

Statement of

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Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental  
Affairs

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Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Collins and Members of the Committee, I am pleased to be here today to discuss progress toward the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) preparedness for catastrophic events. Through lessons learned from both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, FEMA has built and continues to build our Nation's capability to respond to any and all incidents that may occur, and to aid in the country's recovery process as necessary.

It is important to provide the committee and the American people with an update of what FEMA has accomplished with the resources provided by Congress over the past two-and-a-half years since Katrina and Rita. The FEMA of 2008 is not the FEMA of 2005. We have dramatically improved our ability to aid the Nation in preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating against disasters, both natural and man-made. In doing so, we have worked with the emergency management community, the Congress, and all stakeholders at the State and local levels of government.

The FEMA of 2008 is a forward-leaning organization poised to partner with State, tribal, and local officials at the onset of a disaster. This has resulted in FEMA receiving tremendous accolades, most recently with the tornadoes that devastated Arkansas, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

When I took over the position as Administrator of FEMA, I knew that a complete turn around would be neither easy nor quick. With a dedicated staff and hard work, we are carrying out a three-phase approach to bring FEMA back to its position of being the Nation's preeminent preparedness and emergency management agency. The first phase established the vision of what the New FEMA would be. This vision, which we structured around the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) and other legislation directed at clarifying FEMA's roles, was our major focus in FY 2007 and early FY 2008. This legislation guided us on our path forward. The physical transition of preparedness components into FEMA on April 1, 2007, completed Phase 1 of our transformation.

Phase 2 is the ongoing implementation phase. We are not just paying lip-service to the guidance Congress gave in legislation, but the breadth of full implementation has been neither quick nor simple. I pledge that I will try to complete Phase 2 "Implementation" before I leave my post. We experience success every day implementing reforms from the legislation; whether it is providing timely reports to Congress or reaching our goal of staffing 95 percent of our authorized strength.

The progress that FEMA is able to make and the success we experience would be impossible without our dedicated employees. The FEMA workforce has made me proud in the three years that I have been Administrator. Every day, whether they have been in their jobs for three months or 30 years, they work hard despite being routinely pummeled for decisions made in the past or press accounts that ignore the facts in favor of a punch line. I have never worked with a group that is more skilled or more committed to its mission. This is true for our long-time career employees, the new professional staff we have brought in, and the leaders in which President Bush and Secretary Chertoff have

placed their faith. We are committed to building a strong team for today and tomorrow that is based in a sound management philosophy. I hope congress will act to help us here by confirming our acting Deputy Administrator - Harvey Johnson. A retired Vice Admiral from the U.S. Coast Guard, Admiral Johnson has been my right-hand in making all of these changes and improvements as our Chief Operating Officer of FEMA. He is well known as a man of impeccable integrity, has more than three decades of direct, on-the-ground relevant experience, and has the respect of his peers, our partners, the Secretary and the President. He is truly an example of the expert and professional we are trying to attract at FEMA in both career and non-career roles. His confirmation will compliment our efforts to identify, recruit, retain and develop the best possible leaders and managers for today and tomorrow by placing a cadre of career senior executive service in all key offices and programs across FEMA.

FEMA has made it a priority to hire seasoned professionals in emergency management into leadership positions. The career employees that FEMA hires are at the top of their game, whether in the field of logistics, in IT or acquisitions, as operational planners, or as experts able to deliver disaster assistance. These are the people who pour their hearts and souls into FEMA and make it what it is, and that will make it the agency that I have described in my vision. Our political employees are individuals with experience in the fields of emergency management and preparedness. Some of these folks have been lieutenant governors, state directors of homeland security, CEOs of nonprofits, firefighters, local emergency managers, and police chiefs. These are qualified individuals whom I trust to stand by me and who allow me to make fast and informed decisions during times of disaster.

As we move forward, the New FEMA will reflect the expanded scope of the agency's mission – a mission supported through building a National Emergency Management System that provides for a more nimble, flexible use of national resources. It will strengthen coordination among FEMA elements and with other DHS components, and will enable FEMA to better coordinate with agencies and departments outside of DHS. It will also deliver enhanced capabilities to partners at the State and local levels and engage the capabilities of the private sector. FEMA will be an organization in touch with America and valued across all jurisdictions as an engaged, agile, responsive, and trusted leader and partner.

We do not take the trust of the American people for granted. The American taxpayers are investors in our agency and we want to be able to give them a return far beyond the dollars they invest in our annual budget. FEMA is meeting the critical challenge of outlining a clear course of action to transform the agency into the Nation's preeminent emergency management and preparedness agency. This effort continues to require a concerted and comprehensive strategic approach and results-oriented planning to efficiently and effectively use future agency budget dollars to build the core competencies and support systems needed to achieve FEMA's vision.

Phase 3 of our transformation will begin in FY 2009. I would like to see much of the groundwork in place this fall. My intent is to leave this agency in a much better position

to serve the American public than I found it, and lay the foundation to allow FEMA to continue as a leader in times of need.

Recently, the Department of Homeland Security's Inspector General (IG) reviewed several aspects of FEMA's operations and issued a report on its findings. The primary objective of the IG's assessment was to identify key areas for preparing for catastrophic events and to determine the progress FEMA has made in key areas since Katrina struck in August 2005. We view the IG report as validation of our efforts and as an additional learning opportunity as we continue our progress. A copy of FEMA's response to the draft of that IG report is attached as a supplement to my formal statement.

