designs and agreed to modify the language.
- Ms. Beth Zimmerman mentioned that in the past, FEMA provided a publication to provide direction on developing a disaster specific administration plan for mitigation. FEMA will check to see if such a document still exists.
- The current challenge with developing a mitigation strategy is knowing when the funding will be available. It would be helpful if FEMA would consider a reduction in post-disaster mitigation grants and move the funding to pre-disaster mitigation.
- There is a concern about requiring planning from local governments who may lack the capacity to meet such a requirement. Thought must be given on how to provide support to local governments to complete any planning requirements. It was agreed that any requirements should not overburden the government at any level. It was suggested that state governments complete an analysis to identify any additional areas for potential hazard mitigation funding.

Public Comments

- There were no public comments for this Subcommittee report.

Decision

- The NAC agreed to forward the Subcommittee’s recommendations with the modifications discussed to the Administrator.
- The FI&M Subcommittee will continue to work on the following items:
 - Focus on NFIP implementation (charge #1)
 - Risk assessment understanding for the general public (charge #2, part C)
 - Explore interagency integration at the federal level for mitigation (charge #2, part E)
 - Explore the concept of a 428 program





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Lee Feldman – Chair, Preparedness & Protection Subcommittee

- **Subcommittee Mission:** To advise and provide recommendations to the FEMA National Advisory Council regarding the missions of FEMA National Preparedness & Protection, including those specifically addressed in the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA); and ensuring through deliberation and promulgation of recommendations that representation, awareness, engagement, and integration of the whole community and FEMA's strategic goals are addressed.

CHARGES

Charge 1: Examine issues related to the whole community's preparedness and protection for natural, intentional (manmade), and accidental disasters; no recommendations for changes here.

Charge 2: Provide recommendations and/or opine on preparedness, protection, and prevention efforts currently underway or being considered by FEMA.

Charge 3: Independent of requests from FEMA, provide recommendations to the NAC upon reviewing new and innovative preparedness, protection, and prevention efforts, lessons learned and best practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Mr. Feldman thanked Subcommittee members who had worked with him and indicated that in addition to work at the conference, there had been a number of conference calls.

Issue 1—Training and awareness gaps exist for critical components of the whole community (e.g., higher education, day-care centers, hospitals, access and functional needs, seniors). EMI is the critical nexus responsible for the training of emergency managers.

- **Recommendation 1:** EMI should periodically audit, and revise as necessary; all courses to ensure that access and functional needs, seniors, and children's issues are addressed and integrated into current training programs. The audits must include impacted stakeholder populations.

Discussion

- The Subcommittee did not want to create undue burden on the Superintendent at EMI, but thought that this should be done annually. The manner in which the recommendation would be implemented would be up to the Administrator and the EMI Superintendent.
- Discussion about Recommendation 1 focused on how the recommendation would be effectively implemented and how the outcome would be determined and reported.
- These are areas where the most significant gaps remain, and many partners do not know where to begin in addressing the issue(s). It was thought that EMI coursework could provide a good foundation and a starting point.
- A motion was made to amend Recommendation 1 to include language that FEMA include/involve impacted population(s).
- **Recommendation 2:** EMI should develop a specific curriculum of Independent Study courses at the 200-, 700-, and 800-level for higher education institutions. Awareness of emergency management considerations at higher education institutions should be incorporated throughout the Independent Study course curriculum.

Discussion

- Discussion centered around the need to provide extensive training to those working emergencies on college and university campuses. Awareness of emergency management considerations at higher education institutions should be incorporated throughout the Independent Study course curriculum. This means that as EMI is designing coursework, it should incorporate institutions of higher learning.
- It was suggested that there is a need to look at emergency personnel and have certain basic levels of training for everyone.
- FEMA should determine its role on a response level and have foundational training; more is needed than what is currently offered at EMI.
- Students living in campus residences really represent a unique subset of the population, as they live away from their parents. Planning is needed to help support and foster greater levels of understanding and greater integration of local response partners across the country for this group.
- Many colleges and universities are in urban centers, which presents a separate set of unique issues. There needs to be joint training for universities and colleges.





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Public Comment

- Kenneth Pickering, Deputy Emergency Operations Chief, City of New Orleans: Many things are being talked about are for educational institutions. If FEMA would further embrace the Community Emergency Response Team concept, that is preparedness at the base level. We have been trying to get New Orleans' middle schools, high schools and our institutions of higher education to adopt CERT programs on our campuses. This may solve many issues.

