AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

IMPROVING THE NATION'S RESPONSE TO CATASTROPHIC DISASTERS: HOW TO MINIMIZE COSTS AND STREAMLINE OUR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

(112–20)

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

MARCH 30, 2011

Printed for the use of the
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

Available online at: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/committee.action?chamber=house&committee=transportation

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

65–452 PDF WASHINGTON : 2011

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2104 Mail: Stop IDCC, Washington, DC 20402–0001

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

JOHN L. MICA, Florida, *Chairman*

DON YOUNG, Alaska
THOMAS E. PETRI, Wisconsin
HOWARD COBLE, North Carolina
JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR., Tennessee
FRANK A. LOBIONDO, New Jersey
GARY G. MILLER, California
TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON, Illinois
SAM GRAVES, Missouri
BILL SHUSTER, Pennsylvania
SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, West Virginia
JEAN SCHMIDT, Ohio
CANDICE S. MILLER, Michigan
DUNCAN HUNTER, California
TOM REED, New York
ANDY HARRIS, Maryland
ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD, Arkansas
JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER, Washington
FRANK C. GUINTA, New Hampshire
RANDY HULTGREN, Illinois
LOU BARLETTA, Pennsylvania
CHIP CRAVAACK, Minnesota
BLAKE FARENTHOLD, Texas
LARRY BUCSHON, Indiana
BILLY LONG, Missouri
BOB GIBBS, Ohio
PATRICK MEEHAN, Pennsylvania
RICHARD L. HANNA, New York
STEPHEN LEE FINCHER, Tennessee
JEFFREY M. LANDRY, Louisiana
STEVE SOUTHERLAND II, Florida
JEFF DENHAM, California
JAMES LANKFORD, Oklahoma

NICK J. RAHALL II, West Virginia
PETER A. DEFAZIO, Oregon
JERRY F. COSTELLO, Illinois
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, District of Columbia
JERROLD NADLER, New York
CORRINE BROWN, Florida
BOB FILNER, California
EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, Texas
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, Maryland
LEONARD L. BOSWELL, Iowa
TIM HOLDEN, Pennsylvania
RICK LARSEN, Washington
MICHAEL E. CAPUANO, Massachusetts
TIMOTHY H. BISHOP, New York
MICHAEL H. MICHAUD, Maine
RUSS CARNAHAN, Missouri
GRACE F. NAPOLITANO, California
DANIEL LIPINSKI, Illinois
MAZIE K. HIRONO, Hawaii
JASON ALTMIRE, Pennsylvania
TIMOTHY J. WALZ, Minnesota
HEATH SHULER, North Carolina
STEVE COHEN, Tennessee
LAURA RICHARDSON, California
ALBIO SIRES, New Jersey
DONNA F. EDWARDS, Maryland

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

JEFF DENHAM, California, *Chairman*

TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON, Illinois
ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD, Arkansas, *Vice Chair*
RANDY HULTGREN, Illinois
LOU BARLETTA, Pennsylvania
BOB GIBBS, Ohio
PATRICK MEEHAN, Pennsylvania
RICHARD L. HANNA, New York
STEPHEN LEE FINCHER, Tennessee
JOHN L. MICA, Florida *(Ex Officio)*

ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, District of Columbia
HEATH SHULER, North Carolina
MICHAEL H. MICHAUD, Maine
RUSS CARNAHAN, Missouri
TIMOTHY J. WALZ, Minnesota
DONNA F. EDWARDS, Maryland
BOB FILNER, California
NICK J. RAHALL II, West Virginia *(Ex Officio)*

CONTENTS

Page

Summary of Subject Matter vi

TESTIMONY

Christmann, Gary A., Commissioner, City of St. Louis Emergency Management Agency 26
Fugate, Hon. W. Craig, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency 5
Hubbard, James, Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture 5
Murphy, Brendan, Director, Grants Management, California Emergency Management Agency, on behalf of Dayton, Mike, Acting Secretary, California Emergency Management Agency 26
Rash, Rob, CEO and Chief Engineer, St. Francis Levee District of Arkansas 26
Shimanski, Charles S., Senior Vice President, Disaster Services, American Red Cross 26
Weber, Michael, Deputy Executive Director for Operations for Materials, Waste, Research, State, Tribal, and Compliance Programs, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission 5

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Bishop, Hon. Timothy H., of New York 38
Norton, Hon. Eleanor Holmes, of the District of Columbia 40

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED BY WITNESSES

Christmann, Gary A. 42
Dayton, Mike[1] 47
Fugate, Hon. W. Craig 56
Hubbard, James 79
Rash, Rob 86
Shimanski, Charles S. 89
Weber, Michael 93

SUBMISSIONS FOR THE RECORD

Fugate, Hon. W. Craig, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency:
- Responses to questions from Hon. Jeff Denham, a Representative in Congress from the State of California 69
- Response to question from Hon. Richard L. Hanna, a Representative in Congress from the State of New York 75
- Responses to questions from Hon. Timothy H. Bishop, a Representative in Congress from the State of New York 76

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, responses to questions from the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management 97

[1] The prepared written statement is from Mr. Dayton. Mr. Murphy testified on behalf of Mr. Dayton at the hearing.

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

John L. Mica
Chairman

James W. Coon II, Chief of Staff

March 25, 2011

Nick J. Rahall, II
Ranking Member

James H. Zoia, Democrat Chief of Staff

BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

TO:	Members of the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management
FROM:	Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management Staff
SUBJECT:	Oversight Hearing on "Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline our Emergency Management Programs"

PURPOSE

The Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management will meet on Wednesday, March 30, 2011, at 10:00 a.m., in 2253 Rayburn House Office Building to receive testimony from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Forest Service, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) as well as the American Red Cross and state and local emergency managers.

BACKGROUND

Federal Emergency Management Agency and Disaster Declarations

FEMA is the federal government's lead agency for preparing for, mitigating against, responding to, and recovering from disasters and emergencies related to all hazards – whether natural or man-made. When state and local resources are overwhelmed and the "disaster is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local governments,"[1] the Governor of the affected State may request that the President declare a major disaster.

If the President issues a declaration, federal resources are deployed in support of state and local response efforts. FEMA's primary authority in carrying out these functions stems from the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act).[2]

[1] Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5170.
[2] 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207.

There are two categories of incidents included in the Stafford Act – "major disasters" and "emergencies". A "major disaster" is defined under the Stafford Act as:

> Any natural catastrophe (including any hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, winddriven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought), or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion, in any part of the United States, which in the determination of the President causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance under this chapter 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. [3]

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 United States. [4]

The key distinction between a major disaster and emergency is that emergencies authorize fewer types of assistance and do not require a state level disaster declaration or a request from a governor. In addition, emergencies are typically less severe events, limited in cost or can be declared to "lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe."[5]

In 2010, the President issued 81 major disaster declarations and nine emergency declarations.

Catastrophic Disasters

Generally, a disaster that would be considered "catastrophic" would fall within the definition of a major disaster; however, an ongoing question, especially given the slow response and recovery following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, relates to whether a separate "catastrophic" category for disasters should be added to the Stafford Act. Last Congress, Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure included provisions in H.R. 3377, the Disaster Response, Recovery, and Mitigation Enhancement Act of 2009, that were intended to streamline the recovery process following a wide-spread disaster. However, finding the appropriate threshold or "trigger" for a catastrophic disaster and how "catastrophic" is defined for the purposes of federal assistance has remained a point of discussion at Congressional hearings and in the emergency management community.

---

[3] 42 U.S.C. § 5122.
[4] Id.
[5] 42 U.S.C. 5122.

In 2006, the Committee passed and Congress enacted the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act[6], which addressed some of the potential gaps related to catastrophic disasters. Most of these new provisions are related to planning and response, but not recovery. With respect to planning, the Act amended the definition of a "catastrophic incident" as:

> Any natural disaster, act of terrorism, or other man-made disaster that results in extraordinary levels of casualties or damage or disruption severely affecting the population (including mass evacuations), infrastructure, environment, economy, national morale, or government functions in an area.[7]

This definition provides the scope of planning activities for the Federal Government to prepare for a catastrophic incident. However, there exists a question about whether this definition is too broad to be used as a trigger for extraordinary authority to provide Federal assistance in the aftermath of such an event. In addition, the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Act provided for additional authority for response activities including: "accelerated Federal assistance" which can be provided in the absence of a state request in certain situations during the response to a major disaster or an emergency; expedited payments for debris removal; use of local contractors for federal disaster response contracts; and the rescue, care, and shelter for pets and individuals and households with pets.

Moreover, the Stafford Act itself provides broad authority and discretion to the President and FEMA in managing declared disasters. Many of the impediments to expediting response and recovery following a disaster, however, are often found in regulations and policies that the agency established. For example, in the Disaster Mitigation Act enacted by Congress in 2000, Congress authorized FEMA to implement cost estimating as a mechanism to speed up the rebuilding process following a disaster. However, FEMA has not yet implemented these cost estimating provisions.

Disaster Assistance

FEMA's major Stafford Act programs for disaster response and recovery in the aftermath of a major disaster are the Public Assistance Program and the Individual Assistance Program. The Public Assistance Program, authorized primarily by sections 403, 406, and 407 of the Stafford Act, reimburses state and local emergency response costs and provides grants to state and local governments, as well as certain private non-profits to rebuild facilities. The Public Assistance Program generally does not provide direct services to citizens.

The Individual Assistance program, also known as the Individuals and Households Program, is primarily authorized by section 408 of the Stafford Act. The program provides assistance to families and individuals impacted by disasters, including housing assistance. Housing assistance includes money for repair, rental assistance, or

---

[6] Title VI, Public Law 109-295.
[7] 6 U.S.C. § 701(4).

"direct assistance", such as the provision of temporary housing. This section also authorizes the "other needs program", which provides grants to mostly low-income families for loss of personal property, as well as disaster-related dental, medical, and funeral costs to individuals regardless of income. Other Individual Assistance programs authorized by the Stafford Act include: unemployment assistance (section 410), disaster food stamps (section 412), disaster legal services (section 415), and crisis counseling (section 416).

Section 404 of the Stafford Act authorizes the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). HMGP provides grants to state and local governments to rebuild after a disaster in ways that are cost effective and reduce the risk of future damage, hardship, and loss from all hazards. FEMA also provides grants under HMGP to assist families in reducing the risk to their homes from future disasters, through such steps as elevating the home or purchasing the home to remove it from the floodplain.

Emergency Management Performance Grants

One of the key all-hazards grant programs that provides assistance in the planning for catastrophic disasters is the Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG). The events surrounding Hurricanes Katrina and Rita highlighted the critical importance of effective catastrophic all-hazards planning. In order to ensure adequate planning and preparation, state and local jurisdictions engage in comprehensive national and regional planning processes that seek to enhance emergency management and catastrophic capabilities through strengthened national and regional relationships and the allocation of resources toward all-hazards planning, including maintaining current hazard mitigation plans. EMPG assists state and local governments to sustain and enhance all-hazards emergency management capabilities.

National Level Exercise 2011

FEMA coordinates national level exercises to help improve and prepare federal, state, and local resources for catastrophic disasters. The National Level Exercise 2011 (NLE 2011) is scheduled for May 2011. The purpose of the exercise is to prepare and coordinate a multiple-jurisdictional integrated response to a national catastrophic event.

This year the NLE will simulate the catastrophic nature of a major earthquake in the central United States region of the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ). The year 2011 is the bicentennial anniversary of the 1811 New Madrid earthquake. NLE 2011 activities will take place at command posts, emergency operation centers and other locations, including federal facilities in the Washington D.C. area and federal, regional, state, tribal, local and private sector facilities in the eight member states of the Central United States Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC). The eight member states of CUSEC encompass four different FEMA regions: Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee (FEMA Region IV); Illinois and Indiana (FEMA Region V); Arkansas (FEMA Region VI); and Missouri (FEMA Region VII).

FEMA Independence and the Principal Federal Official

The Post-Katrina Act reconstituted FEMA as a distinct entity, but retained FEMA within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Last Congress, Members of the Committee introduced H.R. 1174, the FEMA Independence Act of 2009, which would have made FEMA an independent agency as it was prior to the creation of DHS. While FEMA remains in DHS as a distinct entity, DHS has continued to take actions that blur the lines of authority. The confusion regarding roles and responsibilities was widely criticized as a factor that led to the failed response to Hurricane Katrina. By law, the President, acting through FEMA, is authorized to appoint a Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) to lead the Federal response to major disasters and emergencies. However, despite the clear reading of the law and funding prohibitions contained in previous Appropriations bills, DHS has continued to attempt to create parallel systems and chains of command, including designating Principal Federal Officials (PFOs) in previous disasters, creating confusion as it relates to the statutory authority of the FCO.

Preparedness and Nuclear Reactors

The United States has 104 commercial nuclear power reactors licensed to operate at 65 sites in 31 states. For each site, there are onsite and offsite emergency plans to assure that adequate protective measures can be taken to protect the public in the event of a radiological emergency. Federal oversight of emergency preparedness for licensed nuclear power plants is shared by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and FEMA. This sharing is facilitated through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that provides for FEMA taking the lead in overseeing offsite planning and response, and NRC assisting FEMA in carrying out this role. The NRC has statutory responsibility for the radiological health and safety of the public by overseeing onsite preparedness and has overall authority for both onsite and offsite emergency preparedness.

Preparedness and Wildfires

The Forest Service, within the Department of Agriculture (USDA), manages over 190 million acres of national forest and grasslands. The State and Private Forestry (S&PF) organization within the USDA Forest Service provides technical and financial assistance to landowners and resource managers to help sustain the Nation's forests and protect communities and the environment from wildfires. It also plays a key role, along with others within the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior, in implementing the *National Fire Plan* to manage the impacts of wildfires. Fire and Aviation Management is an integrated program within the S&PF organization that responds to all phases of wildfire operations.

States are responsible for fire protection of nonfederal lands, except for lands protected by the federal agencies under cooperative agreements. The federal government, primarily through the Forest Service, has wildfire programs to provide assistance to states, local governments, and communities to protect nonfederal lands from wildfire damages. State fire assistance includes financial and technical help for fire prevention and fire control.

FEMA also manages fire assistance grants. For example, Fire Management Assistance grants are available to states, local and tribal governments, for the mitigation, management, and control of fires on publicly or privately owned forests or grasslands, which threaten to cause destruction that would constitute a major disaster. Eligible firefighting costs may include expenses for field camps; equipment use, repair and replacement; tools, materials and supplies; and mobilization and demobilization activities.

Other fire-related FEMA grant programs include Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFGP). This program includes the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG), the Fire Prevention and Safety Grant, and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grants. These grants assist in the preparedness and response capabilities of states and local governments in dealing with fire and fire hazards.

WITNESSES

The Honorable W. Craig Fugate
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency

Mr. James Hubbard
Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry
USDA Forest Service

Mr. Michael Weber
Deputy Executive Director for Operations for Materials,
Waste, Research, State, Tribal, and Compliance Programs
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Mr. Brendan Murphy
Director, Grants Management
California Emergency Management Agency

Mr. Charley Shimanski
Senior Vice President
Disaster Services
American Red Cross

Mr. Gary A. Christmann
Commissioner
City Emergency Management Agency
St. Louis, Missouri

Mr. Rob Rash
CEO and Chief Engineer
St. Francis Levee District of Arkansas

IMPROVING THE NATION'S RESPONSE TO CATASTROPHIC DISASTERS: HOW TO MINIMIZE COSTS AND STREAMLINE OUR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2011

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT,
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:01 a.m. in Room 2253, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Jeff Denham (Chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. DENHAM. The subcommittee will come to order. First, let me welcome our distinguished witnesses and thank them for testifying. The purpose of our hearing is to understand how prepared we are today, and what else Congress should do to enable you to perform your jobs successfully.

I am confident that each of you will do everything within your power to save lives and reduce suffering when disaster strikes. Yet in 2005, we saw how a confused chain of command, failed communications, and a host of other problems could thwart the efforts of thousands of responders. Since Hurricane Katrina, much has been done to correct those problems. Congress rewrote the disasters laws, we put FEMA back together again and made it clear the administrator is responsible for managing disasters on behalf of the President. We expedited military assistance. The Red Cross revamped its disaster operations and will coordinate mass care operations. And we spent billions on planning, communications, and logistics at every level of government.

According to the Department of Homeland Security's inspector general, FEMA has made moderate progress in most of the key preparedness areas. While this report is encouraging, there is significant room for improvement. The catastrophe in Japan is a stark reminder of how bad and unpredictable disasters can be. Japan essentially faces three major disasters: an earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear incident. Any one of these disasters would stretch our capabilities. But could we handle three at once?

In my home State of California, and our vice chair's region, we face similar earthquake hazards and have several nuclear reactors. Nationwide there are several natural and manmade disaster scenarios that could result in tens of thousands of casualties and displace well over 1 million people. Are we ready for such an event?

Are we even planning for the worst case scenario? And are we prepared to take the necessary steps after such an event to respond and recover quickly?

While it's not possible to prevent most disasters, proper preparedness will save lives, minimize cost, and ensure our response and recovery is not bogged down in bureaucratic red tape. In addition to recommendations regarding our preparedness levels, the committee is interested in several specific areas.

Could the Japanese nuclear disaster happen here? And are we ready to respond?

Will the 2011 national level exercise for the New Madrid earthquake zone really push the system and reveal its weaknesses?

Will the American Red Cross and FEMA be able to shelter over 1 million people?

What are the Forest Service and FEMA doing to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires?

Proper planning and preparedness is key. We must ensure before a catastrophe hits there is coordination at all levels of government. And to the extent there is red tape that can stifle response and recovery, we must address it now.

I thank the witnesses for being here today to address these important issues. I would now like to recognize Ranking Member Norton from the District of Columbia for 5 minutes to make any opening statements she may have. Welcome.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are grateful to our witnesses for appearing before the subcommittee today to testify on the important and timely issue before us.

We need look no further than the catastrophic events that shook Japan less than 3 weeks ago to ask whether the United States is prepared for such an attack here. The earthquake that shook Japan, measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale, sent a tsunami racing toward the Japanese coast, wiping towns and villages literally off the globe.

With an earthquake or tsunami of this scale, would—while an earthquake or tsunami of this scale would represent a catastrophic disaster, the cascading events, including the crippling of a nuclear power—of nuclear power plants, and continuing radiation release, compel us to think—to rethink the scope of disaster that could occur in our own homeland.

The tragedy in Japan presents us with a unique teaching moment to help us learn to better prepare for and respond to catastrophic disaster. While we will study these lessons for future disasters, our thoughts and prayers must first be with the Japanese people, as they struggle to overcome these triple calamities. Today we ask the necessary question. How can we improve the Nation's response to catastrophic disaster?

Every since Hurricane Katrina exposed the Federal Government's unacceptable inability to respond to a disaster of unexpected magnitude, this subcommittee has performed vigorous oversight on steps the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, should take to improve its planning and preparation for catastrophic disaster, as well as for efforts to mitigate potential damage.

During the 110th and 111th Congresses, our subcommittee held hearing after hearing to ensure that FEMA would not repeat the failures seen on the Gulf Coast. I appreciate that Chairman Denham has chosen to continue this oversight, and I look forward to working with him on these critical issues.

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act was signed into law in 1988. The act, authorized by our committee, serves as the Federal Government's primary authority for addressing major disasters. Importantly, the Stafford Act recognizes that States and local communities, and not the Federal Government, have primary responsibility to address disasters and emergencies. The Federal Government acts to supplement the efforts and resources of States and of local and tribal governments, as well as disaster relief organizations.

Yet it remains unclear whether the Stafford Act contemplates catastrophic disasters, even like Hurricane Katrina, or certainly like the threefold earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear meltdown currently unfolding in Japan. For the most part, the authority provided by the Stafford Act has provided sufficient—was sufficient to address all types of disasters and emergencies, natural and terrorist. But some have questioned whether the Stafford Act is sufficient for catastrophic disasters.

In 2006 this committee sought to address these potential gaps by enacting the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act, enacted as title VI of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriation Act. The Post-Katrina Act defined a catastrophic incident as one that "results in extraordinary levels of casualties or disruption severely affecting the population, including mass evacuations, infrastructure, environment, economy, national morale, or government functions in an area."

This definition provides the framework for how the Federal Government should plan for catastrophic incident. However, there remain questions about whether this is an appropriate trigger for catastrophic disaster. In fact, I chaired a subcommittee hearing in July 2009 that addressed this issue. I look forward to continuing to listen to this ongoing debate within the emergency management community.

While we may not have settled on the best definition of catastrophic, we do know that one characteristic that distinguishes catastrophic disasters from other disasters is that the magnitude of a catastrophic event often has national impact, and that such disasters are complex, unusually large in their effects, hard to predict, and very expensive. We also know another catastrophic event will someday strike the United States. And we must be ready for that day.

In September 2010 the Department of Homeland Security's inspector general released a report that addressed the issue of FEMA's preparedness for the next catastrophic disaster. The report provided a detailed analysis of the Nation's level of preparedness in 10 key areas. The report, in part, shared good news. FEMA had made progress in all 10 areas, and in particular, had made substantial progress toward improving emergency communications.

However, the report also cited concerns about the lack of effective coordination between FEMA and State, local, and tribal govern-

ments, the need for updated information technology systems, to upgrade and integrate Agency-wide resources, the lack of experienced staff to handle the demanding workload at FEMA as States and localities are pressed in the aftermath of the great recession, and left without stimulus or other funds from the Federal Government, and insufficient funding to carry out the Agency's mission.

While many look to FEMA to take the lead during disasters, we must remember that the heart and soul of FEMA's mission is to equip, train, and work with their State, local, and tribal partners, along with relief organizations that serve the country—that serve as the country's first responders in most disasters and emergencies.

I very much look forward to hearing today from Administrator Fugate and others on steps FEMA has taken to address these shortcomings. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Ms. Norton. I now call on Mr. Crawford for a brief opening statement.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to take a brief opportunity to introduce a witness that will testify before this committee a little later today, Mr. Rob Rash. He is the chief executive officer and chief engineer of the St. Francis Levee District of Arkansas. The St. Francis Levee District, headquartered in West Memphis, Arkansas, serves northeast Arkansas, and covers 7 counties with 160 miles of mainline Mississippi River levees and 75 miles of St. Francis River tributary levees. These levees are a part of the Mississippi River and Tributees Flood Control Project, which contains a total of 3,787 miles of levees, along with other structures such as flood walls, floodways, flood plains, diversions, reservoirs, pumping plants, and every other proven method to prevent flooding from the 41 percent of the waters of the United States that flow to the Gulf of Mexico.

Mr. Rash is a respected voice throughout Arkansas and the mid-South for his knowledge and expertise in flood control and prevention and emergency preparedness. Mr. Chairman, I hope that the wisdom that Mr. Rash has gained in working in the States can be applied to the Federal Government to improve our response to future disasters. And with that I yield back to the chairman. And I will fill in for him briefly.

I would like to now recognize Mr. Carnahan for an opening statement.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you. I want to join my colleagues in welcoming this panel and the one to follow, thank Chairman Denham and Ranking Member Norton for putting this hearing together. It is very timely, given the events in Japan, but also in terms of our own preparedness. In particular when we have heard the descriptions of Japan being one of the most prepared countries for an earthquake-type event, I think it really causes serious pause for us to re-evaluate our own preparedness.

I come from a region of the country in the Heartland, the St. Louis, Missouri, region, that, unfortunately, has been home to great floods, tornados, ice storms, droughts. And we sit on one of the largest fault lines on the New Madrid fault line that goes up and down the Mississippi River corridor. We are not prepared enough. We continue to hear concerns about interoperability, about having back-up systems in place. So we very much welcome the up-

coming national exercise that is going to be conducted in the New Madrid seismic zone.

I especially want to give a personal welcome to a witness on the second panel, our city of St. Louis emergency management agency commissioner, Gary Christmann. Gary, welcome. We are pleased to have you here today to be a part of this national conversation, but also to bring to light some of the local challenges that we face in our region.

He is a career professional, has been involved working with hospitals, ambulance, public health areas, incident response teams. So we are very pleased to have your voice here to be a part of this debate. Thank you, and welcome. I yield back.

Mr. CRAWFORD. [presiding.] Thank you, Mr. Carnahan. Are there any other Members who would like to make opening statements?

[No response.]

Mr. CRAWFORD. OK. Hearing none, then I would like to welcome our witnesses here today. Our first panel will be the Honorable W. Craig Fugate, the administrator for the Federal Emergency Management Agency; Mr. James Hubbard, deputy chief for state and private forestry, Forest Service; and Mr. Michael Weber, deputy executive director for operations for materials, waste, research, state, tribal, and compliance programs, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

I ask unanimous consent that our witnesses' full statements be included in the record.

[No response.]

Mr. CRAWFORD. Without objection, so ordered. Since your written testimony has been made part of the record, the subcommittee requests that you limit your oral testimony to 5 minutes, and we will begin with Administrator Fugate. You may proceed.