FEMA appreciates the IG's assessment that improvements have been made to all components of the agency since Hurricane Katrina in 2005. I believe that FEMA's pace of improvement has been steady, and we have tried to use our resources wisely as we move forward on the many requirements identified and recommended by Congress and others, and through our own self-examination.

While our specific responses to the IG's report are discussed in a formal document recently provided to the IG, I prefer to stress the overall positive nature of this third-party view of FEMA's efforts. We appreciate the IG's recognition in the report's executive summary, which acknowledges and highlights our improvements. FEMA is committed to continuing these efforts. We are continuously bringing on energetic new employees and promoting experienced ones from within, updating our technologies and IT infrastructure, improving our procurement practices, improving the quality of policies and guidance to our Nation, conducting exercises, and actively responding to emergencies.

Without using this formal statement to examine the report's 60-plus pages, I would like to discuss two of the IG's recommendations as illustrative of how FEMA is not only using this report as an additional learning opportunity, but also as an example of how FEMA, in many ways, is already ahead of the curve. That said, I am happy to discuss this report in more detail with the committee either through oral questions during this hearing or through written responses to questions submitted for the record.

Among the IG's points is *Recommendation 1: We recommend that FEMA conduct a comprehensive "needs analysis" to determine where they are now and where they need to be, as an agency, in terms of preparedness for a catastrophic disaster. This will assist FEMA with integrating their projects and avoiding duplicative efforts.*

FEMA agrees with this recommendation, but also believes the report does not reflect the full extent of the work in this area, nor the vast amount of information FEMA has available to identify needs and corrective actions. Indeed, needs have been identified on an ongoing basis and corrective actions are already underway. For example, FEMA recently completed its new Strategic Plan, which takes into account the combined lessons learned from Katrina, as well as suggestions and requirements from numerous sources. This strategic plan, which is being finalized and will go to print shortly, was already

being used as a draft working document by all of the FEMA directorates for the past nine months. Indeed it was instrumental in guiding FEMA's directorates in improving their program development processes. Further, back in December 2006, FEMA published its agency vision and its disaster preparedness concept of operations. Both documents have guided many of our internal actions and priority development. In 2007 FEMA completed 17 specific needs assessments and analyses that spanned our business functions, logistics, and communications. Those assessments provide a blueprint for our change efforts. Also in the past year, we stood up a Program Analysis and Evaluation capability for the first time in FEMA and reinvigorated the Investment Working Group.

Each FEMA office has numerous projects and programs underway to improve service and interoperability with other parts of FEMA, DHS, and our partners across the government and in states and localities. This entire effort is being managed through the combined efforts of frequent senior-staff meetings, working-level staff meetings, the Investment Working Group, and the program analysis division of the Office of Policy and Program Analysis to eliminate duplication and increase our preparedness, mitigation, recovery, and response capabilities.

Since the landfall of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, FEMA has been the subject of dozens of analyses, engagements, studies, and reports. Many of these reports were created by outside entities, including the IG, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and Congress. The IG cites a number of these documents on pages 60 and 61 of their draft report. Furthermore, the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) specified more than 250 actions for FEMA to pursue.

FEMA now has more than 100 open engagements each with the GAO and the IG. This translates to more than 100 open recommendations from GAO, and more than 600 open recommendations from the IG. Many of these recommendations are overlapping and/or complementary.

Clearly there is no shortage of recommended improvements at FEMA and our capability gaps have been clearly spelled out. The sheer workload associated with responding to the administrative documentation requirements of more than 700 recommendations from the IG and GAO is directly impacting our continued efforts to improve FEMA. We believe another assessment or analysis is not required. FEMA officials instead believe that the agency should be given an opportunity to implement the new Strategic Plan and continue to take action on the remaining PKEMRA requirements and any outstanding GAO and IG recommendations.

Another IG recommendation on which FEMA has made progress is: *Recommendation 3: To enhance accountability and transparency, and to enhance the ability of key stakeholders to assist FEMA in achieving its mission, we recommend that FEMA provide regular updates regarding progress on all major preparedness initiatives and projects.*

FEMA is already actively providing these updates and is working on a comprehensive reporting effort that will be completed in April 2008. PKEMRA mandated FEMA brief

Congress on nearly all aspects of preparedness on a quarterly basis. The next briefings to the House and Senate committees are scheduled for early May 2008.

PKEMRA also mandated FEMA provide a number of monthly and quarterly reports to Congress on topics including our quarterly staffing vacancies, National Capital Region planning efforts, the disaster relief fund, disaster contracting, disaster declarations, etc. As we continue to promulgate our national plans and guidance, including the National Response Framework, we have updated Congress and have future legislatively mandated updates scheduled

Finally, per PKEMRA, at the request of Congressional committees, and on our own initiative, FEMA continues to brief Congress on all manner of preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation, and disaster logistics issues.

Mr. Chairman, I firmly believe that there is absolutely no doubt that FEMA, based on its own internal efforts, as well as the efforts of our stakeholders, the Congress, our partners in State and local governments, and our colleagues in the FEMA regions, has seized the opportunities to improve and has rededicated itself to its critical mission and responsibilities. Yes, there is more to be done. Indeed, given the ever-changing events that challenge us every day, there will always be more to do. At the same time, FEMA – and the Nation – have much to be proud of in how we as a country both prepare for and respond to emergencies and disastrous events. In the past 12 months alone, we have exemplified the capabilities of the new FEMA and demonstrated a new way of doing business.

