



The Federal Emergency Management Agency

Publication 1

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FEMA

The Federal Emergency Management Agency Publication 1

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Introduction

Publication 1 (Pub 1) is the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) capstone doctrine. Pub 1 describes FEMA's ethos, which is to serve the Nation by helping its people and first responders, especially when they are most in need. It identifies FEMA's core values of **compassion, fairness, integrity, and respect**. Finally, Pub 1 delineates nine guiding principles that provide overarching direction to FEMA employees for the performance of their duties:

- Teamwork
- Engagement
- Getting Results
- Preparation
- Empowerment
- Flexibility
- Accountability
- Stewardship
- Accessibility

FEMA continues to adapt and develop innovative ways to provide better emergency management services in a changing environment. However, the Agency must also stay true to its core values and guiding principles, and it must incorporate them into both strategic level guidance, such as the FEMA Strategic Plan, and operational guidance and practice. Pub 1's themes and principles guide all FEMA activities at all times, and they serve as a lens for FEMA employees to use in examining situations and making decisions that are in the best interests of the American people.

This doctrine applies to all FEMA employees.

Guidance on Interpretation

The various elements of Pub 1 make up an interlocking set of guidance that should be applied as a whole and not as individual principles or values.

FEMA's missions, values, and principles are mutually supporting.

Programmatic implementation or decision-making based solely on one or a few elements of the guidance, without consideration of the rest, may produce incomplete results that may even conflict with the overall FEMA mission.

Guidance on Application

The values and principles outlined in Pub 1 are fundamental to FEMA, and all future FEMA guidance will be based on and consistent with FEMA's capstone doctrine. Pub 1 will serve as a basis for the development or update of FEMA policies, processes, and any mission- or discipline-specific doctrine.

All FEMA employees should be familiar with this doctrine and should refer to it regularly. The core values and guiding principles represent the best thoughts, actions, and experiences of FEMA's employees, and they should be used to guide future actions and decisions. This document also provides new FEMA employees with a means to understand the culture of the organization.

The capstone doctrine should help to advance the practice of consistent decision-making by those with the authority to act. While the guidance is authoritative, it is not directive, and when applied with judgment, it can be adapted to address a broad range of situations. The intent of this guidance is to promote thoughtful innovation, flexibility, and proactive performance in achieving FEMA's complex mission. This document provides managers, supervisors, and employees with the set of values and principles to which they can expect to be held accountable. Employees should feel confident that decisions made based on the capstone doctrine and within their authority are consistent with the FEMA mission.

External agencies, organizations, and stakeholders may use this document to understand how FEMA functions, just as FEMA employees gain insight from the doctrinal products of other organizations. As we understand and appreciate each other's cultures and values, we can anticipate each other's requirements and expectations, and we can support each other's missions more effectively.

Revisions

Pub 1 is based on the experiences of the FEMA work-force. As time passes, the doctrine will evolve to reflect changes in the FEMA mission, personnel, lessons learned, authorities, risks, and hazards. The capstone doctrine should be updated incrementally through small deliberate changes, rather than impulsive reactions to single events or changes in leadership. Although this document is primarily intended to be internal guidance, it affects FEMA's partners and customers. Updates to this doctrine should reflect the needs and perspectives of

all those whom FEMA serves, including people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

Chapter 1 – The History of FEMA

Since President Carter created the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on April 1, 1979, the Nation has had a single agency dedicated to managing disasters. In subsequent years, FEMA supported the Nation in some of its greatest moments of crisis. FEMA personnel have been engaged during the Great Midwest Floods of 1993, the Northridge Earthquake in 1994, the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and Hurricane Sandy in 2012. All told, FEMA employees have coordinated federal response and recovery efforts and supported state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) efforts in more than 2,000 incidents. However, while FEMA’s role in emergency management did not begin until 1979, federal disaster relief actually started more than 200 years ago.

Early Federal Disaster Response and Emergency Management 1802 – 1979

In the early morning hours of December 26, 1802, fire ripped through the city of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, destroying large areas of this important seaport. The fire was a devastating event and threatened commerce throughout the northeast section of the newly founded Nation. Nineteen days later, Congress suspended bond payments



The increase in flood damages around the country prompted many changes in legislation to assist homeowners and to increase mitigation efforts.

for several months for the merchants affected by the fire, thus implementing the first act of federal disaster relief in American history. By the 1930s, the federal approach to disaster-related events became popular. In 1933, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation was given authority to make disaster loans for repair and reconstruction of certain public facilities following an earthquake, and later, following other types of disasters. In the subsequent decades, additional federal

authorities were introduced in a piecemeal fashion. For example, in 1934, the Bureau of Public Roads was given authority to provide funding for highways and bridges damaged by natural disasters.

This piecemeal approach to disaster assistance proved to be problematic, and the 1960s and early 1970s brought massive disasters that focused attention on the issue of natural disasters and spurred increased legislation. In 1968, the National Flood Insurance Act created the Federal Insurance Administration, which made flood insurance available to homeowners for the first time. Congress then significantly expanded the Federal Government's disaster relief role by enacting the Disaster Relief Act of 1970, which authorized federal loans and tax assistance to individuals affected by disasters, as well as federal funding for the repair and replacement of public facilities. Just four years later, Congress gave additional disaster relief authority to the President in the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, which established the Presidential disaster declaration process.

However, although strides had been made to define and expand the Federal Government's role in emergency management, critics pointed to a lack of coordination. Specifically, at the federal level, no single entity was responsible for coordinating federal response and recovery efforts during large-scale disasters and emergencies. Critics pointed out that when hazards associated with nuclear power plants and the transportation of hazardous substances compounded the complexity of natural disasters, more than 100 different federal departments and agencies were involved in some aspect of response and recovery. Working with all these agencies was a corresponding number of SLTT governments. With the broad swath of programs further complicating preparedness and disaster response, organizations such as the National Governors Association (NGA), civil defense and emergency services organizations, and state and local officials urged national leaders to streamline the process.

FEMA: 1979 – 2001



In 1979, President Carter signed an executive order that consolidated many separate federal disaster-related responsibilities within FEMA. The National Fire Prevention and Control Administration of the Commerce Department, the National Weather Service Community Preparedness Program, the Federal Preparedness Agency of the General Services Administration, and the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration and Federal Insurance Administration of HUD were among the agencies that came together to form FEMA. Civil defense responsibilities, which became FEMA's clear focus in its early days, were also transferred to the new agency from the Department of Defense's (DOD) Defense Civil Preparedness Agency.

Congress added responsibilities to FEMA – either directly or through its predecessor organizations – that included earthquake preparedness and mitigation through a 1980 Amendment to the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977, emergency food and shelter under the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, disaster assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988, and dam safety under the National Dam Safety Program Act of 1996.

FEMA faced many challenges during its first years, and experienced the complexities of the business of federal emergency management. Disasters and emergencies early in FEMA's history included the contamination of the Love Canal, the eruption of Mount St. Helens, the Cuban refugee crisis, and the radiological



Mount St. Helens erupting on May 5th of 1980

accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant. Later, widespread problems in the federal response to the Loma Prieta earthquake and Hurricane Hugo in 1989 focused major national attention on FEMA. And despite important advances, such as the publication of the Federal Response Plan in

1992, FEMA's response to Hurricane Andrew later that year brought additional criticism and calls for reform from Congress.

In 1993, FEMA initiated a number of major reforms. Leaders streamlined disaster relief and recovery operations, emphasized preparedness and mitigation, and focused on customer service. At the same time, the reduction in geopolitical tensions occasioned by the end of the Cold War enabled the Agency to redirect resources from civil defense to disaster relief, recovery, and mitigation programs. Almost immediately, the Great Midwest floods of 1993 and the Northridge earthquake in 1994 presented tests for these reforms. The



Search and Rescue workers gather at scene of Oklahoma City bombing

nature of these two disasters highlighted the potential value of hazard mitigation, and they led to an even greater emphasis on mitigating future disasters. Additional measures included acquiring high-risk properties within flood zones, encouraging communities to adopt better building practices and codes, and increasing community and private-sector engagement through FEMA outreach programs such as Project Impact, which emphasized building disaster-resistant communities.

The bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995 posed a significant new challenge for FEMA. This act of terrorism necessitated a

different approach for providing assistance to States and localities.

Accordingly, on April 26, 1996, President Clinton signed the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (AEDPA), which required the Department of Justice (DOJ) and FEMA to train metropolitan firefighters to respond to incidents caused by weapons of mass destruction. It was closely followed by the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act, which charged federal departments and agencies with putting systems into place to protect the public against terrorists. Although DOD initially took the lead for work on the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act, the work eventually migrated to DOJ, specifically the Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP),

along with the firefighter training mandated by AEDPA. These initial ODP programs eventually grew into homeland security preparedness programs that ultimately migrated to FEMA. The effectiveness of these critical programs would be severely tested a few years later.

The Stafford Act and Disaster Declarations

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 5121-5207) authorizes the programs and processes by which the Federal Government provides disaster and emergency assistance to state and local governments, tribal nations, eligible private nonprofit organizations, and individuals affected by a declared major disaster or emergency. The Stafford Act covers all hazards, including natural disasters and terrorist events.

Authority for FEMA to respond to any particular disaster or emergency is generally provided by a declaration issued by the President of the United States under provisions of the Stafford Act. Before the President signs such a declaration, FEMA personnel analyze and process declaration requests submitted by the affected state(s). These requests are made by the Governor and must demonstrate that supplemental Federal assistance is necessary because the incident requires resources beyond state and local capabilities.

The Stafford Act provides for three types of declarations: emergency, major disaster, and fire management assistance.

- An *emergency* is defined as “any occasion or instance for which, in the determination of the President, Federal assistance is needed to supplement state and local efforts and capabilities to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe in any part of the U.S.”
- A *major disaster* is “any natural catastrophe, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion in any part of the U.S. which, in the determination of the President, causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance to supplement the efforts and available resources of states, local governments, and disaster relief organizations in alleviating the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused thereby.”
- *Fire management assistance* is available to SLTT governments, “for the mitigation, management, and control of any fire on public or private forest land or grasslands, that threatens such destruction as would constitute a major disaster.”

FEMA: 2001 – Present



FEMA

On September 11, 2001, terrorists attacked the United States, and FEMA was immediately engaged in supporting New York, Virginia, and Pennsylvania officials in

the response. FEMA deployed 25 Urban Search and Rescue teams, mobile communication equipment, and thousands of staff as part of one of the Agency's largest emergency response operations. The attacks on New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon were also the catalyst for major changes in legislation and policy that affected how the Federal Government would be organized to prevent subsequent attacks and respond to disasters. The changes led to the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

When DHS was created in 2003, it integrated FEMA and 21 other legacy organizations. Although FEMA's name remained intact, the Agency's functions were transferred to the new DHS's Directorate of Emergency Preparedness and Response. In 2005, four FEMA programs were assigned to the new DHS Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness: Emergency Management Performance Grants, Citizen Corps, Metropolitan Medical Response System, and Assistance to Firefighter Grants. In the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, the focus throughout the Federal Government was on terrorism preparedness, prevention, protection, and response. Shortly after DHS was formed in 2003, most of FEMA's preparedness programs were moved from FEMA and consolidated with other counterterrorism activities in a separate DHS Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate. The rationale was that this would free FEMA to focus on disaster response, recovery, and, to some extent, on natural hazards. Although FEMA reflected



Damaged sphere at the site of the World Trade Center

these new priorities, the Agency continued to respond to a series of significant natural disasters, including the historic hurricane seasons of 2004 and 2005.



Aerial of a flooded New Orleans neighborhood after Hurricane Katrina

In 2004, four hurricanes struck Florida in a matter of two months. Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne devastated the state, marking the first time in more than 100 years that four hurricanes had impacted a single state in the same year. These hurricanes provided FEMA with its first

opportunity to conduct a large-scale response operation as an entity within DHS. An even greater response effort would come just a year later.

In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina passed over south Florida and grew into a Category 5 hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico. At the time, it was the fourth most powerful hurricane ever recorded in the Gulf. When it struck the Gulf shores as a strong Category 3 storm, Katrina became the costliest and one of the deadliest disasters in U.S. history. Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama suffered the greatest impact, but all 50 states were ultimately affected as they cooperated in the evacuation and relocation of more than one million displaced residents.

Hurricane Katrina required the largest response effort to a disaster in U.S. history, and it presented unprecedented challenges at the Federal, and SLTT levels. The response to Hurricane Katrina by FEMA and others was roundly criticized in the media and in studies conducted by the White House, Congress, and policy/research organizations. As a result, major reforms and changes were instituted within FEMA.

The 2003 separation of response and recovery from preparedness, along with the separation of counterterrorism and natural hazard capability building, presented major obstacles to a unified approach and implementation during the response to Hurricane Katrina. Gaps in all-hazards preparedness surfaced at the

Federal, and SLTT government levels. Therefore, post-Katrina Congressional activity, most notably the Post Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006 (PKEMRA), ultimately reunited preparedness, response, and recovery programs in FEMA. As a result, FEMA now leads the coordination of efforts across the Federal Government to support its partners in the Federal, SLTT government, along with the private sector. That coordination works to enhance the Nation's preparedness to prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006

PKEMRA mandated several major changes and established FEMA's place within DHS. The Agency became a stand-alone element within DHS, no longer characterized as the department's Directorate of Emergency Preparedness and Response. FEMA's top official became the principal advisor to the President, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Homeland Security on all emergency management-related matters in the United States. PKEMRA also transferred many of the responsibilities of the Department's Preparedness Directorate to FEMA, returning many of the programs that had been removed. It also added significant new authorities, such as the authority for the President to declare an emergency declaration for an imminent threat to protect lives and property; as well as many new training, exercise, and grant programs. In addition to new preparedness and grants organizations, existing activities were reorganized to form directorates for Disaster Assistance, Disaster Operations, and Logistics Management, helping to better focus response and recovery efforts. A Private Sector Office was created to foster cooperation with businesses and nonprofit organizations, and a Disability Coordinator position was added to expand FEMA's capacity to address the needs of persons with access and functional needs.

In the years following PKEMRA, FEMA continued to redefine itself, and between 2005 and 2009, it nearly doubled both its full-time workforce and its cadre of disaster reservists. The Agency also enhanced the role of FEMA's regional offices and emphasized training, staff development, partnership building, and logistics management.

The value of many of the changes and improvements resulting from PKEMRA were tested and validated during FEMA's performance in 2007, when deadly fires engulfed large portions of Southern California, and then in 2008, when Hurricanes Gustav and Ike revisited storm-weary areas of Louisiana and Texas.

National Emergency Management Doctrine

Soon after Hurricane Katrina, national emergency management doctrine and planning changed significantly. In 2016, FEMA led the development of the third edition of National Response Framework (NRF), which replaced both the National Response Plan, developed by DHS in 2004, and its predecessor, the Federal Response Plan of 1992. The NRF established a comprehensive, national, all-hazards approach to domestic incident response.

In March 2011, Presidential Policy Directive (PPD)-8: "National Preparedness" was released with the goal of strengthening the security and resilience of the United States through systematic preparation for the threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation. PPD-8 defines five preparedness mission areas—Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery—and mandates the development of a series of policy and planning documents to explain and guide the Nation's approach for ensuring and enhancing national preparedness. This included the second edition of the National Response Framework (NRF), which provided context for how the whole community works together and how response efforts relate to other parts of national preparedness. It is one of the five documents in a suite of National Planning Frameworks, each covering a mission area: Prevention, Protection, Response, Recovery, and Mitigation.

PKEMRA, Executive Order 13347, and PPD-8 also required emergency management to become inclusive of people with disabilities in all areas of emergency management (preparedness/prevention, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation). FEMA coined the phrase "whole community" in an effort to increase focus on children, families, people with disabilities, people with limited language English proficiency, and others with access and functional needs. That effort sought to make sure the whole community has access to emergency management programs and takes an active role in preparing for disasters.