TESTIMONY OF W. CRAIG FUGATE, ADMINISTRATOR, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY; JAMES HUBBARD, DEPUTY CHIEF FOR STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY, FOREST SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; AND MICHAEL WEBER, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS FOR MATERIALS, WASTE, RESEARCH, STATE, TRIBAL, AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAMS, U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Mr. FUGATE. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman Denham and Ranking Member Norton, Vice Chairman, and the rest of the distinguished members of the subcommittee. Today we are talking about catastrophic preparedness. And that has a lot of different definitions and what it means to people. I think it's important that you see that we are not here by ourselves, this panel. There are a lot of different capabilities and resources within the Federal family. And so I want to talk about what FEMA's role is, the lessons we have learned.

As the ranking member pointed out, with the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act, how we approach disasters is, I think, significantly improved than what we were doing with the previous tools we had. The Homeland Security Act, as amended by the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act reinforced FEMA's role. It clarified the mission of the Agency.

But, more importantly, it recognized something that the ranking member alluded to, and that is, in waiting for disaster to occur, and waiting until locals are overwhelmed, and waiting until a governor has made a formal request to the President to declare a disaster, to active the Stafford Act, often times puts us too far behind a response. And this is particularly true when you have a large-scale event that occurs without notice. In waiting until you have assessed, and waiting until the local responders are overwhelmed, the Federal Government would often times find itself reacting to, rather than being proactive in that response.

The Post-Katrina Reform Act clarified that, and said that, in absence of a declaration of a state of emergency, however when it is assumed that impacts would result in that, or at the direction of the President, FEMA could, with tasking authorities out of the disaster relief fund, assign missions to agencies, contract for vendors, and issue mission assignments to Department of Defense in anticipation of.

I will give an example in real time. When the tsunami occurred—actually, the earthquake occurred—off the coast of Japan, the two tsunami warning centers for the United States—one in Hawaii, one in Alaska—issued tsunami advisories and then ultimately warnings for areas along our islands and territories, State of Hawaii, and along the West Coast, including the Alaskan Aleutian Islands.

At that point, upon those notifications, FEMA began activating the team. There was no formal request. There was no damage at that point. We knew that, based upon maps and work that had been done with our State partners along the West Coast and the well-exercised plan, unfortunately, in Hawaii for tsunami evacuations, that the governor of Hawaii had already activated his team, had started to order the evacuations of his areas, and the West Coast was evaluating the tsunami forecast and the impacts for that evacuation.

We knew approximately the populations involved, and began mobilizing and moving resources out of our territorial warehouses in Guam, as well as in the Hawaiian Islands, and our warehouses on the West Coast, began moving supplies in anticipation that there may be evacuations and sheltering required for that population.

This was all occurring in the early morning hours, and all based upon the authorities vested in us from Congress under the Post-Katrina Reform Act. We did not have a formal request. We did not have the disaster that had occurred. We were preparing for what potentially could happen.

This has to be done, however, in partnership with our State and local partners, as well as our other Federal agencies. Because FEMA, as an entity itself, has limited resources, a bulk of our capabilities in this government are actually vested in our Federal agencies and our military. So we utilize those tools to respond.

But there is another part of this that we have also taken to heart and that is that in supporting our States and their local governments, we often times have only focused on what I call a Federal-centric approach to problem solving. We have only looked at what government can do. This, unfortunately, leaves out a lot of resources, like our volunteer and non-governmental organizations, like the American Red Cross, but also the private sector.

When you look at what would happen in these type of catastrophic events, and you leave out the private sector, particularly the retail sector, it would be very difficult to imagine that you could go from a no-notice of event to getting supplies in quickly if we weren't leveraging the private sector that could get their stores up and get running.

We have taken steps now to bring in the private sector into FEMA in a day-to-day basis at the National Response Coordination Center. We now have a representative, on a rotating basis, from industry focused on coordinating in real time the private sector with our response, so that we don't compete with the private sector at what they do best, but we focus on those gaps.

And then, in my final minute, the last piece of this: personal preparedness. Why is it so critical, and why do we tell people to be prepared? Is it that we're saying, "Government can't get to you in time?" No. What we're saying is those of us that can prepare and should be prepared for those things we know and those things that, again, may not give us warning. When we fail to prepare, who are you cutting in line in front of? The poor? The disabled? Infants and children? The frail elderly?

This isn't about you are on your own, this is about we have to work as a team. And the public needs to realize the better prepared we are as individuals and families, the more we can focus on the most vulnerable populations and the most critical things of life-saving and life-sustaining activities, without having to have us compete with our most vulnerable citizens. It is part of what we call the whole of community.

We must be prepared, as a Nation, to support our local responders and the governors, but more importantly, not compete with the most vulnerable citizens when we, as individuals and families, could have done a better job of being prepared. With that, thank you.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Thank you, Administrator Fugate.

Mr. Hubbard, you may proceed.

Mr. HUBBARD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. Wildland fire is a part of the responsibility in the Forest Service that I deal with, and I want to give you just a brief overview of our wildfire suppression activities.

This very much is a community partnership with States and locals and including the volunteers, the tribal governments, the private contractors, and the Federal agencies, and the Forest Service, and the Department of Interior. And our priorities are dealing with life, property, and natural resource protection.

What we are experiencing in the United States is, because of prolonged drought, is longer fire seasons. We are dealing with hotter, dryer weather. So we get larger fires that are more difficult to control. And we increase the complexity of that by the number of homes and people that are in the way of those fires, which is increasing all the time.

One of the things that we have embarked on, though, that we think will help in this, at the direction of Congress, is to put together a cohesive wildfire strategy for the country. That is underway, and that involves dealing with those State and local partners on how we respond to fire, how we protect communities, and how

we restore landscapes that cause threats to communities and to people. We will sort out those roles and responsibilities, and see where the best response should be, and how we can improve in this increasing complexity that we deal with.

For this year, this fire season, it is underway. Oklahoma and Texas have experienced quite a bit of trouble. Georgia, Florida, as well. It's beginning in New Mexico, Arizona, and a little early in Colorado. Our preparedness levels are at a continuing level, so—and that will only be strengthened by this dialogue that is going to occur with this cohesive strategy.

Federally, we have 16,000 firefighters ready to fight fire this year. That is a normal level for us.

We also get involved a lot with FEMA. And, as Mr. Fugate pointed out, it's in the coordination and how we deal with the State and locals and how we involve them in our responses. We get involved through those mission assignments that the national response framework provides to us. Our primary assistance is in wildfire, but with the number of resources that we have that we can mobilize, in terms of engines and aircraft and people.

We also serve in other capacities. We have a lot of specialists in our system, as well. So we can mobilize from 1 to 10,000, if we need to. And that specialization and that skilled labor force is—becomes important, especially when we rely on the qualifications and standards that are consistent across agencies.

Our command system is one that we share, too, with all those agencies. So we have an incident response command system that cuts across all of that and helps people to have a common response and an organized response.

So, it comes down to being about the relationships and the working agreements that we have in place with the other Federal agencies and with the State, locals, tribes, and private contractors. All of that has been in place and functions quite well. We just have more of a problem that we have to address. And we think we are prepared to do that. Thank you.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Mr. Hubbard.

And, Mr. Weber, you may proceed.

Mr. WEBER. Good morning, Chairman Denham, Ranking Member Norton, and members of the subcommittee. I am pleased to appear before you today to represent the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission to discuss two aspects: the emergency planning and preparedness program for nuclear power facilities in the United States; as well as the protective action guidance that we recently issued in response to the events at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant station in Japan.

NRC's primary mission, as you may know, is to regulate nuclear power plants, reactors, and materials and waste in a manner that protects public health and safety, and promotes the common defense and security.

Emergency preparedness is a key element in our defense in-depth philosophy, and that philosophy ensures quality in design, construction, and operation of nuclear facilities, requires redundant safety systems that reduce the chances of accidents from occurring, and recognizes that, in spite of all these preparations, unforeseen events can occur. Through emergency planning and preparedness,

mechanisms are in place to protect the public health in the unlikely event that these other measures fail.

The NRC emergency preparedness and planning regulations are extensive and require licensees to develop comprehensive and effective emergency plans as a condition of their license to operate.

Nuclear power plant operators are required to provide extensive emergency response training to emergency plant workers. For example, they are required to provide severe accident management training to control room operators, and to conduct a rigorous drill and exercise program. The NRC inspects licensees to ensure that they are meeting these requirements, and monitors their performance.

To form a coordinated system of emergency preparedness and response, the NRC works with licensees, other Federal agencies, State, tribal, local responders and officials, and, of course, first responders. The program includes an every-other-year full participation exercise that engages both on-site and off-site response organizations, as well as the Federal Emergency Management Agency. And we work with FEMA to evaluate the quality and the conduct of those exercises.

NRC resident inspectors also observe licensee on-site emergency drills and exercises. So it's safe to say that over the 30-plus years of operating experience with 140 operating nuclear power plants in the United States, there have been thousands of drills and exercises in response to both abnormal and emergency conditions.

For planning purposes, we define two emergency planning zones, or EPZs, around nuclear power plant sites. The first zone is called the plume exposure pathway, an area that covers the 10-mile radius in the vicinity of the nuclear power plant. This area would require the most immediate protective actions in the event of a severe emergency causing a large-scale release. Planning for this area is comprehensive, and includes consideration of protective measures for members of the public at very low-dose levels, such as evacuation, sheltering, and administration of potassium iodide, as appropriate.

A second emergency planning zone is the ingestion pathway EPZ, and this covers a 50-mile radius around each plant to protect against potential lower level, longer term risks from ingestion of contaminated food, milk, and water. The comprehensive planning in both the 10- and the 50-mile EPZs provide a substantial basis for expansion, if necessary, in response to the emergency.

Let me now address NRC's protection action recommendations that we made recently for U.S. citizens in Japan to evacuate out to 50 miles from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant site. That decision was based on the best available information we had at the time. NRC began monitoring of the event with a tsunami warning that was issued for Hawaii and territories in the West Coast of the United States early that morning. In order to provide timely information to the U.S. Ambassador to Japan, and to best protect the health and safety of U.S. citizens in Japan, we based our assessment on conditions as we understood them.

This site has six nuclear power plants, and four of those plants continue to face extraordinary challenges. Units one, three, and four appear to have suffered significant damage as a result of hy-

drogen explosions. Unit four was in a refueling outage, and so it recently transferred spent fuel into its spent fuel pool. If the water was drained from that pool, it would have posed a risk of overheating that fuel, and another large-scale release. Radiation monitors were showing very high levels of radiation at the plant site, which would pose complications for the plant crew in returning to stabilize the reactors, and there were off-site readings indicating fuel damage was occurring.

Since communications were limited and there was a high degree of uncertainty, it is difficult to accurately assess the radiological hazard. However, we conducted calculations to evaluate the proper evacuation distance, and we used hypothetical but not unreasonable estimates of fuel damage, the containment, and other release conditions. These calculations demonstrated that EPA's protective action guidelines could be exceeded at a distance of 50 miles from the site if a large-scale release occurred from the reactors or the spent fuel pools.

We understood that some of our assumptions were conservative, but we believed it was better to err on the side of protection, especially in the case of a rapidly deteriorating condition. Acting in accordance with that framework, and using the best available information we had, NRC determined that an evacuation out to 50 miles for U.S. citizens was the appropriate course of action, and we made that recommendation to the other government agencies, including the ambassador.

This concludes my testimony. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today, and I would be happy to answer questions.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Mr. Weber. I will now recognize each Member for 5 minutes. We will most likely have time for a second round of questioning. So I would ask each Member to keep it to—their question to 5 minutes.

First question I have, Mr. Fugate, the whole world is focused on Japan right now, and the devastation that we have seen right now. Let's assume a scenario like the one in Japan occurred in the United States. There is a massive 9.0 earthquake in California, a tsunami followed by severe floods, and the nuclear reactions which are near the coast are severely damaged. Millions of people are displaced, thousands missing, no shelters or supplies in the immediate area. Walk us through the type of response that we could expect to see from FEMA and other organizations as—dealing with this type of catastrophe.

Mr. FUGATE. Mr. Chairman, I would eat up all your 5 minutes. I'm going to try to be succinct, and probably want to do a written response in more detail. But just a thumbnail.

We recognize—and I think what is happening in Japan at the nuclear power plant is, often times in the media, overshadowing the actual impacts of the tsunami, earthquake, and the deaths that occurred, and the impacts to the infrastructure and local—and the prefectures, which are the equivalent of States.

This is what you call a maximum event. I think this is, when people talk about catastrophic disasters, what we see. And what I found in my profession was the tendency to plan for what we were capable of, and then place these in the too-hard-to-do box. As Arlin

used to say, this was the hurt locker. You put things in here that you couldn't deal with, and you come back later.

We are trying to change that at FEMA. In fact, our most recently released strategic plan, rather than talking about being prepared, we put numbers against it. And this was actually in production prior to the tsunami earthquake, nuclear power plant tragedy. And what it showed was we were looking at these kind of numbers.

What we are trying to do is move away from being so scripted around a specific scenario, and really start looking at, if you looked at the worst case maximum events that occur from earthquakes to terrorism to hurricanes, what do the big numbers look like? And it actually closely follows what we're seeing in the tsunami. And so the numbers you're throwing out there is what we have to plan against. And this will require national effort.

Again, what we are finding is these would definitely overwhelm our locals. Often times they may become casualties in the impact. States would be severely stressed. This would require a Federal-supported response, but also pointed out the need to incorporate in the whole deal.

The private sector has got to be integrated into these plans, because where they can get their facilities up and running, we need to be focused where they cannot. We need to bring in a lot of different players, such as the U.S. Forest Service, who may not be fighting fires, but may be running staging areas or base camps, or helping us assist local governments in managing the complexity of these disasters.

And we also have to stay focused on a very short timeframe. The first 72 hours are the most critical in these disasters to save lives. We are not going to be able to wait for assessments, we're not going to be able to wait for clarity. We are going to have to respond as if it is as bad as you thought it could be, and then deal with the most pressing issues in the order of very focused, get into the areas, secure it, rescue, start meeting those basic essential needs, and ultimately set the stage for the decisions that may be required. If we cannot get resources to people fast enough, we may need to start taking people to where the resources are.

And so, this planning is based upon that maximum of maximum, looking at not just a scenario, but looking at aggregating out these types of disasters, and then going back to how do we build a national capacity. This is going to require a lot of mutual aid from States that aren't impacted. This is going to require a lot of assistance that would not normally be just federally directed or federally managed resources.

And so, as you point out, that coordination and building this on the front-end—what we call planning for real—is one of the keys that we take away from this, and essentially has been validating what we're trying to do in FEMA now to plan for these types of scenarios, sir.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you. And I will look forward to a more detailed response. I know it's a huge question. But just quickly, in these last few seconds here, how prepared are we, if we had millions of people displaced?

I mean, nationally, the—obviously, a different scenario for different States. But I mean, if you could, give us a broad overview of——

Mr. FUGATE. We are much better prepared than we were in Katrina. But I think this is the lesson learned. You're going to have to make a very quick decision that won't be necessarily popular with local officials, even State officials. It sometimes is better to take people to where resources are, out of an area, than try to bring resources into that area.

So, part of this is looking at, again, evacuations that won't be temporary, they may be longer term. Looking at how you then do this—and we've worked on this with host States that may not be impacted by the disaster, but would need Federal assistance to do sheltering operations, so we worked on sheltered populations outside of that.

A lot of this work, you know, was focused on the hurricane scenarios. We are trying to move this into New Madrid and the other earthquake scenarios where, again, it may be that you cannot get resources in fast enough. You're going to have to move people to where the resources are. This is one advantage we have in these types of events. We are such a large country that we do have a lot of resiliency, just because of the geographical separation of key resources. So it's unlikely we would have a situation where one part of the country would be so overwhelmed that the other parts of the country wouldn't be able to provide that assistance.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you. Now I recognize Ms. Norton for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Weber, how many nuclear plants in the United States sit on or near fault lines, and how many are located on the coast near to areas subject to tsunami?

Mr. WEBER. All the nuclear power plants in the United States are near faults. Faults are——

Ms. NORTON. How come?

Mr. WEBER. The point is that——

Ms. NORTON. I mean you must have been looking to locate them on fault lines.

Mr. WEBER. No, ma'am. They are sited where they're needed for providing the electrical power. But faults and seismic activity is one of the external events that is considered in the design of the nuclear power plant to ensure that, should a large earthquake occur, the plant would remain in a safe——

Ms. NORTON. Would you locate such a nuclear plant on a fault line today?

Mr. WEBER. There are faults throughout the United States.

Ms. NORTON. Well, would you locate a nuclear plant on a fault—on or near a fault line today? I repeat my question.

Mr. WEBER. In siting a nuclear power plant, that is one of the things we specifically look at. But not just seismic activity. We also look at other natural hazards.

Ms. NORTON. So you would or would not, Mr. Weber? I have only so much time, sir.

Mr. WEBER. You would take faults into consideration in siting a nuclear power plant.

Ms. NORTON. So the—so you—have you taken them into consideration before?

Mr. WEBER. Yes.

Ms. NORTON. So you're not doing anything different from what you did before, even after the Japan catastrophe.

Mr. WEBER. Even in low seismic areas there are faults.

Ms. NORTON. I didn't ask you if there were—I asked you would you build or would you authorize the building of a nuclear plant on a fault line, and your answer is yes, you take into account, and that is a very troubling answer. What would you do to mitigate potential hazard of a nuclear plant located on a fault line, or near a part of the coast susceptible to tsunami?

Mr. WEBER. We would make certain that if there were an earthquake on that fault, or faults near the plant, that the plant would remain safe. Otherwise, we would not——

Ms. NORTON. How would it remain safe? You know, that is what they thought in Japan.

Mr. WEBER. Because the site is specifically designed to protect against——

Ms. NORTON. So was that site. Mr. Weber, I am going to go on to Mr.——

Mr. WEBER. OK.

Ms. NORTON. All you have done is to leave me with really a set of questions that astonish me. I would have thought that after this disaster you would say that there were some steps that you are in the process of taking to mitigate the effects of disasters. Are there any such steps?

Mr. WEBER. We are——

Ms. NORTON. Steps after Japan?

Mr. WEBER. Yes, ma'am. We are taking both a near-term and a long-term review of our existing safety program. We are conducting a 90-day review, which will be followed by a longer term review. The purpose of that is to learn what we can from the experience in Japan, and to specifically look at whether we need to change our regulatory program to ensure that, in light of what we have learned from——

Ms. NORTON. When is that review due to be completed?

Mr. WEBER. The first part of that is due within 90 days of last week, and the second review is due within 6 months of the completion of the 90-day——

Ms. NORTON. Would you make sure that a copy of that review is sent to this committee, to its chairman?

Mr. WEBER. We can do that.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Fugate, when is the disaster relief fund due to run out of money?

Mr. FUGATE. Based upon the continuing resolutions in funding, we are sitting at a little over $1.1 billion in the current fund. We are also in the process of looking at open disasters and replenishing that. And, based upon that, all things being equal, May/June timeframes look like we may get close to what we would call immediate needs funding, where we would drop under $1 billion. And we would then look at reductions in certain activities, most principally hazard mitigation and certain public assistance. It would not affect

the initial response or individual assistance. But there is not a hard, fixed date based upon what we're doing right now.

One of the things you have directed and requested us to do is go back and close out old disasters. In doing that, we are—last year we did about $2 billion that were able to go back into the funds that were de-obligated from missions from previous disasters, most notably the Katrina-Rita-Wilma timeframe.

So, it's not a fixed date. And we will have a better idea as we get clarity on the current budget, and also on where we're getting these dollars to come back. But we look at that $1 billion mark as the point at which we would have to look at whether we implement immediate needs funding——

Ms. NORTON. And you are how close to that now?

Mr. FUGATE. It is over $100 million, but that is based upon the continuing resolutions that we get incremental funds coming in, and we also are getting money back from disasters where we are closing out completed missions. And as you de-obligate those funds and put them back in, it is bringing that fund back up. We are holding it at kind of a—we are—as fast as money is going out, these dollars are coming back in, keeping us above that level.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Fugate, let me see where we are on the old concern of this subcommittee and committee on the existence of the so-called principal Federal officer and the Federal coordinating officer.

Everyone believes that one of the causes of the Federal Government's failures in Japan was the placement of FEMA in the Department of Homeland Security, such that the Department insisted upon a—the dual existence of something they called a principal Federal officer when throughout the history of FEMA there had been one chain of command and it was the Federal coordinating officer, and there was no confusion about who was to be in charge.

This is what happened when we layered up. We didn't expect this to happen. And there was bipartisan concern on this committee that you had—that the Agency had marginalized the person who was supposed to be in charge, who is supposed to know most, the Federal coordinating officer.

Now, I understand you have said that you would no longer appoint a principal Federal officer to compete with the Federal coordinating officer. The Federal coordinating officer is a statutory officer. This other thing was thrown in by the Department of Homeland Security, and messed up—there is no question, messed up—the Gulf Coast. It is hard enough. But when two captains are running around trying to guide the ship, you really do have a disaster, a bureaucratic disaster on top of a natural disaster.

Now, I note, however, that the national response framework has not been updated to make clear that in the event of a disaster there is chain of command, there is one person in charge, and he is the Federal coordinating officer. Why hasn't—why isn't that reflected in that plan which we look to to see how you would operate?

And does this mean that this commitment about the PFO, or the principal officer and the Federal officer, is in limbo?

Mr. FUGATE. The short answer is—and I will read the statement again, because, as I did last time, I want to make sure it is—I am completely right on this. And this is from the Secretary.

"The Department has made the decision not to appoint principal Federal officials for"——

Ms. NORTON. Just a minute. I want to stop you right here.

Mr. FUGATE. Yes.

Ms. NORTON. I am asking you about the national response framework. You know, don't read back to me the statement that you gave me. I understand. And I, myself, said that you, yourself, do not intend.

My question is you have a national response framework. Your State and local and tribal officers look to it to see how you operate and how you will operate in their area if there is a tsunami or an earthquake. Why doesn't the national response framework say that there will be a Federal coordinating officer, as the Stafford Act mandates, in the event of a catastrophe in your area?

Mr. FUGATE. The simple but probably unacceptable answer is we are in a rewrite and just have not stricken that as we go through the rewrite for a new updated——

Ms. NORTON. So you do intend to make clear that only the Federal coordinating officer in your area, wherever you are in the United States, is in charge. That is who is the command, that is who we will look to.

Mr. FUGATE. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. NORTON. I wish you would get that in—do your editing. And let me ask you when that editing will be complete, please.

Mr. FUGATE. That will be—we will respond back to that, but that is being updated, and that is in part of the revisions. It just has not been finalized to go back out for publication.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Fugate.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Ms. Norton. Just to clarify, when will the review be done?

Mr. FUGATE. I will need to get back on the timing of that. We currently have it in a rewrite. And I will have to get back on the timing of that when the—part of this, too, is to engage our local and State partners and tribal partners in these rewrites. So we are trying to avoid what we used to have, which we'd write it and send it out and say, "What do you think?" We are trying to engage people as we are going through the rewrite, to make sure we are capturing the lessons learned and bringing this up to the most current operational guidance.

Mr. DENHAM. And as a freshman here I am not familiar with the timelines. Are we talking 1 month, 1 year, 10 years?

Mr. FUGATE. Not 10 years. But as I found coming from the State, moving at the speed of government is somewhat frustration. This is a process that has been ongoing now for—it is not a 10-year project, but I would really like to be able to get back to you on this one, because I think it is basically a contract to update, and that process I would have to be very specific about timeframe. I think we are looking at this year to get the drafts back out and start working from it, but I do not know when we would have the final document that would be published.

Ms. NORTON. Would the gentleman yield? I think the chairman's question is well placed. This was—it was very frustrating for the subcommittee to even get the national response plan.

And, Mr. Chairman, I am very concerned at this—the open-endedness of this, especially in light of the Japanese triple disasters.

Mr. Fugate, don't you think, in light of the chairman's question, you should set a date and should respond to him concerning when you expect this to be done? There is great concern in the country. And we should be able, after this hearing, to give some sense to the American public that there are certain things we are about.

Mr. Weber, you know, astonished me that he said nothing has changed, in effect. And you are dealing with a response plan that the whole Nation looks to, and with a kind of open-ended relaxation that will not put people at ease after Japan who live on fault lines which Mr. Weber thinks is, you know, just the way it is.

Mr. FUGATE. Well, I wouldn't want to give the impression that that document is the only document that we use to make these decisions and plans. It is more of a codification of the actual framework document. We have made progress.

I would also point out—that was in the chairman's statements—is the New Madrid earthquake exercise is coming up this May. And we want to be able to incorporate lessons learned there. We are taking that exercise to heart to take it to the point where we want to see where the failures are. We are not going to merely exercise to what we're capable of. We want to take this to where do we see the failures. And part of that is to come back and look at national response framework and go, "Are these things that are structural in how we're laying out the team?"

This is what the national framework essentially does, is lay out the team. It doesn't tell you how you do stuff, it lays out the team. So are there issues with that? Are there issues with the resources and how you do resource allocations? Or is it an issue in training and personnel?

So, I would prefer to get back in writing about timeframe. But also understand that we are also looking at the national response framework and the object of NLE11. What do we see there? Does that structure need any additional changes, other than what we already know? So that timeline is, again, trying to incorporate the lessons we have been learning through these disasters, as well as looking at NLE11.

But I would also remind people it is not defining that we would wait for that update to change anything. It really is focused on how is the structure of the team built, and how it works in a disaster.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Mr. Fugate. We would like to see a formal timeline, this committee would.