## **RESPONDING TO DISASTERS THIS PAST YEAR**

In the past year, FEMA has responded to many disasters in all regions of the country to include 63 major disaster and 13 emergency presidential declarations. In addition, FEMA issued 60 Fire Management Assistance Grants to assist communities in lessening or averting catastrophes from wildfires. While all of the disasters in 2007 and 2008 were “natural,” an effective response to a natural disaster is a good indication that, with the help of the Federal government, local and State officials will be able to respond effectively to a man-made disaster or act of terror. FEMA has been praised for its readiness and its adept responsiveness in the past year. The following are some of the disasters that FEMA participated in.

FEMA’s response to the tornado in Greensburg, Kansas, for example, was an instance where FEMA’s response was well coordinated, well timed, efficient, and effective. Within hours after the deadly F5 tornado, FEMA arrived onsite with command and control mobile facilities. We began providing temporary housing and direct aid to victims within the first 24 hours, and FEMA’s Disaster Assistance Directorate is playing an integral part in ensuring that needed funds are available for rebuilding.

Following additional tornadoes in the Southeast, FEMA grants made possible a temporary facility to fill in for a destroyed high school and then to replace it permanently

in Alabama. Through a new construction concept, a destroyed hospital in Georgia will be replaced in record time. FEMA's responses to the threat of Hurricane Dean making landfall in the United States, the levee break in Nevada, and the wildfires that raged in California were equally impressive. Coordination occurred among local, State, and Federal emergency managers in each of these instances, and FEMA had true visibility into the resources they needed. Our efforts to improve are working. The American people should feel safer knowing that we are being tested and we are responding well.

During the 2007 California wildfires, FEMA employed a more forward-leaning posture, engaged in stronger collaboration and partnerships at the local, State, and Federal levels, and adopted a greater operational focus, resulting in stronger and more agile disaster response capabilities. The California wildfires included 20-plus fires that burned more than 500,000 acres. The fires destroyed more than 3,000 structures; damaged 200 more; and led to the evacuation of more than 300,000 people. The Federal response included the deployment of more than 10,000 emergency response staff. The response to the California wildfires provided an opportunity to implement and evaluate FEMA's new and enhanced capabilities.

- Upgrades to the National and Regional Response Coordination Centers (NRCC/RRCC) improved our operational capabilities by providing seamless connectivity with the DHS National Operations Center (NOC), California's Emergency Operations Centers, other Federal agencies. The centers provided a forum to share situational awareness and a common operating picture, which allow for immediate decision-making.
- The NRCC also exhibited its new and improved ability to coordinate and exchange information. For example, FEMA held regular and ongoing video teleconferences (VTCs) to facilitate synchronized efforts among the State of California, the Joint Field Office (JFO) and the NRCC. Approximately 25 to 30 organizations participated by video and 50 by audio in daily national VTCs, including substantial and direct involvement of DHS components, Department of Defense senior leadership, and other interagency partners such as the U.S. Forest Service. Using U.S. Forest Service weather reports, a first for FEMA, proved to be invaluable in supporting response efforts.
- FEMA also demonstrated the flexible and scalable response capability of its Federal response teams. Emergency Response Team-National (ERT-N) members were deployed to staff the JFO, and the Atlanta-based Federal Incident Response Support Team (FIRST) provided real-time situational awareness onsite (deployed to Qualcomm Stadium and then to Local Assistance Centers). FEMA had complete and full integration of FEMA and CA OES operations at the JFO.
- Operational planners, a new addition to FEMA staff, also provided improved planning capability at FEMA headquarters. The planners worked with the NRCC activation team and demonstrated their ability to rapidly identify critical issues. They also helped coordinate medical evacuation planning with the Department of

Defense, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and JFO, and they synchronized interagency planning with NORTHCOM and the DHS Incident Management Planning Team.

The response to Hurricane Dean in August 2007 also provided an opportunity to implement and evaluate FEMA's new and enhanced capabilities.

- The agency demonstrated flexible and scalable response capability, with forward deployment of FIRST Atlanta to Puerto Rico to provide real-time situational awareness, followed by its redeployment to the mainland, along with FIRST Chicago's deployment to Texas. FEMA also staged six urban search and rescue task forces in Texas and executed ambulance contracts with HHS to support the State of Texas (results of the gap analysis facilitated the response).
- Operational planners provided improved capabilities in the areas of current and future planning. They also supported Regions II, IV, and VI liaisons in extensive planning with the States and facilitated extensive evacuation coordination and planning between Region VI and Texas.
- FEMA relied on greater use of Pre-scripted Mission Assignments (PSMA), executing about 28 PSMA's with 13 organizations.
- Improved coordination and information exchange took place through daily video teleconferences. About 75 organizations participated by video and 120 by audio in the daily national VTCs.
- The response included substantial and direct involvement of Department of Defense senior leadership, including the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Director of Military Support, the National Guard Bureau, NORTHCOM, and ARNORTH.
- The NRCC/RRCC participated in internal State of Texas conference calls, which improved situational awareness linkages and enhanced decision making.
- Piloted Gap Analysis Program (GAP): methodology providing snapshot of resource shortfalls at local and State levels requiring Federal support. The program focused on debris removal, interim housing, sheltering, evacuation, commodity distribution, medical needs, fuel, and communications. Piloted in 18 hurricane-prone States—facilitated support to Texas.
- More structured After Action Reviews were conducted: Senior Level, Interagency, Regional, NRCC, and Emergency Support Functions.

