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# I. MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR-DESIGNEE



It is my privilege to serve as the designated Chair of the Interagency Coordinating Council on Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities. The Council has been an invaluable source of interagency collaboration during emergency response and recovery activities over the last several years including the 2010 Haiti Earthquake, the 2010 BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the 2011 Mid-Atlantic Earthquake, 2011 Hurricane Irene, 2012 Hurricane Sandy, and the 2013 Colorado flooding.

W. Craig Fugate, Administrator of Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Chair-Designee, ICC

## II. INTRODUCTION

Natural disasters and human caused emergencies pose greater threats to our Nation today than ever before. Whether a tornado, an earthquake, or an act of terrorism, the potential threats we face impact every member of our community equally. To properly address these challenges emergency managers must develop whole community strategies that consider and plan for the needs of every individual equally. People with disabilities are no exception.

Individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs have historically faced many barriers during a disaster due to inaccessible programs and ineffective communication. Just like other members of society, people with disabilities require robust emergency preparedness plans that account for the needs of the whole community. When emergency managers plan for everyone, they develop strong and resilient communities prepared for all aspects of a disaster.

To meet this challenge, in 2004, President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13347, *Individuals with Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness*, establishing the Interagency Coordinating Council on Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities. Since its foundation, the Council has worked diligently across the Federal Government to strengthen the Nation's emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities.

The purpose of this report is to provide the President with an update on the emergency management activities and accomplishments of the ICC for the period 2010-2013 in accordance with Section 3(b) of Executive Order 13347.

### *A. Disability Rights and Emergency Management Laws*

Today, individuals with disabilities are leading more independent lives than ever. Critical legislation over the past several decades has set important standards for accessibility and integration. *The Rehabilitation Act of 1973*<sup>1</sup>, the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* (ADA)<sup>2</sup> as amended, the *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act*<sup>3</sup> as amended, and the *Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006* (PKEMRA)<sup>4</sup> mandate the integration and inclusion of individuals with disabilities into every aspect of emergency management, which includes the following areas:

- Preparation
- Exercises

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<sup>1</sup> Pub. L. No. 93-112, 87 Stat. 394 (Rehab. Act), codified at 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> 42 U.S.C §§ 12101 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> 42 U.S.C §§ 5121 et seq.

<sup>4</sup> PKEMRA was enacted as Title VI of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2007, Pub. L. No. 109-295, 120 Stat. 1355 (2006).

- Notification
- Evacuation and transportation
- Sheltering
- First aid and medical services
- Temporary lodging and housing
- Transition back to the community
- Clean up
- Recovery
- Mitigation
- Other emergency and disaster related programs, services, and activities

## *B. Executive Order 13347, July 2004*

When Executive Order 13347 established the ICC, it directed more than 25 federal executive departments and agencies to work together to ensure that emergency preparedness plans incorporate the perspectives and needs of individuals with disabilities and that barriers to their access to services and planning are removed.<sup>5</sup> The Executive Order designates the Secretary of Homeland Security as chair.

Section 1 of the Executive Order directs the agencies of the Federal Government to:

- a) consider, in their emergency preparedness planning, the unique needs of agency employees with disabilities and individuals with disabilities whom the agency serves;*
- b) encourage, including through the provision of technical assistance, as appropriate, consideration of the unique needs of employees and individuals with disabilities served by State, local, and tribal governments and private organizations and individuals in emergency preparedness planning; and*
- c) facilitate cooperation among Federal, State, local, and tribal governments and private organizations and individuals in the implementation of emergency preparedness plans as they relate to individuals with disabilities.*

### *ICC MEMBERSHIP AUTHORITY*

Under Section 2 of Executive Order 13347, the ICC consists exclusively of “heads of executive departments, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Administrator of General Services, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, and the Commissioner

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<sup>5</sup> A link to Executive Order 13347 is available at the following website: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2004-07-26/pdf/04-17150.pdf>.

of Social Security; and any other agency head as the Secretary of Homeland Security may, with the concurrence of the agency head, designate.”<sup>6</sup>

Executive Departments Named in the Executive Order 13347	Agencies Named in Executive Order 13347	Other Agencies Invited by the Chair
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Commerce (Commerce)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Education (ED)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of the Interior (Interior)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of State (DOS)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury)</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</li> <li>• Federal Communications Commission (FCC)</li> <li>• U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)</li> <li>• U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)</li> <li>• Social Security Administration (SSA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U.S. Access Board</li> <li>• U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission</li> <li>• National Council on Disability (NCD)</li> <li>• President’s Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities</li> <li>• U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)</li> <li>• White House Office of Domestic Policy</li> <li>• White House Office of Public Engagement</li> </ul>

### C. Whole Community Approach to Preparedness

The whole community approach to preparedness is an acknowledgement that successful emergency management cannot be achieved by any solitary organization, government, or individual. When individuals come together to work on a challenge and integrate the needs of the entire community into a preparedness strategy, the community is stronger, more resilient, and more prepared for disasters. It is towards that end that the National Preparedness System guides federal agencies to work with individuals, businesses, faith-based organizations, schools, tribes and all levels of government to create a comprehensive National Preparedness Goal.<sup>7</sup>

The National Preparedness System is organized around the following elements:

- *The National Preparedness Goal states the ends we wish to achieve;*

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<sup>6</sup> EO 13347 Section 2(a)

<sup>7</sup> Presidential Policy Directive / PPD-8: National Preparedness, March 30, 2011: <http://www.dhs.gov/presidential-policy-directive-8-national-preparedness>.

- *National Planning Frameworks and Federal Interagency Operational Plans explain the delivery of the goal and how we use what we build;*
- *An annual National Preparedness Report documents the progress made toward achieving the goal;*
- *An ongoing national effort to build and sustain preparedness helps us maintain momentum.*<sup>8</sup>

## *NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS GOAL*

The National Preparedness Goal drives an interagency focus on engaging the whole community throughout the prevention, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation mission areas. Initially published in 2011, the National Preparedness Goal emphasizes the importance of whole community engagement as an essential element of our Nation’s emergency preparedness. The Goal is to create “a secure and resilient nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.”<sup>9</sup>

Mitigating these risks—which include natural disasters, disease pandemics, chemical spills and other human caused hazards, terrorist attacks, and cyber-attacks—requires participation by the entire community. Successful whole community, emergency preparedness requires:

1. Equal access to all preparedness programs without discrimination;
2. Consistent and active whole community engagement and involvement in all aspects of planning, response, and recovery;
3. Meeting the access and functional needs of all individuals.

## *WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS*

Individuals with access and functional needs are people representing all aspects of society—including race, gender, ethnicity, religious background, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status—who require accommodations or modifications to fully participate and engage in a program or service. Participants will request accommodations to ensure equal program, physical, and effective communication accessibility. People who have an access or functional need include the following examples:

- Children and adults with physical, mobility, sensory, intellectual, developmental, cognitive, or mental health disabilities
- Older adults
- People with chronic or temporary health conditions

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<sup>8</sup> *Learn About Presidential Policy Directive-8*, FEMA: <https://www.fema.gov/learn-about-presidential-policy-directive-8>.

<sup>9</sup> National Preparedness Goal, Department of Homeland Security, September, 2011: [http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1828-25045-9470/national\\_preparedness\\_goal\\_2011.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1828-25045-9470/national_preparedness_goal_2011.pdf).

- Women in late stages of pregnancy
- People needing bariatric equipment
- People with limited English proficiency, low literacy or additional communication needs
- People with very low incomes
- People without access to transportation
- People experiencing homelessness

The Department of Homeland Security defines an access and functional needs accommodation as “circumstances that are met for providing physical, programmatic, and effective communication access to the whole community by accommodating individual requirements through universal accessibility and/or specific actions or modifications.”<sup>10</sup>

### *WHOLE COMMUNITY PLANNING*

Natural disasters and human caused hazards continue to have far-reaching and widespread effects. As a result, preserving the safety, security, and prosperity of all parts of our society remains an ongoing challenge. This reality affects all levels of government in an effort to improve our Nation’s resilience. As emergency management organizations grapple with the limitations of their capabilities, it is important that they embrace the collaboration, integration, and resources that come from whole community planning.

Engaging all members of the community is essential to national preparedness. With equal access to the pertinent knowledge and skills, all members of the community can contribute to national preparedness. This includes children; individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; those from religious, racial, and ethnically diverse backgrounds; and individuals with limited English proficiency.

When communities integrate the access and functional needs of children and adults with and without disabilities in all phases of community-wide emergency management, they strengthen their ability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.



*It is time for [people with disabilities], be they children or any other segment of our communities who have traditionally been underserved, to be more fully and consistently integrated into preparedness and planning efforts at every level of government.*

- Craig Fugate, FEMA Administrator

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<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, “DHS Lexicon: Terms and Definitions,” 2015 Edition.

<sup>11</sup> Statement of FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, “Focus on Children in Disasters: Evacuation Planning and Mental Health Recovery,” Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate, August 4, 2009: <http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/subcommittees/disaster-recovery-and-intergovernmental-affairs/hearings/focusing-on-children-in-disasters-evacuation-planning-and-mental-health-recovery>.

## III. BACKGROUND

### *A. Transitioning Leadership of the ICC*

During the first two years of the reporting period (2010 and 2011), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) continued to serve as the Secretary of Homeland Security's designee for leading and administering the work of the Council. In this role, CRCL facilitated the communication of critical information among stakeholders through collaboration with federal, state, tribal, and local government partners, as well as community-based organizations.

On January 4, 2012, DHS Secretary Napolitano transferred leadership of the Council from CRCL to FEMA. This re-designation of chairmanship recognizes the capability and leadership FEMA has shown in disability inclusive emergency preparedness. In 2010, FEMA established the Office of Disability Integration and Coordination (ODIC). Now with a cadre of 70 disability integration experts, ODIC leads FEMA's commitment to whole community emergency management inclusive of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

### *B. FEMA Office of Disability Integration and Coordination*

Upholding its commitment to whole community emergency planning, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate established the Office of Disability Integration and Coordination in February 2010 with the disability coordinator to serve as the director.

#### *MISSION*

The mission of ODIC is to "lead FEMA's commitment to achieving whole community emergency management, inclusive of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, by providing guidance, tools, methods and strategies to establish equal physical, program and effective communication access."<sup>12</sup> ODIC has adopted three critical mission functions: (1) Whole community stakeholder engagement; (2) guidance, training, and technical assistance; and (3) disability-inclusive emergency preparedness and disaster response and recovery.

Whole community stakeholder engagement is an essential pillar of ODIC's philosophy. Information about the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities can be most accurately and easily ascertained by engaging the disability community directly. ODIC has developed important relationships with disability organizations in every aspect of the community, including local, state, tribal and territorial governments; public, private, faith-based, and non-

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<sup>12</sup> Office of Disability Integration and Coordination Mission: <https://www.fema.gov/office-disability-integration-and-coordination>.

profit organizations; and federal departments and agencies. It is direct engagement with these stakeholders that ensures FEMA is developing emergency preparedness strategies with—not for—individuals with disabilities.

ODIC has a cadre of 70 disability integration experts who deploy all over the country. One of the most important aspects of their job is providing guidance, training and technical assistance to other members of the emergency management community. In partnership with FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute (EMI), ODIC has developed five training courses on disability integration available to local, state, tribal, territorial, and federal emergency managers. Additionally, during a disaster, disability integration experts provide hands on technical assistance for survivors and fellow employees.

Finally, the primary mission function of ODIC is to facilitate and advance disability inclusive emergency preparedness and disaster response and recovery. ODIC coordinates all FEMA led federal disability integration response and recovery actions during a disaster. It is responsible for incident support functions by maintaining a seat in the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC), as an advisor to the senior leadership team, and incident management by coordinating Disability Integration Cadre deployments.

ODIC fulfills its critical mission functions with the following disability integration positions: FEMA Headquarters staff; regional disability integration specialists (RDISs); National Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT), disability integration advisors (DIAs); fulltime and reservist DIAs; Lead DIAs; sign language interpreters; and disaster specific local hires.

# IV. ROLES OF ODIC AND ICC MEMBERS DURING AN EMERGENCY

## *A. ODIC's Role within the ICC during an Emergency*

- Monitor FEMA NRCC notifications; activate response functions concurrent with Phase I (awareness) notification of an emergency.
- Upon receipt of NRCC notification, disseminate an initial message to ICC members and establish lines of communication.
- During response and recovery, transmit updated relevant emergency related information to ICC members, and serve as a conduit back from ICC agencies regarding activities, experiences, and issues that are of importance to the coordinated federal response.
- Provide FEMA senior leadership with timely and pertinent disability related information from ICC agencies—including disability-relevant information regarding the emergency, resources available, and applicable civil rights considerations.
- Provide FEMA External Affairs with timely and pertinent disability related information from ICC agencies to inform public releases of information—including disability-relevant information regarding the emergency, resources available, and applicable civil rights considerations.
- Coordinate national community engagement conference calls involving non-governmental organizations, and key state and local officials, to relay information about the federal response and solicit the perspectives of individuals with disabilities impacted by the emergency; provide the conference call invitation to ICC members as observers and participants. Collaborate directly with ICC member agencies as needed to identify and resolve issues that have a connection to existing federal programs and policy; keep the ICC abreast of such deliberations for overall coordination and reporting.
- Coordinate with ICC members to conduct additional conference calls as needed to explore disability related interagency aspects of issues and potential civil rights implications of response and recovery activities.
- Regularly transmit to the ICC current information regarding the nature of the emergency and the potential impact on individuals with disabilities.
- Utilizing intra and interagency resources, construct a disability-focused demographic profile of the population in the impacted area.
- Work with the FEMA regional disability integration specialists and Disability Integration Cadre to obtain timely field information regarding the status of impacted individuals with disabilities and measures being taken to address the access and

functional needs of this population; share this information with ICC members; reporting during the response phase should be daily and weekly during the early recovery phase.

- Collaborate with ICC member agencies to develop and share public information; disseminate the information electronically to a wide array of disability and emergency management stakeholders using ODIC's email distribution list and FEMA web based postings and other External Affairs outlets.

## *B. Role of ICC Member Executive Departments and Agencies during an Emergency*

- During response and recovery, share updated disability-relevant emergency related information with ODIC and the ICC; key information from federal partners describes activities, experiences, and issues that are of importance to the coordinated federal response.
- Share with ODIC disability-relevant information regarding the emergency, resources available, and civil rights considerations that help inform FEMA's public notices.
- Actively participate in ODIC's national community engagement conference calls to observe community perspectives and share key information when consulted.
- Collaborate directly with ODIC as needed to identify and resolve issues that have a connection to existing federal programs and policy.
- In non-Stafford Act emergencies (e.g., public health emergencies, industrial accidents, terrorist acts, or international relief operations), collaborate with ODIC and the most relevant ICC agencies to present disability-related civil rights information for consideration by the agencies involved in the federal response.
- Each year, provide input to ODIC for inclusion in the ICC's Annual Report to the President. The Report will contain major accomplishments and activities related to emergencies and individuals with disabilities during the reporting year.

# V. ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE COUNCIL (2010-2013)

## A. Meetings

### *FULL COUNCIL RECONVENED DECEMBER, 2013*

On December 5, Council chair-designee, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, and Council lead, ODIC Director Marcie Roth, reconvened the full Council at FEMA Headquarters.

Topics discussed:

- Agency/Office Representation on the ICC
  - Offices that focus on national disaster response/recovery
  - Offices that focus on civil rights/disability policy
  - Offices that focus on workplace safety/emergencies
- ICC Subcommittees and their Chairs
  - Emergency Preparedness in the Workplace (DOL)
  - Emergency Communications (FCC)
  - Emergency Transportation (DOT)
  - Health and Human Services (HHS)
  - Housing (HUD and U.S. Access Board)
  - State, Local, and Tribal Government Outreach (DHS)
  - Nongovernmental Outreach (DHS)
  - Policy (DHS and NCD)
  - Technical Assistance (DOJ)
- The ICC during Disasters
  - During response and recovery, share updated disability-relevant emergency related information describing activities, experiences, and issues that are of importance to the coordinated federal response
  - Share disability-relevant information regarding the emergency, resources available, and civil rights considerations that help inform FEMA's public releases
  - Actively participate in federally sponsored community engagement conference calls to observe community perspectives and share key information when consulted

- Collaborate directly with FEMA and other federal partners to identify and resolve issues that have a connection to existing federal programs and policy
- Each year, provide input on lessons learned and recommendations for inclusion in the ICC’s Annual Report to the President
- Major Accomplishments of the ICC as a Collective Body
  - Launched the DisabilityPreparedness.gov website (2005)<sup>13</sup>
  - Published “Preparing the Workplace for Everyone: Accounting for the Needs of People with Disabilities” (2005)<sup>14</sup>
  - Provided disability subject matter experts (SMEs) for deployment to Louisiana and Texas following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (2005)
  - Coordinated disability SME input into the development of the Nationwide Plan Review (2006)
  - Published “Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities in Disasters: A Reference Guide” (2007)
  - Coordinated disability SME input into the development of the National Response Framework (2008)
  - Provided disability SMEs for deployment to Texas following Hurricane Ike (2008)
  - Coordinated federal agency planning for the effects of the H1N1 Influenza Pandemic on individuals with disabilities (2009)
  - Coordinated multiple agency presentations within the National Conference on Community Preparedness (2009) and the FEMA Getting Real Conference (2010)<sup>15</sup>
  - Participated within the Deepwater Integrated Services Team to ensure that the communication needs of individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency were addressed as part of the recovery from the oil spill (2010)
  - Coordinated disability SME input into the development of the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) (2011)

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<sup>13</sup> DisabilityPreparedness.gov was later changed to <https://www.disability.gov/resource/disability-govs-guide-emergency-preparedness-disaster-recovery/>.

<sup>14</sup> “Preparing the Workplace for Everyone: Accounting for the Needs of People with Disabilities – A Framework of Emergency Preparedness Guidelines for Federal Agencies” is available at <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ep/preparing.htm>.

<sup>15</sup> More information on the “2010 Getting Real: Inclusive Emergency Management National Capacity Building Training Conference” is available at <https://www.fema.gov/2010-getting-real-inclusive-emergency-management-national-capacity-building-training-conference>.

- Provided disability SMEs for deployment to NY and NJ following Hurricane Sandy (2012)
- Supported numerous policy, guidance, and coordination milestones achieved by FEMA and other federal partners
- The 2011 Earthquake Survey
  - Surveyed the experiences of federal employees with disabilities during the Mid-Atlantic Earthquake of August 23, 2011
  - Link to online survey distributed by OPM to federal employees within the National Capital Region
  - Analysis conducted by Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), Department of Labor; final Report prepared by CRCL; and approved by ICC Workplace Subcommittee
  - Resulting recommendations: (1) Need for improvements in workplace emergency planning, communications, post-emergency assembly, and empowerment of employees with disabilities; (2) need for mass-evacuation planning in the region to address the possibility that numerous employees with disabilities could be left waiting in areas of refuge within multi-floor buildings

### *FEMA DISABILITY WORKING GROUP*

The FEMA Disability Working Group, chaired by the director of ODIC, includes a representative from each FEMA directorate or office, including the Office of the Administrator, program offices, regional offices, and FEMA supporting offices. The Disability Working Group serves as FEMA’s internal team responsible for ensuring that the access and functional needs of children and adults with disabilities are fully integrated into all aspects of disaster planning, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation efforts initiated and coordinated at the federal level.

In addition, the working group includes representatives from across the Federal Government, including DHS CRCL and other DHS components, the Department of Justice, the Department of Transportation, Health and Human Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), the Federal Communications Commission, the National Council on Disability, the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Disaster Housing Programs at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Office of Disability Employment Policy at the Department of Labor, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Disability Working Group’s primary areas of focus include, but are not limited to:

- disaster planning, preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation, and grant guidance;
- education and training;

- disaster response and recovery operations;
- physical, programmatic, and effective communications access to emergency services;
- public warnings and alerts;
- evacuation planning;
- general population and medical sheltering needs to include transportation, dietary, medical, communication, personal assistance, and mental health services;
- durable medical equipment (DME) and consumable medical supplies to maintain health, safety, and independence;
- temporary and permanent housing;
- disaster case management, benefits, and crisis counseling;
- education, child care, community services, employment, and other aspects of long-term disaster recovery;
- coordination and collaboration across the Federal Government and with state and local partners, as well as external stakeholders;
- public awareness through access and functional needs guidance to educate individuals with disabilities;
- promote inclusive community practices and protect the civil rights of individuals with disabilities during times of disaster; and
- providing a focal point for FEMA's contributions to the work of the ICC.

## *B. Highlights: ICC Member Accomplishments*

This section highlights the accomplishments of ICC member executive departments and agencies in strengthening emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities, during 2010-2013.

### *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY*

#### **Federal Emergency Management Agency**

In 2010, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate committed to establishing a whole community emergency management system that successfully integrated the needs of individuals with disabilities. A milestone in that effort was the establishment of the Office of Disability Integration and Coordination in 2010 under the leadership of Marcie Roth, the congressionally mandated National Disability Coordinator. During this time period, FEMA brought disability integration to the Regions in the form of regional disability integration specialists and entered into Memoranda of Agreement with two major disability organizations. Additionally, Administrator Fugate created the Disability Integration Cadre in 2013 to increase FEMA's capacity to deploy disability integration advisors to every disaster.

## Office of Disability Integration and Coordination

The Office of Disability Integration and Coordination has three critical mission functions: (1) stakeholder engagement; (2) guidance and training; and (3) emergency preparedness and disaster response and recovery. The following is a list of ODIC's significant accomplishments within these mission functions during the reporting period 2010 to 2013.

### *(1) Stakeholder Engagement*

**Memoranda of Agreement:** FEMA and the National Council on Independent Living entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to enable over 450 Centers for Independent Living across the country to provide assistance in FEMA's Disaster Recovery Centers and serve disaster survivors with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.<sup>16</sup> In 2011, FEMA entered into a MOA with the National Disability Rights Network,<sup>17</sup> and in 2012 FEMA signed a MOA with AARP to further formalize ODIC's relationship and information exchange before, during, and after a disaster with its stakeholder community.

**Stakeholder Communication:** FEMA maintains ongoing email communication with over 2,000 disability and emergency management leaders and stakeholder organizations, providing regular updates on inclusive emergency management practices and engaging communities as key partners in preparedness.

**Emergency Alerting:** The FEMA Integrated Public Alerts and Warning System (IPAWS) team and ODIC partnered to convene regular meetings of community and industry experts and federal partners, to discuss the access and functional needs requirements for alerting and warning individuals with disabilities, as an integrated element of IPAWS. As a result of that coordinated effort, FEMA partnered with several organizations and has engaged in accelerated efforts to integrate access and functional needs requirements within the IPAWS program.

### *(2) Guidance and Training*

**Getting Real:** In September 2010, FEMA organized "Getting Real: Inclusive Emergency Management National Capacity Building Training Conference." The conference brought together over 700 leaders from a variety of emergency management and disability organizations—including individuals from businesses; first responders; medical professionals; professors; law enforcement officials; faith-based leaders; local, state, and tribal government officials; and other stakeholders—to discuss strategies to integrate the entire community into planning for emergencies. Presenters included FEMA Administrator Fugate, leadership from DOJ, DOT, HHS, the FCC, and state and local governments, as well as the American Red

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<sup>16</sup> "Agreement Between the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the National Council on Independent Living for Access to a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) to Offer Disaster Assistance Services," 2010, <https://www.fema.gov/pdf/media/2010/agreement-060110-final.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> "Memorandum of Agreement Between the Federal Emergency Management Agency / United States Department of Homeland Security and The National Disability Rights Network," 2011, [http://www.ndrn.org/images/Documents/Issues/Disaster\\_Preparedness/ndrn-fema-moa-031111.pdf](http://www.ndrn.org/images/Documents/Issues/Disaster_Preparedness/ndrn-fema-moa-031111.pdf).

Cross (ARC). Participants identified priorities for inclusive emergency management. The conference was made available via simultaneous, accessible webcast.

FEMA followed up the first conference with the “2011 Getting Real: Promising Practices in Inclusive Emergency Management for the Whole Community Conference.”<sup>18</sup> The object of this conference was to identify promising practices that strengthen whole community emergency management and emphasize inclusion, integration, and independence of individuals with disabilities. Presenters included FEMA Administrator Fugate, senior leadership from various Federal Government agencies, and non-profit organizations. Again, the conference was made available via simultaneous, accessible webcast.

**Guidance on Functional Needs Support Services:** In October 2010, FEMA published *Guidance on Planning for Integration of Functional Needs Support Services in General Population Shelters (FNSS Guidance)*.<sup>19</sup> The document, written for emergency managers and shelter planners at state and local levels, outlines best practices for meeting the access and functional needs of individuals with disabilities in general population shelters. With the guidance, ODIC helped publish a curriculum and delivered training courses for emergency managers and shelter planners in all 10 FEMA Regions.

**Language Guidelines:** FEMA developed guidance on inclusive language in emergency management, “Language Guidelines for Inclusive Emergency Preparedness, Response, Mitigation and Recovery.” The guidance offers respectful and straightforward ways to reference individuals with disabilities using “people-first” language techniques.

**Emergency Management Institute Training:** In 2013, EMI released three training courses about disability integration in emergency management developed by ODIC. “Integrating Access and Functional Needs into Emergency Planning” (E/L197) was designed to give emergency managers the necessary information to utilize disability inclusive best practices in local and state planning. “FEMA Disability Integration Specialist Advisor Course” (E692) was developed to provide instruction to disability integration advisors in training. And “Including People with Disabilities and Others with Access and Functional Needs in Disaster Operations” (IS-368) was developed for personnel involved in disaster operations at a Joint Field Office (JFO) and other disaster response and recovery operations.<sup>20</sup>

### *(3) Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response and Recovery*

**Regional Disability Integration Specialists:** FEMA hired disability integration specialists for each of its 10 regional offices to increase the agency-wide capacity to provide equal access to all FEMA programs and services, and assist states with integrating the needs of their communities. The RDISs are responsible for establishing local, stakeholder partnerships in the

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<sup>18</sup> More information on the “2011 Getting Real: Promising Practices in Inclusive Emergency Management for the Whole Community” is available at <http://1.usa.gov/1Xrgzmc>.

<sup>19</sup> FEMA, *Guidance on Planning for Integration of Functional Needs Support Services In General Population Shelters*, November 2010: [http://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/odc/fnss\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/odc/fnss_guidance.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> “IS-368: Including People with Disabilities and Others with Access and Functional Needs in Disaster Operations” course can be accessed on the EMI website at <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=is-368>.

disability and emergency management community, and providing training and technical assistance across all regional, state, and local emergency preparedness and disaster response, recovery and mitigation functions in collaboration with ODIC.