Discussion

- Concern was expressed, and there was much agreement that a representative from each of the affected populations—subject matter experts and stakeholders—should be part of the EMI curriculum review process.
- The NAC discussed whether FEMA should be asked to get back to the NAC on results of course audits and about whether an audit schedule is needed regarding when curriculum will be reviewed. No decision was made.
- The NAC also discussed a feedback loop for FEMA's response to the NAC recommendations beyond the written memo. A possible solution is to develop a matrix with grid for monitoring the implementation status of the recommendations.

Decision

- The NAC agreed to forward the Subcommittee's recommendations with the modifications discussed to the Administrator.
- The P&P Subcommittee will work on the following items:
 - Cyber Security: investigation into the needs related to cyber security for emergency management planning, and
 - Preparing for active shooter/incidents of mass violence, as there is a greater role from FEMA for cities throughout the homeland.
- It was suggested that consideration be given to looking at EMPG funding. That would be a good opportunity to look at ensuring they are able to develop those capabilities.

Nim Kidd—Chair, Response & Recovery Subcommittee

- **Subcommittee Mission:** To advise and provide recommendations to the FEMA National Advisory Council on strategic issues relating to FEMA's disaster response and recovery efforts, and to help develop FEMA's initiatives in these areas (ex. NDHS, NDRF, NIMS, NRF); and ensuring through deliberation and promulgation of recommendations that representation, awareness, engagement, and integration of the whole community and FEMA's strategic goals are addressed.

CHARGES

Charge 1: Examine issues related to how the whole community plans, trains, and is educated for the response to and recovery from natural, manmade and accidental disasters.

Charge 2: Give specific attention to those response and recovery efforts/issues occurring during initial response, within the first seventy-two hours, and through long-term recovery.

Charge 3: Continue to examine how the private sector and nonprofit organizations can become more actively engaged in response and recovery efforts.

Charge 4: Continue to review current and emerging response and recovery efforts, to include pilot programs, modifications to existing programs, and identification of new and best practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Issue 1: Addressing Children's Needs: Children represent 25 – 50 percent of the population in any given community and their needs during disasters are unique and must be addressed to ensure their safety and protection. The Subcommittee believes that children's needs are currently included among the "access and functional needs" efforts but feel that they should be elevated to having a specialized focus. Between 2009 and 2012, FEMA had a children's needs coordinator and CWG to address children's issues. Since 2012, FEMA no longer has a technical lead to emphasize and address children's needs. Over the last 10 years, significant progress has been made; however, gaps still exist that put children at risk. For example, lack of awareness of the *Post Disaster Unification of Children: the Nationwide Approach* and how to operationalize it at the state and local level leaves this population vulnerable.

- **Recommendation 1:** Establishment of a permanent technical expert within the Agency to focus on the needs of children in disasters. This individual could act as the lead for FEMA regarding children's needs when working with other federal human service coordinating agencies.

Discussion

- The room was polled for how many people have taken that course and how many people have read the documents pertaining to children's needs. Only four hands went up for having taken the training and the same four hands went up for having read the documents.





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- A member suggested looking outside federal agencies for specific training as well.
- There is a specific person at FEMA headquarters focused on disability integration and coordination. Is this specialization so focused that it is not useful? It was questioned whether the “one and done” concept is really the answer. “One and done” rarely works, but having one person is at least a start. A follow-up recommendation would be to ask for specific guidance in all grant preparedness funding and to ensure that it is included in future literature.
- It was mentioned that hospitals have been able to improve output measures, but agreed that children’s needs need to be integrated into the whole fabric.
- The recommendation should have permissive language, so that the NAC is requiring FEMA to do something but allowing that eligibility for positions.
- **Recommendation 2:** Include specific language in future grant guidance to authorize state and local personnel to establish a similar role to the FEMA permanent technical advisor position to ensure current and future policy and planning is operationalized at the state and local level.

Discussion

- The NAC wants to amend the recommendation so that it includes the uniform state, local, tribal language.

Recommendation 3: Confirm availability of and increase awareness of FEMA’s infant and toddler stockpile supplies to federal, state and local emergency management leadership.