2011 was a record-breaking year for FEMA, wherein the President authorized 98 major disaster declarations, 26 emergency declarations, and 112 Fire Management Assistance declarations. The pace and operational tempo of this year of disasters underscored the need for the Nation to adopt a whole community approach to emergency management, and also helped prepare FEMA to respond to its next, most-significant event since Katrina, Ike, and Gustav.

In late October 2012, Hurricane Sandy hit Jamaica and Cuba before moving up the eastern seaboard. In all, 24 U.S. states were affected, from Florida to Maine and west to Michigan and Wisconsin. New York and New Jersey suffered extensive damage, especially in infrastructure. Sandy was the largest Atlantic hurricane on record, as well as the second costliest, and FEMA's response efforts included significant assistance to disaster survivors and to state and local governments.

In response to Sandy, FEMA coordinated a large-scale mobilization of federal teams, supplies, and other assets. President Obama emphasized that the full resources of the Federal Government were available to support response and recovery



New Jersey was heavily devastated by Hurricane Sandy

operations, and he directed federal departments and agencies to speed assistance to survivors. FEMA coordinated expedited disaster declarations for the affected states, helped to establish a task force to restore power and fuel, and accelerated rental assistance for eligible survivors. However, the magnitude of the disaster revealed areas for improvement related to federal operations, such as better coordinating emergency support functions and refining the mission assignment process.

To address some of the challenges faced during Hurricane Sandy, on January 29, 2013, President Obama signed into law the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act (SRIA) of 2013 and the accompanying Disaster Relief Appropriations Act.

The law authorized several significant changes to the way FEMA may deliver federal disaster assistance to survivors. Key changes included the establishment of a new set of alternative procedures for administering the Public Assistance Program; authorization for the chief executive of a Tribal government to directly request disaster or emergency declarations from the President; creation of a joint process for environmental and historical review for disaster recovery projects; and updates to the factors considered when assessing the need for Individual Assistance in the declaration process. Since Hurricane Sandy, FEMA has implemented a number of related changes to enhance disaster funds management, while also improving the delivery of disaster services.

In summary, FEMA's existence represents a small part of the long history of Federal Government participation in emergency management. Although FEMA may be the best-known brand of federal emergency management assistance, it is just one member of a much larger team. Other federal departments play important roles in preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating disasters. SLTT governments have significantly enhanced and expanded their capabilities since 2003, and communities, as always, continue to provide the first line of defense for and response to disasters and emergencies.

With a renewed emphasis on engaging the private sector, non-governmental entities, and the general public, emergency management practitioners in the United States value collaboration as never before. Our collective experience as a Nation has created a more coordinated approach to emergency management, brought more players to the table, and demonstrated the power of teamwork.

Examples of Unique Response Efforts in FEMA History

Love Canal – 1980: FEMA purchased abandoned homes and found appropriate housing for residents who were displaced by the discovery of chemical toxins in the ground.

Cuban Refugee Crisis – 1980: FEMA was tasked to help process more than 100,000 refugees arriving on Florida’s shores.

Space Shuttle Columbia Disaster – 2003: FEMA coordinated the collection of debris from the shuttle accident, which was spread across Texas and Louisiana.

Bam, Iran Earthquake – 2003: At the request of the Iranian Government, FEMA sent two International Medical Surgical Response Teams to set up a temporary field hospital. The response led to the first official U.S. Government delegation to visit Iran since the Iranian Hostage Crisis 25 years earlier

Haiti Earthquake – 2010: Supporting the U.S. Agency for International Development, FEMA External Affairs established a Joint Information Center on the island. In addition, FEMA sent Urban Search and Rescue Teams, communications equipment and staff from the Mobile Emergency Response Support system.

Increase in Arrivals of Unaccompanied Children – 2014: The number of unaccompanied children crossing the U.S.-Mexico border increased in 2014. More than 57,000 children were referred to HHS—over 30,000 more than the previous year—and arrived in need of food, water, shelter, and social and medical services. FEMA coordinated a government-wide response to address the needs of an influx of unaccompanied children crossing into the United States creating a humanitarian situation along the southwest U.S. border.

Ebola Virus Disease – 2014: CDC made an initial announcement about the West Africa epidemic of Ebola virus disease in March 2014, but the first diagnosed case on U.S. soil occurred in October. The response to the epidemic involved more than a dozen federal agencies, as well as states, private-sector companies, with efforts occurring domestically and overseas.

Chapter 2 – FEMA Roles and Missions

The Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) defines emergency management as: “The governmental function that coordinates and integrates all activities necessary to build, sustain and improve the capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, or mitigate against threatened or actual natural disasters, acts of terrorism or other man-made disasters.” This chapter is organized based on the PKEMRA imperatives, which also represent the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) core missions: Preparedness, Protection, Response, Recovery, and Mitigation. While emphasis placed on these various missions has ebbed and flowed over the years, FEMA’s primary mission remains “to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a Nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.”



First responders help rescue a boat returning with victims from flood waters caused by Tropical Storm Erin

In pursuing this mission, all FEMA activities are based on specific authorities such as the Homeland Security Act of 2002 as amended, the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act, the Stafford Act, Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5, and Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8),

“National Preparedness.” FEMA’s activities and functions are also driven by doctrinal guidance such as the National Security Strategy, Quadrennial Homeland Security Review, National Preparedness System, and National Response, Recovery, and Mitigation Frameworks. A listing of the major authorities that apply to FEMA is provided in Appendix 1.

Preparedness

The Preparedness mission is to reduce the loss of life and property and to protect the Nation by planning, training, exercising, and building the

emergency management profession. National preparedness in the 21st century requires the capability to deal with all types of threats and hazards. Emergency managers know preparedness is a complex and shifting balance of many tangible and intangible factors, such as risk, investments, operational tempo, culture, equipment, and training. Individual, household, and community preparedness is a similarly complex balance of many factors, including demographic and cultural factors, hazard-related knowledge, income, accessibility, and educational level.

As such, preparedness cannot be an absolutely linear and cumulative progression toward a single, universally “correct” level that would be applicable to every American, household, organization, or community. National preparedness is a reflection of risk, citizen preparedness, the readiness of our emergency and other responding services, and the interdependence of those factors.

Overview of Mission

Preparedness is not an outcome. It is a process of continuous engagement toward achieving a desired state of readiness. Preparedness activities (planning, equipping, training, and exercises) build capabilities within all of the emergency management mission areas (i.e., Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery).

The Preparedness mission is a whole-of-government, whole community effort. Each FEMA component has a role in building the capabilities required to accomplish FEMA’s mission. FEMA provides assistance, support, and leadership to help Federal and SLTT governments, as well as the private sector and public, build the operational capabilities needed to successfully implement preparedness strategies.

The National Preparedness System (NPS) guides FEMA’s preparedness activities, using a systematic approach to build on proven preparedness activities and enabling the Nation to meet the National Preparedness Goal. The components of the NPS include: identifying and assessing risk; estimating the level of capabilities needed to address those risks; building or sustaining the required levels of capability; developing and implementing plans to deliver those capabilities; validating and monitoring progress; and reviewing and updating efforts to promote continuous improvement. NPS outputs include

capability targets and preparedness priorities; standards for equipment and training; national training and exercise programs; a comprehensive assessment system; a remedial action management program; an inventory of federal response capabilities; reporting requirements; and specific guidance on federal preparedness measures focusing on including people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

The Ready Campaign and America's PrepareAthon!

Pre-disaster preparedness communications aim to make the public aware of potential hazards and risks and of the steps they should take to stay safe when a disaster strikes. FEMA works to develop resources to enable, support, and further motivate individuals to take action.

The Ready Campaign develops and executes a national public service campaign designed to educate and empower the American people to prepare for and respond to disasters affecting their families and communities. Launched in 2003, the Ready Campaign involves the public in emergency management efforts by increasing awareness regarding potential hazards, providing knowledge and tools to facilitate preparedness and response capabilities locally, and helping disaster survivors become a resource in the whole community approach to emergency management. The Ready Campaign builds collaborative relationships to provide consistent preparedness messaging and resources through a multi-prong approach that includes public service announcements, a comprehensive preparedness website and social media outreach.