**Disability Integration Cadre:** The Disability Integration Cadre was established in 2013. The Cadre is comprised of reservist and fulltime Lead DIAs and DIAs with the ability to deploy to any disaster with 24 hours' notice. The Disability Integration Cadre was the 23rd FEMA Cadre. The disability integration advisor and lead disability integration advisor positions were created to expand the number of individuals ready and qualified to deploy to a disaster. During a disaster, the DIA is responsible for providing situational awareness and guidance to the federal coordinating officer, command staff, and the emergency management organization in general. The DIA serves as an advisor and intermediary between the local and state disability advocacy and services leaders and the incident management leadership at the federal level.

In 2013, the DIA position was officially added to the composition of all National Incident Management Assistance Teams. IMATs are highly trained federal emergency response teams that deploy immediately preceding or following a disaster to support affected states requesting federal assistance. Primary duties of the DIA during a disaster include the following:

- Contact disability advocacy and services leaders and promote their integration throughout disaster response and recovery operations;
- Provide situational awareness to partner groups, the incident management organization, other FEMA components;
- Serve as a direct resource to the community and refer disaster survivors with disabilities to appropriate incident personnel;
- Provide technical assistance regarding equal physical, program, and effective communication access; and
- Provide training to internal and external stakeholders on disability integration issues.

**Disaster Recovery Center Communication Accessibility Kits:** In 2012, ODIC developed and implemented a kit of accessible communication technology and protocols for all FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs). These DRC Communication Accessibility Kits contain a wide range of assistive devices for disaster survivors aimed at providing equal access to FEMA programs and services. Included in the kits are the following items: tablets with 4G connectivity for Video Relay Interpreting (VRI) and translation usage; caption telephones (CapTel); amplified telephone; personal amplifier devices; reading magnifier; teletypewriter (TTY); and numerous other accessibility instructions and accessories.

#### Additional FEMA Achievements in Disability Integration

In addition to the activities of ODIC, FEMA had numerous notable achievements aimed at expanding the inclusiveness of emergency practices:

- FEMA is adapting traditional human resource practices to recruit and hire a more diverse workforce, including recruiting qualified applicants with disabilities. In 2010,

FEMA established a Diversity Advisory Council, which has made it a priority to increase opportunities for workers with disabilities. These accomplishments are especially noteworthy because of the commitment to plan for and address the complexities of providing employee accommodations without notice in often austere environments.

- A list of commonly used sheltering items was expanded to include DME and consumable medical supplies for disaster planning purposes. Additionally, specifications for accessible cots were developed to accommodate individuals with and without disabilities. Bulk Purchasing Contracts were established to provide these items in support of state emergency response efforts. Accessible cots, DME, and consumable medical supplies are included in prepositioned and deployed FEMA “push packs” provided to affected states.
- FEMA played an active role seeking input from disability stakeholders and including their input in the development of the National Preparedness Goal and the National Preparedness System. FEMA included explicit inclusion of equal access and functional needs requirements and reasonable modifications throughout the National Planning Frameworks, including the National Response Framework and the National Disaster Recovery Framework, and Federal Interagency Operations Plans, as well as the National Disaster Housing Task Force Guidance.
- FEMA updated the *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101* to encourage emergency and homeland security managers to engage and include the whole community throughout the emergency planning process.<sup>21</sup> This guidance states that fully integrating the needs of individuals with disabilities is a key element of comprehensive planning and recommends addressing access and functional needs throughout base plans, rather than as separate documents or annexes.
- Administrator Fugate addressed the National Summit on Disability Policy on the 20th anniversary of the ADA. The Administrator talked about the progress the emergency management community has made (1) to integrate the needs of individuals with disabilities and (2) to coordinate with state and local officials to ensure inclusiveness at all levels of emergency management.

### Disability Integration Deployments

2011: ODIC staff along with RDISs deployed to approximately 35 disasters.

2012: ODIC staff along with RDISs deployed to approximately 32 disasters.

2013: The Disability Integration Cadre deployed 39 disability integration advisors a total of 58 times to 21 separate incidents.

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<sup>21</sup> FEMA, *Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans: Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101*, Version 2.0, November 2010: [http://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/divisions/npd/CPG\\_101\\_V2.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/divisions/npd/CPG_101_V2.pdf).

## FEMA ODIC Hurricane Sandy Response and Recovery

In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy made landfall on the east coast of the United States impacting more than a dozen states with devastating effect. FEMA worked closely with local disability and emergency management partners to support affected states in their response to and recovery of all disaster survivors. ODIC staff and disability integration advisors deployed to all of the impacted states, advising FEMA leadership on engaging the whole community and achieving accessibility throughout disaster survivor-related programs and services. Significant accomplishments by ODIC staff and disability integration advisors during Hurricane Sandy response and recovery include the following activities:

**Building Assessments:** As part of a team, DIAs assessed potential building sites for FEMA DRCs and JFOs to ensure that they met Rehabilitation Act and ADA requirements for physical, programmatic, and effective communication access for people with disabilities.

**Technical Assistance:** In DRCs, DIAs provided technical assistance to emergency managers and disaster survivors on the use of accessible technology devices. DIAs trained FEMA DRC personnel to support and use a range of assistive technology equipment, including amplified telephones, captioned telephones, amplified listening devices, and reading magnifiers. Tablet devices pre-loaded with VRI applications were made available to disaster survivors.

**Training:** At JFOs, DIAs advised FEMA employees and other emergency managers on equal physical, program, and effective communication access. DIAs assisted External Affairs employees by providing guidance in compliance to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and alternative formats to provide equal access to all publications.<sup>22</sup>

**Applicant Services:** DIAs provided daily guidance and training on disability-related applicant services issues. They gave technical assistance on initiatives to identify the unmet needs of survivors with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

**Neighborhood Task Force Initiative:** The Neighborhood Task Force Initiative was created in New York to handle the diverse needs of the hardest hit neighborhoods. The Task Force established a Neighborhood Crew—including Community Relations representatives, a Voluntary Agency Liaison, Individual Assistance representatives, and DIAs. As a part of the Neighborhood Crew, the DIA supported communities by simplifying bureaucratic obstacles and providing guidance and technical assistance on communication and program accessibility.

**Temporary Sheltering and Housing:** FEMA assigned DIAs within the Individual Assistance Branch to provide guidance on all disability-related temporary sheltering and housing initiatives and issues.

**Community Engagement:** DIAs worked closely with disability partners throughout the response and recovery process, meeting daily for the first two months. They engaged regularly

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<sup>22</sup> Section 508 is an amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which requires the Federal Government to make its electronic and information technology accessible to individuals with disabilities.

with disability community leaders and presented frequent opportunities for open communication at public meetings.

**Accessible Community Meetings:** DIAs worked closely with FEMA staff by providing training and guidance on accessible public meetings to achieve equal access throughout all FEMA-led public meetings—and public meetings with FEMA speakers—to provide American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters and Computer Aided Real-time Translation (CART). Additionally they advised on creating, obtaining, and offering all FEMA publications in alternative formats including braille, large print, and digital. DIAs monitored the accessibility of public meetings and advised on any reasonable accommodation requests.

**Recovery:** DIAs imbedded in all recovery support functions and provided daily guidance and technical assistance on all program issues to ensure equal access for disaster survivors and throughout community recovery activities supported by FEMA.

### FEMA Regional Activity Highlights

#### *FEMA Region I (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)*

- The Region I RDIS provided subject matter expertise across FEMA Region I Divisions on inclusive emergency management practices. Additionally, the Region I RDIS supported programs by providing resources and recommendations to ensure accessibility and compliance with requirements.
- The RDIS deployed and served in the role of DIA and Lead DIA for 12 disasters, including deployments for Hurricane Isaac, Hurricane Sandy, and the Boston Marathon Bombings.

#### *FEMA Region II (NJ, NY, PR, USVI)*

- The Region II RDIS met with officials from Independent Living Centers throughout New Jersey and New York to identify the impact of Hurricane Sandy on individuals with disabilities and to enlist participation in the long-term recovery process.
- The RDIS organized meetings with disability leaders and Disability Advisory Councils/Committees to explain how disability organizations can participate in the long-term recovery process by becoming members of long-term recovery committees. These meetings were conducted in cooperation with Voluntary Agency Liaisons.

#### *FEMA Region III (DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV)*

FEMA Region III developed several video publications during the reporting period that used ASL interpretation, open caption, and narrated English:<sup>23</sup>

- Two “What to Do about Mold across America” videos—one in Spanish;

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<sup>23</sup> All videos in this list can be found in FEMA’s online media library: <http://www.fema.gov/media-library>.

- Two “Long Term Recovery Groups” videos—one in Spanish;
- SBA and end of registration videos; and
- Hurricane preparedness videos.

*FEMA Region IV (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)*

The Region IV RDIS assisted in the development of various courses related to disability and emergency management:

- DIA training course;
- IS-197 Functional Needs Support Services course aimed at state and local emergency managers; and
- Online Disability Awareness course.

*FEMA Region V (IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)*

The Region V RDIS made presentations on disability-inclusive emergency management at the following conferences and meetings:

- Wisconsin Physical Disabilities Council, October 2012: Presented on the federal role in emergency preparedness and response and provided tips for including people with disabilities
- FEMA Region V State Hazard Mitigation Officer Conference, October 2013: Presented on disability-inclusive practices in mitigation
- Kent County Michigan Disaster Mental Health and Human Services Committee, February 2013: Presented on disability-inclusive emergency management
- Wisconsin Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters Conference, March 2013: Presented on understanding the needs of the whole community
- McHenry County Illinois Functional Needs Committee Meeting, May 2013: Presented on “Inclusive Emergency Management”

*FEMA Region VI (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)*

Region VI demonstrated its commitment to disability-inclusive emergency management at a number of disasters, including the April 2013 Fertilizer Plant Explosion in West, Texas. The explosion presented a number of challenges to both the emergency management community and the survivors. A number of survivors experienced life-changing—short and long-term—injuries including blindness and deafness, requiring assistance to familiarize themselves with state and local services available for injury-related and disability assistance.

The Region VI RDIS used the social services wrap-around model to bring vital resources and information to survivors at the Disaster Recovery Center. Through an ongoing working relationship with the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), the

RDIS identified licensed professionals in the Waco office with expertise in assisting newly injured individuals. DARS provided experts in blindness, deafness and physical disabilities who met with survivors to help them connect with local services.

*FEMA Region VII (IA, KS, MO, NE)*

- Region VII used MOAs between FEMA and the National Disability Rights Network and the National Council on Independent Living to help assess disaster impact on people with disabilities and other people who have access and functional needs in:
  - Shelters;
  - Emergency transportation; and
  - Effective communication.
- The region organized a Twitter-based Q&A chat forum using the hashtag #AllReadyChat on September 24, 2013, addressing preparedness for people with disabilities and individuals with access and functional needs. Participants in the chat included an Independent Living Center, a state employee who works on the state access and functional needs committee, and several federal partners.

*FEMA Region VIII (CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)*

Region VIII, led by the Region VIII RDIS, demonstrated a commitment to disability-inclusive emergency management and whole community stakeholder engagement in several key areas:

- Developing an inclusive emergency management model for state and local jurisdictions, which supports integration of people with disabilities into state and local emergency management agencies and visiting each state emergency management agency director to explain the model with full regional administrator support to directors;
- Delivering training and technical assistance to emergency managers and disability service and support agencies throughout 2012 wildfires in Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, and Black Forest to promote inclusion of people with disabilities during response and recovery; and
- Deploying to Mandan, North Dakota and providing training and technical assistance to ND Emergency Support Function (ESF) 6 (Mass Care) and 8 (Medical Services) managers for emergency response and overall planning.

*FEMA Region IX (AZ, CA, HI, NV, GU, AS, CNMI, RMI, FM)*

- Region IX conducted several focus groups to analyze and develop needs assessments to achieve physical, programmatic, and communications access for disaster applicants with disabilities.
- The RDIS organized and coordinated training for Region IX employees on adaptive communication technologies for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have other communication disabilities. The training was provided by Sprint.

### *FEMA Region X (AK, ID, OR, WA)*

The Region X RDIS engaged with various regional stakeholder agencies and organizations that support people with disabilities including the Washington, Seattle King County Public Health's Vulnerable Population Action Team (VPAT). VPAT addresses the full inclusion of disability and other disproportionately impacted populations in planning efforts for transportation, notification and warnings, and assisting community organizations develop emergency response plans.

### **DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties**

CRCL's overall mission is to support DHS, as it secures the Nation, while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.

As one part of this endeavor, CRCL works with its federal partners to remove barriers to full and equal access for individuals with disabilities to disaster-related services and programs. CRCL also works to ensure that the varied perspectives, needs, and civil rights and civil liberties of individuals with disabilities are integral to the Federal Government's emergency management policy, planning, and procedures. CRCL serves as a resource for government partners to ensure that planning and response strategies respect the civil rights and civil liberties of all populations, including individuals with disabilities; racially and ethnically diverse communities; and persons with limited English proficiency.

### Response Activities

As part of its role in providing proactive policy advice regarding civil rights and civil liberties, CRCL provided coordination and guidance to governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, in the lead up to and aftermath of several major disasters during the reporting period.

### *Responding to the H1N1 Pandemic*

During 2009 and 2010, CRCL worked with the Department's Office of Health Affairs to develop the DHS H1N1 strategic plan; the DHS Intra-Departmental Pandemic Influenza Exercise; and DHS Pandemic Influenza workforce guidance. In particular, CRCL worked to ensure that, regardless of disability, DHS employees had equal access to H1N1-related messages, guidance, and any workplace accommodations that might be needed in response to a serious outbreak within the workplace.

### *Supporting International Disaster Response*

Following the devastating earthquake in Haiti in January 2010, CRCL participated in the federal working group created to establish guidelines and procedures for a coordinated federal response to meet the functional needs of Haitians with disabilities. CRCL gathered information about individuals with disabilities impacted by the earthquake, identified concerns, and promoted outreach and communication to key stakeholders, so that issues faced by that population were appropriately addressed. The working group developed recommendations for future incidents, suggesting that DOS, in such situations, incorporate disability issues into their

decision-making and develop a standard process to ensure the inclusion of disability issues into federal international response and recovery efforts.

#### *Responding to the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill*

Following the April 2010 explosion and oil spill in the Gulf Coast, CRCL worked in collaboration with FEMA, the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and other interagency partners to provide substantial support to the Integrated Services Team on access issues. CRCL staff participated in a host of initiatives in the Gulf Coast including training community relations personnel deployed to the region on a wide range of civil rights issues; drafting standard operating procedures (SOPs) regarding the provision of support and services to individuals with limited English proficiency and other communications needs; and drafting policy language on equal access, ultimately adopted by the Gulf Coast Claims Facility.

#### *Responding to the Japanese Earthquake*

Following the devastating earthquake in Japan on March 11, 2011, CRCL led the formation of the ICC Working Group including representation from DHS (CRCL and ODIC), DoS, USAID, HHS, and NCD. The ICC Working Group convened a dialogue with the founder and president of the Asia Disability Institute to share information regarding the status of individuals with disabilities as Japan responded to the ongoing disasters within their country. At the request of the Japanese coalition partners, the U.S. Working Group sent technical assistance materials to Japan, laying out the application of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, the *Rehabilitation Act*, and Executive Order 13347, to individuals with disabilities in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.

#### *Responding to Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee*

CRCL led the ICC in several engagement endeavors with governmental and non-governmental partners following Hurricane Irene (August 2011) and Tropical Storm Lee (September 2011). CRCL worked in tandem with FEMA to contact non-governmental partners in affected areas and serve as a resource for civil rights and civil liberties and other issues relating to individuals with disabilities or other populations that need functional support. Concerns that emerged were communicated to appropriate federal partners—ICC members—so that gaps in assistance could be closed.

#### *Responding to the Midwest Tornadoes*

In March 2012, a series of severe thunderstorms and resulting tornadoes caused widespread damage across the Tennessee and Ohio River Valleys. CRCL coordinated with FEMA and other federal partners to ensure that affected state and local governments were aware of their obligations regarding nondiscrimination in disaster relief.

#### *Responding to the Colorado Wildfires*

Following disastrous wildfires in Colorado in June 2012, CRCL coordinated with the DHS Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships to support FEMA's Voluntary Agency

Liaison cadre on the ground in the impacted areas. Efforts were aimed at outreach to faith-based organizations supporting the relief efforts.

#### *Responding to the Mid-Atlantic Storms*

Following a wave of severe storms in June 2012 that swept through the Mid-Atlantic region, CRCL coordinated with ODIC regarding the extensive damage and prolonged power outages. CRCL's efforts were aimed at ensuring that the Federal Government released public information that was accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency.

#### *Responding to Hurricane Isaac*

Prior to and following the storm, CRCL staff met daily to address potential civil rights and civil liberties concerns involving Hurricane Isaac. CRCL supported U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in developing a statement addressing immigrant communities impacted by the storm. ICE and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), both Components of DHS, released a joint message that affirmed that there would be no immigration enforcement initiatives associated with evacuations or sheltering related to the storm. CRCL obtained translations of the message in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole, and disseminated it to CRCL external stakeholders—including community partners and immigration advocates—and posted it on CRCL's webpages. The message and translations were also shared with ODIC for further distribution to their disability stakeholders involved in emergency preparedness. CRCL participated in the daily National Incident Communication Conference Line (NICCL) calls among federal communicators and shared the message with FEMA External Affairs and other NICCL participants.

#### *Hurricane Sandy Response and Recovery*

CRCL activated its Disaster Civil Rights Coordination Team to address potential civil rights and civil liberties concerns involving disaster response and recovery efforts connected with Hurricane Sandy. The following are CRCL's significant activity during the disaster:

- CRCL disseminated a joint ICE and CBP statement affirming there would be no immigration enforcement operations associated with evacuations or sheltering in the impacted areas. The statement aimed to encourage individuals, regardless of their immigration status, to take life-saving measures in advance of the storm. CRCL translated the statement into Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Haitian Creole, Korean, and Vietnamese, and disseminated it to its federal partners, community based organizations, and immigration groups.
- CRCL collaborated with FEMA's Office of Equal Rights and ODIC to develop a statement and guidance for states, localities, and other federal recipients on their obligations to carry out disaster response and recovery activities in a nondiscriminatory

manner: “Tips for Effectively Communicating with Protected Populations during Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.”<sup>24</sup>

- CRCL contributed to the coordinated federal response efforts by deploying a senior advisor to the JFO in New York to address disability-related issues on the ground. CRCL’s staff member supported FEMA’s disability integration advisor in the following activities: (1) conducting field assessments of mass care shelters and disaster recovery centers to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities; (2) engaging with community stakeholders and the New York City Mayor’s Office to identify and address disability issues; (3) launching a housing initiative to integrate disability accessibility considerations into all aspects of the federal disaster housing mission being coordinated out of the JFO; and (4) collaborating with all levels of government to ensure that repairs are made to critical accessibility features such as ramps, lifts, and electricity for power wheel chairs.

### Policy Accomplishments

CRCL collaborated with its federal partners to integrate the perspectives, functional needs, and civil rights of individuals with disabilities within national emergency management policy and guidance.

**Shaping the National Disaster Recovery Framework:** During 2010 and 2011, CRCL and FEMA continued to develop the NDRF to ensure that the disaster recovery needs of protected populations remain visible.<sup>25</sup> The purpose of the NDRF was to create a comprehensive coordinating structure that would enhance the Federal Government’s ability to work with state and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to effectively deliver recovery assistance. CRCL worked jointly with DOJ and FEMA to integrate broad civil rights principles into the NDRF to ensure that disaster recovery activities do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin—including individuals with limited English proficiency—religion, sex, familial status, and disability. In addition, CRCL, along with other ICC members, participated in the development of the Recovery Support Function Annexes.

**Shaping the National Preparedness Goal:** CRCL was instrumental in contributing to the development of the first iteration of the National Preparedness Goal, released in April 2011, by providing key civil rights and civil liberties principles to ensure that the perspectives and needs of disaster-affected populations are integrated in emergency management policy, planning, and procedures, including individuals with access and functional needs, racially and ethnically diverse communities, and individuals with limited English proficiency.<sup>26</sup>

**Shaping the National Preparedness System:** CRCL collaborated with FEMA and interagency partners to integrate core civil rights principles into the National Planning Frameworks and

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<sup>24</sup> “Tips for Effectively Communicating with Protected Populations during Preparedness, Response, and Recovery” is available at <http://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/tips-effectively-communicating-protected-populations-02-03-15.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup> For more information about the National Response Framework, visit <http://www.fema.gov/national-response-framework>.

<sup>26</sup> The National Preparedness Goal can be found at <http://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-goal>.

Federal Interagency Operational Plans developed under the National Preparedness System. These critical elements of Homeland Security doctrine aim to ensure coordination at all levels of government within the areas of prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. CRCL developed content to ensure full and equal access for all communities.

**Conducting the Earthquake Survey of Federal Employees:** In September 2011, CRCL conducted an online survey to examine the experiences of federal employees during and following the August 23, 2011 earthquake in the Mid-Atlantic area. The survey questions were drafted by CRCL, finalized by the Workplace Subcommittee of the ICC, and distributed by OPM through federal agency human capital offices throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.

DOL's Office of Disability Employment Policy, which serves as Chair of the ICC's Workplace Subcommittee, provided support in conducting the analysis of the data. CRCL edited and approved a draft and presented it to the ICC Workplace Subcommittee in February 2012. CRCL staff then presented the survey report to the Joint Federal Committee of Emergency Managers within the National Capital Region. Following these presentations, CRCL prepared the final version of the report, including refining the explanation of the findings. In May 2012, CRCL transmitted the final report to FEMA in its new role as the Chair of the ICC.

The survey results point to the need for improvements in workplace emergency planning, communications, post-emergency assembly, and empowerment of employees with disabilities. Themes that arose from respondents' suggestions to improve emergency preparedness included: (1) individualizing emergency plans for individuals with disabilities; (2) providing accommodations at assembly areas; (3) implementing training and drills on emergency procedures for employees; (4) utilizing a system in which individuals with disabilities are assisted by other colleagues; and/or (5) empowering individuals to take charge of their own evacuation. In particular, the survey respondents' accounts of the experiences of individuals with mobility disabilities point to the need for mass-evacuation planning in the Mid-Atlantic region to address the possibility that numerous individuals could be left waiting in areas of refuge within multi-floor buildings, exceeding the rescue capacity of local first responders.

### *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION*

In addition to its work as a participating member of the ICC under Executive Order 13347, DOT is the lead agency for the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility, created by Executive Order 13330.<sup>27</sup> This Executive Order charges DOT and other federal agencies with simplifying customer access to transportation; reducing duplication of transportation services; streamlining federal rules and regulations that may impede the coordinated delivery of services; and improving the availability, quality, and efficient delivery of transportation services for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes. DOT fulfills its obligations, under both Executive Orders, through its United We Ride (UWR) initiative.

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<sup>27</sup> Executive Order (EO) 13330, February 24, 2004, "Human Service Transportation Coordination," <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2004-02-26/pdf/04-4451.pdf>.

## Major Activities and Accomplishments

- DOT continued to work with community stakeholders to identify individuals with access and functional needs and the type of transportation required for safe evacuation. Groups such as the American Public Transportation Association and the Community Transportation Association of America are assisting with these efforts.
- Executive Order 13175, which recognizes the unique legal relationship between the Federal Government and tribal governments, sets forth criteria agencies should follow when formulating and implementing policies that have tribal implications.<sup>28</sup> DOT stated that it will work with tribal governments to ensure all future tribal transportation programs integrate the needs of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.
- As a member of the ICC, DOT assisted CRCL in the creation of a new layout for the ICC website, designed to make the site more user-friendly. The new organization of the site places information into three distinct categories: resources for individuals with disabilities, resources for federal partners, and resources for emergency managers.
- *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act* gives the Secretary of Transportation authority to release emergency funding that benefits all residents including individuals with disabilities. Specifically, Section 20017 authorizes the following activities:
  - Capital projects to protect, repair, reconstruct, or replace equipment and facilities of a public transportation system, including on an Indian reservation, which are in danger of, or have suffered serious damage, as a result of an emergency.
  - Operating Costs related to evacuation, rescue operations, temporary public transportation service, or reestablishing, expanding or relocating public transportation route service before, during, or after an emergency.
- DOT collaborated with FEMA to create an Evacuation & Transportation Module as part of the *Integrating Access and Functional Needs* National Training Program. A DOT team participated in the initial pilot training in June 2013.

### Federal Highway Administration

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) staff served as technical representatives to the Hawaii State Civil Defense Mass Evacuation Task Force. Hawaii's geography and large number of transportation-disadvantaged tourists provide unique challenges to mass evacuation. In this capacity, FHWA staff addressed the needs of residents and tourists with disabilities during full evacuations—to a neighbor island or back to mainland—and partial evacuations—to other parts of the island or to a neighbor island. FHWA also provided technical resources to federal agencies—civilian and military, as well as the judiciary—on disability-related needs in evacuations, under the aegis of the Honolulu-

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<sup>28</sup> Executive Order (EO) 13175, November 6, 2000, "Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments," <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2000-11-09/pdf/00-29003.pdf>.

Pacific Federal Executive Board. In addition, FHWA has developed a series of publications that detail emergency transportation preparedness research and procedures.<sup>29</sup>

- In 2012, FHWA released its on-line training, “Principles of Evacuation Planning Tutorial,” FHWA-NHI-133107. This training is designed for transportation and emergency planning stakeholders along with local leadership (e.g., local public and private emergency management stakeholders), as an introduction to evacuation planning, including the evacuation of individuals with disabilities. The self-paced, Web-based training takes approximately eight hours to complete and is publicly available and free of charge.

### Federal Transit Administration

- To incorporate the needs of the community in emergency preparedness training, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) completed a series of training sessions, entitled “Connecting Communities—Public Transportation Emergency Preparedness.” These training sessions, assisted transit authorities with planning for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs and promoted inclusive emergency management.
- FTA funded a variety of research and demonstration projects:
  - The University of New Orleans studied evacuation plans for carless individuals, including older adults and individuals with disabilities. Upon completion of this research, the University of New Orleans created an evaluation framework and test course on carless evacuation, focusing on planning for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs and coordinating large-scale planning at the regional level.
  - The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is evaluating the benefits of leveraging paratransit client databases to help determine who would require additional assistance in the event of an emergency. MORPC composed a framework for evacuation.
- Easter Seals Project ACTION—funded by the FTA—sponsored a webinar, “Accessible Transportation and Emergency Preparedness Planning,” September 18, 2013.
- FTA published an interim final rule for its new Emergency Relief Program.<sup>30</sup> As part of that rulemaking—applicable to Hurricane Sandy recovery—new rolling stock acquired to replace destroyed rolling stock, must be fully compliant with current safety and other design standards and the *Americans with Disabilities Act*. In addition, facilities damaged by the emergency or disaster which require substantial rehabilitation must be

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<sup>29</sup> Emergency Transportation Operations publications developed by FHWA can be found at <http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/publications.htm#eto>.