The position that we are in now, with the support requested in the FY 2009 budget, will help us to further institutionalize these processes that were not possible in the past.

FEMA will also continue to implement internal reforms, perform external outreach, and reorganize into the best agency possible in FY 2009.

## **BECOMING THE NATION'S PREEMINENT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND PREPAREDNESS AGENCY**

Each FEMA directorate and office contributes to reducing the loss of life and property and protecting the Nation from all hazards, including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters. Our staff does so by leading and supporting the Nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.

I would like to highlight the major steps that, with your support, FEMA was able to take last year, as well as our plans for further integrating these programs. This has also included the establishment or modification of several FEMA directorates as well as the establishment or modification of several agency initiatives. Let me take this opportunity to highlight a few of these changes, which very much enhance our preparedness efforts.

### **National Continuity Programs Directorate**

In FY 2009, the National Continuity Programs Directorate (NCP) will work to complete capability demonstration of the Integrated Public Alert Warning System (IPAWS). The objective of IPAWS is to warn and alert the American people in situations of war, terrorist attack, natural disaster, and other hazards to public safety and well-being with a threshold of 85 percent within 10 minutes and target of 95 percent within 10 minutes. NCP also will update protocol to communicate essential and accurate information to the public prior to, during, and after a catastrophe.

FEMA's current warning system, known as the Emergency Alert System (EAS), was put in place in 1994 to replace the Emergency Broadcast System (EBS), which launched in 1963. The EAS allows the President to transmit a national alert to citizens within 10 minutes, and it allows State and local government officials to send messages during non-Federal emergencies. IPAWS leverages digital and satellite technology to expand alerts and warnings from audio to new communication mediums, including text and video available over radio, television, telephones, cell phones, and e-mail. In 2007, NCP partnered with the Sandia National Laboratory on an IPAWS partial-system pilot in the Gulf Coast States of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi during hurricane season. This successful three-state pilot ran from August 2007 through December 31, 2007, and dramatically increased the States' ability to protect residents during an emergency. This program established FEMA's role as the lead Federal agency for national alerts and warnings.

In the event of a national emergency, the President will have the capability to speak to 90 percent of the listening public through the Emergency Alert System (EAS) using radio broadcast stations.

NCP will continue to use its resources to sustain continuity of operations, continuity of government, and contingency programs that are well-developed and operational and continue to enhance interagency communications to support national-level command and control systems. NCP will also continue to develop and deploy new technologies to improve contingency system programs.

In support of FEMA's mission to provide continuity guidance and support to Federal, State, and local governments nationwide, NCP coordinated with DHS and other key stakeholders to draft and publish the National Continuity Implementation Plan, which the President signed in August 2007. NCP also published two Federal Continuity Directives (FCD1 and FCD2) directing executive branch departments and agencies to carry out identified continuity planning requirements and assessment criteria. Additionally, NCP coordinated and supported continuity activities at the national, State, and local levels nationwide, including Philadelphia Liberty Down, an interagency continuity of operations exercise that involved more than 700 key government officials.

### **Mitigation Directorate**

FEMA has also made a significant investment in its Mitigation Directorate, especially in the Directorate's workforce and its ability to affect real change in practices that make the Nation safer, stronger, and more resistant to disaster. Over the past year, FEMA's Mitigation Directorate succeeded in its effort to get improved disaster-resistance standards included in the Nation's material and building codes, to train more inspectors than ever, and to support communities nationwide through technical assistance and grants.

The directorate's National Hurricane Program, for example, will complete four hurricane evacuation studies that affect coastal counties in four States (to be determined) by providing technical information in order to safely evacuate those coastal populations that may be impacted by potential storm surge inundation from Category 1-5 hurricanes. Further, the National Dam Safety Program will continue the development and implementation of technologies and tools to identify and prioritize the risks associated with state-regulated high- and significant-hazard potential dams. Risk assessment and risk prioritization of our Nation's aging dam infrastructure is a clear priority. Regional and Disaster Support will develop a system to track and ensure the continued relevance of disaster field operations training; quantify best practices of mitigation and insurance disaster operations and provide mechanisms to standardize practices across JFOs; develop customer service feedback; and measure the impact of public mitigation information in increasing mitigation measures taken.

## National Preparedness Directorate

As a direct result of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006, FEMA created the National Preparedness Directorate (NPD). Established on April 1, 2007, NPD oversees coordination and development strategies necessary to prepare for all-hazards. FEMA renewed its focus on building a culture of preparedness in America through its integration of NPD, an expanded Citizen Corps Program and coordinated activities with Ready.gov and the Department of Homeland Security.

In 2007, NPD took part in several major preparedness initiatives. In October, the directorate assisted in the administration of Top Officials 4 (TOPOFF 4), the fourth exercise in the series designated to strengthen the national capacity to combat terrorist attacks. TOPOFF 4 simulated a coordinated terrorist attack that involved a radiological detonation device or “dirty bomb” released in Guam, Arizona, and Oregon.