America's PrepareAthon! is a grassroots, community-based campaign for action to get people better prepared for disasters through hazard-specific group discussions, drills, and exercises that is coordinated in collaboration with Federal, SLTT governments and private sector and non-governmental organizations. Year-round, millions of Americans participate in building the national whole community momentum of preparedness. Cities and counties across the country hold whole community events that bring together schools, businesses, local government, faith leaders, hospitals, individuals and families, and others to participate in preparedness drills and activities.

Grants and Technical Assistance

FEMA provides state and local governments with preparedness program funding in the form of Non-Disaster Grants. Those grants enhance the capacity of state and local emergency responders to prevent, respond to, and recover from a terrorism incident involving weapons of mass destruction or chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive devices; from cyber-attacks; and from natural hazards. FEMA's Technical Assistance (TA) Program facilitates implementation of the NPS by providing SLTT governments with customized support to build, sustain, and deliver capabilities.

Federal grants and technical assistance help achieve the national preparedness goal. FEMA ensures good stewardship by monitoring the use of these grant funds. The Agency also provides technical assistance about the use of grant funds, approval of scope of work, and financial monitoring services.

Some programs aim to improve preparedness, while others focus on enhancing specific capabilities or addressing specific risks or hazards. In managing these programs, FEMA must balance national priorities and requirements, while also helping SLTT governments and other applicants meet their most pressing needs and unique risks.

Disaster Awareness and Action

FEMA also increases preparedness by communicating with individuals, households, organizations, and communities to increase disaster awareness and action. Pre-disaster preparedness communication aims to make the public aware of potential hazard risks and the steps they should take to stay safe when a disaster strikes. FEMA, through the whole community, works to develop resources to enable, support, and further motivate individuals to take action.

Mitigation

The Mitigation mission is to increase the capabilities necessary to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Mitigation capabilities include, but are not limited to, community-wide risk reduction projects; the transfer of flood risk through insurance; efforts to improve the resilience of critical infrastructure and key resource lifelines; risk reduction for specific vulnerabilities from natural hazards or acts of terrorism; and initiatives to reduce future risks after a disaster has occurred.

Overview of Mission

Mitigation is the effort to reduce the loss of life and property by reducing the impact of disasters. This effort is applied in each of the other FEMA mission areas: Preparedness, Protection, Response, and Recovery. The concepts of mitigation are applied to natural hazards, as well as man-made and technological hazards. Reduction of man-made and technological hazards is addressed in the Protection mission area. Mitigation benefits society by creating safer communities, enabling people to recover more rapidly from floods and other disasters, and reducing the financial impact on Federal and SLTT governments and on communities.

Risk can be managed in a variety of ways. FEMA's role in mitigation includes promoting increased risk-informed action across the whole community, and it includes identifying and addressing gaps in risk management knowledge and actions across the Nation. As such, FEMA plays an important role in developing, coordinating, and disseminating natural hazard risk assessment data and tools. FEMA continues to work through its programs and partners to incentivize investment in resilience across the Nation, encouraging individuals and communities to build for the future and to enable national disaster risk reduction.

FEMA has established five basic business lines:

- Risk Management provides predictive data analytics for natural hazards; seeks to understand the potential consequences of those events; and, develops and communicates strategies for prioritizing and reducing the risks. Key programs include Building Sciences and Risk MAP.
- Mitigation improves federal leadership towards the wise use of floodplains and the protection of their natural and beneficial functions; incentivizes communities to avoid high risk areas and build higher and stronger through floodplain management standards and building practices; leverages mitigation grant funding to maximize risk reduction opportunities nationally; and ensures we have a disaster workforce that lowers the risk profile of communities during disaster recovery. Key programs include Floodplain Management and Hazard Mitigation Grants.

- Federal Insurance aligns and simplifies flood insurance program delivery for policyholders and property owners. It meets the demand to run a Federal Insurance program that is geared towards the needs of our policyholders, property owners and disaster survivors, and the need to reduce the program vulnerabilities by maintaining and growing our policy base.
- Fund Management leads the stewardship of the National Flood Insurance Fund and the Insurance and Mitigation budget, and ensures we have the resources and technologies necessary to deliver our programs effectively.
- Environmental Planning and Historical Preservation leverages federal environmental policy in reducing risk, meeting the needs of disaster

Key Mitigation Legislation

The Stafford Act created the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) under which FEMA provides funds to states, territories, Indian tribal governments, local governments, and eligible private non-profits to implement hazard mitigation measures after a major disaster declaration. The purpose of the HMGP is to reduce loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable implementation of mitigation measures during recovery from a disaster. HMGP authorizes a Federal contribution of up to 75 percent of the cost of hazard mitigation measures.

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 established the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program, which provides funds to states, territories, Indian tribal governments, and local governments to implement a sustained pre-disaster natural hazard mitigation program. The purpose of the PDM program is to reduce loss of life and property due to natural disasters.

[The Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2004](#) further strengthened the NFIP with a number of reforms, including the establishment of a Severe Repetitive Loss grant program under which FEMA provides funding to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to severe repetitive loss structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

survivors and environmental stakeholders, and protecting the federal investment.

Key Mitigation Legislation Continued

The Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 reauthorized the NFIP for five years, while requiring significant program reform, including flood insurance, flood hazard mapping, grants, and the management of floodplains. Many of the changes are designed to make the NFIP more fiscally sound, and ensure that flood insurance rates more accurately reflect the true risk of flooding. Congress also required FEMA to complete a study on ways to make flood insurance more affordable.

Protection

The Protection mission is to secure the homeland against acts of terrorism and man-made or natural disasters. Protection capabilities include, but are not limited to, defense against weapons of mass destruction threats; defense of agriculture and food; critical infrastructure; protection of key leadership and events; border security; transportation security; immigration security; and cyber security.



Better building practices help the long term protection of communities

FEMA's mission expanded dramatically with the enactment of PKEMRA in 2006. This included the enhancement of capabilities to prevent terrorist attacks and protect against all risks and hazards. FEMA also expanded its capabilities for supporting protection measures to reduce risks, helping prevent them from escalating into incidents that would require response and recovery resources. Within the Government Facilities Critical Infrastructure/Key Resources (CIKR)

sector, FEMA is responsible for ensuring that federal operations are resilient and can continue to function in any contingency.

Overview of Mission

FEMA is responsible for supporting the enhancement of protection capabilities for all hazards. In turn, this helps integrate the tools and mechanisms for capability building across mission areas; streamlines the delivery of assistance to SLTT governments and non-governmental entities; and leverages existing inter-governmental coordination infrastructures. All grant funding must be inclusive of citizens with disabilities. Protection capabilities also include continuity activities that help ensure operation of government during any event.

The bulk of FEMA's activities to build national protection capabilities are in the form of grants and technical assistance programs. Among these programs, some apply generally to prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery capabilities for all hazards (e.g., Homeland Security Grant Program); some are tailored to address the needs of a specific sector or community (e.g., Port Security Grant Program, Transit Security Grant Program); and others apply protection investments to communities surrounding specific high-priority pre-designated CIKR assets (e.g., Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program).

Government operations, as well as government facilities, require this work to remove, accept, or reduce risks, as well as maintaining robust and redundant capabilities to protect CIKR. Government operations must be able to withstand and operate during any emergency, from natural disasters to acts of terrorism and other man-made disasters. As such, plans and capabilities are needed to ensure operation of essential government functions and services in any crisis, including catastrophic emergencies that may threaten our constitutional form of government. Coordinating and integrating these plans and activities across the Federal Government with SLTT governments and private sector is a key part of continuity planning with CIKR partners, helping to ensure that government at all levels is available and able to protect and respond effectively. Furthermore, the capability of governments to disseminate essential, accurate, and timely

information or instructions to the public prior to, during, and after a catastrophe is key to reducing immediate threats to life, property, public health, and safety.