As well, I do also want to confirm from Ms. Norton's statement you have no intention—you are committing to us that there will be no appointment of a PFO?

Mr. FUGATE. Well, a PFO is not appointed by the FEMA administrator. But the Secretary has reassured us, and she has put it in writing, that she does not intend to appoint principal Federal officials in a Stafford Act declaration.

And to amplify this, Mr. Chairman, and for the ranking member, in the Department of Homeland Security's support and USAID response to Haiti, the incident lead for our team was actually a

FEMA leadership position. So I think it is recognized both within DHS that we do have capable leadership.

The Agency has turned to us for non-Stafford Act assistance in lead agencies. And the Secretary has reaffirmed that she does not see the need to bring in, in these types of Stafford Act responses, outside entities, but depend upon the FEMA leadership and the Federal coordinating officer to coordinate that response in support of a governor.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Fugate. Mr. Fincher?

Mr. FINCHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you guys for being here today. Our hearts and thoughts and prayers go out to the folks in Japan. Just catastrophic. It is just hard to explain.

I want to be careful not to put the blame as much with what has happened in Japan on the earthquake as the tsunami. That is what caused the power failure to cool the nuclear reactors. But at the same time, I think it is a gut check for all of us—and you guys, as well—to do the best job you can at having a clear path, a guided response, working with the States, making sure that you have a clean chain of command, that the right hand knows what the left hand is doing.

But it is a disaster. What happened in Japan was a disaster. I live in a part of the State of Tennessee, where we live on the New Madrid fault. Reelfoot Lake was created back many, many years ago by a massive earthquake. So we are waiting for something to happen. But at the same time, you can only do so much preparing for a disaster. But you have to do your part.

My question is last Congress you testified that FEMA would conduct review of its policies and regulations as they relate to response and recovery. As you know, the Stafford Act provides FEMA with broad authorities. However, as we saw in the recovery from Hurricane Katrina, the bureaucratic red tape found in regulation policy significantly slowed the process.

Where are you in that review, and what changes do you expect to occur from the process?

Mr. FUGATE. Thank you for a chance to come back to that. We have started the process—we actually were bringing in State and locals, as well as our subject matter experts in doing what we call a bottom-up review. We found that we were not being revolutionary, we were being evolutionary. So we have decided that we cannot do that without dedicating some full-time staff to that process.

But what we have done—and I think we demonstrated this in the Tennessee floods—is we have to have a balance between speed and accountability. So in the individual assistance, where this became a huge issue in Katrina and other disasters, where we could not get funds out fast enough and we would literally find ourselves not able to make sure we were determining eligibility prior to administering funds, in the Tennessee floods we put about $100 million in the hands of eligible applicants that had a home inspection done within days of their request for assistance in those floods with no notice. If you remember, we started that weekend, and it was flooding. And by Monday, the governor had a request to the President, we had a declaration, and we were providing assistance by that weekend to folks that had been flooded.

So, we have been taking to heart looking at the flexibility inherent in the Stafford Act, and have began going back through a lot of these procedures that are not in the Stafford Act in the CFR, and questioning why they exist, eliminating those that are not relevant, but putting an emphasis on speed, but not haste, in doing these projects. So this is an ongoing evolution.

We have already been successful in some areas. An area of note, we have clarified for federally recognized tribes that they can be an eligible applicant, as a grantee, after a governor has requested a disaster declaration. This is key to the sovereignty of those tribes and, again, was done internally to our policy reviews, where there was not a conflict in the Stafford Act, but we had that flexibility inherent to that, in order to do that.

Mr. FINCHER. Again, we go back to the Gulf oil spill, how terrible that was. I think that no one wants to destroy the environment, that we need to make sure that we are safe with our energy, but also, at the same time, that if you do not operate and follow the law, you do pay a penalty. But again, we need to be steady, while careful, and do a good job. And I do appreciate your comments to that, guys. Thank you. I would yield back.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Mr. Fincher. Mr. Barletta, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Weber, do you anticipate any major impacts of the radiation from Japan reactors on the U.S.? I saw some reports showing certain States experiencing low-level effects from the Japan reactors, Pennsylvania being one of them, my home State. So I wonder if you could talk about that?

Mr. WEBER. Certainly. We do not expect to see harmful levels of radiation in the United States, and that includes the Territories, Hawaii, Alaska, Aleutians. We are detecting trace levels of contamination from the releases from the Fukushima Daiichi emergency. And that is expected. And we are working within the Federal community to get data from the nuclear power plants—which may be some of the data that you are referring to—to share that, so that it can be integrated with other information taken around the United States, including monitoring data from the Environmental Protection Agency, to provide confidence to the American public that they are not at risk from those releases.

Mr. BARLETTA. So there won't be—you don't anticipate any effects in water and rain——

Mr. WEBER. We are seeing elevated levels in rain, for example. But those levels are still at a very small amount, so that it is not posing a risk to U.S. citizens.

Mr. BARLETTA. And to follow up on Ms. Norton's question, how at risk are our nuclear power plants in the United States to the type of situation that occurred in Japan?

Mr. WEBER. We are confident that the operating nuclear power plants are safe, and that is safe from earthquakes, safe from tsunamis, and other external hazards—hurricanes, tornadoes. That is all part of what we look at before we license a plant to operate.

However, having said that, we are taking a close look at what is actually occurring in Japan, so that we can learn from that experience. At NRC we practice continuous improvement. So we do not

want to blow off a significant event like occurred in Japan. We want to learn from that, and continue to improve our programs.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you. We will now start our second round of questioning. The first question I have again, Mr. Fugate, I am concerned about our planning. And there are obviously some things that are unpredictable, have become a bigger challenge for planning. Nobody could have planned what has happened—the catastrophe that has happened in Japan.

But here in the United States we have the opportunity to plan for—you know, right now in California, I mean, we are going to see a huge amount of flooding this year we are predicting, because we just—we do not build the water storage facilities or the conveyance facilities, and you have a huge amount of snowfall this year, and now all of a sudden we are in normal 70-, 80-degree temperatures in California.

Can you explain to me some—the planning that you do, based on some of the risk assessments from other departments?

Mr. FUGATE. Well, Mr. Chairman, as you point out, some risks are dynamic. They change seasonally, they may change because of certain climate shifts that we see that we are going from drought into a very wet period right now in California.

We utilize our regional offices. We have 10 FEMA regional offices with a regional administrator and a team that are empowered to work closely with the States to plan for these changing threats as the hazards increase or decrease.

And so, Nancy Ward, our regional administrator in region nine, and her team worked with the State of California, California Emergency Management Agency, to look at—and again, California, because of the history of disasters, has a rather robust system of responding to disasters. So what we look at are where do they anticipate gaps or assistance that they would require, and plan that based upon this threat.

We have been working on this actually a little bit more aggressively, because it was earlier in the Midwest and upper-Midwest Red River, where we already set up an incident staging base and moved supplies up there. Yet we have still not seen significant flooding, we are just in a ready mode.

So, these are the kind of things we do when we see a hazard that is increasing, and work with the States, what we try to identify—what would they see as shortfalls, particularly from the standpoint of commodities or other resources that we need to move into an area? And then we would set up, in coordination with the State, initial staging bases, moving supplies in and getting ready for that.

Again, with some of these threats you can actually see that changing. So we do what we call, you know, incident action planning with the State, and look at this kind of a real-time event of where do they see gaps, what do they see are issues, where do we need to go ahead and move or get resources ready so that if they are needed we are not starting from, "Oh, it is flooding, what do you need?"

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you. And right now, obviously, with the $14 trillion debt, you know, the cuts that are coming out here are very

large. And we expect to continue to be looking at the 2012 budget with a very critical eye.

I imagine that FEMA, as you look at your budgets, you are looking at ways that you can save money, as well. Do you ever do any type of budget forecasting that would say—you know, as you get questioned about your budget, well, we could reduce FEMA expenditures if we built a levee, if we built a new water storage, if we managed our forests better?

Mr. FUGATE. It goes to the question of investing before disasters happen, in mitigation and other activities, to buy down, literally, the risk of this country. The challenge is because there are so many areas, and you cannot always predetermine where those best investments would occur, it has not always been able to come back and focus exclusively on prevention and mitigation without having the capability to respond to large-scale catastrophic disasters. So you have to have a balance.

I think the way you become cost effective is to look at a very simple idea, and that is do not compete with the private sector and what they do every day, and look at how, when a disaster occurs, we can maximize what they do so we expend our Federal dollars in those areas and gaps that would occur in the response.

But I think it is that balance between where we can in future development, future growth, mitigate those risks, and look at how, through continuing programs, we can reduce that risk in those existing areas, whether they are in a flood plain, or whether they are in an earthquake-prone area, that building codes and other tools can help reduce that risk for future disaster.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you. And Mr. Hubbard, what type of coordination exists when you do have multiple disasters hitting us at once? We have an earthquake which sets off a forest fire. What type of coordination do you have with FEMA and other agencies?

Mr. HUBBARD. Our coordination is primarily aimed at responding to fire. And we have an extensive network to do that. But when FEMA gives us a mission assignment to help them in any other way, we divert the resources to do that, if we are able to.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you. And one of the challenges that has come up in my district as we have had forest fires in the past, you end up with a lot of trees that are burnt and should be harvested so that we do not see another fire come right beyond that. Are we working to—can you give me any type of assurance that we are working to mitigate this from happening in the future?

Mr. HUBBARD. One way or another, landscape restoration is a key to avoiding future risks to communities and to people and to natural resources. So, our restoration efforts are very much aimed at reducing that risk where it exists and it threatens the most.

So, our assurance is that that is a priority for us. And we will do as much of it as we are able.

Mr. DENHAM. Well, I mean, "as much of it as we are able" does not give me any sense of security. Do we expedite permits when that happens?

Mr. HUBBARD. We go through our—each national forest goes through its normal process for environmental clearance, and that is still the same.

What we try to do with additional resources that we might have for hazard reduction or landscape restoration is to go into those areas and remove material, even if we do not have commercial market for it.

Mr. DENHAM. So——

Mr. HUBBARD. We do that on a priority basis.

Mr. DENHAM. So is it expedited? Are there ways to cut through the red tape so that we do not have a second natural disaster right beyond that?

Mr. HUBBARD. Where the threats are high enough, and we rate it as a high-enough priority for us to do the work ourselves on Forest Service land, yes.

Mr. DENHAM. And what about partnering with private individuals that can come in and help us to——

Mr. HUBBARD. That is where—when we can contract it, and we are the administrator of the contract, yes, we have some latitude. Where we have to operate through a salvage sale or a timber sale, the normal environmental clearances are in place.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you. Ms. Norton?

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Fugate, I know that FEMA was of assistance in Haiti. Have you been of any assistance in Japan?

Mr. FUGATE. We have been in support of USAID. The urban search and rescue teams that deployed the 2 teams that went to Haiti are part of the 28 national teams, 2 of which are funded by both FEMA and USAID. So these teams went, we provided support to USAID in mobilizing those teams. We also made available all of our capabilities.

However, Japan did not——

Ms. NORTON. The teams came from Fairfax? Were they——

Mr. FUGATE. California and Fairfax. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. NORTON. Yes.

Mr. FUGATE. But these are part of the 28 urban search and rescue teams that are funded by FEMA. But the two teams that went are also supported by USAID, and are primarily identified for international response.

In addition to the response there—and again, we had no requests through USAID for any more assistance to Japan itself—we did support U.S. EPA in deploying additional radiation monitors as part of RADNET, particularly in the territories where there were not existing stations. We used our authority under the Stafford Act to provide that assistance to help deploy those to make sure that the territorial islands had monitoring, and we supported that.

And we have been in a participatory mode in this event, both learning the lessons of the tsunami, earthquake, and nuclear power emergency. But other than those items, we have not provided direct assistance to——

Ms. NORTON. Well, that is the kind of assistance I know you often do provide when there is a hazard or catastrophe in a foreign country.

It seems—those teams are all back home now?

Mr. FUGATE. Yes, ma'am. They are all back. In fact, the California team got their equipment back so they are back up for de-

ployment. And I didn't see the status today, but I think the Virginia team is merely awaiting their——

Ms. NORTON. Well, I noticed that the Virginia team came back rather quickly. Was that because of concern about a nuclear hazard?

Mr. FUGATE. Unfortunately, the answer is not that. It was that the search was moving into recovery phase. They did not feel that there was going to be much more opportunity for rescues. And since those teams are primarily designed to do rescues and not body recovery, the Government of Japan asked that the teams be released and sent back to the U.S., while they continued recovery operations.

Ms. NORTON. Actually, that is reassuring. Mr. Weber, one last question—this is a question for both of you, because I know that, Mr. Fugate, that you are about to undertake in May a much-discussed national exercise at—near the New Madrid fault line in the center of the country, south center of the country.

One, are you, Mr. Weber, participating in this national exercise?

Mr. WEBER. Absolutely.

Ms. NORTON. Are there any nuclear plants located near this particular fault line? What are the States, again? Tennessee? What are the States?

Mr. WEBER. Ten States, right?

Mr. FUGATE. Yes. Basically from Mississippi north through Illinois, across Arkansas, back over to Tennessee. When we looked at this exercise, it is based upon the historical event. So we are using the event that occurred in 1811/1812, was a major shock and then several major aftershocks in the area of impact, based upon USGS data that would indicate where we would see shaking and damages occurring across—it's about eight States that would be seeing damages.

There are reports that we could actually have shaking motion and impacts outside that area, but it would not result in significant damages.

Ms. NORTON. Well, in those 10 States, is there any—are there any nuclear plants located along that fault line?

Mr. WEBER. Yes, there are. And in addition to nuclear power plants, there is also a large nuclear facility, such as the Paducah gaseous diffusion plant, and there is a conversion facility in Metropolis, Illinois.

Our preparations are to participate fully in the national exercise, so that we could gain from the experience, working with our partners in FEMA, the States, the local responders.

Ms. NORTON. And, Mr. Chairman, there—the first responders, the teams that went from Fairfax and California, might well be informative to us. I know we, ourselves, heard from the teams that went to Haiti, to see what they could tell us about what would happen if there were an earthquake in Haiti.

Mr. Weber, I go back again to fault lines and construction along fault lines. Are you constructing along fault lines because you really don't have any alternative? Knowing that it is a fault line, knowing that none of us can know when the fault line will prove disruptive, what leads you to construct a nuclear facility, in particular, along a fault line? Do you look at other options?

Mr. WEBER. Absolutely.

Ms. NORTON. Well then why, for example, would a fault line location be chosen?

Mr. WEBER. In dealing with faults, we have to distinguish between active and passive faults. Passive faults may have been active millions of years ago, but are no longer considered active.

Ms. NORTON. OK, I am interested in the active ones.

Mr. WEBER. The active ones you would obviously not try to site a nuclear power plant or other large nuclear facility on top of that fault. But if you were siting a facility, for whatever reasons, and a fault were active and nearby, you would take that into account in the design of the facility, such that——

Ms. NORTON. No, I am asking, in those instances, have you, in fact, decided to build or allow a nuclear facility to be built on a fault because there was no other alternative.

Mr. WEBER. I am not aware of those instances. I do know, for example, at the Diablo Canyon nuclear power station in California, it was discovered during the course of the site investigation that there was a large fault nearby, the Hosgri fault. And that fault was specifically taken into consideration, so that we could have assurance that that facility, if there were an earthquake along that fault, that the Diablo Canyon nuclear power——

Ms. NORTON. So what would you do in that case that you wouldn't do if a facility were not located on a fault?

Mr. WEBER. You would add stiffening to certain parts of the plant, so that if there were seismic motion, that the plant would be safe. You could stand off the fault, so that if you had subsidence along the fault, that it didn't disrupt critical components in the nuclear power plant. So, there are a variety of things that are taken into consideration.

I think the point that is to be made is there are faults throughout the United States, and we need to take that into account, because we do not want to have a situation where we are surprised by a seismic event that causes damage to a plant. And that is the same design philosophy that we employ for flooding, for tsunamis, for tornadoes, for hurricanes.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you. And do you want to do a third round of questioning?

Ms. NORTON. No, no, Mr. Chairman. I just want to say that I have no—I don't feel any more reassured by Mr. Weber's testimony than before. I don't know, for example, whether there are precautions that are taken along faults here that were not taken in Japan.

I do think, Mr. Weber, that when you are finished your review, questions like that, the difference between the precautions you say are taken along our faults, and what was taken in Japan—and I tell you the reason I am interested. Japanese aren't stupid. They are among the very best in preparing for just such catastrophes. They are located—if you look at the location of Japan, you will understand something of the Japanese people.

Because when you have as vulnerable a location as they do, as a set of islands in the middle of a part of the world that sees tsunamis, and you have to build—and in their case, have to build—nuclear plants, and you have the level of technology that the Japa-

nese have, among the highest in the world, you, it seems to me, are the standard that everybody ought to look to. And I hope that in doing your review, you are at least comparing yourself with the Japanese.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you.

And before we go to the next panel, I just want to clarify a couple things. I still do not think that Ms. Norton's question has been answered sufficiently. So let me pull out this map here.

Realize that your standard answer is that we have got faults everywhere. I get that, but we have red areas here. Highest risk areas along the coast of California, Oregon, and Washington: are we planning on building any new nuclear plants there?

Mr. WEBER. At this point we do not have any applications for new nuclear power plants in those locations.

Mr. DENHAM. How about the Madrid area, the red area there?

Mr. WEBER. No.

Mr. DENHAM. OK. So any of the high-risk areas, do we have any plans?

Mr. WEBER. Most of the construction that is going on now or as planned is in the southeastern United States, and with some in the mid-Atlantic.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you.

And as far as the current facilities that we have up and running today, I went to school real close to Diablo Canyon. I mean that facility must be 40 years old, 50 years old. Here we had in Japan a state-of-the-art facility. You know, I believe that that was probably the most modern——

Mr. WEBER. No, sir, I am sorry. Those plants are about 40 years old. Fukushima Daiichi Unit 1 is approaching its 40th anniversary.

Mr. DENHAM. So similar technology?

Mr. WEBER. Similar technology.

Mr. DENHAM. Similar precautions?

Mr. WEBER. Yes.

Mr. DENHAM. Are there things that we would do now to upgrade San Onofre of Diablo Canyon or others after seeing what has happened in Japan? Are there new construction, new architecture that we would want to go in and update those facilities?

Mr. WEBER. It is difficult to compare what our regulatory program has required over the years and how it is implemented versus what has been done in Japan. I will say that one of the reasons why we have been involved in our response is to insure that we learn from the Japanese experience, and we are constantly asking ourselves how would we cope with this situation in the United States.

We have identified a number of features that are present in the nuclear power plants in the United States that we are not aware of were implemented in Japan, and those are the items that would be relied on to ensure that should such a catastrophe occur in the United States, that the nuclear power plants remain safe.

These are things like supplemental emergency power that we have in the United States. We have diesel driven pumps. We have required our licensees that operate the nuclear power plants to take additional measures, particularly since 9/11, so that regard-

less of what event may occur, that they are in a more safe configuration, and they could cope with these kind of catastrophes.

Mr. DENHAM. And I assume there is some type of risk assessment being done in light of what has happened in Japan.

Mr. WEBER. Yes, sir.

Mr. DENHAM. And you would be able to provide this committee with that risk assessment and the recommendations you would have for each of those facilities?

Mr. WEBER. Absolutely.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you.

And just to follow up, Mr. Hubbard, I want to make sure I understood your answer correctly. We have in actual disaster, we have a forest fire that takes out the entire fuel on the ground floor, leaves behind all of these trees that now are in the dying process. Before we see a second disaster, before we see a second forest fire, my understanding from your answer, what I heard from you was that the environmental review process would not be sped up. There would not be anything to provide local loggers the opportunity to come in and log those trees quickly and maybe actually get some economic impact to the local community and to the Forest Service and voice a second disaster.

There is nothing in place today that would expedite that permitting?

Mr. HUBBARD. There are several possibilities, and I will follow up with a better answer, but we often run into the environmental challenges that stop those activities, and that is still at play, and we have not eliminated that issue.

Mr. DENHAM. Do you have recommendations on risk assessment that would say if we do not come in an log these, not only are we going to not see the economic impact, but we are at risk of another disaster?

Mr. HUBBARD. With every fire we assess that risk, and we deal with the emergency restoration that follows any fire. Before it even is controlled we start, and that lasts for up to a year following to take care of what we think might still pose a risk to communities, in particular.

But in terms of salvaging of what's standing burned dead trees, that falls into a different category, and we have to go through our clearance processes.

Mr. DENHAM. I mean, I guess I just find your answer unacceptable. I understand that we all want to be good stewards of the environment, but at a certain point human lives are at risk, and if we have already had one natural disaster and know specifically that the risk has greatly increased and could see a second natural disaster, why would we not expedite the process and reduce our risk of having a second national disaster?

Mr. HUBBARD. We would for sure expedite process in and around communities to protect communities, but on large scale, 50,000 acre fires, we would not deal with the entire landscape that way. We would deal with the areas immediately adjacent to those communities, and we would expedite that process.

Mr. DENHAM. And expedite it with quick permits and bring in private industry if we needed to?

Mr. HUBBARD. Yes.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you. Thank you very much.

At this time I would like to call on our second panel.

Mr. Murphy, Director of Grants Management, California Emergency Management Agency.

Second will be Mr. Shimanski, the Senior Vice President of Disaster Services, the American Red Cross.

Third, Mr. Christmann, Commissioner, City Emergency Management Agency, St. Louis, Missouri.

And fourth, Mr. Rash, CEO and Chief Engineer, St. Francis Levee District of Arkansas.

And I ask unanimous consent that our witnesses' full statements be included in the record. Without objection, so ordered.

Since your written testimony has been made part of the record, the subcommittee would request that you limit your responses to oral to 5 minutes.

Mr. Murphy, you may proceed.

TESTIMONY OF BRENDAN MURPHY, DIRECTOR, GRANTS MANAGEMENT, CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, ON BEHALF OF MIKE DAYTON, ACTING SECRETARY, CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY; CHARLES S. SHIMANSKI, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, DISASTER SERVICES, AMERICAN RED CROSS; GARY A. CHRISTMANN, COMMISSIONER, CITY OF ST. LOUIS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY; AND ROB RASH, CEO AND CHIEF ENGINEER, ST. FRANCIS LEVEE DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

Mr. MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am Brendan Murphy from the California Emergency Management Agency on behalf of Acting Secretary Mike Dayton.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Norton, members of the subcommittee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on how we can work together to improve catastrophic disaster response efforts while minimizing economic impacts.

On behalf of the Acting Secretary of the California Emergency Management Agency, we have the overarching responsibility to insure that California works to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and quickly recover from any type of disaster that may impact California, whether manmade or naturally occurring.

CalEMA coordinates emergency activities to save lives and reduce property losses during disasters and works to expedite recovery from the effects of disasters. On a day-to-day basis, CalEMA provides leadership assistance and support to State and local agencies in planning and preparing for the most effective use of Federal, State, local and private sector resources during emergencies.

Chairman Denham, as a representative from California, you know how vulnerable California is to disasters, such as fires, floods, and earthquakes, and how devastating these types of events are to our State and national economies. We have learned from our experiences in California that one of the best ways to help mitigate the effects of a large scale disaster is to invest in preparedness efforts.

If we focus our investments on disaster preparedness efforts, we reduce the devastation of human suffering and financial loss in the

future. We must invest financial resources on the front-end in an effort to insure that our infrastructure is secure, that early warning systems are in place, and that the public is informed about the potential risks and have the tools to prepare themselves and their families when a disaster strikes.

Similar to what Administrator Fugate said, every individual has to take the responsibility to help to work as a team to respond to an emergency.

The following are some of the highlights of the efforts undertaken by the California Emergency Management Agency and our State and local partners in the areas of being prepared.

We enhanced emergency notification systems. The core responsibility of public agencies is to insure that our communities are aware of disasters so that individuals, families and businesses can take the appropriate and necessary actions.

To that end, we have focused some o four limited resources on enhancing and maintaining our ability to alert and warn the public during times of emergencies and disasters.

Specifically, CalEMA operates the California State Warning Center, which is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to serve as the official State level point of contact for emergency notifications. As you know, Congressman, since you funded it while you were in California, the Warning Center personnel maintain contact with county warning points, State agencies, Federal agencies, and the National Warning Center in Berryville, Virginia.

Through multiple communication channels, CalEMA insures that developing emergencies are responded to quickly and effectively. Last year our Warning Center staff handled 150,000 calls, including reports of more than 11,000 hazardous material spills and 140 seismic and tsunami events.

Between January 2009 and December 2010, more than 650,000 alert and warning notifications were made for 45 major disasters to local, State, and Federal agencies and public-private partners.

In light of the recent earthquake that occurred across the Pacific Ocean but still had significant impacts to California, the ability to warn the public regarding seismic events and tsunamis remains a concern and a priority. Depending on the location of an earthquake, a tsunami has the potential to reach the California coast in as little as 10 minutes. Because of the potential short time period for issuing a warning and the need to identify the areas of the State which may be impacted by a surge, CalEMA in partnership with the California Geological Survey and the Tsunami Research Center at the University of California developed Statewide tsunami inundation maps for California. These maps are used by coastal communities to plan and coordinate their specific emergency evacuation plans.