Discussion

- The room was polled for how many were aware of a stockpile of infant and toddler supplies; none of the NAC members were aware of this stockpile.
- FEMA staff indicated that FEMA has distribution centers scattered across the country with infant toddler kits that are automatically deployed. FEMA maintains contracts with suppliers so that the supply is refreshed and stocked.
- There may be a disconnect between what is available and what is known to be available. Information about this type of thing can be found through individual inquiries, but how does one get the information to a larger population?
- The question was asked, “Why would you need to know this number or the number of available sandbags?” Some of this information is available from WebEOC.
- In past disasters, some of the supplies are unused because there is a gap in understanding what is available. Then other agencies start addressing the gap.
- FEMA staff mentioned that unless a preference is indicated by a state, FEMA sends age-appropriate meals from infants to seniors based on population numbers. The life span on infant formula is too short, so we have standing contracts on that to restock.
- Information on available supplies should be available to emergency managers.
 - FEMA staff mentioned that this information about the supplies can be shared with the state partners, but then you will have to share it beyond that level.
- Is the stockpile that is referenced in the recommendation really limited to the stockpile? If so, the word stockpile should be replaced with cache or supply.
- If a subcommittee were to take on a charge related to commodities, it would have to be an ad hoc subcommittee, as the topic crosses multiple facets. The NAC requested a comprehensive logistics brief from FEMA at the next in-person meeting
- The NAC agreed to standardize the recommendation language to include the whole community and change the word “stockpile” to “supply.”

Public Comment

- Monique Harden, Walter L. Cohen Alumni Association: She appreciated the NAC’s discussions related to targeting the needs of children and hopes the NAC is receptive to recovery needs of children as well. Two schools received \$169 million of federal funds to be built on former toxic waste sites. The community did not know this information and was not involved in public assistance process. Instead, the process was in the hands of applicants, who are more concerned with funding. Now the community has a situation where mercury, lead, and other toxins are present in soil 15 feet under schools, which is dangerous for populations, especially children who are more vulnerable to organ failure, hormone disruption, cancer, and neurological problems. She wants to bring this to the NAC’s attention as the Louisiana Recovery Office has been engaged in the process. She also wants to mention that this is related to recommendation 1 and 2 as well. She handed out a fact sheet with information on the situation of the school.

Decision

- The NAC approved the three recommendations with amended language as discussed.





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Linda Langston—Chair, Interdisciplinary Collaboration Working Group

- The Interdisciplinary Collaboration Working Group (ICWG) was charged with exploring recommendations for best management practices involving interagency collaboration, coordination, and interoperability (vertical and horizontal) in emergency management, particularly as it relates to emergency managers, EMS, fire, law enforcement, public health and medical, and public works, before and during a major event, at both the tactical and strategic levels.
- The working group has two recommendations for NAC deliberation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: FEMA should consider the development of a public health and acute medical care (emergency medical services and hospitals) liaison(s) at FEMA to have strong connections to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), the Department of Transportation (DOT), including the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and others.

Discussion

- During the presentation yesterday from Josh Dozor about DHS Office of Health Affairs (OHA) having a public health person at FEMA, there was a degree of concern over the lack of awareness in the group. While a liaison position may exist from DHS OHA, the working group still wants the NAC to consider the recommendation.
 - A NAC member suggested adding DHS OHA to the list of agencies at the end of the recommendation.
- Recommendation 2:** To develop a best practices library in the subject area of public health integration with emergency managers and EMS available through the federal Disasters.Data.Gov website to offer information to address gaps.

Discussion

- This recommendation builds on the NAC Recommendation #3 from September 2014. There is a concern with where the data resides and who has the time to research thoroughly it. Is there some way to manage the aggregation and the review of the data?
- A NAC member asked whether emergency managers should be coordinating directly with emergency medical services and hospitals in an event.
- The Administrator spoke earlier about FEMA is increasing involvement in large-scale disaster responses, particularly those with health and medical consequences, such as Ebola. The lack of integration between public health, medical and emergency management has been the result of a big disconnect. What the working group is trying to move toward with these recommendations has been very valuable to those in the health and medical communities who depend on emergency management for resources and coordination. Emergency management should be involved with acute medical care, public health, and EMS.
- The NAC concurred that emergency management should be involved with the medical sector, but some NAC members were unsure whether it should be at federal emergency management level.
- At one point, there was someone from within FEMA who was coordinating with CDC for greater alignment of capabilities around grant programs. This recommendation gets to coordination at the planning and response level.
- FEMA staff commented that even though FEMA played a coordinating role for the unaccompanied children and Ebola, FEMA has no ownership of these elements; it is not FEMA's expertise. What FEMA is able to bring to the table is a construct of how everyone can work together as a team. This speaks to emergency management and Emergency Support Function 8 and the Department of Health and Human Services. A lessons learned from the recent non-traditional events is that we can all learn from each other.
- The conversations over the last several months are more about the confusion that develops when someone holds a part of EMS in each one of these federal agencies. If FEMA took on the role of coordinator, this would set a tone and give FEMA a broad reach across all departments so that one entity is keeping EMS in mind. This working group does not believe that this currently exists.