FEMA's primary continuity business lines and associated continuity activities include:

National Protection Framework

The National Protection Framework describes what the whole community should do to protect against the greatest risks in a manner that allows American interests, aspirations, and way of life to thrive. The Framework identifies the core capabilities needed to achieve the Protection mission area. It also lays the foundation for further operational coordination and planning to synchronize Protection efforts within the whole community and across the Prevention, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery mission areas. The holistic approach to protection complements FEMA's other mission areas. Some of the strategies, operations, and tactics that make up this holistic approach include:

- Removing or reducing risks through facility hardening and building resiliency and redundancy.
 - Accepting or transferring risks based on an analysis of the risks, their costs, and potential benefits of the action.
-
- **Continuity Planning:** Providing direction to federal departments and agencies and providing guidance to SLTT governments and the private sector on developing continuity programs and plans.
 - **Continuity Training and Exercises:** Developing and offering online and residential continuity planning courses to all levels of government and the private sector; and conducting, assessing, or supporting continuity exercises ranging from table-tops to full-scale exercises involving federal and non-federal entities.
 - **Continuity Operations:** Monitoring, tracking, and reporting on readiness; maintaining a daily situational awareness watch; providing

continuity-unique information to national leadership; and facilitating reconstitution in a crisis.

FEMA serves as a facilitator in all Protection assistance efforts, often managing programs on behalf of or in support of other organizations, such as the U.S. Coast Guard, the Transportation Security Administration, and the Department of Agriculture, which retain primary subject matter expertise and responsibility. FEMA's expertise in emergency management and its close relationships with SLTT emergency responders make it an ideal representative to coordinate protective measures for the emergency services sector.

Response

The Response mission is to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs after an incident has occurred. To meet the needs of disaster-affected communities, FEMA must play an expeditionary role, with the right people and resources in the right places at the right times. This expeditionary role requires that FEMA's incident workforce is appropriately sized, trained, and organized to conduct effective and efficient operations, even under the most austere conditions. FEMA must be flexible and able to adapt rapidly to any disaster context.

In being expeditionary, FEMA must also be survivor-centric. Survivor-centric programs prioritize ease of access to services, continuously incorporating survivor feedback and shaping processes to fit the needs of those affected. FEMA will work with the whole community to ensure equal access to disaster services and to meet the functional needs of all individuals without discrimination.

Overview of Mission

FEMA conducts response operations in partnership with SLTT governments; interagency federal partners; non-governmental organizations; and the private sector. FEMA's complementary missions of Preparedness, Protection, and Mitigation support effective responses. Since Response and short-term Recovery operate concurrently, these activities provide a foundation for the affected jurisdiction's inclusive long-term Recovery. Unified and coordinated federal response and recovery operations successfully support and complement SLTT incident operations.

Echeloned Response
 FEMA executes disaster operations through established incident management and incident support entities. Those entities capitalize on FEMA's nationwide organizational structure, including the National Response Coordination Center at the national headquarters level, the affected Regional office(s), and temporary field locations established near the scene of a disaster or emergency.



Relief supplies are loaded onto a truck bound for Texas following Hurricane Rita in 2005

In accordance with the principles of incident management, FEMA manages response operations at the lowest possible organizational level. In most disasters requiring Federal Government involvement, this happens at the field or “incident” level, in partnership with the state.

In accordance with the principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System, Federal and SLTT officials, along with other key stakeholders, establish a Unified Coordination Group (UCG), matching the need for whole community inclusion. This UCG sets priorities and provides leadership for a unified response at all levels. Personnel in the affected FEMA Regional office(s) engage with state officials to understand needs and provide incident management assistance. Working with headquarters, Regional Administrators and the Federal Coordination Officer (FCO) take actions in accordance with agency doctrine. They deploy Regional resources and request resources from headquarters to support known and projected needs.

FEMA headquarters ensures that national-level assets, such as search and rescue teams, are deployed to meet requests from incident, local, or state officials. Headquarters may begin mobilizing resources to support projected needs in the affected areas while obtaining formal requests and situation



Responders coordinate medical supplies for distribution from the State of Florida Logistics Response Center

updates from Regional Administrators. At the Regional and headquarters level, the Agency coordinates and synchronizes support using all available capabilities necessary to assist survivors and responders.

Response Functions

FEMA maintains its own unique capabilities that can be applied in times of crisis. FEMA’s disaster operations include logistics, search and rescue (SAR), disaster emergency communications (DEC), and planning.

Logistics

FEMA acts as the federal integrator for supply-chain planning and coordination in response to domestic emergencies and special events. Specifically, FEMA has developed and fostered strong partnerships with other federal departments and agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. Using best practices, these partnerships harness and focus whole community logistics capabilities for delivery to SLTT levels, supporting the life-saving and life-sustaining needs of disaster survivors.

Operating in times of emergency, FEMA recognizes that the resources present at the time of the emergency are rarely sufficient during large-scale incidents. Response operations for large incidents, therefore, often focus on managing shortfalls. Disaster resources can mean the difference between life and death, and, as such, FEMA must be innovative in acquiring resources and moving them quickly, while also maintaining visibility at all levels of the response.

While FEMA's disaster operations support the individual needs of affected states, Tribal governments, and communities, there are commonalities across operations that FEMA uses to better predict, plan, and manage incident support resources. FEMA utilizes these commonalities to ensure that personnel and equipment resources are effectively allocated across the Agency, and that they are capable of being rapidly delivered in support of incident operations.

Search and Rescue

FEMA rapidly deploys components of the National Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Response System to provide specialized lifesaving assistance to SLTT authorities. They provide support for structural collapse search and rescue; waterborne search and rescue; inland/wilderness search and rescue; and aeronautical search and rescue.



Nebraska Task Force One conducts search and rescue operations in the hard hit mountain town of Jamestown.

Disaster Emergency Communications (DEC)

As a national leader in the field of DEC, FEMA coordinates the Federal Government's response, continuity efforts, and restoration of essential communications before, during, and after an incident or planned event. FEMA works closely with Federal and SLTT partners, as well as other mission partners, to ensure collaboration on critical communication needs. FEMA helps to unify the efforts of all responders around a common communication goal: supporting



In remote areas where cell phone and internet communication is sparse the Rapid Communication Ultra High Frequency satellite receiver is a key tool for emergency managers to operate recovery efforts.

the emergency management decision-makers. Having a single, shared communications system gives emergency managers interoperable communications capabilities across all levels of government. DEC system interoperability ensures that mission-critical information and situational awareness is effectively distributed to interagency partners.

Operational and Response Planning

Planning is a critical element of preparedness and all phases of response operations. Planning helps emergency managers by identifying objectives, describing organizational structures, assigning tasks to achieve objectives, identifying resources to accomplish tasks, and contributing to unity of effort through a common blueprint for all activities.

Developed under the direction of the UCG at the incident level, the incident action plan (IAP) is a key element of incident management. IAPs guide FEMA operations when responding to a disaster or delivering assistance to affected communities. Incident planning sets joint priorities for federal and state partners, based on life-saving and life-sustaining requirements. Response operations are limited by quantity and/or application of resources during a given timeframe, meaning FEMA must employ a disciplined approach. The UCG establishes priorities and corresponding objectives through planning, and this planning must engage Federal interagency, SLTT partners, and the whole community, including the private sector and survivors.

FEMA planning in support of Response operations is conducted at the Regional and headquarters levels. Regional and national support plans anticipate resource requirements and programmatic issues for events that span multiple incidents (at the Regional level) and span multiple regions (at the National level).

Deliberate plans are developed in concert with stakeholders before an incident occurs or threatens. This prepares the whole community for Response operations and provides incident planners with a head start when an actual incident occurs.

Citizens/Survivors as First Responders and Force Multipliers

During a disaster, citizens/survivors who are at the location are the first available to provide emergency response. Citizens/survivors have performed a wide range of response actions including immediate rescue, first aid, putting out small fires, traffic control, communications, and transport of the injured. Research and experience prove that citizens/survivors save more lives, perform more rescues, and transport more injured than first responders.

FEMA and local emergency responders place a high priority on providing training to citizens before a disaster in order to build the capacity of survivors to respond safely for themselves and those they are helping. However, even with a priority for training through programs from first aid to Community Emergency Response Teams, the majority of citizens/survivors providing assistance have not participated in pre-incident training and planning. Particularly in large disasters, survivors are likely to execute their actions without access to direction from a centralized decision-making authority. FEMA must regard these spontaneous civic responders as a valuable element of the response operation and work to support and enable them. FEMA must continue to plan how citizen responders, both trained and spontaneous, and trained response organizations can collaborate to achieve common ends (i.e., incident stabilization). This should include actions both prior to and parallel to the deployment and employment of professional emergency response and public safety resources, and should focus on supporting autonomous, opportunistic, self-organizing mass actions of survivors in addition to broad public education on response.