When the tsunami warning was issued on March 11, 2011, CalEMA immediately contacted the coastal county offices of Emergency Services that were then able to use the tsunami maps and their local plans to focus their efforts for response and evacuation based on the type of tsunami that was coming at us.

Local governments have the primary responsibility for alerting their residents to impending events. However, as a State, we provided Federal grant funds to every county in the State so that they

could install the telephone notification system, such as reverse 911, so that they could rapidly notify the people of the county.

Wise investments in local tsunami warning systems save lives and property and mitigate the damaging effects of the recent tsunami, but as you know, plans are only as good as the actions taken by the individuals who use them, and that is why California remains focused on creating a culture of preparedness.

Last week, March 20, 2011, through March 26, 2011, was National Tsunami Awareness and Preparedness Week, a timely event, and we used that opportunity to promote the importance of preparedness and personal responsibility in disaster planning.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Mr. Murphy. I would ask you to summarize your written statement.

Mr. MURPHY. Along those lines, the most important thing that we have is the ability to plan, exercise, reinvigorate those plans, and do it again. It is that learning. It is a culture of preparedness. At the same time we have citizen preparedness. We have focused on having outreach, and one of the most important things is citizens are prepared and can handle themselves, as Administrator Fugate said. That allows valuable public resources to be put into the most critical of areas at that point in time.

I yield the balance.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Mr. Murphy.

Mr. Shimanski, I would ask you the same thing, if you would summarize your written statement.

Mr. SHIMANSKI. Yes, sir. Good morning, Chairman Denham, members and staff of the subcommittee.

This is an important issue before us, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide some input. The American Red Cross is committed to delivering the most effective and efficient relief services possible. We do so by working closely, of course, with Government and other NGOs and the private sector. Each and every day we stand ready to respond to the events ranging from hurricanes that can be forecast, to other events such as earthquakes and human caused catastrophes that cannot.

In just a few short minutes I hope to discuss the Red Cross structure as well as our partnership efforts and the stewardship of donated dollars.

First, let me explain our structure very quickly. The American Red Cross is a nationwide distributed network that ensures both local presence as well as national presence during larger events. Our facilities and our 60,000 trained disaster volunteers are spread throughout the country, which means that we are already there when a disaster strikes.

This is best illustrated in terms of our commitment and strong collaboration with government by the memo of agreement that we signed recently with FEMA. This agreement has the Red Cross now sharing in the leadership of the ESF portion of mass care, ESF–6, Mass Care, which includes feeding, sheltering, bulk distribution, and family reunification.

A person in a shelter should not care if the cot they sleep on is a FEMA cot or a Red Cross cot. There is plenty of work for the whole community.

The FEMA-Red Cross MOA takes us to the next level of coordinating and sharing information. For example, we are now sharing more data about available assets, about all sheltering activity and about the needs of clients. This will make it much faster and will improve service as well as save money.

I will talk briefly about our partnership efforts. The American Red Cross works very closely with many NGOs and faith-based organizations involved in disaster response, and the FEMA MOA codifies our role in leading that. This will have, again, a positive impact on the response and a positive impact on cost.

One key to efficient and effective partnerships is bringing partners together in our work, which the FEMA MOA, again, speaks to.

I want to next talk briefly about stewardship. We are, of course, funded by donated dollars, and we take our responsibility to our donors very seriously, which means we're working constantly to increase our efficiencies and reduce our expenses. As a result, the American Red Cross is proud to say that it spends more than 91 cents on every donated dollar on direct relief.

But we can always be better and we are always looking for ways to improve. This means we must put a stronger focus on our use of volunteers, be more efficient by optimizing our allocation of resources, and be better at sharing data.

Finally, I want to briefly talk about our preparation for the next disaster. A big part of what we do is in looking at our performance in past disasters. For example, our catastrophic earthquake plans have come from reviews of Loma Prieta and Northridge, and they were adjusted some after Haiti. Our hurricane plans have been shaped by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. And as Administrator Fugate and others have wisely noted, we must view the public not only as clients who need our support, but also as a potential asset.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, let there be no doubt that the American Red Cross is committed to being as prepared as possible for whatever disaster will strike. We are committed to improving efficiencies, to partnering effectively, and to increasing individual and community preparedness. We stand ready to work with our partners to ensure that the country is as prepared as possible to respond.

I thank you for your support, and I am happy to address questions when the time comes.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Mr. Shimanski.

Mr. Christmann.

Mr. CHRISTMANN. Good morning, Chairman Denham, Ranking Member Norton, and distinguished members of the subcommittee.

My name is Gary Christmann. I am the Commissioner of the St. Louis City Emergency Management Agency under the Department of Public Safety. I am a member of the U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers.

I am honored and appreciate the opportunity to testify today from the perspective of a local emergency manager. On behalf of the Nation's local emergency managers, I would like to thank the committee for your support of the emergency performance grant, the vital role the committee played after Hurricane Katrina to

strengthen the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act.

We need strong emergency management on the local level. We recognize that all events start and end at the local level. However, we also need strong partners at the State and Federal level for those events that go beyond our capabilities.

The city of St. Louis is 62 square miles made up of residential area, industry, business, transportation. We have three Major League sporting teams. We have five hospitals, which two of them are pediatric trauma centers, and we are the third largest inland port in the Nation.

As a local emergency manager, I have the overall responsibility to coordinate a comprehensive emergency management system addressing all hazards with key stakeholders at all levels of government, volunteer agencies, private sector, hospitals, medical facilities, faith-based organizations, schools, colleges, and universities, utility companies, our residents, and all others.

My responsibility includes planning for events we have most frequently, such as tornados and flooding, but also those high consequence, such as a catastrophic earthquake involving the New Madrid fault.

Planning for an earthquake has many challenges due to the uncertainties which influence our response and recovery, such as the magnitude, the location of the epicenter, the time of day, the downtown activities, and the season.

We recognize that a catastrophic earthquake can cause widespread damage, power outages, mass casualties, mass fatalities, and our missions would include an ongoing public information, continuity of government, mass shelter and care, search and rescue, debris removal, security operations, mass casualty and fatality management, volunteer management, to include our citizens' emergency response teams, just to name a few.

The only way that we can successful in a response to and recover from an event of the magnitude and complexity is to have a fully functional and test system of emergency management in place. The emergency management performance grant plays a pivotal role in maintaining that system.

The city of St. Louis will be participating in the national level exercise in May of 2011. This exercise scenario is based around an earthquake on the New Madrid fault line. We will use the lessons learned from this exercise as well as those from the tragic situation in Japan to strengthen our plans and capabilities.

In summary, Mayor Francis Slay, the city of St. Louis, and the Nation's local emergency managers have appreciated the support of this subcommittee in the past in building a strong emergency management system at the Federal, State, and local level. The investment of the emergency management performance grant is small, given the potential return and creating a strong State and local emergency management system which handles a large majority of disasters.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have, and I appreciate your time.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you.

Mr. Rash.

Mr. RASH. Yes, sir. Thank you very much. I appreciate the opportunity to be here this morning.

There are numerous items I would like to speak about. If you would allow the record to be left open for additional testimony submittal, I would appreciate that.

I would like to limit my comments just to three key points: one, to utilize local responders and local recovery efforts first; two, to improve and remove the traditional bureaucratic cycle, which has obviously been mentioned here this morning; and food protection is a preemptive strike, and I will get to that in a moment.

It is vital for us to utilize those local first responders. During Hurricane Katrina, a Levee Board in Mississippi responded through the governor's office prior to landfall of Katrina and got themselves prepared, brought fuel and other items south to the Gulf Coast and Mississippi Gulf Shore, and their response was very welcome.

These local responders, like the St. Francis Levee District of Arkansas, can be utilized along with other drainage districts, other small districts that are local, that can be utilized more easily, more readily available. But it has to be through coordination with local, State, and Federal efforts. There is no question about that.

Mr. Fugate spoke about being prepared on a local level and that the Federal Government could not be expected to come in immediately because there were criteria in place or not in place to allow that. But the local responders are absolutely necessary, and there are some prepared. Local Levee Boards like myself would be a part of that immediate response.

Second, I would like to talk about the traditional bureaucratic process that is in place. The permitting process is quite difficult. The NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act, the permitting process has become so cumbersome that it is difficult to work through on a local level or the State level to get quick responses in minor disasters.

It is very difficult. Hurricane Katrina was a good example of that, where the NEPA process was streamlined. It was streamlined so U.S. Army Corps of Engineer projects could be done much quicker and without the red tape.

I know that there were questions about the process, but the NEPA process is quite cumbersome. It is very difficult, and the traditional bureaucratic layers have got to be better distributed or more easily cut through. I think there are a number of disasters that proved that.

One thing in particular is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the creation of the Homeland Security Agency and consequently with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Under them is the Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In flood control we have utilized the Corps of Engineers for disaster protection or disaster response. They have been placed in Homeland Security under FEMA, and I understand that.

However, the Corps has specific qualities that can be utilized, and I would ask that it be reevaluated as to where the Corps falls under that hierarchy in Homeland Security Agency.

And last, I would like to talk about all of the disasters. There is no question there are numerous disasters we fall prey to at all

times, but flooding is one that we can prevent. Flooding is one we can work on.

The Mississippi River and Tributaries Project is a project in the lower Mississippi River Valley from Cairo, Missouri, south to New Orleans, and this is an outstanding example of the work of the local people, the work of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Congress to properly protect people from flooding events. This is one emergency that can be prevented. Instead of the reaction, it can be prevented, and the MR&T is an outstanding example of that.

I would ask that this committee please look at the MR&T. I realize that it was a preventive mechanism. It was flood control at its best, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has got a lot to be proud of and Congress as well, and 120 years ago, districts like myself began building levees. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers came and utilized those levees. They built the 1928 Flood Control Act and began the MR&T.

That project is not complete, but it did survive, and it has protected millions of people in the lower Mississippi River Valley. I would ask that we look at that because FEMA, under their current guidelines and direction, is expanding their national flood insurance program, and in doing so, they are undermining projects just like the MR&T by providing or placing areas under a shaded Zone X and other different criteria or other different areas of flood prone areas. They are being redefined.

And areas that have been properly protected for 100 years are now being redefined in a flood hazard area. This is terrible for economic development, but it also undermines the very protective structures that have been in place and for 83 years have protected from disasters.

So I would ask that you please look at that. Flooding is a disaster that can be prevented, and you have an outstanding example of that being the case in the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Mr. Rash. Thank all of you for your testimony.

Starting the first round of questioning, Mr. Murphy, obviously I am very familiar with the State's response system, but how does that interface with the Federal system?

Mr. MURPHY. Absolutely. So one of the unique things, I think, in California is that we have a really strong relationship with our regional administrator. In fact, the regional administrator about 15 years ago worked at the former Office of Emergency Services in California, and Nancy Ward is our Regional Administrator. We know her well. We have known her very well.

But ultimately it is a personal relationship that saves lives and property, and it is knowing that we can rely on the FEMA region to be there and to be the coordinating effort for the resources that the Federal Government brings to bear. I think that is one of the important factors to remember.

You know, as far as responders go, specifically local responders are the first responders. Those are the people on the ground, and in that State and especially the regional FEMA role is to be able to bring to bear the Federal resources that come from the Federal

Government and can help those first responders and then save lives first and property second.

Mr. DENHAM. And from a communications standpoint, the State system interfaces with the Federal system?

Mr. MURPHY. Yes. We test that with an annual exercise, as you know, and in that exercise, we continually test form different parts of the State that ability to interface with FEMA Region 9 and specifically order resources from the Federal Government.

And I think so far, you know, there are hiccups along the way, but that is part of the exercise and planning model. We do it in an exercise and learn from it and make it better the next time.

Mr. DENHAM. And as far as making it better the next time, you know, given what has happened in Japan with the huge earthquake, with the challenges that we have in California, I have certainly seen especially from my old Senate seat, you know, we have had flooding; we have had challenges where we have not seen immediate reaction from FEMA.

Are we prepared as a State to work with the governor in making sure that if there is a disaster, when the next disaster hits that we are requesting FEMA involvement quickly?

Mr. MURPHY. Yes, sir, and absolutely we request FEMA involvement on a very fast basis for the majority of things, and I will say over the last few years, FEMA has been very, very responsive on more recent disasters, and as you say, that may have not historically always been the case, but the relationship is such that right now, for example, in the Harbor up in Del Mar County after the Tsunami, we had teams within 3 days on the ground. So, I mean, it happened on Friday and Monday afternoon we had teams surveying the damage. They were teams of CalEMA as well as FEMA staff. So, yes, the coordination at this point.

To your point on catastrophic incidences, we have done numerous plans in both major urban area centers, the Bay Area as well as Los Angeles, and the catastrophic idea is trying to get the best plan for the scenario that as Administrator Fugate said, nobody wanted to think about a few years ago.

And so in doing that, we have engaged everybody from our FEMA regional partners and actually DHS Headquarters all the way down through nonprofits and the american Red Cross at that local level to try and talk about what can you really provide in certain scenarios of a catastrophic incident.

Mr. DENHAM. As you heard earlier, obviously floods especially this year are a huge concern in California as well as elsewhere around the Nation, but on the same level, forest fires. How closely does CalEMA work with the Forest Services to plan and prepare for wildfires?

Mr. MURPHY. We do work very closely with the Forest Service. Our Fire Branch at CalEMA had an annual contract and contract reviews for maintaining the fire response areas and some joint and shared areas and the interfaces between mostly State public lands as well as Federal public lands.

And so we do coordinate regularly. As you heard earlier, there are 16,000 fire fighting resources for the entire country at the Forest Service, and as you know, we have several hundred thousand fire fighters inside the State of California. Clearly, we tend to help

wherever we can, and especially where we think that lives and property can be evaluated.

We have worked through differences of opinion in the past, and I thing it has built, on the learning side, it has built a better relationship moving forward in the last few years.

Mr. DENHAM. My concern, again, is risk assessment. We oftentimes do not plan well or we ignore the huge risks that we may have over environmental policies. I think we have got to have balance between the two, especially in the case where we have, like I described earlier, we have a forest fire, and now we are stuck with a situation with trees that are, you know, dying. I mean, they have lost their foliage and are dying, and we do not move quickly and another fire could resume.

Mr. MURPHY. I think, as you know, on State lands we worked to solve that problem in the last 7 or 8 years, and I think we have had some very successful resolutions in working with the California Environmental Protection Agency, as well as the resources agency inside California to make sure that we can effectively limit future losses to properly reinvigorate those lands, whether it be through cutting or through replanting, et cetera.

I cannot speak for the U.S. Forest Service, but in that role, I mean, I would think from a State perspective we have done it on the State side, and I do not think we have been as successful in trying to help the Forest Service get to it.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you.

Mr. Shimanski, what do you see are the major challenges if a massive 9.0 type earthquake hit California or States along the New Madrid fault?

Mr. SHIMANSKI. Well, let me first thank you, Mr. Chairman, and let me start by saying I think the national level exercise in May, which everybody has been referring to as the upcoming exercise, but in fact, State agencies, FEMA and others have been engaged in planning efforts for many, many months, have already had resource allocations worked up, and I think that event will teach us a great deal.

I think the challenges if something like what happened in Japan were to occur along your coast, the West Coast of California, one of the greatest challenges will be the communication to the affected communities, and communicating, which is not a responsibility that the Red Cross holds for the sector, but communicating as to where the shelters are so that our shelters are in safe areas where people can get to safely, and that the communities know where those shelters are.

We have created a national shelter system that tracks our 56,000 shelters throughout the United States, and it includes an outward facing Web portal and now a downloadable app so that people in the affected communities can find the closest Red Cross shelter in their community so that they can know exactly where to go and so that it is easy for them to get there.

I should mention that in Japan, the maximum number of people that were being sheltered was 500,000. That number has now decreased to, I believe, below one-quarter of a million.

Post Katrina the American Red Cross had done a great deal of work to build up and increase——

Mr. DENHAM. Could you repeat that?

Mr. SHIMANSKI. In Japan, the number of people sheltered, the maximum number of people sheltered from the event that recently occurred, the numbers I have seen are roughly half a million, and that number has now decreased to roughly one-quarter million, meaning that some of the people initially sheltered have found other facilities or other places to stay besides the shelter of the Red Cross and other shelter providers.

Since Katrina, the American Red Cross has built its capacity. Now, with our partners, we can feed as many as a million meals in any given day. So I think we will learn a great deal from the New Madrid exercise, but I also think that if something happens along the lines of what happened with Japan, I think the whole community approach that Craig Fugate is bringing to FEMA and the philosophy of bringing the public in as a resource will certainly help. That's where much of our exercise and our focus has been, utilizing spontaneous volunteers.

I will finish with one last thought. Taking Hurricane Katrina as an example, when Katrina happened, we had roughly 24,0000 trained disaster responders in our American Red Cross database, and yet we deployed ten times that figure, 234,000 volunteers. In other words, we had an intake of nine spontaneous volunteers for every one we had trained, and we were able to put them to work.

That will be key if an event like what happened in Japan occurs on U.S. soil.

Mr. DENHAM. And what would happen if we had more than one catastrophe at the same time in separate parts of the country? Would the Red Cross be prepared to mobilize and respond to two major catastrophes?

Mr. SHIMANSKI. Thank you. It's a very good question.

First off, I mentioned that we had roughly 24,000 trained disaster volunteers pre-Katrina. That number has now grown to 60,000, and again, these are individuals trained in communities all throughout the United States.

Much of what we do is built around multiple events happening at the same time, again, much like Administrator Fugate addressed. That said, if there is a challenge to the American Red Cross response to multiple disasters occurring either in short succession or at the same time, the one challenge to the Red Cross would likely be in the area of charitable contributions. The public is very generous when a major event occurs. The generosity can at times decline when another big event occurs shortly thereafter. Donors, very generous donors, may have a sense of "I just gave to the Red Cross." So if we have one concern about multiple activities happening in a short time table, it is whether there will be the charitable support that the Red Cross needs to do the work it does.

Mr. DENHAM. And from a funding perspective, I mean, going through a recession, are you seeing budgetary challenges?

Mr. SHIMANSKI. We are. We finished the last fiscal year with a very modest surplus, but we are facing some challenges this year that will likely result in more re-engineering, more efficiencies and optimization as we look at a revenue that is projected to decrease.

Mr. DENHAM. So what happens if you are running and you are faced with multiple disasters?

Mr. SHIMANSKI. Well, we are fortunate in that the American public has historically been generous, and the contributions that we receive are sufficient for us to respond to the disasters.

The times when we are not able to are generally at times when there is a Presidential declaration, and at that point we can work with FEMA; we can work with our State and other partners to see what other funding opportunities might be available if it is a major disaster and charitable contributions have not been sufficient.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you.

And, Mr. Christmann, from a local perspective on the grants, dealing with the same area, emergency management performance grants provide assistance to States and local communities to help prepare and plan for disasters. If those were eliminated or no longer focused on the all hazards approach to disasters, how would that impact the city of St. Louis?

Mr. CHRISTMANN. It would impact our capability to coordinate our local resources, our regional resources, and have that partnership with our State and Federal partners. It would also impact our outreach programs to do public preparedness, to get our citizens, as a number of the panel have talked about, that having our citizens prepared is key to the response, knowing that they are going to be impacted. The locals are going to be impacted due to the catastrophic event.

And resources will come, but they will take a little while to get into those impacted areas, especially looking at a New Madrid earthquake where multiple States, multiple urban areas will be involved. That coordination is very key on the local level to insure that we have the best picture of where our resources are, who our partners are, what they can provide to us, and then build that instant management capability to bring those all to bear on that disaster itself.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you.

And we are short on time, but I did want to get one more question in. The Vice Chair of this committee, Mr. Crawford, had some great things to say about you, Mr. Rash, but one of the concerns that he had was FEMA de-certifying levees, and if you could just explain that in greater detail.

Mr. RASH. Yes, sir. The process for certification of levees has changed dramatically in the last 5 years, and there are numerous levees across the country that are being de-certified under new standards. Given little or no time to bring these areas up to this new standard, it has been placed on the backs of the local people to bring these up to standard and not given any time for implementation.

The levees that I maintain with our district are certified under these new standards. However, the designation behind these levees, even at the top certification given now by FEMA and the Corps of Engineers, shows a shaded Zone X, which designates an area that has not been shown in an historical flood hazard area and now shows it in a flood hazard area. It shows it as a shaded Zone X.

As I mentioned in my statement, with the MR&T and the projects like those, our levees are being undermined just by the fear placed on the new designated areas and our lenders are requiring flood insurance to be purchased.

We have not had any type of levee breach in 83 years in our area. There are numerous levees that do need to be brought up to standard. I would ask that we not handicap the areas that are properly protected because of other areas that are not meeting these new standards.

I understand the new standards, and there area lot of things in the new standards that I think are good. I think it is good and everybody here has spoken about taking a new look. When we find a disaster, we encounter a disaster, we learn form it and we move on. But we do not want to miss the point.

I fear that a lot of the historical design, the maintenance, the construction of good flood control projects across the country are being undermined through this new certification process and providing false fear in a lot of areas. That is not true in all areas, and I understand that, but there are areas that are properly protected that are being shown as a newly designated flood hazard area, and it is not a proper designation.

I would ask that we take a step back and that we look at this process, that we look at the certification process and that the local people, working with the State through FEMA, through the Corps, through the Congress, to upgrade these levees instead of downgrading them through needless flood insurance.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Mr. Rash.

Mr. RASH. Thank you.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Crawford tells me that you have got a great deal of information in this area. This is something this committee will be looking into, and we would ask you to provide that information back to the committee.

At this time, I would ask unanimous consent that the record of today's hearing remain open until such time as our witnesses have provided answers to any questions that may be submitted to them in writing, and unanimous consent that during such time as the record remains open additional comments offered by individuals or groups may be included in the record of today's hearing.

Without objection, so ordered.

I would like to thank our witnesses again for your testimony today. If no other Members have anything to add, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:59 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

Statement of
The Honorable Timothy H. Bishop
Subcommittee on Economic Development,
Public Buildings and Emergency Management
Hearing on "Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters:
How to Minimize Costs and Streamline our Emergency Management Programs"
March 30, 2011

Administrator Fugate, thank you for your service to our nation and taking time to appear before our committee.

As you know, my district on Long Island is situated with the Atlantic Ocean along its south shore and the Long Island Sound along its north shore. As you can imagine, most of nor'easters and other severe weather events in our region that are eventually declared disasters by the President include significant disturbances to our beaches.

As you may also know, Long Island's beaches and waterfronts play a significant role in the economy of our region as tourism, the second home market, and fishing are among our most important industries. These characteristics are shared by many of our nation's coastal communities.

Assessments made by local, State, and Federal agencies following a disaster declaration often call for some level of beach fill and is often the most expensive aspect of coastal community's Public Assistance requests.

It is my understanding that FEMA has recently begun requiring additional Environment and Historic Preservation reviews for offshore sand source dredging areas despite the fact that Army Corps of Engineers' reviews for offshore sand source dredging areas had previously been deemed adequate for these purposes.

As the Ranking Member on the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over the Army Corps and federal involvement over most coastal issues, I have heard from municipalities that feel as if FEMA is moving the goal posts on them mid-game by requiring new, and in their estimation, redundant, federal environmental reviews. According to them, injecting regulatory uncertainty into the process by adding new requirements for identifying appropriate offshore sand sources has lead to significant delays in project worksheet completion.

Representing a coastal community, I know how important it is for a rapid turn around on Public Assistance beach projects in order to protect homes and infrastructure from the next storm. Under ideal circumstances, beach projects already take months of preparation and attention to other federal laws, such as the Endangered Species Act. This can leave communities with small annual dredge windows to complete necessary beach work. If FEMA adds months to a project to complete environmental review already completed by agencies like the Army Corps, this may translate into a year or more until work can actually be completed leaving local residents with few options.

Administrator Fugate, would you agree that duplicating another federal agency's efforts adds an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy that may hinder response operations and may add uncertainty

to the process for State and local emergency response officials? If FEMA believes additional environmental reviews are required by law, can you please articulate for the committee the regulations governing the reviews? Also, have you found inconsistencies between regional offices in their interpretation of the environmental review regulations, and what effect has this had on regional project delivery times?

Finally, does FEMA have the tools needed to eliminate unnecessary redundancies in approving offshore sand sources or would this require congressional action?

Thank you Administrator Fugate, for your attention to my concerns. I would appreciate FEMA's response to my questions within 30 days if possible. And again, I deeply appreciate your service and commitment to our nation's emergency response capability.

STATEMENT OF
THE HONORABLE ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HEARING ON
"Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters:
How to Minimize Costs and Streamline our Emergency Management Programs"

March 30, 2011

We are grateful to our witnesses for appearing before the Subcommittee today to testify on the important and timely issue before us. We need look no further than the catastrophic events that shook Japan less than three weeks ago to ask whether the United States is prepared for such a disaster here. The earthquake that shook Japan, measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale, sent a tsunami racing towards the Japanese coast, wiping towns and villages literally off the globe. While any earthquake or tsunami of this scale would represent a catastrophic disaster, the cascading events in Japan, including the crippling of a nuclear power plant and the continuing release of radiation, compel us to rethink the scope of disaster that could occur in our own homeland. The tragedy in Japan presents us with a unique teaching moment to help us learn to better prepare for and respond to a catastrophic disaster. While we will study these lessons for future disasters, our thoughts and prayers must first be with the Japanese people as they struggle to overcome this calamity.