In December 2007, in an effort to better perform FEMA’s mission of preparing the Nation for all-hazards, NPD was instrumental in facilitating selections of the newly created Federal Preparedness Coordinators (FPC). FPCs will play an integral role in FEMA’s effort to coordinate national preparedness and will be responsible for strengthening, integrating and institutionalizing regional preparedness efforts to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from threatened or actual disasters.

In January 2008, NPD released the National Response Framework (NRF), the successor to the National Response Plan (NRP). The NRF establishes a comprehensive, national, all-hazards approach to domestic incident response and incorporates many NRP elements and lessons learned. Incorporating input from hundreds of individuals, organizations, and governmental partners, the new NRF provides clear guidance on the integration of community, State, tribal, and Federal response efforts. Moving into FY 2009, FEMA will continue to provide training, exercise and planning dollars to support Federal, State and local implementation of the NRF and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

NPD, in coordination with FEMA’s Disaster Operations Directorate and the Department’s Office of Operations Coordination, has begun efforts to implement Annex I to HSPD-8, including its mandate to provide a common Federal planning process that will support developing a family of related planning documents. These related planning documents will include strategic guidance statements, strategic plans, concept plans, operations plans, and tactical plans. The Annex to HSPD-8 is designed to “enhance the preparedness of the United States by formally establishing a standard and comprehensive approach to national planning” in order to “integrate and effect policy and operational objectives to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from all hazards.”<sup>1</sup> A document called the Integrated Planning System (IPS), currently under development, is intended to describe the common Federal planning process and establish uniformity and standardization among planning communities. FEMA continues to be a significant

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<sup>1</sup> HSPD-8, Annex I *National Planning*, pp. 1, 2

contributor to the draft IPS, and will also be involved in developing the family of plans for each of the national planning scenarios as required by the Annex.

Another success of NPD is the Community Preparedness Division (CPD). In 2007, CPD achieved success in its efforts to build preparedness at the community level by coordinating and encouraging citizen participation in preparedness activities. Working through the Citizen Corps Program, CPD continues in 2008 to bring together community and government leaders to increase all-hazards emergency preparedness, planning, mitigation, response and recovery efforts.

### **Logistics Management Division**

The Logistics Management Division (LMD) is also critical to FEMA's core mission. Delivering the right material, to the right place, at the right time is one of the most critical missions FEMA coordinates and performs. To support this important area, the agency is embarking on a process to develop an effective and efficient logistics planning and operations capability similar to Department of Defense strategic level logistics organization. To accomplish this goal, FEMA elevated its logistics function to the directorate level in April 2007 and is developing it as a core competency area. FEMA will transform its logistics operating capability and enhance logistics management by leveraging public sector partnerships and incorporating industry best practices to efficiently support domestic emergencies.

In FY 2009, the directorate plans to transform logistics management of supplies and services by engaging the private sector and incorporating industry best practices. This includes incorporating a Third Party Logistics structure into the directorate.

The LMD is the agency's major program office responsible for policy, guidance, standards, execution and governance of logistics support, services and operations. The mission is to effectively plan, manage and sustain the national logistics response and recovery operations in support of domestic emergencies and special events -- to act as the National Logistics Coordinator. The LMD strengthened its business practices by enhancing its relationships with both the public and private sector for a more coordinated logistics response operation. Preparations for Hurricane Dean, and the responses to the California wildfires, Midwest ice storms and the West Coast winter storms, successfully proved the new business processes and new "National Logistics Coordinator" concept.

FEMA implemented the Total Asset Visibility (TAV) program to provide enhanced visibility, awareness, and accountability over disaster relief supplies and resources. The TAV program assists in resource flow and supply chain management. FEMA implemented Phase 1 of TAV as the lead Federal agency for incident management, preparedness, and response.

To support transformation, the LMD put in place contracts and interagency agreements (IAA) that provide an enhanced logistics capability such as:

- Contractor support (personnel/organic drivers/fleet management)
- Vehicle maintenance contract (organic fleet) maintenance
- Supplies and services (IAA with the Government Services Administration)
- National bus evacuation readiness
- Plastic sheeting (blue roof)
- Supplies and services (IAA with the Defense Logistics Agency)
- Total Asset Visibility (Phase 1A extension/Phase 1B)
- E-Tasker version 2 for regions' single point ordering and tracking
- Logistics Management Transformation Initiative
- Base camp support contracts

Among the LMD's most prominent accomplishments is its lead role in the Loaned Executive Program. The directorate began hosting the Loaned Executive Program as a pilot program for DHS and FEMA. Organized through the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the United Parcel Service (UPS) Foundation, the program is designed to bring a seasoned UPS executive into the LMD to share private-sector expertise. The valuable knowledge and input from the loaned executive will help the directorate adopt the best business practices of private-sector logistics companies. The Loaned Executive Program will hopefully be one of FEMA's success stories for FY 2008 and FY 2009 as we attempt to expand the program through our new Private Sector Office.

In FY 2009, the LMD is planning to upgrade National Distribution Centers (DCs), which are at the core of FEMA's Supply Chain Transformation effort and are essential to FEMA's fundamental readiness mission. Strategic positioning of national-level assets at DCs enables a proactive readiness approach that relies on stocking the most critical disaster support life-saving and life-sustaining assets at levels required for immediate distribution to disaster victims. The "new FEMA" warehousing strategy will provide the capacity and flexibility to respond effectively and efficiently to the full set of disaster scenarios.