<sup>30</sup> 49 CFR 602, October 1, 2014, “Emergency Relief Program,” <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-03-29/pdf/2013-07271.pdf>.

brought to compliance with current design standards and the ADA. This policy of allowing recipients to bring repaired and replaced rolling stock and facilities into compliance with ADA using emergency relief funds will ensure greater accessibility for passengers with disabilities.

- In response to Hurricane Sandy, the FTA worked with the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (NY-MTA) to accommodate individuals with disabilities during the South Ferry Station's repair. NY-MTA efforts to support individuals with disabilities include (1) providing extended bus service on the M5 and M20 routes to accommodate persons with disabilities seeking an ADA accessible transportation connection between the South Ferry station and Chambers Street station; (2) updating station signage regarding accessible service; (3) updating NY-MTA's website to list the availability of shuttle service between South Ferry and Chambers; and (4) ensuring NY-MTA employees were properly trained in accordance with "paratransit plan development" in Section 37.137 of Code of Federal Regulations 49.
- In 2012, the FTA released "Response and Recovery for Declared Emergencies and Disasters," a document that provides extensive guidance to ensure that individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited English proficiency are represented in a community's emergency planning.<sup>31</sup> The document recommends strategies for stakeholder engagement and outreach and urges advanced planning for paratransit fleet evacuations.
- The Transportation Cooperative Research Program, funded by the FTA, released the following publications:
  - In 2011, the FTA published "Communication with Vulnerable Populations: A Transportation and Emergency Management Toolkit," demonstrating how to create a communication process to inform individuals with disabilities about their transportation options in emergencies.<sup>32</sup> The toolkit provides a guiding framework and tools for constructing a scalable, adaptable communication process built on a network of agencies, from public, private, and nonprofit sectors.
  - In 2012, the FTA published "Using Pictograms to Make Transit Easier to Navigate for Customers with Communication Barriers," outlining the practical

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<sup>31</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, "Response and Recovery for Declared Emergencies and Disasters: A Resource Document for Transit Agencies," April, 2012:  
[http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA\\_Response\\_Recovery\\_Declared\\_Emergencies\\_Disasters.pdf](http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_Response_Recovery_Declared_Emergencies_Disasters.pdf).

<sup>32</sup> Transportation Cooperative Research Program, "Communication with Vulnerable Populations: A Transportation and Emergency Management Toolkit," *TRCP Report 150*, March, 2011:  
[http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp\\_rpt\\_150.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_150.pdf).

value of directive pictograms and how they can be used effectively to communicate important transportation messages to diverse audiences.<sup>33</sup>

- In 2012, the FTA published the “Paratransit Emergency Preparedness and Operations Handbook.” This handbook provides guidance to paratransit service providers—including public transportation agencies and other public and private paratransit service providers—about preparing for all types of emergencies, including (a) events with notification such as floods, hurricanes, blizzards, and pandemics; and (b) events with no notification, including earthquakes, power blackouts, fires, and acts of terrorism.<sup>34</sup>

### United We Ride

- UWR produced two demonstration call centers in South Carolina and Kentucky which serve as a central number for the transportation-disadvantaged to call during emergencies. These are one-stop call centers, bringing together human service providers and transportation providers.
- UWR’s Emergency Preparedness and Recovery Work Group developed the fact sheet, “Preparing for Disaster: Getting All to Safe Ground,” to provide current, consistent information that addresses the requirements of those with access and functional needs in emergency preparation and disaster response. This fact sheet is primarily intended for federal program managers, working with federal interagency coordinating councils, and it was designed to provide vital information for inclusion in their respective publications, studies, and other outreach material.

### *FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION*

The Federal Communications Commission administers policy that pertains to a variety of public-safety emergency communications systems and programs, and ensures accessibility for individuals with disabilities and other individuals with access and functional needs. Primary areas of focus for the FCC include 911 and E911; emergency alerts; operability and interoperability of public safety communications; communications infrastructure protection and disaster response; accessibility; and network security and reliability. During a major public emergency, the FCC’s primary mission is to ensure continuous operations and restore critical communications systems and services. The FCC collaborates with federal partners and the

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<sup>33</sup> Matherly, Deborah and Mobley, Jane, “Using Pictograms to Make Transit Easier to Navigate for Customers with Communication Barriers” *TCRP Web-Only Document 59*, September, 2012: [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp\\_w59.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_w59.pdf).

<sup>34</sup> Transportation Cooperative Research Program, “Paratransit Emergency Preparedness and Operations Handbook” *TRCP Report 160*, August, 2012, [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp\\_rpt\\_160.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_160.pdf).

communications sector to ensure continuous operations and reconstitution of critical communications systems and services.<sup>35</sup>

In the ICC, the FCC leads the emergency communications focus area, which has three components that must each operate effectively to achieve successful responses and positive outcomes:

- the processing, delivery, and dispatch of 911 communications;
- the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA); and
- the radio and/or broadcast or cable television station news and updates.

## Major Activities and Accomplishments

### Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act

During the period from 2010 to 2013, the FCC was active in implementing the *Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010* (CVAA), signed into law by President Obama on October 8, 2010. This law requires the FCC to take certain steps to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to emerging communications technologies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>36</sup>

### Emergency Access Advisory Committee

The FCC established the Emergency Access Advisory Committee (EAAC) in accordance with the CVAA for the purpose of achieving equal access to emergency services for individuals with disabilities as part of our nation's migration to a national internet protocol-enabled emergency network, also known as the next generation 9-1-1 system (NG9-1-1).<sup>37</sup>

- **Creating and Operating the EAAC:** EAAC meetings took place on a monthly basis from January 2011 to June 2013. The EAAC was composed generally of state and local government representatives responsible for emergency management, representatives of emergency responders, and national organizations representing people with disabilities and senior citizens, subject matter experts, and others.

To fulfill its mission to determine the most effective and efficient technologies and methods by which to enable access to NG9-1-1 emergency services by people with disabilities, the CVAA directed the EAAC to conduct a national survey and solicit input from groups represented by the EAAC's membership.<sup>38</sup> Survey findings and input from EAAC were used to develop EAAC's recommendations to the FCC to implement

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<sup>35</sup> For more information about FCC accessibility programs, visit the FCC's Disability Rights Office website: <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro>. The FCC has also developed a fact sheet that explains how communications systems are affected during an emergency: <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/emergencies.html>.

<sup>36</sup> Pub. L. No. 111-260, 124 Stat. 2751 (2010) (47 U.S.C. 609); Pub. L. 111-265, 124 Stat. 2795 (2010). The foregoing is collectively referred to hereinafter as the CVAA.

<sup>37</sup> CVAA, § 106.

<sup>38</sup> CVAA, § 106(c).

certain technologies and methods that aim to meet the objectives outlined in EAAC's recommendations.

- **EAAC National Survey:** The EAAC developed two subcommittees for the purpose of developing a national survey: (1) Target Population Subcommittee and (2) Survey Questions Subcommittee. The Target Population Subcommittee constructed a list of potential population groups of persons with disabilities and seniors to whom the survey questions would be addressed and from whom the EAAC would seek participation. Target population groups included people who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or have low vision, and people with cognitive and/or developmental disabilities. The EAAC survey questions were available in English, American Sign Language, a simpler English version, and Spanish. The EAAC survey was conducted from March 16, 2011 to April 25, 2011.

The EAAC received and analyzed a total of 3,149 fully completed surveys for its final report. There were also partially complete surveys that, when added to the fully completed survey numbers, showed that more than 12,766 people accessed the survey online. On July 21, 2011, the EAAC released the *Report on Emergency Calling for Persons with Disabilities Survey Review and Analysis 2011* (Survey Report).<sup>39</sup> This report illuminated, with regard to individuals with disabilities, the prevalence of the use of mobile phones and texting and the strong preference to be able to contact 911 by sending a text message

Following release of the Survey Report, the EAAC formed a policy subcommittee and a technical subcommittee that worked with the full committee to draft recommendations on NG9-1-1. The EAAC Report and Recommendations was submitted to the FCC on December 7, 2011.

- **EAAC Activities:** Meeting minutes and meeting presentations are available on the [EAAC website](#). Subsequent to the initial report delivered to the FCC in December 2011, the EAAC released an additional seven reports on critical topics surrounding accessible emergency services for people with disabilities:
  1. Report on Interim Text Messaging to 9-1-1;<sup>40</sup>
  2. Recommendations on Current 9-1-1 and NG9-1-1 Media Communication Line Services Used to Ensure Effective Communication with Callers with Disabilities;<sup>41</sup>
  3. Report on TTY Transition;<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> EAAC, *Report on Emergency Calling for Persons with Disabilities Survey Review and Analysis 2011*, at 3, July 21, 2011: <http://transition.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/EAAC/EAAC-REPORT.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> See [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-319329A1.doc](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-319329A1.doc), released March 1, 2013.

<sup>41</sup> See [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-319394A1.doc](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-319394A1.doc), released March 1, 2013.

<sup>42</sup> See [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-319386A1.doc](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-319386A1.doc), released March 11, 2013.

4. Report on Recommendations on Time Alignment;<sup>43</sup>
  5. Proposed Procedures for TTY as Text Terminal in Legacy PSAPs without IP Connection;<sup>44</sup>
  6. Proposed Procedures for Calls Between TTY users and NG9-1-1 PSAPs;<sup>45</sup> and
  7. Reports on Gaps in NENA i3 NG9-1-1 Specifications Related to EAAC Accessibility Reports.<sup>46</sup>
- **EAAC Text-to-911 Exhibition Fair:** On March 28-29, 2012, at the FCC’s Technology Experience Center, the EAAC hosted an exhibition fair of 10 text-to-911 vendors showcasing numerous commercial products both in concept and in practice.

### Video Programming Accessibility Advisory Committee

The FCC established the Video Programming Accessibility Advisory Committee (VPAAC) in accordance with the CVAA.<sup>47</sup> The VPAAC met a total of four times in 2011 and 2012 to address issues of closed captioning, video description and accessible emergency information for video programming.<sup>48</sup> The first report of the VPAAC focused on closed captioning of video programming delivered using Internet protocol and was released on July 13, 2011.<sup>49</sup> The second VPAAC report was released on April 9, 2012, and included recommendations, among other things, to improve access to emergency information for individuals with disabilities.<sup>50</sup>

The FCC subsequently adopted rules to require televised emergency information to be accessible to individuals who are blind or have low vision in accordance with the CVAA mandate. Certain visually presented emergency information must be broadcast through video description on a secondary audio stream. In addition, commonly used video apparatus must be capable of delivering emergency information to blind individuals by the mandated date.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> See [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-321740A1.doc](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-321740A1.doc), released June 14, 2013.

<sup>44</sup> See [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-321704A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-321704A1.pdf), released June 14, 2013.

<sup>45</sup> See [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-321705A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-321705A1.pdf), released June 14, 2013.

<sup>46</sup> See [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-322164A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-322164A1.pdf), released July 10, 2013.

<sup>47</sup> CVAA, § 201(a).

<sup>48</sup> Meetings occurred in July 2011, May 2011, November 2011, and February 2012. More information about VPAAC is available at <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/video-programming-accessibility-advisory-committee-vpaac>.

<sup>49</sup> VPAAC, *First Report of the Video Programming Accessibility Advisory Committee on the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010: Closed Captioning of Video Programming Delivered Using Internet Protocol*, July 13, 2011: [http://transition.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/VPAAC/First\\_VPAAC\\_Report\\_to\\_the\\_FCC\\_7-11-11\\_FINAL.pdf](http://transition.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/VPAAC/First_VPAAC_Report_to_the_FCC_7-11-11_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>50</sup> The *Second Report of the Video Programming Accessibility Advisory Committee on the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010* was submitted to the Commission in three parts which are available at <http://vpaac.wikispaces.com/home>.

<sup>51</sup> “FCC Adopts New Video Device Accessibility Rules,” <https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-adopts-new-video-device-accessibility-rules>.

## National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program

On July 1, 2012, the FCC launched the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program, establishing—in accordance with the CVAA—a national program for the distribution of accessible communication devices and equipment for low income persons who are deaf-blind.<sup>52</sup> The distribution of such equipment enhances this diverse population's ability to access emergency information and warnings using 21<sup>st</sup> century communications services and technologies. In its first year, hundreds of pieces of equipment were distributed through this program, which allowed deaf-blind individuals to have access to the Internet and advanced communications, including interexchange services and advanced telecommunications and information services.

## Text-to-911

Text-to-911 is the ability to send a text message to reach 911 emergency call takers from your mobile phone or device. In the future, text-to-911 may be widely available in the United States.

The FCC's current proposal regarding text-to-911 is in a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC Docket 12-149).<sup>53</sup> Also AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon have voluntarily committed to provide text-to-911 service by May 15, 2014, in all areas served by their networks where a 911 call center is prepared to receive texts.<sup>54</sup>

Beginning in September 2013, all wireless telephone companies and certain other text messaging providers were required by the FCC to send an automatic "bounce-back" message to any consumer who tries to send a text message to 911 where this service is not yet available. Consumers who receive this "bounce-back" message will be advised to contact emergency services by another means, such as by making a voice call or using a telecommunications relay service. The FCC's order on "bounce-back" messages was adopted May 8, 2013.

Text-to-911 deployment will happen gradually, depending in part on when local 911 call centers prepare their systems to receive texts. The FCC maintains a list of geographical areas where text-to-911 is available and FAQs.<sup>55</sup>

## Emergency Alert System

The Emergency Alert System is a national public warning system that requires broadcasters, cable television systems, wireless cable systems, satellite digital audio radio service providers, and direct broadcast satellite providers to provide the communications capability to the President to address the American public during a national emergency. The system also may be used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information, such as AMBER alerts and weather information targeted to specific areas.

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<sup>52</sup> CVAA, § 105.

<sup>53</sup> "Text-to-911 Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking," <https://www.fcc.gov/document/text-911-further-notice-proposed-rulemaking>.

<sup>54</sup> See <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022074960>.

<sup>55</sup> See <http://www.fcc.gov/text-to-911>.

The FCC, in conjunction with FEMA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS), implements the EAS at the federal level. The President has sole responsibility for determining when the EAS will be activated at the national level and has delegated this authority to the FEMA Administrator. FEMA is responsible for implementation of the national-level activation of EAS tests and exercises. NWS develops emergency weather information to alert the public about imminent dangerous weather conditions.

The FCC's role includes prescribing rules that establish technical standards for EAS, procedures for EAS participants to follow in the event the system is activated, and EAS testing protocols. Additionally, the FCC ensures that the EAS state and local plans developed by industry conform to FCC EAS rules and regulations.

On November 9, 2011, the FCC and FEMA conducted the first-ever nationwide test of the EAS. The purpose of the test was to allow the FCC and FEMA to assess how the national EAS architecture would perform in practice and to develop and implement any necessary improvements. In April 2013, the FCC released “Strengthening the Emergency Alert System: Lessons Learned from the Nationwide EAS Test,” a comprehensive review of the EAS test results.<sup>56</sup>

On September 23, 2013, the FCC released a public notice to seek comment regarding equipment and operational issues identified following the first nationwide test of the EAS.<sup>57</sup> Among other things, this public notice asked for public comment on how the accessibility and functionality of the EAS can be improved in order to ensure that alerts and emergency communications are fully accessible for individuals with disabilities.

### Wireless Emergency Alerts

Wireless Emergency Alerts is a mobile phone alert and a warning system through messages now deployed nationwide. WEA has accessibility requirements for distinctive vibration and aural tones so that people who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or have low vision can identify the WEA alerts.

The FCC, in conjunction with FEMA and the wireless industry, established a public safety system that allows customers who own certain wireless phone models and other enabled mobile devices to receive geographically-targeted, text-like messages alerting them of imminent threats to safety in their area. WEA—formerly known as the Commercial Mobile Alert System or Personal Localized Alerting Network—utilizes technology that ensures that emergency alerts will not get stuck in highly congested areas which can happen with standard mobile voice and texting services.

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<sup>56</sup> See [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-320152A1.docx](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-320152A1.docx).

<sup>57</sup> See Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Seeks Comment Regarding Equipment and Operational Issues Identified Following the First Nationwide Test of the Emergency Alert System, EB Docket No. 04-296, *Public Notice*, 28 FCC Rcd 13810 (September 23, 2013).

## Sandy Response in Support of FEMA

On February 5, 2013, in New York, NY and Hoboken, NJ, the FCC convened a series of field hearings to examine challenges to the nation's communications networks during natural disasters and other emergencies. These field hearings facilitated a wider national dialogue about the resiliency of communications networks by focusing on the impact of Hurricane Sandy.<sup>58</sup> The FCC also detailed one of its staff members for deployment to FEMA Region II as a senior level disability integration advisor under the FEMA Office of Disability Integration and Coordination. That subject matter expert was deployed to the JFO in Monmouth County, New Jersey for three months to assist with emergency assistance in response to the hurricane.

## *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES*

The Department of Health and Human Services made significant progress integrating individuals with disabilities into many critical mission areas. HHS is a large Department comprised of multiple agencies, each with a unique mission aimed at protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services to everyone, including individuals with disabilities. Many HHS agencies do important work that impacts emergency preparedness, response, and recovery for people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. Contributions for this section of the report were collected by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response.

### **Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response**

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Office of Policy and Planning, Division for At-Risk Individuals, Behavioral Health, and Community Resilience (ABC) provided the following information on critical activities and accomplishments in disability-inclusive emergency preparedness.

#### Major Activities

- In October 2010, ASPR/ABC convened a roundtable to elicit feedback and insights from stakeholders on the National Health Security Strategy Biennial Implementation Plan as it pertains to individuals with disabilities, behavioral health, and community resilience. Six overarching themes emerged:
  1. Involve all communities and constituencies;
  2. Integrate planning;
  3. Build community resilience;
  4. Communicate effectively;
  5. Plan for recovery; and

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<sup>58</sup> See <http://www.fcc.gov/events/superstorm-sandy-field-hearing>.

6. Include behavioral health in all implementation plans.

- ABC produced two videos as part of the Public Health Emergency Discussion series, which serve as resources for emergency planners and responders at all levels of government as follows: (1) *Addressing Functional Needs for At-Risk Individuals in Public Health Emergencies and Disasters*; and (2) *Community Resilience Before, During, and After a Public Health Emergency*.<sup>59</sup>
- ASPR/ABC worked with HHS partners including the Office of Civil Rights and the Administration on Children and Families' Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness and Response (ACF/OHSEPR) and ESF #8 Public Health and Medical Services partners to provide input on the following policies, operational plans, guidance, and other materials to ensure that considerations for individuals with access and functional needs are appropriately addressed:
  - Updating the “Shelter Intake Tool,”—in collaboration with the American Red Cross—a screening protocol for identifying individuals with access and functional needs; and the “Cot-to-Cot Assessment,” an evidence-based model for identifying client needs in disaster shelters;
  - *FNSS Guidance*
  - *National Disaster Recovery Framework* and its “Health and Social Services Recovery Support Function Annex;”<sup>60</sup>
  - *National Health Security Strategy Biennial Implementation Plan*;<sup>61</sup>
  - *Response Federal Interagency Operational Plan*;<sup>62</sup>
  - Children’s HHS Interagency Leadership on Disasters Working Group survey instrument and reports;
  - Deepwater Integrated Services Team Gulf Coast Claims Facility protocols;
  - Botulism ESF #8 Playbook;
  - ESF #6 Hurricane Playbook; and
  - ESF #6 Improvised Nuclear Device Concept of Operations Playbook.
- The majority of patients served by ASPR’s Office of Emergency Management/National Disaster Medical System (ASPR-OEM/NDMS) teams were disproportionately impacted populations who experienced access and functional needs in the aftermath of a disaster. For example, NDMS encountered individuals with access and functional needs when

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<sup>59</sup> See <http://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Pages/phediscussion.aspx>.

<sup>60</sup> See [http://www.fema.gov/pdf/recoveryframework/health\\_social\\_services\\_rsf.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/recoveryframework/health_social_services_rsf.pdf).

<sup>61</sup> “National Health Security Strategy and Implementation Plan,” Last reviewed: February 13, 2015: <http://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/authority/nhss/Pages/strategy.aspx>.

<sup>62</sup> FEMA, *Response Federal Interagency Operational Plan*, July 2014: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/97362>.

assigned to work at the Louisiana School for the Blind during routine assignment to the Medical Needs Shelter and while serving as roving Strike Teams visiting general population shelters where individuals with access and functional needs were accompanied by their families, friends, and caregivers. During Hurricane Sandy, ASPR-OEM's United States Public Health Services Rapid Deployment Force provided care on two floors of Brookdale Hospital to nearly 100 individuals from Brooklyn, NY nursing homes. NDMS Disaster Medical Assistance Teams were assigned to affected neighborhoods and communities chosen by the state, county, parish, and city.

- In 2012, ASPR began work to address the serious health risks faced by individuals who rely on electrically-powered DME during prolonged power outages. The goal is to develop solutions for individuals who rely on DME that allow them to remain in their own home, stay with a loved one, or relocate to a general population shelter. This approach reduces the stress on healthcare facilities, creates safer environments for DME users, and prevents DME users from being separated from their friends and family during an emergency. In June 2013, ASPR and Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in partnership with the City of New Orleans successfully piloted a first-in-the-nation emergency preparedness drill. The drill assessed whether a limited dataset of claims data could assist a local health department in developing actionable information to rapidly identify and conduct outreach to individuals who rely on electricity-dependent, oxygen delivery systems (e.g., oxygen concentrators, ventilators) and may require life-sustaining or maintaining assistance prior to, during, or after a disaster.
- ASPR, in collaboration with CMS, successfully conducted proof-of-concept response and recovery research studies using claims data during Hurricane Sandy. The studies provide valuable information, including identifying early indicators of healthcare system preparedness and stress as well as adverse outcomes for disproportionately impacted populations (e.g., dialysis) that rely on life-sustaining healthcare services. Best practices identified during these studies were promoted with government, healthcare, and academic partners.
- ASPR is advancing community, health systems, and individual resilience through targeted preparedness, response, and recovery research activities. Research initiatives are empowering practitioners to build shared evidence-bases and identify best practices that can be utilized across government, health care, and academia. Recent activities include:
  - ASPR established the first ever disaster recovery research grant program to assess Hurricane Sandy's impact on the healthcare system. Many of the grant activities address individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.
  - ASPR, in collaboration with other federal partners, is developing a broad and pre-linked recovery research dataset to facilitate investigator collaboration, inform long-term recovery studies, and build recovery evidence-bases that will inform future preparedness, response, and recovery activities.

## Major Accomplishments

- In March 2011, ASPR/ABC worked with the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and the North Texas Radio for the Blind to distribute accessible public service announcements (PSAs) for public health emergencies and disasters to all of the major Texas radio stations for persons with low-vision or blindness. ABC has also shared accessible PSAs with FEMA's Office of Disability Integration and Coordination which sent the PSAs to over 1,000 disability organizations and state and local responders.
- In 2011, ASPR published the *Behavioral Health Concept of Operations* that describes coordination and guidance for federal-level behavioral health response and recovery to disasters and public health emergencies. The plan describes how HHS transitions from normal day-to-day operations to coordinated department-wide response to the behavioral health elements of a public health and medical emergency.<sup>63</sup>
- In 2012, ASPR/ABC worked with HHS partners—Administration for Community Living, Office of Civil Rights, Office of General Council, and Medical Reserve Corps—FEMA, and DOJ to resolve definitional and operational challenges to define the mission space of ESF #6 (Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services) and ESF #8 (Public Health and Medical Services), towards integrating the access and functional needs of individuals with medical requirements in disasters. The consensus language regarding HHS support for individuals with disabilities in a mass care setting was reflected in the final draft of the *Response Federal Interagency Operational Plan*.
- From 2012 to 2013, ASPR/ABC worked with HHS partners (ACF/OHSEPR, ACF's Lead Regional Administrator for Emergency Preparedness and Response, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) Office of Regional Operations, ASPR-OEM Recovery Division, and ASPR-OEM's Regional and International Coordination Division) to develop the *Disaster Human Services Concept of Operations* that describes coordination and guidance for federal-level disaster health and human services response and recovery in disasters and public health or medical emergencies. The plan describes how HHS transitions from normal day-to-day operations to coordinated department-wide response to the disaster human services elements of a public health and medical emergency.
- From 2012 to 2013, ASPR/ABC published seven fact sheets that serve to strengthen emergency preparedness and response for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. ABC's goal is to coordinate with internal and external partners to ensure that the access and functional needs of at-risk individuals are integrated into public health and medical emergency preparedness, response, and recovery plans. The seven new fact sheets are as follows:<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *HHS Disaster Behavioral Health Concept of Operations*, December, 2011: <http://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=697340>.

<sup>64</sup> All fact sheets can be found at <http://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Pages/resources.aspx>.

- “Disaster Response for Homeless Individuals and Families: A Trauma-Informed Approach”
- “Personal Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities: Sheltering in Place and Evacuation”
- “FEMA’s Functional Needs Support Services Guidance”
- “Planning for Psychiatric Patient Movement During Emergencies and Disasters”
- “Understanding How to Accommodate Service Animals in Healthcare Facilities”
- “U.S. Public Health Services Access Teams”
- “Personal Assistance Services to General Population Shelter”

## **Office for Civil Rights**

### Major Activities

- The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) provided comment on various draft documents including:
  - National Planning Frameworks;
  - Response, recovery, prevention, protection, and mitigations Federal Interagency Operational Plans;
  - *Disaster Recovery Framework Concept of Operations*;
  - All Hazards Playbook;
  - *Health and Social Services Recovery Support Function*;
  - CMIST Referral Checklist; and
  - *National Health Security Strategy Biennial Implementation Plan*.
- OCR participated on the DHS-led Interagency Access and Functional Needs Definition Working Group and developed a definition and guidance for individuals with access and functional needs.
- OCR participated in the following additional working groups:
  - National Response Framework Access and Functional Needs Subcommittee;
  - HHS Long-Term Disaster Recovery Work Group;
  - National Health Security Strategy Work Group; and
  - Emergency Preparedness Health Subcommittee of the ICC.

### Major Accomplishments

- OCR co-led the Civil Rights Foundations in Emergency Preparedness Interagency Work Group, along with the Civil Rights Division in the Department of Justice and the DHS

Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. Among its accomplishments, the Work Group identified all laws, regulations, agency guidance, policies, and procedures that promote the inclusion of individuals with disabilities and other individuals protected under federal civil rights laws into all phases of an emergency or disaster.