Today, we ask the necessary question: how can we improve our nation's response to a catastrophic disaster? Ever since Hurricane Katrina exposed the federal government's unacceptable inability to respond to a disaster of unexpected magnitude, this subcommittee has performed vigorous oversight of the steps the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) should take to improve its planning and preparation for a catastrophic disaster, as well as of its efforts to mitigate potential damage. During the 110th and 111th Congresses, our subcommittee held hearing after hearing to ensure that FEMA would not repeat its failures seen on the Gulf Coast. I appreciate that Chairman Denham has chosen to continue this oversight, and I look forward to working with him on these critical issues.

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) was signed into law in 1988. The Stafford Act, authorized by our committee, serves as the federal government's primary authority for addressing major disasters. Importantly, the Stafford Act recognizes that states and local communities, and not the federal government, have primary responsibility to address disasters and emergencies. The federal government acts to supplement the efforts and resources of states, local and tribal governments, as well as of disaster relief organizations. Yet, it remains unclear whether the Stafford Act contemplates catastrophic disasters, even like Hurricane Katrina or certainly like the earthquake and tsunami, and the resulting nuclear meltdown currently unfolding in Japan.

For the most part, the authority provided by the Stafford Act has proved sufficient to address all types of disasters and emergencies -- natural and manmade -- but some have questioned whether the Stafford Act is sufficient for catastrophic disasters. In 2006, this committee sought to address these potential gaps by enacting the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (Post-Katrina Act), enacted as Title VI of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act. The Post-Katrina Act defined a "catastrophic incident" as one that "results in extraordinary levels of casualties or disruption severely affecting the population (including mass evacuations), infrastructure, environment, economy, national morale, or government functions in an area." This definition provides the framework for how the federal government should plan for a catastrophic incident. However, there remain questions about whether this is an appropriate "trigger" for a catastrophic disaster. In fact, I chaired a subcommittee hearing in July 2009 that addressed this issue. I look forward to continuing to listen to this ongoing debate within the emergency management community.

While we may not have settled on the best definition of "catastrophic," we do know that one characteristic that distinguishes catastrophic disasters from other disasters is that the magnitude of a catastrophic disaster often has a national impact, and that such disasters are complex, unusually large in their effects, hard to predict, and expensive. We also know that another catastrophic disaster will some day strike the United States, and we must be ready for that day.

In September 2010, the Department of Homeland Security's Inspector General released a report that addressed the issue of FEMA's preparedness for a catastrophic disaster. The report provided a detailed analysis of the nation's level of preparedness in ten key areas. The report, in part, shared good news: FEMA had made progress in all ten areas, and in particular had made substantial progress towards improving emergency communications. However, the report also cited concerns about: the lack of effective coordination between FEMA and state, local, and tribal governments; the need for updated information technology systems to help improve and integrate agency-wide resources; the lack of experienced staff to handle the demanding workload at FEMA, as states and localities are pressed for resources in the aftermath of the Great Recession and left without stimulus or other federal funds; and insufficient funding to carry out FEMA's mission. While many look to FEMA to take the lead during disasters, we must remember that the heart and soul of FEMA's mission is to equip, train, and work with their state, local, and tribal partners, as well as with relief organizations, which serve as the country's first responders in most disasters and emergencies. I look forward to hearing today from Administrator Fugate on the steps FEMA has taken to address the shortcomings identified by the report.

The subcommittee thanks our witnesses for appearing today and testifying about how we can, together, improve our preparation for and response to catastrophic disasters.

Statement of

Gary A. Christmann

Commissioner, Emergency Management

City of St. Louis, Missouri

"Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters:
How to Minimize Costs and Streamline our Emergency Management Programs"

Before the

Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings,
and Emergency Management

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

March 30, 2011

Good morning Chairman Denham, Ranking Member Norton, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. I am honored and appreciate the opportunity to testify today from the perspective of a local emergency manager on this important topic. On behalf of the nation's local emergency managers, I would like to thank the committee for your support of the Emergency Management Performance Grant and the vital role the committee played after Hurricane Katrina to strengthen the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA). We need strong emergency management at the local level, but we also need strong partners at the state and Federal level for those events that are beyond our capacity.

My name is Gary A. Christmann, and I am the Commissioner of the City of St. Louis Emergency Management Agency Department of Public Safety. The Mayor of the City of St. Louis is Francis G. Slay. I am a member of the US Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA). IAEM-USA is our nation's largest association of emergency management professionals, with almost 5,000 members including emergency managers at the state and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business and the nonprofit sector. Most of the members are city and county emergency managers who perform the crucial function of coordinating and integrating the efforts at the local level to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters including terrorist attacks. The membership includes emergency managers from large urban areas as well as rural areas.

The City of St. Louis is 62 square miles made up of residential areas, industry, business, transportation, three major league sports teams and we are the third largest inland port in the nation. As a local Emergency Management Commissioner, I have the over-all responsibility to coordinate the all-encompassing all-hazard disaster planning system including the four phases of Emergency Management – preparedness, response, and recovery, and mitigation. All phases of the system are coordinated with hundreds of partners including all levels of government, volunteer agencies, hospitals, medical facilities, private industry – including the chemical industry- colleges, universities, sporting venues, faith based organizations, and our citizens. We are also heavily involved in coordinating with multiple modes of transportation including surface, rail, pipeline, air cargo, and barges. The City of St. Louis, and the surrounding area, is vulnerable to a number of hazards – including natural, technological, and homeland security related incidents. Severe weather and flooding are our most frequent threats. However, we prepare for the full range of threats – from those that happen with great regularity to those with catastrophic potential. The majority of our response and recovery operations are done with our own resources and our local partners. As a local Emergency Manager, I recognize that all incidents start on the local level and end on the local level…but I know that we need all of our partners for a successful response and recovery. The catastrophic event will require the resources of all levels of Government but will remain the responsibility of the local Emergency Manager.

My responsibilities include planning for – among other things – a catastrophic earthquake involving both the New Madrid and Wabash Valley faults. We face many challenges with our planning due to the uncertainties of such an incident. Our planning has to embrace the earthquake's magnitude, location of the epicenter; the time of day, the day of the week, and the season of the year, which will influence our response and recovery. We recognize that a catastrophic earthquake will cause wide spread damage, power outages, mass casualties, and mass fatalities. Our missions will include mass care and sheltering, search and rescue, debris removal, security operations, mass casualty and fatality management just to name a few. The only way we can be successful in a response of this magnitude and complexity is to have a fully functional and tested system of emergency management in place.

The City of St. Louis will be participating in the National Level Exercise 2011 (NLE 11) in the near future. This exercise is organized around an event on the New Madrid fault line. The consequences of such an event could be catastrophic. In April 2008, our jurisdiction experienced a magnitude 5.4 earthquake in the Wabash Valley fault area. This event caused minor damage to bridges, foundations, and buildings throughout the City of St. Louis. This event accelerated the city's public outreach campaigns and training – primarily Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. I would like to recognize the great state of California for creating this program.

I want to thank this committee for their strong support of the Federal investment in the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG), which is under the jurisdiction of this committee. As you well know, this grant funding has a 60-year history of providing basic emergency management capability at the State and local level. Unlike the Homeland Security grants, EMPG requires at least 50 percent non-federal match and has annual performance requirements. EMPG allows us to sustain our system by providing matching funding for the personnel at its foundation as well as additional capabilities. This helps to fulfill the original rationale behind the creation of EMPG, which is there is a federal interest in developing emergency management capability at the state and local levels of government. The stronger the emergency management system at the state and local levels of government, the more efficiently Federal resources can be deployed to events beyond the capability of state and local governments.

The St. Louis regional area continues to work to build a comprehensive capability to respond to and recover from all incidents. The regional partners working through the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant have created and are maintaining response teams, plans, and resource trailers ready to respond to the needs of our citizens and guests. The City in partnership with the regional partners has also established CERT training which is now part of Citizens Corps to provide disaster preparedness training to our citizens and businesses. We have used every mode of media available to us to communicate the need for personal preparedness so that those who can help themselves and their neighbors will and we can focus our attention on those who can not help themselves. However, we continue to struggle to get our citizens to embrace personal preparedness.

Like many of you, St. Louisian's were shocked by the recent tragic events in Japan and our thoughts and prayers go out to their citizens as they continue the difficult process of response and recovery. We are monitoring the situation in Japan to gain knowledge and lessons learned from their experience. This will lead to further examination and strengthening of our plans. We always review and modify our plans in light of actual occurrences regardless of where they occur.

The City of St. Louis has long had an interest and concern about earthquakes and other potentially catastrophic disasters. That is why we have been engaged in an active training program for first responders, emergency managers, other key emergency response partners, and the public. Much of the training we offer is the field training courses provided by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, Maryland, which is also under the jurisdiction of this committee. We have also emphasized working, training and exercising with the personnel at sports venues and large gathering venues in our area. One of our constant concerns is that 65,000 fans rooting for the Rams in Edward Jones Dome could be at risk if a disaster happens during a game. In 2006, we organized a full-scale disaster simulation with the Cardinals baseball team. I believe this exercise qualified as the largest in the Midwest – involving over 4,000 simulated victims, and over 3,000 first responders, first receivers, military partners from the 7th Civil Support Team, the Chemical Biological Incident Response Force from the United States Marines, and other emergency personnel including the staff of Busch Stadium.

Given the risks, we feel a good warning and communication system is vital. As an example on December 31, 2010, a severe weather outbreak spawned multiple tornadoes in the City of St Louis and other surrounding jurisdictions before moving into Illinois. When the debris settled there was one death and a number of injuries. We want to say a special thanks to the National Weather Service for providing nearly 45 minutes of advance warning. This enabled us to activate our outdoor warning system, our mass media notification system which sends text and email to those who have signed up, coordinate with local media partners to provide life saving warning information to our citizens, and activate our local incident management team. We have remained in almost constant operations due to two additional tornado warnings, an ice storm, and blizzard warning since that time. Our public information coordinated through our local media and notification systems has continued to prove beneficial to our response and recovery. I would like to publicly thank our local media for embracing our public information campaign for awareness and situational briefings for our citizens.

In the past five years, the City of St. Louis has responded to and recovered from several hundred small and large incidents. We received two federal declarations during this period, one for shelter and care of Katrina evacuees and one for the 2006 severe storm that produced 75 MPH winds during a heat emergency and caused a region wide power outage.

Before closing, I would particularly like to thank this committee for the vital role it played in the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA). PKEMRA returned preparedness to FEMA and clearly made the Administrator of FEMA responsible for leading the national effort of preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery for all aspects of disasters and emergencies.

Conclusion

In summary, Mayor Francis Slay, the City of St. Louis, and the nation's local emergency managers, have appreciated the support of this subcommittee in the past in building a strong emergency management system at the Federal, state and local levels. The investment in the Emergency Management Performance Grant is small given the potential return in creating a strong state and local emergency management system, which handles a large majority of disasters. The absence of such a system will inherently add costs and lower the efficiency of Federal assets deployed to a disaster. At the local level, we continue to work with all partners to prepare and respond to those events which happen most frequently while we work to prepare for those which would have the greatest consequence to the nation and the communities we serve.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

BRENDAN MURPHY
Director, Grants Management
California Emergency Management Agency

TESTIFYING ON BEHALF OF

MIKE DAYTON
Acting Secretary, California Emergency Management Agency

Before the House Transportation & Infrastructure
Subcommittee on Economic Development,
Public Buildings and Emergency Management

Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters:
How to Minimize Costs and Streamline Our Emergency Management Programs

March 30, 2011

Chairman Denham, Ranking Member Holmes Norton, and members of the Sub-committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on how we can work together to improve catastrophic disaster response efforts while minimizing economic impacts.

As the Acting Secretary of the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA), I have the overarching responsibility to ensure that California works to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and quickly recover from any type of disaster that may impact California, whether man-made or naturally occurring. Cal EMA coordinates emergency activities to save lives and reduce property losses during disasters and works to expedite recovery from the effects of disasters. On a day-to-day basis, Cal EMA provides the leadership, assistance, and support to state and local agencies in

planning and preparing for the most effective use of federal, state, local, and private sector resources in emergencies.

I want to begin by saying that our thoughts are with the people of Japan as they overcome the devastating impacts of the 9.0 earthquake, the tsunami and the impacts of their ongoing nuclear emergency. In the wake of this event, I want to emphasize the importance of planning and preparedness efforts in mitigating the costs associated with responding to catastrophic disasters.

Chairman Denham, as a representative from California, you know how vulnerable California is to disasters such as fires, floods, and earthquakes, and how devastating these types of events are to our state and national economies. We have learned from our experiences in California that one of the best ways to help mitigate the effects of a large-scale disaster is to invest in preparedness efforts. If we focus our investments on disaster preparedness efforts, we reduce the devastation of human suffering and financial losses in the future. We must invest financial resources on the front end in an effort to ensure that our infrastructure is secure, that early warning systems are in place, and that the public is informed about the potential risks and have the tools to prepare themselves and their families for when a disaster strikes.

Even during these difficult economic times, Cal EMA and our local partners have taken tremendous steps to : enhance our emergency notification systems; create a disaster exercise program that tests operational capabilities; launch a program to get families involved in disaster preparedness and create resiliency in our communities, including the promotion of volunteerism; create an environment whereby businesses can partner with government; focus our planning on the unique challenges of catastrophic disasters, similar to what was just experienced in Japan; and reinforce our efforts to support the state's mutual aid system.

The following are highlights of some of the efforts undertaken by Cal EMA and our state and local partners in these areas:

ENHANCED EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS

A core responsibility of public agencies is to ensure that our communities are aware of disasters so that individuals, families and businesses can take the appropriate and necessary actions.

To that end, we have focused some of our limited resources on enhancing and maintaining our ability to alert and warn the public during times of emergencies and disasters.

Specifically, Cal EMA operates the California State Warning Center, which is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to serve as the official state level point of contact for emergency notifications. The warning center personnel maintain contact with county warning points, state agencies, federal agencies and the National Warning Center in Berryville, Virginia. Through multiple communication channels, Cal EMA ensures that developing emergencies are responded to quickly and effectively. Last year, Cal EMA's warning center staff handled nearly 150,000 calls, including reports of more than 11,000 hazardous material spills and 140 seismic and tsunami events. Between January 2009 and December 2010 more than 650,000 alert and warning notifications were made for 45 major disasters to local, state and federal agencies and public-private partners.

In light of the recent earthquake that occurred across the Pacific Ocean, but still had significant impacts to California, the ability to warn the public regarding seismic events and tsunamis remains a concern and a priority. Depending on the location of an earthquake, a tsunami has the potential to reach the California coast in as little as ten minutes. Because of the potential short time period for issuing a warning, and the need to identify the areas of the state which may be impacted by a surge, Cal EMA, in partnership with California Geological Survey and the Tsunami Research Center at the University of California, developed statewide tsunami inundation maps for California. The maps are used by coastal communities to plan and coordinate their specific emergency evacuation plans. When the tsunami warning was issued on March 11, 2011, Cal EMA immediately contacted the coastal county offices of emergency services that were then able to use the tsunami maps to focus their efforts for response and evacuation.

Local governments have the primary responsibility of alerting their residents to impending events, however we provided federal grant funds to every county in the state so that they could install telephone notifications systems, such as reverse 911, so that they could rapidly notify people. Wise investments in local tsunami warning systems saved lives and property and mitigated the damaging effects of the recent tsunami. But, as you know, plans are only as good as the actions taken by the individuals who use them, and that is why California remains focused on creating a culture of preparedness. Last week, March 20, 2011 through March 26, 2011, was National Tsunami

Awareness and Preparedness Week, and we used that opportunity to promote the importance of preparedness and personal responsibility in disaster planning.

EXERCISES

Disaster planning is important, but in order to truly prepare and measure our ability to respond to disasters, we have implemented an aggressive training and exercise program in California. For instance, we created The Golden Guardian Full Scale Exercise Series to exercise and assess emergency operations plans, policies, and procedures for all-hazards / catastrophic incidents at the local, regional, and state levels. Golden Guardian was first implemented in 2004 and has become the largest statewide exercise series in the country. The next iteration of Golden Guardian will take place between May 17, 2011 and May 19, 2011, and will focus on a major California flood scenario. The exercise will involve participants from federal, state, and local agencies, along with non-governmental organizations and private sector partners. Future Golden Guardian scenarios will focus on exercising our response and recovery efforts associated with a catastrophic earthquake scenario in both Southern California and the San Francisco Bay Area. Exercises like Golden Guardian are costly, but we believe they will save lives and reduce damages during times of disaster.

CITIZEN PREPAREDNESS

One of the key findings of the 911 Commission was that people in their homes and businesses are the true first responders. Individual citizens and businesses will often be the ones to first help themselves, their neighbors, and their employees during disasters. Even with the most robust emergency response system, government agencies can sometimes take several days before they can render assistance following a catastrophic disaster, as we have recently witnessed in Japan. In order to bolster individual disaster readiness, California has implemented several initiatives.

Annually in October, we conduct The Great California Shake-Out Drill. Through various outreach efforts, we focus our attention on what could happen during a significant earthquake and how Californians can best prepare. As part of the drill, Californians practice the "drop, cover and hold on" exercise and are encourage to secure furniture, water heaters, electronics and vulnerable structures; prepare an emergency plan for themselves and their families; and to gather essential emergency supplies. The exercise involves businesses, school districts, state and local governments

and numerous non-profit agencies throughout all of California's counties, and in 2010 more than 7.9 million people participated at home, work and school by practicing "drop, cover, and hold on".. The goal for the 2011 drill is to have more than10 million people simultaneously "drop, cover, and hold on."

Volunteers have always been important to emergency response, but with shrinking agency budgets, volunteers take on increasingly important roles. California is the only state with a cabinet level agency established solely to promote and organize volunteerism. CaliforniaVolunteers administers California's "We Prepare" program, which is designed to motivate families to take action and get prepared for both natural and man-made disasters. The cornerstone of the program is an online customizable family disaster plan and a personalized children's book available at CaliforniaVolunteers.org. CaliforniaVolunteers has also created the Disaster Corps, which consists of volunteers with enhanced training and skills that can be used in disasters to organize and deploy other volunteers, thereby increasing public safety and reducing the demands on government emergency responders.

Knowing what risks you might be faced with is a significant component to preparing for disaster and that is why. Cal EMA has developed several web-based tools to inform Californians about hazards in their own neighborhoods and, more importantly, what they can do to mitigate their risks. Our interactive website, MyHazards.org, allows Californians to access potential hazard risk information,, such as earthquake and flood risk, within their neighborhoods and includes mitigation information to help reduce their risks.

LEVERAGING PUBLIC/PRIVATE/NON-PROFIT PARTNERSHIPS

Businesses play a vital role assisting government agencies by providing goods and services during times of disasters and are essential to the economic recovery efforts after a disaster strikes. To foster partnerships with our business partners, California has established the following programs:

(1) Cal EMA has developed formal relationship with businesses in the retail, banking, and telecommunications industries. These formal relationships, usually through memorandum of

understandings, have led to coordination and communications efforts that will benefit all parties during an emergency.

(2) Businesses in California have repeatedly offered assistance within their communities during disasters, but unfortunately, as a result of their goodwill efforts, they have been subjected to legal liability and lawsuits. Therefore, we statutorily created a business registry program in California that substantially protects those businesses that register on-line from tort liability.

(3) Day to day and during disasters, the non-profit organizations in our communities, such as churches and food banks, provide critical services. Cal EMA recently adopted regulations that allow us to provide funding to these non-profit organizations, which provide essential services during a disaster at the request of local governments.

FOCUSED PLANNING FOR CATASTROPHIC DISASTERS

Even with severely constrained budgets, there remains a need for comprehensive planning for disasters of all types. To best leverage resources and recognize how a catastrophic disaster could create a long-term disruption to lives, businesses, and the state's economy, we have focused both state and federal planning resources on two major planning efforts, the Bay Area Catastrophic Plan and the Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Response Plan.

Bay Area Catastrophic Plan: The San Francisco Bay Area Earthquake Readiness Response: Concept of Operations Plan (Plan) describes the joint state and federal response to a catastrophic earthquake in the Bay Area. While the Plan was developed specifically for a catastrophic 7.7 to 7.9 magnitude earthquake along the San Andreas fault in Northern California, it is applicable to any catastrophic earthquake in the Bay Area. It is designed to be used by emergency managers at all levels and is intended to support elected officials at the local, state and federal levels by providing the mechanisms to engage with disaster response and management officials making informed and effective decisions.

Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Response Plan: On December 14, 2010, Cal EMA and FEMA formally adopted the Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Response Plan, a multi-jurisdictional, scenario-based plan for response to, and recovery from, a catastrophic earthquake in Southern California. The focus of the plan is on addressing the highest, most critical and widespread consequences of mass casualties, tremendous shelter and housing needs,

infrastructure calamity, and enormous economic disruption. The plan is realistic, flexible and scalable, and will no doubt save lives when the catastrophic disaster occur.

MUTUAL AID OR NEIGHBOR HELPING NEIGHBOR

The bedrock of our emergency response system in California is our mutual aid system established in the 1950's. It's a simple concept of one jurisdiction being legally bound to all the other jurisdictions in the state to provide assistance during a disaster. We have learned some valuable lessons over the years, including that there are disasters, like the floods of 1997 that impacted all jurisdictions in a state and that catastrophic events in urban areas, like the Northridge earthquake in Los Angeles that could limit the ability of local emergency resources and would require the help of rural and more distant resources.. Therefore, it is essential that we enhance the emergency response capacities of all jurisdictions if we want to be truly prepared for catastrophic disasters. For example, in California we are fortunate to have eight Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Teams that are primarily located in large urban areas. But, it is equally important to build the capacities of the heavy rescue teams in the dozens of other jurisdiction in the state, as a catastrophic earthquake, a massive flood, a tsunami impact, or a terrorist attack would require significant resources.

INVESTMENTS ARE NECESSARY

We believe California has made substantial progress by leveraging our available resources, but we must sustain, and even increase, our investments in order to ensure that we can respond to and quickly recover from disasters.

Mitigation: FEMA-commissioned study concluded that for each dollar spent on mitigation activities, an average of $4 in post-disaster costs is saved. Pre-Disaster Mitigation focuses on projects that address natural or man-made hazards in order to reduce the risks to the population and structures. Post-Disaster Mitigation efforts are designed to reduce future damage in a stricken area and decrease the loss of life and property due to incidents.

Hazard Reduction Programs: U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein have introduced the National Hazards Risk Reduction Act of 2011, which will help improve our preparedness for earthquakes and violent windstorms, including supporting research into advance

warning systems, improved building codes and other efforts to reduce risks and damage from natural disasters. We believe support for this program could be critical to public safety in California. We have developed a warning system for tsunamis in California, but unlike Japan, we do not have a fully integrated early warning system for earthquakes. We cannot predict earthquakes, but technology exists (and is being used in Japan) that would enable us to give the public and emergency responders a few seconds of warning before an earthquake hits their area, so industrial systems can be safely shut-down, emergency vehicles mobilized, or dangerous medical procedures stopped. This type of system could saving thousands of lives and reduce the cost of disaster recovery.

The legislation will also reauthorizes the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP), which assesses new and existing earthquake hazards, improves building codes and works to decrease the damage of seismic activity by assessing our overall vulnerability. The program was first authorized in 1977 and has led to significant improvements in earthquake research and prediction and infrastructure preparedness in California and other states with an earthquake risk.

Sustainment: Since the attacks of 9/11, and the various federal grant programs that became available to better prepare our nation, we have clearly enhanced our disaster preparedness, but with reductions in state and local budgets, and proposals to substantially reduce the federal budget for these programs, we risk the losing much of the benefit that were achieved with these investments.

The reductions have direct impact on programs, for example the Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) teams that we all saw operating in Japan are underfunded. Local governments and states can no longer supplant the funding of these teams. No state, including California, wants to walk away from the US&R partnership that has proven itself so valuable.

CONCLUSION

As stated previously, it is critical to our efforts to mitigate the risks of disasters by continuing to invest in early warning systems, develop the essential emergency preparedness plans, and educate the public on the ways in which they can best be prepared. California continues to be recognized as a national leader in emergency management and with your support we will continue to work tirelessly to advance efforts which we believe will provide the greatest benefits for our state and nation. Because of your previous support, California's communities are safer, have the best trained and equipped first responders, and continue to move forward with a number of important

initiatives and I urge Congress to continue to dedicate funding towards these efforts. Thank you for this opportunity.

Written Statement of

Craig Fugate

Administrator

Federal Emergency Management Agency

"Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline our Emergency Management Programs

Before the
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

March 30, 2011

I. Introduction

Good morning Chairman Denham, Ranking Member Norton, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. My name is Craig Fugate, and I am the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). It is an honor to appear before you today on behalf of FEMA to discuss our preparedness for catastrophic disasters. Planning and preparing for catastrophic disasters is a top priority at FEMA, and we appreciate the Subcommittee's attention to this important matter.

As I sit before you today, our nation's hearts weigh heavy on the recent tragedy of the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami in Japan. The U.S. government is supporting the Government of Japan in this response. FEMA is currently supporting the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), which is the lead U.S. agency, by providing Urban Search and Rescue Teams from California and Virginia. FEMA teams are also working with U.S. states impacted by the tsunami to assess damages. While the world watches the response to what may be one of the largest disasters in history, our thoughts and prayers go out to those affected by this tragedy.