### **Disaster Assistance Directorate**

FEMA has always regarded the protection and preservation of life and property as its top priority. Accordingly, the Disaster Assistance Directorate (DAD) focuses maximum effort on ensuring the timely and effective provision of critical financial and technical assistance to disaster-impacted individuals, households, and communities available under FEMA's Stafford Act authorities. New initiatives, partnerships, and collaborations define the changes and improvements that have taken place within the DAD.

FEMA will continue to refine its evacuee hosting guidance and in FY 2008 complete five State hosting plans for large numbers of evacuees. FEMA also is completing enhancements to systems that support mass care and housing activities following a disaster. Debris management strategies will be tested and improved. We will implement standard protocols and staff training for long-term recovery planning. FEMA will continue to refine plans and procedures for managing disaster assistance operations under the varying conditions of different catastrophic and extraordinary disaster scenarios.

One of my priorities is to ensure FEMA has a comprehensive, non-redundant deployable command and control capability for each Region for all-hazards response. To fulfill the goals of our National Response Framework, we want 100 percent of State disaster assistance counterparts to indicate a good understanding of roles, responsibilities, regulations, policies, guidance, and systems related to Federal disaster assistance programs in order to effectively partner and deliver programs in a seamless and integrated manner.

In FY 2009, FEMA will continue to improve its plans and capabilities for managing mass evacuations and the resulting displaced populations, including additional State and local plans and development and expansion of evacuee tracking systems. The agency will also continue to improve, test and exercise its capabilities for all of its Individual Assistance functions (mass care, emergency assistance, housing, and human services).

In 2007, FEMA partnered with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to create and pilot the new Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP). On July 26, 2007, FEMA and HUD completed an Interagency Agreement establishing the DHAP, which is a temporary housing rental assistance and case management program for eligible individuals and households displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This new program is being administered by HUD through its existing national network of Public Housing Agencies (PHAs). Since the partnership began, HUD and FEMA have been working together to ensure that the transition of responsibility from one agency to the other is completed as smoothly as possible.

In August 2006, the President signed Executive Order 13411 titled *Improving Assistance for Disaster Victims*, charging Federal agencies, led by DHS, with the responsibility to improve and simplify the application process for Federal disaster assistance to individuals. FEMA participated in an interagency task force responsible for developing and delivering a Disaster Assistance Improvement Plan (DAIP), which outlines a coordinated, actionable strategy to implement a consolidated and unified disaster application by December 31, 2008. The President approved this plan in September 2007.

In support of the DAIP, FEMA established and obtained funding for a DAIP Program Management Office, led by FEMA's Office of Information Technology. The Disaster Assistance Directorate provides program support to the Program Management Office.

FEMA has undertaken many initiatives to improve implementation of the Public Assistance Program. We have established a Public Assistance Steering Committee comprising senior Public Assistance staff in each of our 10 regions and 10 State representatives. The purpose of the committee is to serve as the Board of Directors for the Public Assistance Program. The steering committee will develop the vision, strategies and policies to ensure efficient, effective and consistent implementation of the program.

While we want to streamline the process of getting disaster aid to victims, we need to be responsible stewards of the Disaster Relief Fund. To this end, in FY 2007, we introduced

new software to track and manage applicant data on disaster victims who are displaced to mobile homes. This information was sent as real-time data to caseworkers. This software helps prevent duplicative or overlapping payments to applicants receiving direct housing. Address reviews were also implemented to flag “high-risk” addresses such as check cashing stores, mail drops, cemeteries, and jails. Furthermore, new measures require applications with “high-risk” addresses to be more extensively reviewed to prevent fraud.

### **Disaster Operations Directorate**

The Disaster Operations Directorate (DOD) has the primary responsibility for leading and coordinating the Federal government’s disaster response efforts. In 2007, DOD employed a more forward-leaning posture, engaged in stronger collaboration and partnerships at the local, State, and Federal levels, and adopted a greater operational focus, resulting in stronger and more agile disaster response capabilities. DOD demonstrated these improvements throughout the year in response to events such as the California wildfires, Greensburg tornadoes, and Hurricanes Dean and Flossie, as well as in exercises such as TOPOFF 4 and Ardent Sentry.

In FY 2009, the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) will continue enhancement of disaster operation capabilities to support 24-hour watch operations, increased situational awareness, and support development of the common operating picture (COP) during disaster operations. Also, the NRCC will coordinate the interagency response to disasters and emergencies, regardless of cause. The NRCC is staffed with a watch officer, watch analysts, operational planner, and others as needed. There are 30 NRCC watch stander positions, double the number of watch stander positions in the directorate in 2006. In addition to maintaining a 24/7 Watch Team, the NRCC is augmented by the Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) during disaster operations and is responsible for coordinating the Federal response.

The NRCC’s IT capabilities have been strengthened over the past year. Connectivity with the DHS NOC, ESF operations centers, and JFOs has been improved to enhance situational awareness and COP capabilities and increase equipment compatibility. Connectivity with the Regions has been enhanced by installing standardized, compatible information technology and video equipment and increasing conferencing and information sharing capabilities through interconnected video systems. Internal connectivity among response nodes within the FEMA headquarters building has created a virtual NRCC.