### **Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health**

- The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, is the lead for the Healthy People initiative. In 2010, HHS launched “Healthy People 2020,” the fourth decade of national disease prevention and health promotion goals. The Healthy People 2020 Topic Area on “Disability and Health” defines 27 national objectives with 10-year targets aimed at promoting the health and well-being of individuals with disabilities. Data tracking progress towards achieving the targets is available online. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is responsible for the ongoing management and implementation of this topic area and its objectives.<sup>65</sup>

### **Office of Minority Health**

- The Office of Minority Health (OMH) and OCR collaborated to present the Seventh National Conference on Quality Health Care for Culturally Diverse Populations, “Introduction to Evaluating a Cultural Competency Curriculum for Disaster Preparedness and Response.” The presentation touched on federal civil rights standards protecting persons with disabilities, as well as such standards protecting persons from diverse cultural origins and persons with limited English proficiency.
- OMH developed the Cultural Competency Curriculum for Disaster Preparedness and Crisis Response. The course is an accredited online continuing education curriculum designed to equip disaster personnel with the knowledge, awareness, and skills needed to provide emergency health services in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner to diverse populations.<sup>66</sup>

### **Administration for Children and Families**

#### Major Activities

- In response to the demand for information and communication about immediate issues regarding human services in disasters, the President’s Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities and the ACF Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD)<sup>67</sup> hosted the 2010 ACF Human Services in Disasters Virtual Leadership Event, which focused on the role of service providers to disproportionately impacted children

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<sup>65</sup> Healthy People 2020 Data can be found at <http://www.healthypeople.gov/>.

<sup>66</sup> See <https://cccdpcr.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/>.

<sup>67</sup> In 2012, the Administration on Developmental Disabilities was merged into the new Administration for Community Living.

and families in all 10 HHS Regions. The purpose of the virtual event was to promote communications among governmental human services agencies, neighborhood organizations, and emergency managers for effective responses during crisis events. In addition, ADD coordinated a session on the Disaster Case Management (DCM) pilot project that was developed following Hurricane Katrina. This session was designed to assist national contractors in ensuring that a disability perspective was included and that trainees were exposed to the concepts of access and functional needs and cultural competency prior to implementation of the DCM project in Baton Rouge.

- In August 2010, ADD<sup>68</sup> announced Emergency Preparedness Grants for projects to allow individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to prepare for and remain intact during emergency situations. These projects link individuals with developmental disabilities and families with emergency and disaster-related services and programs. They seek to identify how to evacuate individuals to safe locations and rapidly reunite them with their families; how to guarantee continuous access to medical and mental health care services and supplies; how to transition students back into educational settings; how to provide individuals with developmental disabilities safe housing; how to provide caregivers, home health aides, and service animals; and how to help individuals with developmental disabilities and their families develop personal disaster kits.
- In March 2012, staff from ACF/OHSEPR and ASPR/ABC partnered to provide training at the National Conference of the American Society on Aging on disaster human services relevant to older adults and individuals with access and functional needs.
- In 2011, during the Alabama tornado outbreak, ACF/OHSEPR and ACF/ADD<sup>69</sup> provided technical assistance to the Alabama State Council on Developmental Disability regarding appropriate risk messaging for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- During the 2012 Hurricane Sandy disaster, ACF used social media to promote public awareness of the increased risk of domestic violence in disasters. All promotions for the ACF-supported National Domestic Violence Hotline, included information on accessible contact methods for people who are deaf and hard of hearing.

### Major Accomplishments

- At the Administration for Children and Families, the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) helped develop statewide emergency preparedness and response plans for childcare and the CCDF program. The new guidance encouraged state childcare regulatory agencies to evaluate childcare providers' emergency preparedness activities, including evacuation and relocation, shelter-in-place, family reunification, and accommodation of children with disabilities.

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

- Starting in 2011, ACF/OHSEPR provides a 90 minute training module, *At-Risk Individuals and Populations in Disasters and Public Health Emergencies*, to all newly commissioned U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps officers as part of the Officer Basic Course held by the Office of the Surgeon General. The training includes operational, cultural, and legal issues regarding disaster survivors with access and functional needs.
- From 2011 to 2013, ACF/OHSEPR conducted immediate DCM missions in state disasters including the Texas wildfires, Tropical Storm Irene and Lee in New York and Vermont, tornadoes in Massachusetts, and Hurricane Sandy in New Jersey. DCM provided disaster survivor households with a single point of contact to access an array of benefits, services, and programs to address disaster-related unmet needs. Referral to resources for those with access and functional needs is one category of services.
- During the Hurricane Sandy response mission in 2012, ACF deployed Human Services Liaison personnel to the New Jersey and New York Incident Response Coordination Teams, the New York City Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and the New York and New Jersey JFOs. Human services liaison officers from ACF and ACL provided subject matter expertise and operational support to public health and medical teams with regard to the needs of children, older adults, and individuals with access and functional needs including individuals with disabilities.

## **Administration for Community Living**

In 2012, the Administration for Community Living was created by bringing together the Administration on Aging, the Office on Disability, and the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities into a single agency that seeks to enhance and improve the broad range of supports that individuals may need to live with respect and dignity as full members of their communities.

The Office on Disability continued to monitor states' inclusion of individuals with disabilities in their emergency preparedness plans. In 2010, an additional eight states reported inclusion of guidance for individuals with disabilities during public health emergency and disasters, forming a total of 48 states. The Office on Disability continued to provide guidance to the remaining states through the Community Planning Toolkit for State Emergency Preparedness Managers.

ACL Regional Offices held disaster preparedness conferences calls with their states in 2013 to share ideas and best practices. In coordination with ASPR, ACL conducted the presentation, *Keeping Older Americans and People with Disabilities Safe and Healthy in Emergencies*, at three conferences in 2012 and 2013: one presentation at the National Area Agency on Aging Conferences and two presentations at the 2012 and 2013 Southeastern Area Agency on Aging Conference.

### Major Accomplishments

**Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program:** The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center provided a final report of recommendations to assist ACL in

developing model policies and practices for ombudsman programs. This included a toolkit for ombudsmen that contains resources, best practices, checklists, and information to be shared with consumers, families, long-term care facility administration, and partner agencies as well as training of state and local ombudsmen. In-person training occurred in April 2013, providing an overview of the project and examples of best practices, with 41 states attending. A webinar for all long-term care ombudsmen was held in May 2013. An issue page on emergency preparedness has also been updated with additional resources, best practices, trainings, checklists, and the newly developed Tip Sheets and Best Practice Models.<sup>70</sup>

**Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities:** The Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) developed a number of Projects of National Significance focusing on emergency preparedness. These projects focused on the most pressing issues affecting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Through Projects of National Significance, AIDD funded five states (Delaware, Hawaii, Minnesota, New Jersey, and North Carolina), in August 2010, to design mechanisms whereby individuals with developmental disabilities and their families can be served and assisted during emergency situations. These states worked in collaboration with partners and various agencies by pooling resources, coordinating services, and sharing expenses to effectively meet the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families during an emergency. They also collaborated to train individuals with developmental disabilities and their families on how to prepare for emergency situations, as well as how to return to their regular routines in a timely manner. These grants ended in 2012. Some accomplishments of all five projects are highlighted below:

- **Delaware:** The Collaboration for Inclusive Emergency Preparedness and Response developed a toolkit consisting of a personal emergency readiness planner for individuals with development disabilities and their families and an accompanying navigator's guide. The toolkit included prompts to help individuals with various disabilities prepare a plan to address their own needs during an evacuation or when sheltering in place. Navigators were trained to use this toolkit to assist individuals with disabilities in the preparation of a customized emergency readiness plan.
- **Hawaii:** Hawaii identified and adapted a *Feeling Safe, Being Safe* curriculum to best meet the needs of the target population. Several self-advocates participated in the train-the-trainer program, professional development and organizational skills training, and completed all the steps to becoming certified trainers for the *Hawaii Feeling Safe, Being Safe Training*.<sup>71</sup>
- **Minnesota:** The *Being Prepared, MN Emergency Preparedness Project* trained more than 120 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including individuals who are on the autism spectrum. The training included personal safety planning, H1N1 tips for parents and self-advocates, and tips for winter storms and

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<sup>70</sup> See <http://ltombudsman.org/issues/emergency-preparedness>.

<sup>71</sup> "Feeling Safe, Being Safe Training and Resource," <http://www.cds.hawaii.edu/projects/fsbs/>.

extreme cold. The project also resulted in more than 100 first responders being trained on how to serve people with autism in emergencies.

- **New Jersey:** The *Alianza Emergency Preparedness Project* distributed 90 wrist bands to individuals with disabilities, who may have difficulty communicating. The wrist band contained a USB drive that included Self-Directed Emergency Preparedness Plans with vital personal and family information. Individuals who may have difficulty speaking or remembering important personal information could give an emergency shelter worker the USB drive to retrieve the necessary information.
- **North Carolina:** Developed the *PREPreparation for Emergencies and Recovery: Supporting Individuals with Disabilities and their Families* website through the University of North Carolina, which enabled individuals with disabilities and their families to create PREP plans. The completed website included the template for creating an individual or family PREP Plan, as well as information about the PREP.<sup>72</sup>

**FEMA Memorandum of Agreement:** The National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) signed a MOA with FEMA in 2011 to strengthen the developmental disability network's ability to collaborate with officials before, during, and after an emergency and ensuring the needs and concerns of individuals with a disability are heard. NDRN also established a Memorandum of Understanding with ARC in 2010 to collaborate on issues affecting the disability community.

### Major Activities

- ACL provided extensive comments and met with CMS on their proposed rule to establish national emergency preparedness requirements for Medicare and Medicaid participating providers and suppliers. ACL raised awareness of the specific needs of persons with disabilities and the role of the provider when preparing for and responding to disasters.
- Office on Disability and ACL collaborated with FEMA ODIC, ASPR/ABC, DOJ, and other relevant stakeholders on the development of a consumer-centered approach to functional needs and supportive services guidance.
- Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs (LTCOP) working through the National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center provided a supplemental grant to conduct: (1) research and analysis of effective practices by state and local LTCOP for emergency planning and response on behalf of long-term care residents; (2) development of model practices for Ombudsman programs on responding to the needs of residents before, during and after an emergency; (3) development of pertinent materials including best practices and resources information; and (4) training for state and local Ombudsmen. The goal was to provide information, resources, and training to state and local LTCOP to support and enhance long-term care resident emergency preparedness activities before, during, and after emergency situations.

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<sup>72</sup> See <http://fsp.unc.edu/education-training>.

- During the Superstorm Sandy response in 2012, ACL detailed senior staff to ASPR to provide situational awareness and expert advice on the needs of older adults and people with disabilities in emergency response and recovery. ACL regional and policy staff provided further support and information in support of this effort.
- ACL convened an internal working group on the needs of power dependent populations and met with ASPR's ABC team to share the recommendations and findings of our workgroup.
- The National Disability Rights Network, the non-profit membership organization for the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) Systems, developed a fact sheet on whole community planning in response to a precedent setting, emergency management lawsuit, mandating that individuals with disabilities must be included in the planning process.
- ACL's AIDD programs work to ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families are able to fully participate in and contribute to all aspects of community life. The AIDD programs set priorities at state and local discretion, including emergency preparedness efforts. Each state and territory has a Developmental Disabilities Council. ACL/AIDD supports a P&A Agency in each state and territory and a P&A for Native Americans. The University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UCEDDs) comprise a national network of 68 University Centers throughout the states and conduct interdisciplinary training, exemplary community services, research, and information dissemination activities. In each state or territory, this group of grantees forms a Developmental Disabilities Network that is uniquely positioned to meet the diverse needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and work cross-functionally in each state.

## State and Territorial Developmental Disabilities Councils

**Alaska:** The Alaska Council collaborated with the Maternal Child & Family Health to write a grant increasing the number of individuals with disabilities who receive preventative health care and are prepared for emergencies. Alaska was one of four states to receive this grant award.

**California:** The California Council conducted the Feeling Safe, Being Safe program for local self-advocate chapters throughout the state. Attendees received information and training on preparedness and creating emergency kits and were issued "In Case of Emergency" cards with their photo and other information that would be helpful to emergency responders.<sup>73</sup>

**Connecticut:** The Connecticut Council formed an Emergency Preparedness task force in response to a series of storms. The task force developed a Request for Proposal for pilot programs to develop an effective emergency plan that includes a registry of individuals with

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<sup>73</sup> "Feeling Safe, Being Safe," State of California, Department of Developmental Services: <http://www.dds.ca.gov/ConsumerCorner/fsbs/>.

disabilities and a plan to assist these individuals. The task force also developed and printed brochures for people with developmental disabilities and their families on how to plan for an emergency. These brochures were disseminated through disability organizations in the state and made available online. The task force developed a second Request for Proposal to fund the development and implementation of emergency preparedness training for individuals with disabilities.

**District of Columbia:** The District of Columbia Council collaborated with the District of Columbia (DC) Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, Serve DC, DC Department of Health, and other community-based stakeholders to effectively incorporate the access and functional needs of DC residents, including individuals with developmental disabilities in emergency planning.

**Guam:** The Guam Council, through a collaborative partnership with the Guam Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education Research and Service and the Guam Legal Services Corporation-Disability Law Center, developed the *Emergency Preparedness Handbook* to assist and provide general information and guidance to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the general public in the event of a disaster.

**Kentucky:** The Kentucky Council sponsored the Appalachian Inclusive Emergency Preparedness Conference in which 120 first responders learned how to better assist individuals with disabilities in emergency situations.

**New Hampshire:** The New Hampshire Council developed the State's Sheltering and Volunteer Registry Plan, *NH Helps*, for individuals with access and functional needs and trained emergency personnel statewide to ensure that the needs of all citizens with disabilities are met in an emergency. The Council helped develop and publicize *NH Functional Needs Guidance State Emergency Operations Plan Support Annex Version 3*, which was supported by FEMA's Office of Disability Integration and Coordination. Council staff participated in a national FEMA Think Tank committee, advocating for individuals with developmental disabilities, in planning how to respond to a community-wide emergency. It published *New Hampshire General Sheltering – A Guide for Local Jurisdictions* as a reference guide for local communities who provide shelter to the general population in emergencies. The Council was involved in organizing the NH Emergency Planning Conference to provide training on emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities to armed forces' veterans, NH Council members, and community groups.

**New Jersey:** The New Jersey Council prepared a presentation and emergency preparedness guide for individuals with developmental disabilities. The training covered emotional and psychological aspects in emergency management including who to trust during a disaster, remaining calm, and if possible, going to a family member or friend. In 2008, the Council developed train-the-trainer materials and contracted with agencies to provide emergency preparedness training to individuals living in a group home and independent living arrangements. In FY 2012, 1,830 people were trained.

**Virginia:** The Virginia Council is represented on the Secretary's Health and Human Resources Emergency Preparedness Planning Team. The Virginia Department of Emergency

Preparedness re-established its Citizen Corps program and participated in planning efforts to engage individuals with disabilities in local emergency preparedness planning as part of a whole community philosophy.

## **University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities**

### Hawaii

Hawaii's geographic location possesses unique challenges to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. There is a need for families and communities, on all islands, to achieve a state of all-hazards preparedness and to establish a collaborative working relationship between relevant agencies and community resources. Through the Family Support Emergency Transition One-Stop Planning program much has been accomplished statewide; however, more in-depth plans and implementation are required for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

- **Goals:** (1) Identify and define the needs, resources, and training necessary to assist individuals with developmental disabilities and families during emergencies; (2) Build consensus and develop an implementation plan to establish a one-stop system for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families; (3) Assess, design, and coordinate an inclusive single point of entry information system that will provide information about programs, trainings, and resources related to emergency preparedness; and (4) Define the parameters, stakeholder training needs, and responsible lead agencies for a one-stop center.
- **Features:** Establish an Advisory Council composed of family members and individuals with disabilities along with state and county agencies to provide oversight to the project. Statewide stakeholder summits will identify and define educational and training needs for all stakeholders, resources, recruitment and outreach strategies, referral process in order to provide in-depth family-centered planning for transition emergency services and supports to a minimum of 60 individuals with developmental disabilities and their families annually.
- **Benefits:** The effectiveness of the project will be measured as follows: (1) An Implementation Plan for a one-stop system will be developed and approved by partner agencies; (2) Memoranda of Understanding will be developed to define the roles.

### New Mexico

The Pueblo Emergency Connections, Family Support 360 builds on existing resources for under-served Native American individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in the Sandoval County Pueblos in New Mexico to prepare for emergency situations. The seven pueblos include: Cochiti, Jemez, Sandia, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Santo Domingo, and Zia. The project will be a collaborative venture between the Center for Excellence, Educating Parents of Indian Children with Special Needs, the Native American Independent Living Center, the Native American People First Chapter, tribal governance, and state and county emergency

preparedness agencies. This project will recognize issues of tribal sovereignty within the context of existing state and federal emergency systems for a culturally diverse population.

- Organizations will pool resources, coordinate services, and share expenses to accomplish the following objectives: (1) A multi-agency consortium will develop an implementation plan and oversee the project. Members will be drawn from collaborating organizations, tribal councils, and family members from each Pueblo. (2) An effective outreach strategy will insure eligible families are served by the project. (3) A one-stop center will be established in Sandoval County, a central location to the targeted communities. (4) A culturally appropriate family emergency-support planning tool will be developed. (5) Training curricula will be developed to prepare individuals and their families for emergency transitions, increase awareness of available resources, and explain how to access web-based information. (6) Peer navigators from within the community will be identified and trained to help targeted families develop individualized emergency plans and to connect with local emergency agencies.
- Expected Outcomes: (1) Increased general preparedness for emergency situations among individuals with developmental disabilities and their families as demonstrated by 60 families with an emergency plan. (2) Increased community awareness of the importance of emergency planning as indicated by the number of outreach and training activities.

#### New York (Westchester)

The Center for Excellence developed a multi-session training program entitled, *My Safety, My Responsibility, My Plan*, to help individuals with cognitive disabilities, individuals with mobility disabilities, and others with access and functional needs prepare in an emergency.

- The program includes information and discussion, hands-on activities, and between-session tasks. The step-by-step approach and follow-up at each session are key elements in ensuring that tasks are completed. Materials are written in plain language with important words and concepts clearly defined. Each session involves activities that encourage the participants to think about the important emergency factors. Information gathered from the worksheets, community tasks, and other activities are then transferred to the appropriate areas of their Personal Emergency Plan, which is placed in a folder along with copies of important documents, and kept in their go-bag. At the end of the program, each participant has a curriculum with vital information that they can refer to in an emergency, as well as a Personal Emergency Plan that is suited to their individual needs.
- The first version of the training was developed for individuals who live somewhat independently and have the ability to take some control of their situation in an emergency. The Center for Excellence conducted focus groups for the initial training. The Center for Excellence will provide train-the-trainer workshops to agency staff on using the materials as well as for service coordinators. It is developing a version of the curriculum to focus on emergency plans for families that have individuals with disabilities living at home.

- The Center for Excellence will provide technical assistance to government emergency officials, agencies such as the Red Cross and companies directly involved in emergency planning—such as Entergy, disability groups, schools, and others.
- The Center for Excellence continued to disseminate the *Tips for First Responders* resource for emergency managers and first responders on including the needs and priorities of individuals with disabilities in emergency planning and response.

## **Protection and Advocacy**

### Arizona

The Arizona Center for Disability Law and the Statewide Independent Living Council have collaborated with the Arizona Department of Emergency Management to develop assistive technology caches stored around the State of Arizona to be delivered to shelters in times of emergency evacuation. The Arizona Center for Disability Law collaborated with People First of Tucson to create an outreach booth at the 2012 Special Olympics in Tucson.

### Connecticut

In FY 2011, the P&A staff in Connecticut collaborated with the Departments of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Public Health, Public Safety and Public Works, and individual municipalities on the disability related aspects of emergency planning. The Connecticut P&A provides a watchdog presence in the planning process and emphasizes the principle of universal access approach.

At the end of August 2011, Tropical Storm Irene brought down much of Connecticut's electrical and communications infrastructure for extended periods of time. P&A staff responded to calls about electricity-dependent assistive technology that required recharging and the need for assistance with other DME. While inconvenience and anger over the length of time required for power and telecommunication restoration were widespread, these events caused particular problems for individuals who rely on electrically-dependent technology to maintain their independence.

In response to calls after Irene, the Connecticut P&A sent out a survey to document the experiences of individuals with disabilities during and after the storm. P&A staff members talked with agencies, organizations, and individuals with disabilities to record their experiences during the storm. The P&A synthesized the survey and anecdotal information and requested to provide testimony to the response-evaluating storm panel established by the Governor. P&A staff educated the panel about the experiences of individuals with disabilities and provided recommendations about future emergency planning for individuals with disabilities.

### Georgia

The Georgia Advocacy Office is an integral part of the Georgia's Emergency Preparedness Coalition for Individuals with Disabilities and the Elderly. The Coalition consists of ARC, the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund, the Disability Resource Group, the Emory Center for

Public Health Preparedness, the Georgia Department of Human Resources/Office of Facilities and Support Services/Division of Aging and Division of Public Health, the Georgia Emergency Management Agency, the Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission/State ADA Coordinator's Office, the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Southeast ADA Center, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and Tools for Life, the State Technology Act Agency.

In 2011, the President declared 25 counties in Georgia eligible to receive FEMA benefits due to a series of tornados. FEMA set up 13 Disaster Recovery Centers and contacted 87 faith-based organizations to support the over 3,292 individuals who applied for assistance. The Georgia Advocacy Office participated on daily calls, hosted by FEMA's Regional Integration Disability Specialist and other organizations—Georgia Emergency Management Agency, Division of Aging, ARC, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—to update each other and to ensure that the unmet needs of individuals with disabilities were expediently resolved.

The Georgia Advocacy Office developed a flyer to reach out to individuals with disabilities who were affected by the severe weather. The flyer was distributed to the Georgia Emergency Preparedness Coalition for Individuals with Disabilities and Older Adults and to their Network Members. As a result of the flyer distribution, the Georgia Advocacy Office was contacted by the Director of Emergency Preparedness and Response in the Coastal Health District, located in Brunswick, Georgia—an area not affected by the tornados—with a request to assist with future planning toward full implementation of the FEMA Functional Needs Support Services Guidelines in general population shelters. In response, the Georgia Advocacy Office developed a resource guide for Georgian's with disabilities to use during disaster recovery. The guide features resources for housing, assistive technology, and transportation. It distributed to all members of the Georgia Emergency Preparedness Coalition for Individuals with Disabilities and Older Adults, their Network Members and placed on the state ADA coordinator's website.

### Louisiana

The Advocacy Center submitted comments on the U.S. Access Board's proposed guidelines for emergency transportable housing used after a disaster outlining concerns about the minimum number of accessible units required and accessibility of kitchen sinks and faucets. The final regulations have not been issued.

Advocacy Center staff helped revise policies and volunteer training manuals to better acknowledge the accessibility needs of individuals with disabilities after disasters. As part of the Emergency Management Disability and Aging Coalition, the Advocacy Center prepared to represent the needs of individuals with disabilities at the EOC if a disaster should affect Louisiana. Through participation in emergency preparedness exercises, Advocacy Center staff ensured that emergency managers and first responders are better prepared to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Advocacy Center staff also assisted in the development of a smart phone application and training to be used by first responders and volunteers immediately after a disaster.

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- During the response phase to the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) worked in collaboration with disability service providers to ensure that state and local health officials designated direct care staff members, as healthcare workers, with high priority for immunization. These workers provided essential ongoing services and supports to individuals receiving residential care in congregate facilities and other services critical to their health and well-being.
- The CDC Emergency Risk Communication Branch plays an integral role in communication efforts by ensuring that CDC, speaking in one voice, is able to reach diverse audiences with rapid, effective, and consistent emergency communications. The mission of the Outreach Team is to provide expertise in cultivating relationships with specific public audiences; to disseminate information about behavioral interventions and tailor outreach strategies to these audiences; to enhance knowledge and skills; promote and protect health; strengthen trust; and minimize misconceptions. For example, during 2009 H1N1 pandemic, CDC linked its web resources to [www.DeafMD.org](http://www.DeafMD.org). The DeafMD website provides health information in American Sign Language. In addition, as an emergency effort, CDC amended an existing cooperative agreement with the University of Rochester Prevention Research Center. Their efforts resulted in the production of two captioned videos; one targeting individuals who are deaf and the other targeting parents and caregivers. The videos covered both general flu information and H1N1.

## Division of Human Development and Disability, CDC

**Surveillance:** CDC's Division of Human Development and Disability (DHDD) conducted surveys using the Behavioral Risk Factor Survey System's (BRFSS) internet panel survey, to assess emergency preparedness among adults with disabilities, to include sheltering needs.

**Communication:** DHDD developed and disseminated communication resources to state-based Disability and Health Departments. Examples include:

- Developing a Disability and Health collection of products that states have developed.
- Created a Weekly Update memo to include news and announcements, upcoming training, and conferences focusing on emergency preparedness trainings, both at the state and national level.
- Developed an Emergency Preparedness page on the Disability and Health website.<sup>74</sup>

**Program:** Providing guidance and technical assistance to 18 state-based disability and health programs on the following activities.

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<sup>74</sup> See <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/emergencypreparedness.html>.

## Major Activities

- The CDC NCBDDD, DHDD hosted its 2013 state-based disability and health program annual grantee meeting. Partnering with the CDC’s Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response, DHDD developed an expert panel to discuss Public Health Preparedness and Response as it relates to individuals with disabilities. Participants were divided into one of three scenario-based groups to discuss preparedness and response issues.
- CDC’s NCBDDC developed the Disability and Health, Emergency Preparedness webpage, which provides information and resources on emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities and emergency responders.<sup>75</sup>
- CDC’s NCBDDC wrote a feature article, “Disabilities: Emergency Preparedness Training,” which highlights the personal experience of Nickole, a woman with a disability, who was trapped during a severe storm in Oregon. It also provides information on how to be prepared for an emergency.<sup>76</sup>
- CDC’s NCBDDD wrote a feature article, “Safe Transport in Emergencies,” which shares one family’s story about how emergency preparedness can affect children with health care needs and provides tips for how to be prepared.<sup>77</sup>

## Children with Acute Health Care Needs

- In December 2012, NCBDDD hosted a session at the Association of University Centers on Disability Conference, Minimizing Disaster When Disaster Strikes: Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning for Children with Disability. Representatives from the CDC walked participants through a discussion-based exercise of an improvised nuclear device detonation. This exercise, which was conducted jointly with HHQ/ASPR, focused on the adverse effects on and response actions related to children with disabilities.
- In June 2013, NCBDDD worked with the Institute of Medicine to convene a workshop entitled “Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery Considerations for Children and Families.” This workshop convened experts from across the country, in fields such as healthcare, community resilience, and recovery. NCBDDD served on the workshop’s planning committee.
- In September 2013, NCBDDD and the Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response (OPHPR) at CDC, along with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and Family Voices, partnered to recognize the unique experiences of families and health

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<sup>75</sup> See <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/emergencypreparedness.html>.