In my testimony today, I will discuss how FEMA is working to improve our preparedness through the "Whole Community" framework. This approach recognizes that FEMA is not the nation's emergency management team – FEMA is only a part of the team. In order to successfully prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards, we must work with the entire emergency management community. This "Whole Community" includes FEMA and our partners at the federal level; our state, local, tribal and territorial governmental partners; non-governmental organizations like faith-based and non-profit groups and private sector industry; and most importantly, individuals, families, and communities, who continue to be our greatest assets and the key to our success.

In order to fulfill our mission, we must recognize that these parties are all important participants in the emergency management community, and that we work together as one team. In my testimony today, I will address all of the different participants in the "Whole Community" and discuss how we work together in order to ensure the greatest level of preparedness for a catastrophic disaster.

II. The Role of FEMA and the Federal Government

While our efforts must involve the entire emergency management community, FEMA and its partners at the federal level have an important role to play. FEMA coordinates closely with our federal partners in many endeavors, including catastrophic planning, mission assignments, interagency agreements and advanced contracts for commodities. These partnerships are essential to FEMA's ability to carry out its mission by leveraging the full capacity of the federal government to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate a catastrophic incident.

I would like to discuss some of our efforts at the federal level that help to facilitate preparedness for a catastrophic disaster.

FEMA Organizational Realignment

The unpredictable and exigent nature of emergency management requires us to provide fast and effective service to communities who need it, often on extremely short notice. Because efficiency is always key to operational effectiveness, we must ensure that our organizational alignment allows us to maximize efficiency. I would like to share just a few ways that we at FEMA have done this over the past several years.

On October 1, 2009, the Response, Recovery, Federal Coordinating Officer Program, and Logistics Management Directorates were combined under a new Office of Response and Recovery to more closely align the organizational structure with FEMA's operational mission. This reorganization has enhanced FEMA's ability to perform its mission of coordinating an immediate federal disaster response and recovery capability with state, local and tribal partners in anticipation of, or immediately following, a major disaster.

Under the new Office of Response and Recovery, we have also established a new Planning Division that is focused on national, regional and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive catastrophic planning efforts. The Planning Division is responsible for developing and coordinating joint state/federal catastrophic incident plans, leading the development and alignment of national-level interagency efforts, and coordinating with FEMA's National Preparedness Directorate on regional grant planning initiatives to align all catastrophic planning efforts. The Office of Response and Recovery is also producing needed operational doctrine and response readiness standards.

In February 2010, as part of a broader headquarters realignment, the Disaster Reserve Workforce and Human Capital Divisions of FEMA were integrated into the new Office of the Chief Component Human Capital Officer (OCCHCO). As a result, the Disaster Workforce Division now oversees the readiness and deployment functions for the entire disaster workforce of full-time and reserve employees. Additionally, a critical mass of staffing in the budget, policy and system areas are able to provide more effective services to both the institutional and deployable workforces.

Federal Catastrophic Planning

National efforts to ensure resilience in the U.S. are focusing on improving existing catastrophic event preparedness capabilities, but with a renewed conviction to plan for the most extreme disasters. FEMA has expanded its coordination with other federal agencies to smooth and adapt coordination of federal support when it is needed. A key component of the National Response Framework (NRF) is the Catastrophic Incident Annex (NRF-CIA), which establishes the context and overarching strategy for implementing and coordinating an accelerated, proactive national response to a catastrophic incident. Recognizing that federal resources may be required to augment state, tribal, and local response efforts, the NRF-CIA establishes protocols to pre-

identify and rapidly deploy key essential resources (e.g., medical teams, search and rescue teams, transportable shelters, medical and equipment caches, etc.).

Under the NRF, federal agencies are grouped by capability and type of expertise into 15 Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) to provide the planning, support, resources, program implementation, and emergency services needed during a disaster. The ESFs serve as the primary operational-level mechanisms supporting state, local and tribal efforts--coordinated by FEMA--in providing disaster assistance in functional areas such as transportation, communications, public works and engineering, firefighting, mass care, housing, human services, public health and medical services, search and rescue, agriculture, and energy. The signatories to the NRF provide substantial disaster response assistance in their areas of expertise, as well as operational support when assigned missions to support the disaster response.

Regional Catastrophic Planning

Regional catastrophic planning, and the development of operational plans, is underway for several different geographic areas on catastrophic planning efforts. These include plans addressing catastrophic earthquakes, hurricanes (separate efforts are looking at such events in New England, Louisiana, and Florida), dam failures, improvised nuclear device detonation, evacuation and sheltering of populations during catastrophic events, and preparing for other special events. FEMA is also working with state partners to develop "all-hazard" plans based on hazard surveys and risk assessments occurring in each region and state. All of these plans are being developed by our regions – with support from FEMA headquarters – in partnership with federal, state, and local agencies through the six phases of the planning process, as outlined in our recently published Regional Planning Guide.

The plans will address the unique considerations that exist in the event of a catastrophic incident and identify the tasks and activities that federal, state and other partners will carry out to meet response objectives. They will also specifically identify how resources, personnel, and assets will be allocated in order to execute the mission objectives and priorities, and include a concept of operations with supporting annexes. Scenario and damage information to inform the planning efforts is provided by the U.S. Geological Survey and the academic community. A staff estimate is conducted by the state-federal planning team to refine requirements and develop courses of action to address identified needs. To drive decisions as the plans are developed, a senior steering committee is established with membership from the governors' offices, our regional administrators, adjutants general, the defense coordinating officers, and other state and federal officials.

Mission Assignments

FEMA uses mission assignments to request disaster response support from other federal agencies. Mission assignments are work orders issued by FEMA to other federal agencies that direct the completion of a specific task and are intended to meet urgent, immediate and short term needs. They allow FEMA to quickly request federal partners to provide critical resources, services or expertise. To date, FEMA has developed 263 pre-scripted mission assignments with 29 federal agencies.

This support ranges from heavy-lift helicopters from the Department of Defense, to generators from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to disaster medical assistance teams from the Department of Health and Human Services, and emergency road clearing teams from the U.S. Forest Service. These pre-scripted mission assignments drive a more rapid and responsive delivery of federal support to states, communities and tribes.

Logistics

Our logistics capability is also dependent upon strong and sustained federal partnerships. FEMA serves as co-lead with the General Services Administration (GSA) for ESF #7, Logistics Management and Resources Support. FEMA also serves as the national logistics coordinator, helping to foster a unique interagency supply chain partnership with GSA, the Department of Defense, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and other ESF #7 partners. We leverage the expertise and capability of our federal partners to improve and sustain our supply chain operations. This level of interagency coordination enables us to quickly organize and integrate national level logistics resources through our Regions to the states for meeting the life-saving and sustaining needs of disaster survivors. This partnership also enables us to be good stewards of federal dollars by reducing readiness costs and ensuring that we pay for services only at the time of request. In addition, FEMA uses contracts, which can be activated to provide both pre- and post-event evacuation support to the states, such as ambulance and bus services, as well as emergency generators and temporary housing support.

In addition to partnerships with other federal agencies, FEMA Logistics also partners with non-governmental organizations and private sector entitles to ensure support for our Regions in meeting state and local requirements for life-saving and sustaining resources.

III. How FEMA Works with State, Local, Tribal and Territorial Governmental Partners

Coordination with state, local, tribal and territorial governments is another essential part of our effort to integrate the entire emergency management community. FEMA's leadership comes from diverse backgrounds, but we share something vital: direct, on-the-ground experience in state and local emergency management. Our experiences have helped us realize and appreciate the important role that state, local, tribal and territorial governments play in disaster preparedness, response and recovery. FEMA's success is heavily dependent upon our ability to communicate, coordinate and work closely with these groups.

Emergency Communication

Emergency communications issues presented an impediment to operations in the immediate aftermath of both the September 11, 2001 attacks and Hurricane Katrina. The ability to effectively communicate during and immediately after a disaster is essential to fulfilling our mission. When working on a tight timeframe with partners at the federal, regional, state, local and tribal levels, making sure that everyone is on the same page is absolutely essential. As a result, we have worked hard and put systems in place to ensure that we can coordinate and

communicate in ways accessible to diverse communities that allow us to accomplish our objectives during disasters.

The Disaster Emergency Communications (DEC) Division has significantly enhanced state and local governments' communications capabilities through supporting the development of communications plans. To date, DEC has provided support in the establishment of 37 state-specific plans to improve the nation's interoperability capabilities. We will deliver six additional state plans in FY2011.

Logistics Capability Assessment Tool

The Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT) enables states to automatically self-assess their logistics maturity in five key areas: logistics planning, operations, organization, property management and distribution management. All 10 Regions and 42 states and territories have been briefed on the LCAT, and 21 facilitated assessments have been completed.

Grant Programs

FEMA helps state and local governments prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from incidents of terrorism and other catastrophic events through grants, training, exercises and other support. FEMA is fiercely committed to getting resources into the hands of state and local first responders who are often best positioned to prepare for and respond to terrorism, natural disasters, and other threats. Even in this difficult budget environment, FEMA and this Administration recognize the importance of maintaining funding for state and local governments as they prepare for major disasters and emergencies of all kinds.

Over the past five years, FEMA and DHS have provided more than $23.8 billion for state and local projects through our homeland security and preparedness grant programs and an additional $2.5 billion in firefighter grants. This financial support to our state and local partners has been coupled with intensive stakeholder outreach.

FEMA also supports its state and local partners through its Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP) initiative. The RCPGP has provided over $30 million annually to enhance catastrophic incident preparedness in 10 high-risk, high-consequence urban areas and their surrounding regions. RCPGP is intended to support coordination of regional all-hazard planning for catastrophic events, including the development of integrated plans, protocols and procedures to manage a catastrophic event. The deliverables from the RCPGP will be made available throughout the country to enhance national resilience.

Tribal Outreach

To continue our collaborative nation-to-nation relationships with tribal governments, FEMA has tribal liaisons in all FEMA regions with federally recognized tribes. American Indians and Alaska Natives have a unique and direct relationship with the federal government, and therefore require specific outreach to ensure a successful collaboration.

At the direction of President Obama, FEMA established a Tribal Policy on June 29, 2010, to articulate the Agency's commitment to respect and honor tribes as sovereign partners. We are currently in the final stages of developing the implementation plan for this Tribal Policy. FEMA remains committed to recognizing the sovereign rights, authority, and unique status of tribal governments and is committed to working in close partnership with American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Evacuations

Emergency evacuations are the primary responsibility of state and local governments. However, if state and local emergency management systems become overwhelmed in the event of a disaster, FEMA may implement and support a federalized evacuation to augment the state, tribal and local government plans and operations.

Evacuations during the 2008 hurricane season demonstrate that FEMA's efforts are having an impact. Over 2 million people were successfully evacuated, including during Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Moreover, FEMA is finalizing a national system for states to track evacuees. One example of the tools being developed is the Evacuee Support Planning Guide – FEMA P-760 – a planning resource for states that may receive a substantial number of evacuees from another state and for states that may experience a large evacuation from one area of the state to another. FEMA has also developed reimbursement policies for states to host evacuees and tools such as the National Mass Evacuation Tracking Systems (NMETS).

IV. Engaging Non-Governmental Organizations

Government can and will continue to serve disaster survivors. However, we fully recognize that a government-centric- approach to disaster management will not be enough to meet the challenges posed by a catastrophic incident. That is why we must fully engage our entire societal capacity, leveraging trade associations, non-governmental organizations – including those that represent different linguistic and ethnic minority groups, faith-based organizations, private industry, and social and fraternal organizations. These are the organizations that provide the bulk of services to communities every day, and to the extent that they are able, they should continue to be the primary provider of such services in a disaster. The quicker these entities are able to get back on their feet, the faster communities as a whole will be able to recover.

Private Sector Preparedness and Collaboration

The private sector, encompassing trade associations, corporations, academia, and other non-governmental organizations, is a key partner in our planning and preparedness efforts. These entities provide key capabilities and resources, and also have the ability to reach the broader public through individual employees, customers, students and members.

In October 2007, FEMA established a Private Sector Division within the Office of External Affairs in order to provide a single point of contact to facilitate meaningful integration of the private sector across the spectrum of emergency management activity. Since then, FEMA has been able to bring the private sector to the table in new and more meaningful ways. As an

example, during the severe winter storms that occurred earlier this year, our private sector communication was put to great use, providing businesses with personal preparedness information and gathering store operation updates.

FEMA has also expanded the use of technology and communication platforms to share best practices across the nation's private sector through a new online library of more than 40 model public-private emergency management partnerships at the state, local and regional levels. FEMA's Private Sector Division created several hazard-specific tabletop exercises that anyone can access for free, which were downloaded over 8,000 times in the first few weeks after they were posted online. I also participated in a Business Roundtable podcast series that garnered more than 9,000 listeners, and was featured on several news and disaster management sites, reaching over 90,000 Business Roundtable Facebook and Twitter followers. Additionally, the FEMA Private Sector Division sends out weekly preparedness tips to its growing subscriber list of about 25,000 individuals.

Another way we are working to promote more resilient communities is through the Private Sector Preparedness Accreditation and Certification Program, or PS Prep, which was created at the direction of Congress.

PS Prep encourages the private sector to take voluntary steps to be better prepared to stay in business in the event of a disaster. It does this by setting forth clear guidelines for preparedness, based on industry-recognized standards adopted by DHS. Third-party accrediting bodies that comply with these standards can then certify private sector entities that wish to be recognized as having met the standard.

Non-Profit Community

Working with the non-profit community is an essential part of our integrated emergency response and recovery efforts. In May 2010, FEMA entered into a new MOU with National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD), a coalition of 50 national non-profit disaster relief organizations. The MOU serves as the basis for greater communication with NVOAD members, fostering more inclusive planning and ultimately enhancing services to disaster survivors. This past July, FEMA entered into a new MOA with the National Council on Independent Living to grant access to FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers and assist people with disabilities. In October 2010, FEMA and the American Red Cross signed a MOA that sets the framework for the Red Cross and FEMA to jointly lead the planning and coordination of mass care services, which will strengthen and expand the resources available to help shelter, feed, provide emergency first aid and deliver supplies to survivors of a disaster. This co-led partnership between FEMA and the Red Cross will leverage the resourcing strengths of the federal government and the sheltering, feeding and bulk distribution expertise of the Red Cross.

Engaging the Faith-Based Community

When a disaster strikes, the initial services provided may not come from government, but rather from churches, synagogues, mosques and other faith-based and community organizations. The DHS Center for Faith-based & Neighborhood Partnerships, a Center of the White House Office

of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, connects representatives from faith traditions and community leaders interested in emergency planning, preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation with government emergency management personnel, other federal agencies that employ volunteers in disasters, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) and Citizen Corps Councils, and voluntary organizations active in disasters. For example, at the request of the Missouri Governor's Faith-based Organization Disaster Initiative, the DHS Center worked with the Midland Islamic Council (Greater Kansas City), leading to Kansas City's largest mosque becoming a certified Red Cross shelter.

The DHS Center also participated with federal, state, local and tribal emergency recovery teams – and faith-based voluntary disaster recovery organizations – to rebuild and repair homes that were devastated by the Yukon Ice Flow disaster in the Alaskan interior in May 2009. The faith-based groups provided the volunteer labor, and FEMA and the state of Alaska provided the materials and travel expenses. Overcoming extreme logistical challenges and a short summer season, 50 homes were built and repaired in four remote communities. By including the faith-based groups, taxpayers were saved millions of dollars, and the project has become a best-practice model of partnership between the government and faith-based organizations.

The DHS Center also sponsors and leads regional preparedness conferences where faith-based and neighborhood organizations network, share information and develop partnerships with government emergency management officials. Since 2009, Faithful Readiness conferences have been held in San Francisco, Washington, D.C. and, most recently, in Southeast Wisconsin, after the devastating floods of July 2010. As a result of this conference, the Wisconsin chapter of the Churches of God in Christ, International partnered with the American Red Cross to help promote congregational disaster preparedness and assist in outreach efforts to elderly potential flood victims.

V. The Importance of Individuals, Families and Communities

FEMA's Individual Assistance Division in the Recovery Directorate of the Office of Response and Recovery helps disaster survivors with housing, crisis counseling, low interest loans, legal services, disaster case management, and unemployment assistance, among other services. Our state and local emergency management experience has taught us that, in the event of a disaster, individuals and communities are not liabilities; rather, they are our greatest resources and the key to our success. We are fortunate to have leadership at the Department of Homeland Security and at the White House who share our belief that individuals are integral aspects of our emergency management capability. As Secretary Napolitano said before the Council on Foreign Relations in July 2009, "for too long, we've treated the public as a liability to be protected rather than an asset in our nation's collective security...We need a culture of collective responsibility, a culture where every individual understands his or her role."

Citizen Corps

In the aftermath of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, President Bush launched Citizen Corps, a community-based entity coordinated by FEMA. Citizen Corps recognizes that effective

emergency management and emergency response require community leaders to participate in developing emergency plans for their own communities. These leaders conduct localized outreach and education to the public, promote training, participate in exercises, encourage volunteerism, and form an integral part of the response effort when disaster strikes. The mission of Citizen Corps is to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues, and disasters of all kinds.

The Citizen Corps mission is accomplished through a network of state, local, and tribal Citizen Corps Councils located all over the country. These councils build on community strengths to implement Citizen Corps preparedness programs and carry out local strategies to involve government, community leaders, and citizens in all-hazards preparedness and resilience. Citizen Corps is in the process of updating the registration of more than 2,400 Councils and 3,000 CERT programs in order to provide detailed information on their local strategies and activities.

In 95 percent of all emergencies, a survivor or bystander provides the first immediate assistance on the scene. Because family members, neighbors or fellow employees are often the first to provide assistance, it is important that all members of the community have access to the training they need to make a difference during an emergency situation.

Ready Campaign

Ready is FEMA's national public service campaign, which partners with the Advertising Council to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to all emergencies, including natural disasters and potential terrorist attacks. The goal of the campaign is to get the public involved and to increase the level of basic preparedness across the nation.

Ready and its Spanish language version, *Listo*, ask individuals to take simple steps such as making a family emergency plan, getting an emergency supply kit, obtaining information about the different types of emergencies that could occur and the appropriate responses to each one, and getting involved in community efforts that promote neighbor-to-neighbor preparedness. To further increase its reach, this Campaign has now been translated into 11 additional languages.

The Ad Council has declared *Ready* one of the most successful campaigns in its more than 60-year history. Since its launch, the campaign has generated close to $900 million in donated media support and over 12 billion media impressions. As of March 4, 2011, the website has received 2.7 billion hits and 52 million unique visitors; the toll-free numbers have received approximately 425,000 calls; and more than 63 million *Ready* materials have been requested or downloaded from the website.

In the wake of the tragic events in Japan, people across the U.S. are taking stock in their own personal level of preparedness and educating themselves on the steps they can take by visiting Ready.gov. Visits to the site were up 225 percent compared to an average week with individual page views up 2000 percent.

Incorporating People with Disabilities into Disaster Planning

Planning for disaster means that our efforts must be inclusive of people of different ages and abilities. We need greater inclusion built into our participatory planning and preparedness activities, which includes meeting the access and functional needs of people with disabilities in preparing for and responding to disasters.

Historically, our nation's emergency management team has not planned well for meeting the access and functional needs of people with disabilities during disasters. Most of our planning has been supplemental, contained in annexes, and treated as special needs. However, we are now taking critical steps in the right direction to ensure that we plan for the whole community, integrating people with disabilities into all of our disaster planning, response and recovery scenarios.

In February 2010, FEMA established the Office of Disability Integration and Coordination, and in July 2010, established the first-ever Disability Working Group within FEMA. The Disability Working Group is responsible for ensuring that access and functional needs of children and adults with disabilities are fully integrated into all aspects of FEMA's disaster planning, preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation efforts initiated and coordinated at the federal level.

In October of last year, FEMA published Guidance on Planning for the Integration of Functional Needs Support Services in General Population Shelters. This guidance for states provides comprehensive information and tools for meeting integrated sheltering requirements.

FEMA is also committed to placing Regional Disability Integration Specialists in each of FEMA's ten regions. Eight are already on board on a permanent full-time basis, and an additional one is in place on an acting basis.

Also, earlier this month, FEMA and the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) signed a memorandum of agreement to ensure that the access and functional needs of people with disabilities are incorporated into all aspects of planning for, responding to and recovering from disasters. Specifically, the agreement will ensure that advocates for the NDRN's 57 state and territory affiliates have access to FEMA disaster response offices, including workspace and logistical support, before, during and after a disaster, to be involved in policy decisions and coordinate directly with the entire emergency management team. This partnership will help FEMA leverage the resources of the entire community, including the resources the NDRN or other organizations can offer, to better meet the needs of the entire population impacted by a disaster.

When communities integrate the needs of children and adults with disabilities and others with access and functional needs into their community-wide planning initiatives, they maximize resources and strengthen their ability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate all hazards. FEMA is committed to initiatives that increase the participation of people with disabilities in emergency planning.

Children in Disasters

Similarly, we must all work together to meet the unique needs of children during a disaster, and ensure that their needs are considered at the outset of our planning and preparedness discussions. Emergency management officials at all levels need to plan and prepare for everyone in a community, including children, who comprise approximately 25 percent of the U.S. population. For that reason, FEMA established a Children's Working Group (CWG) responsible for coordinating the Agency's efforts – in partnership with other federal agencies and non-governmental stakeholders – to ensure that the needs of children are considered and integrated into all disaster planning, preparedness, response and recovery efforts initiated at the federal level.

As an example, in preparation for Hurricane Earl last year, we pre-positioned commodities in preparation for the hurricane to make landfall, including water, meals and generators. However, military-style Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) and other provisions are not necessarily suitable for young children. As a result, we also pre-positioned commodities for children, including infant formula, baby food, electrolytes and diapers. We need to anticipate, understand and specifically plan for the needs of children. Similarly, we pre-positioned infant and toddler supplies in anticipation of the upper Midwest flooding earlier this month.

We will continue to incorporate everyone into our disaster planning, recognizing that all populations help to make up the emergency management community.

VI. Whole Community

At the heart of our planning and preparedness efforts is our strong belief that our ability to succeed is tied to whether or not we are able to work together as a team. We must view all of the work FEMA does in concert with the rest of the emergency management community as part of a broad plan for addressing the demands and challenges of a catastrophic disaster.

To ensure that our efforts become part of an interconnected plan of action, we are focused on our "Whole Community" initiative. This initiative will continue to leverage the capabilities that both governmental and non-governmental entities play in preparing for a catastrophic disaster.

We cannot effectively respond to a catastrophic disaster alone. Our planning and preparedness scenarios require all parties to pitch in, including FEMA and its partners at the federal level; state, local and tribal governments; non-governmental organizations in the non-profit, faith-based and private sector communities; and most importantly, diverse individuals, families, and communities, who continue to be our most important assets and allies in our ability to respond to and recover from a major disaster.

As the name of the initiative indicates, it is truly the *whole* community that must be prepared to respond in ways that extend beyond the normal paradigms in which we have traditionally operated. As a result, when we at FEMA address our own preparedness and response

capabilities, we now do it through the "Whole Community" framework. And it is through that lens that we will work to improve our preparedness for the next catastrophic disaster.

VII. Conclusion

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure we work together as a nation to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards. Too often we have overlooked our role as supporting citizens and first responders. The "Whole Community" initiative recognizes that FEMA is not the nation's emergency management team – FEMA is just part of the team.

FEMA continues to play an integral role as part of the emergency management community. However, we know that we cannot and should not do it alone. We know of the capabilities of federal agencies, which can be leveraged in the event of a disaster to provide a robust federal response. We know of the importance of effective coordination with state, local and tribal governments, who provide direct, on the ground experience, and who usually have initial and primary responsibility for disaster response. We know that non-governmental organizations, like faith-based and non-profit groups, and private sector entities, possess knowledge, assets and services that government may not be able to provide. An effective disaster response involves tapping into all of these resources.

Finally, and most importantly, we know of the great capacity of individuals to care for their families, friends, neighbors and fellow community members, making our citizens force multipliers rather than liabilities. Together, we make up the whole community, and we all have an important role to play. We must engage all of our societal capacity, both within and beyond FEMA, to work together as a team. I hope that as Japan moves ahead to recover from the recent tragedy, that FEMA and our nation can learn from Japan and become more prepared and resilient against all of the threats that we face.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the importance of engaging the whole community in FEMA's preparedness for the next catastrophic disaster. I look forward to working with you as we continue ensure a stronger and more agile preparedness, protection, response, recovery and mitigation capability.

I am prepared to answer any questions the Committee may have.

Question#:	1
Topic:	DRF
Hearing:	Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline out Emergency Management Program
Primary:	The Honorable Jeff Denham
Committee:	TRANSPORTATION (HOUSE)
Witness:	Craig Fugate, FEMA Administrator
Organization:	U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Question: In the past, when the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) dipped below a certain level, FEMA moved to "immediate needs" funding. What does "immediate needs" funding mean? What specific programs and activities will FEMA have to reduce or terminate if the agency moves to "immediate needs" funding?

