AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

FEMA PREPAREDNESS IN 2007 AND BEYOND

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JULY 31, 2007

Serial No. 110–62

Printed for the use of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/index.html
http://www.house.gov/reform

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

43–332 PDF WASHINGTON : 2008

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 OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

HENRY A. WAXMAN, California, *Chairman*

TOM LANTOS, California
EDOLPHUS TOWNS, New York
PAUL E. KANJORSKI, Pennsylvania
CAROLYN B. MALONEY, New York
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, Maryland
DENNIS J. KUCINICH, Ohio
DANNY K. DAVIS, Illinois
JOHN F. TIERNEY, Massachusetts
WM. LACY CLAY, Missouri
DIANE E. WATSON, California
STEPHEN F. LYNCH, Massachusetts
BRIAN HIGGINS, New York
JOHN A. YARMUTH, Kentucky
BRUCE L. BRALEY, Iowa
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, District of Columbia
BETTY McCOLLUM, Minnesota
JIM COOPER, Tennessee
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, Maryland
PAUL W. HODES, New Hampshire
CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY, Connecticut
JOHN P. SARBANES, Maryland
PETER WELCH, Vermont

TOM DAVIS, Virginia
DAN BURTON, Indiana
CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, Connecticut
JOHN M. McHUGH, New York
JOHN L. MICA, Florida
MARK E. SOUDER, Indiana
TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, Pennsylvania
CHRIS CANNON, Utah
JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr., Tennessee
MICHAEL R. TURNER, Ohio
DARRELL E. ISSA, California
KENNY MARCHANT, Texas
LYNN A. WESTMORELAND, Georgia
PATRICK T. McHENRY, North Carolina
VIRGINIA FOXX, North Carolina
BRIAN P. BILBRAY, California
BILL SALI, Idaho
JIM JORDAN, Ohio

PHIL SCHILIRO, *Chief of Staff*
PHIL BARNETT, *Staff Director*
EARLEY GREEN, *Chief Clerk*
DAVID MARIN, *Minority Staff Director*

CONTENTS

	Page
Hearing held on July 31, 2007	1
Statement of:	
Ashwood, Albert, director, Oklahoma State Emergency Management Agency, president, National Emergency Management Agency; Christopher Geldhart, director, Office of National Capital Region Coordination; Dewayne West, director of emergency management for Johnston County, NC, National Association of Counties, the International Association of Emergency Managers; Darrell Darnell, director, District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency; and Kathleen Tierney, director, Natural Hazards Center, University of Colorado, Boulder	148
Ashwood, Albert	148
Darnell, Darrell	171
Geldhart, Christopher	155
Tierney, Kathleen	179
West, Dewayne	162
Paulison, R. David, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency; Major General Terry Scherling, Director of the Joint Staff National Guard Bureau; and Matt Jadacki, Deputy Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security	14
Jadacki, Matt	46
Paulison, R. David	14
Scherling, Major General Terry	39
Letters, statements, etc., submitted for the record by:	
Ashwood, Albert, director, Oklahoma State Emergency Management Agency, president, National Emergency Management Agency, prepared statement of	151
Darnell, Darrell, director, District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, prepared statement of	173
Geldhart, Christopher, director, Office of National Capital Region Coordination, prepared statement of	157
Jadacki, Matt, Deputy Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security, prepared statement of	49
Kucinich, Hon. Dennis J., a Representative in Congress from the State of Ohio:	
Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change	85
Prepared statement of	10
Prepared statement of Mr. Jenkins	110
Paulison, R. David, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, prepared statement of	17
Scherling, Major General Terry, Director of the Joint Staff National Guard Bureau, prepared statement of	39
Tierney, Kathleen, director, Natural Hazards Center, University of Colorado, Boulder, prepared statement of	182
Towns, Hon. Edolphus, a Representative in Congress from the State of New York, prepared statement of	204
Waxman, Hon. Henry A., a Representative in Congress from the State of California, prepared statement of	3
West, Dewayne, director of emergency management for Johnston County, NC, National Association of Counties, the International Association of Emergency Managers, prepared statement of	165

FEMA PREPAREDNESS IN 2007 AND BEYOND

TUESDAY, JULY 31, 2007

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m. in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Henry A. Waxman (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Waxman, Towns, Kucinich, Davis of Illinois, Tierney, Clay, Watson, Higgins, Norton, Murphy, Sarbanes, Davis of Virginia, Shays, McHugh, Westmoreland, McHenry, Foxx, Sali, and Jordan.

Also present: Representative Jindal.

Staff present: Phil Barnett, staff director and chief counsel; Kristin Amerling, general counsel; Greg Dotson, chief environmental counsel; David Leviss, senior investigative counsel; Erik Jones and Susanne Sachsman, counsels; Daniel Davis, professional staff member; Earley Green, chief clerk; Teresa Coufal, deputy clerk; Caren Auchman, press assistant; Zhongrui "JR" Deng, chief information officer; Leneal Scott, information systems manager; Jaron Bourke, staff director, Domestic Policy Subcommittee; Noura Erakat, counsel, Domestic Policy Subcommittee; Jean Gosa, clerk, Domestic Policy Subcommittee; Evan Schlom, intern, Domestic Policy Subcommittee; David Marin, minority staff director; Larry Halloran, minority deputy staff director; Jennifer Safavian, minority chief counsel for oversight and investigations; Keith Ausbrook, minority general counsel; Steve Castor, minority counsel; Grace Washbourne, minority senior professional staff member; John Cuaderes and Larry Brady, minority senior investigator and policy advisors; Patrick Lyden, minority parliamentarian and member services coordinator; Brian McNicoll, minority communications director; Benjamin Chance, minority clerk; Ali Ahmad, minority deputy press secretary; and Meredith Liberty, minority staff assistant correspondence coordinator.

Chairman WAXMAN. The meeting of the committee will please come to order.

Today the committee is holding its second day of hearings on the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Less than 2 weeks ago, the committee examined the Agency's response to reports of formaldehyde in FEMA trailers on the Gulf Coast. Our hearing revealed an inexcusable indifference within FEMA to the suffering of displaced hurricane victims living in the contaminated trailers.

As good oversight should, the hearing also served as a catalyst for reform. FEMA announced that it would reverse its policy and

begin testing occupied trailers for dangerous levels of formaldehyde.

Today's hearing will focus on FEMA's preparedness going forward. We will take a broader look at the Agency and ask whether the Federal Government is better prepared now for natural disasters than it was when Hurricane Katrina struck.

These hearings are part of a series of hearings in this committee on how to make Government work. The goal of these hearings is to spotlight deficiencies in Government and restore public confidence in key Government agencies. FEMA used to be widely admired for its effectiveness, but, as Hurricane Katrina showed, cronyism, under-funding, and lack of leadership turned FEMA in to the most-ridiculed agency in Government.

The question we will ask in today's hearing is a simple one: has FEMA restored its capacity to serve the public effectively in times of crisis?

I would like to thank two Members in particular for their work on this hearing. Ranking Member Davis requested this hearing and worked closely with us in selecting the witnesses and organizing the hearing. As the Chair of the House Select Committee on Hurricane Katrina in the last Congress, he looked in detail at what went wrong at FEMA. His expertise and perspective will benefit all committee members.

I also want to thank the Chair of our Domestic Policy Subcommittee, Dennis Kucinich, for his leadership. Oversight of FEMA falls within his subcommittee's jurisdiction, and he and his staff have devoted many hours to examine FEMA and preparing for today's hearing.

We have two panels of witnesses today and I look forward to their testimony on the important issues of FEMA's preparedness.

[The prepared statement of Chairman Henry A. Waxman follows:]

Opening Statement of
Rep. Henry A. Waxman. Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Hearing on
FEMA's Preparedness for the Next Major Disaster

July 31, 2007

Today, the Committee is holding its second day of hearings on the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Less than two weeks ago, the Committee examined the agency's response to reports of formaldehyde in FEMA trailers on the Gulf Coast. Our hearing revealed an inexcusable indifference within FEMA to the suffering of displaced hurricane victims living in contaminated trailers.

As good oversight should, the hearing also served as a catalyst for reform. FEMA announced that it would reverse its policy and begin testing occupied trailers for dangerous levels of formaldehyde.

Today's hearing will focus on FEMA's preparedness going forward. We will take a broader look at the agency and ask whether the federal government is better prepared now for natural disasters than it was when Hurricane Katrina struck.

These hearings are part of a series of hearings in this Committee on how to make government work. The goal of these hearings is to spotlight deficiencies in government and restore public confidence in key government agencies.

FEMA used to be widely admired for its effectiveness. But as Hurricane Katrina showed, cronyism, under-funding, and lack of leadership turned FEMA into the most ridiculed agency in government.

The question we will ask in today's hearing is a simple one: Has FEMA restored its capacity to serve the public effectively in times of crisis?

I would like to thank two members in particular for their work on this hearing. Ranking Member Davis requested this hearing and worked closely with us in selecting the witnesses and organizing the hearing. As the Chair of the House Select Committee on Hurricane Katrina in the last Congress, he looked in detail at what went wrong at FEMA. His expertise and perspective will benefit all Committee members.

I also want to thank the Chair of our Domestic Policy Subcommittee, Dennis Kucinich, for his leadership. Oversight of FEMA falls within his jurisdiction, and he and his staff have devoted many hours to examining FEMA and preparing for today's hearing.

We have two distinguished panels of witnesses today, and I look forward to their testimony on the important issue of FEMA's preparedness.

Chairman WAXMAN. Mr. Davis, I want to recognize you at this point.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Good morning.

Before embarking on their summer travels, every American family kicks the tires, checks the oil, and makes sure their vehicle is ready for the ride. Before Congress heads home for the August recess, it is important that we do the same: we check under the hood of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the vehicle meant to carry us safely through the hazards in our path.

Disasters are indiscriminate, completely nonpartisan, purveyors of devastation and grief. Reflecting that hard reality, this hearing is also a nonpartisan review of FEMA's readiness to perform its vital mission.

Chairman Waxman and Domestic Policy Subcommittee Chairman Kucinich agreed with our request to continue the committee's active oversight of post-Katrina preparedness issues. We appreciate their working with us to frame this experience as a constructive examination of reforms underway at FEMA.

Hurricane Katrina laid bare devastating dysfunction in the Nation's catastrophic response capabilities. We saw critical failures in essential response functions, personnel, planning, logistics, communications, and fiscal stewardship. The Select Committee on Katrina, which I chaired, produced 90 substantive findings to guide the reforms and restoration of national emergency systems. A White House report made 125 recommendations. The administration acknowledged the need to strengthen FEMA and untangle the crossed wires that left States and localities wondering who was in charge and when needed help would arrive.

Many attributed FEMA's problems to the organizational and fiscal price the Agency paid when it was merged into the Department of Homeland Security. Preparedness programs were separate from response planning. Logistic systems atrophied. Budget constraints took a toll. Key personnel with essential skills and institutional memories left. And communications with State and local stakeholders got muddled passing through layers of bureaucratic filters.

Some of us thought FEMA had to be independent again, liberated from the strangling, all-terrorism myopia at DHS and empowered once again to pursue a proven all-hazards approach.

To cure what the Select Committee characterized as a failure of initiative, Congress enacted the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act so that future catastrophes would trigger a far more proactive, robust, and coordinated response to those in need of help. The new FEMA to emerge, although not fully independent, was to be autonomous enough within DHS to take charge when disaster struck. Preparedness grants and training were brought back home to FEMA. Pre-positioning plans and logistics systems were modernized. Lines of authority and accountability were clarified.

Today we take a timely look at how those reforms are being implemented and what still might prevent FEMA from functioning effectively as the Nation's trusted agent and premier catalyst for disaster preparation, response, and mitigation.

As we head into the heart of what is still predicted to be a very active hurricane system, we see troubling signs that key reforms

have not yet taken hold, and that FEMA may still be hobbled with the larger DHS structure.

Specifically, lines of authority still seem blurred and local officials remain frustrated over high-handed, indecisive, and slow answers from Washington, when they get any answers at all. The recent appointment of principal Federal officials and Federal coordinating officers by Secretary Chertoff appears to have bypassed FEMA altogether. Governors were told to direct any questions about these key positions to DHS directorate not even in the emergency response chain of command.

The new logistics systems may not be ready for prime time, and the Government Accountability Office reports FEMA still lacks a strategic work force plan and a related human capital strategy to attract and retain the right people with the requisite skills and experience to sustain effective response operations.

These are all indications DHS may again be following what one of today's witnesses cites as "the spare tire theory of emergency management." Under that discredited premise, disaster response capabilities could be left locked away and forgotten, on the assumption they will work just fine when we need them. But when Katrina struck and we dug FEMA out from under all the terrorism manuals in DHS' trunk, those critical tools had gone dull and flat from neglect. That can't happen again.

Like maintaining the family sedan, keeping the Nation's emergency response vehicle running requires regular lubrication and frequent road tests. Today's oversight hearing is our part of the new FEMA's maintenance program.

I join the chairman in welcoming our witnesses. We look forward to their testimony and to a candid discussion of our Nation's readiness to overcome the predictable and the unexpected hazards on the road ahead.

Thank you.

Chairman WAXMAN. Thank you, Mr. Davis.

Chairman Kucinich.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you very much, Chairman Waxman, Ranking Member Davis. I appreciate the opportunity to work with you and cooperate with you on these important hearings regarding the Government's lack of appropriate response to post-Hurricane Katrina.

The totally inadequate response to and the problems plaguing the recovery and reconstruction from Hurricane Katrina has spawned numerous reports, recommendations, and legislation. We would all like to believe that the executive branch's response to all of that oversight deserves its preferred name, the new FEMA. Today we will examine whether the new FEMA lives up to its moniker.

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast. It devastated the region, destroying homes, businesses, and properties, flooded New Orleans with more than 100 billion gallons of water. In total, the storm took the lives of more than 1,500 people.

This vast swath of destruction across the Gulf Coast tested all levels of government. State and local first responders were almost immediately overwhelmed, and Federal agencies led by FEMA struggled to respond to the hurricane's impact. FEMA's response

displayed a shocking lack of disaster preparation and response capabilities.

As we approach the 2-year anniversary of the country's last catastrophic disaster, we are taking a look at FEMA and seeing if FEMA has learned the lessons from Hurricane Katrina, and we will be looking to see if the so-called new FEMA is not just preparing for the last disaster but for the next national emergency, whatever that might be, whether from an earthquake or influenza pandemic or some other type of natural disaster.

The Government Accountability Office has stated that there are three fronts necessary to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a catastrophic disaster. Those areas are leadership, capabilities, and accountability. The Federal Government's response to Hurricane Katrina demonstrated a failure on all three fronts. Roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority were not clearly defined. The adequacy of the Government's capabilities for communication, evacuation, search and rescue, mass care, and sheltering and logistics were challenged, and FEMA likely made between $600 million and $1.4 billion in improper and possibly fraudulent payments.

These failures spawned a number of Federal investigations, findings, and recommendations, and, following in-depth investigations, reports were published by the House Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina, the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, the White House Homeland Security Council, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security, and FEMA, itself. These reports identified a variety of successes, failures, and recommendations for improving the Federal response to a catastrophic disaster.

These reports were not the only Federal response. We had the Post-Katrina Emergency Management and Reform Act of 2006, assessed by Congress, signed into law by the President in order to strengthen FEMA and ensure that it is better prepared for the next catastrophic disaster. We know that FEMA has begun implementing the Post-Katrina Act. We know that it has made significant changes. We are to evaluate whether or not the new FEMA, as it now stands, is capable of handling the next disaster, and we have learned that, despite the strides FEMA has made, many challenges still remain.

Some of those challenges include the following: FEMA has not released the National Response Plan, and the country is already 2 months into the 2007 hurricane season.

State and local officials have raised concerns about FEMA's lack of independence and its ability to provide assistance and coordination.

FEMA does not appear to be tracking which recommendations it has and has not implemented from the reports published by the White House, Congress, and other Federal agencies.

It is not clear whether or not FEMA is ready to coordinate large-scale evacuations or mass care and sheltering. FEMA has created over 180 mission assignments with over 20 Federal agencies, but it is not clear whether proper FEMA oversight exists to effectuate those missions in the case of a disaster.

As of July 2007, 24 of 77 of executive positions at FEMA were not filled, and as this committee learned 2 weeks ago at its trailer hearing, FEMA is still making tragic mistakes in the Gulf Coast.

To be sure, FEMA's lack of preparing for and responding to a catastrophic disaster is daunting. The evacuation of an entire metropolitan area following a disaster is very complicated. It is expensive and difficult. The task of coordinating mass care and sheltering thousands of people is very complicated. It is expensive.

FEMA has a tough mission, but no one, as far as I know, has told us the assignment is too tough and that the mission cannot be accomplished, so FEMA has a tough but doable job, and this committee's duty is to conduct oversight to ensure that FEMA can lead a disaster response; prepare for, prevent, and help areas recover from disasters. So today this committee will examine whether FEMA is achieving that function.

Again I want to thank Mr. Waxman and Mr. Davis for suggesting today's hearing. Mr. Davis, of course, has chaired the House Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina, conducting important oversight on disaster preparedness.

I want to thank Mr. Waxman and Mr. Davis. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Dennis J. Kucinich follows:]

Opening Statement
Congressman Dennis J. Kucinich, Chairman
Domestic Policy Subcommittee
Oversight and Government Reform Committee

"Disaster Preparedness in 2007 and Beyond"
2154 Rayburn HOB – 10:00 A. M.
Tuesday, July 31, 2007

The totally inadequate response to, and the problems plaguing the recovery and reconstruction from, Hurricane Katrina spawned numerous reports, recommendations, and legislation.

We would all like to believe that the executive branch's response to all of that oversight deserves its preferred name, the "new FEMA." Today we will examine whether New FEMA can live up to its moniker.

On August 29th, 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast. It devastated the region, destroying homes, businesses, and property. It flooded New Orleans with more than 100 billion gallons of water. In total, the storm took the lives of more than 1,500 people.

This vast swath of destruction across the Gulf Coast tested all levels of government. State and local first responders were almost immediately overwhelmed and federal agencies, led by FEMA, struggled to respond to the hurricane's impact. Simply, FEMA's response displayed a shocking lack of disaster preparation and response capabilities.

As we approach the two-year anniversary of the country's last catastrophic disaster, we are taking a look at the progress

- the White House Homeland Security Council;
- the Inspector General for the Department of Homeland Security;
- and FEMA itself.

These reports identified a variety of successes, failures, and recommendations for improving the federal response to a catastrophic disaster. The reports were not the only federal response.

The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 was also passed by Congress and signed into law by the President in order to strengthen FEMA and ensure that it is better prepared for the next catastrophic disaster.

We know that FEMA has begun implementing the Post-Katrina Act and we know that it has made significant changes. We are to evaluate whether or not the "new FEMA" as it now stands, is capable of handling the next catastrophic disaster whatever it may be and wherever it may strike.

We have learned that, despite the strides FEMA has made, many challenges still remain. Some of these challenges include the following:

- FEMA has not released the National Response Plan and the country is
  already 2 months into the 2007 hurricane season;

doable job. This Committee's duty is to conduct oversight to ensure that FEMA can lead a disaster response, prepare for, prevent, and recover from disasters. Today, this Committee will examine whether FEMA is achieving this function.

I would like to thank the Ranking Member of the Committee, Tom Davis, for suggesting today's hearing. He chaired the House Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina and has conducted important oversight on disaster preparedness.

I look forward to hearing from each of our witnesses today and I thank them for being here.

Chairman WAXMAN. Thank you, Mr. Kucinich.

I now want to call on the ranking member of the Domestic Policy Subcommittee, Mr. Issa.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Davis.

This is the type of oversight the American public expects of us, and what we discovered today, needless to say, cannot be nearly as much as we have already seen here.

What we do want to find out today is whether or not at all levels of government we are prepared post-9/11, when we clearly were not prepared. The Katrina response pointed out weaknesses we had in disaster preparedness and disaster response.

I want to join with my colleagues in recognizing the ranking member and my friend, Tom Davis, who spent countless hours as the chairman of the Bipartisan Select Committee to Investigate the Response to Katrina, and the excellent work he did on a bipartisan basis to expose the flaws in our country's disaster preparedness regime. His work led to what we will be talking about today, post-Katrina reform legislation, and today we are here to find out if anything has changed in the world of disaster preparedness.

I feel strongly that it is likely that we will be told we are ready. I feel equally strongly that we on the dias will have a responsibility to figure out how we fill in the gaps that clearly, clearly exist but, in fact, have either not been recognized or have been down played as to their importance.

Specifically, we need answers to the following: is there a new FEMA, and how is it different than the one that responded so poorly in the Gulf Hurricanes? What is the relationship between the Federal Government, State governments, and local governments? Is it stronger? Is it ready? Are they partners, or is one government calling the shots and the others expected to fall in line?

Disaster preparedness and response should not be the sole responsibility of the Federal Government. State and local governments should be first in line of defense when it comes to preparedness and response and should be listened to by Federal agencies. The bully tactics that were clearly in place cannot be accepted, nor can, in fact, a refusal to cooperate, both of which, as well reported, we saw in the post-Katrina report.

The Federal Government needs to supplement State and local governments, not supplant them. But, as was evidenced in Hurricane Katrina, when the Federal Government is needed, they need to be there swiftly and in coordinated fashion and instill the confidence to those affected by the disaster.

I hope that at the end of today's hearing I can tell my constituents that we can count on the government at all levels—I repeat, all levels—to be there for them in the time of disaster.

Clearly, the disaster like what happened after Hurricane Katrina will not happen in California. I am also going to be very concerned about not are we ready for Katrina II, but are we ready for an earthquake, a sizable earthquake, a Northridge Earthquake times two in California? California has had a long history of events that are more catastrophic in the initial stages and often followed by fire than anything we saw in New Orleans.

So, although I very much want to see what we have done post-Katrina, it is my obligation and I am sure the chairman's obliga-

tion as California Members to ask about other disasters and other responses not previously in the report.

Mr. Chairman, once again I thank you for your continued interest and yield back.

Chairman WAXMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Issa.

We are pleased to welcome for our first panel Mr. R. David Paulison, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; Major General Terry Scherling, Director of the Joint Staff National Guard Bureau; and Mr. Matt Jadacki, Deputy Inspector General of the Office of the Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security.

We are pleased to welcome you to our hearing today. Your statements will be made part of the record in full. We are going to have a clock that will time 5 minutes. We would like you to try to keep as close to the 5-minute period as possible.

It is the practice of this committee to swear in all witnesses, so if you would, please stand and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairman WAXMAN. The record will show that the witnesses answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Paulison, why don't we start with you.

STATEMENTS OF R. DAVID PAULISON, ADMINISTRATOR, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY; MAJOR GENERAL TERRY SCHERLING, DIRECTOR OF THE JOINT STAFF NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU; AND MATT JADACKI, DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL, OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

STATEMENT OF R. DAVID PAULISON

Mr. PAULISON. Thank you, Mr. Chair and Ranking Member Davis, and other distinguished members of the committee. I do welcome the opportunity to appear before this committee to discuss how FEMA has prepared for the 2007 hurricane season in the wake of our recent reorganization.

Based on the many lessons learned, FEMA instituted numerous reforms to improve our ability to respond to and recover from disasters. In addition to FEMA's internal transformation that we embraced to improve this Agency, the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA have been working together closely to implement adjustments included in the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act. The result is a new FEMA that is strong, it is more nimble than it was just a year ago. It has improved our preparedness posture for the 2007 hurricane season.

You can see the impact of these changes in our recent response this year to Florida, Georgia, Alabama, the Kansas tornados, the nor'easter that affected the States across the mid-Atlantic and New England, and recent flooding in the Plains.

In each of these cases, FEMA quickly was an engaged partner with the State. We deployed operational and technical experts. We rolled logistics and communication capabilities, and we did this even before disaster declaration. We also coordinated with the Governor's office to facilitate the Presidential declaration.

It was also FEMA that supported and helped facilitate an effective, unified command system amongst the many Federal, State, and local partners involved in the responses. We call this an engaged partnership. Our response to these diverse and numerous events across the breadth of this great country are evidence of the new FEMA's readiness for the 2007 hurricane season.

Today I will focus on our advanced preparations, our plans for operations during the storm, and our improved ability to help with the short and long-term recovery.

Local governments will always be the first to respond, but FEMA does have an important role to play. The old paradigm of waiting for State and local governments to become overwhelmed before providing Federal assistance simply does not work. We have to go in as partners. This engaged partnership with FEMA will strengthen our relationship with key State and local partners, and we will also recognize that one size does not fit all when it comes to responding to States.

FEMA is helping each State analyze its strengths and weaknesses; thus, our planning is more informed and we can better anticipate specific needs and quickly move to support each State.

The reorganization has provided additional strength to these efforts. The Post-Katrina Reform Act establishes 10 regional administrator positions. This spring we have filled all 10, and not just with anyone, but with solid, experienced managers, each with 20 and 30 years of hands-on experience dealing in emergency management.

We have added senior staff at the national level, with a new Disability Coordinator, Lou Daniel; the new U.S. Fire Administrator, Chief Greg Kay; our Logistics Management Assistant Administrator, Eric Smith; and the pending confirmation of Assistant Administrator for Preparedness, Dennis Schrader.

I would like to highlight one office that has joined FEMA in the new reorganization, the Office of National Capital Region Coordination, whose mission is to oversee and coordinate Federal programs for the relationship to State, local, and regional authorities and the National Capital Region. Chris Geldhart, Director of the Office, will be speaking to you today in a later panel about this important office's role in the new FEMA and the NCR.

With these new and experienced leaderships in place, FEMA will be ready to act. As part of our improved reform operation, we have pre-arranged contracts, an approved and improving logistics system, and other elements already in place to expedite this response. FEMA can surge its own team and assets into an area in anticipation of an approaching storm.

This forward-leaning new FEMA is evidence in our response to the tornado that devastated Greensburg, KS, this past May. In the first 72 hours, FEMA coordinated the efforts of numerous Federal agencies. FEMA had an urban search and rescue team on the ground the same day Kansas asked for the support. Supplies were rolling in within hours. Mobile support vehicles moved in early. I am proud of the response by our team. Federal, State, and local partners all together responded to this tragedy.

Once the storm is passed, FEMA is also better organized and better prepared to help in the recovery. FEMA's Disaster Assist-

ance Directorate has expanded its capabilities to assist with mass care; sheltering; debris removal; victim registration, including enhanced protections against waste, fraud, and abuse; and coordination among Government and private sector entities all moving to provide assistance.

One example of FEMA's response is the storms in the northeast this spring. FEMA had staff on the ground before the rain stopped, evaluating damage and registering victims. Mobile assistance centers were available in the immediate wake of the storm. The first individual financial aid was activated, delivered less than 24 hours after the President signed the first declaration. This fast, efficient, multi-State response shows the type of action you can expect from FEMA during this year's hurricane storm.

In conclusion, we have made real progress with FEMA and are much better aligned and prepared for the 2007 hurricane season. By leaning further forward to coordinate the Federal response, which is more informed through assessments and communications with our partners, we can better serve all Americans.

To wrap up, Mr. Chairman, today FEMA has created engaged partnerships with State and local governments. We facilitated and supplied an effective, unified command across all levels of government. We have engaged hurricane-prone States to gain a better understanding of their vulnerabilities. We have improved logistics, communication capabilities to improve response, and enhanced disaster assistance capabilities to recovery efforts.

We are not done yet, Mr. Chair, but if our progress over the past year is any indication, I believe we are on the right track for fulfilling our vision of becoming the Nation's preeminent emergency management agency.

I am proud of the men and women of this Agency. They have put their hearts and souls into rebuilding this Agency.

Thank you for your continued support, and I thank you for the opportunity to appear in front of this panel.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Paulison follows:]

Statement of

R. David Paulison

Administrator

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Department of Homeland Security

Before the
United States House of Representatives
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Washington, DC

July 31, 2007

Introduction

Good morning, Chairman Waxman, Ranking Member Davis and Members of the Committee.

I welcome the opportunity to appear before this Committee to discuss how the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is prepared, not only for the current 2007 Hurricane Season, but for other potentially catastrophic disasters and emergencies that may happen today and in the future.

The Federal response to the 2005 Hurricanes was a clarion call for change in disaster response and recovery for the country and all of those involved in emergency management. Based on the many lessons learned, FEMA instituted numerous reforms to improve its ability to respond to and recover from disasters. In addition to FEMA's internal transformation that we embraced to improve the agency, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and FEMA have been working closely with other components within DHS to implement the adjustments included in the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA or "the Act"). The combination of FEMA's transformation and changes made by PKEMRA are resulting in a new FEMA that is stronger, more nimble and more robust than we were just a year ago.

I would like to address the changes we have made to build a new FEMA, the reforms in our planning and operations under this structure, and their effect on our preparedness.

Let me begin with the reorganization.

The New FEMA – Organization

Last fall, Congress passed and the President signed into law the FY 2007 Homeland Security Appropriations Act (P.L. 109-295), which included PKEMRA. The legislation reorganizes DHS and reconfigures FEMA to include consolidated emergency management functions, including national preparedness functions.

Significantly, and consistent with the lessons learned, the new FEMA has not simply tacked on new programs and responsibilities to an existing structure. Rather, we conducted a thorough assessment of the internal FEMA structure, including new and existing competencies and responsibilities within FEMA. On April 1 of this year, this new and expanded FEMA was formally established. This new organization reflects the expanded scope of FEMA's responsibilities—and the core competencies that we are seeking to establish and enhance. It supports a more nimble, flexible use of resources. It strengthens coordination among FEMA elements and with other DHS components. It enables FEMA to better coordinate with agencies and departments outside of DHS. It also delivers enhanced capabilities to our partners at the State, local and tribal

governments and emergency management and preparedness organizations at all levels, and engages the capabilities and strengths that reside in the private sector.

I'd like to highlight one office that joined FEMA in this reorganization -- the Office of National Capital Region Coordination whose mission is to oversee and coordinate Federal programs for and relationships with State, local and regional authorities in the National Capital Region (NCR). Chris Geldart, Director of the Office, will be speaking with you today in a later panel on this important Office's role in the new FEMA and in the NCR.

National Preparedness

Of particular note in the reorganization, the new FEMA includes a new National Preparedness Directorate, which incorporates functions related to preparedness doctrine, policy and contingency planning. It also contains the exercise coordination and evaluation program, emergency management training, the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program and the Radiological Emergency Preparedness program.

Other FEMA Headquarters Elements

In addition to preparedness, the new FEMA is sharpening the agency's focus on building core competencies in logistics, operational planning, incident management and the delivery of disaster assistance. To this end, the new structure includes:

1. A *Logistics Management* Directorate to fulfill the mandate of the revised Homeland Security Act (HSA) Section 636;
2. A *Disaster Assistance* Directorate incorporating elements of the previous FEMA Recovery Division; and
3. A *Disaster Operations* Directorate incorporating the previous FEMA Response Division and elements from the Preparedness Directorate's National Preparedness Task Force.

FEMA also has established directorates that focus more clearly on broader issues of preparedness, protection and mitigation, including the *National Continuity Programs* Directorate (formerly Office of National Security Coordination), and the *Mitigation* Directorate.

The agency also has created a number of new advocate positions or groups to provide a more comprehensive framework for emergency management.

I am pleased to report that, following consultation with appropriate groups, including disability interest groups as well as State, local and tribal groups, FEMA appointed Ms. Cindy Lou Daniel to the new position of Disability Coordinator. Ms. Daniel works with

the Disaster Assistance and Disaster Operations Directorates, ensuring that FEMA incorporates necessary provisions for the disabled as we plan, respond to, and recover from disasters. The Disability Coordinator, who reports directly to the Administrator, is charged with assessing the coordination of emergency management policies and practices with the needs of individuals with disabilities, including training, accessibility of entry, transportation, media outreach, and general coordination and dissemination of model best practices, including evacuation planning. The Disability Coordinator will work closely with the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

PKEMRA also requires FEMA to establish a National Advisory Council (Council). FEMA announced the proposed Council members on June 19, 2007. These Council members are men and women from diverse backgrounds representing State, local, and tribal entities in the public and private sectors with related experience in emergency management who can contribute to FEMA's efforts to determine how to best serve the American people. Some of the disciplines represented in the Council include professionals in emergency management and response, public health, standards setting, communications, infrastructure protection, cyber security, and special needs.

Additionally, our new structure includes a Small State and Rural Advocate who will serve as the voice for the fair treatment of smaller States and rural communities as we implement response and recovery policies.

FEMA also reorganized our internal management and support functions into offices that are better aligned to support our mission and to coordinate with our partners across all levels of government, with the non-profit community and with the private sector.

FEMA Regional Offices

Where the "rubber really meets the road" is in FEMA's regional offices. Having key leaders with the necessary experience and adequate resources to support their missions across the country is an important element of the agency's reorganization. The ten Regional Administrators report directly to me, the Administrator, and are supported by Regional Advisory Councils. The Regional Advisory Councils provide advice and recommendations to the Regional Administrators on regional emergency management issues and identify weaknesses or deficiencies in preparedness, protection, response, recovery and mitigation for State, local and tribal governments based on their specialized knowledge of the region. We have filled all 10 Regional Administrator posts with men and women with 20 to 30 years of emergency management experience. We also are working to improve operational capabilities in the regions and will establish Incident Management Assist Teams (IMATs) in them. The IMATs will support the enhanced regions by providing a dedicated 24 x 7 organic response capability. When not deployed, IMATs will train with and enhance the emergency management capabilities of our Federal, State, local and tribal partners. IMATs are discussed in more detail under the "Building FEMA's Operational Capabilities" section of this statement.

The New FEMA – Planning and Operations and Their Impact On 2007

The result of these changes is a new FEMA that is better prepared for the future than the organization was in the past. We have a stronger organization with stronger leaders and dedicated men and women striving to serve those most in need. But these structural changes will not be meaningful unless matched with a similar change in FEMA's vision and goals. We are working diligently to reestablish America's trust and confidence in FEMA, and are focused on our vision to become the nation's preeminent emergency management and preparedness agency.

The guiding principle of this new FEMA is to lean further forward to deliver more effective disaster assistance to individuals and communities impacted by a disaster. We call it "engaged partnership." This partnership was evident in the Florida, Georgia, and Alabama tornadoes, the Nor'easter that affected the New England States, and in Kansas, where the community of Greensburg was devastated by a tornado.

In these disasters, FEMA was engaged with the State within minutes of the disaster, immediately deployed operational and technical experts to the disaster site, started moving logistics and communications capabilities even before a disaster declaration and coordinated with the Governor to facilitate a Presidential disaster declaration. Also, FEMA has supported and helped to facilitate an effective Unified Command with other Federal agencies, and State and local officials.

FEMA's support of the response operations for States impacted by large, uncontrolled wildfires is a prime example of our ability to lean forward. FEMA provides Fire Management Assistance Grants (FMAGs) to States when a fire threatens such destruction as would constitute a major disaster. FMAG declarations operate on a 24-hour, real time basis to provide assistance through emergency protective measures, which may include grants, equipment, supplies, and personnel for the mitigation and management of a fire threatening a major disaster. This year, FEMA has provided assistance in the form of FMAG declarations for over 30 fires across 13 States. This assistance includes support of the States of California, Florida, Georgia, and Utah, all of which have experienced extreme fire activity this year. California received seven FMAGs, including one in support of the Angora Fire which significantly threatened the communities around Lake Tahoe. The States of Florida and Georgia received a combined total of 11 FMAGs to assist with their unprecedented early fire season. Utah received assistance for two of the largest fires in the State's history. These grants were declared within hours of being requested, often in the middle of the night, to make available Federal assistance to protect citizens and critical facilities. These efforts demonstrate FEMA's ability to support and help facilitate an effective unified response with other Federal agencies, and State and local officials.

All of these actions were taken by a well led, motivated, and professional FEMA workforce that has embraced and enhanced the vision and reality of a new FEMA.

Projections from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for the 2007 hurricane season indicate we can expect a likely range of 13-17 named storms, 7-10 hurricanes, and 3-5 major hurricanes [categories 3-4-5 on the Saffir-Simpson scale]. We must be prepared to respond to any such storm – whether it strikes our heartland or just skirts our shores. Even storms that don't make landfall impact our plans and activities.

FEMA has prepared for an active 2007 hurricane season by taking the following actions:

1. Established a heightened posture of hurricane preparedness across all 18 hurricane impact risk States, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands;
2. Engaged our State and Federal partners in more thorough and informed hurricane planning; and
3. Built up FEMA's operational capabilities to provide effective response and recovery.

Establishing a Heightened Posture of Hurricane Preparedness

FEMA is placing its primary emphasis on strengthening the Federal-State partnership to better ensure that we are able to achieve shared objectives for a safe, coordinated and effective response and recovery effort.

First, we are emphasizing the States' primary responsibility to provide for the safety and security of their citizens. The States must take the lead to ensure they and their local jurisdictions are prepared for the hurricane season.

The various State Emergency Management Agencies coordinate the overall management of an emergency to include requests for support and resources from other State agencies, from other States under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), and for supplemental assistance from the Federal government. The EMAC process offers State-to-State assistance during Governor-declared states of emergency. EMAC offers a responsive and straightforward system under which States can send personnel and equipment to help disaster relief efforts in other States. When one State's resources are overwhelmed, other States can help to fill the shortfalls through EMAC.

The strength of EMAC and the quality that distinguishes it from other plans and compacts lies in its governance structure, its relationship with Federal organizations, States, counties, territories, and regions, and the ability to move just about any resource from one State to another.

Secondly, by advancing the concept of engaged partnership, FEMA will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the State—we are there to support, fill gaps, and help to achieve a

successful response and recovery. In the past, our system was cued to sequential failure: where the State held back until the local jurisdiction was overwhelmed, and the Federal system held back until the State was overwhelmed. This approach, evident in the response to Katrina, caused delays in delivering support. Under "engaged partnership," FEMA has strengthened the relationship between FEMA Regional Administrators and State Emergency Managers to focus on more deliberate disaster planning. In preparation for this hurricane season, we engaged each of the 18 hurricane impact States (Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas), the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Territories in a focused effort to identify strengths and weaknesses. We are engaged now in discussions with hurricane-prone areas of our Nation to better understand and address gaps and develop mitigation strategies to ensure successful response and recovery. FEMA is prepared to allocate commodities and enlist the assistance of other Departments and agencies as needed to ensure a strong response to a call for assistance. As a result of our joint planning, we can now anticipate needs much better than we have before and provide support more expeditiously.

Third, FEMA has extended its reach across the span of Federal agencies to ensure the smooth and responsive coordination of Federal support when it is needed. The most visible demonstration of that coordination is the array of Federal capabilities contained in our "playbook" of pre-scripted mission assignments. This playbook represents an examination of the range of Federal support that may be requested in response to a disaster. It also includes advance interagency coordination to ensure delivery of that capability when called upon in time of need. At present, we have developed and coordinated 187 pre-scripted mission assignments with as many as 21 Federal agencies. Up to an additional 40 are still under review. This support ranges from heavy-lift helicopters from the Department of Defense (DOD), to generators from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to Disaster Medical Assistance Teams from Health and Human Services (HHS) and Emergency Road Clearing Teams from the U.S. Forest Service. These pre-scripted mission assignments will result in more rapid and responsive delivery of Federal support.

Disaster response support is coordinated through one or more of the National Response Plan's (NRP) 15 Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). The ESFs serve as the primary operational-level mechanism supporting FEMA in providing State and local 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 NRP provide substantial disaster response assistance in their areas of expertise and provide operational support for FEMA when assigned missions to support the disaster response. In addition, FEMA can "surge" its own teams and assets into an area in anticipation of an approaching storm or event that is expected to cause a significant impact and result in a

declared emergency or major disaster, and can turn to other DHS components such as the U.S. Coast Guard for assistance. The surge capability allows FEMA to position assets prior to the event to enable a quick response, but actual assistance cannot be provided until the Governor requests and the President approves a disaster declaration.

An example of the use of the ESFs is the Greenburg, Kansas disaster. Within the first 72 hours after the tornado devastated Greensburg, FEMA coordinated the efforts of numerous Federal agencies in their ESF roles under the NRP. The DHS/National Communication System (ESF 2) worked with State and local officials to reestablish communications infrastructure, advising local government as necessary, and providing needed technical assistance. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ESF 3) management team for critical facility restoration planning was on-site providing technical assistance to State and local governments. Additionally, Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) in the form of 13 small Mobile Emergency Operations Vehicles (MEOVs) and one large MEOV were deployed to Greensburg for communications and command and control support. The larger MEOV was provided to serve as the Unified Command Post.

To further strengthen our partnerships, FEMA is actively engaged with State governments and other Federal partners in joint exercises as we prepare for the 2007 Hurricane Season. During the first week in May, FEMA tested the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and its response operations during a Department of Defense-sponsored exercise called "Ardent Sentry - Northern Edge," which simulated a Category 3 hurricane striking Newport, Rhode Island.

Also, on June 18 and 19, 2007, DHS's National Communications System (NCS) hosted a national level communications response teams training session that was prepared and delivered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). FEMA and other DHS components participated with the General Services Administration (GSA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Defense's United States Northern Command, National Guard, and state and local emergency management officials. FEMA now has three national teams of 37 government personnel each (staffed from FEMA as well as other Federal agencies), trained and ready for deployment. FEMA has accomplished its goal to have teams ready to respond to three (2 major, 1 medium) simultaneous events. These three teams are prepared to provide emergency communications tactical support and to assist industry in infrastructure restoration.

Engaging with State and Federal Partners in More Thorough and Informed Preparedness Planning

For 2007, FEMA has taken a tiered approach to planning. First, we engaged each of the 18 hurricane impact States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands in focused hurricane planning. This planning included the employment of a Gap Analysis Tool that informed the process. Second, we continue to provide specific attention to the Gulf Coast States by pursuing, for the first time, regional

development of a Gulf Coast Evacuation Plan. Third, we continue to pursue specific planning efforts with our partners in the State of Louisiana, in recognition of their condition following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. Lastly, we are focusing Catastrophic Disaster Response Planning on hurricane scenarios in southeastern Louisiana and the State of Florida.

Hurricane Gap Analysis Program

FEMA is working with hurricane prone States and conducting gap analyses that serve as the basis for better understanding vulnerabilities in a more consistent manner. The Gap Analysis Program, developed in coordination with the State of New York Emergency Management Office/New York City Office of Emergency Management, is providing FEMA and its partners at both the State and local levels in the hurricane-prone regions of the country with a snapshot of asset gaps to determine the level of Federal support that will potentially be needed during a category 3 hurricane.

The initiative, a joint effort between State Emergency Management representatives and FEMA Regional representatives, involved conducting a series of structured discussions with local jurisdictions to better understand potential disaster response asset gaps in the critical disaster response areas of debris removal, evacuation, sheltering, interim housing, healthcare facilities, commodity distribution, communications, and fuel. The discussions provided an opportunity for local jurisdictions to ask specific questions of Federal and State officials and identify issues of critical concern that can be addressed as part of long-term preparedness programs.

Specific gaps were determined by identifying a series of requirements in each critical area within each location and then subtracting the corresponding capabilities for meeting those requirements for each location.

The initial data collection phase of this program concluded on June 1, 2007, and the results serve as the ongoing basis for jointly addressing the identified shortfalls and issues with our State partners. As this initiative has progressed, we have noted a steady decrease in the initial shortfalls and vulnerabilities identified in areas such as debris removal contracts; transportation contracts; identification of potential shelters and evacuation routes; identifying points of distribution; and provision of specific commodities such as tarps, generators, and cots.

Although our initial use of this method is focused on the 2007 hurricane season, this process is applicable to all hazards. FEMA is reviewing, revising, and improving the program to reflect our experiences and lessons learned. One of the major revisions will link participation to the allocation of grant funding. Revisions to both the questions and the categories will help FEMA to do a better job of capturing the true capabilities in an all hazards environment. .

As stated before, the new FEMA has made a conscious effort to focus broadly on all 18 hurricane-prone States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and Territories to prepare for the 2007 Hurricane Season. Today, FEMA continues to work closely with each of the 18 State emergency management organizations in the hurricane-prone States using a consistent set of measures and tools to evaluate strengths and vulnerabilities.

Modeling is also an essential element of FEMA's planning efforts for different circumstances. FEMA is coordinating with the DHS Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate to adapt modeling tools to large metropolitan areas. For example, many tools utilize a standard figure for population per square mile, often resulting in skewed data for areas with high-rise apartment buildings. The work with S&T is focusing on adapting these modeling tools to urban environments.

As the use of the Hurricane Gap Analysis Tool becomes more mature, FEMA plans to incorporate additional modeling capabilities to validate the data received and to forecast needs based on different variables. FEMA's current hurricane planning efforts rely heavily on existing modeling tools such as:

- HurrEvac (Hurricane Evacuation) to enable tracking hurricanes and assist in evacuation decision making;
- NOAA's SLOSH (Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes) to enable estimates of storm surge heights and winds resulting from historical, hypothetical, or predicted hurricanes by taking into account pressure, size, forward speed, track, and winds;
- HAZUS (Hazards U.S.) established by FEMA to assess risk and forecast losses based on population characteristics and buildings;
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' modeling tools which rely on geospatial capabilities to provide estimates of debris volumes; water, ice, and commodity needs; and the number of people within the households likely within hurricane force winds; and
- NISAC (National Infrastructure Simulation and Analysis Center) advanced modeling and simulation capabilities to analyze critical infrastructure interdependencies and vulnerabilities.

Gulf Coast State Evacuation Plan –

FEMA has also assisted the States of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama in the development of a Gulf Coast Evacuation Plan that extends to adjacent States who may host Gulf Coast evacuees. The purpose of this effort is to synchronize separate State evacuation plans to create a more cohesive and organized effort. Teams are engaging with each State, identifying requirements and capabilities, and working to develop a plan that integrates shelter planning with transportation planning. The result will be a timely, better organized, and better coordinated evacuation by those with their own transportation and for those who need assistance to evacuate by bus or air. FEMA has established a

Warm Cell Joint Field Office (JFO) in Baton Rouge that is conducting extensive planning for a mass evacuation of the 12 coastal parishes of Louisiana. These plans, closely coordinated with Louisiana State and local plans, will ensure that a comprehensive evacuation plan including transportation, sheltering, mass care, and, ultimately, return, is ready to support Louisiana if needed.

Coordinating with Louisiana

Recognizing Louisiana's continuing fragile situation, we are collaboratively assessing requirements, State capabilities and the potential need for Federal assistance. Louisiana is better prepared than last year—as a result of applying lessons learned and investing some of its own resources—but still needs assistance in finding shelter space in adjacent States, ensuring sufficient transportation resources to conduct a timely and effective evacuation, position commodities, and caring for those with critical medical needs. As mentioned above, a comprehensive evacuation planning effort in Louisiana is tying all aspects of evacuation (transportation, sheltering, mass care, and return) together into one system. A Transportation Management Unit that has been established as part of this evacuation planning effort is taking advantage of the expertise of intermodal planners detailed from the bus, rail, and aircraft industries, key federal partners from the U.S. Department of Transportation, contract and operational transportation planners from the Department of Defense, and FEMA operational planners. They are assessing the overall transportation needs and developing a flexible plan to meet State requirements using all available means of transportation.

Catastrophic Disaster Planning Initiatives

We are also working with 13 southeastern Louisiana parishes (including the City of New Orleans) that were selected as the initial geographic focus area for FEMA's Catastrophic Disaster Planning Initiative because of their vulnerability to hurricane disasters. Substantial planning activity continues with the State of Louisiana and its parishes in planning and preparing for the 2007 Hurricane Season.

In addition, FEMA is using scenario-driven workshops to enhance the State of Florida's capability to respond to a Category 5 Hurricane making landfall in Southern Florida. This is a two-phased project. Phase One focuses on developing regional response and recovery plans, including evacuation planning, for the counties and communities surrounding Lake Okeechobee (in the event of failure of the Herbert Hoover Dike). Initial plans have been developed and being reviewed and fine-tuned. Phase Two will address the effects of a Category 5 hurricane striking south Florida. The end product for Phase Two will be standardized and comprehensive catastrophic Category 5 hurricane disaster functional response and recovery plans for the State of Florida and responding Federal agencies. Phase Two will be completed by September 30, 2008. These plans will also be used as planning templates for other large urban areas.

Similarly, FEMA has undertaken Catastrophic Disaster Planning in eight States along the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ). This initiative addresses the earthquake National Planning Scenario and multiple functional areas such as evacuation, including transportation/staging and distribution of critical resources; command and control; saving lives; search and rescue; temporary medical care; sheltering; hosting; access control and reentry; power; water and ice distribution; volunteer and donations management; hazardous materials; external affairs; business, industry and government partnerships; private sector coordination; critical infrastructure; and exercises of the plan, to include application of the Catastrophic Incident Supplement to the NRP. Several workshops have already been conducted and are planned and a draft Interim Contingency Plan for a NMSZ catastrophic event has been developed. Catastrophic Disaster Planning has also been initiated to address the effects of catastrophic earthquakes in California.

Additionally, in the recent supplemental appropriation, Congress allocated $35 million in funding to tier one Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) cities for coordinated regional catastrophic planning. Catastrophic planning requires resources and effort at all levels of government and with our private and non-profit sector partners. The NCR and the greater FEMA Region III provide the ideal environment to develop a method that brings together all of the catastrophic planning efforts and resources into a comprehensive and coordinated program. In the NCR FEMA will demonstrate how FEMA can blend all catastrophic planning initiatives into true capability that will serve the people of this region during a catastrophic event.

Next, it is important to understand what FEMA is doing to build its operational capabilities to improve its response and recovery capabilities in support of State and local efforts.

Building FEMA's Operational Capabilities to Provide Effective Response and Recovery

In addition to the many action items already described to better prepare for the 2007 Hurricane Season, FEMA's comprehensive strategy for improving its disaster response efforts includes a 2007 Hurricane Contingency Plan, a new operational planning unit, an Interagency Agreement with the Defense Logistics Agency, Total Asset Visibility (TAV), development of a new generation of interagency emergency response teams, and mass evacuation planning.

2007 Hurricane Contingency Plan (CONPLAN)

The 2007 Hurricane CONPLAN provides the operational incident management framework to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of hurricanes impacting the United States. The CONPLAN provides guidance on actions that will be executed by Federal Departments and Agencies.

This document was developed in collaboration with all of FEMA's National Response Plan partners for the Emergency Support Functions- and addresses the coordinated national-level Federal preparedness, response and initial recovery operations that will be used to support State, local, Territorial and Tribal government entities impacted by a hurricane or tropical storm.