In accordance with PKEMRA, FEMA is upgrading the NRCC Watch Area to be able to operate at the Secret-level in an all-hazards environment, which will ensure interoperability with the law enforcement, intelligence, and military communities. A design and engineering study on the best way to proceed with the upgrades will be conducted in the near future. The project is scheduled for completion by the end of 2008. The NRCC has conducted extensive and ongoing training at headquarters and Regional levels on the Homeland Security Information Network, the DHS database platform for

information exchange used to support disaster response situational awareness and the COP.

FEMA is upgrading NRCC capabilities with the installation of a new Emergency Management Information Management System (EMIMS). This Web-based software system will provide greater support to the NRCC, RRCCs, and JFOs in managing disaster operations and information flow, maintaining situational awareness, and coordinating information sharing. One of the system's initial goals is to incorporate the expanded Radiological Dispersion Device (RDD) capabilities list into EMIMS as a password protected resource module. Ultimately, with the capability provided by the new system, vital statistics on the location and content of RDD teams can be geo-coded into the system and continuously updated by the department or agency responsible for the team and used on a real-time basis by the interagency community. A longer-term goal is to use EMIMS to create a larger national asset database of all Federal response teams for all-hazards. This larger database would also be password protected and available to the interagency community for use to support disaster response.

Operational planning is a core competency of the New FEMA. Operational planning encompasses the full spectrum of the planning process, ensuring continuity between long-range planning, current operations planning, and field element incident action planning. This ensures alignment of near- and long-term operational objectives, mission assignments, and resource allocation.

In 2007, FEMA headquarters hired 15 operational planners to provide the capability to perform sophisticated operational analyses, analyze trends, and improve planning for the response to ongoing and future events. Planners will be hired in each of the FEMA Regions and Area Offices to provide this same capability in the field. More than half the Regional planners are on board. Additional staff will be hired in FY 2008 and FY 2009. With the new staff, there is now greater depth and capability to prepare operational plans and conduct crisis action planning to ensure that the agency can lead and support a national all-hazard emergency management response. Regional planners will receive program guidance from FEMA headquarters and ensure training objectives and qualification standards are met, but will operate under the authority of the regional administrators. At the Regional level, these planners will coordinate the development of coordinated Federal, State, and local operational plans to guide response activities and help build a national culture of preparedness. The operational planners will also facilitate/conduct regional evacuation planning. In January 2008, FEMA convened recently hired Regional operational planners with FEMA headquarters planners to coordinate efforts.

In FY 2009, DOD will work within FEMA and with State partners to develop local, State, and regional operational plans, including incident-specific catastrophic plans. It will support the development of operational planning capabilities at all levels of emergency management, and operational planning for the 15 National Planning Scenarios. It will also continue to increase national readiness for site-specific catastrophic events with Federal, regional, State, local and tribal governments, and the private sector

(and the critical infrastructure sectors), using scenario-enhanced CONPLAN development processes and supporting the development of vertically and horizontally integrated Catastrophic Response Plans compliant with NIMS and the NRF.

In accordance with PKEMRA, FEMA is developing Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT), a next generation of rapidly deployable interagency national and regional emergency response teams. These new teams will eventually replace existing Emergency Response Teams (ERT) at the national and regional level and the FIRSs. The IMATs are designed to provide a forward Federal presence to better manage and coordinate the national response for catastrophic incidents.

The national teams will have the capability to establish an effective Federal presence that can support the State within 12-hours of notification, coordinate Federal activities and provide initial situational awareness. Teams will be self sufficient for a minimum of 48 hours to augment potentially scarce local resources. Led by a credentialed Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO), the teams will incorporate similar leadership, emergency management doctrine, and operational communications concepts. They will be staffed with a core of permanent full-time employees, unlike the ERTs, which are staffed on a collateral duty basis. The teams will be fully compliant with NIMS and Incident Command System (ICS) principles and will train and exercise as a unit. When not deployed, the teams will train with Federal partners and provide a planning, training, and exercise capability to help improve State and local emergency management capabilities. The teams will also engage in consistent and coordinated relationship-building with tribal, State, local and other stakeholders.

Currently, the National IMAT is operational and ready to respond to any disaster. The three Regional IMATs should be operational by June 2008, the official start of the hurricane season.

FEMA is applying lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina in several ways, such as to improve disaster emergency communications and interoperability capabilities, to be ready to rapidly and effectively respond to protect people and property, to ensure the adequacy of FEMA's own emergency communications capabilities, and to help our tribal, State, and local partners develop their capabilities.

FEMA is designing, staffing, and maintaining a rapidly deployable, responsive, interoperable and highly reliable emergency communications capability using the latest commercial off-the-shelf voice, video, and data technology. Among the goals for improving communications capabilities are simplifying the communications architecture (modularity, portability, security); ensuring seamless user interoperability and user friendly information transfers; using flexible design options taking advantage of satellite and Internet technologies; pushing capabilities forward to State and local responders; increasing bandwidth and connectivity; and tying into public networks as far forward as possible.

Under the new FEMA re-organization, DOD has created a Disaster Emergency Communications Division. The new division will improve the agency's tactical disaster emergency communications and interoperability capabilities to support all-hazards disaster response and national security emergency requirements. We are in the process of advertising and filling new positions to stand up this new division.