<sup>76</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Real Stories from People Living with a Disability: Nickole Cheron’s Story,” <http://www.cdc.gov/NCBDDD/disabilityandhealth/stories.html>.

<sup>77</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Safe Transport in Emergencies,” Modified September 23, 2013: <http://www.cdc.gov/features/PreparednessSpecialNeeds/>.

providers during emergency situations. This partnership resulted in the collection of 10 real stories that highlighted emergency preparedness in children and youth with acute health care needs. The stories were promoted throughout September via social media, newsletters, blogs, and partner announcements. NCBDDD participated in a Twitter chat on emergency preparedness to answer questions related to preparedness for children, including children with disabilities.

- NCBDDD collaborated with OPHPR to develop content for an activity book series, *Ready Wrigley*, to teach children about preparing for various emergencies. Important considerations for children with special health care needs will be integrated into the series, beginning with *Ready Wrigley Prepares for Winter Weather*.<sup>78</sup>
- Each year, NCBDDD promotes influenza (flu) vaccination for disproportionately impacted children, including children with intellectual disability and neurological or neurodevelopmental conditions. NCBDDD has developed the Flu and Children with Neurologic Conditions webpage, based on an earlier study of pediatric deaths during the 2009 H1N1 flu pandemic, which occurred most often in children with neurologic and neurodevelopmental conditions.<sup>79</sup> During the 2013-2014 influenza season, a number of additional products have been developed to encourage flu vaccination. On September 13, 2013, CDC researchers, in collaboration with researchers at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, published “Influenza Vaccination Practices of Physicians and Caregivers of Children with Neurologic and Neurodevelopmental Conditions – United States, 2011-12 Influenza Season.”<sup>80</sup> Researchers concluded that half of children with neurologic or neurodevelopmental conditions are vaccinated against the flu each year. They also found that most parents look to their child’s health provider for information about vaccines, including the flu shot. However, some pediatricians do not recognize specific conditions that put children at high risk for flu illness. Using these findings, NCBDDD created additional messages to promote flu vaccination to parents and health care providers who care for children with acute health care needs through an AAP News article, “Children with Special Health Care Needs Especially Vulnerable to Flu,” a Parents.com blog, “Put the Flu Shot at the Top of Your To-Do List,” and a federal letter to health providers signed by leaders of multiple HHS departments. NCBDDD also participated in multiple webinars in 2013, including a Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA) call, a flu briefing with March of Dimes, Families Fighting Flu and Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies, and a Family Voices webinar to promote vaccination in disproportionately impacted children.
- In November 2013, NCBDDD hosted a session at the AUCD Emergency Preparedness Special Interest Group meeting at the AUCD 2013 Conference. In this session,

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<sup>78</sup> For the entire *Ready Wrigley* series visit <http://www.cdc.gov/phpr/readywrigley>.

<sup>79</sup> See <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/neurologic-pediatric.htm>.

<sup>80</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Influenza Vaccination Practices of Physicians and Caregivers of Children with Neurologic and Neurodevelopmental Conditions — United States, 2011–12 Influenza Season,” *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, September 2013: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6236a3.htm>.

NCBDDD facilitated a discussion-based exercise of a flood scenario in which participants considered the chronological effects and response actions that would relate to persons with disabilities. This exercise, while intended to demonstrate the utility of an exercise as a tool, resulted in a number of action items in which the disability programs could improve the preparedness of their partners, their constituents, and themselves.

- In December 2013, the NCBDDD's Children's Preparedness Initiative was nominated for an Excellence in Communication award for the development of family stories that highlighted the experiences of children with acute health care needs during emergencies.

## **State Disability Health Programs, CDC**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's state-based disability and health programs inform policy and practice at the state level. These programs ensure that individuals with disabilities are included in ongoing state disease prevention, health promotion, and emergency response activities.

CDC supports 18 state-based programs to promote equity in health, prevent chronic disease, and increase the quality of life for people with disabilities. Each program customizes its activities to meet its state's needs, which broadens expertise and information sharing among states.

### Alabama

**Reviewed Medical Needs Shelter Emergency Plans:** Alabama Department of Public Health's Center for Emergency Preparedness reviewed medical needs shelter plans for ADA compliance in May 2013 and developed and implemented training in July 2013.

**Survey Development and Administration:** Alabama Department of Health program staff worked with University of Alabama at Birmingham evaluators to develop a survey and provide training in June 2013. Two hundred seventy-three kits were obtained from another grant and distributed to Special Assessment Intervention and Liaison clients. The Center for Emergency Preparedness provided funding to distribute an additional 1,350 kits and 800 weather radios to three independent living facilities, and 100 weather radios to the Department of Mental Health, Deaf Services.

**Emergency Preparedness Materials:** Staff identified, reviewed, and selected materials for emergency responders. Alabama Department of Public Health developed the Disability and Health website in May 2013. Materials posted include: preparing for access and functional needs in an emergency; training programs linked to the ADA website; presentations on Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Communication; and the Best Practice Toolkit for State and Local Governments. There is training on the website about people first language.

### Alaska

**Reviewed Emergency Plans:** The Alaska Project coordinator completed a site review for 10 communities across the state and reviewed all community emergency operations plans that are available electronically for disability inclusion.

**Emergency Preparedness Toolkits:** Alaska's "Get Ready" toolkit, adapted with permission from fellow state grantee Oregon's "Ready Now!" toolkit, was developed and piloted at several all-day trainings.

**Emergency Preparedness Trainings for Emergency Managers:** The project coordinator facilitated three all-day trainings for emergency managers on access and functional needs. This included a three-day track at the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's Conference in October 2012, a full-day training for emergency managers on access and functional needs in December 2012, and a day-long training in April.

### Arkansas

**Emergency Preparedness Surveillance:** Arkansas Disability and Health Program collaborated with the Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission to survey 295 individuals with spinal cord injuries or Spina Bifida. The survey included a question for individuals with disabilities regarding whether or not they have an emergency plan and/or kit. Survey results indicated that 16 percent of respondents had an emergency plan and kit, 17 percent had only a plan, but no kit, and 67 percent had neither emergency plan nor kit.<sup>81</sup> In 2013, the program added an emergency preparedness question to the Arkansas BRFSS: "How well prepared do you feel your household is to handle a large-scale disaster or emergency?" The response options were (1) "Well Prepared;" (2) "Somewhat Prepared;" and (3) "Not Prepared At All." People without a disability who replied "Not Prepared At All" constituted 19 percent of participants. People with a disability who replied "Not Prepared At All" constituted 28 percent of participants.

### Delaware

**ADA Compliance in Emergency Plans:** Delaware is developing a resource for first responders that will provide information about how to assist individuals with disabilities during an emergency.

**Volunteer Emergency Registries:** Delaware is promoting the Delaware Voluntary Online Special Needs Registry at workshops, in fliers, etc. County and local first responders use the information that families post on this site to better assist people with disabilities during an emergency.

**Trainings and Workshops:** Delaware conducted emergency preparedness training for 184 individuals with disabilities between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013.

### Florida

**Inclusive Communications:** The Disability and Health Program collaborated with the Department of Health Bureau of Preparedness and Response to update the preparedness information that is specific to individuals with disabilities. This information included graphics and a large font format. It covers how to develop a personal plan for disasters and emergencies and how to make a disaster kit.

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<sup>81</sup> For all BRFSS data visit <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/>.

**Emergency Preparedness Surveillance:** The 2013 BRFSS included a question for individuals with disabilities regarding whether or not they have an emergency plan and/or kit. University of Florida staff designed a survey of individuals with disabilities, the questions to assess respondent-perceived importance of having a plan, whether they have thought about developing a plan, or have an active plan. Additionally, the Disability and Health Program surveyed Florida Centers for Independent Living to determine how many individuals they worked with in 2012 to determine the number of individuals with disabilities they assisted in creating a plan. The response indicated that over 1,900 individuals with disabilities and families or caregivers had an emergency plan, a kit, or both.

## Illinois

**Emergency Preparedness Webinar:** Discussions were initiated with ARC, the Great Lakes American Disabilities Act Disability Business and Technical Assistance Center, and the Emergency Preparedness Work Group about developing a webinar for emergency responders, planners, and managers to better equip them to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities during an emergency. Illinois program staff served on the planning committee for the 2013 Integrated Public Health and Medical Preparedness Summit and organized three concurrent sessions on the needs of individuals with disabilities, reaching more than 180 emergency planners in the state.

**Emergency Preparedness Surveillance:** A survey was developed, utilizing questions from the BRFSS General Preparedness Module, and was administered as a pre-test prior to each training session. A post-test was sent to all training participants at least one month after the training. Baseline indicates that 40 percent of participants had a three-day supply of water, 58 percent had a three-day supply of food, 83 percent had a three-day supply of medication, 48 percent had a working battery operated radio with batteries, and 81 percent had a working flashlight with batteries. The question regarding emergency plans was taken from the BRFSS General Preparedness model and assesses whether or not one has a written disaster evacuation plan; 11 percent reported having a written disaster evacuation plan on pre-test.

**Inclusive Emergency Planning:** To increase representation of individuals with disabilities in developing emergency planning documents, program staff worked with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency to recruit additional disability advocacy organizations for the ESF #6 committee. Additionally, staff began representing individuals with disabilities on the ESF #8 committee at their next meeting. Program staff participated in the Chicago/Cook County Special Needs Advisory Panel and facilitated participation of individuals with disabilities for a full-scale Mass Dispensing Exercise held April 13, 2013.

**Collaboration with Red Cross:** In collaboration with the Illinois Chapters of ARC, a training curriculum specific to the needs of individuals with disabilities was created on how to develop an emergency plan and kit. Six trainings were offered through local Centers for Independent Living, reaching 104 individuals with disabilities and their caregivers.

## Iowa

**Emergency Preparedness Presentations:** Iowa's Division of Human Development and Disability presented at the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Conference on "Whole Community Planning and People with Disabilities." The training provided county emergency managers and planners guidance on identifying disability resources to improve communication and transportation for individuals with disabilities during a disaster. A template was provided to ESF #6 for county emergency manager and planners to use in developing their own plans.

**Inclusive Emergency Exercises:** In 2012, Polk County Emergency Management in collaboration with the Des Moines International Airport, Des Moines Police Department, Des Moines Fire Department, area hospitals, and responders in the community completed a full-scale, simulated plane crash exercise at the Des Moines Airport that included individuals with disabilities.

**Emergency Preparedness Training:** Iowa's Division of Human Development and Disability Seven Steps to Personal Emergency Preparedness program for individuals with disabilities and community service providers delivered training to 185 case managers and direct service providers at six Iowa locations. Staff formed partnerships with three Iowa Area Agencies on Aging to train their volunteer workforce to deliver the Seven Steps program to community members with disabilities in the second grant year.

The Disability and Health Program created the "Personal Emergency Preparedness Planning Guide for People with Access and Functional Needs" to assist individuals with disabilities and their caregivers in developing personal emergency plans. Along with the University of Iowa, College of Public Health, the staff provided a two-hour PrepKids training at 21 locations to 116 rural parents and caregivers with children who have disabilities. Follow-up technical assistance was provided to 28 of those parents and caregivers to provide them with information and a copy of an emergency communication board tool to be included in their family emergency kit.

## Massachusetts

**Emergency Preparedness Materials:** The Health and Disability Program assisted with the development of materials for individuals with access and functional needs, including a Profile of Individuals with Access and Functional Needs and a document outlining useful assistive devices for inclusion in emergency shelters.

**Emergency Preparedness Trainings:** The Health and Disability Program staff provided training to over 100 emergency preparedness professionals and shelter coordinators on the importance of including individuals with disabilities in emergency preparedness planning and exercises. The staff provided four workshops to a total of over 100 first responders, emergency managers, and shelter managers on the needs of individuals with disabilities in emergency situations.

**Emergency Preparedness Surveillance:** The Health and Disability Program received approval to include two questions on emergency plans and/or kits in the state BRFSS.

## Michigan

**Emergency Preparedness Trainings:** The Health and Disabilities Program partnering with Wayne State University's Developmental Disabilities Institute provided training to 250 emergency responders between 2012 and 2013. In addition, the institute provided "Safe Place emergency preparedness training to 357 individuals with disabilities, family members, and caregivers. Partnering data indicate 41 percent of participants had an emergency plan, prior to attending the training; at the conclusion of the training, 100 percent of the participants had an emergency plan.

**Emergency Preparedness Planning Tools:** The Michigan Department of Health's Office of Public Health Preparedness implemented distribution of customizable, inclusive, wallet-sized emergency plans (called "z-cards"), which are inclusive of the needs and recommendations for individuals with disabilities.

## Montana

**Workshops and Trainings:** In June 2013, the Montana Department of Health facilitated a FAST Planning Workshop with Montana Centers for Independent Living representatives, ARC of Montana, and the Missoula City/County Health Department's Assistance and Functional Needs Committee. June Isaacson Kailes, Disability Policy Consultant, facilitated the full-day workshop. All participants agreed to work together to adopt the FAST model for use in Missoula, as a demonstration site, with potential plans to expand the state volunteer registry for medical providers to include access and functional needs experts.

**Emergency Preparedness Survey:** The Montana Health Department is working with Centers for Independent Living and the Montana Developmental Disabilities Program to develop personal emergency planning tools for inclusion in quality improvement and annual planning processes of the state Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) waiver and Community First Choice Option programs. Local health department administrative data from these programs were integrated with other public health data into access and functional needs planning resources to support a whole community approach in emergency management.

**Shelter Assessments:** The Montana Health Department, with partners in three cities, including ARC of Montana and the FEMA RDIS, completed assessments of six large emergency shelters using the ARC Checklist and using the DOJ checklist. Comparisons to assessments conducted by Montana volunteers with 54 ARC registered Montana shelters using only the ARC Checklist guided a collaborative decision to develop an integrated assessment approach.

## New Hampshire

**Emergency Preparedness Website:** New Hampshire developed a comprehensive website with interactive features and tools to assist individuals create emergency preparedness kits and plans. New Hampshire disseminated *Emergency Preparedness & You* brochures to 480 individuals with disabilities, advocates, and family members. The website drew 900 visitors to the Emergency Preparedness pages and the brochure was downloaded 86 times.

**Registry/Emergency Preparedness Surveillance:** New Hampshire contracted with the University of New Hampshire Survey Center to add questions about emergency preparedness to its statewide Granite State Poll for four consecutive quarters. Results of the survey were compared with the 2009 baseline numbers from the BRFSS emergency preparedness module and analyzed to ascertain increases in the percentage of individuals with disabilities, family members, advocates, and caregivers who report possession of a plan or kit or possession of the tools and resources to create a plan or kit.

### New York

**Revisions to the State Emergency Plan:** Revisions to the New York Mass Care Support Plan (State Plan) continue to be a work in progress. The “After Action,” conducted subsequent to Hurricane Sandy, has provided valuable information that is being incorporated into the revision of the State Plan. The leadership team has met to identify areas of the plan that will be modified to incorporate lessons learned. The State Plan includes extensive guidance related to the provision of preparedness, response, and recovery plans and protocols that consider the needs of individuals with disabilities.

**Inclusive Communication:** The Disability and Health Program serves as a resource to the New York State Human Services Committee, which is responsible for the State Plan. The State Plan aligns with the federal FEMA ESF #6 and incorporates both the FEMA *FNSS Guidance* and the *Guidance on Planning for Personal Assistance Services in General Population Shelters*. Staff also serves on the Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication workgroup to ensure communications are developed in a manner inclusive of individuals with disabilities.

**Materials and Workshops:** New York developed promotional materials for the "My Safety, My Responsibility, My Plan" program and sent outreach information to 33 agencies. Additional outreach and promotion activities included presentation to the Family Support Council of Westchester. Contacts were made with the Disaster Preparedness Program of Putnam County, the New York State Self-Advocacy Association, Regional FEMA staff, and the New Rochelle Special Education Parent and Teachers Association, to promote the curriculum. Three workshops were held in Albany and the Metropolitan NY areas trained 78 individuals with disabilities about emergency preparedness plans and kits and 17 family members and caregivers learned about emergency preparedness through their participation in the workshops.

### North Carolina

**Policy Development:** The North Carolina Office of Disability Health has initiated collaboration with a county emergency manager in Eastern North Carolina, and will use lessons learned in future statewide activities. A partner within the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction continues to pursue development of a policy to effectively include students with disabilities in emergency drills. The North Carolina Office of Disability Health met with the Autism Society of North Carolina to discuss school-based issues and strategies.

**Inclusive Emergency Planning and Exercises:** The North Carolina Office of Disability Health staff met with an emergency manager from a rural county in Eastern North Carolina to

discuss collaborative efforts that would build the county's capacity to include people with disabilities in emergency exercise planning and implementation, emergency preparedness communication, public awareness campaigns, and evacuation. The North Carolina Office of Disability Health has been invited to be a member of the county Local Emergency Planning Committee. In the winter of 2013-14, the county conducted a mandatory emergency exercise developed by the local Emergency Planning Committee, and the North Carolina Office of Disability Health used this exercise as an opportunity to identify training needs of first responders and community members with disabilities who can serve on the Planning Committee and participate in future exercises.

**Surveillance and Data:** The North Carolina Office of Disability Health created a pilot survey for use with local chapters of the North Carolina Autism Society that was designed to gather information about how families and caregivers of individuals with disabilities would prefer to receive emergency preparedness information. In addition, the North Carolina Office of Disability Health provided technical assistance to the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities on best practices for individual with disabilities and emergency preparedness. The goal was to direct the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities' efforts and funds toward integration with state public health preparedness initiatives. This effort was successful, and has resulted in the North Carolina Office of Disability Health providing funding to support a disability specialist within North Carolina Emergency Management.

#### North Dakota

**Accessibility of Emergency Shelters Survey:** A needs assessment was conducted to determine accessibility of emergency shelters and inclusion of individuals with disabilities in planning exercises. A baseline was established for specific accommodations, and while each shelter had some accessibility, no shelter reported 100 percent accessibility. The majority of shelters reported accessible parking spots. Seventy-five percent of the respondents indicated individuals with disabilities or their caregivers are included in emergency preparedness training and education exercises in their area. In addition, 62 percent of those surveyed indicated they include individual with disabilities in their advisory committees or planning meetings.

**Emergency Preparedness Presentations:** Two presentations on how to provide emergency services to individuals with disabilities were conducted for emergency responders. A presentation for health care professionals was conducted on emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities, at a statewide emergency preparedness conference.

#### Ohio

**Emergency Preparedness Training Video:** Ohio's Disability and Health Program (ODHP), began the development of two video training modules for first responders and emergency planners on how to better work with and plan for individuals with disabilities. The modules will be available for continuing education credit in Ohio in 2014.

**Inclusive Emergency Exercises:** ODHP is working towards continuously promoting emergency preparedness inclusion and involvement among individuals with disabilities,

caregivers, and disability professionals. ODHP recruited an individual with a disability to participate in a FEMA Integrating Functional Needs in Emergency Planning pilot course, held at Ohio's Emergency Management Agency. The individual provided valuable feedback that benefited the emergency planners and first responders who attended the course. ODHP is also working with Ohio emergency management agencies to increase participation of individuals with disabilities in the disaster response planning process.

## Oregon

**Presentations and Trainings:** The Oregon Office of Disability Health (OODH) conducted presentations with Region II Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) coordinators, Office of Emergency Management and conducted a statewide Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) Training. In addition, OODH developed county resource sheets that provide disability-specific contacts and local disability resources for emergency managers to assist in developing important partnerships and Memoranda of Understanding during disasters. OODH continues to provide technical assistance and training to emergency planners, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities, as well as an accessible video for emergency planning, specifically for people with disabilities.

**Surveillance and Data:** OODH partnered with Oregon's PHEP to include the 11 question General Preparedness Module on the 2013 BRFSS. PHEP paid for 9 out of the 11 questions, and OODH paid for the final 2 questions. In addition to the BRFSS, OODH developed a web-based survey, which specifically targeted both individuals with disabilities and their caregivers, and a survey of county emergency managers tracking where people with disabilities and the needs of that community are taken into consideration in disaster planning.

## Rhode Island

**Volunteer Emergency Registry:** During the reporting period, the Rhode Island Special Needs Emergency Registry (RISNER) had an enrollment of 11,698 individuals with disabilities. Each enrollee received information on personal emergency preparedness, and over 5,000 individuals with disabilities received emergency preparedness kits. Annually, RISNER enrollees are provided with critical personal preparedness information and assistance. The Rhode Island Department of Health forged new partnerships with DME providers, Meals on Wheels, home healthcare agencies, and dialysis centers to provide RISNER enrollment forms to all of their customers. RISNER coordinators participated in 169 events with an outreach table or a speaker.

**Emergency Preparedness Trainings:** The Rhode Island Disability and Health Program (RIDHP) and the Center for Emergency Preparedness Response (CEPR) planned, developed, and facilitated two first responder emergency preparedness trainings for fire and police personnel. The training was held in April 2013 and attended by over 150 first responders representing police, fire, emergency management services, and emergency management agency organizations in the state. First Responders were provided with an overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder behavioral symptoms; educated about effective communication techniques; and provided practical skills to safely interact with persons with autism or language disabilities during an emergency. Those in attendance left the conference with concrete communication

strategies and an Emergency Communication Board to help facilitate communication with those who are unable to speak during an emergency.

**Review Emergency Plans and Shelter Assessments:** Rhode Island's Emergency Operations Plan was reviewed by the RIDHP and CEPR. The inclusion of individuals with disabilities in response plans was noted. RIDHP plans to participate in a review of each ESF with the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), Special Populations Workgroup. The Workgroup will make recommendations to the EMAC for consideration by the lead agency. Rhode Island public emergency shelters are managed by the American Red Cross (ARC) Rhode Island Chapter. All ARC shelters have been assessed, in accordance with the ARC Shelter Facility Survey and the ADA.

### South Carolina

**Inclusive Emergency Exercises:** The South Carolina Disability and Health Program (SCDHP) partnered with several advocacy organizations to form a roster of individuals with a wide variety of disabilities who are willing to participate in emergency planning or exercises. The Emergency Management Department can use this roster during the exercise planning phase and directly contact these organizations and engage individuals with disabilities. SCDHP continues to update this roster and collaborate with other organizational networks of individuals with disabilities.

**Surveillance/Data:** SCDHP created and cognitively tested two questions related to individuals with disabilities having an emergency plan or kit.

**Emergency Preparedness Trainings:** SCDHP provided emergency preparedness training opportunities for individuals with disabilities by engaging South Carolina Independent Living Centers, the Spinal Cord Injury Association peer support group, and Aging and Disability Resource Centers. Additionally, SCDHP trained approximately 800 individuals—many of whom were individuals with disabilities, caregivers, family members, and professional staff—at the South Carolina Assistive Technology Exposition. In conjunction with critical partners, SCDHP utilized Inclusive Preparedness Center materials in the training to promote active discussion between individuals with disabilities and their family members and caregivers.

**Shelter Assessments:** SCDHP obtained a roster of all emergency hurricane shelters utilized by the South Carolina Emergency Management Department. Working with ARC and the Emergency Management Department, SCDHP evaluated the accessibility of each shelter on the roster. SCDHP collaborated with Emergency Planning Committee for People with Functional Needs partners to determine an accessibility "rating system" for the shelters.

**ARC Collaboration:** SCDHP collaborated with the South Carolina American Red Cross branch and the Department of Justice to formulate clear, efficient shelter assessment capabilities. SCDHP provided accessibility kits to each of the 300 ARC shelters in South Carolina. The kits included various assistive technology devices. SCDHP worked with the South Carolina Health Department to establish a method of replenishment that will maintain the kits indefinitely.

## Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

- SAMHSA’s Disaster Technical Assistance Center publishes and updates a resource collection series.<sup>82</sup> One installment of this series, “Persons with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs,” provides resources to responders, planners, and the public. This installment of the SAMHSA Disaster Behavioral Health Information Series focuses on the behavioral health needs of persons with access and functional needs who have experienced disasters.
- SAMHSA maintains the Disaster Behavioral Health Information Services installment “Persons with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs.”<sup>83</sup> This installment has resources for:
  - Disaster and emergency response professionals to ensure that disaster behavioral health planning and response activities include persons with disabilities and other access and functional needs;
  - All service providers, including behavioral health professionals, to increase their understanding of appropriate ways to communicate with persons with disabilities and other access and functional needs; and
  - Persons with disabilities and other access and functional needs who are preparing for or have survived a disaster. In addition, a helpful links section which provides links to organizations, agencies, and other resources that address issues for persons with disabilities is included.
- In an ongoing webinar and podcast series, SAMHSA developed a podcast about applying cultural awareness to disaster behavioral health. This podcast provides emergency and disaster response professionals information about tools that they can use to assess and strengthen cultural awareness practices in disaster behavioral health services.<sup>84</sup>

## *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE*

The Department of Commerce’s work with the ICC and Executive Order 13347 focuses on workplace emergency preparedness and individuals with disabilities. These are the significant activities during the 2010-2013 reporting period:

**Occupant Emergency Plan:** The access and functional needs program at Commerce is run and monitored by the Emergency Operations Center, Office of Security. In 2010, a form was developed by the Special Needs Working Group for personnel with disabilities to self-identify and request appropriate assistance during an emergency. This form is sent to the Occupant

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<sup>82</sup> SAMHSA, “Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC),” Modified June 4, 2015: <http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac>.

<sup>83</sup> SAMHSA, “Persons with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs: Introduction,” [http://archive.samhsa.gov/dtac/dbhis/dbhis\\_pfan\\_intro.asp](http://archive.samhsa.gov/dtac/dbhis/dbhis_pfan_intro.asp).

<sup>84</sup> SAMHSA, “Applying Cultural Awareness to Disaster Behavioral Health,” July 10, 2013: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngozeGfBOW8&list=PLBXgZMI\\_zqfRcT9ndxkbieQ-pQslk-R6](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngozeGfBOW8&list=PLBXgZMI_zqfRcT9ndxkbieQ-pQslk-R6).

Emergency Plan (OEP) program manager in the EOC who then sets up an appointment with the individual, his or her supervisor, a number of volunteer safety monitors (“buddies”), and at least one of the Emergency Response Team members in the individual’s sector of the building. All are briefed on their responsibilities during an evacuation, shelter-in-place, and a lockdown.

Commerce uses the Varolii Messaging System to contact all self-identified personnel who are deaf or hard of hearing to alert them to all OEP drills and events. Commerce runs monthly tests to ensure that all information is current and the recipients are able to receive the Varolii messages. The messages are delivered as texts via mobile phone. In addition, a group of personnel who are deaf or hard of hearing periodically advises the Special Needs Working Group and the OEP program manager. During an evacuation, this group assembles together at the same rally point and accounts for one another.