New Operational Planning Unit Capabilities

FEMA has hired staff for a new "Current Operational Planning Unit" (Planning Unit). Located in FEMA's Headquarters, the Planning Unit will provide sophisticated operational analyses of both ongoing and potential situations to ensure the most effective response to all disasters. With the new staff, FEMA is building its core operational planning competency to provide greater depth of experience and more capability to perform critical disaster response operational analyses, prepare operational plans, and conduct crisis action planning to ensure that the Agency can lead, coordinate and support a national all-hazard emergency management response.

Specifically, the Current Operational Planning Unit will:

- Provide National and Regional operational planning guidance and coordination;
- Coordinate the execution of all hazard contingency plans at the operational level;
- Provide forecasting and analysis of potential events;
- Assist FEMA Regions in operational planning at the regional level; and
- Lead the development of DHS and FEMA hazard-specific contingency plans.

Eventually, planners will also be hired for the FEMA Regions to provide this capability to those areas. Currently, FEMA Operational planners are directly supporting planning efforts for the mass evacuation of Louisiana in the event of a catastrophic hurricane, as well as a mass migration event in the Caribbean. Other projects have included supporting Region 5 in preparation and execution of scenarios during exercise Ardent Sentry. In the coming months, FEMA Operational planners will be hired to directly support planning requirements in the Regions such as planning for hurricanes, pandemic influenza, and flooding events.

FEMA/DLA/Army Corps of Engineers Coordination

FEMA and the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) have entered into a collaborative partnership, via an Interagency Agreement, to optimize the planning, ordering, storing and replenishing of certain commodities such as emergency meals and fuel, and develop a roadmap for larger scaled supply chain initiatives.

The FEMA/DLA partnership has improved FEMA's immediate response and logistics capabilities by reducing the acquisition and distribution time, as well as the

replenishment lead-time. The partnership has also improved FEMA's day-to-day supply chain operations by creating repeatable, sustainable processes for planning and execution at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. Through this agreement DLA will procure, maintain, transport, and stage commodities. DLA currently provides visibility of all commodities shipped to disaster locations, logistic centers or other locations as directed, from the initial receipt of the order until ownership passes to FEMA.

For other commodities, such as ice, FEMA will rely on local purchase or vendor managed arrangements through the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers who has the lead mission for ice support under the National Response Plan. The Corps' advanced contract initiatives and predictive model forecasts for commodities are a robust and reliable capability that makes them the source of choice for ice support. The new Corps ice contract guarantees 3,000,000 pounds of ice within 24 hours of receiving a task order and an increase in deliveries over the next 48 hours to sustain a support capability of 1 million persons per day.

TAV Program

FEMA Logistics has identified areas for improving its end-to-end supply chain to deliver critical supplies at the right time, in the right quantity and to the right location. FEMA is implementing industry best practices for supply chain management and an automated system that is improving information flow by providing real-time visibility into orders and shipment of critical supplies during emergency response efforts.

Launched during the 2006 hurricane season, the Total Asset Visibility (TAV) Program oversees, directs and manages the design and implementation of an initial capability pilot system to monitor and view the orders and movement of select commodities.

Currently, the TAV Program provides FEMA with the ability to: (1) manage and view orders and inventory of select commodities, and (2) track the location of trailers carrying the commodities distributed from the FEMA Logistics Centers (LCs) and select vendors to field sites. The long-term vision for the TAV Program is to engage external emergency management stakeholders – from State, local and tribal governments and other federal agencies to non-government agencies and vendors – in the entire FEMA supply chain. These activities cover requests for critical supplies to tracking shipments and delivery to people in need during times of emergency. Stakeholders would have real-time visibility into the status of requests and locations of shipments in transit.

FEMA recognizes that certain types of resources may be required immediately after a disaster by State and local governments in order for them to adequately respond.

If State or local governments, and State partners, are unable to supply these resources, then FEMA will coordinate the provision of Federal commodities to ensure that resources are in place in order to supplement State and local response efforts during the immediate

phase of response activities. FEMA has initiated the Pre-Positioned Disaster Supply (PPDS) program to position life-saving and life sustaining disaster equipment and supplies in modular containers as close to potential disaster sites as prudent, in order to substantially reduce the initial response time to incidents.

Enhanced Response Teams

As mentioned previously, FEMA is developing the next generation of rapidly deployable interagency emergency response teams called Incident Management Assist Teams (IMATs). These teams will support the emergent needs of State and local jurisdictions; possess the capability to provide initial situational awareness for Federal decision-makers; and support the initial establishment of a unified command. These teams will ultimately provide the three national-level response teams and regional-level emergency response "strike" teams required by PKEMRA.

The teams are still in the design and development phase, and decisions on team assets, equipment, and expected capabilities have not yet been finalized. The teams will subsume the existing mission and capabilities of the Federal Incident Response Support Teams (FIRSTs) and Emergency Response Teams (ERTs). The mission and capabilities of the IMATs will incorporate leadership, emergency management doctrine, and operational communications concepts similar to those in the FIRSTs ands ERTs. The national-level and regional-level teams will be staffed with a core of full-time employees, unlike the ERTs, which have been staffed on a collateral duty basis. IMAT teams will be fully compliant with NIMS and Incident Command System (ICS); and will train and exercise as an integral unit.

Principal Federal Officials

A Principal Federal Official (PFO) may be designated to represent the Secretary of Homeland Security. The PFO ensures that overall Federal domestic incident management efforts are well coordinated and effective. The PFO does not direct or replace the incident command structure, nor does the PFO have direct authority over other Federal and State officials. For example, during a terrorist incident, the local FBI Special Agent-in-Charge coordinates with other members of the law enforcement community and works in conjunction with the PFO.

The PFO, if one is named, is a member of the JFO Coordination Group. This group also includes either a Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO), who manages and coordinates Federal resource support activities related to Stafford Act disasters and emergencies, or a Federal Resource Coordinator, who performs similar functions for incidents that do not involve Stafford Act declarations. Depending on the incident, other agency officials are added to the Coordination Group, such as the Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official.

Mass Evacuation Incident Annex to the National Response Plan

As part of incorporating lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, a Mass Evacuation Incident Annex to the NRP is under development. The Mass Evacuation Incident Annex will provide an overview of evacuation functions and agency roles and responsibilities. It also will provide overall guidelines to enable evacuation of large numbers of people in incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response through the NRP ESFs. This new annex will describe how Federal support resources are integrated with State, local, and tribal efforts. Communication linkages to sheltering facilities, special needs of evacuees, and addressing the need for evacuation of both companion and service animals are just a few of the issues addressed in the new annex.

Improved Delivery of Disaster Assistance

FEMA is making significant progress in improving its delivery of disaster assistance as well. FEMA's Disaster Assistance Directorate's planning and capability building initiatives include enhancing mass care capability by improving the National Shelter System and developing better tools for coordinating and tracking donations and volunteers; greatly increasing disaster victim registration capabilities while enhancing protections against waste, fraud and abuse; developing a national disaster housing strategy and improving operational planning for providing temporary housing in a catastrophic disaster; establishing a case management program; updating ESF- 6 Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services standard operating procedures; developing debris estimation technology and monitoring methodology and enhancing state and local debris operations capabilities; and, improving our capability to conduct operations planning for long term disaster operations.

Emergency Evacuation, Shelter, and Housing

FEMA's most pressing priorities for planning for recovery from a catastrophic disaster event have been *emergency evacuation, shelter and housing*. In 2004, FEMA completed an initial Catastrophic Disaster Housing Strategy, which proposed several initiatives to increase FEMA's capability to provide assistance to individuals and households following an extraordinary or catastrophic disaster. The strategy provided the principles and recommended strategies that establish the framework for the catastrophic disaster housing recovery planning being done today. Key needs identified at that time included the following: an expandable disaster registration intake and applicant assistance process; the ability to provide immediate benefits payments; a plan for assisting applicants to temporarily relocate to outside the disaster area; and a strategy and prepared public messages to provide victims with information about assistance.

- **Mass Evacuee Support Planning**: The 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes caused several hundred thousand residents to evacuate to over forty States, many for prolonged time periods. Cities such as Houston, Oklahoma City, Atlanta, and

Baton Rouge received thousands of evacuees requiring immediate shelter, food, other basic assistance, as well as longer term services. In June 2006, FEMA published "Recovery Strategy RS-001, Mass Sheltering and Housing Assistance." This strategy addresses many contingencies for providing sheltering and housing assistance for declared emergencies and major disasters. In addition, FEMA is undertaking more detailed mass evacuee support planning. This planning will also assist State and local governments to plan and prepare for hosting large displaced populations. The project includes FEMA development of an evacuee registration and tracking capability, implementation plans for federal evacuation support to states, emergency sheltering guidance, and direct planning assistance to potential host States and communities.

- **The National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System and National Emergency Child Locator Center:** As defined in PKEMRA, these capabilities will address the reunification of displaced persons and activities to locate missing children during disasters. For disasters declared by the President, this tracking capability will assist FEMA, the Department of Justice and the American Red Cross in further developing and implementing methods for quickly identifying and reuniting missing and separated children and family members during a disaster.

- **Improving Shelter Management and Accountability**: FEMA and the American Red Cross, the nation's largest operator of major congregate shelters during disasters, are working together to implement the National Shelter System (NSS). The first phase of the NSS was developed through a FEMA/American Red Cross partnership to provide a web-based data system to support shelter management, reporting, and facility identification activities. The system is intended for use by all agencies that provide shelter services during disasters to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the shelter populations and available shelter capacity. In addition, this system will provide visibility on large shelter populations and position FEMA to provide targeted registration assistance to disaster victims. Outreach and training for Federal, State, and local authorities in use of the system is being conducted.

- **Housing Options**: The FEMA Housing Portal was developed to consolidate available rental resources for evacuees from Federal agencies, private organizations, and individuals. The Joint Housing Solutions Group is a dedicated unit to research and document alternatives to traditional temporary housing. They are currently conducting initial baseline field tests of a housing option assessment tool.

- **Expanding Home Inspections Capacity:** FEMA has increased the daily home inspection capacity of FEMA- contracted firms from 7,000 per day to 40,000 per

day through a new contractual agreement. This added capacity – combined with a newly established third party evaluation of inspections performed on victims' damaged homes – will increase the speed and accuracy of home inspections that determine the FEMA repair and replacement grants for which a victim may be eligible.

- **Development of the Mass Evacuation Incident Supplement to the NRP:** A Mass Evacuation Incident Supplement to the Mass Evacuation Incident Annex to the NRP is also being developed, and it will serve to identify each element of the mass evacuation process and describe both how and by whom the specific responsibilities captured in that process are to be performed. This comprehensive document will include guidance and direction from the time a person is identified as an evacuee until such time that the individual, his or her family, and pets are ready to be placed back into the general population.

Applicant Registration and Management

In 2006 and 2007, FEMA has focused its Recovery planning and capability building efforts on improving applicant management systems; expanding registration intake and processing capacity; increasing fraud controls; supporting displaced populations; identifying alternative forms of temporary housing; and debris management planning. FEMA has made significant progress in increasing its capability to provide assistance to individuals, particularly in the areas of registration, applicant processing, and providing assistance.

- **Doubling Registration Capacity to 200,000 Per Day**: During the days and weeks following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, FEMA surpassed 100,000 registrations a day, shattering all previous records of intake. While call center capacity was increased to its highest levels ever, FEMA is pursuing even more robust contract and contingency surge capabilities that will quickly allow for rapid expansion to a registration intake capacity of up to 200,000 per day. FEMA's Internet-based registration capability has been increased by improving accessibility, allowing FEMA to handle more registrations than ever before. This increased capacity will help reduce registration wait times and FEMA Helpline information delays following a major disaster.

- **Deployable Mobile Registration Intake Centers (MRICs) Pilot**: Recognizing many disaster victims may be stranded or located in congregate shelters without communications, and unable to register for assistance, FEMA has established a new registration pilot program that pushes registration capabilities directly into the field. For the 2007 hurricane season, FEMA will have the ability to deploy Mobile Registrations Intake Centers immediately to congregate shelters and provide an on-site capability to quickly register for FEMA assistance.

Debris Management Planning

Management of contaminated debris is of particular concern for terrorist events, but is also an issue in most large natural disasters. An Interagency Work Group to coordinate Federal agency management of contaminated debris began work in 2005 just prior to Hurricane Katrina. The Work Group is developing further Federal contaminated debris operational procedure guidance. This project is analyzing the implications of a catastrophic incident on contaminated debris management programs and policies and will assist FEMA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, EPA, the Coast Guard, and other federal stakeholders to better define their operational roles and inter-relationships. FEMA's Public Assistance Program is also undertaking two catastrophic planning initiatives focusing on increasing State and local debris management capabilities through planning and enhancing Federal capabilities to estimate debris volumes following a disaster to assist in operational planning and cost estimation.

Increasing Fraud Controls

FEMA has also taken steps to implement new, stronger controls pertaining to identity and occupancy verification of applicants for disaster assistance. Examples of controls implemented include: deployment of a new Internet registration application that disallows any duplicate registrations; added identity proofing to the call center registration application so that all Individual and Households Program (IHP) registrations are subjected to the same stringent criteria, including verification of social security numbers and occupancy requirements; data-marking any applications in FEMA's database that fail identity proofing so they are flagged for manual review and denied automated payment; real-time interaction between the FEMA Service Representative and the applicant during registration to ensure the data entered that resulted in a failed identity check is correct before accepting the application; working with FEMA's data contractor to flag any addresses that are not residential addresses in order to prevent automated payments without an on-site inspection verification of address and residency; and flagging at-risk social security numbers to identify potential fraud.

Conclusion

I believe we have made real progress at FEMA and are prepared for the 2007 Hurricane Season. Our reorganization efforts—based on our internal transformation and the implementation of PKEMRA—will bear fruit across our disaster operations and assistance programs. Today, I have focused on how FEMA's reorganization has contributed to:

1. Establishing a heightened posture of hurricane preparedness;
2. Engaging our State and Federal partners in more thorough and informed hurricane planning; and,
3. Building FEMA's operational capabilities to provide effective response and recovery.

There is a lot more going on inside FEMA than the things mentioned that will also contribute to enhanced performance and organizational success.

Although all disasters are local, FEMA must play a more proactive role in understanding vulnerabilities so we can assist the localities in being better prepared to respond. As I hope you will see by today's testimony—we are being more proactive. By leaning further forward to coordinate the federal response, we can better serve all Americans.

Today, FEMA:

- Has a stronger structure in place – and will continue to improve our organization through planning, training and the hiring of experienced and dedicated staff;
- Has created engaged partnerships in support of State and local governments;
- Has supported and helped to facilitate an effective unified command with other Federal agencies, and State and local officials;
- Has engaged with hurricane-prone States to gain a better understanding of their vulnerabilities;
- Has improved logistics and communications capabilities to improve response; and
- Has enhanced Disaster Assistance capabilities for recovery efforts.

Of course, we are not done yet. There is still much work to do.

But if our progress over the past year is any indication, I believe we are on the right track to fulfilling our vision to become the nation's preeminent emergency management and preparedness agency.

I am especially proud of the men and women who work at FEMA. They have put their hearts and souls into rebuilding this agency. The men and women of FEMA are dedicated to the mission of disaster and victim recovery, and staunchly committed to improving the speed, efficiency, and accountability with which we perform that mission. That commitment is not only to the victims and communities of those disasters that we expect to face in the future, but to those victims and communities still struggling with the personal, professional, and social consequences and challenges of past disasters.

I would also like to take this opportunity to provide an update on FEMA's efforts with formaldehyde health concerns and demonstrate our continued dedication to the health and safety of travel trailer and mobile home occupants.

Over the last two months, FEMA has significantly increased its focus on formaldehyde-related health concerns raised by Gulf Coast disaster victims. These individuals reside in FEMA-provided travel trailers and mobile homes in the Gulf States.

Formaldehyde is a common indoor air pollutant that can be found in nearly all homes and buildings. It is a colorless gas that is released into the home from a variety of indoor sources. Formaldehyde can also be found in a variety of materials used in home construction and products for everyday living. FEMA has received a relatively small but meaningful number of inquiries from residents of FEMA trailers who have had medical symptoms possibly related to formaldehyde fumes.

On July 20, 2007, I announced several steps FEMA has taken to address these concerns and to work more closely with residents who may have concerns about formaldehyde exposure. These include:

Air Quality Testing and Research. Pursuant to a plan under development for several weeks, health experts at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Department of Homeland Security's Office of Health Affairs will conduct a preliminary field study that will test air quality conditions in FEMA-purchased housing units under real-life conditions. In addition, the CDC team is comprehensively reviewing known research in order to provide FEMA with advice about the safety of environmental conditions in travel trailers. We are also looking into effective engineering solutions that may be available to remove environmental pollutants from the trailers.

Additional Outreach to Travel Trailer Occupants. Beginning on July 21, 2007, FEMA distributed a formaldehyde and housing fact sheet to the occupants of each FEMA travel trailer and mobile home in the four Gulf States. Currently 64,805 households occupy these units in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Ninety-seven percent of these units are located in Louisiana and Mississippi. This fact sheet provides basic information about formaldehyde, its possible medical effects and contacts for further assistance. Similar information was provided to residents of all FEMA trailers in the Gulf last year. The new brochure is also available at www.fema.gov.

Dedicated Toll-Free Help Line. Beginning on Saturday, July 21, 2007, FEMA opened a toll-free telephone line to serve residents of its travel trailers and mobile homes in the Gulf States. Operators from CDC and FEMA will be available to answer questions about the formaldehyde-related issues and associated FEMA housing concerns. The toll-free number is 1-866-562-2381 (TTY 1-800-462-7585).

Medical Community Outreach. The DHS Chief Medical Officer will contact state health officials in the region to share information about FEMA's communications with occupants of FEMA trailers and mobile homes.

Thank you for your continued support and the opportunity to discuss how FEMA is prepared for the current 2007 Hurricane Season and other potential major disasters or emergencies. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Chairman WAXMAN. Thank you, Mr. Paulison. We appreciate your testimony.

Major General Scherling.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL TERRY SCHERLING

General SCHERLING. Good morning, Chairman Waxman, Ranking Member Davis, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee to discuss the role of the National Guard in support to civil authorities during disasters.

I am here on behalf of Lieutenant General Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, who is currently at Northern Command with a number of Adjutants General from the Homeland Security Committee, continuing our efforts to improve planning, communication, and coordination between the active component and the National Guard.

Mr. Chairman, this is not the first time key leaders have gathered to address the Nation's domestic response capabilities. Earlier this year, representatives from FEMA, Northern Command, and the National Guard Bureau and Adjutants General from the hurricane-affected States met to address ways to better integrate our capabilities necessary for an effective response to domestic emergencies.

Mr. Chairman, these ongoing deliberations are indicative of the Department of Defense's and FEMA's determination and commitment to ensure military support to domestic emergencies is timely, sufficient, and integrated in such a way as to maximize effectiveness. When lives and property are at stake, every second counts, and the National Guard, as first responders, will be ready to respond when a State requests assistance.

I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before the committee today and welcome your questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of General Scherling follows:]

UNCLASSIFIED

FOR THE RECORD

STATEMENT BY

MAJOR GENERAL TERRY L. SCHERLING
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU JOINT STAFF

BEFORE THE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

FIRST SESSION, 110TH CONGRESS

ON

"FEMA PREPAREDNESS IN 2007"

JULY 31, 2007

NOT FOR PUBLIC DISSEMINATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY
THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

UNCLASSIFIED

STATEMENT BY
MAJOR GENERAL TERRY L. SCHERLING
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU JOINT STAFF

Chairman Waxman, ranking member Davis and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the role of the National Guard in support to civil authorities during disasters. While the Army and Air National Guard are engaged with our active duty counterparts in combat operations around the world, the National Guard also maintains capability to help state governors to respond to disasters and other threats to American people here at home.

The Army and Air National Guard are reserve components of the United States Army and the United States Air Force. As such, our reason for existence is to provide units ready to be called to active duty to meet the Nation's military needs.

While the National Guard actively provides units to be mobilized for duty in combat operations overseas, we also recognize that the Nation's governors rely on their National Guard forces here at home to provide needed capability to respond to natural disaster or other threats inside the homeland.

The National Guard Chain of Command in Disasters

There is a saying among first responders that, like politics, all disasters are local. This phrase alludes to the fact that in emergency management, the incident commander is usually an official at the local government level. With limited capabilities to respond to major disasters, such officials frequently turn to their state governors for further assistance. Because the Army and Air National Guard, in addition to being reserve components of the U.S Army and Air Force, are also the organized militia of the States under the U.S. Constitution, the National Guard is frequently called to state duty by Governors when our military equipment, organization and skills provide the capabilities needed to help respond to an emergency. Therefore, when the National Guard responds to disasters, it does so under state command.

There are provisions under law by which the National Guard may be federalized and thus operate under federal command but such federalizations generally result in the National Guard being less capable of providing support to law enforcement due to restrictions inherent in the Posse Commitatus Act. Generally, it has been the National Guard's experience, therefore, that domestic operations are best conducted under state command.

Another option for structuring the National Guard's chain of command is the dual-hatted state/federal military command authority in Title 32. In 2004, domestic operations supporting the G-8 summit at Sea Island, Georgia as well as the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, a National Guard general officer appointed under this authority was successful in simultaneously commanding both active duty troops and National Guard troops in state status. This helped to achieve unity of effort between state and federal forces. That sort of unified effort is particularly important in a multi-state emergency. We need to look for ways to make good use of the dual-hat authority in these types of events in the future.

How the National Guard Bureau Will Respond

Since September 11, the National Guard has performed an increasing number of domestic operations which were executed under state command but funded by the federal government under provisions of Title 32 of the U.S. Code. The National Guard's airport security mission conducted immediately after 9/11, our entire response to Hurricane Katrina, and our current Operation Jump Start assisting in border security were all conducted in this manner. This combines the flexibility, responsiveness and law enforcement support capabilities of state command with the tremendous power of federal resources to give the Nation a strong capability to bring military resources to aid civilians in distress. Governors count on the National Guard to be the first military responder and call on Guard assets within the first hours of an event.

At the National Guard Bureau, we have made a commitment to the governors that our goal will be to manage National Guard mobilizations and overseas deployments to the degree that we can ensure no more than 50 percent of any particular state's

National Guard forces are absent from the state at any given time. The intent is to meet the Nation's military requirements overseas and, at the same time, to have capability remaining in states here at home to help Governors meet needs that may arise during domestic emergencies. In general, we have been successful in meeting this goal. In those few instances where it has been necessary to mobilize more than 50 percent of a state's National Guard, we have worked closely with those governors to help them to identify and, if needed, to access National Guard capabilities in other states through interstate loans under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.

The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), which was quite effective in the response to Hurricane Katrina, is a proven means of redistributing resources from state to state in order to address unfulfilled requirements. As we work to improve our domestic equipping posture, EMAC will play a major role in our domestic response capability. When a disaster overwhelms the capability resident in a state, the state may obtain equipment and forces from neighboring states in this way but that, of course, takes time.

At the beginning of this year, the Army National Guard had on-hand approximately 40% of the equipment which it is required to have. When equipment is needed but not on-hand at a particular location, it is necessary to bring in equipment from farther away either from other units within a state, or from other states under EMAC.

The Department of Defense is taking strong decisive action to address the equipment needs in the National Guard. The budget request now before Congress includes $22 billion for Army National Guard equipment over the next five years. If provided, these funds would bring the Army National Guard up to approximately 76% of the equipment its stated requirement. This increased level of equipping will not only improve the military combat readiness of our units in the Army National Guard but will also decrease response times to domestic emergencies here in the homeland as more equipment is available in the states.

Lesson Learned From Katrina

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the National Guard Bureau has developed and implemented a number of initiatives which will further enhance the capability of the National Guard to provide support to civilian authorities in times of disaster.

The Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina final report titled, "A Failure of Initiative", identified four findings the National Guard Bureau has taken quite seriously.

The report states the committees finding that the Department of Defense had not incorporated or implemented lessons learned form joint exercises in military assistance to civil authorities that would have allowed for a more effective response to Katrina. At the National Guard Bureau, we have developed and integrated after action reports to serve as the basis for future domestic planning efforts.

The committee also found that the lack of integration of National Guard and active duty forces hampered the military response. At the National Guard Bureau, we have addressed this issue by ensuring National Guard supporting plans are provided and included in Northern Command's domestic response plans.

The select bipartisan committee report also raised concern that the Northern Command does not have insight into state response capabilities or adequate interface with governors. Since Hurricane Katrina, the National Guard Bureau and the United States Northern Command have convened several exercises and conferences where state and federal forces share information and plans. In fact, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau is not available to testify at this hearing today because he is participating in a meeting of National Guard Adjutants General with U.S. Northern Command. Along with providing supporting plans, the National Guard has a fulltime staff of title 10 personnel permanently assigned to Northern Command. This provides key leaders with

immediate access and experts on National Guard capabilities available to civil authorities.

Finally, the committee's report expressed the concern that National Guard troops should have been placed in Title 32 status earlier during the response to Hurricane Katrina. This has been addressed by the Department of Defense leadership by noting the necessity and value in expediting an authorization for Title 32 funds for appropriate emergency response operations.

In addition, the National Guard Bureau recognizes that interagency relationships are fundamental to the success of the federal response to any disaster, and we must continue to foster strong relationships with the Department of Homeland Security and Northern Command. The National Guard Bureau has a fulltime Title 10 liaison officer integrated into the staff at the Department of Homeland Security and one at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Indeed, coordination efforts to date, point to the need for better planning, procurement of more equipment and interoperable communications, and joint training of the National Guard, active duty forces, and our federal partners.

I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before the committee today and welcome your questions.

Chairman WAXMAN. Thank you very much.
Mr. Jadacki.

STATEMENT OF MATT JADACKI

Mr. JADACKI. Good morning, Chairman Waxman, Ranking Member Davis, members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

I will focus my remarks on FEMA's plans to meet the next catastrophic incident. The five critical areas I will discuss are: coordination of disaster response efforts, catastrophic planning, logistics and acquisitions, housing, and evacuation.

FEMA's efforts to support State emergency management and to prepare Federal response and recovery in national disasters are insufficient for an event of Hurricane Katrina's magnitude. Reports issued by Congress, the White House, Federal Office of the Inspector General, and the GAO, among others, identified issues, including questionable leadership decisions and capabilities, organizational failure, overwhelmed response and communications systems, and inadequate statutory authorities. As a result, Congress enacted a number of changes to enhance the Federal Government's response capabilities for emergency management. In total, six statutes enacted by the 109th Congress contain changes that apply to future Federal Emergency Management actions.

While most of the new laws contain relatively few changes to Federal authorities related to disasters and emergencies, the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006 reorganizes FEMA, expands it, statutory authority and imposes new conditions and requirements on the operation of the Agency.

In responding to a catastrophic event, it is important to keep in mind that response and recovery are not solely a FEMA responsibility; it is inherently the Nation's responsibility. The National Response Plan was established to marshal, all the Nation's resources and capabilities to address threats and challenges posed by disasters, both natural and manmade.

A successful response to and recovery from a catastrophic event can be directly tied to the resources and capabilities of citizens, local and State governments, the Federal Government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

FEMA is the face of our Nation's response to large-scale disasters and is charged with coordinated deployment of our Nation's resources and capabilities, but success can only be realized when all stakeholders are fully prepared and willing to contribute.

FEMA is largely dependent on other Federal, State, and local agencies and outside resources in executing many activities that take place. To be successful, FEMA needs to plan and conduct exercises with all its partners.

Budget constraints remain a concern for many entities. Some that should participate may not have the resources to do so. Congress recently appropriated $20 million for catastrophic planning. FEMA needs to continue to develop plans and exercises for high-risk scenarios and include all its emergency management partners. Strong logistical and acquisition management capacity is necessary.

FEMA is responsible for coordinating delivery of commodities, equipment, personnel, and other resources to support emergency or disaster response efforts to affected States; therefore, FEMA's ability to track and acquire resources is key to fulfilling its mission. Recent events, including the Kansas tornado, indicate improvements in FEMA's response and logistics capability; however, whether these improvements will work for a catastrophic event are largely untested.

FEMA also has not been well prepared to deal with the kind of acquisitions support needed for a catastrophic disaster. Their overall response efforts have suffered from inadequate acquisition planning and preparation; lack of clearly communicated acquisition responsibilities among FEMA, other Federal agencies, and local State governments; and insufficient numbers of acquisition personnel to manage and oversee the contracts.

Pursuant to the Post-Katrina Act, FEMA has undergone significant reorganization; however, with the hurricane season upon us, a number of acquisition readiness concerns remain. FEMA has yet to finalize a process to ensure that the Federal pre-negotiated contracts for goods and services are coordinated with Federal, State, and local governments. FEMA acquisition process did not fully participate in strategizing and identification of goods and service for which pre-negotiated contracting may be needed in a catastrophic event, and FEMA and other Federal agencies may not have enough trained and experienced acquisitions personnel in place to manage and oversee the vast number of acquisitions that follow major catastrophic events.

An effective and efficient disaster housing strategy is required for successful response. Some components of FEMA's housing strategy were not well-planned or coordinated in response to Katrina. Basically, after Katrina, FEMA used a traditional housing strategy for a non-traditional event. As a result, the housing programs and policies were not effective, and housing problems persist in the Gulf area. A comprehensive catastrophic housing plan and new and innovative housing approaches are needed for such events.

The fiscal year 2007 Homeland Security Appropriation Act mandated FEMA to develop a national disaster housing strategy. FEMA has coordinated with other Federal agencies and the National Council on Disability to develop a strategy to address housing needs for future disasters. These are important first steps to improve disaster housing. To be successful, FEMA needs to look to other Federal agencies and State partners to take a bigger role in disaster housing. While these efforts should improve housing coordination, they remain untested.

Hand in hand with housing is well-executed evacuation strategy. Evacuation plans are complex and must consider a number of scenarios. Recent reports have indicated that, despite warnings and mandatory evacuation orders, a significant number of individuals would not leave their homes. Others may not have the ability to evacuate because of health reasons or lack of transportation. Local and State officials are in the best position to develop evacuation plans based on local demographics; however, it is critical that the Federal Government coordinate with State and locals, because in

a catastrophic event it is likely they will play a major role in evacuation.

Let me end my statement by reiterating our goal, which is to take lessons learned from response to Hurricane Katrina and assist DHS/FEMA to form the foundation for necessary improvements to effectively respond to the next catastrophic events.

That concludes my opening remarks. I am happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Jadacki follows:]

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

MATT JADACKI
DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL
DISASTER ASSISTANCE OVERSIGHT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC

JULY 31, 2007

Good morning, Chairman Waxman, Ranking Member Davis and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

In the two years since Hurricane Katrina struck, a number of Federal agencies, private sector organizations, and public offices issued reports addressing the Federal government's poor response. Reports issued by the House Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation For and Response to Hurricane Katrina and a report from the White House identified many weaknesses and shortcomings that had a direct effect on our citizens. We are in the midst of hurricane season, and there are a myriad of issues that have to be addressed in preparation for the next catastrophic event.

Today, I would like to focus my remarks on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and its plans to meet the next catastrophic incident. There are five critical areas I will address:

- Coordination of Disaster Response Efforts;
- Catastrophic Planning;
- Logistics and Acquisitions;
- Housing; and
- Evacuation.

Our goal is to help FEMA turn lessons learned into problems solved.

Overview

FEMA's efforts to support state emergency management and to prepare for Federal response and recovery in natural disasters were insufficient for an event of Hurricane Katrina's magnitude. Reports issued by Congress, the White House, Federal offices of Inspector General, and the Government Accountability Office (GAO), among others, identified issues including, questionable leadership decisions and capabilities, organizational failures, overwhelmed response and communication systems, and inadequate statutory authorities.

As a result, Congress enacted a number of changes to enhance the Federal government's response capabilities for emergency management. In total, six statutes enacted by the 109th Congress contain changes that apply to future Federal emergency management actions. While most of the new laws contain relatively few changes to Federal authorities related to emergencies and disasters, the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (Post-Katrina Act) contains many changes that will have long-term consequences for FEMA and other Federal entities. That statute reorganizes FEMA, expands its statutory authority, and imposes new conditions and requirements on the operations of the agency.

The integration of FEMA, all hazards preparedness, and disaster response and recovery capabilities within DHS requires additional attention. Because of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, DHS' prevention and preparedness for terrorism overshadowed that for natural hazards, both in perception and in application. Although an "all-hazards" approach can address preparedness needs common to both man-made and natural events, DHS must ensure

that all four phases of emergency management –preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation – are managed throughout the department on an all-hazards basis. Coordination and consultation among DHS components and with state and local governments is essential to guide, advise, develop, and monitor all-hazards capability and responder effectiveness. Many of these issues have been and are currently being addressed. Although FEMA finds itself in a better position today than it did two years ago in response to Katrina, its response and changes to address the next catastrophic disaster remain untested.

Coordination of Disaster Response Efforts

When a catastrophic event occurs, it is important to keep in mind that response and recovery are not solely a FEMA responsibility -- it is inherently the Nation's responsibility. The National Response Plan (NRP) was established to marshal all the Nation's resources and capabilities to address threats and challenges posed by disasters, both natural and manmade. This concept made it different from the old Federal Response Plan, which primarily outlined the Federal government's role in disasters. A successful response to and subsequent recovery from a catastrophic event can therefore be directly tied to the resources and capabilities of citizens, local and state governments, the Federal government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector. FEMA is the face of our Nation's response to large-scale disasters and is charged with coordinating the deployment of our Nation's resources and capabilities, but success can only be realized when all stakeholders are fully prepared and willing to contribute.

The National Response Plan and National Incident Management System

In March 2006, we issued a report entitled, *A Performance Review of FEMA's Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina* (OIG-06-32, March 2006). This report details FEMA's responsibility for three major phases of disaster management, i.e., preparedness, response, and recovery, during the first five weeks of the Federal response to Hurricane Katrina. We evaluated FEMA's preparedness and readiness efforts over the past ten years to determine its organizational capability and position prior to Hurricane Katrina. We reviewed whether FEMA's authorities, plans and procedures, organizational structure, and resources were adequate and effective.

FEMA's initial response was significantly impeded by the adjustments it was making in implementing its responsibilities under the NRP. Moreover, DHS had previously published the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The NIMS along with the NRP restructured how Federal, state, and local government agencies and emergency responders conduct disaster preparation, response, and recovery activities. Changes needed to implement both documents, however, were still underway when Hurricane Katrina made landfall. Unfortunately, two years later FEMA is in a similar position; it has yet to issue a revised NRP addressing chain of command issues as mandated in Title VI of P.L. 109-295, the Post-Katrina Act.

The response to Katrina demonstrated some positive features of the incident command structure under NIMS, which FEMA and state staff directed in Mississippi and Alabama. It also highlighted deficiencies and areas where FEMA and DHS headquarters must make adjustments to the NRP, such as the use of incident designations, the role of the Principal Federal Official

(PFO), and the responsibilities of emergency support function coordinators. It also should not be overlooked that when compared to other disasters, FEMA provided record levels of support to Hurricane Katrina victims, states, and emergency responders.

The Role of the PFO

The DHS Secretary appoints PFOs to facilitate Federal support to the established incident command structure and coordinate overall Federal incident management and assistance to officials such as the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) under their disaster response authorities. The PFO provides a primary point of contact and local situational awareness for the DHS Secretary, a channel for media and public communications, and an interface with state, local and other Federal officials. For the 2007 hurricane season, Secretary Chertoff has assigned five PFOs and Deputy PFOs across the Regions from within the National Protection and Programs Directorate.

The FCO is designated by the President as the lead Federal official to coordinate Federal resource support for each emergency or major disaster declared under the *Stafford Act*. FEMA maintains a standing roster, or cadre, of FCOs who have undergone an agency-wide certification program with preparation for all-hazard events including terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. FCOs must participate in actual disaster response or full-scale exercises as part of the certification program.

Hurricane Katrina was the first operational use of the PFO. When the second PFO for Hurricane Katrina was appointed, he took over a greater role in directing the Federal response and created confusion in command and authority, as well as duplicated planning and reporting activities in the Joint Field Office. State officials have said that a single Federal official should not hold responsibilities for more than one state, as the PFO during Katrina did.

Government-Wide Coordination

Under the authorities of the *Stafford Act* and the NRP, FEMA is responsible for providing the necessary emergency management leadership to other Federal departments, agencies, and other organizations when responding to incidents of national significance.

FEMA is largely dependent on other agencies and outside resources in executing many activities that take place. Therefore, departments and agencies need to allocate personnel and funding to train, exercise, plan, and staff disaster response activities to enable better execution of their roles and responsibilities and plans and procedures. Specific contingency plans must be developed and integrated so that capabilities and gaps are identified and addressed.

Federal departments and agencies often use funds from their base operating budgets to plan and participate in exercises, which may result in limiting the resources they commit. In effect, they have to cannibalize from other programs to find resources for their planning and participation efforts. It has become increasingly important that Federal departments and agencies institutionalize their participation in planning, training, and exercise activities; account for the

costs associated with their participation; and, undertake planning, training, and the commitment of resources in future exercise opportunities.

Furthermore, to effectively address disaster response, recovery, and oversight, Federal interagency data sharing and collaboration are a must. However, data-sharing arrangements between FEMA and other Federal agencies to safeguard against fraud and promote the delivery of disaster assistance are not in place. Critical tasks, from locating missing children and registered sex offenders to identifying duplicate assistance payments and fraudulent applications, have all been hindered because mechanisms and agreements to foster interagency collaboration did not exist prior to Hurricane Katrina.

Catastrophic Planning

Attempts to plan for an event such as Hurricane Katrina striking New Orleans had been ongoing since 1998, but never completed. In 1999, the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness submitted a planning proposal to FEMA requesting their assistance in preparing for a catastrophic storm hitting their state. In August 2001, a second request was sent to FEMA requesting assistance in developing a plan. Although planning was begun, it was interrupted by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and did not resume until December 2001. After another major hurricane in 2002, attempts to revive the planning process were unsuccessful due to funding shortfalls.

In 2004, a series of planning sessions were developed in a scenario named "Hurricane Pam" that was conducted from July 16 to 23, 2004. It involved over 350 participants from more than 15 Federal agencies; 30 Louisiana state agencies and 13 parishes; FEMA headquarters; FEMA Regions I, II, IV, and VI; the Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness; the states of Mississippi and Arkansas; and numerous voluntary agencies. The Southeast Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane Plan was a significant output of these planning sessions. Beyond that no catastrophic planning reached fruition.

According to FEMA officials, the major challenge in conducting catastrophic planning was the lack of funding. The GAO reported that requests from FEMA for $100 million for catastrophic planning and an additional $20 million for catastrophic housing planning in fiscal years 2004 and 2005, respectively, were denied by DHS.[1] There were, however, some planning sessions conducted prior to Hurricane Katrina that focused on sheltering, temporary housing, and medical issues, with the last one held in August 2005. The follow-up sessions were delayed after the initial Hurricane Pam exercise due to difficulties in obtaining funding.

Planning and exercises are critical to prepare for and respond to catastrophic events. As indicated in the GAO report mentioned above, FEMA recognized the need for catastrophic planning and requested resources for a number of scenarios, including earthquakes in California and along the New Madris Fault, hurricanes along the gulf coast, and terrorist attacks. To be successful, FEMA needs to plan and conduct exercises with its Federal, state, and local partners. Budget constraints remain a concern to many governmental entities. As a result, many that

[1] *Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: Unprecedented Challenges Exposed the Individuals and Households Program to Fraud and Abuse; Actions Needed to Reduce Such Problems in the Future,* GAO-06-1013, dated September 2006.

should participate, may not have the resources to do so. Congress recently appropriated $20 million for catastrophic planning. FEMA needs to continue to develop plans and exercises for high risk scenarios and include all its emergency management partners.

Logistics and Acquisitions

Logistics

FEMA is responsible for coordinating the delivery of commodities, equipment, personnel, and other resources to support emergency or disaster response efforts of affected states. Therefore, FEMA's ability to track resources is key to fulfilling its mission.

In response to Hurricane Katrina, state officials expressed frustration with the lack of asset visibility in the logistics process. Officials indicated they had ordered water, ice, and meals-ready-to-eat (MREs) in quantities far greater than what was delivered. When they attempted to determine where additional quantities were in the delivery process, they were told the commodities were "in the pipeline." According to FEMA field officials, on average, Mississippi received less than 50 percent of the commodities it requested between August 27, 2005, and September 5, 2005. Similarly, during the 2004 hurricane season, when asked about the delivery status of requested ice and water, Federal logistics personnel could only tell requesting state officials that the commodities were en route.

In our review of FEMA's performance following Hurricane Katrina, we looked at the process for ordering and filling resource requests. We determined an inconsistent process was used. It involved multiple, independent computer and paper-based systems, many of which generated numerous, unique tracking numbers and few of which were cross-referenced. Similarly, the White House report revealed a highly bureaucratic Federal supply process that was not sufficiently flexible or efficient to meet requirements, and that failed to leverage the private sector and 21st Century advances in supply chain management. FEMA must develop a means to standardize and streamline its resource ordering and tracking process.

In our report, *Emergency Preparedness and Response Could Better Integrate Information Technology with Incident Response and Recovery* (September 2005) we stated that FEMA's Logistics Inventory Management System (LIMS) provides no tracking of essential commodities, such as food and water. As a result, FEMA cannot readily determine its effectiveness in achieving DHS' specific disaster response goals and whether or not there is a need to improve. LIMS is essentially an inventory system used to manage equipment and accountable property, such as cell phones or pagers. Once the items are identified for deployment, LIMS does not indicate when they will be shipped or when they should arrive. To compensate, emergency personnel said that they tracked items on a spreadsheet and spent a significant amount of time calling trucking companies to determine the status and projected arrival times of in-transit goods. This required the assignment of additional personnel to obtain the status of deployed commodities and complicated emergency response planning and coordination. FEMA has made improvements to LIMS, and we are continuing to review FEMA logistics.

We noted that FEMA's disaster response culture has supported the agency through many crisis situations, such as the 2004 hurricanes. However, FEMA's reactive approach encourages short-term systems fixes rather than long-term solutions, contributing to the difficulties it encountered in supporting response and recovery operations. Without taking the time to fully define and document systems requirements, it is difficult for FEMA to evaluate viable alternatives to its custom-designed systems. Also, the reactive manner in which information technology systems are funded and implemented has left little time for proper systems testing before they are deployed.

In 2004, FEMA Logistics began testing a pilot program to track total asset visibility, which involved putting tracking units on selected trucks to monitor their movement. About 25 to 33 percent of the trucks were equipped with tracking units during Hurricane Katrina. FEMA logistics officials said that funds were not available to purchase tracking units for all trucks. Due to software limitations of the tracking equipment, FEMA was unable to determine whether a truck had been offloaded or had changed cargo once it left its point of origin. Additionally, FEMA had to retrieve the tracking units from trailers that were not FEMA-owned.

Since Hurricane Katrina, FEMA has identified five major storage sites for commodities such as water, meals, tarps, sheeting, blankets, cots and generators. FEMA has also expanded its asset visibility to all regions. Reporting capabilities have been enhanced to allow for more comprehensive and real time reporting from the field. FEMA has interagency agreements with key partners at the Defense Logistics Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Transportation, and the American Red Cross, and is pursuing one with the General Services Administration, to sustain efforts at 100 percent of requirements within 72 hours. These interagency agreements will provide FEMA with meals-ready-to-eat, fuel, ice, medical supplies, water, cots, blankets, tarps and rental equipment. Each agency will be responsible for tracking its assets and working closely with FEMA and its total asset visibility staff. The agreement with the American Red Cross will also allow for coordination with other non-government organizations for feeding in shelters and communities.

FEMA is currently expanding its total asset visibility system to all regions. It is essential that FEMA possess the capability to track assets real-time, across Federal, state, and local organizations. We are planning a review of this system.

The actions to improve logistical capability are all steps in the right direction. Recent events, including the Kansas tornado, indicated improvements in FEMA's response and logistics capabilities. However, whether these improvements will work for a catastrophic event are largely untested.

Acquisitions

In FY 2006, FEMA obligated $7 billion in contracts, of which 89 percent was for services, largely attributable to spending for recovery from Hurricane Katrina. FEMA spent $6.2 billion for services, such as construction/family housing, and $727 million for goods, such as trailers and plastic fabricated materials. For FY 2007 through July 11, FEMA has obligated over $872 million.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, we focused substantial work on FEMA acquisitions. FEMA has not been well prepared to provide the kind of acquisition support needed for a catastrophic disaster. Their overall response efforts have suffered from:

- Inadequate acquisition planning and preparation for many crucial needs;
- Lack of clearly communicated acquisition responsibilities among FEMA, other Federal agencies, and state and local governments; and
- Insufficient numbers of acquisition personnel to manage and oversee contracts.

Pursuant to the Post-Katrina Act, FEMA has undergone significant reorganization, including in its acquisition function. In May 2007 we published an acquisition management scorecard to gauge FEMA's progress and to create a baseline for measuring progress. FEMA made limited progress in areas deemed critical for a fully successful acquisition program. Major concerns for the acquisition program include the need for: (1) an integrated acquisition system; (2) a full partnership of FEMA's acquisition office with other functions; (3) a comprehensive program management policies and processes; (4) appropriate staffing levels and trained personnel; (5) reliable and integrated financial and information systems; and (6) timely corrective actions in response to many OIG and GAO report recommendations.

FEMA recognized the need to improve acquisition outcomes and has taken some positive steps including the execution of pre-negotiated or "readiness" contracts to be activated when disaster strikes. FEMA is also using a Hurricane Gap Analysis Tool to identify potential disaster response gaps in critical areas. DHS created a Disaster Response/Recovery Internal Control Oversight Board to address many problems. Finally, FEMA continues its aggressive hiring initiative and has reported that it has reached its goal of filling 95 percent of the Agency's funded permanent full-time positions.

We are in the early stage of an audit of FEMA's pre-negotiated contracts. Our goal is to determine the status of these agreements in relation to preparedness goals and requirements for a catastrophic event, and whether FEMA is communicating and coordinating its advance contracting with other Federal agencies and state and local governments, as required under the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2007 (Public Law 109-295). With hurricane season upon us, a number of acquisition readiness concerns remain:

- FEMA has yet to finalize an established process to ensure that Federal pre-negotiated contracts for goods and services are coordinated with Federal, state and local governments,

- FEMA's acquisition function does not yet fully participate in the strategizing and identification of goods and services for which pre-negotiated contracting may be needed in a catastrophic event, and

- FEMA and other Federal agencies may not have enough trained and experienced acquisitions personnel in place to manage and oversee the vast number of acquisitions that follow major and catastrophic events.

For the remainder of 2007 and into 2008, we will continue to conduct a broad body of work on FEMA's acquisition functions to identify additional improvements that FEMA can make. Specifically, we will audit FEMA's internal controls, acquisition workforce, acquisition process, and property management system. We also plan to review a select number of 2007 disaster contracts to assess the extent to which FEMA has improved its ability to track, manage, and monitor disaster contracts.

The urgency and complexity of FEMA's mission will continue to demand effective acquisition strategies in preparing for, preventing, responding to, and recovering from disasters. While DHS continues to build its acquisition management capabilities in the component agencies and on the department-wide level, acquisition management will continue to be an important area of oversight for our office.

Housing

FEMA's overall housing strategy for Hurricane Katrina consisted of shelters, hotels, motels, cruise ships, and tents, as well as other available housing resources to address immediate needs. Disaster victims were then transitioned to travel trailers, mobile homes and apartments to address longer-term housing needs. Some components of FEMA's housing strategy were not well planned or coordinated, and some were not as effective or efficient as FEMA had anticipated. Due to the devastation from Katrina, FEMA immediately procured 20,000 manufactured housing units with plans to purchase over 100,000 units. Some sites initially identified in Louisiana by FEMA to place multiple units were not well coordinated with local officials, and local officials determined placement was not acceptable. FEMA worked with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to implement additional programs to provide housing assistance vouchers to eligible disaster victims. However, FEMA and HUD housing initiatives never reached fruition.

The Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2007 mandated FEMA to develop a National Disaster Housing Strategy. FEMA has coordinated with other Federal agencies and the National Council on Disability to develop a strategy to address housing needs for future disasters. The strategy will focus on sheltering, interim and permanent housing, and various populations to be served. It will guide FEMA and other Federal agencies during disasters and identify gaps, including additional authorities required to deal with sheltering and housing operations. The strategy will be flexible and scalable to meet the unique needs of individual disasters. FEMA is looking to other federal and state partners to take a bigger role in disaster housing.

The strategy includes a Joint Housing Task Force that consists of other federal agencies, state, local, tribal governments, and volunteer agencies. The task force will convene immediately after a Presidential disaster declaration to work with FEMA to coordinate resources and implement housing programs.

These efforts should improve housing coordination, but are untested. FEMA needs to develop a catastrophic housing plan to deal with large-scale evacuations and displacement of citizens for

extended periods. After Hurricane Katrina, FEMA used traditional housing programs for a non-traditional event. As a result, the housing programs and policies were not effective and housing problems persist in the gulf area. New and innovative housing approaches are needed for such events. FEMA has only recently executed an Interagency Agreement with HUD to handle long-term Gulf Coast housing issues. Similar agreements are needed for future disaster preparedness.

Evacuations

FEMA plans to take a more active role in evacuating victims during a disaster such as Hurricane Katrina and will provide support when state and local governments cannot handle the evacuation process. DOT will be responsible for some transportation functions; however, FEMA has taken over the responsibility for standby contracts for air/bus/rail support. FEMA is also working closely with States to ensure that evacuation plans are in place.

In response to Hurricane Katrina, it was initially difficult for FEMA to identify the number and location of evacuees, as well as the need for shelters. The first activation of FEMA as coordinator for ESF-6 was in response to Hurricane Katrina and roles and responsibilities were not clearly defined or established. The American Red Cross (ARC) stated they were responsible only for coordination and reporting on ARC mass care operations, while FEMA said they relied heavily on ARC to coordinate mass care operations and reporting. As a result, a National Sheltering System is being developed and is almost complete in which FEMA can more easily track victims from evacuation to arrival at a shelter, so they do not have to wait for victims to register for assistance with FEMA.

Evacuation plans are complex and must consider a number of scenarios. Recent reports have indicated that despite warnings and mandatory evacuation orders, a significant number of individuals will not leave their homes. Others may not have the capacity to evacuate even if they wanted to because of health or lack of transportation. Local and state officials are in the best position to develop evacuation plans based on local demographics. However, it is critical that the Federal government coordinate with state and locals because in a catastrophic event, it is likely they will play a major role in the evacuation.

Let me end my statement with reiterating our goal and intention, which is to take the lessons learned from the response to Hurricane Katrina and assist DHS to form the foundation for critical improvements to prepare for the response to the next catastrophic event.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared remarks. I would be happy to answer any questions that you or the Committee Members may have.