Recovery

The Recovery mission is to support communities in rebuilding so all individuals in the whole community, all households, organizations, and communities can function on their own and protect against future hazards.

FEMA plays a critical role in helping survivors recover from federally declared disasters. FEMA focuses on supporting and empowering all disaster survivors, including individuals, households, organizations, and communities. Many

survivor services are also provided by other organizations, including public-, private-, faith based, and nonprofit-sector programs. In those circumstances, FEMA works with whole community partners to ensure that survivors can access applicable services as efficiently and effectively as possible

Overview of Mission

Recovery plays an integral role in FEMA's overall mission, and it has an emphasis on assisting individuals and communities affected by Presidentially-declared disasters of all sizes. FEMA works to ease the impact of disasters on survivors and to increase their capacity to take effective and practical steps to help themselves, their families, and their communities.

This begins with a prompt and effective response effort, as well as rapid, equal access and compassionate care to communities, families, and individuals. It

continues with the efficient processing of state requests for supplementary disaster assistance, as well as rapid and compassionate care to communities, families, and individuals. The success of recovery is dependent on coordinated efforts, initiatives, and teamwork between FEMA; other Federal partners; state, tribal, and local governments; private sector partners; faith-based and nongovernmental organizations.

The success of recovery depends on coordinated efforts, initiatives, and teamwork between FEMA; other federal partners; SLTT governments; private sector partners; faith-based; and non-governmental organizations. Through the Stafford Act, FEMA can apply a myriad of resources to assist individuals and communities.

FEMA's Recovery programs have a lasting impact and represent an important long-term commitment to our fellow citizens who have been affected by



FEMA's Long Term Community Recovery booth was in place for the public during Hurricane Awareness Day events

disasters and emergencies. FEMA accomplishes its Recovery mission through a combination of programs and functions that provide equal access to direct and indirect support. These include the Stafford Act Declaration process, recovery planning, and programs specifically designed to assist both individuals and local governments that have been affected by disasters.

Public Assistance

Public Assistance (PA) helps communities recover from the devastating effects of disasters efficiently, effectively, and in a survivor-centric manner through technical assistance and financial grants. PA provides federal disaster grants from the Disaster Relief Fund to eligible SLTT governments, as well as certain nonprofit organizations. The grants can help fund emergency protective measures; debris removal; and the repair, replacement, or restoration of eligible facilities and infrastructure damaged by the disaster. The Sandy Recovery Improvement Act recognized the importance of rapid community recovery and was intended to allow FEMA to reduce cost of providing assistance, increase flexibility in the administration of assistance, expedite provision of assistance to Applicants, and provide financial incentives and disincentives for timely and cost-effective completion of projects.

Individual Assistance

Individual Assistance (IA) ensures that disaster survivors have prompt, equal access to a full range of programs and services to speed and simplify their recovery. IA works through coordination of assistance and partnerships among Federal and SLTT governments; voluntary and non-governmental agencies; and the private sector. Federal IA is authorized by the Stafford Act, and it is funded by the Disaster Relief Fund.

IA functions include:

- **Mass Care/Emergency Assistance:** FEMA supports agencies and organizations that provide services such as feeding, sheltering, clothing, health maintenance, and reunification of households. FEMA's partners in fulfilling this mission include National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, which is comprised of more than 60 national organizations.

- **Housing:** FEMA disaster housing assistance may be provided as financial aid or direct housing assistance. The Stafford Act also authorizes FEMA to construct permanent housing under certain circumstances. Temporary housing assistance includes



Creating new housing solutions for disaster survivors is an ongoing recovery challenge. For survivors with disabilities, some Mobile Housing Units (MHUs) come equipped with modifications which could include a ramp and countertop modifications.

financial assistance to rent alternate housing, repair and replacement assistance, direct assistance typically in the form of manufactured housing, and semi-permanent and permanent construction. In addition, FEMA provides referrals, identification and provision of accessible housing, and access to other sources of housing assistance. For over three decades, FEMA has provided temporary housing assistance to help eligible survivors with their housing needs.

- **Human Services:** FEMA coordinates individual, household, and community services recovery programs. These recovery programs provide for “Other Needs Assistance” to repair/replace personal property and pay for transportation, medical, assistive, dental, and funeral expenses. Disaster Unemployment Insurance provides unemployment and re-employment services through the Department of Labor to individuals who have become unemployed because of the disaster and are unable to secure regular unemployment benefits. The Crisis Counseling Program, coordinated by FEMA and the Department of Health and Human Services, provides supplemental funding to states to support short-term counseling services for eligible disaster survivors. Through an agreement with the American Bar Association, FEMA also provides free help to meet survivors’ disaster-related legal needs, such

as replacing legal documents lost in the disaster, providing advice on home repair contracts, and preparing power-of-attorney documents.

- **Supporting Disaster Assistance to Survivors:** Staff members in FEMA National Processing Service Centers register applicants for disaster assistance. FEMA staff or contractors also conduct on-site inspections to verify disaster losses, process applications to determine assistance eligibility, respond to inquiries from applicants, and coordinate the FEMA applicant telephone registrations. Additionally, FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance teams provide on-site registration, applicant status checks, expedited delivery of disaster assistance, and on-the-spot needs assessments. They also provide access to Federal and SLTT governments, and non-government entities offering survivor services, including survivor services for individuals with disabilities, children and families, and older adults. FEMA Disability Integration Advisors help ensure people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs have access to all FEMA programs; recovery resources and other appropriate FEMA facilities; and to all information (whether printed, electronic or internet-based) in formats they routinely use, to the greatest extent possible.

Recovery Planning

Recovery planning is conducted at the FEMA National and Regional levels with a broad range of partners (Federal and SLTT governments; the private sector; and non-government organizations). This helps to strengthen recovery assistance for specific incidents and supports participation in national-level exercises. Planning also helps to integrate recovery programs and activities with other disaster missions such as response and mitigation.

National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF)

Recovery begins with pre-disaster preparedness and includes a wide range of planning activities. The NDRF clarifies the roles and responsibilities for stakeholders in recovery, both pre- and post-disaster. It recognizes that recovery is a continuum and that there is opportunity within recovery. This includes the opportunity to increase universal accessibility and disaster resilience during rebuilding. It also recognizes that when a disaster occurs, it disproportionately impacts some segments of the population.

Chapter 3 – Ethos and Core Values

During the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA’s) relatively short history, several key events affected and, in some cases, altered FEMA’s organizational structure and the scope of its core mission. Some of these key events resulted in statutory changes that sought to improve FEMA’s ability to address the requirements of the Nation and its citizens. Consequently, these changes allowed FEMA to incorporate new missions and organizations, transfer functions, and, most recently, become a component of the Department of Homeland Security.

Ultimately, it is FEMA’s history that influences its unique culture, “personality,” and how it integrates additional responsibilities. Therefore, it is important to recognize and understand this history and culture, as they form the foundation of how FEMA personnel function as emergency management professionals and how those personnel execute their vital missions.

Ethos

An ethos is the underlying sentiment that informs the beliefs of a community or people. It is the characteristic tone or genus of an institution or social organization. FEMA’s fundamental goal, and the inspiration and motivation for many FEMA employees, is to serve the Nation by helping its people and first



Face to face help is a core element of what FEMA employees do.

responders, especially when they are most in need. FEMA’s responsibilities help to complement this ethos. For example, FEMA employees are responsible for effectively executing the missions defined by statutes and policy. They are also

required to be good stewards of federal resources, and they must ensure that survivors, partners, and colleagues are treated fairly and equally. Those FEMA serves must receive all the services or benefits to which they are entitled,

including those who may require reasonable accommodations, and FEMA must design its programs and processes to be survivor centric - with the ease of use by survivors, grantees, communities, partners, and colleagues in mind. Whether supporting SLTT governments in responding to and recovering from disasters, directly meeting the needs of disaster survivors, supporting the first responder community, or making the Nation more resilient through preparedness or mitigation activities, FEMA employees have a unique opportunity and vital responsibility to help others.