**Workplace Exercises:** Commerce schedules occupant exercises quarterly for all personnel and visitors at the headquarters building. These exercises routinely include one lockdown, one shelter-in-place, one evacuation, and one shelter-in-place to evacuation. Personnel with mobility disabilities participate in all exercises and maintain constant communications with the EOC.

**Facility Accessibility:** At the headquarters facility, Commerce installed UbiDuo devices at main entrances for any employees or visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing, allowing them to communicate directly to security officers. This same program is available at our other facilities, and our Office of Civil Rights, offered to procure these devices as requested.

Commerce’s Security Manual provides detailed guidance for all facilities on the development and management requirements for their respective OEP, with emphasis placed on integrating the access and functional needs of individuals with disabilities.

**The National Institute of Standards and Technology:** The National Institute of Standards and Technology maintains a comprehensive program of self-identification and self-reporting during emergencies. During evacuations, coordinators work closely with the Incident Commander to address the access and functional needs of individuals with mobility disabilities.

## **The U.S. Census Bureau**

**Occupant Emergency Plan:** The U.S. Census Bureau’s Health and Safety Branch developed an Emergency Response Plan for Persons with Disabilities, with the following initiatives:

- Active encouragement of self-identification of individuals with permanent and temporary disabilities.
- Safety staff meetings with each requestor to develop an emergency response plan individualized to the person’s needs.
- Up to four volunteer safety monitors are assigned to each individual with a disability, who has requested such an assignment.
- Employees with mobility disabilities are assigned two-way radios that communicate with safety staff in the Command Center during emergencies. Safety staff maintains a

confidential list of these individuals and check on people who do not call in. Employees are more willing to stay in refuge areas, pending arrival of assistance, with the knowledge that their status is being monitored.

- Safety monitors, with additional two-way radios, are deployed on selected floors in each stairwell. They report to safety staff, in the Command Center, on the status of individuals with disabilities, as well as on any other general issues, which arise during a building emergency.
- Emergency evacuation chairs are placed by every emergency stairwell, on every floor above ground level. Each shift of the Prince George's County Fire Department, has been oriented to the headquarters building, including the chair locations and a detailed review of all emergency plans at the U.S. Census Bureau.
- The headquarters building is equipped with strobe lights to alert personnel and visitors who are deaf and hard of hearing of any emergency.

An expanded Emergency Public Address System allows the U.S. Census Bureau to offer text pagers to employees who are deaf or hard of hearing. Pagers demonstrate direct, effective communication and avoid common disaster-related problems associated with telephone and email.

### **The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office**

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) designated official is responsible for overseeing all evacuation procedures, as described in the OEPs. All USPTO supervisors are responsible for ensuring any employees who have a self-disclosed disability which could impact their ability to take the actions described in the OEP have a customized plan.

**Fire Alarm Evacuations:** Individuals who are unable to self-evacuate should report to an Assist Room (area of refuge). There are Assist Rooms on every floor that have been approved by the local fire marshal's office. Additionally, the OEP floor team has a member assigned to respond to, assist, and wait with any individuals who report to an Assist Room. Other floor members are responsible for ensuring the number of individuals in each Assist Room is reported to the designated official and USPTO liaison officer, to be provided to the fire department. The fire department is responsible for evacuating all individuals in Assist Rooms when they determine it is necessary for their safety.

**Non-fire Alarm Evacuations:** In the event of a non-fire evacuation, individuals who are unable to self-evacuate are directed to take an elevator. If public safety agencies prohibit the use of elevators, the procedures for fire alarm evacuations are followed.

**Earthquake:** If evacuation is required, individuals with mobility disabilities are directed to wait in the Assist Room on their floor with an assigned floor team member. After the majority of evacuees has cleared the building, all occupants of Assist Rooms move to the fire stairwell landings.

## **The Bureau of Economic Analysis**

**Occupant Emergency Plan:** The Bureau of Economic Analysis designates stairwell monitors who assist individuals with disabilities during an emergency. Depending on the individual's access and functional needs, stairwell monitors may operate evacuation chairs or physically support the person down the stairs.

Personal assistants work with employees with disabilities to develop individualized OEPs that address the specific access and functional needs of the individual. During drills and actual emergencies, the personal assistant responds directly to the employee, supports any necessary assistance, and remains with them for the duration of the event. Employees are trained to help their colleagues leave the area or building quickly and safely and offer support to access and functional need personal assistants.

## **The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**Occupant Emergency Plan:** NOAA has developed a program very similar to the other Commerce components. According to the OEP, individuals with disabilities and others with access or functional needs may self-identify and request assistance during emergency situations. These individuals include individuals who have mobility disabilities, who are blind, who are deaf or hard of hearing, who have cardiac or respiratory conditions, who are recovering from surgery, or who are in the late stages of pregnant. During an evacuation, individuals with mobility disabilities have the option to egress using the "Evacutrac" emergency evacuation chair or by waiting in the stairwell for fire department responders. Stairwells at NOAA's Silver Spring Metro Center campus are pressurized. This feature allows a constant flow of positive pressure air and forces smoke out of the stairwell. Therefore, the stairwell is an ideal place for individuals to seek safety from smoke conditions.

## *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION*

Information for this report was provided by the Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), Office of Safe and Healthy Students (OSHS), and the Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

## **Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services**

OSERS is committed to improving results and outcomes for individuals with disabilities of all ages and supports programs that serve millions of children, youth, and adults with disabilities. OSERS' work to further Executive Order 13347 was advanced primarily by its National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) which has emerged as a leader in federal research and development initiatives related to emergency management and individuals with disabilities. NIDRR's activities have included:

**Resource Development:** In 2008, NIDRR released *Emergency Management Research and People with Disabilities: A Resource Guide*.<sup>85</sup> NIDRR identified a total of 16 federally-funded research projects in this area, with five federal agencies providing funding. NIDRR funded a series of studies and reports from Louisiana State University on evacuation and accessible emergency communication (see below).

**Evacuation Study:** In 2007, NIDRR awarded a three-year grant to Louisiana State University to survey individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, emergency managers, first responders, service agencies, and governments to determine evacuation behaviors, experience, and knowledge. The following excerpts were adapted from two reports from this grant on (a) disasters, evacuations, and persons with disabilities;<sup>86</sup> and (b) promising practices for evacuating individuals with disabilities.<sup>87</sup>

- **Disasters, Evacuations, and Persons with Disabilities:** Investigators conducted a nationwide study identifying evacuation-specific information from 1,162 persons who had experienced disaster and evacuation. The study included individuals with disabilities and members of their households (e.g., family members and caregivers) and older adults who did not identify as having a disability. Select findings include:
  - Respondents with disabilities were more likely to suffer a difficult evacuation than persons without disabilities.
  - Nearly one-quarter of respondents indicated they are either not at all or not very well prepared to evacuate or shelter-in-place without assistance.
  - The majority of respondents evacuated to homes of friends or family members in their most recent evacuation.
  - The larger the impact of disability on a respondent’s daily activities, the higher the perceived threat of harm from evacuation or sheltering-in-place.
  - Compared to all other disability groups, persons with cognitive disabilities are much more likely to have steps in place for household preparedness, while persons who are hard of hearing and deaf are least likely to have steps in place for household preparedness.
  - As the access and functional needs of a respondent with a disability increased, the respondent was increasingly less likely to evacuate to homes of friends and family members and more likely to evacuate to public shelters.

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<sup>85</sup> U.S. Department of Education, *Emergency Management Research and People with Disabilities: A Resource Guide*, April, 2008: <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/guide-emergency-management-pwd.pdf>.

<sup>86</sup> Gerber, Brian J., Norwood, Frances, and Zakour, Michael J., *Disasters, Evacuations and Persons with Disabilities: An Assessment of Key Issues Facing Individuals and Households*, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, April 2010.

<sup>87</sup> Norwood, Frances, *Promising Practices for Evacuating People with Disabilities*, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, January 2011.

- **Promising Practices for Evacuating Individuals with Disabilities:** A second project under the grant aimed to improve future planning and preparedness activities by governmental and nongovernmental organizations that provide assistance to persons with disabilities and their households during emergency and disaster evacuations. Findings from telephone interviews conducted between March and June 2010 cover promising practices by evacuation component, type of disability, type of disaster, and models for evacuating persons with disabilities, such as: (a) working examples of alternatives to registries; (b) tips on combining resources and efforts between emergency management and information about how to better incorporate needs of persons with disabilities in sheltering, evacuation, and recovery; (c) tips for supporting evacuation by type of disability and type of hazard; and (d) examples of best practices in evacuation, notification, response, and recovery for persons with disabilities from across the country. Among the report’s findings:
  - World Trade Center attacks in 2001 suggest that the “wait for help” strategy for individuals with disabilities evacuating buildings is not the best alternative.
  - In a work environment, everyone needs to be trained in how to operate an evacuation chair.
  - Registries have been established in communities across the United States, but respondents report that they have usually yielded mixed or negative results. Reported reasons not to institute a registry include that registries are expensive to build, difficult to maintain, and communicate the message that responders are coming to help you, even though in mid- to large-scale disasters, that is often not the case. A few respondents experimented with alternatives to registries, such as working through existing disability networks and neighbor-to-neighbor programs to reach individuals with disabilities in the event of an emergency.
- **Accessible Emergency Communications.** In 2009, NIDRR awarded a three-year grant to National Public Radio (NPR) to develop and test methods to translate captioned emergency broadcasts into electronic braille messages that can provide emergency alerting information to individuals who are both deaf and blind. NPR is working to demonstrate the best methods to develop electronic braille devices, by connection to smartphones, tablet computers, and new Internet Media Devices; and facilitate industry acceptance of these methods for purposes of developing industry standards. NPR is one of 38 organizations, designated by FEMA, to disseminate national-level emergency alert messages. NPR plans to transmit these geographically targeted messages through the new digital high-definition radio stations, of which there are already 2,000 stations on the air.

## **Office of Safe and Healthy Schools**

OSHS administers, coordinates, and recommends policy for improving the quality of programs and activities to promote the health and well-being of students in elementary schools, secondary schools, and institutions of higher education.

- To date, OSHA has developed a host of materials for ED Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) grantees on the topic of emergency management considerations for individuals with access or functional needs or disabilities. These materials include a newsletter, technical assistance responses, a webinar, and an advanced online training module. In addition, ED requires that both REMS and Emergency Management for Higher Education grantees take access and functional needs into account when conducting their emergency management planning work.
- The REMS online Technical Assistance Center provides resources for integrating students with access and functional needs and various other emergency management topics.<sup>88</sup> It includes an emergency preparedness toolkit and information on providing services to people with access and functional needs during an H1N1 flu outbreak; fire safety resources for students with disabilities in higher education; an interactive map of disability and emergency preparedness resources; and information about stairwell use during an emergency.

### **Office for Civil Rights**

The Office for Civil Rights has twelve Enforcement Offices throughout the country that investigate complaints of discrimination, including complaints alleging disability discrimination in violation of Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended, and Title II of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*. OCR Enforcement Offices investigated and resolved complaints relating to the topic of emergency preparedness and individuals with disabilities, securing appropriate remedies to ensure nondiscrimination. The following cases are examples of resolved complaints:

- A complainant alleged that a school had no accessible emergency evacuation route from its basement level. In addition, students with disabilities were informed about emergency drills ahead of time and removed early from the school building. Accordingly, these students with disabilities were not given an equal opportunity to participate in drills with students without disabilities. Under a Resolution Agreement with OCR, the school district agreed to (1) remove obstructions to a platform lift so that it provided an accessible evacuation route from the basement level; and (2) develop a written policy for the emergency evacuation of students with mobility disabilities including provisions for evacuating students from the basement level when the platform lift is inoperable.

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<sup>88</sup> Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center: <http://rems.ed.gov/>.

- A complainant alleged that a school district had no district-wide plan to evacuate students with disabilities during an emergency. The district voluntarily developed a district-wide evacuation plan. However, OCR’s review of the plan found that it contained no provisions to address the evacuation needs of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs and it failed to address adequately the evacuation needs of visitors and staff with disabilities. The district entered into a Settlement Agreement with OCR and revised its plan to address the needs of students, staff, and visitors with a variety of disabilities. Under the Settlement Agreement, OCR monitored the district’s implementation of the plan.

## *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE*

Information for this report was provided by the Disability Rights Section in DOJ’s Civil Rights Division.

DOJ enforces, regulates, implements, coordinates, and provides technical assistance for the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)* and Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)*, as amended. Among other things, DOJ staff coordinates with and provides technical assistance to other federal agencies, and provides technical assistance to state and local governments and private entities on the application of these laws in the emergency management context.

### **Technical Assistance Activities**

During 2010, DOJ provided technical assistance on the civil rights of individuals with disabilities, coordinated with other federal agencies, and participated in a number of enforcement activities. The following cases are prominent examples:

**Publications, Webinars, Conferences, and Training:** DOJ participated in, staffed, and supported the development of FEMA’s *FNSS Guidance*, a publication for use by state and local governments, and private entities, in planning their emergency sheltering efforts to assist in compliance with the ADA and Section 504. DOJ staff also participated in day-long training sessions on the *FNSS Guidance* with local governmental and non-governmental/non-profit representatives throughout the FEMA regions, answering questions on the rights of individuals with disabilities in emergency management programs.

As a follow up to the *FNSS Guidance*, DOJ issued a technical assistance publication explaining obligations under federal disability rights laws relating to “Access to Medical Care for Individuals with Mobility Disabilities.” The publication includes explanations of access issues encountered by individuals with mobility disabilities when seeking medical care and effective strategies for addressing those access issues in compliance with the ADA.

Additionally, DOJ provided substantive edits and comments to FEMA’s Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101 version 2, National Disaster Response Framework and the National Disaster Housing Task Force and various subgroups, to ensure conformity with the ADA, Section 504, and DOJ and other technical assistance materials.

Since 2010, DOJ has provided technical assistance on compliance with the ADA and Section 504 and the ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments, during the following conferences, meetings, and webinars:

- Pass It On Center’s National Leadership Summit on Emergency Management and Assistive Technology Reutilization in Washington, DC (Feb. 23-24, 2010);
- National Hurricane Conference in Orlando, Florida (March 29-April 2, 2010);
- FEMA and Citizens Corps Emergency Management and Compliance with Federal Disability Rights Laws webinar (April 7, 2010);
- FEMA Individual Assistance Conference in San Diego, California (April 27-30, 2010);
- National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters Conference in Orlando, Florida (May 11-12, 2010);
- American National Standards Institute Homeland Security Standards Panel Workshop on Emergency Evacuation Operations in New Orleans, Louisiana (June 17, 2010);
- FEMA Region VII Regional Interagency Steering Committee meeting in Kansas City, Missouri (July 19, 2010);
- Reinventing Quality Conference in Baltimore, Maryland (August 10, 2010);
- FEMA’s “Getting Real” Conference in Baltimore, Maryland (September 22, 2010);
- Midwest Partners in Preparedness Conference in St. Louis, Missouri (Sept. 29-30, 2010);
- National Emergency Managers Association Conference in Alexandria, Virginia (March 21-22, 2011);
- Big City Emergency Managers Conference in Washington, DC (April 28, 2011);
- Florida Governor’s Hurricane Conference in Fort Lauderdale, Florida (May 16, 2011);
- National Emergency Managers Association FEMA Listening Session (November 15, 2011);
- Association of American Law Schools Conference, entitled “Disaster, Disability, and Law” in Washington, DC (January 5, 2012);
- ESF #8, FEMA/HHS Regions 1 and 2 Conference in Boston, Massachusetts (January 31-February 1, 2012);
- Florida Emergency Preparedness Association Conference in Daytona Beach, Florida (Feb. 6-7, 2012); and
- North Carolina Emergency Manager’s Association Conference in Sunset Beach, North Carolina (March 13-15, 2012).

**Interagency and Stakeholder Coordination:** DOJ provided technical assistance and coordination with ICC committees on the application of federal disability rights laws to emergency management at the federal and state levels. It maintained a chair on FEMA’s Disability Working Group, coordinating with FEMA to address time-sensitive policy and procedural issues that involve emergency management program accessibility. And DOJ provided technical assistance to the CDC and Harvard University, regarding an initiative to study identification and location of individuals with disabilities during emergencies through the use of registries and the potential concerns in light of the ADA and Section 504.

## **Enforcement Activities**

**Project Civic Access:** Under DOJ’s Project Civic Access (PCA) initiative, the Civil Rights Division conducts compliance reviews and complaint-based investigations to ensure equal, integrated access for individuals with disabilities to state and local government programs, services, activities, and facilities. Key areas of focus, include emergency management programs, policies, and shelters; access to 911 emergency communication systems; effective communication for individuals who are deaf, are hard of hearing, are blind, or have low vision; training for law enforcement officers regarding effective communication with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing; the requirement to construct and alter facilities, so they are accessible to individuals with disabilities, in accordance with accessibility standards adopted by DOJ; and equal access for individuals with disabilities to web-based programs, information, and services.

In the context of emergency management, DOJ requires all emergency shelters to be accessible to individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs, and require state and local governments to provide equal, integrated access for individuals with disabilities to all aspects of emergency management, including preparedness, notification, evacuation, sheltering, clean-up, recovery, and rebuilding. DOJ has provided comprehensive guidance regarding ADA requirements in emergency management and emergency shelters in Chapter 7 of the “ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments.”<sup>89</sup>

DOJ has entered more than 60 PCA settlement agreements resolving complaint-based investigations and compliance reviews under the ADA and Section 504 where state and local governments have agreed to ensure that their emergency management programs afford equal, integrated access to individuals with disabilities. Each agreement is tailored to the findings of the compliance review, conducted by DOJ staff, which includes an on-site review of facilities. During 2010, DOJ entered into PCA settlement agreements, posted on the Department’s ADA webpage, with the following local governments:

- Fairfax County, Virginia<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> See <http://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/toolkitmain.htm>.

<sup>90</sup> “Settlement Agreement between the United States of America and Fairfax County, Virginia under the Americans with Disabilities Act,” (Settlement Agreement with Fairfax County, VA) DJ 204-79-258: <http://1.usa.gov/1IOTLSq>.

- Newport, Rhode Island<sup>91</sup>
- Fort Myers, Florida<sup>92</sup>
- Muskegon, Michigan<sup>93</sup>
- Pearl River County, Mississippi<sup>94</sup>
- The Town of Pomfret, Connecticut<sup>95</sup>
- Wilson County, North Carolina<sup>96</sup>
- Smyth County, Virginia<sup>97</sup>
- Saint Clair County, Illinois<sup>98</sup>
- Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas<sup>99</sup>

In 2010, DOJ began to coordinate systematically with DHS, to ensure that cities and counties selected for PCA compliance reviews included some sites that are recovering from a disaster, so that post-disaster recovery and rebuilding will comply with the accessibility requirements of the ADA and Section 504.

Since 2010, DOJ has engaged in a number of enforcement activities, including:

- On May 22, 2013, DOJ filed a Statement of Interest in *Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled, et al. v. Bloomberg, et al.*, Civil Action No. 11-6690 (JMF), in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York.<sup>100</sup> The lawsuit was filed by and on behalf of individuals with disabilities alleging that New York City discriminates against individuals with disabilities in their emergency management services, programs, and activities in violation of the ADA and Section 504, by, among others, failing to plan to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. The Statement of Interest addressed the architectural accessibility of evacuation centers and emergency shelters, transportation and evacuations plans, and communications. On November 7, 2013, Judge Jesse Furman issued an extensive Opinion and Order finding New York City’s evacuation, sheltering, and communication plans fail to adequately include the rights of individuals with disabilities.

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<sup>91</sup> “Settlement Agreement with Newport, RI,” DJ 204-66-49: [http://www.ada.gov/newport\\_pca/newport\\_sa.htm](http://www.ada.gov/newport_pca/newport_sa.htm).

<sup>92</sup> “Settlement Agreement with Fort Myers, FL,” DJ 204-17M-413: [http://www.ada.gov/ft\\_myers\\_pca/fort\\_myers\\_sa.htm](http://www.ada.gov/ft_myers_pca/fort_myers_sa.htm).

<sup>93</sup> “Settlement Agreement with Muskegon, MI,” DJ 204-38-109: [http://www.ada.gov/muskegon\\_pca/muskegon\\_sa.htm](http://www.ada.gov/muskegon_pca/muskegon_sa.htm).

<sup>94</sup> “Settlement Agreement with Pearl River County, MS,” DJ 204-41-47: [http://www.ada.gov/pearl\\_co\\_pca/pearl\\_co\\_sa.htm](http://www.ada.gov/pearl_co_pca/pearl_co_sa.htm).

<sup>95</sup> “Settlement Agreement with Pomfret, CT,” DJ 204-14-135: [http://www.ada.gov/pomfret\\_PCA/pomfret\\_sa.htm](http://www.ada.gov/pomfret_PCA/pomfret_sa.htm).

<sup>96</sup> “Settlement Agreement with County of Wilson, NC,” DJ 204-54-113: [http://www.ada.gov/wilsonco\\_pca/wilson\\_sa.htm](http://www.ada.gov/wilsonco_pca/wilson_sa.htm).

<sup>97</sup> “Settlement Agreement with Smyth County, VA,” DJ 204-80-84: [http://www.ada.gov/smyth\\_pca/smyth\\_sa.htm](http://www.ada.gov/smyth_pca/smyth_sa.htm).

<sup>98</sup> “Settlement Agreement with St. Clair County, IL,” DJ 204-25-73: [http://www.ada.gov/stclare\\_pca/stclare\\_sa.htm](http://www.ada.gov/stclare_pca/stclare_sa.htm).

<sup>99</sup> “Settlement Agreement with Wyandotte County and Kansas City, KS,” DJ 204-29-136: <http://1.usa.gov/1KvBqB7>.

<sup>100</sup> See <http://www.ada.gov/brooklyn-cil-brief.pdf>.

- On October 7, 2010, DOJ filed a Statement of Interest in *CALIF, et al. v. City and County of Los Angeles, California*, Civil Action No. CV 09-0287 (RZx), in the United States District Court for the Central District of California.<sup>101</sup> The lawsuit was filed by and on behalf of individuals with disabilities alleging that the City and County of Los Angeles, California discriminate against individuals with disabilities in their emergency management programs in violation of the ADA and Section 504. The Statement of Interest, filed in support of the Plaintiffs' position, provided an explanation of the obligations that state and local governments have under the ADA and Section 504 to plan for, and meet the needs of, individuals with disabilities during emergencies and disasters. On February 10, 2011, Judge Conseulo Marshall entered an order granting the plaintiffs motion for summary judgment, finding that the City of Los Angeles failed to adequately plan and prepare for individuals with disabilities in its emergency planning.
- DOJ has conducted numerous compliance reviews and complaint-based investigations of state and local government entities to determine compliance with the ADA and Section 504 in emergency planning and facilities. DOJ has entered dozens of settlement agreements where state and local government entities have agreed to ensure that their emergency services, programs, and activities comply with the ADA and Section 504. DOJ's various settlement agreements can be found at the ADA website.<sup>102</sup>

## Coordination Activities

Since 2010, DOJ has engaged in a number of federal coordination activities, including:

- DOJ participated in and supported drafting of several White House emergency planning guides:
  - *Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans* (June 2013);<sup>103</sup>
  - *Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Institutions of Higher Education* (June 2013);<sup>104</sup>
  - *Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship* (June 2013);<sup>105</sup>
- DOJ participated in and supported the drafting and revision of frameworks and other documents published pursuant to PPD-8, to ensure appropriate inclusion of the rights of individuals with disabilities in whole community planning, including:
  - *National Disaster Recovery Framework* (Sept. 2011).

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<sup>101</sup> See [http://www.ada.gov/briefs/calif\\_interest\\_br.pdf](http://www.ada.gov/briefs/calif_interest_br.pdf).

<sup>102</sup> See [http://www.ada.gov/enforce\\_current.htm](http://www.ada.gov/enforce_current.htm).

<sup>103</sup> See [http://rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS\\_K-12\\_Guide\\_508.pdf](http://rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS_K-12_Guide_508.pdf).

<sup>104</sup> See [http://rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS\\_IHE\\_Guide\\_508.pdf](http://rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS_IHE_Guide_508.pdf).

<sup>105</sup> See <http://1.usa.gov/1Tj4TIZ>.

- *National Prevention Framework* (May 2013).
- *National Protection Framework* (forthcoming).
- *National Mitigation Framework* (May 2013).
- *National Response Framework, ver. 2* (May 2013).
- *Emergency Support Functions and Annexes* (May 2013).
- *National Preparedness Report* (March 30, 2012).
- DOJ provided substantive comments for *FEMA’s Communicating During and After a Nuclear Power Plant Incident* (June 2013).
- DOJ provided substantive comments for *FEMA’s Improvised Nuclear Device Response and Recovery: Communicating in the Immediate Aftermath* (June 2013).<sup>106</sup>
- DOJ participated in and supported the drafting and revision of *FEMA’s Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101 v. 2.0* (Nov. 2010), to promote nationwide preparedness activities that include the rights of individuals with disabilities.<sup>107</sup>
- DOJ supported the development of *FEMA’s FNSS Guidance*.

## *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR*

Information for this report was provided by the Department of Labor’s Office of Disability and Employment Policy (ODEP) and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

ODEP provides national leadership by developing and influencing disability employment-related policies and practices affecting an increase in the employment of individuals with disabilities. ETA provides job training, employment, labor market information, and income maintenance mainly through state and local workforce development systems.

Part of DOL’s duties, from 2011 - 2013, included ensuring that already established methods of safety were maintained. This included:

- Maintaining the OEP and making it available to all employees, via DOL’s intranet website (Labornet) and in hard copy form.
- Maintaining DOL Safe (1-877-DOL-SAFE), a toll-free telephone number that enables DOL personnel, including federal and contract employees, to report their well-being and location in the event of a large-scale emergency. The phone line, when activated, is designed to capture vital information and communicate it to DOL management.
- Presenting the principles of emergency preparedness to grantees all across the country, such as the administrators for the Senior Community Service Employment Program. These presentations covered the core principles of mitigation, prevention, preparedness,

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<sup>106</sup> See <http://1.usa.gov/1UxkDNx>.

<sup>107</sup> See <http://1.usa.gov/1w4mSyZ>.

response, and recovery and are a continuous ongoing effort for each year, to ensure that the knowledge base is maintained.