Chairman WAXMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Jadacki.

I am going to start off the questions.

Administrator Paulison, in the written testimony you submitted to the committee, you discussed everything that FEMA has done since Hurricane Katrina to ensure that it is ready for the next catastrophic disaster. In fact, I think the first 20 pages of your testimony were dedicated to explaining everything FEMA has done, and I appreciate that FEMA has made changes. However, toward the end of your submitted testimony you state, "Of course, we are not done yet. There is still much work to do."

I am happy to see that you acknowledge this in your statement, because it is important that FEMA acknowledge that work still needs to be done. Your statement didn't elaborate on what FEMA still needs to do, and I would like to hear you explain which areas FEMA still needs improvement and why.

Mr. PAULISON. Yes, sir. First of all, that won't ever be done. There is always room for improvement. But specifically, we have done some gap analysis for hurricane States from Texas all the way to Maine to give us a very clear assessment of what the needs are in those States and working with them very closely to fill those gaps. We have not done the rest of the country, but we want to make that gap analysis tool that we have developed with the State of New York and the State Emergency Management available to the rest of the States to deal with that.

The logistics system has been improved significantly and is improving. We still have a lot more work to do to make sure that I have an end to end view of where those commodities are from the time it is ordered until it is absolutely delivered to where it needs to be. We have done a great job of being able to track that, and we can track our supplies pretty much across the country.

But I want to move more to what we call a 3PL—third-party logistics—type system. We have hired some exceptional people from the Defense Logistics Agency to run logistics, and we are not quite where I want to be yet. I am very comfortable that we can provide the supplies we need, but I still want to bring it into the 21st century to make sure that we have what we consider one of the best logistics systems in this country. And we are looking at other private partners and how the Defense Logistics Agency does it, how does Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Lowe's, all those people, move supplies around. We are bringing those in to help us do that.

Those are just two examples of where we are not done yet. We have done a lot, but we have more work to do.

Chairman WAXMAN. One concern I have is whether FEMA is taking on too much responsibility. After Hurricane Katrina, one of the recommendations was that other agencies become more involved in their areas of expertise. In the draft national framework, FEMA has been named as the primary Federal agency for housing and emergency services; however, the Lessons Learned Report issued by the White House recommended that other Federal agencies and organizations take the lead in these critical functions.

For example, recommendation number 69 stated, "Designate HUD as the lead Federal agency for the provision of temporary housing." However, FEMA and not HUD will take the lead for housing, according to the draft response framework.

I am not sure that the White House was correct when it made the recommendations, but I would like to understand FEMA's view of the matter. Why has FEMA decided not to follow the recommendations made by the White House report with respect to temporary housing?

Mr. PAULISON. Actually, we are going to be leaning very heavily on HUD for this long-term housing. FEMA should take the lead in the short-term emergency housing, but we have been working with an MOU with HUD right now to take over all of these people that are in rental assistance places like apartments. That does belong to HUD, and we are looking to transfer all of that this fall to HUD, who are the experts in this type of housing. So it takes both of us together, working with HHS and other agencies to make sure that we can spread the workload, the expertise around the Federal Government, as opposed to all of it falling in FEMA's lap. Put it where the expertise is, and right now that long-term housing place, nobody does it better than HUD, so we are working with them to do that.

Chairman WAXMAN. In the national draft framework, FEMA was also designated as the primary Federal agency for human services; however, recommendation No. 63 in the White House report states, "Assign the Department of Health and Human Services the responsibility for coordinating the provisions of human services during disasters."

The American public doesn't care what agency provides the response to a disaster, they just want the response to be done correctly, and that is our goal, of course, as well. But I am concerned that this tug of war about who will perform what functions will impede an effective response and undermine effectiveness. What is your response to that?

Mr. PAULISON. The response framework is not finished yet. We are adjudicating some final comments this week, and hopefully we will be able to get the draft to you within a week or so, hopefully within a week, to make sure you have that.

We are not going to fight over responsibilities. We are going to make sure that we know who is responsible for what. Those are some clear lessons learned in Katrina, so I can assure you that we will sort this out, putting those responsibilities exactly where they belong, working as a partnership.

We are one Federal Government and we are going to start acting like that.

Chairman WAXMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Davis.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to start my question with Administrator Paulison and the issues related to command and control.

I know you are familiar with the Select Committee report. In that report the Select Committee found command and control was impaired at all levels, which delayed relief, and noted contributing factors including lack of communications, situational awareness, personnel training, and funding.

In a July 16, 2007, letter from Secretary Chertoff to Louisiana's Governor, describing prescripted assignments of the principal Federal officials—the PFO, the deputy PFO, and the Federal coordinat-

ing official, the FCO—the letter stated that the PFO is the DHS' Secretary's representative in the field during a disaster and helps ensure smooth coordination among other senior officials.

What are the roles of the PFO and the FCO, and how you contribute to seamless command and control if one reports to you and the other to Secretary Chertoff?

Mr. PAULISON. First of all, very seldom will there be a PFO named unless it is some type of catastrophic event or something that is not necessarily a Stafford Act event. For instance, if we had several small terrorist attacks across the country that did not raise to the level of disaster declaration in any particular State, you wouldn't have an FCO. The PFO would be that primary Federal official out there.

The PFO is the Secretary's representative out there, and the PFO will help coordinate all of those Federal groups together, but the FCO handles the operational piece. The PFO does not have line authority. The FCO does not report to that person. So I don't see a conflict here at all.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. What would Brown have been? Would he have been the PFO or the FCO? How would you have considered Michael Brown in a case like that?

Mr. PAULISON. One of the things that happened during Katrina, and maybe rightfully so, was the PFO and the FCO were pretty much the same person. That is not going to happen again. They are two different jobs, two different entities. But, regardless, we are all going to work through the joint field office. What we won't have is the PFO giving information. The Secretary does not go through the joint field office and does not come to me also, so we are working it out where the PFO and the FCO have totally different jobs, but will coordinate together and work together very closely.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Have State and local preparedness officials bought into this concept of the PFO and the CFO? Can you ensure the committee these roles will contribute to better communications?

Mr. PAULISON. Yes, sir. One of the major failures inside during Katrina was the breakdown in communication between the local and the State government, and between the State government and the Federal Government, and even inside the Federal Government, itself. Our unified command system that we set up and have tested and have actually had exercises all the way up including the President's Cabinet will stop that from happening again.

The joint field office will be the focal point of that unified command system, so we are all sharing information. We all know what each other knows, and there are no stovepipes. That was one of the biggest failures during Katrina.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Let me go back to the July 16th letter from Secretary Chertoff to Governor Blanco. It described the prescripted assignments of the PFO, the Deputy PFO, the CFO. The lieutenant states that "States should contact DHS' Risk Management Analysis Unit within the National Programs and Protection Directorate," the NPPD. Why is this being run by the NPPD and not by FEMA?

Mr. PAULISON. That is just for the administrative part of the PFO. In fact, in the 2008 budget that will transfer to the Director

of Operations, Admiral Roof, to oversee that part of it. But as far as managing the Federal assets on the ground, deciding which supplies go where, that will be handled by FEMA through the FCO.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Why is the NPPD even involved with this in the first place?

Mr. PAULISON. I think that seemed like a good place to put it at the time. Again, transferring that over to the Director of Operations, and that is who will manage the administrative part of the PFO. But the PFO reports directly to the Secretary, does not report through any body else.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. The Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006 and the Stafford Act doesn't appear to designate NPPD as part of the authorities involved in emergency designation and leadership, so how do they get in it?

Mr. PAULISON. Well, they needed someone to oversee the training, the selection of the PFOs. The PFOs and the NCOs are selected. FEMA is part of that system selecting the FCOs. We do all the FCOs and also sit on the panel for the PFOs. We also participate in the training of the PFOs. They just needed somebody in the Secretary's office to coordinate that. That is why it was the NPPD. That, again, will be the Director of Operations will coordinate that for the Secretary.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Our theory, of course, is for FEMA, that you can go and conscript the resources of Government from anywhere in Government. That is where it is. A lot of us thought it ought to be right there in the White House at a time of emergency. Instead, it is sitting under DHS, and now we see NPPD and other groups getting into it. Frankly, this makes me a little nervous.

I just want to ask one last question. Last week, as you know, we had a hearing on the problems of formaldehyde in the FEMA trailers. FEMA was caught off guard in its mass housing strategy. In his written testimony, Al Ashwood, Oklahoma State Director of Emergency Management, who is on our second panel, he is highly critical of your post-Katrina housing strategy.

Just to remind everybody, the Select Committee report states, "FEMA failed to take advantage of the Department of Housing and Urban Development's expertise and large-scale housing challenges.

So my question is: how does FEMA plan the coordination of short, medium, and long-term housing? What is different now in the post-Katrina environment, and is Mr. Ashwood overreacting, or is housing still a major concern?

Mr. PAULISON. Mr. Ashwood is not over-reacting. We did not take advantage of HUD's capabilities in the aftermath of Katrina. One of the lessons learned. We know we are going to do that now. We are working very closely with HUD. If the MOU is not signed now, it will be signed very shortly to make sure that we move that long-term housing piece over to HUD and just use FEMA for the emergency housing to get people immediate help, put them in immediate safe housing, and then transfer it over to HUD. That will take place this fall.

Mr. KUCINICH [presiding]. Major General, I would just like to ask some questions about the readiness of the National Guard. Do you have enough Guardsmen and Guardswomen to be able to respond to a national emergency if another hurricane was to, let's say, hit

the Gulf Coast and cause tremendous damage and dislocation to people? And could you tell this committee the degree of preparation the Guard has made with respect to the number of personnel, the kinds of equipment, and whether you are truly ready, aside from any paper plans?

General SCHERLING. Yes, sir. To focus first on personnel, I will tell you that the personnel availability within the States is very good at this time. While we have approximately 50,00 personnel deployed overseas, we have approximately 10,000 personnel day to day here in the United States involved in domestic operations. That leaves us approximately 390,000 personnel to be available in the event of another disaster here in the United States.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you, Major General. Now I would like you to square your response that you just gave this committee with the response that the Senate committee heard on U.S. disaster response earlier this month from Army Lieutenant General Steven Blum, head of the U.S. National Guard, who stated that in the case of a major disaster without advanced notice, that the National Guard is unprepared to respond? He said, "In a no-notice event we are at risk, and we are at significant risk." I would like you to square the statement that you just gave to this committee with the statement of Lieutenant General Blum. Thank you.

General SCHERLING. Yes, sir. I believe that General Blum was referring in particular to equipment, sir. And the reason I say that is, because of the first of the year, the equipage rate of the National Guard was approximately 40 percent, and it has been our policy within the National Guard that if a State has an equipment requirement and the National Guard has equipment available in our inventory, we will make sure that they have it. In order to prepare for this hurricane season, what we have done is focused on the hurricane States, and in doing so we have held several hurricane conferences which FEMA has participated in and conducted our own gap analysis on the equipment available to each and every State.

What we have done subsequent to that is to also determine where we would match shortages with availability from other States. So, for example, the State of Louisiana may have particular shortages and we have actually used the emergency management assistance compacts to determine which States would be most available to provide equipment to match their shortages.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you. And let me ask you this. Are you saying that you have enough manpower?

General SCHERLING. Yes, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. And are you saying you have enough equipment?

General SCHERLING. Sir, we have enough manpower. The National Guard is short of our dual-use equipment.

Mr. KUCINICH. So you are saying that Lieutenant General Blum was speaking only about equipment and wasn't speaking about the issue of whether or not you have enough people?

General SCHERLING. Yes, sir. I believe that to be the case.

Mr. KUCINICH. But if you have enough people and you don't have enough equipment, what does that say to the overall preparedness of the National Guard?

General SCHERLING. Sir, while we may not have enough equipment in particular States, what we have done is prepare for the upcoming season by making available other equipment from other States to cover those shortages, and that would be General Blum's response, I believe, as well.

Mr. KUCINICH. So your response is that you only have shortages of equipment in certain States?

General SCHERLING. Yes.

Now, Mr. Paulison, are you in close contact with the National Guard relative to their level of preparedness?

Mr. PAULISON. Yes, sir. In fact, we have the closest relationship with the Department of Defense, the National Guard than we have ever had. We meet with them on a regular basis. We have weekly videoconferences that they participate in. We have developed an extremely good relationship and are working hand in hand together. We are doing exercises together, making sure we know where the shortfalls are in particular States. Like I said, we did the gap analysis already.

Mr. KUCINICH. Shortfalls? Have they given you a budget for equipment?

Mr. PAULISON. No, sir, they have not given us a budget for equipment.

Mr. KUCINICH. Do you know if they have needs for equipment that have not been met?

Mr. PAULISON. The system that we use is the emergency management assistance compact, so if they have a disaster in a particular State and there is something lacking, we can move that very quickly from one State to another.

Mr. KUCINICH. Now, I want to go back to what Army Lieutenant General Blum said to a Senate committee. He said that in a no-notice event we are at risk, we are at significant risk. You are just telling this committee that you seem to have no problems about whether they have the equipment they need, but you haven't really submitted a budget. You are saying that you have some equipment needs but you can move them around from State to State. Since no-notice events really limit mobility, but by common sense I am just, again, asking you—and we are going to go back to another round on this—about what equipment needs are out there that haven't been met. Has there been a budget? Is there communication on real, practical matters?

I am going to go to the next questioner. This is the ranking member of the Domestic Policy Subcommittee, a person who I serve with, who serves with distinction, and who I am glad to work with today, Mr. Issa.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think this epitomizes a bipartisan hearing, and I am going to followup right where you left off.

General, we all know what hangar queens are, especially since I am an Army aviator, so we only know about helicopters we can't get out, but when we look at your shortfalls in equipment, as the chairman was asking, what is the net number that you can deploy? If you have 360,000 people potentially—and we all know there will be sick, lame, and lazy that will fall out of that. We all know there are people whose skill sets would be inappropriate, or for some

other reason be inappropriate to deploy, so you get a lesser number.

Let's say, for argument's sake, that is 300,000. Now we talk about the equipment you have that is appropriate for dual use. How many people with full equipment can you put on a target, let's just say in each of the four regions in a 24 hour basis? So take the southeast, the southwest, the northwest, the northeast, and let's just assume for a moment that a hurricane hits and the Fort Dix guys do something on steroids, what can you put in each of those zones?

General SCHERLING. As I mentioned earlier, we have approximately 390,000 people that would be available. Now, being a planner, one might put 100,000 in each of the four zones. What I would tell you is that the availability of equipment is much like living in a small town like I grew up in North Dakota, where you may have a fire in your house, and say it is a two-truck fire, where you would typically need two fire trucks to put this fire out, and you only have one fire truck available, but you have to get the fire truck from the neighboring town to get the fire out.

Mr. ISSA. General, I understand that, and I think we all understand that, exactly like forest fires—and I am from the west, so we understand that there has never been a forest fire fought in California that wasn't fought with out-of-Staters, and there has never been anything else in the west that wasn't fought with California firefighters. However, my question really is: how many people with full equipment can you put to the next Katrina? And let's assume that 24 hours into that disaster, whatever amount you give me, you have an equal disaster in one of the other four quadrants. What is your reserve? When do you run out of people in each of those four regions?

The reason we are asking is that the likelihood of another Katrina may be low, but the likelihood of two more events is what we have been asking FEMA to be ready for for a long time.

So have a Katrina, then have the bad guys take advantage of that situation and do something catastrophic. Let's just divide it in four. How many people can you have in four regions with equipment?

General SCHERLING. Congressman, the reason that I would separate equipment and personnel is really that when we respond to disasters we do so with 10 essential different areas of equipment, to include transportation, logistics, aviation, and it requires different numbers of people to sustain each different type of equipment, so——

Mr. ISSA. OK. Let me change to another subject then. I think I will go to the IG, because I am a little frustrated. If I need 100,000 temporary dwellings in the southeast today without formaldehyde, do you believe that these agencies are prepared to deliver those today? And we are not talking about the ones that are already there. I think that is clear.

Mr. JADACKI. I don't think we can buy 100,000 temporary dwellings, whether they are travel trailers or mobile homes, without formaldehyde. I don't think there is any guarantee to do that. I think, as some Members alluded to before, the fact that there are

other agencies out there that probably have better capability to do that.

There is Housing and Urban Development. Housing is in the name. They should be doing housing. And I think, under the National Response Plan, and when there is a catastrophic event, FEMA needs to look at these other Federal agencies where the expertise is. There are Stafford Act authorities that can be used early on to provide temporary housing until the situation is stabilized. I think, mid-to long-term, I think they do need to look for the experts in the Federal Government to do that, including going out and buying 100,000 housing units.

Mr. ISSA. I only have time for two quick followups. One would be for the IG, and that is basically: what effect do you believe the global war on terror, which is translated into preparedness by FEMA, has affected its ability to deal with other routine—I hate to say hurricanes are routine, but they do happen more often than terrorist attacks. How much has been diverted because of that portion of preparedness?

And, Mr. Paulison, so that I don't leave you out, in Hurricane Katrina we had a de minimis amount of need for hospitals, by comparison to other forms of disaster. It wasn't there it was none, but on a scale most ever had to do with people who didn't have power, didn't have food, or whose medical emergencies were not caused directly by the hurricane. What are you doing to change that to be prepared in the next disaster, hospitalized?

In either order, quickly.

Mr. PAULISON. We have particularly worked very closely with our gap analysis in looking at hospitals, which hospitals can shelter in place, what do they need to do that, and just particularly in Louisiana we have put six huge generators down there, installed them, fueled them for those hospitals that can shelter in place and are not part of a flood zone.

Some cannot shelter in place, and those we make sure that, working with the State, we have very good, rock solid evacuation plans. Where are they going to go? How are they going to get there? Who is going to take them? Who is responsible for that? And not only the hospitals, but the nursing homes, where we had some of the issues down there.

Those are the types of things we have put in place for hospitals.

Am I answering your question?

Mr. ISSA. Yes. Thank you.

Just on the IG quickly, because my time is expiring.

Mr. JADACKI. Yes. After 2003 when Homeland Security formed, a lot of the emphasis was on terrorist attacks and those types things. I think the focus on natural disasters really was minimal.

After 2004, the hurricanes hit Florida. That was a little taste of the capability of the Federal Government, but I think that Katrina was the eye-opener. I think it brought to the attention to the American public, to everybody, that we can't ignore.

The consequences are the same, whether it is a natural disaster or it is a man-made disaster. There is still that response and recovery capability that is needed by the Federal Government and the State and local government.

Mr. KUCINICH. I want to thank the ranking member on our subcommittee and just to comment to you that this line of questioning I hope other Members are going to pick up between the disparity between having enough people and equipment, because if you are a truck driver and you don't have a truck, hello. So I want to thank the gentleman for exploring that.

I am asking for unanimous consent for the committee to permit the inclusion in this hearing of our good friend from Louisiana, the distinguished gentleman, Mr. Jindal, to participate in this hearing as a member of the committee and to be able to ask questions. Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair at this point will recognize Eleanor Holmes Norton, the distinguished representative of the District of Columbia.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I have a question about DHS dominance and the attending dominance of terrorism over natural disasters. I do want to say, for Mr. Paulison and Mr. Jadacki, perhaps, I do want to say to Mr. Paulison you are getting a great deal of oversight, including by my own subcommittee, which has the primary jurisdiction over FEMA and will be doing a comprehensive hearing in New Orleans on the Katrina anniversary in late August. You have had hearings here in this committee on formaldehyde most recently. We have had hearings on ice and food. There has been a tendency on the part of Katrina to respond to under-preparation and Katrina to over-preparation. It suggests the absence, even given the difficulties of calibrating, it really does suggest the absence of skilled personnel in these matters.

My question, though, goes in part to my membership on the Department of Homeland Security and my membership on this committee and, of course, our subcommittee. We passed the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act to deal with DHS dominance, to try to give FEMA more independence, and yet I really don't see evidence of that.

Let me give you an example. First of all, apparently to declare a national emergency one has to still go through bureaucracies all the way to OMB, suggesting DHS is still in charge, no matter whether the expertise would naturally flow to FEMA. But let's look at what is happening with emergency exercises, as a case in point. We know we are dealing with all hazards, and, indeed, it is a failure if you have to attune to disaster. You should be able to handle disasters across the board.

In the national emergency exercises for the hypothetical emergency scenarios, isn't it interesting that, although you can expect that there will be floods and hurricanes and earthquakes and snow storms, although that is clearly the expectation, in your hypothetical emergency scenarios, where you have 15 scenarios in total, 12 of the scenarios are terrorist attacks.

I can understand post-9/11 everybody would want to, in fact, make sure that we could do something in the event of terrorist attack, but that kind of dominance of a terrorism approach makes you wonder whether you understand what American people have to deal with every single year. Why are there only three scenarios that deal with natural disaster—an earthquake in California, an

earthquake on the New Madrid Fault Line, and a pandemic flu outbreak?

I would like to know why there aren't more real-time disaster exercises. For example, the District of Columbia on July 4th does a very simple real-time, putting all the red lights on just to make sure everybody can stop and go. They go on for a longer period of time than usual. You know, that really comes out of the District of Columbia.

I wonder, for example, whether you have had anything to do with real-time exercises any place else. Suppose you had to evacuate San Francisco or the District of Columbia. Could we do that? Would people know to stay in place or evacuate? How would FEMA respond? And why are there so many scenarios for terrorist disasters and so few for natural disasters?

Mr. PAULISON. First of all, that is an excellent question. We are making sure that we don't go one way or the other. I know FEMA gets accused sometimes of focusing strictly on natural disasters and not the terrorist events. We have just taken over, just this last spring, all of the exercises, and I can tell you that I have done tabletop exercises for hurricane seasons. We did preparedness workshops and exercises in region two at the Caribbean office, region two, region six, the Pacific area office, through March to June. I did hurricane preparedness workshops in several different areas.

Ms. NORTON. I am really talking about the Presidential Security Council. Are you doing those? Are you now doing the fifteen scenarios and not the Presidential Security Council, which had twelve terrorist and three natural?

Mr. PAULISON. Yes. The 15 scenarios are out there for people to train to, to do those types of things. I feel like we do enough natural disaster exercises across this country. All of our catastrophic planning——

Ms. NORTON. What about real-time exercises?

Mr. KUCINICH. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Ms. NORTON. Could he just answer that about real-time exercises, like the one that was in the District of Columbia?

Mr. PAULISON. We do that on a regular basis, particularly with hurricanes and things like that, and earthquakes. We do the evacuation piece.

Ms. NORTON. Where have you done real-time exercises?

Mr. PAULISON. It has to be table top.

Ms. NORTON. Where have you done real-time exercises?

Mr. PAULISON. If you are talking about real-time exercises, every State has a hurricane exercise, and we always participate in those with the States, because that is where the impact is. Those are either real time or tabletop. For a hurricane it is tough to do a real-time type of exercise for that type of thing, because you can't evacuate people. You don't want to ship supplies, so you do a tabletop to make sure you have things in place. That seems to work best for us.

Mr. KUCINICH. The gentlelady's time has expired.

I am going to recognize Mr. Shays from Connecticut.

Mr. SHAYS. I had the opportunity to serve on the Select Committee under the guidance of Chairman Davis. It was a hard-hitting report. I think that my reaction to Katrina was that we could deal

with an administration that was being arrogant and competent, but it was tough to deal with an administration that was being arrogant and incompetent, and Katrina looked so incompetent to all of us. I realize it was a 500-year storm, so nobody is going to be able to deal with it in the way we would want, but I would have at least liked someone of authority to have gone into the Superdome and said, I am not leaving this place until all our fellow Americans are out safe. It was almost like everybody avoided going in there. It was a very shameful feeling for me.

By the way, Mr. Paulison, thank you for your work and your work as the Acting Director and now as the Director, but what I am hearing is that we are looking at this in a strategic way, which is good, but I would like you to kind of outline some of the tactical and operational areas that you are looking to improve. Not all of them, because it would take you a long time, but just give me an outline.

Mr. PAULISON. First of all, what happened at Katrina should not happen in this country, and I am going to do everything in my power to make sure it doesn't happen again. I am going to make sure that this organization is capable of responding.

We have taken all of those lessons learned from the reports that came out of the House, out of the Senate, out of the White House, the IG's report, GAO—I mean, there is a ton of them. There were similar themes to every one of them: tremendous breakdown in communications; not having visibility on the ground in what is really happening and getting all those multiple stories back; not having a good victim registration in place; having people scattered across this country and not knowing where they are or who they were or what their needs were; not being able to provide the right kind of logistics, having the right things in the right places at the right time. So we are taking those and focusing on those major issues that were a breakdown in the system.

Right now we can register over 200,000 people a day that we could not do before. We have put five mobile registration vans in place where we can go out to where people are, because they could not come to our registration centers, and they are equipped with satellite-based laptop computers and satellite-based cell phones. We saw this work very well in Greensburg, KS, where people actually sat down at a table and sat on a computer and registered themselves or pick up the phone and call that 1–800–621-FEMA number to get registered, putting a logistics system in place that brings it into the 21st century.

I know Eleanor Norton Holmes has helped us with that and recognized very clearly that we cannot continue to stockpile millions and millions of dollars worth of ice and just let it go away; we have to bring in a third-party logistics systems, which is what we have done as——

Mr. SHAYS. Let me use that as a transition. One of the things that I found most astonishing was how bureaucratic FEMA was and how we had let out contracts. I have in Connecticut some of the largest producers of bottled water. They were willing to give it below cost, and in some cases free. They had to go through some individual who didn't have an office in Georgia, I think it was, who had a contract, who basically was kind of trying to direct this out

of what seemed like his kitchen. That was an absolute absurdity. My folks came to me and said, Forget it. We are not going to go through this individual.

I hope we are looking at how we give out contracts and have the capability, if they are not instantly able to perform or if there is an overwhelming effort, to be able to nullify those contracts.

Mr. PAULISON. There is no question that a tremendous amount of bureaucracy built up over the 30 years that this organization has been in existence, and we are trying to very quickly get rid of some of that to move much faster and be much more nimble. It has been tough, I have to tell you, be honest with you. It has been difficult at times to do some of that. The Stafford Act needs to be looked at again to make sure it gives us better tools to do what we need to do.

But what you are saying should not happen.

Mr. SHAYS. Right.

Mr. PAULISON. We should be able to use the supplies where they are.

Mr. SHAYS. Right. And instead of bringing them all the way from Connecticut, if they are already down close to the area. But I particularly have concerns about these contracts which seem to me like all they do is skim from the top.

Let me just make this final point to you. When this committee helped create the Department of Homeland Security, we wanted the Department of Homeland Security to be added value to FEMA. I have told this to the Secretary. I was dumbfounded that he basically stood back and said, I want FEMA to be FEMA. We wanted FEMA to be FEMA plus have a Department of Homeland Security adding value, to be able to call in all the other resources that the Department has.

Mr. KUCINICH. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. SHAYS. I would just like to know, Do you feel there is a better working relationship with the Secretary, etc?

Mr. PAULISON. Yes, sir. I have a great relationship with the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary. Being inside of Homeland Security has given me access to assets that I may not have. I meet every week with the operational components of Homeland Security. That gives me access to people on a first-name basis that I can just pick up the phone and ask for assistance.

I feel like I get a tremendous benefit out of what is inside Homeland Security.

Mr. SHAYS. Terrific.

Mr. KUCINICH. I want to thank the gentleman for the practical line of questioning that is being asked here. It is really essential.

The Chair recognizes Representative Clay from Missouri. Mr. Clay.

Mr. CLAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for conducting this hearing.

You know, FEMA failed Americans during Hurricane Katrina, and they continue to fail those who were displaced by the storm. Last week's hearing did not reassure me that FEMA is anything short of a dysfunctional agency that epitomizes mismanagement and waste.

In addition to potentially putting the health of displaced hurricane victims at risk by exposing them to formaldehyde, reports of disaster ice being stored for 2 years at a cost of $12.5 million to taxpayers was irresponsible.

Mr. Paulison, is it true that FEMA contracts require disposal of the ice 3 months after its purchase date?

Mr. PAULISON. We are disposing of all that ice we purchased in 2005 and 2006 at a cost of $3.5 million to get rid of the ice. We are no longer going to store ice. We are using a third-party system with the Corps of Engineers. They can deliver 3.5 million pounds of ice within 24 hours, and then whatever else we need within 72 hours.

This is a new system that we are going to. If we had not stored ice and food and had the type of hurricane season that was predicted in 2006, we would have not had the supplies we needed to do the job we did, like we learned at Katrina.

Mr. CLAY. Wait a minute. Who advised FEMA to go against its own policy and store this ice for 2 years?

Mr. PAULISON. The ice was still good. We had it tested on a regular basis. We kept it for as long as we could. We recognized that we could not keep it any longer, and we did not want to use it, so we are disposing of the ice. It is an expendable commodity, like anything else that has a shelf life, so we are getting rid of it.

Again, we learned from those lessons. Since we cannot depend on predictions for hurricane seasons—we were supposed to have a heavy hurricane season last year and it did not happen. So instead of storing those massive quantities of food and ice, we are looking at a just-in-time delivery system, like the rest of the business community uses. I want to bring FEMA into the 21st century logistics, and that is why we are bringing top-notch logistics people in who know how to operate in this type of a system.

Mr. CLAY. OK. I have a limited amount of time, Mr. Paulison. So apparently cost is no object here? I mean, that is what it seems like, and it seems like in your response you indicated that was the policy then and you kept storing the ice for almost 2 years. So apparently cost is no object when it is the taxpayers' dollars.

Mr. PAULISON. No, sir, that is not accurate. I am sorry, I can't let that go. We stored what we thought was enough supplies to get us through that 2006 hurricane season. We didn't have any hurricanes, so we had excess supplies. Learning from that, we are no longer going to do that.

Mr. CLAY. OK. Let's go to the next one then, Mr. Paulison. GAO estimated that FEMA, in responding to Hurricane Katrina, made between $600 million and $1.4 billion in improper and possibly fraudulent payments. How has FEMA addressed concerns over these payments that were made in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina?

Mr. PAULISON. A couple of things. I don't know about the dollar amount, but GAO is correct: FEMA did a lot of payments that they should not have done. They did not have a system in place to accurately identify a person were who they said they were and they lived where they said they lived. So we have put a system in place where we can now do that. We have an identity verification company, a system in place so when you come for payment we can tell

you are who you said you are and you lived where you said you lived.

The second piece of that is some of the contracts that FEMA did during Katrina were done on the fly, and we don't want to do that. We have those contracts in place ahead of time. We are negotiating from a position of strength, as opposed to negotiating from a position of weakness when you are in the middle of a storm and you need that type of assistance.

Mr. CLAY. And at that time, again, taxpayer money was no object here. Let me——

Mr. PAULISON. No, sir. That is why I was brought in, to fix those issues, and that is what I am doing.

Mr. CLAY. And I hope you do.

Mr. PAULISON. Thank you, sir.

Mr. CLAY. Let me go on to Mr. Jadacki.

Mr. Jadacki, an agency like FEMA cannot properly prepare for nor respond to a disaster without effective leadership. What personnel changes have been made to address ineffective leadership within FEMA since the hurricane?

Mr. JADACKI. Some of the changes that were made in FEMA, we have been providing a lot of oversight over contracting and those types of things. There was a goal by the Director to ensure that 90 to 95 percent of the vacancies be filled by the beginning of hurricane season. They recently achieved that goal. There is a number of industry experts that are now working for FEMA in senior leadership positions that have practical disaster management experience from the outside that they are bringing in to FEMA right now. But, again, a lot of these new initiatives aren't tested, so it remains to be seen what is going to happen when a major disaster occurs, but the signs are encouraging. We have seen some of the leadership positions being filled and some of the capabilities along with those positions are coming in place.

Mr. KUCINICH. The gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. CLAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair recognizes my colleague from Ohio, Representative Jordan. Thank you.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the panel being with us.

I had underlined the same sentence that Congressman Clay just pointed out in the memorandum that was prepared for us by the majority and the minority staff members, highlighting the $600 million to $1.4 billion in improper and potentially fraudulent payments.

Mr. Paulison is that an accurate estimate, or is it more or less? Can you elaborate more? And also talk about some of the things you said in response to Congressman Clay's question. What checks? What balances? What auditing mechanism do you have in place so that if, in fact, that is accurate, it doesn't happen again?

Mr. PAULISON. The estimate of the amount of dollars of $1.4 billion, we don't think it was that high, but regardless, there were not good systems in place to stop that waste, fraud, and abuse that we saw, so we put several things in place. One, the identity verification. It was going to help us tremendously, being able to give the

right people the amount of money they are due and not give it to the people who don't deserve it.

The second piece is having contracts in place ahead of time, where we are negotiating the contract as opposed to the contractor. FEMA put in place a tremendous amount of contracts in the middle of the hurricane, and we did not get a good deal, quite frankly, on a lot of those contracts. They were no bid. The contracts were not written into the best interest of the taxpayer or the best interest of FEMA, the Federal Government.

So what we have done now is put those contracts in place ahead of time, what we call readiness contracts, where they are sitting on the shelf ready to go. We had the upper hand negotiating them. They are bid out, they are not no bid, to make sure we can stop that waste, fraud, and abuse. We want to be good stewards of taxpayers' money. Disasters cost a lot of money, but we should be able to spend it wisely, and that is what we are trying to do.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Jadacki, would you care to comment at all?

Mr. JADACKI. Yes. One of the problems they had after Hurricane Katrina was the capacity of the system to accept applications, as Mr. Paulison alluded to. It had the capacity to take in about 100 registrations a day. So in order to increase capacity, some of the controls were dropped, and one of the critical controls was validating Social Security numbers, whether they were valid or not. Depending on how you applied for assistance, they would either check it or wouldn't check it. In some cases we found a lot of Social Security numbers were all zeroes or sequential and those types of things, but the system accepted them and provided checks to those individuals.

Some of the other items that GAO pointed out in its report were checks going to Federal prisons and those types of things. In some cases, yes, they were fraudulent and we are looking into it. We have active investigations. In some cases, some of the prisoners actually had residences that were destroyed and they are eligible for those types of things.

So the numbers appear to be a little high from GAO, but, nevertheless, there was a pretty good amount of fraud, waste, and abuse, a lot of because there were citizens that were fraudulently applying for assistance, but in some parts the checks and balances on the back end just weren't there.

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

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank the gentleman. The Chair recognizes Representative Murphy.

Mr. MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Paulison.

I wanted to talk a little bit about how we get to the point of a disaster being declared. No doubt when you talk about an incident such as Katrina, about that declaration, but there are dozens if not hundreds of smaller disasters that happen all around the country on a yearly basis. I come from an experience in Connecticut where we had, I think, a fairly unfortunate interaction with FEMA this spring when we had, on April 15th and 16th, some historic, major flooding in northwestern Connecticut and throughout the State. The next day our Governor was in touch with FEMA to ask for a

disaster declaration, and it took nearly a month before that disaster was declared. It took, in fact, 2 months before homeowners and individual businesses were allowed to even apply for disaster assistance.

Representative Shays inquired about some of the bureaucratic hurdles that exist within FEMA in relation to disaster response. It certainly seems that, at least in this case, there remain some fairly significant and troubling bureaucratic hurdles, even for the declaration of a disaster.

In Connecticut we simply couldn't understand, as we stood outside and looked at flooding that we had never seen before, why it would take a month in order for the Federal Government to declare what we knew over night: that a major, unprecedented disaster had hit our State.

I have some specific questions on that but first want to ask you in general whether you still see bureaucratic hurdles to disaster declarations within FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. PAULISON. We do have still a lot of work to do on the declaration process. No question about it. The ones that are really obvious and overwhelming are easy. We have been turning those around in less than 24 hours. The ones like in Connecticut and some other areas where, although it maybe devastated you, the thresholds that we set down for individual and public assistance sometimes aren't quite there and we have to do what we call preliminary damage assessments.

We worked very hard with Connecticut, with the State, to get to yes. And it took a while, probably longer than it should, but at least we finally got there.

We have to do something to streamline the process even better to make it move faster, and in some cases the general guidelines that we have that we are applying across the country don't necessarily work for smaller States, and that is why we are bringing in the small State and rural advocate into FEMA, to help us come up with some of those things.

For instance, 100 homes damaged in Texas is a lot different than 100 homes damaged in Connecticut or a smaller State out there, but that is kind of like some of the rough guidelines we use. So we need to re-look at that whole system, look at that individual assistance piece, and how do we make it equitable from one State to another based on size, based on population, all those types of things.

Those are things we are looking at. What happened with Connecticut, with taking 2 months for that, we don't want to happen again.

Mr. MURPHY. That is the second question. How long is too long? A disaster is a disaster. In Connecticut we have small towns that simply didn't have the resources available to them on a short-term basis in order to make some of the immediate emergency infrastructure improvements that they needed to make. I mean, in your mind how long should it take in order for a disaster to be declared, even if it is a smaller, more localized disaster like we had in the northeast?

Mr. PAULISON. As quick as we can do the preliminary damage assessments and get the numbers that we need. Again, it goes back

to the thresholds that we set down to either declare a disaster or not, and I am not comfortable that those are where they need to be, again particularly with the smaller States. So we have to work very hard. Sometimes it takes longer to find all of the damage. We go back to the State, which we did with Connecticut, and say, look, the numbers aren't there. We do the preliminary damage assessments together. FEMA doesn't do them by themselves. We do it hand-in-hand with the State to go out and do that.

Something that is major we have been turning around in 1 or 2 days, and my goal would be to not take more than a week or so to get those declarations through the process and give you a yes or a no so that——

Mr. MURPHY. Before my time is up I want to ask one more question. It is my understanding that one of the hurdles is that right now, in order to declare a disaster, you have to check with the White House's Office of Budget and Management. It concerns me that a budgetary agency is having input on decisions as to whether a disaster occurred. It seems like that is a wholly separate question. As we have moved FEMA into DHS, it seems to me that some of the independence of those decisions is being compromised.

Do you have to check with OMB before you make a disaster declaration?

Mr. PAULISON. We don't check with OMB. I make my recommendation to the President, and that does go through the Office of Budget and Management. They are the receiver of that for the President.

Mr. MURPHY. Do you have to wait for——

Mr. PAULISON. But we don't pick up the phone and check with them and say, Gee is this right? I send my recommendation over to them, and then they process it for the President.

Mr. MURPHY. If OMB comes back and gives a negative input or feedback on your requests, can you still declare a disaster?

Mr. PAULISON. The President has to sign the declaration. All I do, I make a recommendation to the President.

Mr. KUCINICH. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. MURPHY. Thank you.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair is pleased to recognize Mr. McHenry.

Mr. MCHENRY. I thank my friend for recognizing me, and I yield a 15-second intervention.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Paulison, I think Mr. Murphy and I are very grateful that you responded to our concerns. It took a little longer, but ultimately we got what we needed. We are very grateful to you on that.

I think, though, there is another little point that we realized. You need to look at metropolitan areas, because it may be the State is divided up in a way that neither side has enough, but the area has critical mass. I hope you pursue that. I don't want to comment now on that because the gentleman has yielded to me, but thank you.

I thank our other two witnesses, as well.

Mr. MCHENRY. I thank my friend, Mr. Shays.

Mr. Paulison, we appreciate your leadership. You have had an enormous record of public service. This is a culmination of a career well trained for you.

There are a couple of things that I think are important as you have an ongoing rebuilding FEMA, ensuring that not only the National Guard but State and local authorities are incorporated and the private sector. Located in my District is Lowe's Home Improvements. Well, they have a financial interest in making sure 2 by 4s and rakes and shovels and chain saws get to affected areas, and they do this very well. They have a whole facility dedicated to this. I am sure Home Depot, as well as the big box retailers like Wal-Mart, all have that facility up and running.

What have you done to coordinate the private sector response?

Mr. PAULISON. One of the biggest issues that I see in hurricanes, particularly being raised in south Florida, is getting those businesses back up and running as quickly as possible and building that resiliency. The Stafford Act does not allow us to assist private businesses. What we can do is work with them and lecture to them and talk to them how do they build resiliency into their business so they can get back up and running.

Mr. MCHENRY. With all due respect, Mr. Paulison, that is not the issue. I am asking if you are asking them for help.

Mr. PAULISON. I misunderstood.

Mr. MCHENRY. I will tell you——

Mr. PAULISON. We are. Yes, sir. Can I finish?

Mr. MCHENRY. I will tell you that they have the capability, they have the technology, they have the ability, and, based on what I have seen out of FEMA prior to your service, FEMA doesn't have it, but these private sector entities do.

So I am not asking you to assist a private sector company; I am asking if you are asking them to assist you, because I will tell you this: Wal-Mart could get bottled water there. They could get those trucks of ice that were never delivered, the tens of millions of dollars we spent on ice for Katrina that was never delivered. I am sure Wal-Mart could get it there. I am sure Yellow Freight could find a way to get it there. What are you doing to incorporate them?

Mr. PAULISON. Yes, sir, we are, and what we are trying to do is to bring FEMA into the 21st century logistics-wise and use some of those business models that you just talked about.

We are meeting with the business roundtable, with the National Chamber of Commerce, with other groups like that to tap into that expertise. We are working with a couple of groups now to bring perhaps some interns from the private sector into FEMA to help us learn from them of how they move these types of logistics. The people that I am hiring in the logistics area have that type of expertise.

We are definitely looking to that business model. We are talking with them. We are talking to the Home Depots, we are talking to the Wal-Mart's about how do we do that, how do we do a better job of providing logistics and not necessarily taking it all on ourselves but use that third-party logistics where we can tap into what they already do and what they do best as far as moving supplies.

Mr. MCHENRY. The thought I have is that, instead of trying to rebuild what is out there in the private sector, utilize the private

sector, whether it is Lowe's or Wal-Mart or even grocery stores that have an interest in getting products to the marketplace. They just need some assistance.

To that end, what about first responders' ID cards? For instance, if the home improvement store, like Lowe's that I am familiar with, if they have employees that are trying to get to the facility, if we had an ID card for first responders they would be able to get through maybe two or three jurisdictions in order to get to the facility that otherwise they couldn't get to because they don't have an identification card that refers to them as first responders. Same for local fire departments, volunteer fire departments. Where are we in this process for a first responder ID card?

Mr. PAULISON. We are looking at a credentialing system for this country for first responders—nurses, doctors, paramedics, all those types of things. Mr. Geldhart, who is going to testify on the next panel on the National Capital Region about what they are doing is a prototype system here, to see if this system is going to work and how we are going to use that.

But what you are saying is actually right on target. That is where we want to go. We want to credential people so if I am going to the disaster scene if I am the local fire chief or the local mayor I know who is coming into my district and I know what credentials they have.

Hurricane Andrew, I had 3,500 fire fighters show up to help out. I didn't know who they were or were they really fire fighters. At the World Trade Center we had the same type of thing—people crawling on that rubble pile that we don't know who they were. That has to stop.

The national credentialing system is where we really need to go, and we are working on that right now.

Mr. MCHENRY. Thank you. I appreciate your comments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank the gentleman.

As I think everyone is aware now, there is a vote on. We are going to entertain questions from Mr. Towns of New York, then the committee will recess for the vote. I am going to ask the witnesses to return because we have more questions.

Mr. Towns, would you proceed? Thank you.

Mr. TOWNS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Paulison, on May 15th Chairman Thompson of Mississippi, who is the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, held a hearing on hurricane season preparedness. During that hearing, Mr. Paulison, you were asked for an approximation of the NRP, when would it be ready, the National Response Plan. This is what you said: "I can tell you that we are working hard to get it done in the June timeframe and not in July." Now, Mr. Paulison, this is the last day of July, the last day. My question is: what is the problem?

Mr. PAULISON. It is not a problem; it is the issue of trying to make sure we get it right. We set some artificial time lines for ourselves to get this thing done. That is when I testified in front of Mr. Thompson's committee, and I was sincere about that, but I was not going to put it out just to meet an artificial date.

We are now distributing the National Response Plan among the rest of our Federal partners. We will have a copy to this committee hopefully within a week, and then we are going to put it out for review to the first responder and emergency management world out there on a 30-day review very shortly. So we are going to do that.

Yes, it is not where I wanted it to be, but we do have an actual response plan in place. It is not like we are operating without a plan. The plan is there. The one we are reviewing now brings some of the Post-Katrina Reform Act issues into it. We wanted to make it less bureaucratic, more readable. We wanted to make it smaller, take some of the annexes out and put them on the Web so it wasn't such a bulky document.

Mr. Towns, I just want to make sure that when it goes out it is as right as I can get it, and that is the reason for the delay. But those dates were artificial. I set up to really push myself and our team to get it out. We didn't meet those dates, but we are going to get it out very shortly.

Mr. TOWNS. We are into the hurricane season already, so, Mr. Jadacki, could you comment on that? I mean, here we are. We entered the hurricane season. The States have to prepare for incorporating into their plans. I mean, there has to be coordination here. This has not happened. I would like to get your comments on that.

Mr. JADACKI. We did a lot of work immediately after Hurricane Katrina. We spent about 5 weeks on the ground down in the Gulf area. One of the things that we found was that there was a lot of confusion that was created as a result of the National Response Plan being rolled out really for the first time with some of the names and incident command system and those types of things. There was a lot of confusion. I think a lot of the reports that have been written as a result of that, lessons learned, identified the need to revise the National Response Plan so the clear roles, the roles of the FCO versus the PFO and those types of things, are clearly defined so people know.

The fact that the National Response Plan is not issued yet doesn't clarify those roles yet. As we are in the midst of hurricane season, I think there may still be some confusion if there is another catastrophic event.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Chairman, I know we have a vote so I am going to yield back.

But I want to let you know, Mr. Paulison, that this is very disturbing. I think that if there is a need for additional help or resources or whatever it is, I think you need to yell out and let us know, because we are talking about the lives of people. Of course, as you heard from the comments coming from the various members of this committee, we are troubled by what is going on. Of course, I must say that you did not relieve my pain.

With that, I yield back.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank the gentleman. I want to just say to the gentleman that when we come back after the votes we are going to continue this line of questioning. Staff has provided us with some additional information that is critical to being able to establish where we are at this moment.

I thank the gentleman.

The Chair recognizes the distinguished gentlewoman, Congresswoman Virginia Foxx, for questions, and then as soon as you are complete we are going to go right to the vote.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this. I am not going to be able to come back afterwards because of a meeting I have to go to.

I want to say to you, Mr. Paulison, that I share Mr. Towns' comments and his concerns. You used the word you are trying to get it right. Do me a favor, try to pick up that cup in front of you. You picked it up. You didn't try. You did it. This issue of the plan is a metaphor for what is wrong with FEMA, and the fact that you are not getting your plan done in a timely fashion does not give me or the American people any comfort that you have learned lessons at FEMA and that you are doing things differently.

When you set that deadline, I respectfully say to you that you could have done a lot to help the image of FEMA, and perhaps not just the image but the impact of FEMA, had you stuck to the deadline, because by not being able to mobilize within your own Agency, plus with the other agencies to get a plan done, what does that tell the American people about the effectiveness of FEMA doing its job? I am not sure why you couldn't understand that, again, as a metaphor for the whole problem with FEMA.

You have used words, "We are going to start acting like," "hopefully," "trying." I would again respectfully say to you that those are words that indicate in the future something is going to happen; it is not happening now. It has been a long time since the failures of FEMA with Katrina, and I think that it is time for action, not trying.

Mr. KUCINICH. Would the gentleman like to respond?

Mr. PAULISON. Again, the National Response Plan is in place. We are simply making it a document much easier to use.

Mr. KUCINICH. The Chair would like to observe that the gentlelady's remarks are quite perceptive, because when you listen to the language about whether there is preparedness, it is one thing to say you are going to try, you are hoping, but it is another thing to be able to do. So when the committee comes back we are going to go to a second round of questions quite specific about the level of preparation, and so I want to thank the members of the panel. I would ask that you remain in the vicinity. The Chair is going to declare a one-half hour recess and we will return for questions immediately after votes.

Thank you very much.

[Recess.]

Mr. KUCINICH. The committee will come to order.

I want to thank the witnesses for remaining, and we are going to begin a second round of questions. We just had a series of votes, but Members may be rejoining us. They will also be entitled to ask some questions.

I would like to begin by sharing with the members of the panel a story, and it is a story that relates to preparedness.

About 30 years ago I had the honor of being elected mayor of the city of Cleveland. At that time there was a very short transition to the office. The election was on a Tuesday, and the following Monday the new mayor was sworn in.

A few weeks into my term we were visited by an unexpected snow storm. One of the worst storms of the century hit the city of Cleveland. I was the new mayor, and I was intent on demonstrating to the people that the city was ready, because we had a wonderful work force in the service department that operated the snow plows, and the personnel we had were just the best. So I called my new service director, Morris Pettis, and with the feeling of a new general I called and I said, Director, Pettis, get those snow plows out on the road. Clear those streets. We are going to show the people of Cleveland that we can do the job. He said, Yes, sir.

About 2½ hours later I got a call from Director Pettis, and he said, Mayor, we don't have any snow plows. We had the manpower, but they didn't have the plows, because the previous administration had sent all the plows out to be repaired and didn't provide that the city would have equipment to be able to move the snow. The result? Our city was buried in snow for weeks.

Now, I am sharing this story with you for an obvious reason. We had terrifically prepared workers that could do the job. They didn't have the equipment.

Now, Mr. Jadacki, your job is to review this preparedness that the Department asserts. Is the United States prepared for the next catastrophic disaster?

Mr. JADACKI. We are better prepared than we were 2 years ago.

Mr. KUCINICH. That is not saying a lot, my friend.

Mr. JADACKI. Right.

Mr. KUCINICH. You don't want to use that as a benchmark.

Mr. JADACKI. Right.

Mr. KUCINICH. I will give you another shot at it.

Mr. JADACKI. OK. We are not there yet. A lot remains——

Mr. KUCINICH. Where are we not yet? I want you to be quite specific.

Mr. JADACKI. I don't think we will ever get to an end point. It is always evolving. There are always new threats. There are always new types of disasters, always changes. So if you are looking for an end point, I can't say when that is going to be.

Mr. KUCINICH. You know what I am looking for? I am looking for you to be quite specific. Plan, logistics, equipment, manpower, womanpower—I want specifics. This is part of your job. You are, in fact, the Deputy Inspector General in the Office of the Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security. You are the person that Congress counts on to oversee and look over the level of preparedness.

Mr. JADACKI. OK. I will tell you that in catastrophic planning more needs to be done. We are not there yet. I will tell you in logistics that a lot more needs to be done. There are systems that are getting into place, but more needs to be done.

Mr. KUCINICH. Where are we not that we should be? Please be specific. This is too general, and the whole idea of emergency preparedness is to be quite specific. We have had a bipartisan hearing where Members are looking for specifics. Generalities won't do. Please be specific.