Public Comment

- There were no public comments for this working group report.

Decision

- The NAC approved the two recommendations with amended language as discussed.
- The NAC agreed to sunset the Interdisciplinary Collaboration Working Group, as it has completed its charge.





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Response and Recovery Update

Beth Zimmerman—Associate Administrator, Office of Response and Recovery, FEMA

Jonathan Hoyes—Director, National Disaster Recovery Planning Division, FEMA

- Since the Tribal Declarations Guidance was released, nine tribal governments have requested direct federal assistance for disasters. Of these, seven disaster declarations were approved. FEMA is determining the appropriate modifications to the tribal declaration process based on the 1,000 comments received. Some areas of consideration are the Public Assistance threshold and the cost share and technical assistance. Upon completion of incorporating changes to the process, FEMA will seek another round of public comments.
- FEMA's Logistics Division, with assistance from the US Army Corps of Engineers, has completed an assessment of FEMA's generator stockpile and streamlined the inventory to a fleet of 150 generators with six standard sizes. The generators are located at various distribution points. FEMA will provide a full update on logistics, including additional information on generators, to the NAC members at the next in-person meeting.
- FEMA is reviewing and updating the Public Assistance program to meet better the current needs for disaster response and recovery. One of the main objectives of the exercise is to increase the speed and flexibility of the program. Topics being discussed include validation methods of estimated costs, differences in small and large projects, and life of project schedules. FEMA is currently completing the fifth of five working sessions on the update and will present their findings at the NEMA Mid-Year conference later in March, with a final product released in the coming months.

Question and Answer with Office of Response and Recovery

NAC Question: Will state and local governments be required to go through the UASI to request generators and determine appropriate size?

- State and local governments are encouraged to review and determine their needs. Although FEMA does not fund assessments, FEMA can assist with training individuals to complete them.

NAC Question: Are there any tools that can assist logistics personnel in determining any gaps or shortfalls in supplies?

- FEMA developed a program a few years ago called the Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT) that can be used by states and communities to conduct self-assessments. FEMA can provide this tool as well as train-the-trainer workshops at the request of state or local governments.

NAC Question: How is FEMA addressing possible impacts on supplies due to state budget issues?

- FEMA begins moving supplies as soon as an emergency notice is received in order to have them available to states. FEMA can store supplies on federal property and move in ahead of the requests. Supplies are not over-purchased, as there are contracts to reorder readily supplies as needed.

NAC Question: How are supplies disposed of once they reach their useful life?

- FEMA will donate supplies to local communities on a rotating basis. Donations typically occur based on existing relationships and in coordination with National VOADs. Organizations interested in learning more about donated stocks should reach out to FEMA's regional offices. Additionally, FEMA is constantly assessing measures to reduce the need for stock rotation.

NAC Comment: Recently in Toledo, OH, there was an issue with providing bladders and buckets filled with water to the public due to current perceptions. FEMA should look into vendors that can supply collapsible bottles and containers to provide to people.

NAC Question: Is FEMA planning any additional response efforts in the Caribbean?

- FEMA does not respond to disasters in other countries as part of its regular duties. However, FEMA may provide support to these international efforts at the request of the Department of State.

NAC Question: Is there any guidance available to protect against audits?

- It is important to follow the Federal Acquisition Regulation when utilizing federal funds. FEMA recognizes some of the challenges and complexities in the regulations, especially with debris removal in smaller communities, and can provide technical assistance to help address compliance issues.

NAC Question: Is the OIG involved with the review of the Public Assistance program and proposed changes? There is concern that the OIG will become involved after the modified program is implemented, resulting in the de-obligation of funding.

- The OIG representatives have been involved in the review process. FEMA has also requested a more proactive engagement of the OIG's office in disaster response and recovery activities.





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Public Comment Period - started at 4:00 pm CST

- Michael Gordon: Mr. Gordon acknowledged that the NAC members are not paid and come from all different part of the country and different communities. He represents the unpaid, unprotected workforce of sub-contractors. In reviewing the Stafford Act and the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act, there are many similar names with lobbyists and others. As a professional licensed contractor, he had a team of licensed individuals who came to support the efforts. An engineer on his team had experience working with FEMA. Then, he explained how he experienced contracting issues with a primary, no bid contract. He mentioned that FEMA investigated and promised that they would fire and replace the contractor. However, he did not receive a response. He shared a picture of a newspaper article to demonstrate what happened. His team did the work but was not paid. He lost his home and his firm. He wants to ensure that this situation does not happen in the future and that contracts need better safeguards to protect subcontractors and to ensure that this type of thing does not happen.