- ODEP, in conjunction with the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, and various other DOL offices, leads the ICC Emergency Preparedness in the Workplace Subcommittee. The ICC established the subcommittee to address emergency preparedness, response, and recovery issues related to individuals with disabilities, in both government and private sector workplaces. The subcommittee addresses strategies to ensure that workplace emergency preparedness plans fully integrate the unique perspectives and needs of individuals with disabilities. It serves as a forum for collaboration, dialogue, and the exchange of ideas regarding a wide range of disability-related workplace preparedness considerations, action steps to use, and concerns/solutions to improve existing practices and concerns.
- DOL has recently updated its federal guidance entitled, *Preparing the Workplace for Everyone* with multiple addendums.<sup>108</sup> The document was developed as a tool for federal emergency planners and emergency managers to re-evaluate their emergency plans and ensure that they include provisions that specifically address the needs of employees with disabilities. This document can serve as a launching point for federal agencies as they strengthen their OEPs, required for all federal agencies by the U.S. General Services Administration. This framework of guidelines reflects the effective practices of nearly 20 federal agencies gathered from direct input, existing reports and articles, and actual emergency plans.

## **The Emergency Management Center**

The DOL Emergency Management Center annually reviews the regional and component agency Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans to ensure that all DOL entities are in compliance with COOP requirements, including the assurance that the needs of employees and customers with disabilities are met. As such, DOL has established the Emergency Management Work Group, an internal departmental committee representative of all component agencies and DOL regions, which meets monthly. Responsibilities of this committee include the collection of data and the review of all efforts to address the needs of its employees and customers with disabilities in all emergency planning, including any departmental response to any declared disasters. In addition, DOL:

- Identified teleworking capabilities of essential job functions for individuals with disabilities if the COOP plan is activated.
- Republished the *U.S. DOL Evacuation and Emergency Response Handbook*. This newer edition has a completely redesigned and more in depth component concerning active shooter protocols. The plan features a multi-tiered approach to emergency evacuation for individuals with disabilities, including the use of rally points and

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<sup>108</sup> “Preparing the Workplace for Everyone: Accounting for the Needs of People with Disabilities, A Framework of Emergency Preparedness Guidelines for Federal Agencies,” <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ep/preparing.htm>.

dedicated staff, with designated elevator usage. This is augmented with an emergency intercom system that links directly with the Security Command Center. This allows individuals to request an elevator, via intercom and, if one is not available or inoperative, to then be aided down the stairs, utilizing evacuation devices, by security personnel, first responders, or trained members of the cadre of floor wardens, zone monitors, and voluntarily assigned companions or “buddies.” This effort has been completed, but efforts are underway to utilize this handbook to create a computer accessible training tool.

- Replaced all of its current evacuation devices with new state-of-the-art devices, selected with the direct input of DOL employees with disabilities. The DOL Security Center conducted product evaluation, and acquired the new devices and has implemented new evacuation procedures.
- Created a method to review and validate all of the regional offices’ OEPs to ensure that the unique needs of individuals with disabilities have been considered and included in the development of their plans. The next step, in this effort, is to develop essential training to all staff, to ensure compliance with Federal Protective Service and General Services Administration requirements.
- Assisted with the development and implementation of evacuation chair standards. DOL has done this by serving on a committee hosted by Rehabilitative Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America, which is charged with the responsibility of developing new evacuation device standards and providing expertise on the needs and requirements of individuals with disabilities. DOL continues to work with the committee as the standards are finalized.
- Developed an emergency preparedness briefing and training to be provided to all new employees, during their initial departmental orientation, with an emphasis on emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities or others requiring additional assistance. Now that this training and briefing has been completed, all new employees will benefit from this effort.
- Began consultation with regional administrators and regional safety and health managers regarding evacuation procedures, for individuals with disabilities, to ensure that all employees’ needs are met at these facilities for emergency preparedness. This effort was started in 2010 and is currently continuing.
- Developed a proposal to better integrate ICC activities and interests into departmental administrative functions.
- Provided resources materials, through its Workforce3One website to the public workforce development system, including disability-related grantees, on emergency preparedness, response, and recovery for persons with disabilities.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> See <https://disability.workforce3one.org/>.

## Meetings

ODEP leads the ICC Emergency Preparedness in the Workplace Subcommittee. This ICC Workplace Subcommittee has met approximately every six weeks since its inception in 2005, and continues to issue new information, which is beneficial to emergency planners, concerning the needs of individuals with disabilities in emergency situations.

Member agencies participating in the ICC Workplace Subcommittee include:

### *ICC Members Participating in the Emergency Preparedness in the Workplace Subcommittee*

- U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (Chair)
- Federal Communications Commission
- General Services Administration
- U.S. Access Board
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- U.S. Department of Defense
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Service
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Department of State
- U.S. Department of Transportation
- U.S. Department of Treasury
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- U.S. Office of Personnel Management
- U.S. Social Security Administration

## Major Activities

DOL updated its federal guidance entitled, *Preparing the Workplace for Everyone*. These updates include addenda, such as “Stairwell Use during an Emergency;” “Service Animals;” and “Visitors with Disabilities.” A fourth addendum, concerning “Evacuation Chairs,” is currently in the clearance process. The overarching document was developed as a tool for federal emergency planners and emergency managers, to re-evaluate their emergency plans and ensure the inclusion of provisions that address the needs of individuals with disabilities. This document can serve as a launching point for federal agencies to strengthen the OEPs which are required for all federal agencies by the U.S. General Services Administration. Plans are currently being discussed to update this guide, as it is approximately 9 years old. The framework of guidelines combines the effective practices of nearly 20 federal agencies gathered from direct input, existing reports, articles, and actual emergency plans.

## Major Accomplishments

The ICC Workplace Subcommittee worked with nearly 20 federal agencies to address questions, issues, or needs which have arisen during these agencies' efforts to include individuals with disabilities in their emergency preparedness and planning. The Workplace Subcommittee has continued to provide materials to those new to the arena of emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities and has taught experienced emergency planners about new methods they could implement to improve their efforts to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. Additionally, the Workplace Subcommittee meetings have been a neutral forum for emergency planners and disability policy personnel to have straightforward interactions and discussions about potential changes to disability emergency planning policies and practices, as well as to develop approaches to new regulations, situations, policies and practices. These conversations have led to a shared commitment to disability inclusion and an informal testing ground for ideas.

The *Preparing the Workforce for Everyone* framework continues to be a popular resource in its digital form with 870 unique visits to the Framework of Guidelines and 2,045 unique views of the Addendum to the Framework on Stairwells.

### *U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT*

Information for this report was provided by OPM's, Office of Diversity and Inclusion and Office of Facilities, Security, and Contracting.

Facilities, Security, and Contracting ensures the day to day COOP and Occupant Emergency Programs, by using a comprehensive system of preparedness, prevention, protection, response, and recovery for personnel, contractors, visitors, and assets, including those with access or functional needs and/or disabilities worldwide.

In 2010, OPM continued its outreach to all occupants with disabilities and accomplished the following at OPM offices around the country:

### Meetings

**Membership in Key Federal Disabilities Committees:** OPM continues to actively participate on the FEMA led ICC, attending all ICC meetings and those of the Workplace Subcommittee.

### Major Activities

**Disability Employment Initiative:** On July 26, 2010, President Barack Obama signed Executive Order 13548, Increasing Federal Employment of Individuals with Disabilities, to mark the historic 20th anniversary of the signing of the ADA.<sup>110</sup> The Executive Order recognized that Americans with disabilities have an employment rate far lower than that of Americans without disabilities and are underrepresented in the federal workforce. The

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<sup>110</sup> Executive Order 13548, July 26, 2010, "Increasing Federal Employment of Individuals with Disabilities," <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-07-30/pdf/2010-18988.pdf>.

Executive Order required federal agencies to increase the hiring of individuals with disabilities by 100,000 over the next five years. In support of the Executive Order, OPM, in collaboration with the White House, the Office of Management and Budget, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and DOL, issued model strategies to federal agencies on hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities. This effort, while not directly linked to emergency preparedness, increases the numbers and visibility of individuals with disabilities in the federal workforce, as well as increases the scope and breadth of accommodations needed with respect to emergency preparedness and response. It necessitated a re-evaluation of OPM's emergency preparedness program for all employees, to ensure that individual disabilities are addressed.

Executive Order 13548 is not an isolated effort but works in coordination with Executive Order 13347 on Individuals with Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness; EO 13518 on Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government issued on November 9, 2009; Presidential Memorandum on The Presidential POWER Initiative: Protecting Our Workers and Ensuring Reemployment issued on July 19, 2010; and EO 13583 on Establishing a Coordinated Government-wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce issued on August 18, 2011.<sup>111</sup>

In collaboration with the White House, EEOC, DOL, the Department of Defense's Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP), Department of Education and Bender Consulting, the deputy director conducted trainings regarding employment and reasonable accommodation of individuals with disabilities. Over 1,000 federal staff from more than 56 agencies were trained on recruitment techniques, how to use Schedule A excepted appointing authority to hire individuals with disabilities, reasonable accommodation, the CAP Program, and getting employees, who become ill or injured on the job, back to work. In addition, the deputy director conducted a webinar, reaching over 300 federal personnel, service providers, and individuals with disabilities, and she is visiting federal executive boards, across the country, to share information regarding the Executive Order on Employment of People with Disabilities in the Federal Government and other relevant issues.

**Town Hall Meetings:** In April of 2010, OPM conducted a Town Hall Meeting for OPM employees and others with disabilities, to listen to their concerns and discuss the importance of including individuals with disabilities, in the emergency planning process. From May 2010 through June 2013, OPM conducted 10 Emergency Preparedness/COOP town halls meetings, on emergency preparedness, at OPM offices, around the country. During these town halls meetings, we addressed the emergency concerns of and local points of contact for individuals with disabilities and other access/functional needs.

In October of 2012, OPM's Office for Equal Employment Opportunity partnered with Facilities, Security, and Contracting and conducted a brown bag luncheon for individuals with disabilities. We discussed accommodation procedures and listened to concerns from

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<sup>111</sup>More information on activities supporting this initiative and employment statistical reports are published at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/diversity-and-inclusion/reports/#url=Employment-Statistical-Reports>.

individuals with disabilities. In June of 2013, OPM Security Services and Emergency Actions conducted a Town Hall Meeting for the Office of Planning and Policy Analysis, addressing Employee Viewpoint Survey Security and Emergency Actions concerns of OPM employees, including those with access/functional needs and other disabilities.

**Annual Preparedness Fairs:** From 2010 to 2013, OPM conducted annual Security and Emergency Preparedness Fairs. As part of the activities of the fair, OPM invited several local disability organizations to participate, educating building occupants on the needs of those with specific disabilities. OPM solicited emergency planning input from individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. Finally, OPM encouraged individuals with disabilities to self-identify, so that the building emergency response team could properly assist them during emergencies.

**America's PrepareAthon:** In 2013, OPM entered into a partnership with FEMA for the nationwide, community-based, emergency preparedness campaign. This biannual campaign encourages participants to conduct targeted drills and training for community members, including individuals with disabilities. OPM issued a memorandum to heads of federal departments and agencies, strongly encouraging everyone to participate.

**Risk Assessments:** OPM continued to perform risk assessments at OPM facilities around the country, to ensure each facility had accessible egress routes and a viable OEP that addressed the emergency needs of all occupants at the facility, including employees and visitors with disabilities. OPM also encouraged office supervisors to develop procedures for individuals with disabilities, within their offices, to include the identification of evacuation or shelter in place "buddies" and accessible egress routes.

**Great Southeast Shakeout:** In 2012, OPM participated in the nationwide, earthquake preparedness exercise. OPM encouraged Headquarters occupants to drop, take cover, and hold on for 5 minutes, then issued a public address announcement to evacuate. OPM also educated individuals with disabilities or others with access and functional needs, on what to do when there is an earthquake.

## **Major Accomplishments**

**Increase in Hiring Federal Employees with Disabilities:** Executive Order 13548 committed the Executive Branch to increasing the number of individuals with disabilities in the federal workforce, with a goal to hire 100,000 individuals with disabilities into federal service over 5 years. The Federal Government has made great progress towards accomplishing this goal. By the end of fiscal year (FY) 2013, total permanent federal employment for individuals with disabilities had increased from 219,975 in FY 2012 to 234,395, representing an increase from 11.89 to 12.8 percent. New hires who were individuals with disabilities totaled 16,024, representing an increase from 16.31 percent in FY 2012 to 18.18 percent in FY 2013. At no point in the past 33 years, have individuals with disabilities been hired at a higher percentage than in FY 2013. This success has led to more individuals with disabilities in federal service, both in real terms and by percentage, than at any time in the past 33 years.

**Membership in Key Federal Disabilities Committees:** OPM continues to actively participate on the ICC, attending all ICC meetings including those of the Workplace Subcommittee. OPM's Facilities, Security, and Contracting contributed to the completion of best practices (the Visitor's Addendum, Evacuation Chair Recommendations, and Stairwell Use Guidelines) which are addenda to "A Framework of Emergency Preparedness Guidelines for Federal Agencies—Preparing the Workplace for Everyone" (July 2005). OPM incorporated these best practices into the latest revision of the OPM Headquarters Occupant Emergency Plan. These procedures are posted on the OPM intranet for easy access by and others.

**Occupant Emergency Plan/Emergency Action Cards:** In addition to a full revision of the OPM Headquarters OEP, Facilities, Security, and Contracting issued to all occupants a wallet-sized emergency action card or "Z-card," listing procedures for evacuation, sheltering in place, and other emergency information. All information, including the OEP, has been posted on an OPM Intranet Emergency Preparedness website portal. This portal also provides a downloadable form for employees to discreetly self-declare disabilities for emergency purposes. Facilities, Security, and Contracting also crafted and reviewed OEPs for field offices, and a new leased facility (Union Square), in Washington, DC.

**Monthly Emergency Preparedness Messages:** OPM provided a monthly email to all employees, reminding them of occupant emergency procedures to include, at a minimum, specifics for personnel with disabilities.

**Mobility Equipment:** OPM provided people with mobility disabilities additional wheelchairs, scooters, and folding chairs to support safe egress and movement through the building or seating for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs to await further assistance. OPM also trained over 70 emergency team members on proper use of these devices and encouraged emergency personnel to interact with people with mobility disabilities to learn how to assist them during emergencies.

**Assistive Technologies:** The Office of Personnel and Management continued to provide BlackBerrys and Apple iPhones with text messaging capabilities to employees and contractors who are deaf and hard of hearing. In addition, individuals were provided with TTY devices and video relay services. In all buildings OPM occupies, there are visual signals to alert individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing of an emergency and to either shelter in place or evacuate.

**Accessible OPM Buildings:** OPM moved closer to ensuring all of its facilities are 100 percent accessible for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. In its Headquarters facility, OPM installed two wheelchair lifts and installed accessible entryways and screening stations in the ground floor breezeways.

**Emergency Response Training:** OPM conducted annual Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and CPR training for OPM employees and emergency team members. The Emergency Team comprises approximately 70 volunteers from OPM Headquarters and OPM's contract workforce, who provide for the security and safety of all OPM occupants on each floor of the Theodore Roosevelt Building. Emergency teams at other OPM offices, throughout the country,

also receive similar training from American Red Cross or American Heart Association-certified trainers.

**FEMA Pub P-912:** In September of 2012, OPM partnered with FEMA’s Office of National Capital Region Coordination, to create an emergency preparedness publication for federal employees in the National Capital Region. This publication has a section with helpful tips for individuals with disabilities or others with access and functional needs.<sup>112</sup>

**FEMA Independent Study Courses:** In December of 2012, OPM also partnered with FEMA’s Office of National Capital Region Coordination, in the development and release of two independent studies and emergency preparedness courses, for federal employees, including individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

### *NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY*

NCD’s mission is to be a trusted advisor, in collaboration with individuals with disabilities, to the President; the Congress; federal entities; state, tribal communities, and local governments; and other entities and organizations. NCD fulfills its advisory roles, regarding disability policies, programs, procedures, and practices, that enhance equal opportunity by convening stakeholders to acquire timely and relevant input for recommendations and action steps; gathering and analyzing data and other information; engaging and influencing current debates and agendas; identifying and formulating solutions to emerging and long-standing challenges; and providing tools to facilitate effective implementation.

### **Meetings**

- In September 2011, NCD held an all-day meeting with FEMA’s Office of Disability Integration and Coordination and regional disability integration specialists, where the agencies discussed the current state of emergency management for people with disabilities and opportunities for collaboration between the agencies. A follow-up call between the agencies was held in February 2012. In addition, NCD participates in weekly calls with FEMA’s ODIC.
- In 2012, NCD met with staff from the House Committee on Homeland Security, to discuss NCD’s emergency management work. Also in 2012, NCD staff met with the Emergency Management Administrator in Hampton Roads, Virginia, to discuss local inclusive emergency management.
- In May 2012, NCD staff presented on FEMA’s Hurricane Preparedness Week conference call, focusing on inclusive emergency preparedness with an emphasis on the access and functional needs of children and adults with disabilities.

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<sup>112</sup> FEMA, “Emergency Preparedness for Federal Employees in the National Capital Region,” FEMA P-912, September 2012: <http://1.usa.gov/1KQ5WUT>.

- In August 2012, NCD met with GAO, at their request, to discuss emergency alert and warning systems.
- In January 2013, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, briefed the Council on FEMA’s activities and the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy.

## Major Activities

- On June 15, 2010, Chairman Jonathan Young testified before the House Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee, on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications on “Caring for Special Needs during Disasters: What’s Being Done for Vulnerable Populations.” The purpose of this hearing was to receive testimony on the actions taken by FEMA, nonprofits, and localities, to address the needs of individuals with disabilities, the poor, children, and individuals with limited English proficiency, during disasters.
- In July 2010, NCD celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ADA with its partners, by convening the first-ever National Disability Policy Summit, in Washington, DC. A diverse group of more than 500 people from U.S. Territories, tribal entities, 48 states, and one foreign country, gathered at the multi-day Summit, to launch a national dialogue on disability policies and programs for the 21st century. The Summit included several discussions, related to emergency management; among the esteemed presenters were FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate and Marcie Roth, director of ODIC.
- In September 2011, NCD co-sponsored FEMA’s “Getting Real II Conference-Promising Practices in Inclusive Emergency Management for the Whole Community.” To increase participation in the Conference and dissemination of the information, using PKEMRA funds, NCD paid for the Conference to be streamed live online. In addition to the Conference’s 400 attendees—who came from 37 states and Guam—2,826 people viewed the webcast, with 80 percent coming via direct traffic and 10 percent via international traffic—primarily from Japan, Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom, as well as Africa.
- In August 2012, NCD disseminated information, regarding Hurricane Isaac, via its website and social media.
- In 2013, NCD collaborated with the House Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, on refining language in the “Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2013.” In December 2013, NCD issued a letter to the House Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications stating our support of an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to the bill, which adopted much of the language suggested by NCD.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Rosen, Jeff, “NCD Letter to House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness Regarding IPAWS Bill,” National Council on Disability: <http://www.ncd.gov/publications/2013/12192013/>.

- In November 2013, NCD staff was interviewed by an NPR affiliate regarding the New York City emergency management lawsuit and the national implications of the ruling.

## Reporting

**The State of Housing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:** In 2010, NCD published *The State of Housing in America in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Disability Perspective*, which includes a chapter on “Lessons Learned from National Emergencies Regarding the Provision of Accessible and Affordable Housing.”<sup>114</sup> This resource notes that once people are in an emergency shelter, their stay can be lengthy and traumatic. Problems stem from the lack of accessible and affordable temporary units, including public housing, rental units, and government-provided trailers. A key challenge is that rental units may not have needed accessibility features. While FEMA recently established a Disaster Housing Portal that indicates if a unit offers basic accessibility, and HUD recently created a National Housing Locator System that helps people search for accessible units, these units are, at times, located at a considerable distance from the occupant’s original location. In some disasters, the Federal Government may authorize mobile homes or travel trailers, which are far from ideal. The units often take time to transport and place in areas that require the construction of roads and utilities. Once people have been relocated into temporary units, other problems tend to arise: including difficulties in accessing transportation and difficulties accessing health and social services. Historically, few communities or organizations have made accessibility a key issue before or after a disaster.

**2011 Annual Report:** In October 2011, NCD released its annual report, *National Disability Policy: A Progress Report*, which included a section on the “State of Emergency Management and Disability.” This report found that despite the noteworthy increase in national efforts to improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities in emergencies, such efforts have been delayed and are fraught with challenges. For example, despite the increased effort in disability integration, research-based knowledge supporting these activities is severely lacking. Furthermore, the report noted that FEMA’s ODIC lacked sufficient staff and resources to meet this critical national need. Accordingly, NCD recommended increased coordination and funding for research; legislation that establishes and funds ODIC as a permanent office within FEMA; and developing ODIC training for people with disabilities on preparing for emergencies, including training for individuals with disabilities and individuals who have limited English proficiency.

**2012 Annual Report:** In September 2012, NCD released its annual report, entitled, *National Disability Policy: A Progress Report*, which included discussion on emergency management within its “Community Living” chapter.<sup>115</sup> This discussed focused on the importance of effective communication with individuals with disabilities before, during, and after an emergency and the need for heightened attention to this important area. Accordingly, NCD recommended that the U.S. Department of Justice, in collaboration with the Federal

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<sup>114</sup> National Council on Disability, *The State of Housing in America in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Disability Perspective*, January 19, 2010: [https://www.ncd.gov/rawmedia\\_repository/cdd1f2d8\\_ae1e\\_44ed\\_b016\\_938405e73a26.pdf](https://www.ncd.gov/rawmedia_repository/cdd1f2d8_ae1e_44ed_b016_938405e73a26.pdf).

<sup>115</sup> All NCD Progress Reports can be found at [http://www.ncd.gov/progress\\_reports](http://www.ncd.gov/progress_reports).

Communications Commission, as appropriate, increase the enforcement of disability laws and regulations, as they pertain to effective communication before, during, and after emergencies for individuals with disabilities. Specifically, state and local emergency management officials must comply with their effective communication legal obligations. In addition, television broadcasters must adhere to laws and regulations, regarding the accessibility of emergency information.

**2013 Annual Report:** In October 2013, NCD released its annual report, *2013 Report on National Disability Policy: Strength in Our Differences*, which highlighted recent federal achievements from August 2012 to September 2013, and identified areas where changes in public policy and additional steps are needed. NCD consulted with diverse voices from the broad disability community, in determining its findings, and their views provided the basis for its recommendations. Among the diverse topics covered by the report, was the importance of inclusive emergency management practices, including accessible emergency exit signage and comprehensive emergency plans in schools.

### *C. Summary: Other Council Member Achievements*

This section presents a summary of other activities of ICC member agencies in strengthening emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities during 2010-2013.

#### *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT*

##### **Superstorm Sandy Recovery**

HUD played a vital role in the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force, chaired by Secretary Shaun Donovan. The Rebuilding Strategy of the Task Force sought to address the needs of disproportionately impacted people, including people with limited English proficiency and individuals with disabilities. After Hurricane Sandy, HUD made its first Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Disaster Recovery allocation in record time— just eight days after Congress appropriated funds—which allowed money to flow as quickly as possible to grantees, once their action plans were approved. New York State’s plan dedicated \$838 million for housing programs; New Jersey’s plan provided \$1.16 billion; and New York City’s allocated \$648 million.

Many of New York City’s public housing projects were located in mandatory evacuation zones. While many residents evacuated to safety, many others became stranded without power and heat, in some cases for weeks. Many people with disabilities were unable to descend from high-rise apartments due to nonworking elevators. Prior to Sandy, federal funding was insufficient to obtain emergency resources, e.g., generators, emergency boilers, and pumps that would have protected such residents. The Task Force sought to ensure that public housing agencies and other assisted multifamily housing received funding for hazard mitigation, as well as for rebuilding. This approach helps protect residents from facing similar problems in the event of future disasters.

In 2013, HUD published *Housing Counseling Program Guide for Superstorm Sandy Disaster Relief*. The guide explains that housing counseling post-purchase may include “compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act including design features to provide accessibility, non-discriminatory lending, and funding for persons who modify their dwellings to accommodate disabilities” as well as information regarding nondiscrimination laws.<sup>116</sup>

After Hurricane Sandy, the Indoor Environmental Pollutants Work Group that included HUD, EPA, FEMA, HHS (CDC and the National Institute of Environmental Health Services), and OSHA prepared a listing of resource documents addressing housing-related health and safety aspects of post-disaster recovery.<sup>117</sup>

## **Major Activities and Accomplishments**

As part of the Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities with DOT and EPA, HUD established HUD’s Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, which will help communities improve access to affordable housing. When reviewing grant and technical assistance applications, the Partnership agencies, including HUD, screen for engagement of populations not traditionally involved in planning, such as people with limited English proficiency and people with disabilities. HUD funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act helped make possible the construction of affordable homes for seniors and persons with disabilities.

In 2011, HUD’s Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity published the following brochures in various languages for persons with limited English proficiency:

- “Are You A Victim of Housing Discrimination?” in Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese
- “Equal Opportunity for All” in Bengali, Creole, Chinese, Farsi, French, Haitian, Hindi, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese
- “Domestic Violence Guide” in Armenian, Burmese, Creole, Chinese, Haitian, Indonesian, Korean, Persian, Spanish, and Vietnamese

Through Congressional appropriations, HUD’s Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program provided flexible grants to help cities, counties, and states recover from presidentially-declared disasters, especially in low income areas. Funding included:

- FY 2010 - \$100 million to assist recovery in areas affected by severe storms and flooding from March 2010 through May 2010
- FY 2012 - \$400 million to assist recovery from multiple disasters occurring in 2011

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<sup>116</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *HUD Housing Counseling Program Guide for Superstorm Sandy Disaster Relief*, March 14, 2013: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=SandyHsgCounsPrgmGuide.pdf>.

<sup>117</sup> See <http://1.usa.gov/1O2HeBG>.

- FY 2013 - \$16 billion to assist recovery from Hurricane Sandy. (\$15.18 billion after sequester)<sup>118</sup>

## *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE*

**USDA Target Center:** USDA continued to incorporate the needs of individuals with disabilities in emergency preparedness planning and incident management through the USDA Target Center. The center ensures all employees have equal access to electronic and information technology through assistive technology and worksite accommodations.

**Accessible Emergency Evacuation:** In FY 2010, USDA provided hands-on training for staff and employees with mobility disabilities in the use of “Garaventa” evacuation chairs. Mechanical wheelchairs were staged near exits, for use by individuals with mobility disabilities. These chairs are also available for individuals who may become injured during an emergency. The agency also replaced a text only messaging system—Roam Secure—with MIR3 text and voice messaging system, on a dedicated server.

**Occupant Emergency Plans:** During the reporting period, USDA updated Occupant Emergency Plans (OEPs) for all headquarters facilities in the National Capital Region to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) “All Hazards” format. The new plans ensure that the needs of employees with disabilities are appropriately addressed. USDA also implemented new employee accountability procedures designed to improve emergency communication and establish reporting guidelines in the event of an evacuation. USDA conducted several exercises including evacuation procedures, prearranged assembly areas, and shelter-in-place procedures. USDA also created a desktop flipchart of the new procedures and disseminated it to all employees.