Mr. JADACKI. I don't think the Nation is ready for the next catastrophic event or series of events if it occurs because of some of the issues that were discussed before. The National Response Plan is

still an issue that is evolving. There is communications, there is confusion.

There is a draft that is out right now, but I think that if we had another catastrophic event right now there would be some improvement but we are not there yet. I can't give you a percentage of how close we are, but we are not there yet in a number of areas, probably hundreds of areas: acquisitions, pre-positioning supplies, logistics, the National Response Plan, staffing—I think FEMA is making strides in getting staffing. We are not there yet—State communication. I still think there are issues that can be resolved in all those areas, and more.

Mr. KUCINICH. Catastrophic disaster exercises, are we there yet?

Mr. JADACKI. We are not there yet.

Mr. KUCINICH. OK. Information technology capabilities, are we there yet?

Mr. JADACKI. There are improvements there, but we are not there yet.

Mr. KUCINICH. Funding, are we there yet?

Mr. JADACKI. No, we are not there yet.

Mr. KUCINICH. Leadership, are we there yet?

Mr. JADACKI. No.

Mr. KUCINICH. OK. We are not there yet.

Mr. JADACKI. Right.

Mr. KUCINICH. OK. I think it would be very helpful if you would provide this committee with the list of exactly what remains to be done in order for the American people to be assured that their Government will be able to respond in a way that they can be confident.

How long will it take you to be able to put together a detailed report going over the areas that you have just basically off-the-cuff responded to? How long would it take you to create the list and then let us know where the deficiencies are so that we may be able to track the level of readiness and provide resources or whatever needs to be done in order to encourage the readiness? How long would it take you?

Mr. JADACKI. I would say at least 6 months to put together a report of that magnitude.

Mr. KUCINICH. Wow. Is there something you could do in a few days so that you could help us, at least on an interim basis?

Mr. JADACKI. We can probably do a high-level review based on some of the work we have done over the past couple of years and some of our experience dealing with some of the FEMA activities in a short period of time. But if you are looking for a more comprehensive review, that would probably take longer.

Mr. KUCINICH. But just from a short period of time, how long would it take you to be able to at least notify this committee of the level of preparedness?

Mr. JADACKI. I think to do a high-level review, probably 90 days we can do a high-level score-card-type review.

Mr. KUCINICH. I think it would be helpful to have a score-card-type review, but let's go to a shorter term here. What are the critical areas that you think we need to focus on for an immediate improvement in preparedness in the event of another hurricane, let's say?

Mr. JADACKI. I think the lines of communication are critical. I think the roles of the various parties at the Federal, State, and local level. I think a clear understanding of the FCO's responsibility versus the PFO's responsibility is critical. I think interoperability among the various first responders is critical, and I think logistics is probably a critical thing that needs to take place now in the midst of hurricane season—supplies, those types of things. I also think coordination with other Federal agencies I think is also critical, too, the prescripted mission assignments and those types of things.

Mr. KUCINICH. Just so you understand this approach in this hearing, this isn't a "gotcha" hearing. I am not interested in that. I want to see what kind of guidance FEMA could receive and that the National Guard could receive so that whatever resources are available right now would be put to the best use in the event that there was some type of disaster, so it is in that spirit that I think it would be important for the Inspector General's office to provide some immediate response to the committee so that we can look at it now. Even 90 days might be a problem. I mean, there are some areas—you just told us a few areas—catastrophic disaster exercises, for example, Mr. Paulison. The Inspector General's Office, you are not there. This relates to a question that Eleanor Holmes Norton raised at the beginning. Your answer was somewhat divergent.

We all understand that real-life exercises require a vast movement. I don't think she was asking about that, but I am just giving you the concerns that members of this committee have about the level of preparedness. Your job is to say you are going to do everything you can to get ready. I understand that. You made it very clear.

Representative Virginia Foxx also made it clear that we have to look at the rhetoric here. We can't soft-soap this. We can't tell the American people yes, we are ready, and not be. We need to be very candid with the American people.

I am going to ask Mr. Jadacki to work with FEMA and the National Guard. And I would like to engage my colleague here, who has actually spent more time than anybody on this committee on this, Mr. Davis, in assisting in this line of inquiry.

Do you have any recommendations as to what would be helpful to get the committee up to speed so we get a good read of where we are so we can know where we need to push, my friend?

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Well, I mean, there are a lot of things. We have talked about it. I think that the test runs that you do are very, very important. As you know, they did a Hurricane Pam prior to Katrina, which went fairly well, but when Katrina came it was so overwhelming we didn't follow the models that had been set there. But, as I said in my opening remarks, this isn't just like a spare tire you can take out of the trunk and hope it works; you have to constantly be testing, you have to be asking tough questions. I think it would be good for the committee to understand some of those models that you are looking at, that you are simulating and testing again, to see where the weaknesses are.

One of the difficulties you had in the whole Department of Homeland Security is you took 22 different agencies and 170,000 employ-

ees and put them under one roof with a lot of different cultures and a lot of different missions, and it is a work in progress. Just getting the computer systems to mix and match up and work across platforms, that we give them a FISMA grade every year, and it has been bad because yours is as bad as your weakest link.

This is a tremendous undertaking. What we have tried to do with FEMA is kind of take you out of that and make you autonomous, so that when there is a crisis you have access to every asset of Government in whatever agency it is. We saw in Katrina it didn't all come as quickly as we would have liked. Now, part of that was the fact that we weren't coordinated locally. We didn't have that. But some of these simulations let us know very early on what is happening, how quickly you can get access to all of the elements that the Government has put together.

Katrina was an overwhelming, unforgiving storm, but as we look back at it there were so many little mistakes in this storm that was so unforgiving they have become exaggerated. The prospects for this year and the projections for the hurricanes this year are not good, so it would be helpful to know what simulations they are using, Mr. Chairman, what we are testing against, and what weaknesses appear, because nothing ever worked perfectly even in the simulation.

Mr. KUCINICH. And I would like to add to my colleague's suggestion that 20 years ago there was computer software out there, SimCity, where actually it was kind of a test of logistics of what do you need to be able to do to manage a city under different circumstances. I think that it would be useful, as Mr. Davis said, to look at where you are with that kind of modeling that would enable the broader discussion among all the operations in Government.

Would you like to respond, Mr. Paulison?

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Could I ask one quick question, too? The other question is just having key personnel there. I mean, this personnel is an issue in every Government agency in key positions, being able to attract and retain the best and the brightest. This is an agency, again, where expertise and experience are at a premium.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Paulison.

Mr. PAULISON. And actually we have done very well in that area as far as bringing the right people in.

Let me talk about the exercises you talked about.

Mr. KUCINICH. Go ahead, sir.

Mr. PAULISON. Since 2005 we have a course at the Emergency Management Institute called the Integrated Emergency Management Course. We bring 70 people from a particular city into Emmitsburg and keep them for a week and walk through similar things. We have done 134 cities since that time to bring them through that course, and hundreds before then. Salt Lake City went through just before the Olympics. Oklahoma City went through it before the bombing, and other cities. We just brought New Orleans in to bring the top administrators in the individual cities, because we know that response is at that local level and they have to be ready because they are the first responders.

Mr. KUCINICH. And I think that what you have just said confirms that you have done some response capabilities with respect to ter-

rorism scenarios. But, according to Mr. Jadacki, you haven't done a natural catastrophic disaster test run.

Mr. PAULISON. What we do on the catastrophic——

Mr. KUCINICH. Is that correct?

Mr. PAULISON. First of all, we bought in planners into FEMA that we have never had before. We just hired 13 operational planners. I was incredulous to find out we didn't have those people in place. But we are doing catastrophic planning right now. One is a hurricane in south Florida, going through the Miami Dade and Broward County, Palm Beach area. Probably 6 million people live in that area—catastrophic plan around Lake Okechobee, catastrophic planning for the New Orleans, Louisiana/Mississippi area, and catastrophic planning for the New Madrid earth fault, and also catastrophic plan for California for a major earthquake out there. So we are now putting those plans in place and doing them to make sure we have those rock solid plans.

The exercises are extremely important also. We inherited the training and exercise program of the Post-Katrina Reform Act and brought those into FEMA. That is allowing us to integrate like we could not do before. We can do some things now that we could not do before, where we had a separate training section over in DHS and FEMA was doing its own thing. Now it is all together.

So the work that the committee did to help get that through is invaluable for us as far as making sure that our cities and our States are going to be ready for these type of disasters.

Mr. KUCINICH. Well, appropro of what Mr. Davis just said, I have here the most recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which, as you know, is an assembly of the world's most famous and leading scientists. On page 8 of this report, table SPM.2, they project—and I would ask you to follow this carefully—that "the likelihood of future trends, based on projections for the 21st century, for intense tropical cyclone activity increases; likely, increased incidents of extreme high sea level; likely, high precipitation events; frequency increases, very likely."

Without objection, I would like to include this in the record of the hearing.

[The report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change follows:]

A report of Working Group I of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Summary for Policymakers

Drafting Authors:
Richard B. Alley, Terje Berntsen, Nathaniel L. Bindoff, Zhenlin Chen, Amnat Chidthaisong, Pierre Friedlingstein, Jonathan M. Gregory, Gabriele C. Hegerl, Martin Heimann, Bruce Hewitson, Brian J. Hoskins, Fortunat Joos, Jean Jouzel, Vladimir Kattsov, Ulrike Lohmann, Martin Manning, Taroh Matsuno, Mario Molina, Neville Nicholls, Jonathan Overpeck, Dahe Qin, Graciela Raga, Venkatachalam Ramaswamy, Jiawen Ren, Matilde Rusticucci, Susan Solomon, Richard Somerville, Thomas F. Stocker, Peter A. Stott, Ronald J. Stouffer, Penny Whetton, Richard A. Wood, David Wratt

Draft Contributing Authors:
J. Arblaster, G. Brasseur, J.H. Christensen, K.L. Denman, D.W. Fahey, P. Forster, E. Jansen, P.D. Jones, R. Knutti, H. Le Treut, P. Lemke, G. Meehl, P. Mote, D.A. Randall, D.A. Stone, K.E. Trenberth, J. Willebrand, F. Zwiers

This Summary for Policymakers should be cited as:
IPCC, 2007: Summary for Policymakers. In: *Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Solomon, S., D. Qin, M. Manning, Z. Chen, M. Marquis, K.B. Averyt, M.Tignor and H.L. Miller (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA.

Introduction

The Working Group I contribution to the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report describes progress in understanding of the human and natural drivers of climate change,[1] observed climate change, climate processes and attribution, and estimates of projected future climate change. It builds upon past IPCC assessments and incorporates new findings from the past six years of research. Scientific progress since the Third Assessment Report (TAR) is based upon large amounts of new and more comprehensive data, more sophisticated analyses of data, improvements in understanding of processes and their simulation in models and more extensive exploration of uncertainty ranges.

The basis for substantive paragraphs in this Summary for Policymakers can be found in the chapter sections specified in curly brackets.

Human and Natural Drivers of Climate Change

Changes in the atmospheric abundance of greenhouse gases and aerosols, in solar radiation and in land surface properties alter the energy balance of the climate system. These changes are expressed in terms of radiative forcing,[2] which is used to compare how a range of human and natural factors drive warming or cooling influences on global climate. Since the TAR, new observations and related modelling of greenhouse gases, solar activity, land surface properties and some aspects of aerosols have led to improvements in the quantitative estimates of radiative forcing.

Global atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide have increased markedly as a result of human activities since 1750 and now far exceed pre-industrial values determined from ice cores spanning many thousands of years (see Figure SPM.1). The global increases in carbon dioxide concentration are due primarily to fossil fuel use and land use change, while those of methane and nitrous oxide are primarily due to agriculture. {2.3, 6.4, 7.3}

- Carbon dioxide is the most important anthropogenic greenhouse gas (see Figure SPM.2). The global atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide has increased from a pre-industrial value of about 280 ppm to 379 ppm[3] in 2005. The atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide in 2005 exceeds by far the natural range over the last 650,000 years (180 to 300 ppm) as determined from ice cores. The annual carbon dioxide concentration growth rate was larger during the last 10 years (1995–2005 average: 1.9 ppm per year), than it has been since the beginning of continuous direct atmospheric measurements (1960–2005 average: 1.4 ppm per year) although there is year-to-year variability in growth rates. {2.3, 7.3}

- The primary source of the increased atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide since the pre-industrial period results from fossil fuel use, with land-use change providing another significant but smaller contribution. Annual fossil carbon dioxide emissions[4] increased from an average of 6.4 [6.0 to 6.8][5] GtC (23.5 [22.0 to 25.0] $GtCO_2$) per year in the 1990s to 7.2 [6.9 to 7.5] GtC (26.4 [25.3 to 27.5] $GtCO_2$) per year in 2000–2005 (2004 and 2005 data are interim estimates). Carbon dioxide emissions associated with land-use change

[1] *Climate change* in IPCC usage refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity. This usage differs from that in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, where climate change refers to a change of climate that is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and that is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.

[2] *Radiative forcing* is a measure of the influence that a factor has in altering the balance of incoming and outgoing energy in the Earth-atmosphere system and is an index of the importance of the factor as a potential climate change mechanism. Positive forcing tends to warm the surface while negative forcing tends to cool it. In this report, radiative forcing values are for 2005 relative to pre-industrial conditions defined at 1750 and are expressed in watts per square metre ($W\ m^{-2}$). See Glossary and Section 2.2 for further details.

[3] ppm (parts per million) or ppb (parts per billion, 1 billion = 1,000 million) is the ratio of the number of greenhouse gas molecules to the total number of molecules of dry air. For example, 300 ppm means 300 molecules of a greenhouse gas per million molecules of dry air.

[4] Fossil carbon dioxide emissions include those from the production, distribution and consumption of fossil fuels and as a by-product from cement production. An emission of 1 GtC corresponds to 3.67 $GtCO_2$.

[5] In general, uncertainty ranges for results given in this Summary for Policymakers are 90% uncertainty intervals unless stated otherwise, that is, there is an estimated 5% likelihood that the value could be above the range given in square brackets and 5% likelihood that the value could be below that range. Best estimates are given where available. Assessed uncertainty intervals are not always symmetric about the corresponding best estimate. Note that a number of uncertainty ranges in the Working Group I TAR corresponded to 2 standard deviations (95%), often using expert judgement.

Changes in Greenhouse Gases from Ice Core and Modern Data

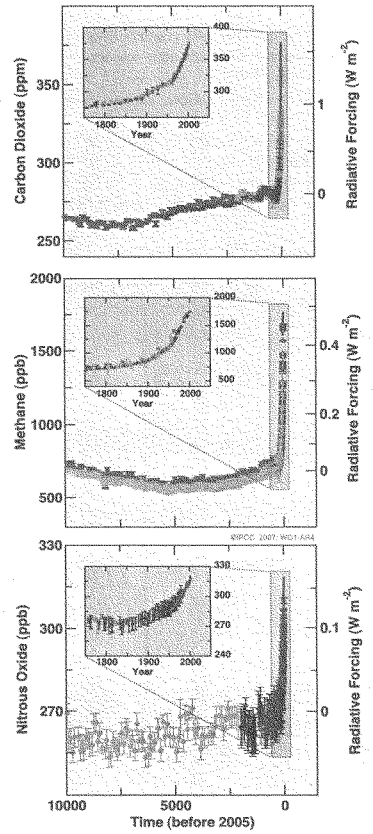

Figure SPM.1. *Atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide over the last 10,000 years (large panels) and since 1750 (inset panels). Measurements are shown from ice cores (symbols with different colours for different studies) and atmospheric samples (red lines). The corresponding radiative forcings are shown on the right hand axes of the large panels. {Figure 6.4}*

are estimated to be 1.6 [0.5 to 2.7] GtC (5.9 [1.8 to 9.9] $GtCO_2$) per year over the 1990s, although these estimates have a large uncertainty. {7.3}

- The global atmospheric concentration of methane has increased from a pre-industrial value of about 715 ppb to 1732 ppb in the early 1990s, and was 1774 ppb in 2005. The atmospheric concentration of methane in 2005 exceeds by far the natural range of the last 650,000 years (320 to 790 ppb) as determined from ice cores. Growth rates have declined since the early 1990s, consistent with total emissions (sum of anthropogenic and natural sources) being nearly constant during this period. It is *very likely*[6] that the observed increase in methane concentration is due to anthropogenic activities, predominantly agriculture and fossil fuel use, but relative contributions from different source types are not well determined. {2.3, 7.4}

- The global atmospheric nitrous oxide concentration increased from a pre-industrial value of about 270 ppb to 319 ppb in 2005. The growth rate has been approximately constant since 1980. More than a third of all nitrous oxide emissions are anthropogenic and are primarily due to agriculture. {2.3, 7.4}

The understanding of anthropogenic warming and cooling influences on climate has improved since the TAR, leading to *very high confidence*[7] that the global average net effect of human activities since 1750 has been one of warming, with a radiative forcing of +1.6 [+0.6 to +2.4] W m^{-2} (see Figure SPM.2). {2.3., 6.5, 2.9}

- The combined radiative forcing due to increases in carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide is +2.30 [+2.07 to +2.53] W m^{-2}, and its rate of increase during the industrial era is *very likely* to have been unprecedented in more than 10,000 years (see Figures

[6] In this Summary for Policymakers, the following terms have been used to indicate the assessed likelihood, using expert judgement, of an outcome or a result: *Virtually certain* > 99% probability of occurrence, *Extremely likely* > 95%, *Very likely* > 90%, *Likely* > 66%, *More likely than not* > 50%, *Unlikely* < 33%, *Very unlikely* < 10%, *Extremely unlikely* < 5% (see Box TS.1 for more details).

[7] In this Summary for Policymakers the following levels of confidence have been used to express expert judgements on the correctness of the underlying science: *very high confidence* represents at least a 9 out of 10 chance of being correct; *high confidence* represents about an 8 out of 10 chance of being correct (see Box TS.1)

SPM.1 and SPM.2). The carbon dioxide radiative forcing increased by 20% from 1995 to 2005, the largest change for any decade in at least the last 200 years. {2.3, 6.4}

- Anthropogenic contributions to aerosols (primarily sulphate, organic carbon, black carbon, nitrate and dust) together produce a cooling effect, with a total direct radiative forcing of −0.5 [−0.9 to −0.1] W m^{-2} and an indirect cloud albedo forcing of −0.7 [−1.8 to −0.3] W m^{-2}. These forcings are now better understood than at the time of the TAR due to improved *in situ*, satellite and ground-based measurements and more comprehensive modelling, but remain the dominant uncertainty in radiative forcing. Aerosols also influence cloud lifetime and precipitation. {2.4, 2.9, 7.5}

- Significant anthropogenic contributions to radiative forcing come from several other sources. Tropospheric ozone changes due to emissions of ozone-forming chemicals (nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and hydrocarbons) contribute +0.35 [+0.25 to +0.65] W m^{-2}. The direct radiative forcing due to changes in halocarbons[8] is +0.34 [+0.31 to +0.37] W m^{-2}. Changes in surface albedo, due to land cover changes and deposition of black carbon aerosols on snow, exert

Radiative Forcing Components

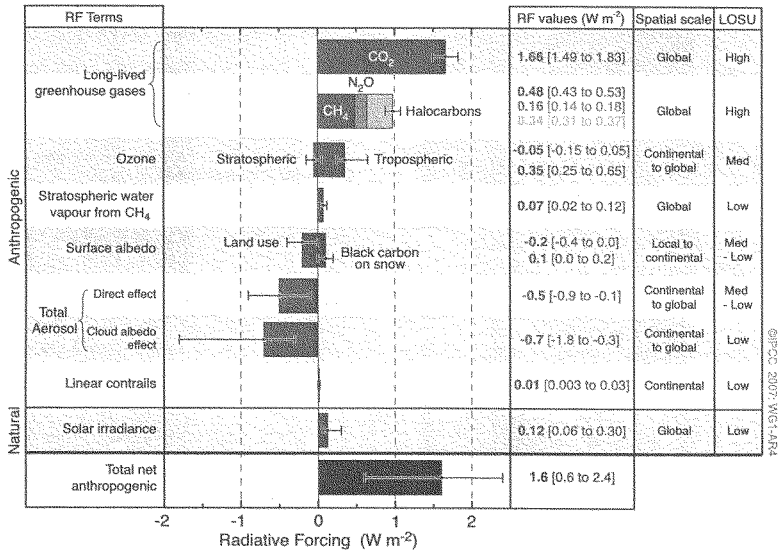

Figure SPM.2. *Global average radiative forcing (RF) estimates and ranges in 2005 for anthropogenic carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O) and other important agents and mechanisms, together with the typical geographical extent (spatial scale) of the forcing and the assessed level of scientific understanding (LOSU). The net anthropogenic radiative forcing and its range are also shown. These require summing asymmetric uncertainty estimates from the component terms, and cannot be obtained by simple addition. Additional forcing factors not included here are considered to have a very low LOSU. Volcanic aerosols contribute an additional natural forcing but are not included in this figure due to their episodic nature. The range for linear contrails does not include other possible effects of aviation on cloudiness. {2.9, Figure 2.20}*

[8] Halocarbon radiative forcing has been recently assessed in detail in *IPCC's Special Report on Safeguarding the Ozone Layer and the Global Climate System* (2005).

respective forcings of –0.2 [–0.4 to 0.0] and +0.1 [0.0 to +0.2] W m^{-2}. Additional terms smaller than ±0.1 W m^{-2} are shown in Figure SPM.2. {2.3, 2.5, 7.2}

- Changes in solar irradiance since 1750 are estimated to cause a radiative forcing of +0.12 [+0.06 to +0.30] W m^{-2}, which is less than half the estimate given in the TAR. {2.7}

Direct Observations of Recent Climate Change

Since the TAR, progress in understanding how climate is changing in space and in time has been gained through improvements and extensions of numerous datasets and data analyses, broader geographical coverage, better understanding of uncertainties, and a wider variety of measurements. Increasingly comprehensive observations are available for glaciers and snow cover since the 1960s, and for sea level and ice sheets since about the past decade. However, data coverage remains limited in some regions.

Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global average sea level (see Figure SPM.3). {3.2, 4.2, 5.5}

- Eleven of the last twelve years (1995–2006) rank among the 12 warmest years in the instrumental record of global surface temperature[9] (since 1850). The updated 100-year linear trend (1906 to 2005) of 0.74°C [0.56°C to 0.92°C] is therefore larger than the corresponding trend for 1901 to 2000 given in the TAR of 0.6°C [0.4°C to 0.8°C]. The linear warming trend over the last 50 years (0.13°C [0.10°C to 0.16°C] per decade) is nearly twice that for the last 100 years. The total temperature increase from 1850–1899 to 2001–2005 is 0.76°C [0.57°C to 0.95°C]. Urban heat island effects are real but local, and have a negligible influence (less than 0.006°C per decade over land and zero over the oceans) on these values. {3.2}

- New analyses of balloon-borne and satellite measurements of lower- and mid-tropospheric temperature show warming rates that are similar to those of the surface temperature record and are consistent within their respective uncertainties, largely reconciling a discrepancy noted in the TAR. {3.2, 3.4}

- The average atmospheric water vapour content has increased since at least the 1980s over land and ocean as well as in the upper troposphere. The increase is broadly consistent with the extra water vapour that warmer air can hold. {3.4}

- Observations since 1961 show that the average temperature of the global ocean has increased to depths of at least 3000 m and that the ocean has been absorbing more than 80% of the heat added to the climate system. Such warming causes seawater to expand, contributing to sea level rise (see Table SPM.1). {5.2, 5.5}

- Mountain glaciers and snow cover have declined on average in both hemispheres. Widespread decreases in glaciers and ice caps have contributed to sea level rise (ice caps do not include contributions from the Greenland and Antarctic Ice Sheets). (See Table SPM.1.) {4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 5.5}

- New data since the TAR now show that losses from the ice sheets of Greenland and Antarctica have *very likely* contributed to sea level rise over 1993 to 2003 (see Table SPM.1). Flow speed has increased for some Greenland and Antarctic outlet glaciers, which drain ice from the interior of the ice sheets. The corresponding increased ice sheet mass loss has often followed thinning, reduction or loss of ice shelves or loss of floating glacier tongues. Such dynamical ice loss is sufficient to explain most of the Antarctic net mass loss and approximately half of the Greenland net mass loss. The remainder of the ice loss from Greenland has occurred because losses due to melting have exceeded accumulation due to snowfall. {4.6, 4.8, 5.5}

- Global average sea level rose at an average rate of 1.8 [1.3 to 2.3] mm per year over 1961 to 2003. The rate was faster over 1993 to 2003: about 3.1 [2.4 to 3.8] mm per year. Whether the faster rate for 1993 to 2003 reflects decadal variability or an increase in the longer-term trend is unclear. There is *high confidence* that

[9] The average of near-surface air temperature over land and sea surface temperature.

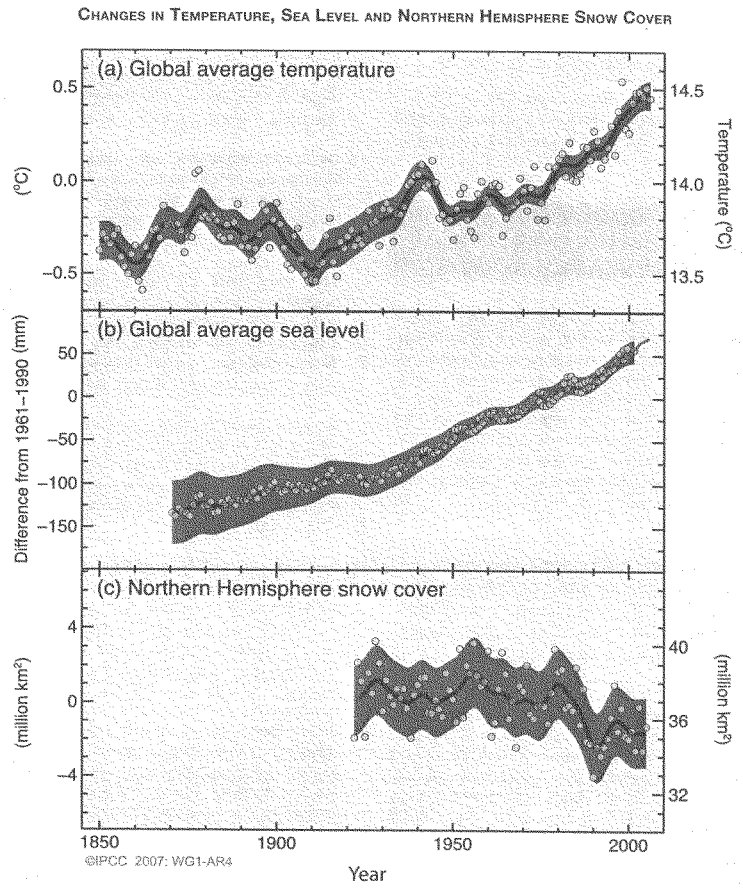

Figure SPM.3. *Observed changes in (a) global average surface temperature, (b) global average sea level from tide gauge (blue) and satellite (red) data and (c) Northern Hemisphere snow cover for March-April. All changes are relative to corresponding averages for the period 1961–1990. Smoothed curves represent decadal average values while circles show yearly values. The shaded areas are the uncertainty intervals estimated from a comprehensive analysis of known uncertainties (a and b) and from the time series (c). {FAQ 3.1, Figure 1, Figure 4.2, Figure 5.13}*

the rate of observed sea level rise increased from the 19th to the 20th century. The total 20th-century rise is estimated to be 0.17 [0.12 to 0.22] m. {5.5}

- For 1993 to 2003, the sum of the climate contributions is consistent within uncertainties with the total sea level rise that is directly observed (see Table SPM.1). These estimates are based on improved satellite and *in situ* data now available. For the period 1961 to 2003, the sum of climate contributions is estimated to be smaller than the observed sea level rise. The TAR reported a similar discrepancy for 1910 to 1990. {5.5}

At continental, regional and ocean basin scales, numerous long-term changes in climate have been observed. These include changes in arctic temperatures and ice, widespread changes in precipitation amounts, ocean salinity, wind patterns and aspects of extreme weather including droughts, heavy precipitation, heat waves and the intensity of tropical cyclones.[10] {3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 5.2}

- Average arctic temperatures increased at almost twice the global average rate in the past 100 years. Arctic temperatures have high decadal variability, and a warm period was also observed from 1925 to 1945. {3.2}

- Satellite data since 1978 show that annual average arctic sea ice extent has shrunk by 2.7 [2.1 to 3.3]% per decade, with larger decreases in summer of 7.4 [5.0 to 9.8]% per decade. These values are consistent with those reported in the TAR. {4.4}

- Temperatures at the top of the permafrost layer have generally increased since the 1980s in the Arctic (by up to 3°C). The maximum area covered by seasonally frozen ground has decreased by about 7% in the Northern Hemisphere since 1900, with a decrease in spring of up to 15%. {4.7}

- Long-term trends from 1900 to 2005 have been observed in precipitation amount over many large regions.[11] Significantly increased precipitation has been observed in eastern parts of North and South America, northern Europe and northern and central Asia. Drying has been observed in the Sahel, the Mediterranean, southern Africa and parts of southern Asia. Precipitation is highly variable spatially and temporally, and data are limited in some regions. Long-term trends have not been observed for the other large regions assessed.[11] {3.3, 3.9}

- Changes in precipitation and evaporation over the oceans are suggested by freshening of mid- and high-latitude waters together with increased salinity in low-latitude waters. {5.2}

Table SPM.1. *Observed rate of sea level rise and estimated contributions from different sources. {5.5, Table 5.3}*

Source of sea level rise	Rate of sea level rise (mm per year) 1961–2003	1993–2003
Thermal expansion	0.42 ± 0.12	1.6 ± 0.5
Glaciers and ice caps	0.50 ± 0.18	0.77 ± 0.22
Greenland Ice Sheet	0.05 ± 0.12	0.21 ± 0.07
Antarctic Ice Sheet	0.14 ± 0.41	0.21 ± 0.35
Sum of individual climate contributions to sea level rise	1.1 ± 0.5	2.8 ± 0.7
Observed total sea level rise	1.8 ± 0.5[a]	3.1 ± 0.7[a]
Difference (Observed minus sum of estimated climate contributions)	0.7 ± 0.7	0.3 ± 1.0

Table note:
[a] Data prior to 1993 are from tide gauges and after 1993 are from satellite altimetry.

[10] Tropical cyclones include hurricanes and typhoons.

[11] The assessed regions are those considered in the regional projections chapter of the TAR and in Chapter 11 of this report.

- Mid-latitude westerly winds have strengthened in both hemispheres since the 1960s. {3.5}

- More intense and longer droughts have been observed over wider areas since the 1970s, particularly in the tropics and subtropics. Increased drying linked with higher temperatures and decreased precipitation has contributed to changes in drought. Changes in sea surface temperatures, wind patterns and decreased snowpack and snow cover have also been linked to droughts. {3.3}

- The frequency of heavy precipitation events has increased over most land areas, consistent with warming and observed increases of atmospheric water vapour. {3.8, 3.9}

- Widespread changes in extreme temperatures have been observed over the last 50 years. Cold days, cold nights and frost have become less frequent, while hot days, hot nights and heat waves have become more frequent (see Table SPM.2). {3.8}

Table SPM.2. *Recent trends, assessment of human influence on the trend and projections for extreme weather events for which there is an observed late-20th century trend. {Tables 3.7, 3.8, 9.4; Sections 3.8, 5.5, 9.7, 11.2–11.9}*

Phenomenon[a] and direction of trend	Likelihood that trend occurred in late 20th century (typically post 1960)	Likelihood of a human contribution to observed trend[b]	Likelihood of future trends based on projections for 21st century using SRES scenarios
Warmer and fewer cold days and nights over most land areas	*Very likely*[c]	*Likely*[d]	*Virtually certain*[d]
Warmer and more frequent hot days and nights over most land areas	*Very likely*[e]	*Likely (nights)*[d]	*Virtually certain*[d]
Warm spells/heat waves. Frequency increases over most land areas	*Likely*	*More likely than not*[f]	*Very likely*
Heavy precipitation events. Frequency (or proportion of total rainfall from heavy falls) increases over most areas	*Likely*	*More likely than not*[f]	*Very likely*
Area affected by droughts increases	*Likely* in many regions since 1970s	*More likely than not*	*Likely*
Intense tropical cyclone activity increases	*Likely* in some regions since 1970	*More likely than not*[f]	*Likely*
Increased incidence of extreme high sea level (excludes tsunamis)[g]	*Likely*	*More likely than not*[f,h]	*Likely*[i]

Table notes:

[a] See Table 3.7 for further details regarding definitions.

[b] See Table TS.4, Box TS.5 and Table 9.4.

[c] Decreased frequency of cold days and nights (coldest 10%).

[d] Warming of the most extreme days and nights each year.

[e] Increased frequency of hot days and nights (hottest 10%).

[f] Magnitude of anthropogenic contributions not assessed. Attribution for these phenomena based on expert judgement rather than formal attribution studies.

[g] Extreme high sea level depends on average sea level and on regional weather systems. It is defined here as the highest 1% of hourly values of observed sea level at a station for a given reference period.

[h] Changes in observed extreme high sea level closely follow the changes in average sea level. {5.5} It is *very likely* that anthropogenic activity contributed to a rise in average sea level. {9.5}

[i] In all scenarios, the projected global average sea level at 2100 is higher than in the reference period. {10.6} The effect of changes in regional weather systems on sea level extremes has not been assessed.

- There is observational evidence for an increase in intense tropical cyclone activity in the North Atlantic since about 1970, correlated with increases of tropical sea surface temperatures. There are also suggestions of increased intense tropical cyclone activity in some other regions where concerns over data quality are greater. Multi-decadal variability and the quality of the tropical cyclone records prior to routine satellite observations in about 1970 complicate the detection of long-term trends in tropical cyclone activity. There is no clear trend in the annual numbers of tropical cyclones. {3.8}

Some aspects of climate have not been observed to change. {3.2, 3.8, 4.4, 5.3}

- A decrease in diurnal temperature range (DTR) was reported in the TAR, but the data available then extended only from 1950 to 1993. Updated observations reveal that DTR has not changed from 1979 to 2004 as both day- and night-time temperature have risen at about the same rate. The trends are highly variable from one region to another. {3.2}

- Antarctic sea ice extent continues to show interannual variability and localised changes but no statistically significant average trends, consistent with the lack of warming reflected in atmospheric temperatures averaged across the region. {3.2, 4.4}

- There is insufficient evidence to determine whether trends exist in the meridional overturning circulation (MOC) of the global ocean or in small-scale phenomena such as tornadoes, hail, lightning and dust-storms. {3.8, 5.3}

A Palaeoclimatic Perspective

Palaeoclimatic studies use changes in climatically sensitive indicators to infer past changes in global climate on time scales ranging from decades to millions of years. Such proxy data (e.g., tree ring width) may be influenced by both local temperature and other factors such as precipitation, and are often representative of particular seasons rather than full years. Studies since the TAR draw increased confidence from additional data showing coherent behaviour across multiple indicators in different parts of the world. However, uncertainties generally increase with time into the past due to increasingly limited spatial coverage.

Palaeoclimatic information supports the interpretation that the warmth of the last half century is unusual in at least the previous 1,300 years. The last time the polar regions were significantly warmer than present for an extended period (about 125,000 years ago), reductions in polar ice volume led to 4 to 6 m of sea level rise. {6.4, 6.6}

- Average Northern Hemisphere temperatures during the second half of the 20th century were *very likely* higher than during any other 50-year period in the last 500 years and *likely* the highest in at least the past 1,300 years. Some recent studies indicate greater variability in Northern Hemisphere temperatures than suggested in the TAR, particularly finding that cooler periods existed in the 12th to 14th, 17th and 19th centuries. Warmer periods prior to the 20th century are within the uncertainty range given in the TAR. {6.6}

- Global average sea level in the last interglacial period (about 125,000 years ago) was *likely* 4 to 6 m higher than during the 20th century, mainly due to the retreat of polar ice. Ice core data indicate that average polar temperatures at that time were 3°C to 5°C higher than present, because of differences in the Earth's orbit. The Greenland Ice Sheet and other arctic ice fields *likely* contributed no more than 4 m of the observed sea level rise. There may also have been a contribution from Antarctica. {6.4}

Understanding and Attributing Climate Change

This assessment considers longer and improved records, an expanded range of observations and improvements in the simulation of many aspects of climate and its variability based on studies since the TAR. It also considers the results of new attribution studies that have evaluated whether observed changes are quantitatively consistent with the expected response to external forcings and inconsistent with alternative physically plausible explanations.

Most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is *very likely* due to the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations.[12] This is an advance since the TAR's conclusion that "most of the observed warming over the last 50 years is *likely* to have been due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentrations". Discernible human influences now extend to other aspects of climate, including ocean warming, continental-average temperatures, temperature extremes and wind patterns (see Figure SPM.4 and Table SPM.2). {9.4, 9.5}

- It is *likely* that increases in greenhouse gas concentrations alone would have caused more warming than observed because volcanic and anthropogenic aerosols have offset some warming that would otherwise have taken place. {2.9, 7.5, 9.4}

- The observed widespread warming of the atmosphere and ocean, together with ice mass loss, support the conclusion that it is *extremely unlikely* that global climate change of the past 50 years can be explained without external forcing, and *very likely* that it is not due to known natural causes alone. {4.8, 5.2, 9.4, 9.5, 9.7}

- Warming of the climate system has been detected in changes of surface and atmospheric temperatures in the upper several hundred metres of the ocean, and in contributions to sea level rise. Attribution studies have established anthropogenic contributions to all of these changes. The observed pattern of tropospheric warming and stratospheric cooling is *very likely* due to the combined influences of greenhouse gas increases and stratospheric ozone depletion. {3.2, 3.4, 9.4, 9.5}

- It is *likely* that there has been significant anthropogenic warming over the past 50 years averaged over each continent except Antarctica (see Figure SPM.4). The observed patterns of warming, including greater warming over land than over the ocean, and their changes over time, are only simulated by models that include anthropogenic forcing. The ability of coupled climate models to simulate the observed temperature evolution on each of six continents provides stronger evidence of human influence on climate than was available in the TAR. {3.2, 9.4}

- Difficulties remain in reliably simulating and attributing observed temperature changes at smaller scales. On these scales, natural climate variability is relatively larger, making it harder to distinguish changes expected due to external forcings. Uncertainties in local forcings and feedbacks also make it difficult to estimate the contribution of greenhouse gas increases to observed small-scale temperature changes. {8.3, 9.4}

- Anthropogenic forcing is *likely* to have contributed to changes in wind patterns,[13] affecting extra-tropical storm tracks and temperature patterns in both hemispheres. However, the observed changes in the Northern Hemisphere circulation are larger than simulated in response to 20th-century forcing change. {3.5, 3.6, 9.5, 10.3}

- Temperatures of the most extreme hot nights, cold nights and cold days are *likely* to have increased due to anthropogenic forcing. It is *more likely than not* that anthropogenic forcing has increased the risk of heat waves (see Table SPM.2). {9.4}

[12] Consideration of remaining uncertainty is based on current methodologies.
[13] In particular, the Southern and Northern Annular Modes and related changes in the North Atlantic Oscillation. {3.6, 9.5, Box TS.2}

Global and Continental Temperature Change

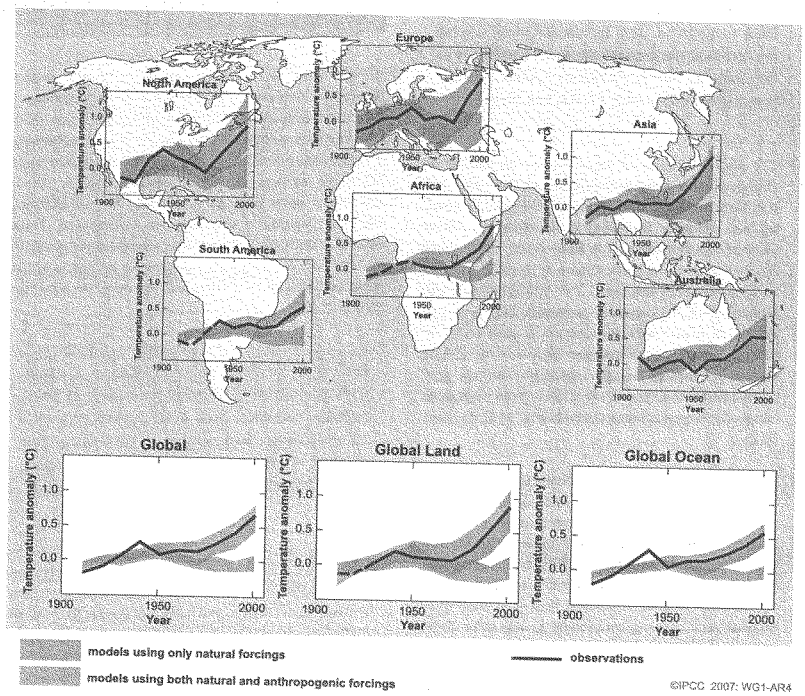

Figure SPM.4. *Comparison of observed continental- and global-scale changes in surface temperature with results simulated by climate models using natural and anthropogenic forcings. Decadal averages of observations are shown for the period 1906 to 2005 (black line) plotted against the centre of the decade and relative to the corresponding average for 1901–1950. Lines are dashed where spatial coverage is less than 50%. Blue shaded bands show the 5–95% range for 19 simulations from five climate models using only the natural forcings due to solar activity and volcanoes. Red shaded bands show the 5–95% range for 58 simulations from 14 climate models using both natural and anthropogenic forcings. {FAQ 9.2, Figure 1}*

Analysis of climate models together with constraints from observations enables an assessed *likely* range to be given for climate sensitivity for the first time and provides increased confidence in the understanding of the climate system response to radiative forcing. {6.6, 8.6, 9.6, Box 10.2}

- The equilibrium climate sensitivity is a measure of the climate system response to sustained radiative forcing. It is not a projection but is defined as the global average surface warming following a doubling of carbon dioxide concentrations. It is *likely* to be in the range 2°C to 4.5°C with a best estimate of about 3°C, and is *very unlikely* to be less than 1.5°C. Values substantially higher than 4.5°C cannot be excluded, but agreement of models with observations is not as good for those values. Water vapour changes represent the largest feedback affecting climate sensitivity and are now better understood than in the TAR. Cloud feedbacks remain the largest source of uncertainty. {8.6, 9.6, Box 10.2}

- It is *very unlikely* that climate changes of at least the seven centuries prior to 1950 were due to variability generated within the climate system alone. A significant fraction of the reconstructed Northern Hemisphere inter-decadal temperature variability over those centuries is *very likely* attributable to volcanic eruptions and changes in solar irradiance, and it is *likely* that anthropogenic forcing contributed to the early 20th-century warming evident in these records. {2.7, 2.8, 6.6, 9.3}

Projections of Future Changes in Climate

A major advance of this assessment of climate change projections compared with the TAR is the large number of simulations available from a broader range of models. Taken together with additional information from observations, these provide a quantitative basis for estimating likelihoods for many aspects of future climate change. Model simulations cover a range of possible futures including idealised emission or concentration assumptions. These include SRES[14] illustrative marker scenarios for the 2000 to 2100 period and model experiments with greenhouse gases and aerosol concentrations held constant after year 2000 or 2100.

For the next two decades, a warming of about 0.2°C per decade is projected for a range of SRES emission scenarios. Even if the concentrations of all greenhouse gases and aerosols had been kept constant at year 2000 levels, a further warming of about 0.1°C per decade would be expected. {10.3, 10.7}

- Since IPCC's first report in 1990, assessed projections have suggested global average temperature increases between about 0.15°C and 0.3°C per decade for 1990 to 2005. This can now be compared with observed values of about 0.2°C per decade, strengthening confidence in near-term projections. {1.2, 3.2}

- Model experiments show that even if all radiative forcing agents were held constant at year 2000 levels, a further warming trend would occur in the next two decades at a rate of about 0.1°C per decade, due mainly to the slow response of the oceans. About twice as much warming (0.2°C per decade) would be expected if emissions are within the range of the SRES scenarios. Best-estimate projections from models indicate that decadal average warming over each inhabited continent by 2030 is insensitive to the choice among SRES scenarios and is *very likely* to be at least twice as large as the corresponding model-estimated natural variability during the 20th century. {9.4, 10.3, 10.5, 11.2–11.7, Figure TS-29}

[14] SRES refers to the *IPCC Special Report on Emission Scenarios* (2000). The SRES scenario families and illustrative cases, which did not include additional climate initiatives, are summarised in a box at the end of this Summary for Policymakers. Approximate carbon dioxide equivalent concentrations corresponding to the computed radiative forcing due to anthropogenic greenhouse gases and aerosols in 2100 (see p. 823 of the TAR) for the SRES B1, A1T, B2, A1B, A2 and A1FI illustrative marker scenarios are about 600, 700, 800, 850, 1250 and 1,550 ppm respectively. Scenarios B1, A1B and A2 have been the focus of model intercomparison studies and many of those results are assessed in this report.

Continued greenhouse gas emissions at or above current rates would cause further warming and induce many changes in the global climate system during the 21st century that would *very likely* be larger than those observed during the 20th century. {10.3}

- Advances in climate change modelling now enable best estimates and *likely* assessed uncertainty ranges to be given for projected warming for different emission scenarios. Results for different emission scenarios are provided explicitly in this report to avoid loss of this policy-relevant information. Projected global average surface warmings for the end of the 21st century (2090–2099) relative to 1980–1999 are shown in Table SPM.3. These illustrate the differences between lower and higher SRES emission scenarios, and the projected warming uncertainty associated with these scenarios. {10.5}

- Best estimates and *likely* ranges for global average surface air warming for six SRES emissions marker scenarios are given in this assessment and are shown in Table SPM.3. For example, the best estimate for the low scenario (B1) is 1.8°C (*likely* range is 1.1°C to 2.9°C), and the best estimate for the high scenario (A1FI) is 4.0°C (*likely* range is 2.4°C to 6.4°C). Although these projections are broadly consistent with the span quoted in the TAR (1.4°C to 5.8°C), they are not directly comparable (see Figure SPM.5). The Fourth Assessment Report is more advanced as it provides best estimates and an assessed likelihood range for each of the marker scenarios. The new assessment of the *likely* ranges now relies on a larger number of climate models of increasing complexity and realism, as well as new information regarding the nature of feedbacks from the carbon cycle and constraints on climate response from observations. {10.5}

- Warming tends to reduce land and ocean uptake of atmospheric carbon dioxide, increasing the fraction of anthropogenic emissions that remains in the atmosphere. For the A2 scenario, for example, the climate-carbon cycle feedback increases the corresponding global average warming at 2100 by more than 1°C. Assessed upper ranges for temperature projections are larger than in the TAR (see Table SPM.3) mainly because the broader range of models now available suggests stronger climate-carbon cycle feedbacks. {7.3, 10.5}

- Model-based projections of global average sea level rise at the end of the 21st century (2090–2099) are shown in Table SPM.3. For each scenario, the midpoint of the range in Table SPM.3 is within 10% of the

Table SPM.3. *Projected global average surface warming and sea level rise at the end of the 21st century. {10.5, 10.6, Table 10.7}*

Case	Temperature Change (°C at 2090-2099 relative to 1980-1999)[a]		Sea Level Rise (m at 2090-2099 relative to 1980-1999)
	Best estimate	*Likely* range	Model-based range excluding future rapid dynamical changes in ice flow
Constant Year 2000 concentrations[b]	0.6	0.3 – 0.9	NA
B1 scenario	1.8	1.1 – 2.9	0.18 – 0.38
A1T scenario	2.4	1.4 – 3.8	0.20 – 0.45
B2 scenario	2.4	1.4 – 3.8	0.20 – 0.43
A1B scenario	2.8	1.7 – 4.4	0.21 – 0.48
A2 scenario	3.4	2.0 – 5.4	0.23 – 0.51
A1FI scenario	4.0	2.4 – 6.4	0.26 – 0.59

Table notes:
[a] These estimates are assessed from a hierarchy of models that encompass a simple climate model, several Earth System Models of Intermediate Complexity and a large number of Atmosphere-Ocean General Circulation Models (AOGCMs).
[b] Year 2000 constant composition is derived from AOGCMs only.

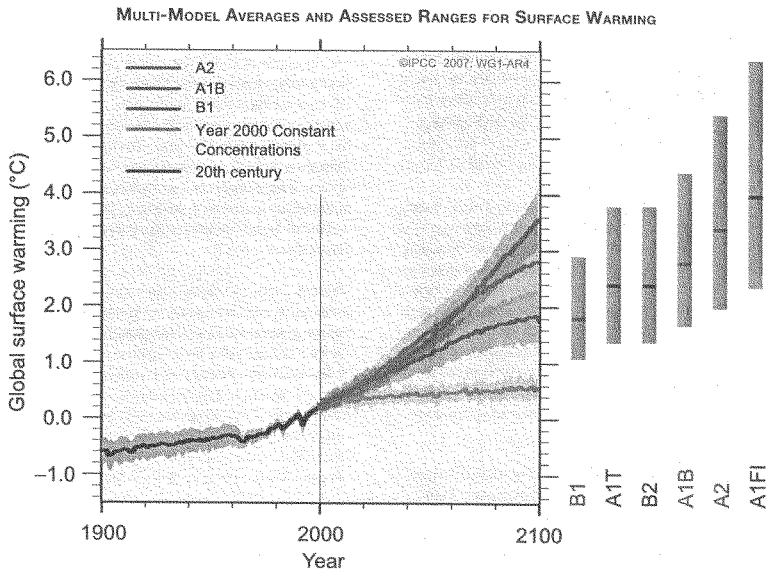

Figure SPM.5. *Solid lines are multi-model global averages of surface warming (relative to 1980–1999) for the scenarios A2, A1B and B1, shown as continuations of the 20th century simulations. Shading denotes the ±1 standard deviation range of individual model annual averages. The orange line is for the experiment where concentrations were held constant at year 2000 values. The grey bars at right indicate the best estimate (solid line within each bar) and the* ***likely*** *range assessed for the six SRES marker scenarios. The assessment of the best estimate and* ***likely*** *ranges in the grey bars includes the AOGCMs in the left part of the figure, as well as results from a hierarchy of independent models and observational constraints. {Figures 10.4 and 10.29}*

TAR model average for 2090–2099. The ranges are narrower than in the TAR mainly because of improved information about some uncertainties in the projected contributions.[15] {10.6}

- Models used to date do not include uncertainties in climate-carbon cycle feedback nor do they include the full effects of changes in ice sheet flow, because a basis in published literature is lacking. The projections include a contribution due to increased ice flow from Greenland and Antarctica at the rates observed for 1993 to 2003, but these flow rates could increase or decrease in the future. For example, if this contribution were to grow linearly with global average temperature change, the upper ranges of sea level rise for SRES scenarios shown in Table SPM.3 would increase by 0.1 to 0.2 m. Larger values cannot be excluded, but understanding of these effects is too limited to assess their likelihood or provide a best estimate or an upper bound for sea level rise. {10.6}

- Increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations lead to increasing acidification of the ocean. Projections based on SRES scenarios give reductions in average global surface ocean pH[16] of between 0.14 and 0.35 units over the 21st century, adding to the present decrease of 0.1 units since pre-industrial times. {5.4, Box 7.3, 10.4}

[15] TAR projections were made for 2100, whereas projections in this report are for 2090–2099. The TAR would have had similar ranges to those in Table SPM.3 if it had treated the uncertainties in the same way.