Hurricane Katrina: A Personal Perspective

Pat Santos—Director, Business Development, the Stephenson Disaster Management Institute, Louisiana State University

- At the time of Katrina, Pat Santos was with the Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. Mr. Santos showed a video of the response to Hurricane Katrina from the perspective of the Louisiana National Guard.
- There were thousands of Louisiana National Guard responders, who were later joined by more U.S. National Guardsmen. The circumstances in the Superdome were overinflated in the media. There were six deaths, including four individuals on hospice, a drug overdose, and one suicide. There were also five births.

Discussion

NAC Question: Has there ever been as successful an evacuation as the 90 percent Katrina evacuation?

- No there has not been. There were 35,000 people at the Superdome, which was a 'refuge of last resort.' The Superdome drew in people because it was dry and had food and water, but those folks needed to be evacuated. During that time, Santos met Sandy Coachman and Phil Parr from FEMA, who helped facilitate getting 866 buses to assist in the evacuation of the Superdome. There were also 14,000 people at the Convention Center, which was also never intended to be a shelter. Eventually 8,000 Guardsmen landed and evacuated people from the Convention Center. Pat Santos said he remembered writing out a plan on an MRE box. He added that a decision to evacuate must be made at H-102, almost four days before the hurricane makes landfall. When that trigger is pulled, the cost is about \$6 million for the buses whether they are used or not.

NAC Discussion

- The NAC members asked about following up on Mr. Gordon's public comments.
- Beth Zimmerman commented that FEMA does not do contracting for debris. The state, tribe, or local government does most of the contracting. FEMA has put together procurement teams, that go out to local governments to show that they have to follow local procurement rules and assist. This has been a huge issue in the past. FEMA has now developed teams to go out in disasters with Public Assistance folks in order to help with the procurement process in order to make sure all the requirements are being properly met; however, FEMA has only implemented this practice in last 12-18 months. The issue became known after Hurricane Irene where there were huge problems with procurement.
- Nim Kidd expressed reluctance to bring forth ideas for changes that require law and inquired: If an issue is in 44 CFR, should the NAC discuss it?
- Beth Zimmerman explained that this gets into the reengineering of Public Assistance. PA has been around a long time, but some areas still don't make sense. It begs the question, "Why we are doing it the same way we always have?" Some time ago, we started looking at how much time FEMA was spending in order to pay out reimbursements for small projects. But FEMA is now looking again at where the Agency is putting our money, looking at IG reports. Thirty-two percent were FEMA's fault, 68 percent were found to be the grantees' fault. As a result, FEMA has taken on a heavy charge to look at the PA program, how it exists today, and to look at it to see what it needs to be going forward. This is one of FEMA's top two priorities – flood insurance and PA restructuring. The Public Assistance Division conducted data collection and has been holding share sessions as a result. The first session was brought to FEMA senior leadership, to put data on the walls to look at the PA program. This is biggest program that FEMA administers so everyone was at the table: the CFO, Human Capital, FIMA, etc. They looked at small project and large project review, looked at the life cycle of a Project Worksheet (PW) and how it is reviewed. They charted it out – it took 23 days for a project to be reviewed before it got obligated. When people were actually touching it, it takes less than a day. There were some "AHA!" moments when looking at things like that. The





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last of the five regional share sessions is happening in Boston today. The revelations coming out of these share sessions are amazing. Now the Agency is looking at how to move this forward, make changes in partnership, and identify responsibilities. FEMA can rescind policy but also needs to look at the Stafford Act and 44 CFR as well. It takes years to change 44 CFR, but what can happen in the near term?

- FEMA is looking to its stakeholders to come up with a model for PA. The Agency will test the results of this overhaul in Joint Field Offices and bring it back to stakeholders to get feedback. SRIA allowed estimate bundling for projects over a million dollars. FEMA is considering the implementation of this type of process for small projects under \$1M.
- Nancy Dragani asked about audits and local governments: Is the requirement to use federal regulations something that can be changed?
- Joe Nimmich responded that the Federal Acquisitions Regulations (FAR) dictates this; however, it creates challenges because the smaller the community, the more likely they are to find someone to get the job done, for debris removal more than anything else does. This is why FEMA is sending out lawyers now, right up front.

Next Steps and Closing Remarks

Charlotte Hyams Porter-NAC DFO

- The NAC will resume meeting tomorrow morning at 8:30 am CST.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm CST by Charlotte Hyams Porter, NAC DFO.

I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing executive summary of the National Advisory Council Meeting on March 4, 2015 is accurate and complete.



James Featherstone
Chair
FEMA National Advisory Council



FEMA