**New Employee Emergency Communication System:** USDA created a new two-way emergency communication system called AG-AWaIRS (Agriculture Automated Warning and Information Response System) that has the capability to notify employees via desktop pop-up alerts on their computer, phone, text, email, and public address system. The new system allows individuals that may need assistance during an emergency to respond to alerts to let emergency response officials know they need assistance. The AG-AWaIRS system allows for increased employee accountability and more complete and timely communication of emergency information.

## *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE*

**The Fort Hood Task Force:** The Fort Hood Task Force implemented recommendations that have a direct bearing on emergency preparations supporting larger populations, including employees and dependents with disabilities, family members residing on installations, patients at military hospitals, and students who are wards of the DOD educational staff. Actions undertaken to implement the recommendations of the Fort Hood Task Force include the

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<sup>118</sup> For more information on HUD’s Community Development Block Grant please visit <http://1.usa.gov/NWVQXp>.

following examples: (1) development of policy for integrated installation preparedness and protection; (2) acceleration of enhanced 911 services for DOD Installations; (3) accelerated fielding of installation emergency notification systems; and (4) development of mutual aid agreements between installations and surrounding local municipalities.

**Accessible Pentagon:** DOD continued renovations of the Pentagon to meet modern building codes and to enhance accessibility and safety. In addition, the Pentagon Integrated EOC continued to ensure effective emergency management and communications, which include: InfoNet, Mass Notification (Big Voice), and NotiFind. The Pentagon also installed 70 new EZ Glide Evacuation Chairs throughout the building; and released a 3-D training video on emergency readiness and evacuation, entitled “You and the Big ‘What If?’”

### *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR*

**Occupant Emergency Plan:** In FY 2010, Interior revised the OEP for its headquarters facility, in Washington, DC, with an emphasis on improving evacuation and shelter-in-place procedures for individuals with disabilities. The Office of Emergency Management worked with the Office of Accessible Technology, to improve the procedures for self-identification of individuals who may need assistance during an emergency.

Interior also established emergency rally points, on each floor for individuals with disabilities. Emergency “Red” phones were installed at each rally point, to automatically dial the Security Dispatch Center, which can dispatch an elevator mechanic to evacuate individuals who require assistance. This capability enables individuals who use wheelchairs to be evacuated in their wheelchairs, instead of in an evacuation chair, by stairs.

### *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE*

During the reporting period, the Department of State enhanced internal procedures to better address emergency preparedness for employees with disabilities. The updated process will inform individuals on a variety of actions to take in order to prepared for and respond to emergencies.

Additionally, the Department’s domestic emergency management intranet site contains a broad range of preparedness and emergency specific information ensuring the safety and well-being of all its employees. The Department developed, published, and distributed more than 25,000 copies of the DOS domestic *Emergency Preparedness Guide*. The pocket-sized guide provides information about a variety of emergency procedures, including specific preparedness information for individuals with disabilities.

### *U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION*

**2010 GSA Expo:** At the 2010 GSA Expo in Orlando, Florida, the Center for Emergency Management and Office for Emergency Response and Recovery convened all regional emergency coordinators, to discuss GSA requirements and responsibilities to include

individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs into all emergency planning situations.

**Occupancy Emergency Planning:** GSA also trained emergency wardens at its facilities, who direct building occupants to safety and are equipped to assist individuals with disabilities in the event of an emergency. GSA employees regularly attend seminars to learn from specialists in emergency preparedness.

**Joint Field Offices:** GSA's regional emergency coordinators work with FEMA RDISs to find possible locations or properties for JFO use following a disaster. GSA realty specialists execute a lease once FEMA selects a specific facility which meets its requirements.

## *U.S. SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION*

The Social Security Administration (SSA) delivers services that are vital to the economic sustainment and welfare of the American people by providing benefits to retirees, disabled persons, survivors of deceased workers and beneficiaries, and aged individuals. SSA relies on a very skilled, dedicated, and diverse workforce that spans over 1,400 facilities across the nation. Besides its headquarters in Woodlawn, Maryland, facilities include regional offices, field offices, card centers, teleservice centers, processing centers, and hearing offices. SSA also maintains a presence in United States embassies around the world.

### **Emergency Preparedness Overview**

SSA's success in providing much-needed services to the American people depends on its continued ability to provide a safe working environment for its personnel. The agency's streamlined approach to emergency preparedness planning helps ensure the safety of its employees and members of the public visiting its offices. SSA developed many plans and procedures that address emergency preparedness and strives to ensure that it appropriately addresses the needs of employees with disabilities in these plans.

The following three emergency preparedness programs focus on the life and safety of SSA personnel, including employees with disabilities:

**The Occupant Emergency Program:** The Occupant Emergency Program includes plans that enable the agency to respond to and recover from a wide range of emergencies, including terrorist attacks, hurricanes, fires, and earthquakes. These plans, which are available on the agency's intranet site, include evacuation procedures, previously designated assembly areas, and shelter-in-place procedures.

Under the OEP, SSA routinely conducts training events, including fire drills and shelter-in-place exercises. SSA designates and trains Occupant Emergency Organization members for each facility, which include supervisors, managers, and other volunteer members that serve as floor wardens and monitors for employees with disabilities. Floor wardens ensure that all personnel relocate to a safe area during emergencies. The agency assigns a monitor to assist self-identified employees with disabilities during emergencies. SSA provides training for all

Occupant Emergency Organization members and employees with disabilities and their monitors.

Each facility has its own OEP, which provides guidance for building occupants on a range of emergencies and actions necessary to ensure the safety of employees and the public. SSA makes each facility's OEP available to its employees via the agency's intranet site or in hard copy format.

**The Emergency Response Team:** The Emergency Response Team (ERT) responds to emergencies and manages incidents that affect SSA headquarters and the surrounding area. The ERT manages emergencies at headquarters by coordinating with first responders and other external organizations. SSA bases its ERT structure on the Incident Command System (ICS) developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. ICS provides federal, state, and local organizations with a common approach and terminology for managing incidents, so departments and agencies supporting one another can unify their efforts and speak the same language. Whether the ERT or local authorities lead the management of an incident, SSA take steps to ensure the safety of employees with disabilities.

**The Altmeyer Control Center (ACC):** The Altmeyer Control Center is the 24/7 security presence at the agency's headquarters. Also referred to as the "Watch," the ACC is staffed by security guards with oversight provided by a Watch Officer. The ACC monitors all security and safety-related functions for the headquarters complex and our nearby facilities and serves as a conduit to various law enforcement and security agencies during an emergency. Using security-related equipment, hardware, and systems, the ACC staff monitor security and keeps management informed of significant activities. In the event of hazardous conditions that could affect SSA personnel, the ACC becomes an emergency communications and coordination hub, as it implements the action plans that keep SSA employees and building occupants safe.

### **National Advisory Council for Employees with Disabilities**

With contingency plans designed to handle multiple hazards, threats, and unsafe conditions, SSA makes a concerted effort to ensure that its emergency preparedness program seamlessly incorporates the needs of all our employees. SSA's National Advisory Council for Employees with Disabilities advises agency management on issues that affect employees with disabilities and increases awareness of the concerns of employees with disabilities within the agency. Also, the council works to enhance the quality of work life for employees with disabilities, while promoting diversity and equality in the areas of service delivery, employment, recruitment, reasonable accommodations, training, and career advancement.

### **Actions and Programs that Enhance Employees with Disabilities Emergency Preparedness**

SSA designed the following actions and programs to enhance emergency preparedness for SSA employees with disabilities:

- In the event of severe weather or other hazardous conditions that could result in closing or delayed openings of our facilities, SSA shares these announcements in a number of methods to ensure the accessibility of the information:
  - Posting the information on the agency’s website;
  - Sending text messages directly to employees’ personal cell phones;
  - Having local television and radio stations broadcast the information; and
  - Making the information available via telephone TTY.
- SSA provides evacuation chairs upon request, to each self-identified employee with a mobility disability, to assist in moving down flights of stairs. Evacuation chairs are located near the workstations of employees with disabilities.
  - Additionally, SSA installed evacuation chairs in the stairwell of each non-exit floor of its multi-floor buildings. The agency has issued over 2,000 evacuation chairs since 1997 to headquarters and field personnel.
  - SSA recently began exclusively purchasing heavy duty Stryker Evacuation Chairs because first responders were most familiar with their operation.
  - SSA provided live evacuation chair training for employees with mobility disabilities and their assigned monitors in our headquarters facilities. The training includes classroom instruction and hands-on demonstrations in the stairwells. In SSA field facilities, the agency provides training to employees with mobility disabilities and their monitors via video presentations available on the SSA Video on Demand system, which includes closed captioning for employees who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- SSA created a shelter-in-place training video which is available to all employees via its Video on Demand system with closed captioning for employees who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- SSA installed emergency telephones that connect to the ACC in the stairwells of most headquarters facilities to enhance safety and security in those locations.
- SSA makes occupant emergency supplies available for employees with disabilities, including "Go Bag" emergency kits, multi-function hand cranked flashlights, and reflective identification armbands.
- Since 2010, SSA has posted signage that designates shelter-in-place locations throughout SSA facilities. Each sign is designed with braille, in compliance with the *Americans with Disabilities Act*.
- To enhance emergency communications for employees with disabilities, SSA makes two-way radios available. This communication capability helps facilitate the evacuation of employees with disabilities during an emergency.

- SSA has an extensive test, training, and exercise program that addresses virtually every aspect of the emergency preparedness and response programs. The following are a few examples:
  - SSA conducts two fire drills and two shelter-in-place exercises in every agency facility annually. Employees with disabilities participate in all fire and shelter-in-place drills.
  - SSA conducts 3-hour mandatory training sessions for our Occupant Emergency Organization members biannually.
  - SSA conducts monthly two-way radio communications tests with the Occupant Emergency Organization members to ensure that radios are functioning properly.
- On April 26, 2013, SSA participated in the Eagle Horizon 2013 Continuity of Operations Plan Exercise. The agency conducted the required continuity-focused training activities in the morning session. In the afternoon, SSA added a shelter-in-place exercise and a building evacuation drill to test the Occupant Emergency Organization, ERT and ACC processes. For the building evacuation, SSA created a scenario in which a propane gas tanker overturned by an SSA building, and a brush fire started burning nearby. Because the building evacuation was not a simulated event, the agency coordinated with the Baltimore County Police Department and the Baltimore County Fire Department. A major component of the evacuation process was coordinating efforts with the Maryland Transit Authority to test their capability to transport SSA employees with disabilities and public transit users away from the scene. The Maryland Transit Authority's participation was a success, as they quickly transported employees away from the scene.

Because of the agency's effective planning, training, and coordination with internal emergency groups and external partner organizations, SSA demonstrated its ability to achieve a successful shelter-in-place and subsequent evacuation of approximately 2,000 occupants of its 7-floor building in approximately 1 hour. This was a significant accomplishment for SSA, given the fact that it was the first emergency response training event of this magnitude.

SSA takes the safety and well-being of its employees seriously. The emergency preparedness programs and provisions the agency develops for its employees with disabilities are integral to keeping all personnel safe. SSA will continue to examine ways to enhance emergency planning efforts to address the needs of individuals with disabilities and ensure the safety of all employees and building occupants.

### *U.S. ACCESS BOARD*

The following are the U.S. Access Board (the Board) emergency preparedness activities for the period, 2010-2013:

### **Guidelines for Emergency Transportable Housing**

The Board is developing accessibility guidelines for temporary housing, provided by the government, in emergencies and natural disasters. Emergency transportable housing units, which are designed and manufactured for transport over roadways, have a smaller footprint than other types of housing and pose unique accessibility challenges. Access to such housing was found to be problematic in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005.

The new guidelines will supplement the Board's *Americans with Disabilities Act* and *Architectural Barriers Act of 1968* (ABA) Accessibility Guidelines by adding provisions and exceptions that specifically address emergency transportable housing. The Board is developing these guidelines according to recommendations from an advisory panel it organized, the Emergency Transportable Housing Advisory Committee, which included representation from disability groups, industry and code groups, and government agencies.

Once these guidelines are adopted into the ABA Standards by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and into the ADA Standards by the Department of Justice, they will be enforceable standards. The Board published its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the Federal Register in June, 2012 and expects to issue a final rule early in 2014.

### *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS*

**Emergency Occupancy Plans:** VA maintains Emergency Occupancy Plans for all its facilities nationwide. In addition to the EOPs, all VA facilities maintain and regularly practice Comprehensive Emergency Management Program (CEMP) plans. The EOPs describe a general strategy for how the operating units in the facility will coordinate response actions during emergencies. The CEMP plans provide greater detail into assisting occupants with disabilities and occupants with other access and functional needs during an emergency. In addition, individual operating units have customized occupant emergency procedures or emergency measures, which address the needs of occupants with disabilities. VA Healthcare and Medical Center personnel are well versed in caring for, assisting, and evacuating individuals who have disabilities, who are sick or injured, and others who have access and functional needs during an emergency. VA Central Office and all VA medical facilities conduct regular exercises and training sessions to ensure all staff are able to meet the needs of all those who would be impacted by a disaster or emergency before, during, and after the event.

EOPs for buildings in the DC metro area detail emergency action steps for occupants with access and functional needs and their designated assistants. By-floor lists are maintained of those individuals who have self-identified as having a disability or needing assistance during an emergency. These lists are maintained by the building's Facility Security Committee Chair and updated regularly. The buildings have floor signage indicating locations where those in need can obtain assistance and all plans are routinely exercised. In addition, evacuation chairs are strategically placed for easy access during an emergency to help evacuate any employee who may need assistance. VA routinely conducts training events, including fire drills, active shooter, and shelter-in-place exercises.

**Veterans Affairs Notification System/Personnel Accountability System:** VA Headquarters has implemented the Veterans Affairs Notification System/Personnel Accountability System

(VANS/PAS) which allows the Integrated Operations Center to alert all employees to an emergency situation. The system has the capability to instruct all employees on the nature of the emergency and the safest actions to implement during the emergency. VANS/PAS is exercised on a regular basis and utilized during any real world events that require quick, accurate information transmission to all employees. The VANS/PAS data base is updated on a monthly schedule to ensure accuracy.

**Emergency Preparedness Training:** VA Administrations and Staff Offices (A&SOs) have made online and hands-on emergency preparedness training an annual requirement for all staff including individuals with disabilities. The training covers preparations for and recommended responses to various emergency situations.

**Assistive Technology:** Robust telework policies adopted by A&SOs provide individuals with disabilities access to information and communications during emergencies. Employees identified as those in need of dedicated equipment have been issued Section 508 compliant mobile communications devices such as iPads and adapted laptops. If ad hoc telework is implemented in response to inclement weather, emergency or disaster, the employee is able to work from home.

**Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Meetings:** The Office of Operations, Security and Preparedness convenes quarterly emergency preparedness coordinator meetings which address all Continuity of Operations and resilience issues for the Department. An important part of these quarterly meetings is a review of current plans and capabilities ensuring that all employees with disabilities are equipped to respond during an emergency and have access to a safe environment.

# VI. APPENDICES

## *Appendix A: Executive Order 13347 (July 22, 2004)*

### *INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and to strengthen emergency preparedness with respect to individuals with disabilities, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1. Policy.** To ensure that the Federal Government appropriately supports safety and security for individuals with disabilities in situations involving disasters, including earthquakes, tornadoes, fires, floods, hurricanes, and acts of terrorism, it shall be the policy of the United States that executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government (agencies):

- (a) consider, in their emergency preparedness planning, the unique needs of agency and individuals with disabilities whom the agency serves;
- (b) encourage, including through the provision of technical assistance, as appropriate, consideration of the unique needs of employees and individuals with disabilities served by State, local, and tribal governments and private organizations and individuals in emergency preparedness planning; and
- (c) facilitate cooperation among Federal, State, local, and tribal governments and private organizations and individuals in the implementation of emergency preparedness plans as they relate to individuals with disabilities.

**Sec. 2. Establishment of Council.**

- (a) There is hereby established, within the Department of Homeland Security for administrative purposes, the Interagency Coordinating Council on Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities (the “Council”). The Council shall consist exclusively of the following members or their designees:
  - (i) the heads of executive departments, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Administrator of General Services, the Director of OPM and the Commissioner of Social Security; and
  - (ii) any other agency head as the Secretary of Homeland Security may, with the concurrence of the agency head, designate.
- (b) The Secretary of Homeland Security shall chair the Council, convene and preside at its meetings, determine its agenda, direct its work, and, as appropriate to particular subject matters, establish and direct subgroups of the Council, which shall consist exclusively of Council members.
- (c) A member of the Council may designate, to perform the Council functions of the member, an employee of the member’s department or agency who is either an officer of the United

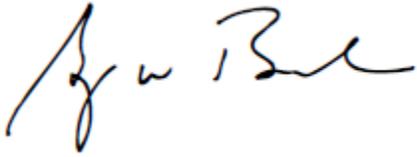
States appointed by the President, or a full-time employee serving in a position with pay equal to or greater than the minimum rate payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule.

**Sec. 3. *Functions of Council.***

- (a) The Council shall:
  - (i) coordinate implementation by agencies of the policy set forth in section 1 of this order;
  - (ii) whenever the Council obtains in the performance of its functions information or advice from any individual who is not a full-time or permanent part-time Federal employee, obtain such information and advice only in a manner that seeks individual advice and does not involve collective judgment or consensus advice or deliberation; and
  - (iii) at the request of any agency head (or the agency head's designee under section 2(c) of this order) who is a member of the Council, unless the Secretary of Homeland Security declines the request, promptly review and provide advice, for the purpose of furthering the policy set forth in section 1, on a proposed action by that agency.
- (b) The Council shall submit to the President each year beginning 1 year after the date of this order, through the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security, a report that describes:
  - (i) the achievements of the Council in implementing the policy set forth in section 1;
  - (ii) the best practices among Federal, State, local, and tribal governments and private organizations and individuals for emergency preparedness planning with respect to individuals with disabilities; and
  - (iii) recommendations of the Council for advancing the policy set forth in section 1.

**Sec. 4. *General.***

- (a) To the extent permitted by law:
  - (i) agencies shall assist and provide information to the Council for the performance of its functions under this order; and
  - (ii) the Department of Homeland Security shall provide funding and administrative support for the Council.
- (b) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, or legislative proposals.
- (c) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George W. Bush". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "George" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "W. Bush".

THE WHITE HOUSE

*July 22, 2004.*

## *Appendix B: Definition of Access and Functional Needs*

### *DHS OFFICIAL DEFINITION FOR ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEED ACCOMMODATION<sup>119</sup>*

**Term:** access and functional need accommodation

**Synonym:** access and functional needs

**Definition:** circumstances that are met for providing physical, programmatic, and effective communication access to the whole community by accommodating individual requirements through universal accessibility and/or specific actions or modifications

**Extended Definition:** includes assistance, accommodation or modification for mobility, communication, transportation, safety, health maintenance, etc.; need for assistance, accommodation or modification due to any situation (temporary or permanent) that limits an individual's ability to take action in an emergency

**Annotation:** When physical, programmatic, and effective communication access is not universally available, individuals may require additional assistance in order to take protective measures to escape to and/or from, access either refuge and/or safety in an emergency or disaster, and/or may need other assistance, accommodations or modifications in an emergency or disaster. This is accomplished through pre-planning by emergency management, first response agencies and other stakeholders or in sheltering or other situations, from notification and evacuation, to sheltering, to return to pre-disaster level of independence.

Individuals having access and functional needs may include, but are not limited to, individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited English proficiency, limited access to transportation, and/or limited access to financial resources to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the emergency.

Federal civil rights law and policy require nondiscrimination, including on the bases of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, English proficiency, and economic status. Many individuals with access and functional needs are protected by these provisions.

**Source:** PPD-8 Access and Functional Needs Working Group 2014

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<sup>119</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, "DHS Lexicon: Terms and Definitions," 2015 Edition.

## Appendix C: Acronym List

<u>Shorthand</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<b>AAP</b>	American Academy of Pediatrics
<b>ABA</b>	<i>Architectural Barriers Act of 1968</i>
<b>ABC</b>	Division for At-Risk, Behavioral Health, and Community Resilience, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>ACC</b>	The Altmeyer Control Center, Social Security Agency
<b>ACF</b>	Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>ACL</b>	Administration of Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>ADA</b>	<i>Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990</i>
<b>ADD</b>	Administration on Developmental Disabilities, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>AED</b>	Automated External Defibrillator
<b>AIDD</b>	Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Administration of Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>ARC</b>	American Red Cross
<b>ASL</b>	American Sign Language
<b>A&amp;SO</b>	Administrations and Staff Offices, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
<b>ASPR</b>	Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>ASPR-OEM</b>	Office of Emergency Management, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>Board</b>	U.S. Access Board
<b>BRFSS</b>	Behavioral Risk Factor Survey System
<b>CAP</b>	Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program, U.S. Department of Defense
<b>CapTel</b>	Captioned telephone

<u>Shorthand</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<b>CART</b>	Computer Aided Real-time Translation
<b>CBP</b>	U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
<b>CDBG</b>	Community Development Block Grant, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
<b>CCDF</b>	Child Care Development Fund, Administration of Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>CDC</b>	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>CEMP</b>	Comprehensive Emergency Management Program, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
<b>CEPR</b>	Center for Emergency Preparedness Response
<b>CERT</b>	Community Emergency Response Team
<b>Census</b>	U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce
<b>CMS</b>	Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services
<b>COCA</b>	Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity
<b>Commerce</b>	U.S. Department of Commerce
<b>COOP</b>	Continuity of Operation
<b>Council</b>	Interagency Coordinating Council on Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities
<b>CPG</b>	Comprehensive Preparedness Guide
<b>CRCL</b>	Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
<b>CVAA</b>	<i>Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010</i>
<b>DARS</b>	Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services
<b>DCM</b>	Disaster Case Management
<b>DHDD</b>	Division of Human Development and Disability, Centers of Disease Control and Prevention
<b>DHS</b>	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
<b>DIA</b>	Disability Integration Advisor

<u>Shorthand</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<b>DME</b>	Durable medical equipment
<b>DOD</b>	U.S. Department of Defense
<b>DOE</b>	U.S. Department of Energy
<b>DOJ</b>	U.S. Department of Justice
<b>DOL</b>	U.S. Department of Labor
<b>DOS</b>	U.S. Department of State
<b>DOT</b>	U.S. Department of Transportation
<b>DRC</b>	Disaster Recovery Center
<b>EAAC</b>	Emergency Access Advisory Committee
<b>EAS</b>	Emergency Alert System
<b>ED</b>	U.S. Department of Education
<b>EEOC</b>	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
<b>EMAC</b>	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
<b>EMI</b>	Emergency Management Institute
<b>EOC</b>	Emergency Operations Center
<b>EPA</b>	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
<b>ERT</b>	Emergency Response Team, U.S. Social Security Administration
<b>ESF</b>	Emergency Support Function
<b>ETA</b>	Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor
<b>FCC</b>	Federal Communications Commission
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
<b>FHWA</b>	Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation
<b>FNSS Guidance</b>	<i>FEMA's Guidance on Planning for Integration of Functional Needs Support Services in General Population Shelters</i>
<b>FTA</b>	Federal Transit Administration
<b>GSA</b>	General Services Administration
<b>HHS</b>	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

<u>Shorthand</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<b>HQACED</b>	Headquarters Advisory Council for Employees with Disabilities
<b>HUD</b>	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
<b>ICC</b>	Interagency Coordinating Council on Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities
<b>ICE</b>	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
<b>IMAT</b>	Incident Management Assistance Team
<b>Interior</b>	U.S. Department of the Interior
<b>IPAWS</b>	Integrated Public Alerts and Warning System
<b>JFO</b>	Joint Field Office
<b>LTCOP</b>	Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs
<b>MOA</b>	Memorandum of Agreement
<b>MORPC</b>	Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
<b>NCBDDD</b>	National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities Education
<b>NCD</b>	National Council on Disability
<b>NDMS</b>	National Disaster Medical System, Office of Emergency Management, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>NDRF</b>	National Disaster Recovery Framework
<b>NDRN</b>	National Disability Rights Network
<b>NG9-1-1</b>	Next Generation 911, Federal Communications Commission
<b>NICCL</b>	National Incident Communication Conference Line
<b>NIDRR</b>	National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, U.S. Department of Education
<b>NOAA</b>	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
<b>NPR</b>	National Public Radio
<b>NRCC</b>	National Response Coordination Center
<b>NWS</b>	National Weather Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
<b>NY-MTA</b>	New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority

<u>Shorthand</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<b>OCR</b>	Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>ODIC</b>	Office of Disability Integration and Coordination, Federal Emergency Management Agency
<b>ODEP</b>	Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor
<b>ODHP</b>	Ohio's Disability and Health Program
<b>OEP</b>	Occupant Emergency Plan
<b>OHSEPR</b>	Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness and Response, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>OMH</b>	Office of Minority Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>OODH</b>	Oregon Office of Disability Health
<b>OPHPR</b>	Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<b>OPM</b>	Office of Personnel Management
<b>OSERS</b>	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education
<b>OSHS</b>	Office of Safe and Healthy Schools, U.S. Department of Education
<b>P&amp;A</b>	Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities
<b>PCA</b>	Project Civic Access
<b>PHEP</b>	Public Health Emergency Preparedness
<b>PKEMRA</b>	<i>Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006</i>
<b>PPD-8</b>	Presidential Policy Directive 8: National Preparedness
<b>PSA</b>	Public service announcement
<b>PSAP</b>	Public Safety Answering Point
<b>RDIS</b>	Regional Disability Integration Specialist
<b>REMS</b>	Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools
<b>RIDHP</b>	Rhode Island Disability and Health Program
<b>RISNER</b>	Rhode Island Special Needs Emergency Registry

<u>Shorthand</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<b>SAMHSA</b>	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<b>SCDHP</b>	South Carolina Disability and Health Program
<b>SME</b>	Subject matter expert
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedure
<b>SSA</b>	U.S. Social Security Administration
<b>Treasury</b>	U.S. Department of the Treasury
<b>TTY</b>	Teletypewriter
<b>UCEDD</b>	University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education
<b>USAID</b>	U.S. Agency for International Development
<b>USDA</b>	U.S. Department of Agriculture
<b>USPTO</b>	U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
<b>UWR</b>	United We Ride
<b>VA</b>	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
<b>VANS/PAS</b>	Veterans Affairs Notification System/Personnel Accountability System
<b>VPAAC</b>	Video Programming Accessibility Advisory Committee
<b>VPAT</b>	Seattle King County Public Health's Vulnerable Population Action Team
<b>VRI</b>	Video Relay Interpreting
<b>WEA</b>	Wireless Emergency Alert