[16] Decreases in pH correspond to increases in acidity of a solution. See Glossary for further details.

There is now higher confidence in projected patterns of warming and other regional-scale features, including changes in wind patterns, precipitation and some aspects of extremes and of ice. {8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 9.4, 9.5, 10.3, 11.1}

- Projected warming in the 21st century shows scenario-independent geographical patterns similar to those observed over the past several decades. Warming is expected to be greatest over land and at most high northern latitudes, and least over the Southern Ocean and parts of the North Atlantic Ocean (see Figure SPM.6). {10.3}

- Snow cover is projected to contract. Widespread increases in thaw depth are projected over most permafrost regions. {10.3, 10.6}

- Sea ice is projected to shrink in both the Arctic and Antarctic under all SRES scenarios. In some projections, arctic late-summer sea ice disappears almost entirely by the latter part of the 21st century. {10.3}

- It is *very likely* that hot extremes, heat waves and heavy precipitation events will continue to become more frequent. {10.3}

- Based on a range of models, it is *likely* that future tropical cyclones (typhoons and hurricanes) will become more intense, with larger peak wind speeds and more heavy precipitation associated with ongoing increases of tropical sea surface temperatures. There is less confidence in projections of a global decrease in numbers of tropical cyclones. The apparent increase in the proportion of very intense storms since 1970 in some regions is much larger than simulated by current models for that period. {9.5, 10.3, 3.8}

Projections of Surface Temperatures

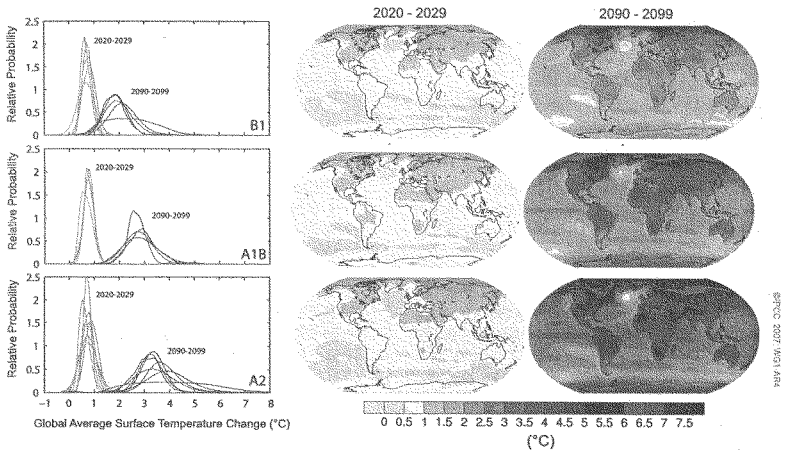

Figure SPM.6. *Projected surface temperature changes for the early and late 21st century relative to the period 1980–1999. The central and right panels show the AOGCM multi-model average projections for the B1 (top), A1B (middle) and A2 (bottom) SRES scenarios averaged over the decades 2020– 2029 (centre) and 2090–2099 (right). The left panels show corresponding uncertainties as the relative probabilities of estimated global average warming from several different AOGCM and Earth System Model of Intermediate Complexity studies for the same periods. Some studies present results only for a subset of the SRES scenarios, or for various model versions. Therefore the difference in the number of curves shown in the left-hand panels is due only to differences in the availability of results. {Figures 10.8 and 10.28}*

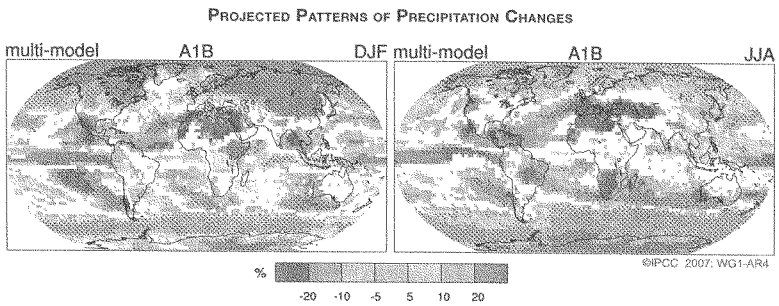

Figure SPM.7. *Relative changes in precipitation (in percent) for the period 2090–2099, relative to 1980–1999. Values are multi-model averages based on the SRES A1B scenario for December to February (left) and June to August (right). White areas are where less than 66% of the models agree in the sign of the change and stippled areas are where more than 90% of the models agree in the sign of the change. {Figure 10.9}*

- Extratropical storm tracks are projected to move poleward, with consequent changes in wind, precipitation and temperature patterns, continuing the broad pattern of observed trends over the last half-century. {3.6, 10.3}

- Since the TAR, there is an improving understanding of projected patterns of precipitation. Increases in the amount of precipitation are *very likely* in high latitudes, while decreases are *likely* in most subtropical land regions (by as much as about 20% in the A1B scenario in 2100, see Figure SPM.7), continuing observed patterns in recent trends. {3.3, 8.3, 9.5, 10.3, 11.2 to 11.9}

- Based on current model simulations, it is *very likely* that the meridional overturning circulation (MOC) of the Atlantic Ocean will slow down during the 21st century. The multi-model average reduction by 2100 is 25% (range from zero to about 50%) for SRES emission scenario A1B. Temperatures in the Atlantic region are projected to increase despite such changes due to the much larger warming associated with projected increases in greenhouse gases. It is *very unlikely* that the MOC will undergo a large abrupt transition during the 21st century. Longer-term changes in the MOC cannot be assessed with confidence. {10.3, 10.7}

Anthropogenic warming and sea level rise would continue for centuries due to the time scales associated with climate processes and feedbacks, even if greenhouse gas concentrations were to be stabilised. {10.4, 10.5, 10.7}

- Climate-carbon cycle coupling is expected to add carbon dioxide to the atmosphere as the climate system warms, but the magnitude of this feedback is uncertain. This increases the uncertainty in the trajectory of carbon dioxide emissions required to achieve a particular stabilisation level of atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration. Based on current understanding of climate-carbon cycle feedback, model studies suggest that to stabilise at 450 ppm carbon dioxide could require that cumulative emissions over the 21st century be reduced from an average of approximately 670 [630 to 710] GtC (2460 [2310 to 2600] $GtCO_2$) to approximately 490 [375 to 600] GtC (1800 [1370 to 2200] $GtCO_2$). Similarly, to stabilise at 1000 ppm, this feedback could require that cumulative emissions be reduced from a model average of approximately 1415 [1340 to 1490] GtC (5190 [4910 to 5460] $GtCO_2$) to approximately 1100 [980 to 1250] GtC (4030 [3590 to 4580] $GtCO_2$). {7.3, 10.4}

- If radiative forcing were to be stabilised in 2100 at B1 or A1B levels[14] a further increase in global average temperature of about 0.5°C would still be expected, mostly by 2200. {10.7}

- If radiative forcing were to be stabilised in 2100 at A1B levels[14], thermal expansion alone would lead to 0.3 to 0.8 m of sea level rise by 2300 (relative to 1980–1999). Thermal expansion would continue for many centuries, due to the time required to transport heat into the deep ocean. {10.7}

- Contraction of the Greenland Ice Sheet is projected to continue to contribute to sea level rise after 2100. Current models suggest that ice mass losses increase with temperature more rapidly than gains due to precipitation and that the surface mass balance becomes negative at a global average warming (relative to pre-industrial values) in excess of 1.9°C to 4.6°C. If a negative surface mass balance were sustained for millennia, that would lead to virtually complete elimination of the Greenland Ice Sheet and a resulting contribution to sea level rise of about 7 m. The corresponding future temperatures in Greenland are comparable to those inferred for the last interglacial period 125,000 years ago, when palaeoclimatic information suggests reductions of polar land ice extent and 4 to 6 m of sea level rise. {6.4, 10.7}

- Dynamical processes related to ice flow not included in current models but suggested by recent observations could increase the vulnerability of the ice sheets to warming, increasing future sea level rise. Understanding of these processes is limited and there is no consensus on their magnitude. {4.6, 10.7}

- Current global model studies project that the Antarctic Ice Sheet will remain too cold for widespread surface melting and is expected to gain in mass due to increased snowfall. However, net loss of ice mass could occur if dynamical ice discharge dominates the ice sheet mass balance. {10.7}

- Both past and future anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions will continue to contribute to warming and sea level rise for more than a millennium, due to the time scales required for removal of this gas from the atmosphere. {7.3, 10.3}

The Emission Scenarios of the IPCC Special Report on Emission Scenarios (SRES)[17]

A1. The A1 storyline and scenario family describes a future world of very rapid economic growth, global population that peaks in mid-century and declines thereafter, and the rapid introduction of new and more efficient technologies. Major underlying themes are convergence among regions, capacity building and increased cultural and social interactions, with a substantial reduction in regional differences in per capita income. The A1 scenario family develops into three groups that describe alternative directions of technological change in the energy system. The three A1 groups are distinguished by their technological emphasis: fossil-intensive (A1FI), non-fossil energy sources (A1T) or a balance across all sources (A1B) (where balanced is defined as not relying too heavily on one particular energy source, on the assumption that similar improvement rates apply to all energy supply and end use technologies).

A2. The A2 storyline and scenario family describes a very heterogeneous world. The underlying theme is self-reliance and preservation of local identities. Fertility patterns across regions converge very slowly, which results in continuously increasing population. Economic development is primarily regionally oriented and per capita economic growth and technological change more fragmented and slower than other storylines.

B1. The B1 storyline and scenario family describes a convergent world with the same global population, that peaks in mid-century and declines thereafter, as in the A1 storyline, but with rapid change in economic structures toward a service and information economy, with reductions in material intensity and the introduction of clean and resource-efficient technologies. The emphasis is on global solutions to economic, social and environmental sustainability, including improved equity, but without additional climate initiatives.

B2. The B2 storyline and scenario family describes a world in which the emphasis is on local solutions to economic, social and environmental sustainability. It is a world with continuously increasing global population, at a rate lower than A2, intermediate levels of economic development, and less rapid and more diverse technological change than in the B1 and A1 storylines. While the scenario is also oriented towards environmental protection and social equity, it focuses on local and regional levels.

An illustrative scenario was chosen for each of the six scenario groups A1B, A1FI, A1T, A2, B1 and B2. All should be considered equally sound.

The SRES scenarios do not include additional climate initiatives, which means that no scenarios are included that explicitly assume implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or the emissions targets of the Kyoto Protocol.

[17] Emission scenarios are not assessed in this Working Group I Report of the IPCC. This box summarising the SRES scenarios is taken from the TAR and has been subject to prior line-by-line approval by the Panel.

Mr. KUCINICH. I would ask Mr. Paulison, can you tell this committee if FEMA is or is not planning for any effects attributable to calculation?

Mr. PAULISON. I am making sure that this organization is ready to respond, regardless of what comes our way. The prediction of hurricanes has not been very scientific. Last year we were predicted to have a lot of hurricanes; we did not have them. So far we have had none this year. We do have one storm out there north of Bermuda. But we are going to be ready, regardless of what the calculation people say to make sure yes, we are getting ready for that.

Mr. KUCINICH. OK.

Mr. PAULISON. We are going to be ready for that. I am trying to be as positive as I can.

Mr. KUCINICH. Do you have that as a matter of policy, though? I mean, for example, in your policy division, which you have developed, does the policy division have a policy on global warming?

Mr. PAULISON. FEMA does not have a policy on global warming. We have a policy that says this organization is going to be ready to respond to disasters, whether they are natural disasters, whether they come in bunches or they come one at a time.

Mr. KUCINICH. But does FEMA have a position that calculation would have no impact on the kind of natural disasters that we are supposed to deal with?

Mr. PAULISON. I am not a climatologist nor am I a meteorologist, so I don't know what impact the climate change is going to have on natural disasters. All I am telling you is this agency is ready to respond, and we are going to continue to be ready to respond.

Mr. KUCINICH. Did you have an interest, though, on the impact of calculation on creating natural disasters? Is that something that has occurred to you?

Mr. PAULISON. Well, of course it would. Any time we get predictions that there is going to be something worse coming on down the road——

Mr. KUCINICH. You don't dismiss that out of hand?

Mr. PAULISON. No, sir. No, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. I just was curious about that.

What I would like to do, since Representative Jindal is here and has not yet had a chance to ask questions, with the permission of Mr. Davis we could perhaps refer to Mr. Jindal.

You have the floor for 5 minutes. Thank you.

Mr. JINDAL. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Davis. Thank you for allowing me to sit in on the committee, and thank you also to the committee for allowing me to participate in the previous hearing on the trailers and the formaldehyde hearing.

Mr. Paulison, it is good to see you again. I want to thank each of the witnesses for their testimony.

I have several questions. Mr. Chairman, with your consent I would like to submit my written statement for the record, if there is no objection.

Mr. KUCINICH. Without objection.

Mr. JINDAL. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I should have asked for more, Tom.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Without objection.

Mr. JINDAL. I have several questions also to submit for the record, but I have two points I really want to make with the time I have. The first has to do with the regional office infrastructure. You know, back after the hurricane struck in 2005, the White House released its assessment, the Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina, Lessons Learned: Identifying Critical Flaws in the Nation's Response, including, in terms of preparing this, an absence of regional planning and coordination.

According to the report, DHS did not have the needed personnel or resources in the regional offices. This led to reduced communications and an understanding of onsite needs, further delaying an effective response.

That report actually recommended an increase in regional response capabilities, specifically called on DHS to build regional structures to integrate State and local strategies, and capabilities to encourage regional partnerships. Indeed, in the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Congress mandated that DHS set up a regional structure. On April 28, 2005, 4 months before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck the Gulf Coast, I actually called on Secretary Chertoff to follow through with a regional framework in which Louisiana would have been equipped to facilitate a regional response.

My first point, my first question is this. When you contrast the Coast Guard's response, an agency within DHS, versus FEMA's and other agencies', there is a much more robust, much more effective response, I think partially due to the fact the Coast Guard had boots on the ground before the storms, they knew the area, they knew the people. That wasn't their first experience.

Given the fact the Gulf Coast will be hit in the future by future hurricanes, future storms, certainly we have been a long-time advocate for a robust DHS regional office in the greater New Orleans area in Louisiana.

My first question is a leading question, but my first question, the same question I asked the Secretary in 2005, Don't you agree an enhanced regional structure could improve the flow of communication between Washington and local emergency management officials? I know you all have staffed up some of the regional administrators, but couldn't we do more to have a more robust presence on the ground?

Mr. PAULISON. Yes, sir, we can and we are.

Mr. JINDAL. I will followup in writing. One of the reasons I want to spend some of my time talking about this, I do want to continue to get public commitments, because I do think there is an opportunity. New Orleans is building a Federal city concept, bringing together different Federal agencies. There is already a regional headquarters there for the Coast Guard, for Customs, for different Federal agencies that are part of DHS. It just seems like it would be a natural place to consolidate and get those synergies.

I thank you for your commitment to that. Like I said, I would like to followup on that with you.

My second question is: you all have done an assessment, and you refer to this in your statement earlier about the gaps and preparedness among the different States. I know in Louisiana, in part, you identified some gaps when it came to in-place sheltering, when it comes to transportation and other things in terms of being pre-

pared. This is especially important considering the fact we are in the middle of another hurricane season.

Last year we passed in Congress the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act that required FEMA to provide assistance to the States in terms of evacuations. I also added some language to the Defense authorization bill requiring the Secretary of Defense to pre-position pre-identified assets such as medical supplies, food, water, and communications equipment to help the Department of Defense help us, to help the Department of Defense respond to requests from civilian authorities. The provision also called for Defense to work with DHS to develop concept plans to maximize military support.

You talked about the gaps in Louisiana, and some of those I have talked about. given the directives in last year's legislation, what is the status on your work with Louisiana in providing additional shelter space, pre-positioned supplies, and what can we do to utilize the Homeland Security grant program to help meet those needs that are identified in that gap analysis?

Mr. PAULISON. Particularly in Louisiana, but we have done it pretty much from Texas all the way to Maine, but particularly in Louisiana we have been working very closely with the State and the cities to make sure we have adequate shelters identified to put people in, who is going to staff them, who is going to put supplies in them. Also, for transportation modes in place, how many people do we think are going to self-evacuate in their own vehicles, how many buses without objection we need, do we have ambulance contracts in place? And the answer is yes to all of those. We now have identified enough shelter space for the predicted amount of people that would evacuate out of New Orleans and out of Louisiana should a hurricane come.

We did it with three States. We did it with Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama, together, because we know what affects one State affects all the others. This is the most robust involvement FEMA has had with working with States to fill those gaps and making sure that we have good, solid plans in place to move people out.

Louisiana really stepped up to the plate this year, has put bus contracts in place and other things to really help us work together as a team to make sure that, if we do have to evacuate, that we know where people are going to go and how they are going to get there.

My time has expired. My last point, Mr. Chairman——

Mr. KUCINICH. I just want the gentleman to know that if the gentleman wishes to ask questions for another 5 minutes, I will permit that, because I think that, given the fact that you represent Louisiana, you are entitled to this. So if you would like to proceed, proceed.

Mr. JINDAL. Well, I appreciate the chairman's indulgence. Thank you. And I thank the ranking member, as well.

Mr. KUCINICH. Without objection.

Mr. JINDAL. What I was going to make in my final moments—and I appreciate the additional time—is that one of the things I would certainly ask FEMA to consider doing is providing guidance to the State about the best use of those security grant programs to help fill these gaps year in and year out.

I know one of the things we have heard, for example, there has been a lot of funding—maybe not enough, but a lot—provided, for example, for interoperable communications. One of the things we are hearing is that if those dollars aren't coordinated and spent effectively, we may not get that chance again. We did not have interoperable communications we needed. We didn't have it in Oklahoma City, we didn't have it on 9/11, and we certainly didn't have it after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. So as you identify gaps, I would request that FEMA help provide guidance to the State on what might be the best ways to utilize some of the discretionary Homeland Security grants to help make sure that we can address these gaps.

You know, one of the things I added in that language was requiring coordination with the Department of Defense to pre-position. I heard your comments before about having generators for hospitals and wanting to avoid no-bid contracts, and I applaud you for that. I absolutely agree. We don't want to be in that same position again where we don't have adequate food and water supplies. But then we also don't want to end up paying too much for supplies. We saw what happened in the last couple of years.

What has been done as far as coordinating with the Department of Defense? I put that language in there. Has that taken place to your satisfaction? Is there more that could be done between the two departments?

Mr. PAULISON. Like I said earlier, we have the best relationship with the Department of Defense, NORTHCOM, and the National Guard than we have ever had. I know Katrina was a wake up call for all of us, and we recognize we have to work together, we have to plan together, we have to train together so we are not exchanging business cards in the middle of the disaster.

We have put a Defense coordinating officer in every region in this country, every region that FEMA has, to help with that coordination. We meet. We have a videoconference with them every week and with NORTHCOM on there. We meet with the National Guard to make sure that we are coordinated, we are sharing information, and we are working together as a team as opposed to working in silos.

We are doing this. We are going to continue doing it. It is the right thing to do.

Mr. JINDAL. I have two last points. One of the points I want to make—and I have said this at previous hearings—one of the things I am going to advocate for, and I would hope you all would be supportive of this, I think there is a lot of flexibility in the Stafford Act we have not taken advantage of, but I do think that there needs to be a completely different category for the kinds of catastrophes that were Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

For example, allowing more flexibility on housing, allowing more flexibility for the assistance. I think we could have done more with the dollars we ended up spending, but too often found ourselves tied by rules—for example, not being able to improve public infrastructure; the rules requiring us to replace what had sometimes been there before; the rules that are preventing the hazard mitigation money to help families who are trying to get help through the Road Home program.

I know we have declarations for disasters, but I think we need a designation for a catastrophe.

I want to ask you one of the things. If, not when, if we get to that point I would hope that FEMA within the administration would also advocate for that.

My last question. I know there had been press reports that after the hurricanes, after the storms there was approximately $854 million in cash and oil that was pledged by foreign governments, but only $40 million has been used so far for disaster victims or for reconstruction. I know there were some issues with the State Department. What mechanisms have FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security made to reduce the bureaucracy to make sure that if there are future offers of support that they are handled in a more effective way?

Mr. PAULISON. A major, major problem for us and embarrassment, as far as I am concerned, not having a system in place to handle donations from our friends in other countries, so we have worked with our Office of International Affairs, we are working with the State Department, working with the Department of Homeland Security to make sure that we have a plan in place, and we do have a plan in place. One, making sure that people understand what our needs are so we are not being offered things that we can't use; making sure we have a place to put them, and how we are going to distribute those. We have put those plans in place so that does not happen again.

We have a lot of friends around this world who offered a lot of things. Some of it we could not use, and we should have let them know right up front what our needs were and what we could use.

Mr. JINDAL. Even my extended time has expired, but I want to ask you one last quick question to make sure I am understanding. In your judgment, based on the assessment gap and the work you have done, do you feel the Gulf Coast is ready, God forbid, if there should be another hurricane on the order of magnitude of another Katrina?

Mr. PAULISON. Congressman, I do. Louisiana is, in my opinion, more ready than it has ever been. They have really done a great job of putting this organization back together, getting on board. We still have issues, as you know because you live there, with the parishes not talking to the State. The communication system there is not what it should be. But as far as what I see happening on the ground, as far as making preparations for contracts in place, having shelter in place, willing to make evacuation calls early, and also with our new policy of, if a State can ask for pre-landfall declaration, we will help them with that, as any Gulf Coast State. So I think with all those things in place I am comfortable we are going to be able to respond there and we are going to do a good job if a hurricane does come. God forbid, we don't want one. They surely don't need it right now with everybody in those mobile homes and trailers. But yes, they are as ready as I have ever seen them.

Mr. JINDAL. Thank you. And thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your indulgence.

Mr. KUCINICH. I just want Mr. Jindal to know that the members of this committee support you and your community and we want

to make sure that all your questions are asked and that you are satisfied that everything is being done.

When I spoke to Mr. Jadacki earlier, he had said that it would take 6 months to be able to get a detailed assessment of readiness and that perhaps some degree of report might be available in 90 days.

What I am going to ask you to do is this, Mr. Jadacki—to at least provide us when we come back in September, 1 month from now, with the areas of concern that you have, and then within 90 days to be able to establish, on a scale from 1 to 10, some quantification of the degree of readiness, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. If you could do that, it would give this committee some ability to be able to know where we are going.

Can you respond to that question?

Mr. JADACKI. Yes. I think we can meet those deadlines.

Mr. KUCINICH. I think that would be something we would find comforting.

Mr. JADACKI. And that will be working closely with FEMA.

Mr. KUCINICH. That is appropriate, and we appreciate that. And with the Guard, of course.

Also, before dismissing the first panel, I would just ask Mr. Paulison, I want to clarify your answer to my previous question. This is a question. Is FEMA incorporating the predicted effects of global warming into its planning, yes or no?

Mr. PAULISON. The answer is no. We are planning for the worst and hoping for the best, so regardless of what the predictions are, we are going to make sure the organization can respond to disaster, whether they are hurricanes or terrorist event or anything else.

So do we plan on the weather changing? The answer is no. What we do is plan on having hurricanes and dealing with them.

Mr. KUCINICH. Do you think it would be appropriate for FEMA to consider the predicted effects of global warming in your planning?

Mr. PAULISON. I do. I think there are modeling tools that are out there that we can tap into that we have not been that could be useful for us in planning for the future of this organization, so the answer is yes.

Mr. KUCINICH. So will FEMA from this point on incorporate the predicted effects of global warming into its planning?

Mr. PAULISON. Yes, sir. We will look at that very closely and work with our Science and Technology Department, along with other modeling tools that we know we are going to have to use to do a better job of planning for the future.

Mr. KUCINICH. I just want to make sure, as we are moving forward now, that we have a clear and concise response from FEMA with respect to incorporating predicted effects of global warming into planning, because then that relates essentially to readiness. So you are saying that you will do that?

Mr. PAULISON. Yes, sir. That is one of those things we have to deal with, just like everything else.

Mr. KUCINICH. You know what? That then is part of the new FEMA.

Mr. PAULISON. OK.

Mr. KUCINICH. I want to thank the members of the panel for their patience and their participation. I want to thank you on behalf of every member of this committee. We had many Members show up for participation today.

What we are going to do, now that we have concluded the testimony from panel one, we have many significant issues that will be raised on a second panel that we could not address on the first panel, and so I want my staff to summarize those issues in a letter to you, Mr. Paulison, so that you can address them after the hearing.

I want to thank you members of the panel—Major General, Mr. Paulison, Mr. Jadacki. You are much appreciated and you are excused.

We will now take a 5-minute recess to allow for our staff to set up the second panel, so 5 minutes from now we will begin.

Again, thanks to each of you for your service to our country.

Mr. PAULISON. And, sir, thanks to you also. The feedback from this panel is extremely helpful for us in putting this organization back on track. Thank you.

Mr. KUCINICH. Well, we are all working together. Thank you.

[Recess.]

Mr. KUCINICH. The committee will come to order.

The first witness had to leave to take a flight, so we are going to put into the record the testimony of William Jenkins, who is Director of Homeland Security and Justice Issues at the Government Accountability Office. Without objection, we will include his testimony in the record of the hearing.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Jenkins follows:]

United States Government Accountability Office

GAO

Testimony

Before the Committee on Oversight and Governmental Reform, House of Representatives

For Release on Delivery
Expected at 10:00 a.m. EDT
July 31, 2007

HOMELAND SECURITY

Observations on DHS and FEMA Efforts to Prepare for and Respond to Major and Catastrophic Disasters and Address Related Recommendations and Legislation

Statement of William O. Jenkins, Jr.
Director, Homeland Security and Justice Issues

GAO-07-1142T

GAO
Accountability·Integrity·Reliability
Highlights

Highlights of GAO-07-1142T, a testimony before the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) faces the simultaneous challenges of preparing for the season and implementing the reorganization and other provisions of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006. The Act stipulated major changes to FEMA that were intended to enhance its preparedness for and response to catastrophic and major disasters.

As GAO has reported, FEMA and DHS face continued challenges, including clearly defining leadership roles and responsibilities, developing necessary disaster response capabilities, and establishing accountability systems to provide effective services while protecting against waste, fraud, and abuse. This testimony (1) summarizes GAO's findings on these challenges and FEMA's and DHS's efforts to address them; and (2) discusses several disaster management issues for continued congressional attention.

What GAO Recommends

This testimony includes no new recommendations, but identifies issues to which Congress, FEMA, and DHS may wish to give continued attention so that FEMA may fulfill the requirements of the Post-Katrina Reform Act. These issues are based on the findings and recommendations of more than 30 Katrina-related GAO reports.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-1142T.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact William Jenkins, Jr. at (202) 512-8777 or jenkinswo@gao.gov.

July 31, 2007

HOMELAND SECURITY

Observations on DHS and FEMA Efforts to Prepare for and Respond to Major and Catastrophic Disasters and Address Related Recommendations and Legislation

What GAO Found

Effective disaster preparedness and response require defining what needs to be done, where and by whom, how it needs to be done, and how well it should be done. GAO analysis following Hurricane Katrina showed that improvements were needed in leadership roles and responsibilities, development of the necessary disaster capabilities, and accountability systems that balance the need for fast, flexible response against the need to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse. To facilitate rapid and effective decision making, legal authorities, roles and responsibilities, and lines of authority at all government levels must be clearly defined, effectively communicated, and well understood. Adequacy of capabilities in the context of a catastrophic or major disaster are needed—particularly in the areas of (1) situational assessment and awareness; (2) emergency communications; (3) evacuations; (4) search and rescue; (5) logistics; and (6) mass care and shelter. Implementing controls and accountability mechanisms helps to ensure the proper use of resources. FEMA has initiated reviews and some actions in each of these areas, but their operational impact in a catastrophic or major disaster has not yet been tested. Some of the targeted improvements, such as a completely revamped logistics system, are multiyear efforts. Others, such as the ability to field mobile communications and registration-assistance vehicles, are expected to be ready for the 2007 hurricane season.

The Comptroller General has suggested one area for fundamental reform and oversight is ensuring a strategic and integrated approach to prepare for, respond to, recover, and rebuild after catastrophic events. FEMA enters the peak of the 2007 hurricane season as an organization in transition working simultaneously to implement the reorganization required by the Post-Katrina Reform Act and moving forward on initiatives to address the deficiencies identified by the post-Katrina reviews. This is an enormous challenge. In the short-term, Congress may wish to consider several specific areas for immediate oversight. These include (1) evaluating the development and implementation of the National Preparedness System, including preparedness for natural disasters, terrorist incidents, and an influenza pandemic; (2) assessing state and local capabilities and the use of federal grants to enhance those capabilities; (3) examining regional and multi-state planning and preparation; (4) determining the status and use of preparedness exercises; and (5) examining DHS polices regarding oversight assistance.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss issues associated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA), an agency within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and its efforts to address the shortcomings of the preparation and response to Hurricane Katrina and enhance its capabilities for responding to major disasters, including hurricanes. The 2007 hurricane season has started and its peak period will begin in a few weeks. Almost two years ago, Hurricane Katrina severely tested disaster management at the federal, state, and local levels and revealed weaknesses in the basic elements of preparing for, responding, to and recovering from any catastrophic disaster. The goal of disaster preparedness and response is easy to state but difficult to achieve and can be stated as follows:

> To prevent where possible, prepare for, mitigate, and respond to disasters of any size or cause with well-planned, well-coordinated, and effective actions that minimize the loss of life and property and set the stage for a quick recovery.

Achieving this goal for major disasters, and catastrophic disasters in particular, is difficult because success requires effective pre- and post-disaster coordination and cooperation among different levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector. Individuals can also contribute to success through such things as knowing evacuation routes, complying with evacuation orders, and having a family and individual disaster preparation plan and supplies.

As the Comptroller General testified in February 2007 on DHS's high-risk status and specifically disaster preparedness and response, DHS must overcome continuing challenges, including those related to clearly defining leadership roles and responsibilities, developing necessary disaster response capabilities, and establishing accountability systems to provide effective services while protecting against waste, fraud, and abuse.[1] These issues are enormously complex and challenging for all levels of government. It is important to view preparedness for and response to major disasters as a national system with linked responsibilities and capabilities. This is because effective preparedness for and response to

[1]GAO, *Homeland Security: Management and Programmatic Challenges Facing the Department of Homeland Security*, GAO-07-452T (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 7, 2007).

major disasters requires the coordinated planning and actions of multiple actors from multiple first responder disciplines, jurisdictions, and levels of government as well as nongovernmental entities. Parochialism must be put aside and cooperation must prevail before and after an emergency event. The experience of Hurricane Katrina illustrated why it is important to tackle these difficult issues.

My testimony today (1) summarizes our key findings on leadership, response capabilities, and accountability controls and the efforts made by DHS and FEMA in their implementation of the Post-Katrina Reform Act[2] and other recommendations made in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and (2) highlights several disaster management issues for continued congressional attention. My comments today are based on our body of work on disaster and emergency management including more than 30 reports on the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, our review of recent emergency management reform legislative changes, and materials and statements provided by FEMA. We conducted our audit work in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Summary

Our analysis of the preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina showed the need for (1) clearly defined and understood leadership roles and responsibilities; (2) development of the necessary disaster capabilities; and (3) accountability systems that effectively balance the need for fast and flexible response against the need to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

A key issue in the response to Hurricane Katrina was the lack of clearly understood roles and responsibilities. One aspect of this issue that continues to be a subject of discussion is the roles and responsibilities of the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO), who has the authority to make mission assignments to federal agencies for response and recovery, and the Principal Federal Official (PFO), whose role was to provide situational awareness to the Secretary of Homeland Security.

Since the 2006 hurricane season, DHS has designated a FCO for each region that includes states at risks of hurricanes and a supporting FCO for

[2]The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 was enacted as Title VI of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2007, Pub. L. No. 109-295, 120 Stat. 1355, 1394 (2006).

each of these states. It has also designated a PFO for each of three regions—the Gulf Coast, the Northeast Region, and the Mid-Atlantic Region—plus a separate PFO for the state of Florida and Texas. However, this year's designations of PFOs, deputy PFOs and FCOs have generated some questions in Congress as to the clarity of the lines of authority between these designated officials and DHS leadership such as the FEMA Administrator and the Secretary of DHS. In a July letter to the nation's governors, designating PFOs and FCOs, the Secretary of Homeland Security directed states to contact the head of the Office of Risk Management and Analysis at the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD) with questions related to these designated officials. The reasons for this were not stated in the letter, and the Risk Management and Analysis Directorate of the NPPD has no designated role in the current *National Response Plan*, which outlines the principal roles and responsibilities of federal agencies in a major disaster. In a letter to the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security expressed concern about the role of the NPPD, noting that under the Post-Katrina Reform Act, the FEMA Administrator is designated to "lead the Nation's effort to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against the risks of natural disasters, acts of terrorism and other man-made disasters including catastrophic incidents."[3]

It is critically important that the authorities, roles, and responsibilities of FEMA and these designated FCOs and PFOs be clear and clearly understood by all. There is still some question among state and local first responders about the need for both positions and how they will work together in disaster response. One potential benefit of naming the FCOs and PFOs in advance is that they have an opportunity to meet and discuss expectations, roles and responsibilities with state, local, and nongovernmental officials before an actual disaster, possibly setting the groundwork for improved coordination and communication in an actual disaster.

Developing the ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from major and catastrophic disasters requires an overall national preparedness effort that is designed to integrate and define what needs to be done, where, and by whom (roles and responsibilities); how it should be done; and how well

[3] Pub. L. No. 109-295, § 611(11), 120 Stat. 1355, 1396 (2006) (codified at 6 U.S.C. § 313(b)(2)(A)).

it should be done—that is, according to what standards. The principal national documents designed to address each of these are, respectively, the *National Response Plan* (*NRP*), the *National Incident Management System* (*NIMS*), and the *National Preparedness Goal* (*NPG*). The *NRP* *NIMS* and the *NPG* are undergoing extensive review and revision by DHS with the input of federal, state, and local government officials, tribal authorities, non-governmental and private sector officials, according to DHS. This effort is intended to assess the effectiveness of the doctrine embodied in these documents, identify modifications and improvements, and reissue the documents. The results of the review for the *NRP*, for example, were initially scheduled for release in June 2007. However, in April 2007, DHS officials notified stakeholders that some important issues were more complex and require national-level policy decisions, and stated that additional time was needed to complete a comprehensive draft. DHS noted that the underlying operational principles of the current *NRP*, as revised in May 2006, remain intact and still apply. Were the latest revision of the *NRP* to be released in the next few weeks, it is unlikely that any changes from these revisions could be effectively implemented for the 2007 hurricane season, which is now two months old. FEMA officials have told us that the final version of the *NPG* and its corresponding documents are currently receiving final reviews by the White House and will be out shortly.

In addition to roles and responsibilities, the nation's experience with hurricanes Katrina and Rita reinforced some questions about the adequacy of the nation's disaster response capabilities in the context of a catastrophic disaster—particularly in the areas of (1) situational assessment and awareness, (2) emergency communications, (3) evacuations, (4) search and rescue, (5) logistics, and (6) mass care and sheltering. Overall, capabilities are built upon the appropriate combination of people, skills, processes, and assets. Ensuring that needed capabilities are available requires effective planning and coordination in conjunction with training and exercises in which the capabilities are realistically tested and problems identified and subsequently addressed in partnership with other federal, state, and local stakeholders. In various meetings with GAO, in congressional testimonies, and in some documents, FEMA has described a number of initiatives to address identified deficiencies in each of these areas. However, a number of FEMA programs are ongoing and it is too early to evaluate their effectiveness. In addition, none of these initiatives appear to have been tested on a scale that reasonably simulates the conditions and demand they would face following a major or catastrophic disaster. Thus, it is difficult to assess the probable results of these initiatives in improving response to a major or catastrophic disaster,

such as a category 4 or 5 hurricane.[4] The National Guard has traditionally been an important component of response to major disasters. States and governors rely on their National Guard personnel and equipment for disaster response, and National Guard personnel are frequently deployed to disaster areas, including those outside their home states. However, the types and quantities of equipment the National Guard needs to respond to large-scale disasters have not been fully identified because the multiple federal and state agencies that would have roles in responding to such events have not completed and integrated their plans[5].

With regard to balancing speed and flexibility with accountability, FEMA has stated it has upgraded its victim recovery systems. For example, FEMA states that it can register up to 200,000 applicants per day for individual assistance while including safeguards for preventing fraudulent and duplicate applications. The inability to reliably and efficiently identify fraudulent and duplicate applications was a major problem following Katrina that resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars in improper payments. FEMA has also taken actions to revise its debris removal and contracting policies and to increase the use of advanced contracting for goods and services. Again, we have no basis to determine the effectiveness of these systems as they have yet to be tested on a large scale basis.

Entering the 2007 hurricane season, FEMA was and is an organization in transition working to implement the reorganization mandated by the Post-Katrina Reform Act as it moves forward on initiatives to implement a comprehensive, risk-based national emergency management system as required by the act. In November 2006, the Comptroller General wrote to the congressional leadership suggesting that one area needing fundamental reform and oversight was preparing for, responding to, and rebuilding after catastrophic disasters. Among the topics that Congress might consider for oversight are:

[4]Section 602 of the Post-Katrina Reform Act defines "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.

[5]GAO, *Reserve Forces: Actions needed to Identify National Guard Domestic Equipment Requirements and Readiness*, GAO-07-60 (Washington, D.C.: January 26, 2007).

- the development and implementation of the National Preparedness System, including preparedness for natural disasters, terrorist incidents, and an influenza pandemic;
- the assessment of state and local capabilities and the use of federal grants in building and sustaining those capabilities;
- regional and multistate planning and preparedness;
- the status and use of preparedness exercises; and
- DHS policies that affect the transparency of its efforts to improve the nation's preparedness for and response to major and catastrophic disasters.

Background

Several federal legislative and executive provisions support preparation for and response to emergency situations. The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (the Stafford Act)[6] primarily establishes the programs and processes for the federal government to provide major disaster and emergency assistance to state, local, and tribal governments, individuals, and qualified private nonprofit organizations. FEMA, within DHS, has responsibility for administering the provisions of the Stafford Act.

Besides using these federal resources, states affected by a catastrophic disaster can also turn to other states for assistance in obtaining surge capacity—the ability to draw on additional resources, such as personnel and equipment, needed to respond to and recover from the incident. One way of sharing personnel and equipment across state lines is through the use of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), an interstate compact that provides a legal and administrative framework for managing such emergency requests. The compact includes 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.[7] We issued a report this week examining how the Emergency Management Assistance Compact has been used in disasters and how its effectiveness could be enhanced.[8] As the committee is aware, a number of specific recommendations have been made to improve the nation's ability to

[6]The Stafford Act is codified as amended at 42 U.S.C. § 5121 et seq.

[7]California is currently not a member of EMAC as the state's legislation approving its membership in the compact had expired.

[8]GAO, *Emergency Management Assistance Compact: Enhancing EMAC's Collaborative and Administrative Capacity Should Improve Disaster Response*, GAO-07-854 (Washington, D.C.: June 29, 2007).

effectively prepare for and respond to catastrophic disasters following the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Beginning in February 2006, reports by the House Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina,[9] the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee,[10] the White House Homeland Security Council,[11] the DHS Inspector General,[12] and DHS and FEMA[13] all identified a variety of failures and some strengths in the preparations for, response to, and initial recovery from Hurricane Katrina. In addition to these reviews, a report from the American National Standards Institute Homeland Security Standards Panel (ANSI-HSSP) contains recommendations aimed at bolstering national preparedness, response, and recovery efforts in the event of a natural disaster. A key resource identified in the document is the American National Standard for Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs (ANSI/NFPA 1600), which was developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The standard defines a common set of criteria for preparedness, disaster management, emergency management, and business continuity programs.

Hurricane Katrina severely tested disaster management at the federal, state, and local levels and revealed weaknesses in the basic elements of preparing for, responding to, and recovering from any catastrophic disaster. Based on our work done during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, we previously reported that DHS needs to more effectively coordinate disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, particularly for catastrophic disasters in which the response capabilities of

[9]House of Representatives, House Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina. *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report of the House Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for And Response to Hurricane Katrina* (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 15, 2006).

[10]U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. *Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared* (Washington, D.C.: May 2006).

[11]White House Homeland Security Council. *The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned* (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 23, 2006).

[12]Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General. *A Performance Review of FEMA's Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina*, OIG-06-32 (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 31, 2006).

[13]Federal Emergency Management Agency. *DHS/FEMA Initial Response Hotwash: Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana*, DR-1603-LA (Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Feb. 13, 2006).

state and local governments are almost immediately overwhelmed.[14] Our analysis showed the need for (1) clearly defined and understood leadership roles and responsibilities; (2) the development of the necessary disaster capabilities; and (3) accountability systems that effectively balance the need for fast and flexible response against the need to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse. In line with a recommendation we made following Hurricane Andrew, the nation's most destructive hurricane until Katrina, we recommended that Congress give federal agencies explicit authority to take actions to prepare for all types of catastrophic disasters when there is warning. We also recommended that DHS

1. rigorously retest, train, and exercise its recent clarification of the roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority for all levels of leadership, implementing changes needed to remedy identified coordination problems;

2. direct that the *NRP* base plan and its supporting Catastrophic Incident Annex be supported by more robust and detailed operational implementation plans;

3. provide guidance and direction for federal, state, and local planning, training, and exercises to ensure such activities fully support preparedness, response, and recovery responsibilities at a jurisdictional and regional basis;

4. take a lead in monitoring federal agencies' efforts to prepare to meet their responsibilities under the *NRP* and the interim National Preparedness Goal; and

5. use a risk management approach in deciding whether and how to invest finite resources in specific capabilities for a catastrophic disaster.

The Post-Katrina Reform Act[15] responded to the findings and recommendations in the various reports examining the preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina. While keeping FEMA within DHS, the act enhanced FEMA's responsibilities and its autonomy within DHS. FEMA is

[14]GAO, *Catastrophic Disasters: Enhanced Leadership, Capabilities, and Accountability Controls Will Improve the Effectiveness of the Nation's Preparedness, Response, and Recovery System*, GAO-06-618 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 6, 2006).

[15] Pub. L. No. 109-295, 120 Stat. 1355, 1394 (2006).

to lead and support the nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation. Under the Act, the FEMA Administrator reports directly to the Secretary of DHS; FEMA is now a distinct entity within DHS; and the Secretary of DHS can no longer substantially or significantly reduce the authorities, responsibilities, or functions of FEMA or the capability to perform them unless authorized by subsequent legislation. FEMA has absorbed many of the functions of DHS's Preparedness Directorate (with some exceptions). The statute establishes 10 regional offices with specified responsibilities. The statute also establishes a National Integration Center responsible for the ongoing management and maintenance of the *NIMS* and *NRP*. The Post-Katrina Reform Act also included provisions for other areas, such as evacuation plans and exercises and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. In addition, the act includes several provisions to strengthen the management and capability of FEMA's workforce. For example, the statute called for a strategic human capital plan to shape and improve FEMA's workforce, authorized recruitment and retention bonuses, and established a Surge Capacity Force. Most of the organizational changes became effective as of March 31, 2007. Others, such as the increase in organizational autonomy for FEMA and establishment of the National Integration Center, became effective upon enactment of the Post-Katrina Reform Act on October 4, 2006.

FEMA Is Reviewing Its Responsibilities, Capabilities as It Implements Recommendations and Post-Katrina Reform Act

After FEMA became part of DHS in March 2003, its responsibilities were over time dispersed and redefined. FEMA continues to evolve within DHS as it implements the changes required by the Post-Katrina Reform Act, whose details are discussed later. Hurricane Katrina severely tested disaster management at the federal, state, and local levels and revealed weaknesses in the basic elements of preparing for, responding to, and recovering from any catastrophic disaster. According to DHS, the department completed a thorough assessment of FEMA's internal structure to incorporate lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina and integrate systematically new and existing assets and responsibilities within FEMA.

The effective implementation of recent recommendations and the Post-Katrina Reform Act's organizational changes and related roles and responsibilities should address many of our emergency management

observations and recommendations.[16] In addition, we previously reported that DHS needs to more effectively coordinate disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, particularly for catastrophic disasters in which the response capabilities of state and local governments are almost immediately overwhelmed. Our September 2006 analysis showed the need for (1) clearly defined and understood leadership roles and responsibilities; (2) the development of the necessary disaster capabilities; and (3) accountability systems that effectively balance the need for fast and flexible response against the need to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse[17].

Leadership Is Critical to Prepare for, Respond to, and Recover from Catastrophic Disasters

In preparing for, responding to, and recovering from any catastrophic disaster, the legal authorities, roles and responsibilities, and lines of authority at all levels of government must be clearly defined, effectively communicated, and well understood to facilitate rapid and effective decision making. Hurricane Katrina showed the need to improve leadership at all levels of government to better respond to a catastrophic disaster. As we have previously reported, developing the capabilities needed for catastrophic disasters requires an overall national preparedness effort that is designed to integrate and define what needs to be done, where, and by whom (roles and responsibilities), how it should be done, and how well it should be done—that is, according to what standards. The principal national documents designed to address each of these are, respectively, the *NRP*, *NIMS*, and the *NPG*.

All three documents are undergoing extensive review and revision by DHS with input from state and local government officials, tribal authorities, non-governmental and private sector officials.[18] For example, the review of

[16] GAO, *Homeland Security: Observations on DHS and FEMA Efforts to Prepare for and Respond to Major and Catastrophic Disasters and Address Related Recommendations and Legislation.* GAO-07-835T. (Washington, D.C.: May 15, 2007).

[17] GAO-06-618

[18] On May 25, 2006, DHS released changes to the NRP regarding leadership issues, such as which situations require secretarial leadership; the process for declaring incidents of national significance; and the scope of the NRP and its Catastrophic Incident Annex. The revised NRP clearly states that the Secretary of Homeland Security, who reports directly to the President, is responsible for declaring and managing incidents of national significance, including catastrophic ones. At the time of Hurricane Katrina, the supplement to the catastrophic incident annex, which provides more detail on implementing the annex, was still in draft. Subsequent to Hurricane Katrina, DHS published the final supplement to the Catastrophic Incident Annex, dated August 2006.

the *NRP* is intended to assess the effectiveness of the *NRP*, identify modifications and improvements and reissue the document. This review includes all major components of the *NRP* including the base plan, Emergency Support Functions (ESF), annexes such as the Catastrophic Incident Annex and its Supplement; the role of the PFO and FCO, and the Joint Field Office structure. Also during the current *NRP* review period, FEMA has revised the organizational structure of Emergency Support Function 6 (ESF-6), Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services, and places FEMA as the lead agency for this emergency support function. The Red Cross will remain as a supporting agency in the responsibilities and activities of ESF-6. According to a February 2007 letter by the Red Cross, this change will not take place until the *NRP* review process is complete and all changes are approved.

The revised *NRP* and *NIMS* were originally scheduled for release in June 2007. In April 2007, however, DHS officials notified stakeholders that some important issues were more complex and required national-level policy decisions, and additional time was needed to complete a comprehensive draft. DHS noted that the underlying operational principles of the *NRP* remain intact and the current document, as revised in May 2006, still applies. FEMA officials have told us that the final version of the National Preparedness Goal and its corresponding documents like the Target Capabilities List, are currently receiving final reviews by the White House and are expected to be out shortly.

A key issue in the response to Hurricane Katrina was the lack of clearly understood roles and responsibilities. This is an issue that continues to be a subject of discussion is the roles and responsibilities of the FCO, who has the authority to make mission assignments to federal agencies for response and recovery under the Stafford Act, and the PFO, whose role was to provide situational awareness to the Secretary of Homeland Security. The May 2006 revisions to the *NRP* made changes designed to address this issue. However, the changes may not have fully resolved the leadership issues regarding the roles of the PFO and the FCO. While the Secretary of Homeland Security may avoid conflicts by appointing a single individual to serve in both positions in non-terrorist incidents, confusion may persist if the Secretary of Homeland Security does not exercise this discretion to do so. Furthermore, this discretion does not exist for terrorist incidents, and the revised *NRP* does not specifically provide a rationale for this limitation.

For 2006, FEMA pre-designated five teams of FCOs and PFOs in the Gulf Coast and eastern seaboard states at risk of hurricanes. This included

FCOs and PFOs for the Gulf Coast Region,[19] Northeast Region,[20] and the Mid-Atlantic Region,[21] and separate FCOs and PFOs for the states of Florida and Texas.

However, this year's designations of PFOs, deputy PFOs, and FCOs have generated some questions in Congress as to the clarity of the lines of authority between these designated officials and DHS leadership such as the FEMA Administrator and the Secretary of DHS. In a July letter to the nation's governors, designating PFOs and FCOs, the Secretary of Homeland Security directed states to contact the head of the Office of Risk Management and Analysis at the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD) with questions related to these designated officials. The reasons for this were not stated in the letter, and the Risk Management and Analysis Directorate of the NPPD has no designated role in the current *National Response Plan*, which outlines the principal roles and responsibilities of federal agencies in a major disaster. In a letter to the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security expressed concern about the role of the NPPD, noting that under the Post-Katrina Reform Act, the FEMA Administrator is designated to "lead the Nation's effort to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against the risks of natural disasters, acts of terrorism and other man-made disasters including catastrophic incidents."[22]

It is critically important that the authorities, roles, and responsibilities of FEMA and the designated FCOs and PFOs be clear and clearly understood by all. There is still some question among state and local first responders about the need for both positions and how they will work together in disaster response. One potential benefit of naming the FCOs and PFOs in advance is that they have an opportunity to meet and discuss expectations, roles and responsibilities with state, local, and nongovernmental officials before an actual disaster, possibly setting the groundwork for improved coordination and communication in an actual disaster.

[19]Includes Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

[20]Includes New York, New Jersey, New England, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

[21]Includes Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island.