Response: In the past, FEMA has implemented Immediate Needs Funding (INF), when the Disaster Relief Fund balance has ranged between $800 million - $1 billion. During such times, the Agency had restricted funding to the specific items listed below.

a. Individual Assistance programs
b. Mission Assignments related to response activities
c. Reimbursements for emergency measures and debris removal (Public Assistance categories A & B);
d. Technical Assistance Contract support for Public Assistance category A&B activities and Individual Assistance manufactured housing support;
e. State management costs; and
f. Essential JFO operations (staff, travel, and JFO operations).

In addition to these restrictions, in the past INF implementation resulted in funding constraints for the Disaster Readiness and Support (DRS) Account. DRS allocations were processed on a case-by-case basis, and were consistent with the immediate needs criteria, essential open disaster support activities only, and/or to comply with contractual obligations.

Question#:	2
Topic:	immediate needs
Hearing:	Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline out Emergency Management Program
Primary:	The Honorable Jeff Denham
Committee:	TRANSPORTATION (HOUSE)

Question: Has FEMA estimated how "immediate needs" funding will negatively impact economic recovery in communities that have experienced a disaster or emergency?

Response: No, FEMA has not conducted a study to determine the impact of Immediate Needs on the affected communities.

Question#:	3
Topic:	funds
Hearing:	Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline out Emergency Management Program
Primary:	The Honorable Jeff Denham
Committee:	TRANSPORTATION (HOUSE)

Question: What amount of supplemental funds is needed to avoid moving to "immediate needs" funding during Fiscal Year 2011, assuming FEMA receives its entire Fiscal Year 2011 allocation at Fiscal Year 2010 levels?

Response: In FY 2010, FEMA initiated INF when the Fund balance dropped between $800M and $1 B. There is no hard requirement as to when INF is applied. It is the discretion of FEMA leadership. Currently, with the DRF CR funding provided in FY 2011, FEMA anticipates that no additional supplemental funding is required in FY 2011. This assumes that no new major disaster events occur this fiscal year. Also, it also assumes that the current pattern of non-catastrophic funding continues.

Question#:	4
Topic:	scenario
Hearing:	Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline out Emergency Management Program
Primary:	The Honorable Jeff Denham
Committee:	TRANSPORTATION (HOUSE)

Question: Let us assume a scenario like the one in Japan occurred in the U.S. – there is a massive 9.0 earthquake in California, a tsunami followed by severe floods and the nuclear reactors, which are near the coast, are severely damaged. Millions of people are displaced, thousands missing, no shelters or supplies in the immediate area. Walk us through the response to a disaster like this, starting with how the state would engage FEMA and tap into federal resources.

Response: In the event of a catastrophic earthquake and tsunami along the west coast, the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) has primary responsibility for coordinating the state's response and serving as a liaison between the federal and regional/local governments. Cal EMA divides operations into three regions and each has a Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC) – Southern Region (REOC- ¬Los Alamitos), Inland Region (REOC-Sacramento), and the Coastal Region (REOC-Oakland) which is activated during disaster incidents and is the primary coordination point for the regional/local governments. The REOCs report to the State Operations Center (SOC).

The Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Response Plan (OPLAN) provides a coordinated state/federal response to a catastrophic earthquake in Southern California. This OPLAN is the result of more than 1500 emergency management professionals determining how best to use the combined capabilities of the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local, state, tribal and federal resources, as well as the affected citizens, to respond to a magnitude 7.8 earthquake on the southern San Andreas Fault. Basic services, including transportation, healthcare, water, power, and communications, will be significantly disrupted following a catastrophic earthquake in Southern California.

The OPLAN concept of operations is divided into three distinct phases – Phase One: Normal Operations, Phase Two: Response, and Phase Three: Long-Term Recovery. Phase 2, Response, is further divided into Activation (Immediate Response), Deployment and Employment, and Sustained Response.

Given the magnitude of such an event, we can assume that the President would likely make a disaster declaration for the State of California and other states that were severely impacted by the event. FEMA will have already been in contact with California and other affected states and, with the declaration, will immediately begin to move resources in support of the State's response efforts. To lead and coordinate the federal response, a

Question#:	4
Topic:	scenario
Hearing:	Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline out Emergency Management Program
Primary:	The Honorable Jeff Denham
Committee:	TRANSPORTATION (HOUSE)

Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) will be appointed for each of the impacted states. FEMA Regions will activate their Regional Response Coordination Centers (RRCCs), which include representatives from all Emergency Support Functions. In addition, the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC), located at FEMA HQ, will also be activated.

The RRCCs will contact the affected states to identify capabilities and anticipate shortfalls to determine the initial federal response and support requirements. The RRCCs will implement processes for gathering, collating, analyzing, and disseminating incident information to all appropriate parties, including providing the NRCC with information necessary to make critical national-level incident management decisions. FEMA will obtain federal agencies' resources through the use of mission assignments and interagency agreements. To assist the FCO in managing the federal response both Regional and National Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMATs) will be deployed to establish a Unified Coordination Group (UCG) at a Joint Field Office (JFO) in each impacted state.

The FEMA NRCC coordinates a "push" of federal resources to each of the JFOs as requirements are more clearly defined and as information, including damage to infrastructure and transportation corridors, flows in from the RRCCs. Available air, land, and sea avenues of approach are used to push communications, Search and Rescue (SAR), firefighting, medical care and evacuation, and mass care assets. Staging areas are determined at the time of the incident. These facilities are chosen due to their earthquake survivability, suitability for large scale air operations (including offloading and staging of teams, equipment and material) and their proximity to the incident area. In coordination with the state, life saving and life sustaining commodities are pushed from these staging areas forward to state and local officials for distribution to citizens most impacted by the disaster.

The triage of critical infrastructure systems to enable communications, water distribution, power generation, fuel refinement, and air operations is prioritized by the UCG as temporary sources of water, power, and fuel are acquired and consumed by local jurisdictions in the incident area. The Operations Section in the UCG works closely with the state and private sector to coordinate triage of critical systems.

As information continues to flow and decision makers have a better awareness of the total impact, a shift from the "push" of resources and teams transitions to a more clearly defined "pull" of resources. The state continues to administer the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) and state-to-state mutual aid. The JFO

Question#:	4
Topic:	scenario
Hearing:	Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline out Emergency Management Program
Primary:	The Honorable Jeff Denham
Committee:	TRANSPORTATION (HOUSE)

becomes fully operational in each of the affected states. Emergency debris clearance from major access and egress routes is completed to enable increased flow of support. Task forces and the private sector are working to restore infrastructure. Mass care services, including voluntary agency support are taking place, and local jurisdictions are working with state and federal counterparts to clearly refine their requirements as the response tempo shifts to long term recovery operations.

FEMA recognizes that it takes all aspects of a community to effectively prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against any disaster. It cannot be just the government – we must leverage the volunteer, faith and community-based organizations, the private sector, and the public, including survivors themselves, to ensure an effective response. We must work together to enable communities to develop collective, mutually supporting local capabilities to withstand the potential initial impacts of these events, respond quickly, and recover in a way that sustains or improves the community's overall well-being. This collective capacity requires innovative approaches from the full spectrum of community actors to expand the existing practices, institutions, and organizations that manage local communities to enable this social infrastructure to meet the community needs when an incident occurs.

On April 20, 2011 the Senior Leadership and Stakeholders Kick-off Briefing occurred in Eureka California for the Cascadia Subduction Zone Earthquake and Tsunami Response Plan. Representatives from federal, state, local, tribal, non-government agencies and the private sector attended. This planning project is also part of a larger effort we are working on with multiple states (California, Oregon, Washington and Alaska), multiple Regions (Regions XI and X), and multiple countries (USA and Canada), to build on and improve already existing operational plans. In 2000 FEMA and the State of California completed the Cascadia Logistics Support Protocol, and this plan will be used as the foundation to increase our capabilities and further refine the objectives and priorities. This planning effort is currently scheduled to be completed and approved by November 2012.

Question#:	5
Topic:	partnerships
Hearing:	Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline out Emergency Management Program
Primary:	The Honorable Richard Hanna
Committee:	TRANSPORTATION (HOUSE)

Question: I appreciated your comments about public-private partnerships as a means of leveraging response to emergencies. Could you share with the Committee your experiences in Florida regarding partnerships to use digital billboards to deliver emergency information? Further, could you provide your professional assessment of whether this type of partnership (displaying emergency information on digital billboards operated by the private sector) could be applied in other jurisdictions as this technology expands?

Response: In 2008, the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) created a partnership with the outdoor advertising industry (Florida Outdoor Advertising Association, FOAA) allowing digital billboards to be used by emergency managers to reach motorists at no cost to the public. Emergency officials use high-tech billboards to communicate targeted messages on weather warnings, evacuations, shelter locations, and road detours. Via this partnership, emergency authorities have access to more than 100 digital billboards in Florida. Billboard operators post emergency information on a voluntary basis.

This public-private partnership was first activated in August of 2008 due to widespread flooding caused by Tropical Storm Fay. During a 10 day activation, 37 different emergency messages displayed on 75 digital billboards in 11 counties impacted by the storm.

Since 2008, the emergency alert notification system has been activated four times in Florida, relaying information on flash flood watches and warnings during severe tropical storms. This public-private partnership enables FDEM to ask FOAA member companies to provide general/widespread information to the public, and-or specific disaster-related details such as locations and directions to shelters, evacuation routes prior to hurricanes, and road openings/closings following a severe storm.

This concept – quick display of emergency information on donated digital billboards – is also used elsewhere. For example, 10 digital billboards in Milwaukee, WI, displayed registration information for FEMA Individual Assistance after severe flooding in the fall of 2010 ("FLOOD DAMAGE, Register Today, 1-800-621-FEMA").

Question#:	6
Topic:	duplicating
Hearing:	Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline out Emergency Management Program
Primary:	The Honorable Timothy H. Bishop
Committee:	TRANSPORTATION (HOUSE)

Question: Administrator Fugate, would you agree that duplicating another federal agency's efforts adds an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy that may hinder response operations and may add uncertainty to the process for State and local emergency response officials? If FEMA believes additional environmental reviews are required by law, can you please articulate for the committee the regulations governing the reviews? Also, have you found inconsistencies between regional offices in their interpretation of the environmental review regulations, and what effect has this had on regional project delivery times?

Response: Yes, the duplication of efforts between federal agencies may add an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy that may hinder disaster response operations.

National environmental planning and historic preservation (EHP) requirements mandate that a Federal agency conduct a review of a proposed action for EHP compliance prior to initiation of the action. Recovery projects may involve a combination of actions by various Federal agencies, such as FEMA's award of disaster funding, the issuance of a Federal permit (such as from the US Army Corps of Engineers), and the approval of another Federal agency's financial assistance (such as HUD's Community Development Block Grants). Each of these Federal actions triggers an independent EHP review, but federal law does not require that they be duplicative reviews.

EHP requirements allow for the various Federal agencies to come together to decide which agency will lead the review. In addition, some EHP requirements allow for one Federal agency to adopt a review and analysis that has been completed by another Federal agency after an independent review of the analysis.

FEMA acknowledges that there are some variations between the agency's regional offices in the EHP programs. This can be attributed to regional and State differences in the nature of the affected resources, differences in the approaches taken by local resource agencies' on the implementation of EHP requirements, and differences in the level of cooperation of grantees or applicants to identify the full scope of their planned activities, and on occasion differences in state law. FEMA regional offices often take advantage of streamlining tools, such as the adoption of another Federal agency's EHP analysis or early coordination with another Federal agency to determine lead agency status, which could improve project delivery times in those regions compared to regions that do not take advantage of such streamlining tools or regions where those tools are not available.

Question#:	6
Topic:	duplicating
Hearing:	Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline out Emergency Management Program
Primary:	The Honorable Timothy H. Bishop
Committee:	TRANSPORTATION (HOUSE)

Currently, FEMA is evaluating the nature of these differences and developing FEMA-wide policies and guidance on EHP review in order to reduce inconsistencies at the regional level.

Question#:	7
Topic:	tools
Hearing:	Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline out Emergency Management Program
Primary:	The Honorable Timothy H. Bishop
Committee:	TRANSPORTATION (HOUSE)

Question: Finally, does FEMA have the tools needed to eliminate unnecessary redundancies in approving offshore sand sources or would this require congressional action?

Response: Yes, FEMA does have the tools to eliminate unnecessary redundancies. In accordance with national environmental planning and historic preservation (EHP) requirements, FEMA must take into account the impacts of its proposals for funding, including all connected or interrelated actions, before approving its funding action. For a beach nourishment or replenishment project, this includes taking into account the impacts associated with offshore sand sources for the project. At the regional level, FEMA is pursuing arrangements with other Federal agencies that have jurisdiction by law for the permitting and review of offshore sand source activities to leverage the EHP compliance reviews conducted by those agencies and eliminate unnecessary redundancies. Some EHP requirements allow for and even encourage one Federal agency to adopt a review and analysis that has been completed by another Federal agency after an independent review of the analysis. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations also direct all agencies to develop their NEPA reviews concurrently and integrated with other environmental review laws and executive orders to the fullest extent possible.

In this instance, the grantee/applicant can help align FEMA's EHP review with the USACE permit review by providing information such as the proposed sand source or any any reasonable alternative sources for federal agency environmental evaluation. If a sand source is identified and the project has a current USACE permit, FEMA would utilize the review already conducted by USACE to accelerate our review.

Statement of
Jim Hubbard
Deputy Chief,
State and Private Forestry
U. S. Forest Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture

Before the
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
U. S. House of Representatives

March 30, 2011

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to provide the status of the U.S. Forest Service's wildfire suppression capabilities. Additionally, I will provide information regarding the Agency's emergency preparedness capabilities for all hazard responses and incident management support.

WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

The Forest Service, in cooperation with the partner agencies in the Department of the Interior, have the best wildland firefighting organization in the world and together with our State, local, and tribal government partners work to maintain our operational excellence and continually improve the safety and effectiveness of the fire management program.

The Forest Service takes seriously its role in protecting people, property and valuable natural resources from wildfire. We are prepared for the 2011 wildland fire season and are staffed to provide effective fire management.

We will continue our commitment to successful initial attack of wildland fire, where appropriate, with full attention to firefighter and public safety. Our commitment to risk informed performance based strategies will reduce firefighter exposure to unnecessary risk during fire incidents. Additionally, we will continue to provide assistance to Fire Adapted Communities that have been or may be threatened by wildfire to enable these communities to reduce risks of wildland fire. In providing this assistance, we will

continue to make hazardous fuels treatment in wildland urban interface areas a priority, assist localities in building their response capability, and work collaboratively with local communities to understand the role of fire and find ways to mitigate risk and to foster individual responsibility for property protection.

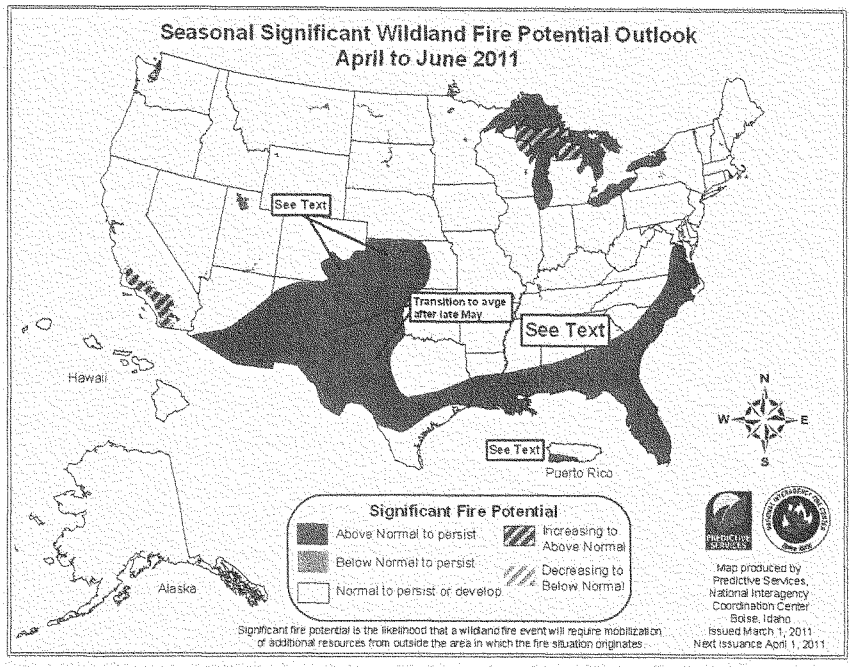
Wildland fire and wildland firefighting are influenced by a complex set of environmental and social factors. In recent years, fires across all jurisdictions have become larger, impacting more acres, due in part to persistent drought and hazardous fuels accumulations. In addition, the expansion of development in the wildland urban interface has increased the complexity of fighting wildland fire. These trends are not expected to change. In fact, it is expected that effects of persistent drought in some areas will continue to increase the probability of longer fire seasons and bigger fire events and declining forest health conditions in many regions of the country. However, one of the best tools we have for treating these lands is the careful management of fire itself, which can reduce fuels and increase the diversity of the forested landscape.

To assist in mitigating these factors, the wildland fire community, through the auspices of the Wildland Fire Leadership Council, has developed the Cohesive Wildfire Strategy. This ground breaking document provides a common underpinning for all entities with statutory responsibilities for wildfire. This is a national collaborative effort between wildland fire organizations, land managers, and policy making officials representing federal, state and local governments, tribal interests, and non-governmental organizations. In addition, next year the federal, non-federal and tribal wildland fire management partners will work on Phase II of the Cohesive Strategy.

2011 WILDLAND FIRE SEASON OUTLOOK

The 2011 wildland fire season has begun. Over 429,957 acres have burned this calendar year as of March 21, 2011, predominately in the southeast, Texas and Oklahoma[i]. February was warmer than typical across sections of the intermountain west and the mid-Atlantic states. The total number of fires and acres burned are above average for this time of year.

Drought is forecast to persist or worsen across much of the southern half of the nation. The Interagency Fire Predictive Services group is calling for above normal fire potential across this area, including Southern California and Colorado, through June. The Interior West and northern part of the country is expected to experience normal fire potential throughout this time period (See figure below).



WILDLAND FIRE PREPAREDNESS

To prepare for the 2011 fire season, the Forest Service along with our partners in the Department of Interior have worked to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our firefighting resources. Fire managers assign local, regional, and national firefighting personnel and equipment based on anticipated fire starts, actual fire occurrence, fire spread, and severity.

Firefighting Forces

Responses to wildland fires in the United States involve not only the resources of the Forest Service, but also includes permanent and seasonal employees from other federal agencies, states, tribal governments, local governments, contract crews, and emergency/temporary hires. For the 2011 fire season, the available firefighting forces – firefighters, equipment, and aircraft – are comparable to those available in 2010 with more than 16,000 firefighters available from the Department of Agriculture and Department of the Interior. The levels of highly-trained firefighting crews, smokejumpers, Type 1 national interagency incident management teams (the most experienced and skilled teams) available for complex fires or incidents, and Type 2 incident management teams available for geographical or national incidents also are comparable to those available in 2010. Additionally, the Forest Service and the federal

wildland fire fighting community work with State and local departments, which serve a critical role in our initial attack success. We could not achieve the successes we have without them.

The National Interagency Coordination Center, located at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, ID, coordinates wildland firefighting needs throughout the nation. Resources are prioritized, allocated, and, if necessary, re-allocated by the National Multi-Agency Coordinating group, composed of management representatives of major fire organizations headquartered at NIFC. Prioritization ensures firefighting forces are positioned where they are needed most. Fire resources such as personnel, equipment, aircraft, vehicles, and supplies are dispatched and tracked through an integrated national system.

If conditions become extreme and U.S. firefighting resources are determined to be in short supply, assistance is available under standing agreements for firefighting forces from Canada, Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand. Under specified instances the Department of Defense, and specifically National Guard resources may also be available to assist.

Aviation

The wildland firefighting agencies continue to employ a mix of fixed and rotor wing aircraft. Key components of the Forest Service 2011 aviation resources include 19 contracted large air tankers, up to 26 Type 1 heavy helicopters, 41 Type 2 medium helicopters on national contracts, and 52 Type 3 light helicopters on local or regional contracts. The Forest Service also leases 13 Aerial Supervision fixed-wing aircraft, owns and operates 1 fixed-wing and 2 aerial supervision helicopters, owns 8 Smokejumper aircraft and contracts for 4, owns 2 heat detecting infrared aircraft, and contracts 2 single engine air tanker aircraft (SEATs). Additionally, there are nearly 300 call-when-needed helicopters available for fire management support as conditions and activities dictate. The Forest Service maintains a contract for a 100- passenger transport jet to facilitate the rapid movement of firefighters during the peak of the fire season. The Forest Service also coordinates closely with the Department of Defense (DoD) in maintaining 8 Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems (MAFFS) that can be deployed in Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve C-130s. The MAFFS program provides surge capability for large fire airtanker support.

Likewise, the Department of the Interior, the lead contracting government entity for SEATs, will maintain a mix of aviation resources to include almost 70 call when needed SEATS, over 100 call when needed light helicopters, 9 exclusive use Type 2 helicopters, contracts for 4 water scooper aircraft, contracts for 7 smokejumper aircraft, and 5 leased Aerial Supervision fixed-wing aircraft in 2011 similar to the aircraft used in 2010. This resource readiness is comparable to the past several years, and we believe an effective approach. We will continue to preposition fire fighting resources based on anticipated fire conditions, values at risk, and historic fire occurrence.

IMPACTS OF A CHANGING AND EXPANDING FIRE ENVIRONMENT

The impacts of an unnatural fire environment have adverse effects on natural resources and as social-political ramifications as well . Wildfire has a natural and valuable role in many ecosystems. Currently, many ecosystems across the country are out of ecological balance and are in need of restoration. This ecological imbalance results in ecosystems that are more threatened by wildfire due to factors such as increased fuel accumulation and infestation by invasive pests. These ecosystems contribute to higher fire risks and extreme fire behavior with severe fire effects. By managing vegetation and restoring natural function and land resiliency, we can change fire behavior and the impacts of fire. Through a combination of mechanical treatment and managed fire, we can help improve the health of some fire adapted ecosystems and prevent heavy accumulations of highly flammable fuels.

To mitigate increased costs and to improve management the Forest Service has adopted substantive reforms. Along with State and local partners, the Forest Service has spent significant effort and resources over the past several years to coordinate capability, improve inter-governmental communication, and employ management controls to ensure effective response, raise efficiency, and manage operations within the amounts appropriated to manage wildland fire.

We must re-double our efforts to invest resources in not just suppression, but hazardous fuels reduction, restoration activities, and community assistance. The President's Budget reflects the commitment of this Administration to implement program reforms to allow wildfire to reassume its ecological function on the landscape and ensure fire management resources are focused where they will do the most good.

The FLAME Act of 2009 established the FLAME Wildfire Suppression Reserve Fund to support the cost of large or complex wildfire events. The FLAME Fund is intended to minimize the need to transfer funds from non-fire accounts to the Wildland Fire Management Appropriation for fire suppression. The FLAME Fund also may be used as a reserve when amounts provided for wildfire suppression are exhausted.

The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress as we strive to improve the safety, cost-effectiveness, and accountability of our management of wildfire. We will continue to work to effectively address wildfires, restore fire adapted landscapes, and seek adequate resources for hazardous fuels, fire science, assistance to others, and preparedness. Our work in this regard will assist in the creation of new wood–based industries to create jobs, through programs supporting wood-to-energy and alternative fuels from wood. The cohesive strategy mentioned earlier is the blueprint that will guide these efforts in the future.

FIRE MANAGEMENT IS EVOLVING TO A NEW ERA

The wildland fire program in the Forest Service is strong and moving in a positive direction. We are committed to continued improvement to increase our effectiveness and maximize our efficiency. The Departments of Agriculture and the Interior continue to face challenges that make management of wildland fire complex and demanding. However, we have taken steps to manage costs and are adopting techniques to apply before and during fire incidents that work to ensure leaders are aware of fire management activity risks, operational efficiencies, and appropriate use of research and technology to reduce fire-related impacts. Specifically, these actions include:

- We will continue to focus on hazardous fuels treatments in wildland-urban interface areas and in fire-adapted ecosystems where risks are highest to infrastructure such as municipal drinking water supplies.

- We will continue to constantly improve decision-making during a wildland fire. The Forest Service and the Department of the Interior are using the Wildland Fire Decision Support System to give managers better information to estimate risk and better ways to predict what may happen during a fire. The decision support system is intended to guide and document wildfire management decisions. The process provides situational assessment, analysis of hazards and risk, implementation actions, and documentation of decisions and rationale for those decisions. In layman's terms, firefighters on the ground will have the predictive maps that enable them to make the most informed decisions. For fires that escape initial attack, we will use these science-based computer models and couple them with improved risk management approaches as part of the agency's continuing effort to safeguard lives, protect communities and important natural resource values, and restore ecosystem health. These fire management reforms are aimed at improving fire management decisions, increasing firefighter and public safety, and are anticipated to provide cost-effective and accountable outcomes from investments made in managing fire on the landscape.

- We will continue to work on enhanced response and efficiency that comes from sharing resources on a nation-wide basis, managing aviation resources, pre-positioning of firefighting resources, and improving aviation risk management for safe engagement.

- We will continue after-action review of fire incidents to apply lessons learned and best practices to policy and operations.