The FEMA ethos also demands that FEMA employees enable and empower citizens and communities to support one another and help their communities. By focusing on this ethos, FEMA employees can make a real difference to the people and communities of this Nation, and they can provide the best and most accessible service possible under the law.

Members of the FEMA family are committed to serving communities in need. To fulfill this mission, FEMA employees must exhibit and draw upon their personal strength and unwavering commitment. FEMA's employees are its most valuable resource.

Sustaining this resource happens not only through formal processes, such as personnel policies and training programs, but through compassionate, fair, and respectful treatment of peers, subordinates, and supervisors. FEMA employees exhibit these traits in their continual efforts to improve the Agency.



FEMA works closely with people with disabilities to make sure they receive the services they need.

Core Values

Core values are the accepted principles or standards of a person or group. In FEMA's case, core values guide behavior and provide the basis for what FEMA does and for how FEMA personnel operate and interrelate with others. FEMA is committed to the core values of compassion, fairness, integrity, and respect. FEMA's core values extend to the execution of all programs and services.

Compassion

Engaging individuals and communities that have been affected by disaster, requires empathy and compassion. FEMA must ensure, for example, that it focuses on the needs of all members of a community, especially those who may have specific requirements and those who are most disproportionately impacted by the incident. FEMA's responsibility is to support SLTT partners in caring for all those affected by disaster, and it must conduct this support with patience, understanding, and consideration.

Understanding and compassion are not applied only during FEMA's disaster work. FEMA personnel also apply these values in dealing with co-workers, response partners, and non-disaster customers.

Fairness

In all interactions, FEMA and its individual team members strive to achieve principled, well-reasoned, and just outcomes. FEMA is an agency committed to providing all the appropriate assistance permitted by law to disaster survivors, and, as such, FEMA personnel plan for and address the needs of the whole community that is impacted by the incident, including people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.



Taking the time to talk to disaster survivors is a cornerstone of what FEMA employees do.

FEMA employees work hard to provide equal access to resources and to communicate clear and consistent information regarding assistance programs and policies. Their work also includes actively listening and considering the viewpoints of all members of the community, as well as all response partners, stakeholders, and co-workers. FEMA's intent is that, regardless of the outcome, all people with whom FEMA has dealings know that FEMA professionals provided equal access, listened to their concerns, and treated them fairly and with respect.

Integrity

As both individual employees and the collective agency they comprise, FEMA personnel recognize that integrity is their most valuable attribute. As Federal Government employees, they are obliged to comply with a range of ethics-based principles and standards of conduct. These are legitimate guidelines, but they are not enough. Emergency management is an inherently collaborative business, and, therefore, earning the trust of citizens, co-workers, and partners is essential.

FEMA personnel earn this trust and establish productive relationships by always behaving honestly, dependably, credibly, and professionally.

Respect

FEMA employees are committed to treating those whom they serve and those with whom they work with fairness, dignity, respect, and compassion. For disaster survivors, being treated with respect and due consideration is not only important, it is also their right. FEMA employees are committed to

understanding the specific sensitivities of diverse groups and members of the community. FEMA employees are also committed to providing equal access, responding appropriately, and treating everyone without bias or preference.



FEMA recognizes that disasters affect all facets of society.

Furthermore, FEMA personnel treat their partners in Federal and SLTT governments and their private sector partners with the dignity each partner deserves. FEMA employees do this not only because it is right, but also because it creates sustainable work relationships and environments. This effectively improves every partner's capacity to meet the needs of disaster survivors. FEMA personnel also encourage their fellow employees to grow

through opportunity and empowerment, to work as a cohesive team, and to remember that their commitment is valued.

Chapter 4 – Guiding Principles

As members of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) team, FEMA staff members have weighty responsibilities and obligations. On behalf of the President, they administer a wide variety of programs to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the impacts of man-made and natural disasters.

Over time, FEMA has developed policies and procedures to guide the delivery of its programs. These policies tell FEMA employees what to do, but they do



Wanting to help disaster survivors is a core concern of FEMA employees.

not always tell them how to do it. This is where guiding principles apply.

The principles described in this chapter provide a common framework for how FEMA delivers programs and services. This framework exists within the context of an overarching commitment to excellence; this

commitment leads to an ongoing improvement in organizational performance. This improvement helps define how FEMA members view themselves and how their teammates and the public view FEMA.

Publication 1’s guiding principles apply across all FEMA’s missions: Preparedness, Protection, Response, Recovery, and Mitigation. The principles guide FEMA’s actions, and they are particularly important when FEMA is faced with situations where no clear guidance exists. For FEMA personnel, knowing and applying the following guiding principles helps them consistently act in accordance with FEMA’s core values.

The Principle of Teamwork

Emergency management is an inherently collaborative activity. Success depends on interdisciplinary, intergovernmental, and interagency cooperation.

Major disasters and emergencies are too complex for any one organization to handle.

FEMA must lead the way in the area of teamwork. Whether participating in interagency incident response teams or internal FEMA task groups, FEMA employees embrace the concept of unified command from the National Incident Management System/Incident Command Systems. FEMA employees also pride themselves on developing and supporting joint priorities and objectives when working together with the widest possible assortment of partners.

Where others may find the collaboration process challenging, FEMA employees are proud to be part of the Nation's emergency management team, along with partners from the whole community. FEMA employees work hard to maintain and strengthen these ties. They consistently approach their work with the team in mind, and they pursue every opportunity to foster and support unity of effort. FEMA employees strive to develop the capabilities of all team members.

Every Employee is an Emergency Manager

Every FEMA employee has regular and recurring emergency management responsibilities, though not every position requires routine deployment to disaster sites. In June 2012, FEMA instituted the initiative "Every Employee an Emergency Manager" (EE-EM). EE-EM has four guiding principles:

- (1) Ensure each current and future employee understands the meaning and expectations of being a Federal emergency manager;
- (2) FEMA assigns, trains, and qualifies every employee to perform regular and recurring emergency management duties;
- (3) FEMA is an expeditionary Agency taking the mission to the field; and
- (4) FEMA flexible: in addition to the EE-EM program architecture, FEMA retains the statutory right, in accordance with applicable laws, "to take whatever actions may be necessary to carry out the agency mission during emergencies.

Teamwork is important in the Response and Recovery phase of any hazard, and it is important at every FEMA echelon: Incident, Regional, and national. But teamwork is especially important in the response to large-scale disaster. It is only through teamwork that FEMA can hope to accomplish its primary mission of serving the Nation through supporting SLTT government partners and successfully utilizing the resources and capabilities of the federal team. This teamwork is an integral feature of FEMA



The National Response Coordination Center is the focal point for teamwork.

operations at all levels. Success at every level is predicated on FEMA’s ability to effectively work within teams, large and small, to achieve the desired results.

The Principle of Engagement

Teamwork is enhanced and complemented through engagement of the broadest range of partners. By reaching out to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) components; other Federal and SLTT partners; the private sector; and non-governmental organizations, FEMA tries to engage the entire emergency management community. This also includes organizations that may not traditionally have been seen as emergency management stakeholders.

This engagement process is key in developing the teams that are needed to accomplish FEMA’s core missions. FEMA continuously collaborates with stakeholders at all levels, including disaster survivors, supporting the belief that informed citizens make better choices for themselves, their families, and their communities. Informed employees and response partners are in the best position to fully participate in the emergency management team.

FEMA employees collect, analyze, and share pertinent information from all elements of FEMA, fellow DHS components, and other partners to maintain a common operating picture, support sound decision-making, and promote unity of effort.

Whole Community

A Whole Community approach to emergency management engages the full capacity of the private and nonprofit sectors, including businesses, regional associations, faith-based and disability organizations, and the general public, in conjunction with the participation of SLTT and Federal Government partners.

The benefits of Whole Community include a more informed, shared understanding of community risks, needs, and capabilities; an increase in resources through the empowerment of community members; and, in the end, more resilient communities.