[22] Pub. L. No. 109-295, § 611(11), 120 Stat. 1355, 1396 (2006) (codified at 6 U.S.C. § 313(b)(2)(A)).

Enhanced Capabilities Are Needed to Adequately Prepare for and Respond to Major Disasters

Numerous reports, including those by the House, Senate, and the White House, and our own work suggest that the substantial resources and capabilities marshaled by state, local, and federal governments and nongovernmental organizations were insufficient to meet the immediate challenges posed by the unprecedented degree of damage and the number of victims caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Developing the ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from major and catastrophic disasters requires an overall national preparedness effort that is designed to integrate and define what needs to be done and where, how it should be done, and how well it should be done—that is, according to what standards. As previously discussed, the principal national documents designed to address each of these are, respectively, the *NRP*, *NIMS*, and the *NPG*, and each document is undergoing revision.

Overall, capabilities are built upon the appropriate combination of people, skills, processes, and assets. Ensuring that needed capabilities are available requires effective planning and coordination in conjunction with training and exercises in which the capabilities are realistically tested and problems identified and subsequently addressed in partnership with other federal, state, and local stakeholders. In recent work on FEMA management of day-to-day operations, we found that although shifting resources caused by its transition to DHS created challenges for FEMA, the agency's management of existing resources compounded these problems.[23] FEMA lacks some of the basic management tools that help an agency respond to changing circumstances. Most notably, our January 2007 report found that FEMA lacks a strategic workforce plan and related human capital strategies—such as succession planning or a coordinated training effort. Such tools are integral to managing resources, as they enable an agency to define staffing levels, identify the critical skills needed to achieve its mission, and eliminate or mitigate gaps between current and future skills and competencies. FEMA officials have said they are

[23]GAO, *Budget Issues: FEMA Needs Adequate Data, Plans, and Systems to Effectively Manage Resources for Day-to-Day Operations*, GAO-07-139 (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 19, 2007).

beginning to address these and other basic organizational management issues. To this end, FEMA has commissioned studies of 18 areas.[24]

An important element of effective emergency response is the ability to identify and deploy where needed a variety of resources from a variety of sources—federal, state, local or tribal governments; military assets of the National Guard or active military; nongovernmental entities; and the private sector. One key method of tapping resources in areas not affected by the disaster is the EMAC. Through EMAC, about 46,000 National Guard and 19,000 civilian responders were deployed to areas directly affected by the 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes. We issued a report this week examining how the Emergency Management Assistance Compact has been used in disasters and how its effectiveness could be enhanced.[25]

One of the resources accessed through EMAC is the National Guard. States and governors rely on their National Guard personnel and equipment for disaster response, and National Guard personnel are frequently deployed to disaster areas outside their home states. However, as we reported in January 2007, the types and quantities of equipment the National Guard needs to respond to large-scale disasters have not been fully identified because the multiple federal and state agencies that would have roles in responding to such events have not completed and integrated their plans.[26] As a liaison between the Army, the Air Force, and the states, the National Guard Bureau is well positioned to facilitate state planning for National Guard forces. However, until the bureau's charter and its civil support regulation are revised to define its role in facilitating state planning for multistate events, such planning may remain incomplete, and the National Guard may not be prepared to respond as effectively and efficiently as possible. In addition, questions have arisen about the level of

[24]The areas are (1) individual assistance technical assistance contract, (2) contractor management program, (3) facilities; (4) payment process for contractors, (5) finance center operations, (6) capital planning and investment control, (7) security, (8) human resources, (9) logistics, (10) acquisition, (11) disaster emergency communications, (12) decision support systems (data resource management), (13) disaster workforce, (14) information technology, (15) federal coordinating officer cadre, (16) financial systems, (17) budget process, and (18) disaster relief fund.

[25] GAO, *Emergency Management Assistance Compact: Enhancing EMAC's Collaborative and Administrative Capacity Should Improve Disaster Response*, GAO-07-854 (Washington, D.C.: June 29, 2007).

[26]GAO, *Reserve Forces: Actions Needed to Identify National Guard Domestic Equipment Requirements and Readiness*, GAO-07-60 (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 26, 2007).

resources the National Guard has available for domestic emergency response. DOD does not routinely measure the equipment readiness of nondeployed National Guard forces for domestic civil support missions or report this information to Congress. Thus, although the deployment of National Guard units overseas has decreased the supply of equipment available to nondeployed National Guard units in the U.S., there has been no established, formal method of assessing the impact on the Guard's ability to perform its domestic missions. Although DOD has begun to collect data on units' preparedness, these efforts are not yet fully mature.

The nation's experience with hurricanes Katrina and Rita reinforces some of the questions surrounding the adequacy of capabilities in the context of a catastrophic disaster—particularly in the areas of (1) situational assessment and awareness, (2) emergency communications, (3) evacuations, (4) search and rescue, (5) logistics, and (6) mass care and sheltering. According to FEMA, the agency has described a number of actions it has taken or has underway to address identified deficiencies in each of these areas. Examples include designating national and regional situational awareness teams; acquiring and deploying mobile satellite communications trucks; developing an electronic system for receiving and tracking the status of requests for assistance and supplies; acquiring GPS equipment for tracking the location of supplies on route to areas of need; and working with the Red Cross and others to clarify roles and responsibilities for mass care, housing, and human services. However, a number of FEMA programs are ongoing and it is too early to evaluate their effectiveness. In addition, none of these initiatives appear to have been tested on a scale that reasonably simulates the conditions and demand they would face following a major or catastrophic disaster. Thus, it is difficult to assess the probable results of these initiatives in improving response to a major or catastrophic disaster, such as a category 4 or 5 hurricane. The section below briefly discusses actions taken or underway to make improvements in each of these areas.

Situational Awareness. FEMA is developing a concept for rapidly deployable interagency incident management teams, at this time called National Incident Management Team, to provide a forward federal presence on site within 12 hours of notification to facilitate managing the national response for catastrophic incidents. These teams will support efforts to meet the emergent needs during disasters such as the capability to provide initial situational awareness for decision-makers and support the initial establishment of a unified command.

Emergency Communications. Agencies' communications systems during a catastrophic disaster must first be operable, with sufficient communications to meet everyday internal and emergency communication requirements. Once operable, systems should have communications interoperability whereby public safety agencies (e.g., police, fire, emergency medical services, etc.) and service agencies (e.g., public works, transportation, and hospitals) can communicate within and across agencies and jurisdictions in real time as needed. DHS officials have identified a number of programs and activities they have implemented to improve interoperable communications nationally, and FEMA has taken action to design, staff, and maintain a rapidly deployable, responsive, interoperable, and reliable emergency communications capability.

Logistics. FEMA's inability to effectively manage and track requests for and the distribution of water, ice, food, and other supplies came under harsh criticism in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Within days, FEMA became overwhelmed and essentially asked the military to take over much of the logistics mission.[27] In the Post-Katrina Reform Act, Congress required FEMA to make its logistics system more flexible and responsive. FEMA's ongoing improvements to its logistics strategy and efforts are designed to initially lean forward and provide immediate support to a disaster site mainly through FEMA-owned goods and assets, and later on to establish sustained supply chains with the private vendors whose resources are needed for ongoing response and recovery activities, according to FEMA officials. In addition, we recently examined FEMA logistics issues, taking a broad approach, identifying five areas necessary for an effective logistics system. In short, FEMA is taking action to transition its logistics program to be more proactive, flexible, and responsive. While these and other initiatives hold promise for improving FEMA's logistics capabilities, it will be several years before they are fully implemented and operational.

Mass Care and Shelter. Our work examining the nation's ability to evacuate, care for, and shelter disaster victims, we showed that FEMA needs to identify and assess the capabilities that exist across the federal government and outside the federal government. In an April testimony, FEMA's Deputy Administrator for Operations said that emergency evacuation, shelter and housing is FEMA's most pressing priority for

[27]GAO, *Hurricane Katrina: Better Plans and Exercises Needed to Guide the Military's Response to Catastrophic Natural Disasters.* GAO-06-643 (Washington, D.C.: May 15, 2006).

planning for recovery from a catastrophic disaster. He said that FEMA is undertaking more detailed mass evacuee support planning; the Department of Justice and Red Cross are developing methods for more quickly identifying and uniting missing family members; and FEMA and the Red Cross have developed a web-based data system to support shelter management, reporting, and facility identification activities.

In addition, FEMA is in the process of developing an Alternative Housing Pilot Program (AHPP) designed to evaluate new options for housing victims in the aftermath of a disaster. We have been asked to review the process FEMA used to evaluate proposals and award grants under this program and we expect to release a report at the end of August of this year.

Balance Needed between Quick Provision of Assistance and Ensuring Accountability to Protect against Waste, Fraud, and Abuse

Controls and accountability mechanisms help to ensure that resources are used appropriately. Nevertheless, during a catastrophic disaster, decision makers struggle with the tension between implementing controls and accountability mechanisms and the demand for rapid response and recovery assistance. On one hand, our work uncovered many examples where quick action could not occur due to procedures that required extensive, time-consuming processes, delaying the delivery of vital supplies and other assistance. On the other hand, we also found examples where FEMA's processes assisting disaster victims left the federal government vulnerable to fraud and the abuse of expedited assistance payments.

We estimated that through February 2006, FEMA made about $600 million to $1.4 billion in improper and potentially fraudulent payments to applicants who used invalid information to apply for expedited cash assistance. DHS and FEMA have reported a number of actions that are to be in effect for the 2007 hurricane season so that federal recovery programs will have more capacity to rapidly handle a catastrophic incident but also provide accountability. Examples include significantly increasing the quantity of prepositioned supplies, such as food, ice, and water; placing global positioning systems on supply trucks to track their location and better manage the delivery of supplies; creating an enhanced phone system for victim assistance applications that can handle up to 200,000 calls per day; and improving computer systems and processes for verifying the eligibility of those applying for assistance. Effective implementation of

these and other planned improvements will be critical to achieving their intended outcomes.[28]

Finally, catastrophic disasters not only require a different magnitude of capabilities and resources for effective response, they may also require more flexible policies and operating procedures. In a catastrophe, streamlining, simplifying, and expediting decision making should quickly replace "business as usual" and unquestioned adherence to long-standing policies and operating procedures used in normal situations for providing relief to disaster victims. At the same time, controls and accountability mechanisms must be sufficient to provide the documentation needed for expense reimbursement and reasonable assurance that resources have been used legally and for the purposes intended.

We have recommended that DHS create accountability systems that effectively balance the need for fast and flexible response against the need to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse. Doing so would enable DHS to provide assistance quickly following a catastrophe and keep up with the magnitude of needs to confirm the eligibility of victims for disaster assistance, or assure that there were provisions in contracts for response and recovery services to ensure fair and reasonable prices in all cases. We also recommended that DHS provide guidance on advance procurement practices and procedures (precontracting) for those federal agencies with roles and responsibilities under the *NRP*. These federal agencies could then better manage disaster-related procurement and establish an assessment process to monitor agencies' continuous planning efforts for their disaster-related procurement needs and the maintenance of capabilities. For example, we identified a number of emergency response practices in the public and private sectors that provide insight into how the federal government can better manage its disaster-related procurements. These practices include developing knowledge of contractor capabilities and prices, and establishing vendor relationships prior to the disaster and establishing a scalable operations plan to adjust the level of capacity to match the response with the need.[29]

[28]GAO, *Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Disaster Relief: Prevention Is the Key to Minimizing Fraud, Waste, and Abuse in Recovery Efforts.* GAO-07-418T. Washington, D.C.: January 29, 2007.

[29]GAO, *Homeland Security: Management and Programmatic Challenges Facing the Department of Homeland Security*, GAO-07-452T (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 7, 2007).

Recent statutory changes have established more controls and accountability mechanisms. For example, The Secretary of DHS is required to promulgate regulations designed to limit the excessive use of subcontractors and subcontracting tiers. The Secretary of DHS is also required to promulgate regulations that limit certain noncompetitive contracts to 150 days, unless exceptional circumstances apply. Oversight funding is specified. FEMA may dedicate up to one percent of funding for agency mission assignments as oversight funds. The FEMA Administrator must develop and maintain internal management controls of FEMA disaster assistance programs and develop and implement a training program to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse of federal funds in response to or recovery from a disaster. Verification measures must be developed to identify eligible recipients of disaster relief assistance.

Several Disaster Management Issues Should Have Continued Congressional Attention

In November 2006, the Comptroller General wrote to the congressional leadership suggesting areas for congressional oversight.[30] He suggested that one area needing fundamental reform and oversight was preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and rebuilding after catastrophic events. Recent events—notably Hurricane Katrina and the threat of an influenza pandemic—have illustrated the importance of ensuring a strategic and integrated approach to catastrophic disaster management. Disaster preparation and response that is well planned and coordinated can save lives and mitigate damage, and an effectively functioning insurance market can substantially reduce the government's exposure to post-catastrophe payouts.

Lessons learned from past national emergencies provide an opportunity for Congress to look at actions that could mitigate the effects of potential catastrophic events. On January 18, 2007, DHS provided Congress a notice of implementation of the Post-Katrina Reform Act reorganization requirements and additional organizational changes made under the Homeland Security Act of 2002. All of the changes, according to DHS, were to become effective on March 31, 2007. The effective implementation of the Post-Katrina Reform Act's organizational changes and related roles and responsibilities—in addition to those changes already undertaken by DHS—should address many of our emergency management observations and recommendations.

[30]GAO, *Suggested Areas for Oversight for the 110th Congress*. GAO-07-235R (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 17, 2006.

The Comptroller General also suggested in November 2006 that Congress could also consider how the federal government can work with other nations, other levels of government, and nonprofit and private sector organizations, such as the Red Cross and private insurers, to help ensure the nation is well prepared and recovers effectively[31]. Given the billions of dollars dedicated to preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and rebuilding after catastrophic disasters, congressional oversight is critical.

Congress might consider starting with several specific areas for immediate oversight, such as (1) evaluating development and implementation of the National Preparedness System, including preparedness for an influenza pandemic, (2) assessing state and local capabilities and the use of federal grants in building and sustaining those capabilities, (3) examining regional and multistate planning and preparation, (4) determining the status of preparedness exercises, and (5) examining DHS policies regarding oversight assistance.

DHS Has Reorganized Pursuant to the Post-Katrina Reform Act

On January 18, 2007, DHS provided Congress a notice of implementation of the Post-Katrina Reform Act reorganization requirements and additional organizational changes made under the Homeland Security Act of 2002. All of the changes, according to DHS, were to become effective on March 31, 2007. According to DHS, the department completed a thorough assessment of FEMA's internal structure to incorporate lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina and integrate systematically new and existing assets and responsibilities within FEMA. DHS transferred the following DHS offices and divisions to FEMA:

- United States Fire Administration,
- Office of Grants and Training,
- Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Division,
- Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program,
- Office of National Capital Region Coordination, and,
- Office of State and Local Government Coordination.

DHS officials stated that they have established several organizational elements, such as a logistics management division, a disaster assistance division, and a disaster operations division. In addition, FEMA expanded

[31]GAO, *Suggested Areas for Oversight for the 110th Congress*. GAO-07-235R (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 17, 2006).

its regional office structure with each region in part by establishing a Regional Advisory Council and at least one Regional Strike Team. FEMA officials have noted that for the first time in recent memory there will be no acting regional directors and all 10 FEMA regional offices will be headed by experienced professionals.

Further, FEMA will include a new national preparedness directorate intended to consolidate FEMA's strategic preparedness assets from existing FEMA programs and certain legacy Preparedness Directorate programs. The National Preparedness Directorate will contain functions related to preparedness doctrine, policy, and contingency planning. It also will include the National Integration Center that will maintain the *NRP* and *NIMS* and ensure that training and exercise activities reflect these documents.

Effective Implementation of the Post-Katrina Reform Act's Provisions Should Respond to Many Concerns

The effective implementation of the Post-Katrina Reform Act's organizational changes and related roles and responsibilities—in addition to those changes already undertaken by DHS—should address many of our emergency management observations and recommendations.

As noted earlier, our analysis in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina showed the need for (1) clearly defined and understood leadership roles and responsibilities; (2) the development of the necessary disaster capabilities; and (3) accountability systems that effectively balance the need for fast and flexible response against the need to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse. The statute appears to strengthen leadership roles and responsibilities. For example, the statute clarifies that the FEMA Administrator is to act as the principal emergency management adviser to the President, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of DHS and to provide recommendations directly to Congress after informing the Secretary of DHS. The incident management responsibilities and roles of the National Integration Center are now clear. The Secretary of DHS must ensure that the *NRP* provides for a clear chain of command to lead and coordinate the federal response to any natural disaster, act of terrorism, or other man-made disaster. The law also establishes qualifications that appointees must meet. For example, the FEMA Administrator must have a demonstrated ability in and knowledge of emergency management and homeland security and 5 years of executive leadership and management experience.

Many provisions are designed to enhance preparedness and response. For example, the statute requires the President to establish a national preparedness goal and national preparedness system. The national

preparedness system includes a broad range of preparedness activities, including utilizing target capabilities and preparedness priorities, training and exercises, comprehensive assessment systems, and reporting requirements. To illustrate, the FEMA Administrator is to carry out a national training program to implement, and a national exercise program to test and evaluate the *NPG*, *NIMS*, *NRP*, and other related plans and strategies.

In addition, FEMA is to partner with nonfederal entities to build a national emergency management system. States must develop plans that include catastrophic incident annexes modeled after the *NRP* annex to be eligible for FEMA emergency preparedness grants. The state annexes must be developed in consultation with local officials, including regional commissions. FEMA regional administrators are to foster the development of mutual aid agreements between states. FEMA must enter into a memorandum of understanding with certain non-federal entities to collaborate on developing standards for deployment capabilities, including credentialing of personnel and typing of resources. In addition, FEMA must implement several other capabilities, such as (1) developing a logistics system providing real-time visibility of items at each point throughout the logistics system, (2) establishing a prepositioned equipment program, and (3) establishing emergency support and response teams.

The National Preparedness System Is Key to Developing Disaster Capabilities

More immediate congressional attention might focus on evaluating the construction and effectiveness of the National Preparedness System, which is mandated under the Post-Katrina Reform Act. Under Homeland Security Presidential Directive-8, issued in December 2003, DHS was to coordinate the development of a national domestic all-hazards preparedness goal "to establish measurable readiness priorities and targets that appropriately balance the potential threat and magnitude of terrorist attacks and large scale natural or accidental disasters with the resources required to prevent, respond to, and recover from them." The goal was also to include readiness metrics and standards for preparedness assessments and strategies and a system for assessing the nation's overall preparedness to respond to major events.

To implement the directive, DHS developed the NPG using 15 emergency event scenarios, 12 of which were terrorist related, with the remaining 3 addressing a major hurricane, major earthquake, and an influenza pandemic. According to DHS's National Preparedness Guidance, the planning scenarios are intended to illustrate the scope and magnitude of

large-scale, catastrophic emergency events for which the nation needs to be prepared and to form the basis for identifying the capabilities needed to respond to a wide range of large scale emergency events. The scenarios focused on the consequences that first responders would have to address. Some state and local officials and experts have questioned whether the scenarios were appropriate inputs for preparedness planning, particularly in terms of their plausibility and the emphasis on terrorist scenarios.

Using the scenarios, and in consultation with federal, state, and local emergency response stakeholders, DHS developed a list of over 1,600 discrete tasks, of which 300 were identified as critical. DHS then identified 36 target capabilities to provide guidance to federal, state, and local first responders on the capabilities they need to develop and maintain. That list has since been refined, and DHS released a revised draft list of 37 capabilities in December 2005. Because no single jurisdiction or agency would be expected to perform every task, possession of a target capability could involve enhancing and maintaining local resources, ensuring access to regional and federal resources, or some combination of the two. However, DHS is still in the process of developing goals, requirements, and metrics for these capabilities and the NPG in light of the Hurricane Katrina experience.

Several key components of the National Preparedness System defined in the Post-Katrina Reform Act—the *NPG*, target capabilities and preparedness priorities, and comprehensive assessment systems—should be closely examined. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, DHS had established seven priorities for enhancing national first responder preparedness, including, for example, implementing the *NRP* and *NIMS*; strengthening capabilities in information sharing and collaboration; and strengthening capabilities in medical surge and mass prophylaxis. Those seven priorities were incorporated into DHS's fiscal year 2006 homeland security grant program (HSGP) guidance, which added an eighth priority that emphasized emergency operations and catastrophic planning.

In the fiscal year 2007 HSGP program guidance, DHS set two overarching priorities. DHS has focused the bulk of its available grant dollars on risk-based investment. In addition, the department has prioritized regional coordination and investment strategies that institutionalize regional security strategy integration. In addition to the two overarching priorities, the guidance also identified several others. These include (1) measuring progress in achieving the *NPG*, (2) integrating and synchronizing preparedness programs and activities, (3) developing and sustaining a statewide critical infrastructure/key resource protection program,

(4) enabling information/intelligence fusion, (5) enhancing statewide communications interoperability, (6) strengthening preventative radiological/nuclear detection capabilities, and (7) enhancing catastrophic planning to address nationwide plan review results. Under the guidance, all fiscal year 2007 HSGP applicants will be required to submit an investment justification that provides background information, strategic objectives and priorities addressed, their funding/implementation plan, and the impact that each proposed investment (project) is anticipated to have.

The Particular Challenge of Preparing for an Influenza Pandemic

The possibility of an influenza pandemic is a real and significant threat to the nation. There is widespread agreement that it is not a question of if but when such a pandemic will occur. The issues associated with the preparation for and response to a pandemic flu are similar to those for any other type of disaster: clear leadership roles and responsibilities, authority, and coordination; risk management; realistic planning, training, and exercises; assessing and building the capacity needed to effectively respond and recover; effective information sharing and communication; and accountability for the effective use of resources.

However, a pandemic poses some unique challenges. Hurricanes, earthquakes, explosions, or bioterrorist incidents occur within a short period of time, perhaps a period of minutes, although such events can have long-term effects, as we have seen in the Gulf region following Hurricane Katrina. The immediate effects of such disasters are likely to affect specific locations or areas within the nation; the immediate damage is not nationwide. In contrast, an influenza pandemic is likely to continue in waves of 6 to 8 weeks for a number of weeks or months and affect wide areas of the nation, perhaps the entire nation. Depending upon the severity of the pandemic, the number of deaths could be from 200,000 to 2 million. Seasonal influenza in the United States results in about 36,000 deaths annually. Successfully addressing the pandemic is also likely to require international coordination of detection and response.

The Department of Health and Human Services estimates that during a severe pandemic, absenteeism may reach as much as 40 percent in an affected community because individuals are ill, caring for family members, or fear infection. Such absenteeism could affect our nation's economy, as businesses and governments face the challenge of continuing to provide essential services with reduced numbers of healthy workers. In addition, our nation's ability to respond effectively to hurricanes or other major disasters during a pandemic may also be diminished as first responders, health care workers, and others are infected or otherwise unable to

perform their normal duties. Thus, the consequences of a pandemic are potentially widespread and effective planning and response for such a disaster will require particularly close cooperation among all levels of government, the private sector, individuals within the United States, as well as international cooperation.

We have engagements under way examining such issues as barriers to implementing the Department of Health and Human Services' National Pandemic Influenza Plan, the national strategy and framework for pandemic influenza, the Department of Defense and Department of Agriculture's preparedness efforts and plans, public health and hospital preparedness, and U.S. efforts to improve global disease surveillance. We expect most of these reports to be issued by late summer 2007.

Knowledge of the Effects of State and Local Efforts to Improve Their Capabilities Is Limited

Possible congressional oversight in the short term also might focus on state and local capabilities. As I testified in February on applying risk management principles to guide federal investments,[32] over the past 4 years DHS has provided about $14 billion in federal funding to states, localities, and territories through its HSGP grants. However, little has been reported about how states and localities finance their efforts in this area, have used their federal funds, and are assessing the effectiveness with which they spend those funds.

Essentially, all levels of government are still struggling to define and act on the answers to basic, but hardly simple, questions about emergency preparedness and response: What is important (that is, what are our priorities)? How do we know what is important (e.g., risk assessments, performance standards)? How do we measure, attain, and sustain success? On what basis do we make necessary trade-offs, given finite resources?

There are no simple, easy answers to these questions. The data available for answering them are incomplete and imperfect. We have better information and a better sense of what needs to be done for some types of major emergency events than for others. For some natural disasters, such as regional wildfires and flooding, there is more experience and therefore a better basis on which to assess preparation and response efforts and identify gaps that need to be addressed. California has experience with

[32] GAO, *Homeland Security: Applying Risk Management Principles to Guide Federal Investments*, GAO-07-386T (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 7, 2007).

earthquakes; Florida, with hurricanes. However, no one in the nation has experience with such potential catastrophes as a dirty bomb detonated in a major city. Although both the AIDS epidemic and SARS provide some related experience, there have been no recent pandemics that rapidly spread to thousands of people across the nation.

A new feature in the fiscal year 2006 DHS homeland security grant guidance for the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grants was that eligible recipients must provide an "investment justification" with their grant application. States were to use this justification to outline the implementation approaches for specific investments that will be used to achieve the initiatives outlined in their state Program and Capability Enhancement Plan. These plans were multiyear global program management plans for the entire state homeland security program that look beyond federal homeland security grant programs and funding. The justifications must justify all funding requested through the DHS homeland security grant program. In the guidance DHS noted that it would use a peer review process to evaluate grant applications on the basis of the effectiveness of a state's plan to address the priorities it has outlined and thereby reduce its overall risk.

For fiscal year 2006, DHS implemented a competitive process to evaluate the anticipated effectiveness of proposed homeland security investments. For fiscal year 2007, DHS continued to use the risk and effectiveness assessments to inform final funding decisions, although changes have been made to make the grant allocation process more transparent and more easily understood. DHS officials have said that they cannot yet assess how effective the actual investments from grant funds are in enhancing preparedness and mitigating risk because they do not yet have the metrics to do so.

Regional and Multistate Planning and Preparation Should Be Robust

Through its grant guidance, DHS has encouraged regional and multistate planning and preparation. Planning and assistance have largely been focused on single jurisdictions and their immediately adjacent neighbors. However, well-documented problems with the abilities of first responders from multiple jurisdictions to communicate at the site of an incident and the potential for large-scale natural and terrorist disasters have generated a debate on the extent to which first responders should be focusing their planning and preparation on a regional and multi-governmental basis.

As I mentioned earlier, an overarching national priority for the NPG is embracing regional approaches to building, sustaining, and sharing

capabilities at all levels of government. All HSGP applications are to reflect regional coordination and show an investment strategy that institutionalizes regional security strategy integration. However, it is not known to what extent regional and multistate planning has progressed and is effective.

Our limited regional work indicated there are challenges in planning. Our early work addressing the Office of National Capital Region Coordination (ONCRC) and National Capital Region (NCR) strategic planning reported that the ONCRC and the NCR faced interrelated challenges in managing federal funds in a way that maximizes the increase in first responder capacities and preparedness while minimizing inefficiency and unnecessary duplication of expenditures.[33] One of these challenges included a coordinated regionwide plan for establishing first responder performance goals, needs, and priorities, and assessing the benefits of expenditures in enhancing first responder capabilities. In subsequent work on National Capital Region strategic planning, we highlighted areas that needed strengthening in the Region's planning, specifically improving the substance of the strategic plan to guide decision makers.[34] For example, additional information could have been provided regarding the type, nature, scope, or timing of planned goals, objectives, and initiatives; performance expectations and measures; designation of priority initiatives to meet regional risk and needed capabilities; lead organizations for initiative implementation; resources and investments; and operational commitment.

[33]GAO, *Homeland Security: Management of First Responder Grants in the National Capital Region Reflects the Need for Coordinated Planning and Performance Goals*, GAO-04-433 (Washington, D.C.: May 28, 2004); *Homeland Security: Coordinated Planning and Standards Needed to Better Manage First Responder Grants in the National Capital Region*, GAO-04-904T (Washington, D.C.: June 24, 2004); *Homeland Security: Effective Regional Coordination Can Enhance Emergency Preparedness*, GAO-04-1009 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 15, 2004); *Homeland Security: Managing First Responder Grants to Enhance Emergency Preparedness in the National Capital Region*, GAO-05-889T (Washington, D.C.: July 14, 2005); and *Homeland Security: The Status of Strategic Planning in the National Capital Region*, GAO-06-559T (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 29, 2006).

[34]GAO, *Homeland Security: Assessment of the National Capital Region Strategic Plan*, GAO-06-1096T (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 28, 2006).

Exercises Must Be Carefully Planned and Deployed and Capture Lessons Learned

Our work examining the preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina highlighted the importance of realistic exercises to test and refine assumptions, capabilities, and operational procedures; build on the strengths; and shore up the limitations revealed by objective assessments of the exercises. The Post-Katrina Reform Act mandates a national exercise program, and training and exercises are also included as a component of the National Preparedness System. With almost any skill and capability, experience and practice enhance proficiency. For first responders, exercises—especially of the type or magnitude of events for which there is little actual experience—are essential for developing skills and identifying what works well and what needs further improvement. Major emergency incidents, particularly catastrophic ones, by definition require the coordinated actions of personnel from many first responder disciplines and all levels of government, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector. It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of effective interdisciplinary, intergovernmental planning, training, and exercises in developing the coordination and skills needed for effective response.

For exercises to be effective in identifying both strengths and areas needing attention, it is important that they be realistic, designed to test and stress the system, involve all key persons who would be involved in responding to an actual event, and be followed by honest and realistic assessments that result in action plans that are implemented. In addition to relevant first responders, exercise participants should include, depending upon the scope and nature of the exercise, mayors, governors, and state and local emergency managers who would be responsible for such things as determining if and when to declare a mandatory evacuation or ask for federal assistance. We are initiating work that will further examine the development and implementation of a national exercise program.

DHS Has Provided Limited Transparency for Its Management or Operational Decisions

Congressional oversight in the short term might include DHS's policies regarding oversight assistance. The Comptroller General has testified that DHS has not been transparent in its efforts to strengthen its management areas and mission functions[35]. While much of its sensitive work needs to be guarded from improper disclosure, DHS has not been receptive toward

[35]GAO, *Homeland Security: Management and Programmatic Challenges Facing the Department of Homeland Security*, GAO-07-398T (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 6, 2007); and GAO, *Homeland Security: Management and Programmatic Challenges Facing the Department of Homeland Security*, GAO-07-452T (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 7, 2007)

oversight. Delays in providing Congress and us with access to various documents and officials have impeded our work.

We need to be able to independently assure ourselves and Congress that DHS has implemented many of our past recommendations or has taken other corrective actions to address the challenges we identified. However, DHS has not made its management or operational decisions transparent enough so that Congress can be sure it is effectively, efficiently, and economically using the billions of dollars in funding it receives annually, and is providing the levels of security called for in numerous legislative requirements and presidential directives.

That concludes my statement, and I would be pleased to respond to any questions you and subcommittee members may have.

Contacts and Staff Acknowledgments

For further information about this statement, please contact William O. Jenkins Jr., Director, Homeland Security and Justice Issues, on (202) 512-8777 or jenkinswo@gao.gov.

In addition to the contact named above the following individuals from GAO's Homeland Security and Justice Team also made major contributors to this testimony: Sharon Caudle, Assistant Director; and John Vocino, Analyst-in-Charge.

Appendix I: Related GAO Products

Homeland Security: Observations on DHS and FEMA Efforts to Prepare for and Respond to Major and Catastrophic Disasters and Address Related Recommendations and Legislation. GAO-07-835T. Washington, D.C.: May 15, 2007.

Homeland Security: Management and Programmatic Challenges Facing the Department of Homeland Security. GAO-07-833T. Washington, D.C.: May 10, 2007.

First Responders: Much Work Remains to Improve Communications Interoperability. GAO-07-301. Washington, D.C.: April 2, 2007.

Emergency Preparedness: Current Emergency Alert System Has Limitations, and Development of a New Integrated System Will be Challenging. GAO-07-411. Washington, D.C.: March 30, 2007.

Disaster Preparedness: Better Planning Would Improve OSHA's Efforts to Protect Workers' Safety and Health in Disasters. GAO-07-193. Washington, D.C.: March 28, 2007.

Public Health and Hospital Emergency Preparedness Programs: Evolution of Performance Measurement Systems to Measure Progress. GAO-07-485R. Washington, D.C.: March 23, 2007.

Coastal Barrier Resources System: Status of Development That Has Occurred and Financial Assistance Provided by Federal Agencies. GAO-07-356. Washington, D.C.: March 19, 2007.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Disaster Relief: Continued Findings of Fraud, Waste, and Abuse. GAO-07-300. Washington, D.C.: March 15, 2007.

Homeland Security: Preparing for and Responding to Disasters. GAO-07-395T. Washington, D.C.: March 9, 2007.

Hurricane Katrina: Agency Contracting Data Should Be More Complete Regarding Subcontracting Opportunities for Small Businesses. GAO-07-205. Washington, D.C.: March 1, 2007.

Hurricane Katrina: Allocation and Use of $2 Billion for Medicaid and Other Health Care Needs. GAO-07-67. Washington, D.C.: February 28, 2007.

Disaster Assistance: Better Planning Needed for Housing Victims of Catastrophic Disasters. GAO-07-88. Washington, D.C.: February 28, 2007.

Highway Emergency Relief: Reexamination Needed to Address Fiscal Imbalance and Long-term Sustainability. GAO-07-245. Washington, D.C.: February 23, 2007.

Small Business Administration: Additional Steps Needed to Enhance Agency Preparedness for Future Disasters. GAO-07-114. Washington, D.C.: February 14, 2007.

Small Business Administration: Response to the Gulf Coast Hurricanes Highlights Need for Enhanced Disaster Preparedness. GAO-07-484T. Washington, D.C.: February 14, 2007.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: Federal Actions Could Enhance Preparedness of Certain State-Administered Federal Support Programs. GAO-07-219. Washington, D.C.: February 7, 2007.

Homeland Security Grants: Observations on Process DHS Used to Allocate Funds to Selected Urban Areas. GAO-07-381R. Washington, D.C.: February 7, 2007.

Homeland Security: Management and Programmatic Challenges Facing the Department of Homeland Security. GAO-07-452T. Washington, D.C.: February 7, 2007.

Homeland Security: Applying Risk Management Principles to Guide Federal Investments. GAO-07-386T. Washington, D.C.: February 7, 2007.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Disaster Relief: Prevention Is the Key to Minimizing Fraud, Waste, and Abuse in Recovery Efforts. GAO-07-418T. Washington, D.C.: January 29, 2007.

GAO, Reserve Forces: Actions needed to Identify National Guard Domestic Equipment Requirements and Readiness, GAO-07-60 Washington, D.C.: January 26, 2007.

Budget Issues: FEMA Needs Adequate Data, Plans, and Systems to Effectively Manage Resources for Day-to-Day Operations, GAO-07-139. Washington, D.C.: January 19, 2007.

Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations: Actions Needed to Clarify Responsibilities and Increase Preparedness for Evacuations. GAO-07-44. Washington, D.C.: December 22, 2006.

Suggested Areas for Oversight for the 110th Congress. GAO-07-235R. Washington, D.C.: November 17, 2006.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: Continued Findings of Fraud, Waste, and Abuse. GAO-07-252T. Washington, D.C.: December 6, 2006.

Capital Financing: Department Management Improvements Could Enhance Education's Loan Program for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. GAO-07-64. Washington, D.C.: October 18, 2006.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: Unprecedented Challenges Exposed the Individuals and Households Program to Fraud and Abuse; Actions Needed to Reduce Such Problems in Future. GAO-06-1013. Washington, D.C.: September 27, 2006.

Catastrophic Disasters: Enhanced Leadership, Capabilities, and Accountability Controls Will Improve the Effectiveness of the Nation's Preparedness, Response, and Recovery System. GAO-06-618. Washington, D.C.: September 6, 2006.

Disaster Relief: Governmentwide Framework Needed to Collect and Consolidate Information to Report on Billions in Federal Funding for the 2005 Gulf Coast Hurricanes. GAO-06-834. Washington, D.C.: September 6, 2006.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: Coordination between FEMA and the Red Cross Should Be Improved for the 2006 Hurricane Season. GAO-06-712. Washington, D.C.: June 8, 2006.

Federal Emergency Management Agency: Factors for Future Success and Issues to Consider for Organizational Placement. GAO-06-746T. Washington, D.C.: May 9, 2006.

Hurricane Katrina: GAO's Preliminary Observations Regarding Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. GAO-06-442T. Washington, D.C.: March 8, 2006.

Emergency Preparedness and Response: Some Issues and Challenges Associated with Major Emergency Incidents. GAO-06-467T. Washington, D.C.: February 23, 2006.

Homeland Security: DHS' Efforts to Enhance First Responders' All-Hazards Capabilities Continue to Evolve. GAO-05-652. Washington, D.C.: July 11, 2005.

Continuity of Operations: Agency Plans Have Improved, but Better Oversight Could Assist Agencies in Preparing for Emergencies. GAO-05-577. Washington, D.C.: April 28, 2005.

GAO's Mission

The Government Accountability Office, the audit, evaluation and investigative arm of Congress, exists to support Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and accountability of the federal government for the American people. GAO examines the use of public funds; evaluates federal programs and policies; and provides analyses, recommendations, and other assistance to help Congress make informed oversight, policy, and funding decisions. GAO's commitment to good government is reflected in its core values of accountability, integrity, and reliability.

Obtaining Copies of GAO Reports and Testimony

The fastest and easiest way to obtain copies of GAO documents at no cost is through GAO's Web site (www.gao.gov). Each weekday, GAO posts newly released reports, testimony, and correspondence on its Web site. To have GAO e-mail you a list of newly posted products every afternoon, go to www.gao.gov and select "Subscribe to Updates."

Order by Mail or Phone

The first copy of each printed report is free. Additional copies are $2 each. A check or money order should be made out to the Superintendent of Documents. GAO also accepts VISA and Mastercard. Orders for 100 or more copies mailed to a single address are discounted 25 percent. Orders should be sent to:

U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street NW, Room LM
Washington, D.C. 20548

To order by Phone: Voice: (202) 512-6000
TDD: (202) 512-2537
Fax: (202) 512-6061

To Report Fraud, Waste, and Abuse in Federal Programs

Contact:

Web site: www.gao.gov/fraudnet/fraudnet.htm
E-mail: fraudnet@gao.gov
Automated answering system: (800) 424-5454 or (202) 512-7470

Congressional Relations

Gloria Jarmon, Managing Director, JarmonG@gao.gov (202) 512-4400
U.S. Government Accountability Office, 441 G Street NW, Room 7125
Washington, D.C. 20548

Public Affairs

Paul Anderson, Managing Director, AndersonP1@gao.gov (202) 512-4800
U.S. Government Accountability Office, 441 G Street NW, Room 7149
Washington, D.C. 20548

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Mr. KUCINICH. We have a full panel of witnesses, and I appreciate their attendance.

Mr. Albert Ashwood is the Director of the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management and has held that position for 10 years. He joined the State of Oklahoma in 1988 and has served the department in various positions, including Deputy Director from 1995 to 1997. In his tenure at the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management, Mr. Ashwood has overseen the distribution and administration of over $500 million in Federal and State aid. He also serves on FEMA's National Advisory Council and is President of the National Emergency Management Association.

Thank you, Mr. Ashwood, for being here.

Mr. Christopher Geldhart is Director of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination in FEMA. Before joining FEMA in April 2007, Mr. Geldhart worked for the State of Maryland as assistant director in the Governor's Office of Homeland Security. He is a 12-year veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, and was formerly a strategy consultant for the consulting firm of Booz Allen Hamilton.

Thank you for being here.

Mr. Dewayne West is director of emergency services for Johnston County, NC, where he is responsible for supervising the emergency management program, fire marshal's office, and emergency medical services for the county. He has held this position for almost 20 years. Mr. West is a certified emergency manager by the International Association of Emergency Managers, and is a member of many industry boards and commissions.

Thank you, Mr. West.

Mr. Darrell Darnell is director of the District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency. Mr. Darnell is responsible for operating and maintaining the District's emergency management infrastructure and coordinating the District's emergency response. Mr. Darnell joined the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency after serving as director of the Urban Areas and Exercise Program at IEM, a Louisiana-based national disaster and Homeland Security consulting company, as well as working at the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security.

Thank you, Mr. Darnell.

And, finally, Professor Kathleen Tierney is professor of sociology and director of the Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Professor Tierney has over 20 years of experience in the disaster field and has conducted research projects on a wide variety of subjects. She is also the author of dozens of articles, book chapters, and technical reports on the social aspects of hazards, disasters, and risks.

To members of the panel, it is the policy of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to swear in all witnesses before they testify. I would ask that you please rise and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. KUCINICH. Let the record reflect that all of the witnesses answered in the affirmative.

Members of the panel, as we requested with panel one, we ask that each witness give an oral summary of his or her testimony, and keep the summary under 5 minutes in duration. I want you to bear in mind that the complete record of your written testimony will be included in the record of the hearing.

Let us begin with Mr. Ashwood. You may proceed, sir. Thanks again for your attendance.

STATEMENTS OF ALBERT ASHWOOD, DIRECTOR, OKLAHOMA STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY; CHRISTOPHER GELDHART, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION COORDINATION; DEWAYNE WEST, DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FOR JOHNSTON COUNTY, NC, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES, THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS; DARRELL DARNELL, DIRECTOR, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY; AND KATHLEEN TIERNEY, DIRECTOR, NATURAL HAZARDS CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, BOULDER

STATEMENT OF ALBERT ASHWOOD

Mr. ASHWOOD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to be here today to express my views on the current collaboration between FEMA and the States on the issues of preparedness, response, and recovery in the post-Katrina environment.

I come here today as the current president of the National Emergency Management Association, which represents State emergency management directors throughout the Nation and U.S. territories, and also as the state director of emergency management in Oklahoma.

Nearly 2 years ago I testified before the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, with the topic being Recovering from Katrina: Ensuring that FEMA is up to the Task. At that time I addressed the issue by asking which FEMA was being assessed, the one prior to the development of the Department of Homeland Security or the shell which was in place at the time Katrina made landfall. I talked about FEMA success stories of the 1990's and the long evolutionary trek FEMA took to get there. I talked about the disassembling of FEMA under the Department of Homeland Security structure and the total de-emphasis of natural disasters from September 11, 2001, through July 2005. I also told the committee that moving FEMA out from under DHS and returning its funding and manpower to the pre-DHS levels would be a way to return FEMA to the level of efficiency we should all expect.

Today, however, I cannot honestly say these recommendations would be enough. I still personally believe FEMA should be an independent agency, working directly for the President, but I would be naive if I were to sum up all the Agency's problems under this one issue.

I believe all current issues can be summarized in one topic: communication. In my 19 years of emergency management, I have never experienced a more polarized environment between State and Federal Government. It seems that the Katrina Federal legacy

is one of minimizing exposure for the next event and ensuring future focus is centered on State and local preparedness efforts.

The perfect example of this attitude is illustrated in the National Plan review, which was conducted in 2006. States were told that this was an opportunity for all levels of government to sit together, review plans, identify shortfalls, and develop a strategy to address those shortfalls, both operationally and financially in the future. It seemed like a wonderful concept, right up until the time the national planning report card was published for each State; then the entire exercise seemed little more than an opportunity for the Federal Government to tell the press, We told you the States weren't prepared.

Also, consider the National Response Plan—excuse me, now called the National Response Framework—which is to be released by DHS in the near future. You will be told that this national document was developed over many hours of collaboration between all levels of government and all disciplines. Let me be the first to say that this statement is totally inaccurate. I have queried my colleagues at both the State and local level and realized that no one knows what information this document contains, and we won't until we read it like everyone else in this room.

Then there are the efforts currently being performed along the Gulf Coast to ensure that every future evacuee is accounted for and the public's expectation of government will be met. Millions of dollars are being spent on Federal plans to airlift individuals from Louisiana to Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, and other host States, yet the arithmetic doesn't work. The contractors can't find enough States to pledge support to host the number of evacuees in the New Orleans area, alone; therefore, I am constantly receiving calls from FEMA saying, can't you handle another 20,000, another 30,000? We will make sure your costs are reimbursed.

Unfortunately, it seems a bigger issue is the revelation which appeared in the newspapers last week. One in three people surveyed along the Gulf Coast said they would ignore Government evacuation warnings. This is up from one in four in last year's survey.

In Oklahoma I am lucky to have a boss, Governor Brad Henry, who realizes emergency management is a customer service business. More importantly, he understands that the customers we serve are at the local level, not in Washington. Following disaster events, he expects me to brief him on what assistance is being provided to the victims immediately and what assistance we are working to provide in the future. The Governor does not expect me to provide anything which is not available under the law, but he does expect me to extract the full potential of the law to the victims' advantage, and he expects the same level of customer service to be provided by the Federal Government in support of our State.

Unfortunately, our recent dealings with FEMA in response to disasters our State has experienced over the last 18 months has done little to ensure customer service is a concern, or that we are even considered a customer. Since December 2005, Oklahoma has experienced wild fires, ice storms, tornadoes, and floods which have resulted in six major disaster declarations, one emergency declaration, and 26 fire management assistance grants. One might say that this level of activity is proof that the new FEMA is working

diligently to make sure assistance is being provided as quickly as possible, but I would offer that each request has been viewed from a Federal perspective of what is the minimum we have to provide, as opposed to what is the need.

Never before have I entered into so many discussions regarding interpretation of the law or the standard of assessment. I have even had one FEMA attorney question the authority my lieutenant Governor has to make a request for the State in the Governor's absence.

Through this all, the Governor has asked me some very simple questions like: is FEMA this unresponsive because they are under DHS? Why does it take 2 weeks to make a decision on my request? Why does the FEMA region support our request and FEMA headquarters doesn't? Or even, why won't they return my phone calls?

Regretfully, I have but one answer to each of these questions: I don't know, sir, but I do know this is not the way it is supposed to be.

In conclusion, I would like to summarize the current philosophical differences between my State and FEMA with a brief illustration.

In my operations center a sign defining what is expected of each employee has hung on the wall for many years. It simply says, if it is legal, moral, and ethical, just do it. While I realize much of this creed is subjective by nature, it does stress the reason we are all employed: to provide a service to our citizens during their time of need. With this in mind, I wonder what a similar sign would say if it were currently hanging on the wall of FEMA headquarters. Perhaps it would say something like, if it is legally concise and limits our Agency's exposure and potential liability, we should consider doing it, contingent, of course, on General Counsel's final opinion and coordination with the Office of Management and Budget and subject to a final vote of a tribunal convened to effectively disperse responsibility throughout the Federal Government.

Whether this philosophy is a product of FEMA, DHS, the White House, Congress, or a combination of any or all of the above, I simply don't know. I only know it does not meet my expectations as either a State customer or a private citizen.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ashwood follows:]

ALBERT ASHWOOD
PRESIDENT, NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
AND DIRECTOR, OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
ON
FEMA PREPAREDNESS IN 2007 AND BEYOND

THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 31, 2007

Thank you Chairman Waxman, Chairman Kucinich, Ranking Member Davis, Ranking Member Issa and distinguished members of the Committee. It is a pleasure to be here today to express my views on the current collaboration between FEMA and the states on the issues of preparedness, response and recovery in the post-Katrina environment. I come here today as the current President of the National Emergency Management Association, which represents state emergency management directors throughout the nation and U.S. territories, and also as the State Director of Emergency Management in Oklahoma.

Nearly two years ago I testified before the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, with the topic being "Recovering after Katrina: Ensuring that FEMA is up to the task". At that time, I addressed the issue by asking which FEMA was being assessed, the one prior to the development of the Department of Homeland Security or the shell which was in place at the time Katrina made landfall.

I talked about the FEMA success stories of the 1990s and the long evolutionary trek FEMA took to get there. I talked about the disassembling of FEMA under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) structure and the total de-emphasis of natural disasters from September 11, 2001 through July 2005. I also told the committee that moving FEMA out from under DHS and returning its funding and manpower to pre-DHS levels would be the way to return FEMA to the level of efficiency we all should expect.

Today, however, I cannot honestly say these recommendations would be enough. I still personally believe FEMA should be an independent agency working directly for the President, but I would be naive if I were to sum up all the agency's problems under this one issue.

I believe all current issues can be summarized in one topic – communication. In my 19 years in emergency management, I have never experienced a more polarized environment between state and federal government. It seems that the Katrina federal legacy is one of minimizing exposure for the next event and ensuring future focus is centered on state and local preparedness efforts.

A perfect example of this attitude is illustrated in the National Plan Review, which was conducted in 2006. The states were told that this was an opportunity for all levels of government to sit together, review plans, identify shortfalls, and develop a strategy to address those shortfalls, both operationally and financially in the future. This seemed like a wonderful concept, right up until the time the national planning report card was published for each state. The entire exercise seemed to be little more than an opportunity for the federal government to tell the press, "we told you states weren't prepared".

Also, consider the National Response Plan, excuse me, the now called National Response Framework, which will be released by DHS in the near future. You will be told this is a national document, developed over many hours of collaboration between all levels of government and all disciplines. Let me be the first to say you should have a shovel nearby when you hear this. I've queried my colleagues at both the state and local level and realize that no one knows what information this document contains and we won't until we read it like everyone else in this room.

Then, there are the efforts currently being performed along the Gulf Coast to ensure that every future evacuee is accounted for and the public's expectations of government will be met. Millions of dollars are being spent on federal plans to airlift individuals from Louisiana to Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee and other "host" states. Yet, the arithmetic doesn't work. The contractors can't find enough states to pledge support to host the number of evacuees in the New Orleans area, alone. Therefore, I'm constantly receiving calls from FEMA saying, "Can't you handle another 20,000 or 30,000? We'll make sure your costs are reimbursed." Unfortunately, the bigger issue is the revelation which appeared in

newspapers last week. One in three people surveyed along the Gulf Coast said they would ignore government evacuation warnings, up from one in four in last year's survey.

In Oklahoma, I'm lucky to have a boss, Governor Brad Henry, who realizes emergency management is a customer service business. More importantly, he understands that the customers we serve are at the local level, not in Washington. Following disaster events, he expects me to brief him on what assistance is being provided to the victims immediately and what assistance we're working to provide in the future. The Governor does not expect me to provide anything which is not available under the law, but he does expect me to extract the full potential of the law to the victim's advantage. And, he expects the same level of customer service to be provided by the federal government, in the support of our state.

Unfortunately, our recent dealings with FEMA, in response to disasters our state has experienced over the last 18 months, has done little to ensure customer service is a concern, or that we are even considered a customer. Since December 2005, Oklahoma has experienced wildfires, ice storms, tornadoes and floods which have resulted in six major disaster declarations, one emergency declaration, and 26 fire management assistance grants.