- The Forest Service is analyzing the optimal mix of helicopters and air tankers and developing a cost benefit analysis of the options.

ALL HAZARD RESPONSE

In addition to fire fighting, the Forest Service and DOI have developed a robust skill set in providing assistance with other types of incidents across the country when the President declares that an emergency or major disaster exists. We work closely with other federal and state agencies during these responses. Responses to these incidents is accomplished through the use of the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS is a scalable, standardized, on scene emergency management system specifically designed to allow its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure that can span jurisdictional boundaries. For example, interagency incident management teams (IMT) were ordered and dispatched on September 11, 2001, to New York City and to Arlington, VA. Both of these teams successfully integrated into a complex mix of jurisdictions and operated in a unified command structure. The same can be said during other emergency situations such as the Columbia Space Shuttle recovery, Hurricane Katrina response, the Deep Water Horizon cleanup, and other declared disasters.

Additionally, the Forest Service hosts four interagency National Incident Management Organization (NIMO) teams for 2011. These four, seven-member full-time Type I Incident Management Teams' full time job is dedicated to emergency response. In addition, before the fire season began, the NIMO teams have worked collaboratively with selected National Forests that are historically at higher risk of large fire to build capacity through strategic pre-season planning and training. These efforts in particular have been cutting edge and enabled the Forest Service to stay ahead of the wildfire curve, while helping communities stay out of harms way.

CONCLUSION

This concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

---

[1]National Interagency Fire Center, National Year-to-Date Report on Fires and Acres Burned by State and Agency, March 21, 2011

STATEMENT

ROB RASH, CHIEF ENGINEER CEO

ST. FRANCIS LEVEE DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

30 MARCH 2011

Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee it is a privilege and a pleasure for me to be here today and to give Testimony on "Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline our Emergency Management Programs."

There are numerous items I would like to discuss and would respectfully ask that the hearing record be left open for an additional thirty days for testimony submittal. Because of time I will limit my key points to three (3).

1. **Utilize local first responders and recovery efforts.**
2. **Improve or remove the traditional bureaucratic cycle.**
3. **Flood Protection is a pre-emptive strike.**

1) It is vital for an efficient response to any disaster to utilize local recovery efforts.

Just before Katrina made land-fall, some of the Officials of the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee Board with Headquarters in Clarksdale, Mississippi contacted the Governor's Office and offered their help.

Authority was immediately given and the Levee Board used modified dump-trucks filled with gasoline and diesel fuel and moved South. They were a welcome sight and began moving more of their equipment and personnel to the devastated area and stayed and worked until Thanksgiving or about 90 days. They expended over a million dollars from their Emergency Reserve Fund and were later reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for about three-quarters of a million dollars. The larger Levee Boards in the Mississippi River Watershed have the experienced and qualified people and in some cases suitable equipment for work such as initial or advance clean-up and repair following a Catastrophic Disaster and they and other State Chartered Agencies should be used whenever possible. In the case of clean-up and re-habituating following a Disaster, it appears the people with the greatest first-hand information do a better and less expensive job than those from out-side the State or general area affected.

2) The traditional bureaucratic process is not efficient.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) permitting processes have become so cumbersome and bureaucratic that it is difficult at best to maintain efficiency in the critical path of the recovery process. Also, we seemed to have over-looked at the time the fact that the Civil Works portion of the United States Army, Corps of Engineers had been placed under the direction of the Homeland Security Agency and consequently under the Federal Emergency Management Agency. There are several things the Military hold dear such as Duty, Honor, Country and others, such as the Chain of Command. When you look at an Organizational Chart it is quite plain that the Army Corps of Engineers are below both the Homeland Security Agency and FEMA, therefore you had a well-organized, well-led and experienced Agency, that has dealt with Disasters since this Country's beginnings, answering to and taking direction from people inexperienced in the management of a situation of the size and magnitude of the aftermath of Katrina. With all due respect, the Congress needs to remedy this

ridiculous situation before another Disaster strikes this Country.

3) The Nation is in danger at all times from several different Natural Disasters such as Hurricanes, Tornadoes, Earthquakes, Volcano Eruptions and Riverine Flooding. Only Riverine Flooding can be protected against and we that live in the Lower Reaches of the Mississippi River Watershed, in conjunction with the Congress of the United States and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers working together as a threesome, have protected ourselves from that disaster. We have done so with the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project but now our efforts that have extended well over a hundred years all seem to have been in vain. Now the Federal Emergency Management Agency in all it's power and it's lack of experience are dead set on setting the stage for lenders to require the selling to millions of citizens that live in the Valley unwanted and unneeded insurance that protects not against Flooding but if you are lucky and win the arguments with the insurance agents may provide some financial aid after the disaster has done its damage.

I will close by summarizing (1) involve the people closest to the Disaster as much as possible. (2) take a hard look at the organization of the Federal Bureaucracy. (3) protect what can be protected and warn the populous of the dangers that cannot be protected. Refocus our nation on protection before the event at less cost, like the Mississippi River & Tributaries Project which currently has a B/C ratio of 27 to 1.

Embargoed until Delivery
Wednesday, March 30, 2011
10:00 am (ET)

For more information, contact:
Neal Denton, Govt Relations
202/303-4348

TESTIMONY OF CHARLES S. SHIMANSKI
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, DISASTER SERVICES
AMERICAN RED CROSS

Before the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management

Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline our Emergency Management Programs

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Members and staff of the Subcommittee. This is a very timely gathering to address an extremely important subject and we appreciate the opportunity to provide our perspective. The American Red Cross is dedicated to working with government and with our partners to improve the nation's response to disasters. Our work is made possible by charitable contributions graciously donated by compassionate supporters. As grateful stewards of those donated dollars, the American Red Cross always strives to provide services effectively and efficiently. The tragedy in Japan just a few weeks ago reinforces just how important these topics are to our country.

The American Red Cross responds to nearly 70,000 disasters each year in communities across the United States, supplies about 43 percent of the nation's blood; teaches lifesaving skills to about 10 million people a year; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families.

Most of my comments before the Subcommittee today focus on major disasters here in the United States, although our American Red Cross system is designed to provide the same general set of services regardless of scale. While the most visible of these events are the larger catastrophic events, disasters such as house fires that affect a single family are of course catastrophes for those families.

Each and every day, the American Red Cross remains ready to respond to events ranging from hurricanes that can be forecast days in advance to "no notice" events such as earthquakes and human-caused catastrophes. The country relies on the American Red Cross to deliver our promise of neighbor helping neighbor, and our corps of volunteers is ready to deliver. We work closely with our partners and colleagues in the nonprofit, charitable and faith-based communities, as well as the private sector, to improve the reach of services. And our coordination with Federal, state and local officials is as strong as ever.

My testimony today will speak directly to how our network of chapters works together with government, communities, nonprofit and faith based agencies, the private sector, and our volunteers to ensure timely and effective response to a catastrophic disaster.

Working with Federal and State Partners

The American Red Cross disaster field structure is aligned by state. This structure ensures local presence, provides for strong integration of plans with local, state, and Federal officials, and establishes specific points of contact for coordination and a unified response. Strong and effective coordination is key to eliminating duplication and leveraging resources to fill gaps in capacity or readiness.

The American Red Cross commitment to collaboration is illustrated by our October 2010 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Under the terms of the MOA, FEMA and the American Red Cross now share the leadership of the mass care portion of Emergency Support Function 6 (ESF-6) to include feeding, sheltering, bulk distribution and family reunification. The American Red Cross continues to be a support agency to the other components of ESF-6, which include Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services. The agreement reinforces that FEMA and the American Red Cross will work together to avoid redundancies and to deliver service effectively and efficiently.

The new agreement will promote a more comprehensive approach to planning and coordinating sheltering, feeding and distribution of relief supplies, which will in turn help people affected by disasters. For example, under the new agreement, both FEMA and the American Red Cross will have better visibility into each other's operations and resources through enhanced sharing of data. This visibility will make it easier to locate the closest supplies, and match shortages with surpluses. This saves time and money and often means faster and improved service to those in need.

Another example of our commitment to share operational data is how we will approach reporting of sheltering activities. Under the MOA, American Red Cross relief operations will now identify all locations and populations for all shelters, including both Red Cross and non-Red Cross shelters, in an affected community and ensure this data is entered into the National Shelter System (NSS) database. The NSS contains location and capacity information for over 56,000 community facilities (schools, churches, etc) that have been established as potential shelters across the country. The system records all shelter openings, closings and overnight populations on a daily basis, and is used to guide operational and planning decisions for multiple agencies at all levels. The American Red Cross has worked to provide this information to the public through a public-facing portal and map on www.redcross.org. The NSS shelter information is also available through a downloadable app. These comprehensive reporting practices and improved access to information will allow us to more effectively identify and assess the needs of those affected by disasters as well as provide invaluable resources and information to the public seeking help.

Looking ahead, the May 2011 National Level Exercise (NLE) with Federal and state government leads will offer an opportunity to exercise the strong coordination that is expected under the MOA. The NLE will focus on a New Madrid earthquake scenario and will involve dozens of American Red Cross staff and trained volunteers as well as local, state, and Federal government partners.

Collaborating with Nongovernmental Partners and the Private Sector

Identifying new partnerships and strengthening existing partnerships continues to be a priority for our organization. We are working to become a better facilitative partner and leader in disasters, not just with other voluntary agencies already engaged in disaster, but also with newer, non-traditional organizations that are looking to play a role in disaster response. We recognize that groups that possess a particular critical expertise, community trust, or credibility can greatly expand and improve a community's response. Organization-wide, the American Red Cross remains committed to building a culture of collaboration, diversity and inclusion in our partnering efforts. This work has positive cost implications as well as a positive impact on the country's capacity to respond.

All of our partners provide invaluable expertise to help clients, in particular diverse clients and those with unique needs. We are often able to extend capacity and capabilities, and to extend our reach and trust into diverse and/or underserved communities, and to leverage expertise that is better provided by other organizations.

On the local level, we continue to partner with community, faith-based and civic organizations. We also have stepped up efforts to ensure that community 2-1-1 organizations have access to current disaster information. On a national level, we continue to rely on our longstanding partners in disaster, such as the North American Mission Board (Southern Baptist Disaster Relief), The Salvation Army, Catholic Charities USA, and Feeding America. In addition, we are cultivating and strengthening more diverse partnerships with groups like HOPE *worldwide*, NAACP, Legal Services Corporation, Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, and National Baptist Convention USA. We work closely with disability rights groups, children's groups, immigration rights groups, and language interpretation and translation groups such as the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, National Council of La Raza, National Disability Rights Network, Children Disaster Services, Save the Children, and tribal

organizations. These partnerships, together with partnering efforts in the private sector and the local business community, are a key to ensuring the most efficient and effective service to our clients at the lowest cost possible.

Serving as an Effective Steward of the Donated Dollar

FEMA and other Federal agencies have made substantial changes as a result of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act, changes to the Stafford Act and the progression from the Federal Response Plan (FRP) to the National Response Plan (NRP) and to the National Response Framework (NRF). Similarly, the American Red Cross has taken steps to improve our operations and to ensure that we are able to continue to provide the services that the public needs and expects. We continue to work towards increasing efficiencies and reducing expenses, which is especially important in light of the number of disasters that generate expenses that outpace contributions.

Over the past few years, we have focused significant effort on stockpiling supplies and on partnering extensively with government, NGOs, faith-based organizations, and the private sector. These are needed improvements that will serve as the foundation of future operations. However, we know that we cannot build resiliency through capacity alone, so we are also developing a more community-based model for relief. We know that having supplies pre-stocked in warehouses is good preparation, but we also need to get these supplies to people in need following disasters.

A strong example of a community approach is what is occurring now in preparation for potential flooding across the Midwest. FEMA has moved quickly to send supplies, and has provided significant visibility into these supplies. This allows the American Red Cross and other NGOs to focus efforts on other aspects of these potential operations. A person in a shelter should not care if the cot is a Red Cross cot or a FEMA cot -- and that is just as it should be. In a large disaster, there is plenty of work for the whole community.

Another step to reduce costs while maintaining service levels is a strong and continued emphasis on local volunteers. While some larger disasters will require movement of volunteers using the American Red Cross national Disaster Services Human Resources system, use of volunteers from the local area is always our first choice. In addition to the obvious cost drivers, this also translates to a worker pool that is more reflective of a local community's population.

Finally, no discussion of stewardship would be complete without an acknowledgement of the financial constraints that currently face our organization. Like many NGOs, the American Red Cross is facing financial shortfalls that have been driven in part by the economic downturn. The American Red Cross has eliminated a $209 million operating deficit over two years and finished our fiscal year last June 30 with a modest operating surplus. However, we are facing increasing challenges in the coming year. Over the next several months, we will continue to review each and every program to ensure that we are as efficient and effective as possible. We take our obligation to the public and to our partners--including FEMA under the newly signed MOA--very seriously, and we are planning in earnest to ensure that we continue to provide the same excellent level of service as in past years.

Preparing for the Next Disaster

Our organization operates in a constant cycle of responding to disasters and preparing for the next one. The American Red Cross – at the local and national levels – regularly participates in activities to build capacity, partner, plan, prepare, exercise and evaluate our capabilities. We periodically review and, when necessary, refine our roles and responsibilities. Spring is a critical time of the year, as we are typically responding to tornadoes and floods at the same time that we are preparing for the potential demands of the upcoming hurricane season.

Each disaster to which we respond offers insight into how to best prepare for the next disaster. For example, our California chapters and our national headquarters staff have conducted extensive reviews after earthquake responses, including large quakes like Loma Prieta, Northridge, and events outside of the U.S. mainland. Based on these reviews, we have generated catastrophic earthquake plans that incorporate lessons learned and move towards streamlining our response structure. We also actively participated in FEMA's catastrophic planning process for both a Northern and a Southern California earthquake.

Nuclear events are another area of focus in our preparations, with a number of recent drills designed to identify potential gaps in capacity and preparedness. The American Red Cross provided testimony to this Subcommittee in July of 2009 that outlined gaps in the country's capabilities to handle a large-scale event, including housing shortages, case management, preparedness, and community resilience. While some gaps remain, the American Red Cross and the country have made considerable progress. A good example of the challenges that we face is in Washington, DC. While the potential shelter spaces in the District of Columbia is approximately 13,000, we have identified potential space for more than 70,000 in the greater metropolitan area and potential space for more than 600,000 in the surrounding area. These capacities are based on an inventory of previously inspected buildings that could be declared shelters by local emergency managers in the event of an emergency. While evacuees would of course prefer to stay in or near their home communities, infrastructure and access to social services are also critical components to a safe shelter environment. There are many scenarios such as this one where it would not be possible to meet all shelter needs locally.

Encouraging Community and Citizen Preparedness

On March 10, just one day prior to the March 11 Japan earthquake/tsunami, American Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces (SAF) staff, in partnership with members of the U.S. Military, conducted a one-week preparedness exercise for service members and their families at Yokota Air Base. While it is still too early to assess how much of a positive impact that this course may have had, we know from past experience that exercises such as these are important learning tools. Nothing can fully prepare a country for a disaster of this magnitude, but we should continue to work to prepare the individuals who could be affected.

Despite the compelling case for preparedness, surveys still show that the majority of the public has not taken the right steps to be ready. To offset the lack of preparedness, we are moving towards an approach that encourages people to help themselves in times of emergencies, and then to take on the responsibility for helping others, too. This model provides access to resources and training that enables people to enhance personal, neighborhood, and community capability. As Administrator Fugate and others have observed, the public must be viewed as a potential asset and not as a liability.

Note that our current efforts to train communities so that they can be resources during events are intended to supplement -- not replace -- our current preparedness messaging. Despite the challenges we have seen in changing behaviors, a single national message of preparedness remains important. Our "Be Red Cross Ready" campaign, which parallels FEMA's Ready Campaign, offers three important steps: (1) Get a Kit; (2) Make a Plan; and (3) Be Informed.

Finally, as we move towards increasing resilience, we need to take advantage of emerging communications channels like social media. In the past few years, we have started to focus on the use of social media for "just-in-time messaging," including preparedness messages that are disseminated throughout the course of a disaster. The public may not pay much attention in the calm before the storm, but we know that they are listening *during* events. We try to get the word out quickly and through multiple channels so that the public can help itself. We are also using "crowd-sourcing" to aggregate data generated by disaster survivors so that we can identify particular geographies that have needs.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony today. The American Red Cross is committed to be as prepared as possible for whatever disaster may strike. We are working hard to improve efficiencies, to eliminate redundancies, to partner effectively, and to increase individual and community preparedness.

We are excited to be working with this Subcommittee, with your Congressional colleagues, with FEMA Administrator Fugate and his strong leadership team, and with other leadership in the Executive Branch. As a member of the team, we stand ready to work with our partners in government, communities, nonprofit and faith based agencies, and the private sector to ensure that the country is as prepared as possible to respond.

I am happy to address any questions you may have.

STATEMENT
BY MICHAEL WEBER, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR
MATERIALS, WASTE, RESEARCH, STATE, TRIBAL AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAMS
UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

MARCH 30, 2011

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee. I am pleased to appear before you on behalf of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to discuss our emergency planning and preparedness programs at nuclear power facilities in the United States, and to discuss the protective action guidance recently issued by the U.S. Ambassador to American citizens in Japan in response to the events at the Fukushima-Daiichi nuclear power plant site.

NRC's primary mission is to regulate nuclear reactors, materials, and waste facilities in a manner that protects the health and safety of the public and promotes the common defense and security. Emergency preparedness is a key element of the "defense in depth" safety philosophy we employ for nuclear power plants. This philosophy ensures high quality in design, construction, and operation of nuclear power plants; requires redundant safety systems that reduce the chances that malfunctions will lead to accidents; and recognizes that in spite of all these precautions, unforeseen events could occur. Through emergency planning and preparedness, mechanisms are in place to protect the public in the unlikely event that these measures fail.

The NRC emergency preparedness and planning regulations are extensive and require the licensee to develop and demonstrate an effective emergency plan as a condition of their

license. The nuclear power plant operator is required to provide extensive emergency response training to emergency plant workers. For example, they are required to provide severe accident management training to control room operators, and to demonstrate personnel response in a rigorous drill and exercise program. The NRC inspects licensees to ensure that they are meeting emergency preparedness requirements and monitors performance indicators related to emergency preparedness.

To form a coordinated system of emergency preparedness and response, the NRC works with licensees; Federal agencies; State, Tribal, and local officials; and first responders. This program includes an every-other-year full participation exercise that engages both the onsite and offsite response organizations as well as Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These exercises are evaluated by both FEMA (offsite) and NRC (onsite) staff. NRC resident inspectors also observe licensee on-site emergency drills and exercises. It is safe to say that over the 30-plus years of operating history and at 104 operating nuclear power plants, there have been thousands of drills and exercises designed to ensure optimum response to abnormal and emergency conditions.

For planning purposes, we define two emergency planning zones, or EPZs, around nuclear power plant sites. The first zone, called the Plume Exposure Pathway EPZ, is an area covering a 10-mile radius around a nuclear power plant. This is the area that would require the most immediate protective actions as it has the greatest potential for exposure from a release. Planning for this area is comprehensive and includes such protective actions as evacuation, sheltering, and administration of potassium iodide, as appropriate, for members of the public.

Consideration of these protective actions is prompted at very low projected dose levels. A second emergency planning zone, called the Ingestion Pathway EPZ, covering a 50- mile radius

around each plant is also established to deal with potential lower-level, long-term risks primarily due to exposure from ingestion of contaminated food, milk, and water. This comprehensive planning within the 10 and 50 mile EPZs provides a substantial basis for expansion of response efforts in the event that this is necessary.

Let me now address the NRC's recent protective action recommendation for U.S citizens in Japan to evacuate out to 50 miles from the Fukushima-Daiichi site. That decision was based on the best information available during an evolving event. NRC began monitoring the event when the tsunami warning was issued for Hawaii and the west coast of the United States. The information flow from the Fukushima site was often confusing and conflicting. In order to provide timely information to the U.S. Ambassador to Japan, and to best protect the health and safety of U.S. citizens in Japan, we based our assessment on the conditions as we understood them at the time. This site has six nuclear power plants and 4 of the plants are facing extraordinary challenges. Units 1, 3 and 4 appeared to have suffered significant damage as a result of reported hydrogen explosions. We suspected that the concrete, secondary containment buildings were severely damaged by the explosions and may not be capable to perform their function of stopping the release of radiation. Unit 4 was in a refueling outage and its entire core had been transferred to the spent fuel pool a little more than 3 months earlier. This means that there was irradiated fuel that had been freshly loaded into the spent fuel pool that was in danger of overheating if the water level dropped, and there were indications that was happening. Additionally, radiation monitors were showing very high levels of radiation on the plant site, which would pose challenges to plant crew attempting to stabilize the reactors, and there were offsite readings indicating that fuel damage had occurred.

Since communications were limited and there was a large degree of uncertainty about plant conditions at the time, it was difficult to accurately assess the radiological hazard. In order to

determine the proper evacuation distance, the NRC staff performed a series of calculations using NRC's RASCAL computer code to assess possible offsite consequences. The computer models used meteorological model data appropriate for the Fukushima Daiichi vicinity. Source terms were based on hypothetical, but not unreasonable estimates of fuel damage, containment, and other release conditions. These calculations demonstrated that the Environmental Protection Agency's Protective Action Guidelines could be exceeded at a distance of 50 miles from the Fukushima site, if a large-scale release occurred from the reactors or spent fuel pools. We understood that some of our assumptions were conservative, but believed that it was better to err on the side of protection, especially in the case of a seemingly rapidly deteriorating situation.

If this situation had occurred in the United States, the NRC has resident inspector staff at the plants that can report back to the Region and Headquarters on conditions as they are evolving. In addition, we are able to readily access "live-time" plant parameters and radiation monitors, as well as talk directly to our licensee and emergency management officials allowing us to refine our understanding and consequence assessments. The licensee would then make a recommendation to State or local officials on what protective actions to take. With the Fukushima event we had to make our best decision with what we had available. The Emergency Preparedness framework provides for the expansion of the emergency planning zones as conditions require. Acting in accordance with this framework and with the best information available at the time, the NRC determined that evacuation out to 50 miles for U.S. citizens was an appropriate course of action, and we made that recommendation to other U.S. Government agencies.

This concludes my testimony. Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony. I would be happy to answer your questions.

Responses to Questions for the Record

Hearing on Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline our Emergency Management Program March 30, 2011

QUESTION 1. Of the 104 operating commercial nuclear reactors in the United States, how many are on or near active fault lines?

ANSWER.

An active fault is defined as a fault that has documented evidence of displacement of surficial or near-surficial materials in the "geologically recent past." NRC adopts a definition of "within the last 130,000 years" as being the "geologically recent past," consistent with that used by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in the National Fold and Fault Database.

Utilizing this definition, and a distance measure of "within 50 miles" to represent "on or near," there are four nuclear plant sites which contain 8 operating commercial nuclear power reactors that are within 50 miles of at least one identified active fault: Diablo Canyon, San Onofre, Columbia, and Palo Verde.

All US nuclear plants are built to withstand natural hazards, including earthquakes. Those nuclear plants that are located within areas of potentially higher seismic activity are designed for safety in the event of such a natural disaster. The NRC requires that safety-significant structures, systems, and components be designed to take into account even rare and extreme seismic events. In addition to the design of the plants, significant effort goes into emergency response planning and accident management. Each nuclear power plant is designed to a ground-motion level that is appropriate for its location, given the possible earthquake sources

that may affect the site and its tectonic environment. Ground motion is a function of both the magnitude of an earthquake and the distance from the fault plane to the site.

QUESTION 2. Construction of all 104 operating reactors began more than 30 years ago. Has the NRC required that all reactors located on or near active fault lines be retrofitted or improved to protect against earthquakes? If yes, what types of changes has the NRC required? What reactors have specifically been improved and which ones still require improvement?

ANSWER.

The NRC requires that each plant be designed to withstand the expected ground motion level from an earthquake specific to the site, plus additional margin to account for uncertainty.

Many plants have unique features associated with seismic design appropriate for their locations. Perhaps the most notable design features are the automatic reactor trip systems at Diablo Canyon and San Onofre, which are designed to shut down the plants if ground motion exceeds a predetermined level.

Currently, the NRC is evaluating Generic Issue (GI)-199, "Implications of Updated Probabilistic Seismic Estimates in Central and Eastern United States on Existing Plants." The NRC is performing an updated assessment of the adequacy of the earthquake design of U.S. nuclear power plants based on the latest data and analysis techniques. When completed, a determination will be made regarding any required changes at nuclear power plants. In addition, on an ongoing basis, the NRC has been regularly reviewing new seismic information regarding the plants in California as it becomes available.

As a result of the events in Japan, on March 23, 2011, the Commission directed the establishment of a task force to conduct a methodical and systematic review of NRC processes

and regulations to determine whether the agency should make enhancements to our regulatory system. This activity will have both near-term and longer-term components. The task force has begun its near-term effort, which consists of a 90-day review to evaluate all of the currently available information from the Japanese events to identify immediate or near-term operational or regulatory issues potentially affecting the 104 operating reactors in the U.S., including their spent fuel pools. The task force's meetings with the Commission will be open to the public as well as webcast. The final report will also be made available to the public, and NRC will send the Committee a copy of the report as we committed to during the March 30, 2011 hearing.

○