FEMA is committed to continued engagement in ongoing discussions with its partners to further develop and refine strategies to deliver more effective emergency management outcomes and enhance the security and resilience of our communities and our Nation.



Engaging all stakeholders in emergency management fosters a team approach.

Timely, accurate, accessible, and open information sharing, along with mutual regard and respect, provide the foundation for effective engagement. This engagement is vital to decision-making in emergency management.

FEMA employees must clearly and openly

communicate to the public, FEMA's partners, and FEMA's leadership, sharing critical information concerning hazards, risks, responsibilities, smart practices, preventative measures, situational awareness, capabilities, and available assistance. At the same time, FEMA employees must carefully respect their obligation to safeguard certain types of information.

Although sharing information is essential to engagement, engagement also includes other important elements. For example, responding to major disasters and emergencies is challenging. During truly catastrophic incidents, FEMA needs to find innovative solutions and new sources for response resources. To do this, FEMA must engage the broadest possible range of partners, including non-traditional sources and disaster survivors.

Effective engagement means that employees respect and value the professionalism and capabilities that their partners provide. FEMA employees



Engagement of unique resources is an important element of FEMA's coordination.

seek new opportunities and innovative ways to include their partners in routine decision-making processes, in addition to collaborating with them during the execution of disaster missions. FEMA employees understand that FEMA is a member of the emergency management team, and that it takes the entire team, working together, to effectively respond to a disaster.

seek new opportunities and innovative ways to include their partners in routine decision-making processes, in addition to collaborating with them during the execution of disaster missions. FEMA employees understand that FEMA is a

The Principle of Getting Results

Getting results means identifying what must be achieved and articulating it in terms of outcomes, rather than processes. By understanding as clearly as possible what FEMA is trying to achieve, FEMA personnel improve the likelihood that they will make the best decisions possible under the extreme pressures inherently associated with large-scale disaster operations.

Focusing on outcomes also helps FEMA employees understand the circumstances and identify and implement the best courses of action.

Underlying this principle is FEMA's belief that those closest to the need will deliver the FEMA mission most efficiently and expeditiously.

The goal is to innovate when there are roadblocks and to succeed where there are opportunities.

The Principle of Preparation

Preparation is the key to getting desired results. FEMA continually engages its preparation work through a focus on planning. In fact, FEMA is guided by the adage that failing to plan is planning to fail.

FEMA is committed to planning carefully and ensuring that its plans are grounded in reality. FEMA's plans must account for all elements of the population and must focus on universal accessibility. This means integrating the



This elevated home in Biloxi, Mississippi is an example of the results created by mitigation.

access and functional needs of all community members, rather than just planning for community members without access and functional needs. The plans must also be readily adaptable to meet the situation at hand, which will rarely be the exact scenario for which FEMA planned. Finally, FEMA's plans must prepare the agency to acquire and apply whatever capabilities are needed to achieve the desired outcomes.

To support this effort, FEMA continues to offer its employees specialized training in how to plan, train, exercise, and equip for disasters. This training includes education in how to work in partnership with stakeholders from the Federal and SLTT governments, as well as stakeholders from the private sector, so that they can effectively respond together in all hazards.

The Principle of Empowerment

The nature of FEMA's responsibilities means that it must constantly lean forward and always be prepared to take decisive action. FEMA employees must be empowered to take actions expeditiously to achieve desired outcomes. Empowerment starts at the top. Senior management must trust team members

and authorize them to make decisions to meet the needs of a situation without having to request permission from superiors. Empowerment reflects the understanding that every FEMA employee plays an important role in the execution of FEMA's mission.



Empowering FEMA employees to help disaster survivors is integral to our success.

Empowerment is achieved when those closest to the need are ready and able to act and to make informed, prompt decisions based on the appropriate authorities, principles, and practices. When applied correctly, empowered decision-making in disasters means that a FEMA employee asks the following questions:

- Is the decision lawful?
- Is the course of action I decided upon the best one available to achieve the jointly developed, outcome-based objective(s)?
- Am I willing to be accountable for this decision?

The Principle of Flexibility

No two incidents are identical. As a result, FEMA disaster response personnel are trained and programs are designed to be flexible and capable of adapting their original mission, scope, and authority to get the job done. As one member of a larger emergency management effort, FEMA anticipates substantial change, and it is prepared to accommodate those changes in goals, courses of action, and operating environments with minimal notice.

FEMA is also prepared to adjust quickly as risks and stakeholder needs change. FEMA personnel work in dynamic environments that are characterized by rapidly changing priorities and ground rules. FEMA employees thrive in this environment by devising innovative ways to meet new challenges as they arise.

This expectation of great adaptability is most clearly demonstrated in employees' acceptance of FEMA's conditions of service. Employees understand that in the event of an emergency, they may be deployed, with little advance notice, to support the response to a disaster; that they may be called on to work irregular hours; and that they may have to perform duties other than those specified in their normal position descriptions.



FEMA flexible was important for Urban Search and Rescue team members in Oklahoma after the tornado that devastated a neighborhood in 2013.

Being prepared to respond to such a need quickly and enthusiastically is at the heart of what it means to be a FEMA employee.

The Principle of Accountability

Supporting Federal and SLTT partners often requires FEMA to respond quickly under rapidly changing conditions, and sometimes to respond with limited information. FEMA employees pride themselves on being able to meet extraordinary needs even in difficult and often austere conditions. FEMA personnel embrace their responsibilities for meeting the needs of survivors and other customers, and they seek accountability. FEMA employees accept responsibility for accomplishing their missions, are transparent in their decision-making, and expect to be held accountable for the actions they take.

The Principle of Stewardship

While the core of FEMA's mission is to support its SLTT partners, including citizens and first responders, FEMA is also expected to ensure that the Nation is ready and able to address all hazards. FEMA employees are committed to maximizing the impact of the resources and authorities with which they are entrusted. FEMA personnel are public servants entrusted with public resources to perform a critical mission. They have ethical, moral, and legal responsibilities to protect these resources and ensure they are used effectively and for their intended purpose. FEMA employees also have a responsibility to

be good stewards of the Nation's natural and cultural resources and to take this responsibility very seriously executing their mission.



FEMA personnel have responsibilities in protecting the Nation's public

Employees routinely reassess FEMA programs, policies, and actions to identify issues, lessons learned, and best practices, ensuring that FEMA is operating as effectively and efficiently as possible when addressing present and future challenges. In doing so, FEMA employees ensure programs and products are designed in a survivor-centric manner. This means that the programs prioritize ease of access to services, and continuously incorporate survivor feedback to fit the needs of those affected. FEMA employees also work closely with their Federal and SLTT partners to ensure they are all making the best use of collective resources and authorities.

The Principle of Accessibility

Equal access to FEMA's emergency programs and services is necessary to serve all survivors during their initial time of need. Universal accessibility is achieved through proactive planning to accommodate all survivors; regardless of age, functional capabilities, socio-economic characteristics, and language. This includes optimizing physical, programmatic, and effective communications, as well as decreasing the need for overly specific actions, accommodations, or modifications.

At FEMA, we integrate the access and functional needs of all survivors in all phases of emergency management, and across the workplace. This enables us to optimize our ability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards. It also enables all survivors, regardless of needs, to perform a host of response actions and serve as force multipliers during an incident.

Conclusion

The information provided in this document applies to all types of FEMA incidents—from small floods to catastrophes that devastate thousands of people in many states and across multiple FEMA regions. FEMA professionals are expected to apply the guidance by exercising good judgment and to apply the expertise they have gained through experience and training.

Appendix A: FEMA Authorities

A number of foundational documents provide statutory, regulatory, and executive guidance for FEMA. Some key foundational documents include:

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 5121-5207)
- Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Emergency Management and Assistance
- Homeland Security Act (Public Law 107-296, as amended, 6 U.S.C. § 101 et seq.)
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5), 2003
- Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) of 2006 (Public Law 109-295), October 4, 2006
- National Response Framework (NRF), January 2008
- National Incident Management System (NIMS), December 2008
- Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8), “National Preparedness,” March 2011
- National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF), September 2011
- Sandy Recovery Improvement Act (SRIA) of 2013 (Public Law 113–2), January 2013
- National Mitigation Framework (NMF), May 2013



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