One might say that this level of activity is proof that the "new" FEMA is working diligently to make sure assistance is being provided as quickly as possibly, but I would offer that each request has been viewed from a federal perspective of, "what is the minimum we have to provide, as opposed to, what is the need." Never before have I entered into so many discussions regarding the interpretation of the law or the standard of assessment. I've even had a FEMA attorney question the authority my Lieutenant Governor has to make a request for the state, in the Governor's absence. Through this all, the Governor has asked me some very simple questions, like: "Is FEMA this unresponsive because they're under DHS?; Why does it take two weeks to make a decision on my request?; Why does the FEMA Region support our request and FEMA Headquarters doesn't?; or even, Why won't they return my phone calls?". Regretfully, I have but one answer to each of his questions, "I don't know, sir. But, I do know this is not the way it's supposed to be."

In conclusion, I'd like to summarize the current philosophical differences between my state and FEMA with a brief illustration. In my operations

center a sign, defining what is expected of each employee, has hung on the wall for many years. It simply says, "If it's legal, moral and ethical . . . Just do it!" And while I realize much of this creed is subjective, by nature, it does stress the reason we are all employed . . . to provide a service to our citizens during their time of need. With this in mind, I wonder what a similar sign would say, if it were currently hanging on the wall in FEMA headquarters. Perhaps it would say something like, "If it's legally concise and limits our agency's exposure and potential liability, we should consider doing it, contingent of course on General Counsel's final opinion, in coordination with the Office of Management and Budget, and subject to the final vote of the tribunal convened to effectively disperse responsibility throughout the federal government."

Whether this philosophy is a product of FEMA, DHS, the White House, Congress, or a combination of any or all of the above, I simply don't know. I only know it is does not meet my expectations, as either a state customer or private citizen. Thank you.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank the gentleman.
Mr. Geldhart.

STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER GELDHART

Mr. GELDHART. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Davis. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee today. I would also like to recognize my colleague, Darrell Darnell, from Washington, DC, Homeland Security Emergency Management Director, and also the other distinguished members of this panel.

I am here today to discuss the role of the Office of the National Capital Region Coordination and how we work with our local, State, regional, and Federal partners to enhance preparedness within the National Capital Region.

I joined the Office of National Capital Region as its new Director 4 months ago, as the chairman said before earlier, when the office became a component of the newly reorganized Federal Emergency Management Agency. Also, as the chairman had mentioned earlier, I came from the State of Maryland. Part of my duties at the State of Maryland were to work within the National Capital Region on many different topics and areas such as critical infrastructure protection and many of the governance groups that govern how all three jurisdictions within the NCR come together to work together.

As such, I have first-hand knowledge of the NCR, the geographic, economic, and socio-political complexity that exists here in the region.

As you know, the NCR has some very key characteristics that make it different than a lot of other places. We are the fourth largest metropolitan population area in the United States, second largest public transportation system, robust private and public nonprofit sector. We are the seat of the national government and home to more than 230 individual Federal departments and agencies representing all three branches of Government. Most importantly, the NCR is home to more than 5 million residents and 20 million tourists annually.

The complexity inherent in the region was a key factor that led to many in Congress, including members of this committee, to establish the Office of National Capital Region Coordination in the Department of Homeland Security to oversee and coordinate Federal programs for and relationships with State, local, and regional authorities.

The Office of National Capital Region Coordination leverages key partnerships to successfully execute the strategic priorities. These include the Joint Federal Committee, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Regional Emergency Preparedness Council, and the National Capital Region Senior Policy Group.

Through these and other venues, the Office of National Capital Coordination coordinates daily with Homeland Security advisors, emergency management directors, chief administrative officers, first responder leaders, leadership from the private sector and nonprofit communities, as well as other Federal officials.

The office has had several key accomplishments that it has completed prior to me coming into this office, and I would just like to highlight a couple of them.

Mr. KUCINICH. And I would ask the gentleman, you have about 2 minutes left.

Mr. GELDHART. Absolutely. Homeland Security governance structure, the way that things are operated here in the National Capital Region for planning and preparedness, response and recovery from Homeland Security; the strategic plan that was put in place, working with all the stakeholders I mentioned earlier; communications interoperability, which that accomplishment, alone, has led to advanced ratings in every category of DHS' interoperability score card for this region; and the National Capital Region's first responder partnership initiative landmark credentialing effort that allows first responders to move quickly through multiple jurisdictions in the event of an incident.

Moving forward from here, my job, my goal, the way I see the office moving forward has three key objectives:

First key objective, coordinated and integrated catastrophic planning effort, not only within the boundaries of the legislated, directed National Capital Region, but also those areas that surround this region that will be part of a major catastrophic event, such as evacuation, mass care, and mass shelter.

Second, enhance the Federal coordination, focusing on the operational and strategic planning and decisionmaking within the region.

Last, to create a more robust regional risk assessment for this region so we have a clear understanding of what we need to invest in, when, why, and how.

I can go into detail with all of these different areas, Mr. Chairman, but in the interest of finishing up my introduction I would say by focusing on these key areas our office can help the NCR continue to be the model for regional planning throughout the Nation. Building upon the foundation that has already been constructed, the NCR will take tangible steps to enhance catastrophic planning, improve Federal coordination, and better understand risk from a regional perspective. At the end of the day, we are all committed to one goal, the continued safety and security of the region, its residents, and visitors.

I would like to thank the chairman and the ranking member and the members of the committee for the opportunity to discuss the role of the National Capital Region, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Geldhart follows:]

Testimony before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

FEMA Preparedness in 2007 and Beyond

Statement of Mr. Christopher T. Geldart
Director, Office of National Capital Region Coordination
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Department of Homeland Security

Tuesday, July 31, 2007
Room 2154
Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

FEMA

Testimony of Christopher T. Geldart
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Public Hearing: FEMA Preparedness in 2007 and Beyond

Introduction

Good morning Chairman Waxman, Ranking Member Davis and Members of the Committee. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today. I would also like to recognize my colleague Darrell Darnell, Washington, D.C.'s new Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director, and other distinguished members of the panel.

I am here today to discuss the role of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination (NCRC) and how we work with our local, State, regional and Federal partners to enhance preparedness within the National Capital Region (NCR). As the new NCRC Director, I would like to outline my priorities for implementing and expanding efforts to effectively coordinate critical homeland security initiatives in a region with a geographic, economic, social and political complexity unlike any other in the Nation.

The NCR is the fourth largest metropolitan area in the United States and encompasses 11 local jurisdictions across Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. It is home to the second largest public transit system, more than 2,000 non-profits and international non-governmental organizations, produces a Gross Regional Product of $288b annually, is the seat of national government and home to more than 230 individual Federal departments and agencies representing all three branches of government. Most importantly, the NCR is home to more than 5 million residents and 20 million tourists annually.

The complexity inherent in the region was a key factor contributing to the creation of NCRC under Section 882 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, in which the office is charged with a broad mandate to "oversee and coordinate Federal programs for and relationships with State, local and regional authorities" within this unique region. NCRC executed its role as a staff and resource coordination element when the Office was created as a component within the Office of the Secretary in the Department of Homeland Security. However, as a result of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006, the NCRC became a component of the newly reorganized and strengthened Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on April 1, 2007, reporting directly to the Administrator. It was just after this transition that I joined the FEMA NCRC team as its new Director.

NCRC leverages key partnerships to successfully execute the strategic priorities of this Office and the region. We coordinate daily with local, State, regional, and Federal entities—to include the Joint Federal Committee, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Regional Emergency Preparedness Council, and the NCR Senior Policy Group. Stakeholders include homeland security advisors, emergency management directors, chief administrative officers, first responder leadership, and leadership from the private sector and non-profit communities for integrated regional decision-making. My

colleague Darrell Darnell is a member of the Senior Policy Group. I'm sure he can also speak to the value and accomplishments of this key partnership.

NCRC Accomplishments

NCRC accomplishments include working with the stakeholders mentioned above to create the region's homeland security governance structure as well as develop the *NCR Homeland Security Strategic Plan,* the first of its kind in the Nation. This strategic plan serves as a roadmap for strengthening capabilities and enhancing capacity to realize the NCR partners' vision for a safer and more secure NCR.

To date, the work of NCRC has focused on capabilities development and response planning by facilitating communication among stakeholders within the NCR, and supporting the development of an operational construct to better enable effective coordination in the event of a catastrophic event. Organizing NCRC around its initial mission priorities enabled fundamental accomplishments, including the selected examples below.

- The NCR was one of only four Urban Areas to achieve "Advanced" in all categories in the Tactical Interoperable Communications Scorecard assessments published by DHS in January of 2007. The Tactical Interoperable Scorecards assessed the maturity of tactical interoperable communications capabilities in 75 urban/metropolitan areas throughout the Nation.

- The NCRC is a key partner in local, State, regional and Federal efforts to coordinate multi-jurisdictional training to ensure consistent operational methodologies across the region and to maximize regional resources. Since the Department's inception, the NCRC has been a key partner in numerous table-top, command post and other exercises conducted by DHS and key NCR partners. We also continue to work with NCR stakeholders to solidify a comprehensive exercise program that will ensure continued improvement through a rigorous corrective action program, measure current capability, and provide realistic training to area responders, government officials, businesses and non-profit organizations, and the public.

- NCRC coordinated the development of the NCR First Responder Partnership Initiative (FRPI), a landmark credentialing effort. The FRPI leverages Federal standards and technology to create a common identity management approach that permits First Responders to move quickly through multiple jurisdictions in the event of an incident, addressing a major challenge.

Moving Forward

As the new NCRC Director, I have the opportunity to build upon the strong coordination and partnership mechanisms that have been created in the NCR to help craft enhanced homeland security policies, procedures and protocols. My goal coming in three months ago was to leverage the solid foundation provided by our existing programs along with the additional resources requested for this Office in FY 2008 to move the NCRC mission forward now that the Office is a component of FEMA. NCRC priorities for FY 2008 to FY 2013 reflect emerging regional needs and national policy guidance—specifically Catastrophic Planning, Regional Risk Assessment, and enhanced Federal agency coordination within the NCR.

Catastrophic Planning

Congress has clearly indicated its interest and intent regarding catastrophic planning in the NCR, particularly with respect to evacuation and mass care. The NCRC has worked diligently with NCR stakeholders and, where desired by Congress, with stakeholders beyond the immediate region to ensure coordination and inclusion in ongoing evacuation planning efforts. As the new FEMA vision moves forward, we have an opportunity to take a substantial leap in NCR catastrophic planning. By coordinating current State and local planning efforts with grant funding provided in the recent supplemental appropriation and the on-going catastrophic planning efforts underway at FEMA, we can bring resources and expertise to bear in a way that was not possible before. By coordinating these multiple efforts, we can expand our catastrophic planning efforts.

Enhanced Federal Coordination

The considerable presence of the Federal community—both of employees and Federal first responders—within the NCR necessitates stronger coordination than exists today. As seen in past events, communication and coordination between the Federal Government and State and local first responders must occur prior to and throughout the duration of an event—regardless of magnitude.

An immediate area in which the NCR can improve its ability to respond to critical incidents is in the coordination among and between Federal agencies—a priority identified in the *NCR Homeland Security Strategic Plan*. NCRC's primary focus in this area is to advance the dialogue within the Federal community in the NCR to better integrate planning and operations.

The unique nature of the NCR demands a Joint Federal Coordinating Element (JFCE) to ensure coordination of protective measures and protocols in advance of an event, so that there is seamless response during an event. This is a gap in Federal response coordination that NCRC is currently working to fill. The JFCE will enable a seamless transition from steady-state operations, to incident support, and finally, to a designated

Joint Field Office—the desired end state being dynamic and continuous information sharing among joint Federal partners.

Regional Risk Assessment

Conducting regional risk assessment will enable informed resource allocation, and will subsequently lead to more strategic capability development. We are engaged with the DHS Risk Management & Analysis (RMA) Office to produce a way forward on a comprehensive and actionable regional risk assessment for the NCR that builds on the data collection efforts of the NCR Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment project recently concluded. The goal of this next phase will be to support more effective decision making at the strategic and operational levels, and within a regional context.

Conclusion

The NCRC is now at an exciting crossroad as it continues its central preparedness and coordination missions as a part of FEMA, and furthers its collaboration efforts with the local, State and regional jurisdictions that comprise the National Capital Region. Building upon the foundation that has already been constructed, the NCRC will take tangible steps to enhance catastrophic planning, improve Federal coordination, and better understand risk from a regional perspective. At the end of the day, we are all committed to one goal, the continued safety and security of this region and its residents and visitors.

I would like to thank Chairman Waxman, Ranking Member Davis and the Members of the Committee for the opportunity to discuss the role of the Office of National Capital Region Coordination. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. West, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF DEWAYNE WEST

Mr. WEST. Thank you, Chairman Kucinich and Ranking Member Davis and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on this critically important topic.

I am Dewayne West, director of the Johnston County Emergency Services located in the great State of North Carolina. We are located midway between New York and Florida on I–95 at the crossroads of I–95 and I–40. With that, Johnston County connects to the Nation's north and south with east and west.

Currently I am a member of the National Association of Counties [NACO], board of directors, and a past president of the International Association of Emergency Managers. Since the tragic events of September 11th, NACO and IAEM have formed a strong affiliate partnership, and today I provide this testimony on both their behalf.

The International Association of Emergency Managers has over 3,800 members, including emergency management professionals at the State and local government levels, the military, private business, and nonprofit sector in the United States and other countries. Most IAEM members are U.S. 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, resolve, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters, including terrorist attacks. Members include emergency managers from both large urban areas, as well as rural counties.

Founded in 1935, NACO is the Nation's leading advocate for the county elected and appointed officials. NACO advances issues with a unified voice before the Federal Government, improves the public's understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. NACO's membership totals more than 2,000 counties, representing over 80 percent of the Nation's population.

Again, I am pleased to join you today to present our position on these issues.

Since Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast in the fall of 2005, Federal, State, and local elected officials, emergency managers, and other public safety officials have worked to strengthen the Nation's preparedness and response to future hazards. While States, local governments, emergency managers, and other public safety officials across the Nation focused on strengthening and revising pre-existing emergency preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery plans, and in educating residents during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Congress focused their attention on strengthening the agency most associated with the Federal Government's response to a catastrophe, that being the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

After most of the debate, Congress included the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 in the fiscal year 2007 appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security. Local

governments, emergency managers, and other public safety officials across the Nation applauded the hard work of Congress in arriving at these comprehensive revisions to strengthen FEMA. It was clear that FEMA's ability to respond had deteriorated after its inclusion in the Department of Homeland Security, and this vital link in the emergency management system needed to be repaired.

The legislation made a number of changes to FEMA, and we supported many of these provisions, specifically: The strengthening of the role of FEMA Administrator, and the assurance that the Administrator would be principal advisor to the President, DHS Secretary, and Homeland Security Council during times of disaster; the restoration of preparedness functions with response and recovery functions within Federal Emergency Management Agency, thus representing a return to established emergency management doctrine, all hazards integrated, all phases; the assurance that FEMA Administrator would have a demonstrated ability and knowledge of emergency management and/or Homeland Security and at least 5 years of executive leadership and management experience; strengthen FEMA regional offices and integrated regional preparedness initiatives and resources; enhance training exercises and technical assistance for Federal, State, local governments, and first responders; creation of FEMA regional advisory councils in existing FEMA regional offices; and the establishment of a formal and effective mechanism for identifying and deploying local assets for effectively strengthening EMAC, which you have heard about.

Prior to these changes and since creation of the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA can best be characterized by a cycle of neglect, crisis, and further neglect. In fact, I would like to refer to this cycle as the spare tire theory, which you have heard expounded on earlier today. It seemed unusual to hear that coming back from the Federal level.

This theory suggests that we forget about or neglect the condition of our car's spare tire until we have a flat, and then we hope it is in good enough shape to get us to where we need to go. Likewise, we tend to forget about and neglect our system of emergency management until we need it.

As we explore today's topic, I strongly urge our Federal partners to heed the lessons we should have learned from the past.

Overall, I cannot say with certainty that FEMA is ready for the next catastrophic disaster. The changes legislated by Congress only went into effect last March. While we applaud the effort of Congress to legislate needed changes, we are very concerned that the law may not be implemented as intended.

We applaud the efforts being made by Administrator Paulison and Deputy Administrator Johnson, but we are concerned that they may not have the protections within DHS that they need and Congress expects.

Mr. KUCINICH. I want to thank the gentleman. Your time has expired.

Mr. WEST. I am sorry.

Mr. KUCINICH. No, it is fine. You are doing very well. What we will do is to include your entire statement in the record of the hearing. It is quite extensive. I have read it.

Mr. WEST. Thank you.

Mr. KUCINICH. It is going to contribute to enhancing the work of this committee, and I think we will be able to get to some of the questions, which will enable you to draw out some of the other contributions that you have made.

I want to thank you, Mr. West.

Mr. WEST. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. West follows:]

Dewayne West, CEM

Past President

International Association of Emergency Managers

&

Board Member

National Association of Counties

Testimony

Before the
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

United States House of Representatives

On

FEMA Preparedness in 2007 and Beyond

July 31, 2007

Chairman Waxman, Ranking Member Davis, and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on this critically important topic – FEMA Preparedness in 2007 and Beyond.

BACKGROUND

I am Dewayne West, Director of the Johnston County Office of Emergency Services, located in the great state of North Carolina. The Johnston County Office of Emergency Services encompasses three main departments: Emergency Management, Emergency Medical Services, and the Fire Marshal's Office. Collectively, the department provides essential service to Johnston County and its ten towns including Smithfield, Clayton, Selma, Benson, Kenly, Four Oaks, Pine Level, Princeton, Wilson's Mills, and Micro. Located midway between New York and Florida on I-95 and at the cross-roads of I-95 and I-40, Johnston County connects the nation's North and South with East and West.

Currently, I a member of the National Association of Counties' (NACo) Board of Directors, and a past President of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM). Since the tragic events of September 11th, NACo and IAEM have formed a strong affiliate partnership and today; I provide this testimony on both their behalf.

The International Association of Emergency Managers has over 3,800 members including emergency management professionals at the state and local government levels, the military, private business and the nonprofit sector in the United States and in other countries. Most IAEM members are U.S 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. Members include emergency managers from large urban areas as well as rural counties.

Founded in 1935, NACo is the nation's leading advocate for county elected and appointed officials. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public's understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. NACo's membership totals more than 2,000 counties, representing over 80 percent of the nation's population.

FEMA PREPAREDNESS IN 2007 AND BEYOND

Again, I am pleased to join the Committee today and discuss FEMA Preparedness in 2007 and Beyond.

Since Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast in the fall of 2005, federal, state and local elected officials, emergency managers and other public safety officials have worked to strengthen the nation's preparedness and response to future hazards. While States, local governments, emergency managers and other public safety officials across the nation focused on strengthening and revising pre-existing emergency preparedness, prevention, response and recovery plans and educating residents during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Congress focused their attention on strengthening the agency most

associated with the federal governments' response to the catastrophe – the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

After months of debate, Congress included the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 in the FY 2007 Appropriations Bill for the Department of Homeland Security. (PL 109-295) Local governments, emergency managers and other public safety officials across the nation applauded the hard work of Congress in arriving at these comprehensive revisions to strengthen FEMA. It was clear that FEMA's ability to respond had deteriorated after its inclusion in the Department of Homeland Security and this vital link in the emergency management system needed to be repaired.

The legislation made a number of changes to FEMA, and we supported many of these provisions. Specifically, we supported:

- The strengthening of the role of the FEMA Administrator and the assurance that the Administrator would be the principle advisor to the President, DHS' Secretary, and the Homeland Security Council during times of disaster;

- The restoration of preparedness functions with response and recovery functions within FEMA. Thus, representing a return to established emergency management doctrine – all hazards, integrated, all phases;

- The assurance that the FEMA Administrator would "have a demonstrated ability and knowledge of emergency management and/or homeland security, and at least five years of executive leadership and management experience;"

- Strengthened FEMA Regional Offices and integrated regional preparedness initiatives and resources;

- Enhanced training, exercises and technical assistance for federal, state, local governments and first responders;

- Creation of FEMA Regional Advisory Councils in existing FEMA Regional Offices;

- And the establishment of a formal and effective mechanism for identifying and deploying local assets for effectively strengthening EMAC.

Prior to these changes and since creation of the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA can best be characterized by a cycle of neglect, crisis and further neglect. In fact, I like to refer to this cycle as the "spare tire" theory of emergency management. This theory suggests that we forget about and neglect the condition of our car's spare tire until we have a flat and then hope it is in good enough shape to get us to where we need to go. Likewise, we forget about and neglect our system of emergency management (preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation) until we need it.

So as we explore today's topic - Is FEMA better prepared to respond to the next disaster; I strongly urge our federal partners to heed the lessons we have learned from the past.

Overall, I cannot say with certainty that FEMA is ready for the next catastrophic disaster. The changes legislated by Congress only went into effect last March. While we applaud the effort of Congress to legislate needed changes, we are very concerned that the law may not be implemented as Congress intended. We applaud the efforts being made by Administrator Paulison and Deputy Administration Johnson, but we are concerned that they may not have the protections within DHS they need and Congress expects.

Some of our concerns follow:

- The intent of Congress was to make FEMA a semi-autonomous organization in DHS, like that of the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Coast Guard. It seems that that is not being followed.

- It remains unclear if the FEMA Administrator has the authority within the department which he needs to direct the Federal response to disasters and emergencies. Congress must insist that the authority to accomplish the mission clearly resides with the Administrator, and the National Response Plan should be written to require this. There are law enforcement incidents where this might not be applicable, but when it is incident management for the Department of Homeland Security it is appropriate for the FEMA Administrator as the department's incident manager to be in that chain of command.

- FEMA must have the lead on the rewrite of the National Response Plan. It has been reported that a high level DHS official is rewriting the Plan to be more of a framework. We are extremely concerned that state and local emergency managers and elected officials are not having a role in this further rewrite.

- Congressional intent clearly stated that the FEMA Administrator was to report directly to the Secretary and that the FEMA Administrator position was to be established as a Deputy Secretary level position. We understand the Department intends for the Administrator to report to the Deputy Secretary.

- Even though the (PFO) was not abolished under the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act, there was a clear intention that the PFO's role was to act only as an advisor to the Secretary and not have operational control. NACo and IAEM members want the Federal Coordinating Officers to have the authority to make decisions and for them not to be reversed. If the PFO program is not abolished, it will be important that Congress insist that FEMA manage the doctrine, training, and exercising of the PFOs to insure no conflict between the PFO doctrine and the FCO responsibilities. This is clearly a FEMA function under the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act and the law does not permit the Secretary to move FEMA functions to other parts of the Department. There is recent evidence that, in fact, DHS intends to continue its support for the routine use of the PFO. In a recent letter to Secretary Chertoff, your colleague, Chairman Price of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, took serious issue with the Secretary's recent letter to state governors naming PFOs and Deputy PFOs for four regions of the country. With respect to the ability of FEMA to be allowed to do its job, Chairman

Price also takes note of the fact that the Secretary named an individual within the National Protection and Programs Division as the point of contact to whom the Governors should respond rather than FEMA. We share Chairman Price's concern and feel this is just one indicator that FEMA is not being allowed the authority or respect necessary to get on with solving the monumental problems revealed by Katrina.

- We applaud the preparedness functions being moved to FEMA. However, at this time it is unclear whether FEMA will have the responsibility for the policy or just be an administrative agency. It was clearly Congressional intent for FEMA to have the policy function. In addition, it will be vital that all the positions to support the preparedness functions be moved to FEMA as well. We understand funding was taken from preparedness programs for "shared services". Were all of those funds transferred with the programs? When FEMA was created in 1979, departments and agencies did not send the support positions with the programs—this history should not be repeated.

- It is unclear what the role of the Federal Preparedness Coordinator position in the regions will be, who they will report to and who will select them. It is unclear what the role of the Coordinator will be vs the existing National Preparedness positions in the regions. In addition, preparedness grants staff positions should be moved to the regional offices. particularly when vacancies occur.

- The FEMA Administrator must have the authority to name the officials to serve on the National Advisory Council and must ensure that local elected, emergency managers and other public safety officials are included in the National and Regional Advisory Councils as provided for under the Reform Act. NACo and IAEM have offered our services to assist the FEMA Administrator in identifying qualified and certified local emergency managers and other public safety officials to serve on these councils.

- Greater emphasis and attention must be placed on supporting states and communities who must receive evacuees when disasters cause the relocation of large numbers of persons from affected areas. For example, in North Carolina, we have determined that one of our greatest threats is the need to evacuate large numbers of citizens and tourist from our coastline and/or the coastal areas of adjacent states in the event of a Category Five Hurricane.

- FEMA must fully endorse the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) concept. We would like to emphasize that, except for the participation of the National Guard, the majority of personnel deployed under EMAC are emergency managers, first responders and other support personnel from local governments. EMAC is one of the elements of a solid and enduring national emergency management system.

- As DHS and FEMA seek to implement standards and credentialing criteria at the direction of Congress, IAEM and NACo urges the agency to support the use of the

Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) and the Certified Emergency Manager Program. (CEM).

In order to be successful, a truly effective national emergency management system must be supported by programs and approaches which enhance our ability to improve our performance based on lessons we have learned.

I strongly urge Congress to continue to support the Critical Elements of a National Emergency Management (E.M.) System. This system has three critical elements. First, the system must be comprehensive, in that it must encompass all potential hazards and all potential impacts relevant to any community in this nation. Second, it is essential that our E.M. system be integrated. Without unity of effort before, during and after any disaster, the effort is going to be chaotic at best and, at worst, doomed to failure. Third, there must be well established and maintained coordination among all stakeholders in the system to ensure that it is effective. Comprehensive and integrated plans on paper are not sufficient. Key stakeholders – like local government emergency managers and other qualified public safety officials – must be constantly consulted to ensure that the plans are based on reality and have "buy in" from those same key stakeholders through discussion and consensus.

It is the revitalization and continued maintenance of this comprehensive, integrated and coordinated national emergency management system in a solid and enduring way that NACo and IAEM feels is of primary importance.

In closing, local elected officials, emergency managers and other public safety officials at all levels of government are constantly working to restore and improve this national system upon which so much depends. We thank you for your support in convening this hearing today and ask for your consideration of our needs and recommendations for the future.

Contact information:
International Association of Emergency Managers, 201 Park Washington Court, Falls Church, VA 22046. Telephone: 703-538-1925.
President: Mike Selves (mselves@jocogov.org);
Government Affairs Chair: Bob Bohlmann (rcbohlmann@co.york.me.us);
Policy Advisor: Martha Braddock (MSBraddock@aol.com).

National Association of Counties, 25 Mass Ave, NW; Suite 500
Washington, DC 20001 Telephone: 202-942-4236
President: The Honorable Eric Coleman (ecoleman@naco.org)
Executive Director: Larry Naake (Lnaake@naco.org)
Associate Legislative Director: Dalen Harris (Dharris@naco.org)

Mr. KUCINICH. We are going to move on to Mr. Darnell now for 5 minutes. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF DARRELL DARNELL

Mr. DARNELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon. Good afternoon Congressman Davis and members of the subcommittee.

I am Darrell Darnell, director of the District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency. I am pleased to have the opportunity to testify before you today about the extent to which the District of Columbia is prepared to respond to emergencies and disasters and our collaboration with our partners in the National Capital Region.

During the almost 6 years since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the 2-years since the Gulf Coast devastation from Hurricane Katrina, the District and the NCR, as a whole, have worked independently and in collaboration with our partners at the Federal, State, and local levels to enhance and improve our abilities in five critical areas.

Transportation and housing. Evacuating the District is a daunting challenge under any circumstance. Moreover, a significant portion of the population relies exclusively on public transportation, necessitating government assistance during an evacuation effort. Acknowledging these difficulties and having learned lessons from the Gulf Coast experience with Hurricane Katrina, the District has conducted regular evacuation drills, such as Operation Fast Forward, in conjunction with the July 4th festivities on the National Mall, and is leading the NCR's efforts to coordinate evacuation and sheltering plans throughout the region.

Understanding that any evacuation undertaken in the District will quickly involve our regional partners, we have worked closely with them to develop a number of tools that would assist decision-makers in all of the jurisdictions during an emergency. These resources include regional unified evacuation route profiles; an inventory of vehicles, drivers, transportation pickup points and standing agreements; as well as shelters that could be activated across the region in the event of an emergency.

Medical assistance. The ability to respond to the health and medical consequences of a large-scale incident requires a combination of plans, facilities, properly trained clinical staff, pharmaceuticals, equipment, and supplies, broadly interpreted as medical surge capacity. The District, in coordination with the region, has steadily increased bed capacity and has added 300 hospital beds within the district's borders.

To assist in preventing the spread of a biological agent, the District's health community has been provided with the syndromic surveillance system. This system provides an early warning capability that alerts the public health community to impending health situations, allowing them to take proactive measures to stop a potential public health emergency. This system connects pharmacists, hospital emergency rooms, schools, veterinarians, laboratories, and emergency medical services information and spots trends within the data to begin to track an outbreak and assist in identifying the potentials for it.

Security and law enforcement. As the Nation's Capital, the District of Columbia presents a unique environment for security and law enforcement. The District is home to numerous law enforcement agencies, with more per capita than anywhere else in the country. These agencies work together in a collaborative fashion on a daily basis to provide security to the citizens of the District, as well as Federal Government agencies and employees.

Logistics. In addition to the accomplishments noted in transportation and housing, our efforts in the area of interoperable communications, a primary focus for the region have yielded significant improvements in our ability to share information and communicate across jurisdictional boundaries. In an assessment conducted by DHS, the National Capital Region ranked in the top 10 percent of urban areas of the Nation for advanced interoperable communication.

Collaboration with the Office of National Capital Region Coordination. Since its establishment in March 2003, the Office of National Capital Region Coordination has worked closely with the jurisdictions in the NCR to help ensure regional cooperation and coordination.

However, one final comment. The restructuring of the Federal response structure to include a principal Federal officer [PFO], in addition to the full coordinating officer. As a State emergency management director, it is my opinion that adding additional Federal officials to the process may lead to confusion about the roles and responsibilities of each. It would be helpful to have only one Federal official assigned for all the events, versus multiple Federal officials for different incidents. Clarification of the role and responsibility of that official would also improve the process.

With the leadership of Chris Geldhart, I believe ONCRC will continue to work with its partners to ensure further progress in preparing and securing the NCR against disaster, whether natural or manmade, in the coming years, and we look forward to our continued success.

This is not a part of my prepared testimony, Mr. Chairman. The one thing that I think we have been missing from the discussion today, if I may respectfully say, is the role of citizens in our preparedness efforts. Here in the District of Columbia since 2002 we have trained over 2,400 volunteers in citizen emergency response training. We signed up 39 neighborhoods with over 60 volunteers to update and to develop community preparedness plans for their specific neighborhoods in all eight wards of the cities.

This fall, as a part of the National Preparedness Month, and at the start of our school year, we are going to implement our Commander Ready program, where we signed up 75 volunteers to teach over 650 school-aged kids in the grades of two to five, 5 to 13 in age, about emergency preparedness and Homeland Security, because we really believe that this effort is not one of government only; citizens also have to take part and take an active role in preparedness efforts.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Darnell follows:]

Government of the District of Columbia

Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency

Testimony of
Darrell Darnell
Director

"FEMA Preparedness in 2007 and Beyond"

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Tuesday, July 31, 2007
Room 2154
Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
10 a.m.

Good morning, Chairman Waxman, Chairman Kucinich, Congressman Davis, Congressman Issa, and members of the subcommittee. Good morning also to my fellow panelists and other distinguished colleagues. I am Darrell L. Darnell, director of the District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA). I am pleased to have the opportunity to testify before you today about the extent to which the District of Columbia is prepared to respond to emergencies and disasters, including our collaboration with our partners in the National Capital Region (NCR).

The Committee's letter of invitation identified five areas of preparedness the Committee seeks to examine – housing, transportation, medical assistance, security and logistics. I will begin my testimony by addressing the efforts by the District in coordination with its partners in the NCR to ensure competency in each area as it pertains to local priorities.

During the almost six years since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the two years since the Gulf Coast's devastation from Hurricane Katrina, the District and the NCR as a whole have worked independently and in collaboration with our partners at the federal, state and local levels to enhance and improve our abilities in each of these five critical areas.

Building on the foundation of planning, training, and exercises we established following September 11, we have incorporated lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina to develop an even more robust capacity to manage the consequences of natural disasters and other types of emergencies.

As you know, following September 11 we developed local and regional response plans based on the National Response Plan, with common terminology and parallel structures and functions. We also are working to create or refine specialized plans and procedures in a variety of areas, including housing, sheltering and transportation (including evacuation,) as well as medical assistance, security and logistics.

Transportation and Housing

Evacuating the District is a daunting challenge under any circumstance. With traffic congestion a consistent problem, moving a significant number of people at once within the District and the greater region poses considerable difficulties. Moreover, a significant portion of the population relies exclusively on public transportation, necessitating government assistance during an evacuation effort. Acknowledging these difficulties, and having learned lessons from the Gulf Coast's experience with Hurricane Katrina, the District has conducted regular evacuation drills (Operation Fast Forward) in conjunction with the July 4th festivities on the National Mall and is leading the NCR's effort to coordinate evacuation and sheltering plans.

A successful evacuation requires two crucial transportation efforts: quick, informed decisions about how to re-route traffic out of the affected area and a concerted effort to assist the part of the population that relies exclusively on public transportation. As we learned in Hurricane Katrina, the plans to do so must be established—and practiced—before an event occurs.

An example of that practicing took place on July 4th. The District's Department of Transportation (DDOT), in coordination with its regional transportation and public safety partners,

and in coordination with its July 4th traffic control plan, carried out a limited test of its emergency traffic signal timing patterns and emergency traffic operations capabilities.

The test, known as Operation Fast Forward III, incorporated the lessons learned in the previous two tests and continued a review of emergency plans and operations . DDOT is currently evaluating regional traffic signal timing, emergency route traffic control, and is testing emergency transportation communication protocols.

Understanding that any evacuation undertaken in the District will quickly involve our regional partners, we have worked closely with them to develop a number of tools that would assist decision-makers in all of the jurisdictions during an emergency. These resources include a regional, unified evacuation route profile; an inventory of vehicles, drivers, transfer/pickup points and standing agreements that could be activated across the region in the event of an emergency.

The transportation inventory catalogs the availability, type, and number of vehicles that could meet emergency requirements, while the evacuation route profile includes:

- Functional classification in the regional roadway system
- Route length
- Roadway dimensions and variability
- Route capacity
- Route constraints
- Average weekday and peak period travel demand
- Route signal control plans

Once District residents and visitors have been evacuated, the focus turns to sheltering. The District has been working closely with the American Red Cross to inventory shelters within the city. Further, as part of the ongoing regional evacuation effort, we are conducting an assessment of shelter facilities throughout the National Capital Region and developing profiles for large capacity (>5,000) shelters.

As we know, providing this information to those who will make decisions during a disaster and, importantly, familiarizing them with it *before* an event occurs is crucial to a successful evacuation. These tools, coupled with our existing District-specific plans, put us in a much better position to conduct a mass evacuation than we would have been prior to Hurricane Katrina.

Medical Assistance

The ability to respond to the health and medical consequences of a large scale incident requires a combination of plans, facilities, properly trained clinical staff, pharmaceuticals, equipment, and supplies; interpreted as "medical surge" capacity. The District, in coordination with the region, has steadily increased bed capacity and has added 300 hospital beds within the District's borders. Medical surge preparedness efforts within the District have switched from concentrating on simply increasing bed capacity to the need to develop full capabilities. As an example, if a hospital simply bought more beds, equipment, and supplies, the investment would not necessarily save more lives if the hospital did not also have enough clinical personnel with the training required to care for the patient, particularly for patients that require unusual or highly specialized care.

Training seminars in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Hospital Incident Command System have been offered to local health officials to insure a further understanding of the command and control structure of an incident. In April 2006 the District convened a Pandemic

Influenza summit, which brought together federal and District officials along with business and community leaders, members of the health care community and a broad spectrum of other stakeholders to discuss the city's preparations for a possible influenza pandemic. Subsequently, in October 2006 the Region funded a pandemic flu exercise focusing on health and medical response. Avian / Pandemic Influenza preparedness training and education for the community have been offered and 550 persons in the NCR have been educated about disease transmission, specific infection control plans and protocols, and have participated in discussions about ways to limit the spread of disease. Additionally, a "Train the Trainer" course on how to prepare their employees for a pandemic has been offered to NCR occupational health nurses. Public information officers in the District and the region also have received crisis communications training related to pandemic influenza.

The majority of funding for medical surge resulting from a mass casualty event has paid for developing "response" capabilities. To assist in preventing the spread of a biological agent, the District's health community has been provided with a syndromic surveillance system. This system builds a potential "prevention" capability or early warning system that permits the public health community to receive early warning of an impending health situation and take proactive measures to stop a potential public health emergency. This system connects pharmacists, hospital emergency rooms, schools, veterinarians, laboratories and emergency medical services information and spots trends within the data to begin to track an outbreak and assist in identifying the potential spread.

Security and Law Enforcement

As the Nation's Capital, The District of Columbia presents a unique environment for security and law enforcement. The District is home to numerous law enforcement agencies (more per capita than anywhere else in the country), including the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, the United States Capitol Police, the Secret Service and the F.B.I., among others. These agencies work together in a collaborative fashion on a daily basis to provide security to the citizens of the District as well as federal government agencies and employees.

Frequent large scale special events in the District require well-coordinated inter-agency operations, and keep the various law enforcement agencies in the area well-practiced in working together. Events such as presidential inaugurations, state funerals, the National 4th of July celebration and other federal special events require a joint effort by MPD, FBI, Secret Service, U.S. Capitol Police and others. In fact, we are already setting up an inter-agency working group to begin the planning process for the next presidential inauguration, even though it is a year and a half away.

A cornerstone of this coordinated security and law enforcement capability is the transparent sharing of intelligence information between federal and local partners. In the District, in 2006, we took the next step towards improving this already robust sharing of information by establishing the Metropolitan Washington Fusion Center. The center, which currently shares resources with the FBI, is working towards standing up a fully functional fusion center which will provide a mechanism for law enforcement, public safety and private partners to come together with a common purpose and improve the ability to safeguard our homeland and prevent criminal activity. By routinely analyzing disparate pieces of information, the fusion center is a major contributor to enhancing situational awareness and achieving a common operating picture. Integral to the success of the District's fusion center is close, regular collaboration with existing fusion centers in our partner jurisdictions in the National Capital Region as well as with DHS's National Operations Center.

Logistics

In addition to the accomplishments noted in transportation and housing, our efforts in the area of interoperable communications – a primary focus for the region – have yielded significant improvements in our ability to share information and communicate across jurisdictional boundaries. In an assessment conducted by DHS, the National Capital Region ranked in the top 10% of urban areas in the nation for advanced interoperable communication.

In furtherance of the goal of interoperable regional communications, the D.C. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency established a regional emergency operations center committee in August 2006 with representation from more than 140 federal, local and regional EOCs. The group's members were linked through the Washington Metropolitan Area Warning System (WAWAS), whose control point is the D.C. HSEMA. In April 2007, the Council of Governments Emergency Managers Committee incorporated the EOC committee into a newly-established subcommittee known as the NCR Operations Center Coordination Group. Current membership includes DHS and the Department of Defense's U.S. Army Military District of Washington/Commander, Joint Force Headquarters-National Capital Region., as well as NCR jurisdictions. Through this standing body, the practitioners at the state, local and federal levels regularly seek ways to enhance information sharing and collaboration. Since the technological impediments to information sharing have largely been conquered, this body has turned its attention to establishing agreements between Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) in order to ensure standard operating procedures.

The District also has installed WebEOC, a web-based crisis management system that allows emergency managers and first responders to track an emergency event in a common operating picture. All of the NCR jurisdictions, as well as several dozen federal partners—including DHS's FEMA, the U.S. Secret Service, and the Coast Guard—have joined the network and are able to quickly and easily share real-time information. WebEOC users have the option to post information relevant to the region to a common page that participant EOCs can see. This system is the primary vehicle for sharing information and achieving situational awareness in the National Capital Region on a daily basis. While WebEOC is used throughout the region for day-to-day operations, it also can provide a specific forum for collaboration during a major event. Specific agencies and jurisdictions are granted access to a customized site where event-specific information is exchanged among those with a need to know, enhancing capability while protecting sensitive information.

Other communications initiatives include the District's four-part citizen emergency notification system, which includes voice alert, text alert, the Emergency Information Center website and the Emergency Alert System, the partnership between government and the broadcast industry that allows regular programming to be interrupted to broadcast emergency information. The text alert system has been made available to all NCR jurisdictions and residents are able to enroll in systems across the region, not just where they live. It also has been expanded to include special groups such as safety and security officers at member institutions of the Metropolitan Washington Consortium of Colleges and Universities and discussion are on-going to establish a group for Federal Protective Service officers located at buildings that have joint federal and commercial tenants. The region also has purchased a cache of 800 Mhz radios that can be used for regional events and has installed repeaters in Metro tunnels to help ensure uninterrupted communications ability.

Collaboration with the Office of National Capitol Region Coordination

Since its establishment in March 2003, as part of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the Office of National Capital Region Coordination (ONCRC) has worked closely with the jurisdictions in the NCR to help ensure regional cooperation and coordination. As early as August 2002, when the governors of Maryland and Virginia, the Mayor of the District of Columbia and Governor Tom Ridge, director of what was then known as the White House Office of Homeland Security, convened a regional summit and committed to eight action items, it has been widely acknowledged that the NCR occupies a unique position among the nation's states and cities and, therefore, requires a level of regional coordination above what may be required in other localities.

ONCRC has coordinated with the District of Columbia and regional partners to develop a strategic plan that guides decision-making on homeland security priorities. The strategic plan demonstrates the ability to work together to leverage the best of local strengths with the ability to execute across local and state jurisdictional lines to share information, synthesize data, prioritize transportation flows, track health and infectious disease movement, and mitigate all-hazards risks affecting the region.

One final comment, regarding the restructuring of the federal response structure to include a PFO in addition to the FCO. As a state emergency management director, it is my opinion that adding additional federal officials to the process may lead to confusion about the roles and responsibilities of each. It would be helpful to have only one federal official assigned for all events, versus multiple federal officials for different incidents. Clarification of the role and responsibility of that official would also improve the process.

With the leadership of Chris Geldart, I believe ONCRC will continue to work with its partners to ensure further progress in preparing and securing the NCR against disaster, whether natural or manmade, in the coming years and we look forward to our continued success.

This concludes my prepared testimony. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am prepared to respond to any questions you may have.

Mr. KUCINICH. I would like to just respond briefly to what you said.

I have read the testimony of each person here, and you are all making a contribution by being here and it is very important that you are here, and I look forward to Ms. Tierney's testimony momentarily.

I want to say that the point that you make about citizen involvement is absolutely critical. So what I would ask you to do is to provide this committee and our staff here with the information that you use to advance that program. Show us the manuals or models that you use, because it may be that this is something that would be important for the entire Nation. I would ask that you provide it to the staff, and I also would like an extra copy so that I can review it personally.

Mr. DARNELL. Yes, I will do that.

Mr. KUCINICH. I think it is a very valuable testimony here.

Mr. DARNELL. Thank you, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. I would like to thank you.

I would ask Ms. Tierney to proceed with your testimony for 5 minutes. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF KATHLEEN TIERNEY

Ms. TIERNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be here to testify today.

It is almost impossible for an academic to say anything in 5 minutes, but I will do my best.

The new FEMA is in the process of being created; however, we don't know at this time how proposed and in-process changes will affect the Agency's ability to respond in the future, particularly to catastrophic events. Major changes must be instituted. The necessary resources must be applied to address glaring deficiencies in our inter-governmental system of emergency management, and those given responsibility for the implementation of new reforms must be held accountable through strong oversight at various levels of government.

In my testimony I discuss seven areas that require immediate attention.

First is to ensure that the Nation develops a fully functional emergency management system, intergovernmental emergency management system, placing a priority on the Nation's most vulnerable urban areas.

The Nation does not currently have an effective intergovernmental system for managing hazards and disasters. What now exists is a patchwork or lily pad arrangement within which some entities have the knowledge, resources, and political clout to deliver effective programs, but the majority do not. This is termed in emergency management scholarship the leaders and laggers problem.

At the same time, as we strengthen the leaders and assist the laggers, the efforts that we make have to be risk and vulnerability based. The potential for catastrophic losses from disaster events is well understood. Metrics already exist to assess the vulnerability of communities, and we know where the problems are.

Second, ensure that an all-hazard approach to emergency management is implemented at all levels of government. The Federal

Government's official position is supportive of an all-hazards approach. At the same time, investments in terrorism-related programs far outstrip those devoted to other hazards.

As Ms. Norton said earlier, the scenarios which communities around the country were required to prepare as part of the national preparedness goal are skewed toward terrorism-related threats. State and local agencies that receive funding for terrorism-related programs will naturally focus on terrorism unless something is done.

Third, ensure that FEMA and other crisis-relevant organizations center their efforts on comprehensive emergency management. We are talking today about preparedness and response, but what we need is a return to the pre-September 11th emphasis on the four phases of the disaster cycle: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Mitigation is particularly important so that we can have smaller disasters to respond to, because we have less loss and disruption, and it is also proven to be cost effective.

Again, long-term recovery is very important. That the Nation lacks a strategy for large-scale disaster recovery is all too glaringly evident right now in the Gulf region.

Fourth, explore organizational arrangements and authorities that depoliticize high leadership positions within FEMA, DHS, and other crisis-relevant organizations. There have been a number of different suggestions for how this might be done, including making the head of FEMA something like the head of the Federal Reserve System or the Government Accountability Office.

Fifth—and we come back to Mr. Darnell's comments—invest in and mobilize institutions that provide the backbone for effective emergency management.

We have to recognize that many of the systems that we will be relying on in future disasters, such as medical and health care systems, are already over-strained. We also know that the critical information on which effective disaster responses depend is largely in private hands. We need public/private partnerships.

We also need to expand and strengthen the role of civil society institutions in the management of hazards and disasters. The program that Mr. Darnell describes is exactly what I am talking about in my testimony. Mobilize the critical civic infrastructure. One logical way to do this is to begin first with organizations that normally provide services to at-risk populations and that would be required to do so even more during disasters.

Sixth—and this echoes a recommendation by the Government Accountability Office—develop and implement a strategy for work force planning for emergency management, a strategic work force initiative. Again, this is something that the GAO has talked about, and I provide some more details in my written testimony.

Finally, build oversight accountability and evaluation into emergency management programs at all levels of government. All the reports after Katrina talk about the need for greater transparency and accountability, but it is astonishing that we have invested so much in so many initiatives without systematic research on program effectiveness.

At this time, the goal of evidence-based emergency management remains illusive, but the need for objective assessments of programs and practices is clearer than ever before. Reasonable people might well wonder which emergency management practices actually achieve their intended results, where programs are falling short, and which investments are likely to bring the greatest return. Likewise, they might wonder whether the communities in which they live will be able to meet their needs in disasters.

The Federal Government owes the Nation answers to questions like these.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Tierney follows:]

Testimony by Kathleen J. Tierney
Professor, Department of Sociology and Institute of Behavioral Science
Director, Natural Hazards Center, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO
tierneyk@colorado.edu
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
July 31, 2007

Introduction and Background

I wish to thank the Committee for giving me this opportunity to prepare testimony on issues related to FEMA's ability to respond to disasters nationally. I currently serve as director of the Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado. The Center, which was founded in 1976, is the nation's repository and clearinghouse for knowledge on the social, economic, and policy dimensions of hazards, disasters, and risk. The Hazards Center is funded by grants from the National Science Foundation and contributions from other agencies, including NOAA, NASA, FEMA, USGS, and other agencies whose missions focus on reducing losses from extreme events. More information on the Hazards Center can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/hazards.

I am also a co-principal investigator for the DHS academic center of excellence grant that focuses on the social and behavioral aspects of terrorism and terrorism's impacts. That center, the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), is headquartered at the University of Maryland. I serve as the leader of the START working group on societal response to terrorism, and conduct research on local preparedness networks for terrorism and other extreme events (see http://www.start.umd.edu).

I am a member of the American Sociological Association, the Research Committee on Disasters of the International Sociological Association; the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute; and the Advisory Committee on Earthquake Hazards Reduction. I am a recent member of the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Disaster Research in the Social Sciences and of NIST's National Construction Safety Team Advisory Committee, which oversaw NIST's investigation of the World Trade Center attacks. My publications include *Facing the Unexpected: Disaster Preparedness and Response in the United States* (Tierney, Lindell, and Perry, 2001) and dozens of articles, book chapters, technical reports, and other publications on topics related to hazards, disasters, and emergency management. I currently serve as co-editor for the second edition of the International City and County Management Association's "green book" on *Emergency Management: Principles and Practice for Local Government.*

My testimony is organized in terms of three points in time. First, I discuss observations made by some researchers and practitioners concerning the ways in which post-September 11 policy and programmatic changes were adversely affecting FEMA's ability to respond in future major disaster events. Second, I briefly review assessments of FEMA's performance during hurricane Katrina, as well as post-Katrina reforms. Third, I

suggest changes that have the potential for enhancing FEMA's ability to reduce losses in future disaster events. With little notice in terms of developing testimony, I have relied a great deal on my own experience and writings. Nonetheless, I believe that my comments accurately reflect what many in the research and practice communities have observed over the past six years.

Before Katrina: Concerns Regarding Negative Effects of Post-September 11 Changes on FEMA's Ability to Respond to Major Disasters

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, along with other emergency management scholars, I wrote about and discussed post-September 11 institutional and organizational changes that were negatively affecting the nation's ability to respond to major disasters—changes that coincided in particular with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. Those changes include the following: (1) a retreat from the longstanding concepts of "all hazards" disaster management and "integrated emergency management" (IEM), in favor of a "one hazard" and disjointed approach; (2) a failure to incorporate into new homeland security programs lessons learned from decades of research and practice related to extreme events and their management; (3) new terrorism-related initiatives that focused exclusively on that single peril, eclipsing other threats the nation faces from natural and technological disasters; (4) the marginalization of emergency management professionals and the rise of law enforcement and defense-related agencies—changes that brought about clashes among different organizational cultures; (5) the transfer to DHS of key programs, such as preparedness planning and the Metropolitan Medical Response System, accompanied by the development of a justice and law-enforcement and terrorism-oriented preparedness unit within DHS; (6) the decision to embark on a new planning effort—the National Response Plan—rather than improving the existing and well-tested Federal Response Plan, which had served the nation following the 9-11 attacks; (7) FEMA's loss of autonomy, authority, and resources after its merger with DHS; and (8) the brain drain that affected FEMA following September 11, with a concurrent loss of FEMA's institutional memory and leadership and management capabilities.

