



Mitigation Assessment Teams

Building Stronger and Safer

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) Mitigation Assessment Teams (MATs) conduct engineering analyses after major natural disasters to assess damage to government facilities, homes, businesses, and other structures, and to determine the causes of structural failures and successes. Based on a comprehensive analysis of data, MATs prepare recommendations for construction codes and standards, building design issues, and best practices. The program works in collaboration with State and local governments, and draws on a wide range of technical expertise from the private sector.

Assessing Damages With an Eye to the Future

MATs comprise technical experts from FEMA, State, and local agencies, and the private sector, including specialists in civil and coastal engineering, hydraulics, architecture, construction, and building code development and enforcement. The composition of each MAT depends on the type of damages incurred. The teams assess damages to many types of structures, including hospitals, police and fire stations, schools, government offices, and homes.

The goal is to learn how buildings performed in the hazard event and why they withstood or did not withstand the strain caused by hazards. Key questions include: How did buildings perform? Did wind damages exceed building codes? Did flood damages go beyond the flood zone? Were building codes enforced? Were construction materials sufficient to withstand wind and water damages? Were local, State, and Federal building standards and ordinances sufficient?

Consensus Recommendations for Building Stronger and Safer

The key to the MAT process is consensus. The team consults with partnering government agencies and private

organizations throughout the process to ensure consensus on each phase of the investigation, including methodology, data collection, and analysis. This helps to ensure the MAT's final recommendations represent the most current data and technical expertise available.

Upon conclusion of the field investigation, specialists work as a team to analyze the field data, as well as other damage reports and studies conducted by government agencies or private firms. The team then prepares conclusions and develops recommendations about appropriate construction methods. Once consensus is reached, FEMA issues a series of "Recovery Advisories," which provide initial guidance on building issues and best practices that can be used in the reconstruction process. FEMA also publishes a comprehensive report that includes detailed technical recommendations for improving building construction and design, building code policy and enforcement, and mitigation activities that can limit or eliminate damages in future disasters. To view FEMA MAT reports visit <http://www.fema.gov/fema-mitigation-assessment-team-reports>.

Information for the Public

FEMA has published FEMA P-312, *Homeowner's Guide to Retrofitting* (<http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/480>) for individuals whose homes have been flooded or that are located in flood hazard areas. This publication outlines the actions individuals should take to reduce flood damage to their homes. It explains the damage-reduction methods that are available, discusses the degree to which they work, and helps individuals determine whether they meet their needs. This publication is designed for readers who have little or no knowledge of flood protection methods or building construction techniques.