I also discussed what I called the "9-12 syndrome," which refers to the belief that the world changed so much on 9-11 that pre-9-11 knowledge, practices, and institutional arrangements could no longer apply in a world dominated by the terrorist threat. The 9-12 syndrome included a myopic focus on terrorism as the only physical threat of any significance to the nation. It was marked by a militaristic, command and control mindset that encouraged secrecy rather than transparency in extreme event preparedness. These and other aspects of 9-12 thinking ran counter to the manner in which emergency management had been evolving in the U. S., as a collaborative and inclusive multi-disciplinary field. During the 1990s, the nation had been developing a balanced approach to mitigating, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from extreme events of all types, arising from all sources. The governmental response to the events of September 11, 2001 reversed that trend. (For more lengthy discussions, see Tierney 2006, originally written in 2004, and Tierney 2003).

Rapid and massive legal, policy, and programmatic changes came about as a result of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. As these changes were taking place, experts expressed concern about what their ultimate consequences would be. For example, in September, 2002, *Public Administration Review* published a special issue on topics relevant to terrorism and homeland security. One article in particular, by Richard Sylves and William Waugh and Richard Sylves, entitled "Organizing the War on Terrorism," argued that the creation of new bureaucracies and hierarchies could well be counterproductive from the perspective of effectively responding to terrorism-related events. The authors expressed concern that there would be too much secrecy, too little collaboration with the wide range of organizations that participate in responses to extreme events, and too much rigidity built into the nation's crisis response system. They argued that

> If the war on terrorism inadvertently undercuts or distorts an emergency system designed to deal with so-called routine disasters, it may well weaken current capabilities to manage conventional hazards *and* the hazards posed by terrorism (2002: 147).

In hindsight, this appears to be exactly what happened with respect to the ability of the intergovernmental emergency management system to respond effectively to Hurricane Katrina.

In March, 2004, former FEMA director James Lee Witt pointed out that post-September 11 agency realignments would weaken our nation's ability to respond to disasters of all types. Foreshadowing the Katrina disaster, Witt told Congress that "I assure you that we could not have been as responsive and effective during disasters as we were during my tenure as FEMA director, had there been layers of federal bureaucracy between myself and the White House" (Witt 2004). More recently, John Harrald (2007) has outlined the ways in which institutional arrangements and planning efforts designed to combat the terrorist threat, including the roll-out of a new emergency response structure outlined in the National Response Plan, had unintended negative consequences for the nation's ability to handle the hurricanes of 2005.

At the same time, members of the hazards research community warned about disasters to come. In 2003 and 2004, for example, my own center's newsletter ran a series on "disasters waiting to happen," which included scenarios on potential catastrophic events and their impacts. The last article in that series, by sociologist Shirley Laska of the University of New Orleans, was published less than a year before Katrina (Laska, 2004). It involved a scenario of a major hurricane striking New Orleans that eerily anticipated what did happen when Katrina struck.

Many researchers and practitioners considered a direct hit by a Category 3 or larger hurricane to be among the most likely deadly and destructive catastrophes threatening our nation. Hurricane Katrina came as a surprise only to those who did not understand how natural forces would inevitably interact with fragile natural and built environments and with societal vulnerabilities to produce a major catastrophe.

After Katrina: Critiques and Reforms

Hurricane Katrina was a disaster of catastrophic proportions. The United States has fortunately only experienced a few true catastrophes. Events that match Katrina's scale include the 1900 Galveston hurricane, the 1907 San Francisco earthquake, and the 1927 Mississippi River floods. Catastrophes differ from disasters in important respects: scale and severity of impacts; deaths, injuries and economic losses; and the extent to which catastrophes destroy or cripple disaster response systems and critical infrastructure and civil society institutions that are necessary for disaster response. In all these respects, Katrina was orders of magnitude more severe than other large disaster events, including major disasters such as the Loma Prieta earthquake, Hurricane Andrew, the 1993 Midwest floods, and the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. While not a "worst case" for the Gulf Region—that would have involved a larger hurricane directly striking New Orleans—Katrina ranks among the most devastating disasters (and the most expensive, in terms of monetary losses) the nation has ever experienced.

Even more so than disasters, catastrophes reveal fundamental weaknesses in societal response capabilities. Regardless of the readiness status of disaster management regimes, Katrina would have posed almost insurmountable challenges for local, state, and federal response organizations, particularly in the first few days after impact. Unfortunately, however, Katrina had its greatest impact in a local jurisdiction (New Orleans) and a state (Louisiana) that lacked the capacity to even begin to cope with its scope and severity. The threat to Greater New Orleans was well understood, as were the likely consequences of a large hurricane landfall—including the catastrophic levee failures that caused the most loss of life in the Katrina disaster. Yet local and state agencies had no effective plans, preparedness initiatives, or resources to cope with those consequences.

Again unfortunately, Katrina occurred in the context of the federal-level changes discussed above. Terrorism was seen as the one peril that could have catastrophic consequences for the nation. FEMA had been significantly weakened, and its autonomy compromised. Those in charge of key agencies and response management units were not experts in emergency management, nor were they able to appreciate the challenges presented by a catastrophic event. The National Response Plan had been signed in December, 2004 but was far from being implemented. Roles and responsibilities under the plan were not well understood. In any case, the NRP, with its emphasis on incident command, unified command, and the national incident management system (NIMS), did not address key policy and strategic aspects of disaster management. To make matters worse, the Katrina catastrophe occurred at a time when key decision makers were on vacation or traveling. Particularly during the impact and immediate post-impact periods, there was an absence of situation awareness, a paralysis of the intergovernmental response system, and a lack of understanding of organizational roles and responsibilities—all compounded by bureaucratic rigidity and an overall inability to envision the consequences and response-generated demands that catastrophes produce.

Following Katrina, many hazards researchers and practitioners called for an independent, non-partisan commission—like the Kemeny Commission that was convened after the Three Mile Island nuclear accident—that would study the Katrina response. Such a commission was not created, but nonetheless, Hurricane Katrina now rightly ranks among the most-scrutinized crisis events in U. S. history. The many institutional, organizational, and strategic failures that contributed to the Katrina response debacle have been analyzed in congressional testimony, White House and congressional reports, scholarly papers, reports by professional associations and government agencies such as the Government Accountability Office, popular books, and the mass media (see, for example, Daniels, Kettl., and Kunreuther, 2005; House Select Bipartisan Committee, 2006; Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, 2006; The White House 2006; *Annals,* 2006; Cooper and Block, 2006; McQuaid and Schleifstein, 2006; van Heerden and Bryan, 2006; Government Accountability Office 2007a; 2007b)

Numerous errors of judgment and system inadequacies have been identified and numerous recommendations made. Different analyses converge on key points relating to the need for a greater focus on the threats all types of hazards, not just terrorism, pose for the nation, its people, and the economy; clarification of the roles of different organizations and levels of government in comprehensive emergency management; the mobilization of resources sufficient to the task of preparing the nation for extreme events and responding to such events; the need for both flexibility and accountability in disaster response operations; and the reversal of longstanding governmental practices that hamper the nation's ability to respond effectively during disasters, such as appointing non-experts and inexperienced personnel to key positions for which they are unqualified.

The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act seeks to correct conditions that compromised FEMA's ability to respond effectively to disasters. DHS offices and divisions that logically should have been (or had been) located within FEMA—including in particular part of the Preparedness Directorate and the Office of State and Local Government Coordination—are being moved there. The authority of the Secretary of Homeland Security and the FEMA administrator are being clarified. Other reforms center on the need to better understand and prepare for various types of catastrophes the nation will face in the future. The assessment of preparedness and training efforts is being given a high priority. FEMA has recently taken on lead responsibility for mass care during disasters, a role formerly played by the Red Cross. Various post-September 11 programs, such as the National Response Plan and the National Preparedness Goal (NPG) are being more closely vetted and hopefully improved.

This is not the first time such recommendations have been made. Following Hurricane Andrew, for example, Congress asked the National Academy of Public Administration to conduct a study on the factors that contributed to the mismanagement of that disaster. The following are among the key findings reported in the NAPA study report (2003), which was entitled *Coping With Catastrophe: Building an Emergency Management System to Meet People's Needs in Natural and Manmade Disasters*:

--The President should have a domestic crisis monitoring unit to assure that federal responses to major disasters are timely, effective, and well coordinated;
--FEMA was like a "patient in triage" that should either be treated or left to die;
--FEMA could only play its appropriate role in disasters if the White House and Congress took appropriate steps to make it a viable institution;
--The only political appointees in FEMA should be the director and deputy director, and FEMA should have a career executive director, and the agency should develop a competent and professional career staff;
--An all-hazards approach should be taken to managing disasters; and
--FEMA and emergency management are overseen by too many congressional committees

After Hurricane Andrew, steps were taken to strengthen and professionalize FEMA and to allow the director of FEMA greater direct access to the President during major disasters. New programs were initiated, particularly in the area of pre-disaster mitigation and community capacity-building. Issues of short- and long-term disaster recovery also received greater emphasis. During that same period in the 1990s, emergency management began to emerge as a profession requiring a broad range of educational, training, and on-the-job experiences. Critical skill-sets were identified, professional associations grew in size, and credentialing mechanisms were put in place. Unfortunately, many of these positive changes were reversed or crippled following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

In the aftermath of Katrina, the nation again finds itself at a crossroads with respect to strategies for achieving comprehensive emergency management—that is, a set of institutional and organizational arrangements and a culture of safety that is capable of addressing issues related to mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery for all hazards, including both more-familiar and emerging threats (e.g., CBRN weapons, pandemic influenza, bioterrorism).

It is of course too soon to tell what the ultimate outcomes post-Katrina reforms will be. My professional assessment is that the nation's emergency management system has been compromised to a degree that the road back will be very difficult. Strong leadership, new resources, and vigilant oversight will be needed. It may take years to see positive outcomes from post-Katrina reforms—years that will unfortunately be marked by more and perhaps even more severe disasters.

The Future: Enhancing FEMA's Ability to Function Effectively in Extreme Events

The "New FEMA" is in the process of being created. However, at this time almost no information exists on how proposed and in-process changes will affect the agency's ability to respond in the future, particularly to catastrophic events. Nor do we know how FEMA is likely to function in the future with respect to *disaster loss reduction*, as opposed to *disaster response*. There are a number of key areas that in my view must be addressed now. Major changes must be instituted, the necessary resources must be applied to help solve glaring deficiencies in our intergovernmental system of emergency

management, and those given responsibility for the implementation of new reforms must be held accountable through strong oversight at various levels of government. Not necessarily in order of priority, these are my own personal recommendations:

1. Ensure that the nation develops a fully-functional intergovernmental emergency management system, placing a priority on the nation's most vulnerable urban areas.

The nation does not currently have an effective intergovernmental system for managing hazards and disasters. What now exists is a patchwork or lily pad arrangement within which some entities have the knowledge, resources, and political clout to deliver effective programs, but the majority do not. This "leaders and laggers" phenomenon of course applies in all areas of governance, but it is particularly noteworthy in the area of emergency management. As many investigations have shown, lack of state and local capacity was a key factor in the Katrina catastrophe.

Members of the American public should not be put at greater risk merely because of the states and communities in which they reside. Targeted efforts are needed to keep leaders strong while simultaneously improving the capabilities of states and local jurisdictions that lag behind.

Such efforts must also be risk- and vulnerability-based. The potential for catastrophic losses from disaster events is well understood among researchers and practitioners. Metrics already exist to assess communities around the U.S. in terms of their hazards and their built environment and population vulnerabilities. We know where the likelihood of truly staggering losses is highest.

The Urban Areas Security Initiative attempts to use risk-based criteria in its homeland security funding allocations. Many argue that UASI investments have helped prepare the nation's cities to respond during disasters, but there is in fact no conclusive evidence that this is the case. There must be a parallel and coordinated national initiative to prepare our most vulnerable communities for all hazards—or perhaps UASI needs to be transformed in that direction, with needed modifications. I emphasize again that we have all the tools we need to understand our nation's vulnerability to hazards. What are lacking are comprehensive vulnerability-based loss reduction programs.

2. Ensure that an all-hazards approach to emergency management is implemented at all levels of government.

The federal government's official position is supportive of an all-hazards approach to disaster management—that is, an approach that takes into account the various perils that the nation and its communities face. At the same time, however, investments in terrorism-related programs far outstrip those centering on other hazards. The scenarios for which communities around the country are required to prepare as part of the National Preparedness Goal are still skewed toward terrorism-related threats and in many cases highly exotic threats. The 2006 hurricane season was a relatively quiet one, as is 2007 so

far. Perhaps the pendulum of concern is moving back toward terrorism threats, even as efforts are being made to implement post-Katrina reforms.

The strategy that promises to save lives and protect property is one in which the federal government, states, and local jurisdictions collaborate on the development of risk- and vulnerability-based emergency management solutions. Such approaches must be based on objective assessments of the nature, range, frequency, and expected severity of all hazards faced by U. S. communities, individually and collectively. State and local agencies that receive funding through terrorism-related programs will naturally focus on preparing for terrorism-related threats despite whatever efforts they may be making to plan for natural and technological disasters. Incentives must be provided for genuine all-hazards loss reduction efforts that consider terrorism in the context of the range of hazard-related problems communities face.

Implementation of a genuine all-hazards approach is only possible if it is supported by changes in institutional and organizational cultures and led by committed experts. Likewise, it can only be implemented if accompanied by vigorous efforts to overcome the stovepiped nature of current disaster and homeland security preparedness efforts.

3. Ensure that FEMA and other crisis-relevant organizations center their efforts on comprehensive emergency management.

The concept of comprehensive emergency management includes both the all-hazards orientation described above and a focus on actions and programs addressing the classic four phases of the hazard/disaster cycle: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. This particular hearing centers on emergency preparedness and response issues, but a national strategy must place equal emphasis on longer-term pre-event and post-event loss-reduction activities. This disaster phase-based approach has been advocated since the late 1970s and was being implemented prior to the 9-11 terrorist attacks. It resembles in many respects the national strategy for combating terrorism, which focuses first on preventing attacks from taking place in the first place, mitigating the effects potential attacks (e.g., through blast-resistant design and other protective measures), then preparing for, responding to, and recovering from those attacks.

With respect to pre-event mitigation, just as it better to keep people healthy than it is to cure disease, it is better to mitigate the effects of disasters before they strike than to suffer larger losses and attempt to pick up the pieces. Yet this is exactly what the nation's current emergency management system is structured to do: wait for a disaster event to occur, respond, and provide assistance to victims. Currently the best way for states and local communities to obtain funds for hazard mitigation is to experience a disaster and then apply for post-disaster mitigation dollars. This situation is changing, but not rapidly enough or on a large enough scale. This despite the fact that a congressionally-mandated five-year-long study recently showed that federal mitigation projects and programs reduce future disaster losses both to the nation and to the federal treasury (National Institute of Building Sciences, Multihazard Mitigation Council 2005).

Attention to short- and long-term recovery issues will again help ensure that the disruption and further losses caused by disasters do not extend into the future. A nationwide disaster management strategy must focus not only on response-related preparedness, but on pre-event planning for post-event recovery. This type of preparedness planning is not being addressed to any great degree at present. That the nation lacks a recovery strategy for large-scale disaster events is all too glaringly evident in the Gulf Region.

Put another way, along with enhancing *preparedness and disaster response*, the nation must focus its emergency management strategy on *disaster impact and loss reduction.* This means developing and implementing programs based on an all-hazards strategy that also includes effective interventions at all phases of the hazard/disaster cycle.

4. Explore organizational arrangements and authorities that de-politicize high leadership positions within FEMA, DHS, and other crisis-relevant organizations.

Former FEMA director James Lee Witt often said that disasters are political by their very nature, and this is clearly the case. Challenging leaders and institutions and often garnering enormous media attention, disasters can make or break political careers. They also constitute arenas in which political conflicts are played out and provide many opportunities for the exercise of political largesse.

However, the fact that disasters are inherently political does not mean that their management should be governed by partisan politics or that FEMA, DHS, and other crisis-relevant organizations should be politicized. Earlier I mentioned the 1993 NAPA report, which focused on the high proportion of political appointees in key positions in FEMA prior to Hurricane Andrew. Since Andrew, and in particular since the terrorist attacks of 2001 and Hurricane Katrina, even greater attention is being paid to both the politicization of disasters and to the need for disaster management by professionals.

The NAPA report argued that while the head of FEMA can be a political appointee, the agency should also have a career executive director. Katrina has again raised questions regarding how to make heads of FEMA—as well as other agencies in key response roles—both politically accountable and insulated from partisan politics. In a chapter in a recently-published history of emergency management in the U.S., public administration experts Robert Ward and Gary Wamsley (2007) suggest that FEMA and other key disaster response agencies follow the model of the Federal Reserve System and the Government Accountability Office "in which presidential and congressional oversight balance partisanship and expertise" (Ward and Wamsley 2007: 234). Such steps are warranted, they argue, because of the need to "assure citizens and partners in the emergency management network that competent and experienced professionals will direct federal emergency management activities" (Ward and Wamsley, 2007: 234).

Calls for accountability and professionalism stem from the recognition that emergency management efforts cannot succeed without the public's trust. That disasters always

involve politics is inarguable. That disasters should be managed on the basis of political agendas is unacceptable.

5. Invest in and mobilize institutions that provide the "backbone" for effective emergency management.

This recommendation has two parts. Congress and the agencies must address the fact that many critical systems on which the nation will rely during future emergencies are already overstrained. This applies in particular to the health care and public health sectors. Current preparedness efforts—for example, pandemic flu and bioterrorism planning—mean little if critical crisis-relevant organizations are unable to function effectively when disaster strikes. As we all know, the critical infrastructure on which effective disaster responses depend is largely in private hands. Massive public-private partnership efforts are needed. Plans will become what sociologist Lee Clarke terms "fantasy documents" (Clarke, 1999) unless the nation invests in much-needed improvements.

The second part of this recommendation relates to the need to expand and strengthen the role of civil society institutions in the management of hazards and disasters. Research consistently shows that community residents and those directly affected are the true first responders when disaster strikes. While disasters like Katrina are national and even global events, disasters are first and foremost local. The nation has a rich and vibrant civil society composed of numerous and diverse organizations and groups that could perform critical functions during disasters but that are not yet equipped to do so. Disaster preparedness networks such as the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, Emergency Network Los Angeles, and other national and local organizations need to be strengthened and better integrated into public sector preparedness efforts. Programs such as Citizen Corps, Community Emergency Response Teams, and Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams are a step in the right direction but are grossly under-supported.

A logical strategy is to develop programs to enhance the preparedness of organizations that normally provide services to at-risk populations and that would be required to do even more during disasters. Investing in initiatives that target the critical civic infrastructure and organizations that comprise the nation's social safety net during non-disaster times is a wise strategy.

6. Develop and implement a strategic emergency management workforce strategy for the nation.

In its May, 2007 report, the Government Accountability Office noted that FEMA "lacks a strategic workforce plan and related human capital strategies" (2007:11) and also noted that FEMA is making an effort to address this gap. Workforce issues are critical in the emergency management sector, not only within FEMA but across federal agencies, other levels of government, and the private sector. With respect specifically to FEMA, the post-9-11 brain drain has already been noted. Compounding this problem is a trend that

all governmental agencies face: the impending retirements of large numbers of senior staff. These challenges take place in the context of a growing need for knowledgeable, trained emergency management professionals.

Recruitment and retention strategies are needed, not only within FEMA and DHS, but also within other key crisis-relevant organizations covered by the NRP. Beyond the federal family, parallel efforts are needed at regional, state, and local levels.

Steps must be taken to strengthen the training and education pipeline to ensure the nation's ability to sustain emergency management capability over time. The next generation is keenly interested in fields related to emergency management and homeland security. There are now more than 100 different emergency management degree and certificate programs in U. S. higher education institutions. Many were established after 9-11 in response to the war on terrorism. Since Katrina, colleges and universities have become even more interested in adding courses on disaster research and emergency management to their curricula. FEMA's Higher Education Program coordinates knowledge transfer and curriculum development efforts in the areas of homeland security and emergency management. The DHS academic centers of excellence program also has a major priority the training of students who can move on to become members of the homeland security/emergency management workforce. These activities alone are not enough; more resources are needed to ensure workforce continuity. Taking into account both demographic trends in the U. S. and the characteristics of at-risk populations, the emergency management work force must also become much more diverse.

Intensified training efforts are also needed, not only for first responders but also for emergency management professionals. The contemporary field of emergency management spans a variety of disciplines, including public administration, public finance and policy, disaster law, risk and vulnerability analysis, risk communication, and management science. Certificates and credentials already exist for the field, but professionalization and training efforts for mid- and upper-level managers must be strengthened even more to ensure that those who have to make hard decisions in future disasters will be intellectually equipped to do so.

7. Build oversight, accountability, and evaluation into emergency management programs at all levels of government.

Many recommendations developed in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina center on the need for greater transparency and accountability with respect to emergency management programs and personnel. It is too soon to say how these recommendations are being implemented, but clearly there is a need for careful, ongoing oversight in these areas. In that same vein, the federal government in particular needs to take the lead with respect to evaluating emergency management initiatives and programs. It is astonishing that so much has been invested and so many initiatives have been launched in the area of emergency management without systematic research on program effectiveness. I noted earlier that owing to a congressional mandate FEMA undertook a study on the cost-effectiveness of some of its post-disaster mitigation programs. Just this year, FEMA

released an assessment of its decades-old national flood insurance program. These efforts warrant mention because they are so rare.

Systematic program evaluation involves the application of scientific methods to the study of program processes, outputs, and outcomes. This type of evaluation can be distinguished from anecdotal, self-report, and compliance-oriented approaches to measuring program success. The fact that some people believe that a particular program worked well in a particular community context says nothing about the potential effectiveness of that program in other communities, or about whether experts would agree that the program has succeeded. As in other policy areas, emergency management programs quite frequently rely on self-assessments, as opposed to objective assessments of program effectiveness. There is also a tendency to take a checklist or compliance approach to assessment that lacks nuance and attention to local circumstances. Some aspects of emergency management doctrine have been accepted without systematically-collected evidence of effectiveness. Additionally, like many areas of inquiry and practice, emergency management is also susceptible to fads and fashions that are adopted wholesale without evidence or sufficient critical assessment.

At this time, the goal of *evidence-based emergency management* remains elusive, but the need for objective assessments of programs and practices is clearer than ever before. Reasonable people might well wonder which emergency management practices actually achieve their intended results, where emergency management programs are falling short, and which investments are likely to bring the greatest return. Likewise they might wonder whether the communities in which they live will be able to meet their needs during future disasters. Does the federal government not owe it to the nation to answer such questions?

References

American Society of Civil Engineers. 2005. Hurricane Katrina: Who's in Charge of the New Orleans Levees? Washington, DC: American Society of Civil Engineers.

Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. 2006. *Shelter from the Storm: Repairing the National Emergency Management System after Hurricane Katrina,* W. L. Waugh (ed.) Vol. 604, March. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Clarke, L. 1999. *Mission Improbable: Using Fantasy Documents to Tame Disaster.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cooper, C. and Robert Block. 2006. *Disaster: Hurricane Katrina and the Failure of Homeland Security.* New York: Henry Holt and Co.

Daniels, R. J., D. F. Kettl, and H.Kunreuther. 2005. *On Risk and Disaster: Lessons from Hurricane Katrina.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Government Accountability Office 2007a. *Homeland Security: Preparing for and Responding to Disasters.* GAO-07-395T. March 9, 2007.

Government Accountability Office 2007b. *Homeland Security: Observations on DHS and FEMA Efforts to Prepare for and Respond to Major and Catastrophic Disasters and Address Related Recommendations and Legislation.* GAO-07-835T. May 15, 2007.

Harrald, J. 2007. "Emergency Management Restructured: Intended and Unintended Outcomes of Actions Taken Since 9/11. Pp. 161-183 in C. B. Rubin (ed.) *Emergency Management: The American Experience 1900-2005*. Fairfax, VA: Public Entity Risk Institute.

Laska, S. 2004. "What if Hurricane Ivan Had Not Missed New Orleans?" *Natural Hazards Observer* November. Available on the web at http://www.colorado.edu/hazards

McQuaid, J. and M. Schleifstein. 2006. *Path of Destruction: The Devastation of New Orleans and the Coming Age of Superstorms*. Little, Brown and Co.

National Academy of Public Administration. 2003. *Coping With Catastrophe: Building an Emergency Management System to Meet People's Needs in Natural and Manmade Disasters*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Public Administration.

National Institute of Building Sciences, Multihazard Mitigation Council. 2005 *Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves: An Independent Study to Assess the Future Savings from Mitigation Activities.* Washington, DC: National Institute of Building Sciences.

Select Bipartisan Committee. 2006. *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report of the Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina.* Washington, DC: U. S. Congress.

Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. 2006. *Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared.* Washington, DC: United States Senate.

Tierney, K., M. K. Lindell, and R. W. Perry. 2001. *Facing the Unexpected: Disaster Preparedness and Response in the United States.* Washington DC: Joseph Henry Press.

Tierney, K. J. 2003. "Disaster Beliefs and Institutional Interests: Recycling Disaster Myths in the Aftermath of 9-11." Pp. 33-51 in L. Clarke (Ed.) *Terrorism and Disaster: New Threats, New Ideas. Research in Social Problems and Public Policy, Vol. 11.* Elsevier Science Ltd.

Tierney, K. 2006. "Recent Developments in U. S. Homeland Security Policies and Their Implications for the Management of Extreme Events." Pp. 405-412 in H. Rodriguez, E. L. Quarantelli, and R. R. Dynes (Eds.) *Handbook of Disaster Research.* New York: Springer.

Van Heerden, I. and M. Bryan. 2006. *The Storm: What Went Wrong and Why During Hurricane Katrina.* New York: Viking.

Ward. R. and G. Wamsley. 2007. "From a Painful Past to an Uncertain Future." Pp. 208-241 in C. B. Rubin (ed.) *Emergency Management: The American Experience 1900-2005*. Fairfax, VA: Public Entity Risk Institute.

Waugh, W. and R. T. Sylves. 2004. "Organizing the War on Terrorism." *Public Administration Review*. Vol 62, Special Issue: 145-153.

White House. 2006. *The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned.* Washington, DC: The White House.

Witt, J. L. 2004. Testimony before the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations and the Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs, March 24.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank the witness and all members of the panel. We are going to go to questions now. The Chair will recognize our ranking member of the full committee, Mr. Davis.

Mr. Davis.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you very much. I apologize for not being able to stay for additional questions, but I have a meeting with Chairman Waxman down the hall.

Let me start, Mr. Ashwood, just on your comment that if it is legal, ethical, or moral, just to do it. I mean, sometimes I think in the bureaucracy that is what you need is people who are willing to get outside the regulations and the box, and in our Katrina report some of the real hearings are those that were able to step outside the box, see an emergency situation, and respond.

Unfortunately, Government doesn't generally reward that kind of behavior. It gets punished. In private sector you get a promotion. You don't need to say anything, but I think that is what it needs to be, customer service. You have to empower the guy at the window or that person on the street to make a split decision. They are going to make bad decisions once in a while, and we need to be careful about second-guessing everything they do, but that is what it takes in emergencies. Nothing is ever quite neat and fit and wrapped in a neat package when it comes to emergency situations.

My real questions, Mr. Geldhart, are for you, because I represent parts of the National Capital Area. We had an issue a few years ago with Tractor Man. Do you remember Tractor Man?

Mr. GELDHART. Yes, sir.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. It was a disaster. It held up, I think, three or four rush hours while we were waiting to make a decision, and there was nothing. Where are we today? If a similar situation occurred today, do you step into the breach? Are we well coordinated? And for emergencies, whether it is a hurricane or a snow storm or, heaven's sake, a terrorist attack of some kind, have we run any regional models or tests to show how everybody is coordinating?

Mr. GELDHART. Thank you for the question, sir. To answer your question as far as regional models, I am not aware of a regional model that we have run to see if everybody is prepared, but what I would offer is what has happened in just the 4-months that I have been here, to answer your question.

One of the first things that came up when I came onboard was July 4th. In getting into the breach of the first real major event that happened since I have been here and going to all the coordination meetings, all the different folks that were involved and the way that they brought things together was amazing to me, even though I have worked here for 3 years prior, to see the Federal, State, and local coordination, and it showed through in a couple of ways.

First, we had a storm that came in at 5 p.m., with a packed Mall with a bunch of people waiting for the fireworks to happen, and we had to evacuate the mall. The way that flowed from the National Weather Service giving the update to the Federal folks within the Park Police that sent out the message, since they were the lead Federal agency that said we need to get everybody off the mall, to D.C.'s Emergency Management Homeland Security Agency, who

then helped communicate that word out to all of the folks who were on the Mall, to help execute and get everybody off the Mall, MPD being there, Metropolitan Police Department being there. And then once again going back to the outstanding Federal side and opening up all the buildings that we had along the Mall so that folks had a place to go and we had a place where they could get in and out of the storm.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. I was out working parades in Fairfax and stuff. How did it go downtown?

Mr. GELDHART. I think that worked phenomenally, and it worked phenomenally because the folks on the ground, sir, have been doing this for years. What we have been able to do is we have been able to start to attach on, like a Lego, attach on the next level of what we need to do to make this thing come off well.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Who coordinated that?

Mr. GELDHART. That was a mutual coordination effort. When we look at these type of incidents, that one in particular the lead agency in that was Park Police, because they are in charge of the Mall, but everybody falls in behind that, and whether that be D.C. Emergency Management Agency, whether it be Metropolitan Police Department, whether it be Capital Police, if any of those folks are in the lead the others will fall in behind, because this is what we do. We are either in the lead or we support in this region.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. You have issues making sure, if there is any kind of an attack or a huge emergency of some kind, hospitals moving people in and out is the most difficult, getting first responders in, making sure that you are going to draw on the whole region. Do we have agreements with Maryland, the District, Virginia, where they can come from all over? There are differences in tort laws, liability issues, all of those kinds of things if it happens that gives somebody's hesitancy to move people in if they could get sued and the like. Do we have regional agreements that tie that together?

Mr. GELDHART. We do have regional agreements in place for mutual aid, sir. There are MOUs in place for the regions of the National Capital Region to provide mutual aid to each other.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. And you feel confident, if there is something, that you can draw on all the resources of the region, including National Guard, in case of an emergency to bring people in very quickly?

Mr. GELDHART. Not only myself, sir, but whoever is the lead in that particular case.

I can give you one more example. Just this past weekend we had a WMATA worker—Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority worker—notice some dead birds around one of the stations, and in that raised awareness, rose it up to the WMATA operations center, who then called out to several other stations and they found several other dead birds.

In that instance now all of the sudden we have what potentially could be a bunch of different things. Who knows what it is? What we were able to do was coordinate throughout the region. We got on a conference call. We brought everybody together and we said, OK, what do we know right now? What do we know that we can act on? Who is in the lead? Who is in charge?

That happened very quickly, and very quickly we recognized that WMATA was in charge. They were chasing down what they were doing. We had the National Terrorism Task Force there, the Joint Terrorism Task Force was there, Washington Field Office was there, I was on the phone, all of the Homeland Security advisors and emergency management directors coordinated that.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Let me suggest this. I mean, I think some of the things that are helpful that are here is we had the test run on Hurricane Pam in New Orleans, and it wasn't executed, but those are the kinds of things that I think we need to be ahead of the curve.

Mr. GELDHART. Yes, sir.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. You can never predict with precision exactly what emergency you are going to have to encounter. It just never perfectly fits the scenario.

Mr. GELDHART. That is right, sir.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. But in the episodes we have had today, I am happy that you are discussing them all, evacuation, because that is an indication of everybody working together. But in the other episodes we have seen, whether it was the Janitors for Justice, whether it was the Tractor Man, whatever, we have in many cases, I think, seen an inability to get the right decisions made in a timely manner. Evacuation plans are difficult.

Mr. GELDHART. Yes, sir.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. What we need, I think, from our perspective, just speaking for myself, are some test models of how everybody responds, what would be the protocols in a situation like that. We remain a target. The new Homeland Security bill that we just passed starts putting more money into this region and areas that face this.

Weather can be anywhere, but some of the other issues that may face us could be far more severe. I think running tests and models and all that kind of stuff can be very important.

So if you could work with us in terms of what you might be looking at in those areas, what the results are, if you could make it public, but what the plans are, it would make us feel a lot more comfortable.

We have had episodes in this region where one guy having a bad day on the bridge has held up traffic along the East Coast for hours; where one guy driving a tractor on the Mall holds it up and emergency vehicles can't get through. When you see that, you just sit and wonder what if it is a real attack.

I am glad you are back on the job. I hope you are coordinating appropriately and have been out to Fairfax and out to Prince William and out to Arlington and Alexandria and Prince George's and all the other jurisdictions in here. The important thing: do you think they are comfortable with the plans at this point, or are you still getting your feet wet?

Mr. GELDHART. Your question, sir, was whether they are comfortable with the plans that are in place?

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. With the plans that are in place and the coordination, or do you think we are still getting our feet wet?

Mr. GELDHART. I think that at the tactical level, on the ground, as I said earlier, our firefighters within this region, they go from

a one-alarm to a four-alarm fire in a given day. They work with the different jurisdictions within this region. I think those folks are ready. I think they are up to the task and I think they will perform admirably in any condition we throw them into.

I think our coordination and the piece that you are mentioning, sir, that needs to be better—and that I think we would all agree on needs to improve—is at the strategic and operational level. I think that is a constant area of improvement that we need to work on.

One of my top priorities, catastrophic planning, we have to do that in this region. We have to get deeper into that. And it is not a one-person show. This is a team sport here in the National Capital Region. At any given time, somebody is the quarterback, but we are going to drive from my office to have catastrophic planning done.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Well, welcome aboard.

Mr. GELDHART. Thanks.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Let me just say this may be the subject of a future hearing, I may suggest to the chairman, just for this region, because you have Congress and the operations of Government and everything else, and we hope to continue to stay in correspondence with you on this. Thank you very much.

Mr. GELDHART. Thank you, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you, Mr. Davis. I concur that there is a reason to have a specific hearing with respect to this region and to the District.

In the time that we have remaining before we wrap up this hearing for the votes, I want to direct some questions to the members of the panel.

First of all, to Mr. Ashwood and to Mr. West, within your own sphere of activities, do you feel that you are prepared to meet the disasters, let's say, in your State, your respective States?

Mr. ASHWOOD. I will go ahead and tackle that question first. I feel we are better prepared every day. Do I feel we are prepared to meet any disaster? I would have probably told you yes prior to the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, and I would have been totally wrong. I would probably told you yes before the ice storms we had in 2000 and 2001, and I would have been totally wrong.

Mr. KUCINICH. So what do you expect from the Federal Government? I think that is a fair question to ask.

Mr. ASHWOOD. What I expect from the Federal Government, I expect their support. I expect their participation in the planning process. I think that is the key here. It is not the plan, it is the process. It is making sure that all levels of government are in on the front end of the process so that we all know what each other is doing so we can support each other more effectively when the event does occur. That is what I expect.

Mr. KUCINICH. So at this moment what would be your assessment of the ability of the Federal Government to do that?

Mr. ASHWOOD. I would say, as I did in my testimony, my biggest concern is the communication with the Federal Government on what to expect. I don't know if I am talking to FEMA or DHS or the White House or who exactly is calling the shots.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. West.

Mr. WEST. I would concur with his comments. To say we are ready, I would say we are as ready as we can be, given the resources and the funding, personnel, etc., that we have had over the last 20 years. A good emergency manager probably would refrain from ever saying they are ready, but we are getting ready.

Mr. KUCINICH. Let me go back to Mr. Ashwood a minute. Is it your opinion that, in light of the testimony that you have heard today on the previous panel and in light of what you have experienced and heard based on your work for the State of Oklahoma, does it appear that there is some shifting of responsibility back to the State and local level as a means of trying to forego Federal responsibility for its appropriate role in helping to coordinate and provide resources for a disaster?

Mr. ASHWOOD. Probably not. I will say this because I do have a great deal of respect for Dave Paulison. I think he is trying to do the right thing. I think what the real issue here is, though, is that disasters are a bottom-up event. You have to have a strong base. The stronger local government is, the stronger the State is, the stronger the individual citizen is, and the more prepared that they are the better prepared that we are nationally.

Mr. KUCINICH. So if the communication is there, then you have the chance for preparation?

Mr. ASHWOOD. Absolutely, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Would you agree with that, Mr. West?

Mr. WEST. Yes, sir, and at the end of the day people like me and my elected officials have to face our citizens, and they say we did well or we did not. Certainly FEMA and our State is going to be involved in that, but we have to live with these people after everybody else goes home.

Mr. KUCINICH. I want to go back to the issue of preparedness. We are still working with the old National Response Plan. I mean, they haven't really implemented a new one. They are talking about it. How does using this old plan affect your State of Oklahoma and your State of North Carolina, Mr. Ashwood?

Mr. ASHWOOD. I don't think it does, really, to tell you the truth, and I was part of the initial writing team of the first National Response Plan. Frankly, I didn't know what was wrong with the Federal Response Plan prior to that except that there needed to be a national plan, which makes perfect sense, to incorporate all levels of government in the process. When that didn't happen, I lost a lot of faith in the National Response Plan in any form.

Mr. KUCINICH. Well, there is a new plan. How long do you think it will take to implement a new plan once it is put in place?

Mr. ASHWOOD. Having not read it, I have no idea, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. But it does take time to implement a plan?

Mr. ASHWOOD. Absolutely.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. West.

Mr. WEST. Yes, sir, I agree. I concur with his comments. We felt good about the fact that we were going to be included in some of the initial work, but then we have not seen any results from that at this point.

Mr. KUCINICH. So you don't know if the input that you provided has been included in the plan?

Mr. WEST. That is correct, sir. I think one of the frustrating things is that we attend listening sessions and various meetings, and we rarely see the results of those meetings being implemented, or suggestions, or things of that nature.

Mr. KUCINICH. Now, were you told, Mr. West, that a high-level DHS official was rewriting the plan but with no input from State and local officials?

Mr. WEST. That is correct, and I was pleased to hear today that this is going out in draft form for comment, because we were not aware of that until today.

Mr. KUCINICH. OK. I think this committee would be interested to know, when the draft report gets to the State level, whether or not that draft report reflects the input from the State in terms of enhanced communication.

Mr. Ashwood.

Mr. ASHWOOD. I would be glad to, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. West.

Mr. WEST. Absolutely.

Mr. KUCINICH. Now, to Mr. Ashwood and Mr. West, you are concerned that your input be included in that?

Mr. ASHWOOD. Absolutely.

Mr. KUCINICH. I want to go to the decisionmaking at FEMA before we conclude. Many people have expressed concern to our staff that decisions at FEMA are not being made by on-the-ground regional directors, but instead are being made by bureaucrats in Washington; therefore, decisions that used to be made by experienced management coordinators who were most knowledgeable about the needs of the area are being overruled by attorneys and people in the Office of Management and Budget.

Now, Mr. Ashwood, I understand that you faced this problem recently when you attempted to get a declaration of emergency in Oklahoma; is that correct?

Mr. ASHWOOD. Yes, sir, that is correct.

Mr. KUCINICH. And what would you tell this committee that might facilitate, let's say, a quick response to a State that needed a declaration? What could we do to make sure we serve your constituency?

Mr. ASHWOOD. I could illustrate the frustration that we had, and we have actually had it a couple of times this year. The most recent request we had, our Governor on July 5th of this year requested that four counties be declared for individual assistance because of torrential rainfall and flooding that we had across the State from May 24th to that time period, over a month's time. We had record rainfall and we had documentation from the National Weather Service showing record rainfall during that entire period of time.

We requested four counties be declared for individual assistance. We requested that the time period begin May 24th to the present. And we requested that direct Federal assistance—that would be Federal resources such as water and ice and that type of thing—be made available for these four counties.

The turnaround on that request was exceptional. It was within 24 hours. However, receiving the answer to our request, we received two counties for declaration, no direct Federal assistance nor

no mention of direct Federal assistance, and the timeframe had changed from June 10th to the present rather than May 24th to the present.

Now, while I am not saying that we were totally correct on everything, it would seem to me that if there was a problem with our request, the Governor's request to the President, that a phone would have been picked up somewhere along the line and said, look, we have a problem here, can we talk about it and work this thing out, rather than just making a unilateral decision and saying, Here, take it.

Mr. KUCINICH. The interesting thing about your testimony and what we have heard from Mr. West is that the lack of communication in this era of cell phones and pagers and every manner of being able to contact people instantaneously, it still comes down to human relations, people talking to people saying how do we work this out and how do we come together.

I think that your testimony today will send a message to FEMA of the urgency of not only including you in the planning, but also in tightening up lines of communication so that mobilization in the case of disaster can happen. I think that the testimony of Mr. Tierney in terms of the specific steps that have to be taken is really important in this regard, and I am hopeful that FEMA will reflect on it.

Mr. Darnell, you have given us an image of a system that you are really working to test, but also involve more and more people. When I heard you speak, it reminded me of the kind of preparedness that we saw communities involved with in Y2K, which was a kind of model. Had you thought about that?

Mr. DARNELL. Well, I wasn't at the local level during Y2K, but a lot of my experiences are born out of my previous experience at Department of Justice and DHS, particularly in interoperable communications and in the planning aspects of it.

One of the things that we try to do in the NCR, going to Congressman Davis' concerns about the Tractor Man incident, all of our emergency operations centers now can work an event or an incident using a common operating picture, and we couldn't do that in the past, and so we have software programs called WebEOC that all 140 emergency operations centers in the National Capital Region are using. What that allows us to do is have real-time situational awareness looking at the same information, sending out the same messages on the same information system and sharing that information. That makes it easier to communicate.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Darnell, I want to thank you for that response.

I have just been notified that we have about 4 minutes left on a vote.

We have had an extensive hearing today, and the participation of each and every one of the witnesses here has been essential for us to be able to continue our efforts to make sure that this country is better prepared to be able to meet the needs of disasters and emergencies.

This has been a hearing of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives. I am Dennis Kucinich, and I am the Chair of the Subcommittee on Domestic

Policy. I have been privileged to Chair these proceedings with the permission and good graces of Chairman Waxman, who is the Chair of our full committee. We have had a very extensive discussion that started at 10. The panel has been patient, and your participation has been invaluable.

The committee is going to continue to proceed to explore the issues that came out as a result of your testimony and the previous panel's.

At this point I want to thank the panel. You are excused.

This concludes the hearing of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, the hearing on FEMA preparedness on 2007 and beyond. Thank you very much. Good afternoon.

[Whereupon, at 2:07 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

[The prepared statement of Hon. Edolphus Towns and additional information submitted for the hearing record follow:]

Opening Statement of Rep. Edolphus Towns

"FEMA's Preparedness for the Next Major Disaster"

July 31, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and welcome to our witnesses. We are fortunate to have each of you with us today to hear your views on the changes that FEMA has undergone following Hurricane Katrina and to answer the critical question: Are we better prepared today to respond to the next catastrophic disaster?

Millions saw the images of thousands of New Orleans residents stranded for days on roofs, overpasses, and the Superdome, pleading for food, water and aid. It was a national disgrace that prompted investigations and legislation to ensure it never happened again. While I have no doubt that FEMA has come a long way from where it was, I'm glad we're looking at whether FEMA has come far enough.

I hope our witnesses today can discuss some of the issues that I've been working on in my Subcommittee on management and procurement. What progress has been made in having contracts in place in advance, so the government doesn't enter into high-cost, poorly-defined contracts after an emergency? What are FEMA's

standards for providing high-quality customer service to disaster victims, and are the standards being met? Are small, local, and disadvantaged businesses being utilized in ongoing recovery efforts? And how does FEMA measure the performance of its contractors, so that the best companies are rewarded with new work, and the poor performers are phased out?

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on these issues, and discussing what everyone can do to support the ongoing process of strengthening FEMA. I yield back.

UNCLASSIFIED

FOR THE RECORD

STATEMENT BY

MAJOR GENERAL TERRY L. SCHERLING
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU JOINT STAFF

BEFORE THE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

FIRST SESSION, 110TH CONGRESS

ON

"FEMA PREPAREDNESS IN 2007"

JULY 31, 2007

NOT FOR PUBLIC DISSEMINATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY
THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

UNCLASSIFIED

STATEMENT BY
MAJOR GENERAL TERRY L. SCHERLING
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU JOINT STAFF

Chairman Waxman, ranking member Davis and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the role of the National Guard in support to civil authorities during disasters. While the Army and Air National Guard are engaged with our active duty counterparts in combat operations around the world, the National Guard also maintains capability to help state governors to respond to disasters and other threats to American people here at home.

The Army and Air National Guard are reserve components of the United States Army and the United States Air Force. As such, our reason for existence is to provide units ready to be called to active duty to meet the Nation's military needs.

While the National Guard actively provides units to be mobilized for duty in combat operations overseas, we also recognize that the Nation's governors rely on their National Guard forces here at home to provide needed capability to respond to natural disaster or other threats inside the homeland.

The National Guard Chain of Command in Disasters

There is a saying among first responders that, like politics, all disasters are local. This phrase alludes to the fact that in emergency management, the incident commander is usually an official at the local government level. With limited capabilities to respond to major disasters, such officials frequently turn to their state governors for further assistance. Because the Army and Air National Guard, in addition to being reserve components of the U.S Army and Air Force, are also the organized militia of the States under the U.S. Constitution, the National Guard is frequently called to state duty by Governors when our military equipment, organization and skills provide the capabilities needed to help respond to an emergency. Therefore, when the National Guard responds to disasters, it does so under state command.

There are provisions under law by which the National Guard may be federalized and thus operate under federal command but such federalizations generally result in the National Guard being less capable of providing support to law enforcement due to restrictions inherent in the Posse Commitatus Act. Generally, it has been the National Guard's experience, therefore, that domestic operations are best conducted under state command.

Another option for structuring the National Guard's chain of command is the dual-hatted state/federal military command authority in Title 32. In 2004, domestic operations supporting the G-8 summit at Sea Island, Georgia as well as the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, a National Guard general officer appointed under this authority was successful in simultaneously commanding both active duty troops and National Guard troops in state status. This helped to achieve unity of effort between state and federal forces. That sort of unified effort is particularly important in a multi-state emergency. We need to look for ways to make good use of the dual-hat authority in these types of events in the future.

How the National Guard Bureau Will Respond

Since September 11, the National Guard has performed an increasing number of domestic operations which were executed under state command but funded by the federal government under provisions of Title 32 of the U.S. Code. The National Guard's airport security mission conducted immediately after 9/11, our entire response to Hurricane Katrina, and our current Operation Jump Start assisting in border security were all conducted in this manner. This combines the flexibility, responsiveness and law enforcement support capabilities of state command with the tremendous power of federal resources to give the Nation a strong capability to bring military resources to aid civilians in distress. Governors count on the National Guard to be the first military responder and call on Guard assets within the first hours of an event.

At the National Guard Bureau, we have made a commitment to the governors that our goal will be to manage National Guard mobilizations and overseas deployments to the degree that we can ensure no more than 50 percent of any particular state's

National Guard forces are absent from the state at any given time. The intent is to meet the Nation's military requirements overseas and, at the same time, to have capability remaining in states here at home to help Governors meet needs that may arise during domestic emergencies. In general, we have been successful in meeting this goal. In those few instances where it has been necessary to mobilize more than 50 percent of a state's National Guard, we have worked closely with those governors to help them to identify and, if needed, to access National Guard capabilities in other states through interstate loans under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.

The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), which was quite effective in the response to Hurricane Katrina, is a proven means of redistributing resources from state to state in order to address unfulfilled requirements. As we work to improve our domestic equipping posture, EMAC will play a major role in our domestic response capability. When a disaster overwhelms the capability resident in a state, the state may obtain equipment and forces from neighboring states in this way but that, of course, takes time.

At the beginning of this year, the Army National Guard had on-hand approximately 40% of the equipment which it is required to have. When equipment is needed but not on-hand at a particular location, it is necessary to bring in equipment from farther away either from other units within a state, or from other states under EMAC.

The Department of Defense is taking strong decisive action to address the equipment needs in the National Guard. The budget request now before Congress includes $22 billion for Army National Guard equipment over the next five years. If provided, these funds would bring the Army National Guard up to approximately 76% of the equipment its stated requirement. This increased level of equipping will not only improve the military combat readiness of our units in the Army National Guard but will also decrease response times to domestic emergencies here in the homeland as more equipment is available in the states.

Lesson Learned From Katrina

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the National Guard Bureau has developed and implemented a number of initiatives which will further enhance the capability of the National Guard to provide support to civilian authorities in times of disaster.

The Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina final report titled, "A Failure of Initiative", identified four findings the National Guard Bureau has taken quite seriously.

The report states the committees finding that the Department of Defense had not incorporated or implemented lessons learned form joint exercises in military assistance to civil authorities that would have allowed for a more effective response to Katrina. At the National Guard Bureau, we have developed and integrated after action reports to serve as the basis for future domestic planning efforts.

The committee also found that the lack of integration of National Guard and active duty forces hampered the military response. At the National Guard Bureau, we have addressed this issue by ensuring National Guard supporting plans are provided and included in Northern Command's domestic response plans.

The select bipartisan committee report also raised concern that the Northern Command does not have insight into state response capabilities or adequate interface with governors. Since Hurricane Katrina, the National Guard Bureau and the United States Northern Command have convened several exercises and conferences where state and federal forces share information and plans. In fact, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau is not available to testify at this hearing today because he is participating in a meeting of National Guard Adjutants General with U.S. Northern Command. Along with providing supporting plans, the National Guard has a fulltime staff of title 10 personnel permanently assigned to Northern Command. This provides key leaders with

immediate access and experts on National Guard capabilities available to civil authorities.

Finally, the committee's report expressed the concern that National Guard troops should have been placed in Title 32 status earlier during the response to Hurricane Katrina. This has been addressed by the Department of Defense leadership by noting the necessity and value in expediting an authorization for Title 32 funds for appropriate emergency response operations.

In addition, the National Guard Bureau recognizes that interagency relationships are fundamental to the success of the federal response to any disaster, and we must continue to foster strong relationships with the Department of Homeland Security and Northern Command. The National Guard Bureau has a fulltime Title 10 liaison officer integrated into the staff at the Department of Homeland Security and one at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Indeed, coordination efforts to date, point to the need for better planning, procurement of more equipment and interoperable communications, and joint training of the National Guard, active duty forces, and our federal partners.

I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before the committee today and welcome your questions.

○