There were several accomplishments in the area of planning, including implementation of a successful GAP Initiative, developed in coordination with the State of New York Emergency Management Office/New York City Office of Emergency Management, and implemented in spring 2007. FEMA incorporated seven critical areas in the initial application of the GAP tool for review: debris removal, commodity distribution, evacuation, sheltering, interim housing, medical needs and fuel capacity along evacuation routes.

A "Gap Analysis" provides 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 potentially needed in responding to a Category 3 hurricane. During 2007, FEMA worked closely with each of the 18 State emergency management communities in hurricane-prone areas, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, using a consistent set of measures and tools to evaluate strengths and vulnerabilities. There was a steady decrease in the initial shortfalls and vulnerabilities identified in the seven critical areas as this process evolved over the summer. In 2007, the GAP efforts better prepared us in our coordinated response to support States during Hurricane Dean and Tropical Storm Erin. Our initial use of the GAP concept, which proved to be successful in the 2007 hurricane season, will be expanded to cover all hazards and applied nationwide in Fiscal Year 2008.

## **Regional Offices**

The FEMA Regional Offices are at the forefront of any disaster. They are usually the first Federal boots on the ground and interact regularly with their State, tribal, and local partners. As FEMA moves towards further empowering the Regions, FEMA headquarters will continue to rely on their critical relationships with our state, local, and tribal partners. The following are just a few highlights from the FEMA Regional Offices.

- Regional staff completed work on the Southern California Flood Control Mitigation, Loss Avoidance Study. This evaluation of the effectiveness of six Southern California flood control projects is a collaboration of California Office of Emergency Services (OES) mitigation staff and Region IX.
- In 2007, Region IX provided extensive support to the Federal Executive Boards in the Region. Solid partnerships have been created with leadership from the boards in Hawaii, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Each board has established active Continuity of Operations Planning Working Groups supported by membership from representative department and agencies.

- The regional Pacific Area Office, in coordination with the FEMA Logistics Division and Hawaii State and County Civil Defense, successfully completed deployment of the DHS Pre-Positioned Disaster Supplies Program. Regional actions resulted in the pre-positioning of the 500-person containers and home recovery kit containers on Oahu, Kauai, Maui, and the Big Island.
- During 2007, the RRCC in Region X expanded its hours of operation, enhanced situational awareness, developed a real-time thematic representation of regional hazards, and improved readiness of personnel to accomplish their roles in the RRCC. The RRCC is now operational weekdays from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. at a watch level, staffed by new full-time RRCC watch standers and additional personnel as needed.
- In July 2007, FEMA Region X successfully established an Alaska Area Office, as required in PKEMRA. The office is integrated into the Regional operation and provides for situational awareness in Alaska and enhanced capability to conduct effective pre- and post-disaster response activities.
- Region IV Operational Planners participated in the launch of several catastrophic planning initiatives, including the Florida Catastrophic Planning scenario, the New Madrid Seismic Zone, 2007 hurricanes, critical transportation needs planning for Gulf Coast mass evacuation, and pandemic influenza.
- In FY 2007, Region III focused on enhancing its operational and planning capabilities. First, as a result of the GAP initiative, the region forged new relationships with State agencies (outside of the traditional emergency management community) to produce greater traction in identifying capabilities and shortfalls. Now, Region III has a better understanding of what their unmet needs could be during a major hurricane response. Second, with a renewed emphasis on the Incident Command System principles for crisis management and response, Region III also stood up a pilot planning cell in our National Preparedness Division to focus on all-hazards planning and to ultimately strengthen the capabilities of the field planning element during disasters.

### **Office of Acquisition Management**

FEMA's Office of Acquisition Management (OAM) has made considerable strides in improving the contract management and oversight aspects of its acquisition duties. FEMA has implemented new policies and requirements on its acquisition workforce, such as improved advanced planning, accurate documentation, workforce training, increased emphasis on market research and greater consideration of small business goals. FEMA can boast that during FY 2007 about 81 percent of its acquisition dollars were competed. This represents a 45 percent increase over FY 2006, when only about 35 percent of FEMA's acquisition dollars were competed. There are two main areas of focus for these improvements:

#### *Contract Administration Plans (CAPs)*

- Facilitate efficient and effective contract administration by outlining the required level of contractor performance surveillance, implementing contract terms and conditions, and establishing and monitoring performance milestones and reporting requirements
- Improve the agency's post-award contract execution by providing a consistent guide on ordering, competing, and administering procedures for task orders on task order-type contracts
- Promote task order competition while ensuring that services are available expeditiously to meet critical disaster response needs
- Establish consistent enterprise-wide contract administration processes for the Contracting Officer's Technical Representatives (COTR) in various regions
- Strengthen the acquisition planning process – CAPs are being prepared for large and complex acquisitions as part of the acquisition planning process
- Document the agreement between program offices and OAM. Prior to award of an acquisition requiring a CAP, the plan is drafted and jointly agreed to by both the program office and OAM
- Guide the program office and OAM through continual actions related to contract administration by program office and OAM actions

#### *Contract Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) Program Office*

OAM developed a robust COTR Program Office to ensure COTRs have the training, support, and tools needed for effective contract administration. The Program Office has established a COTR program, which has achieved the following:

- Implementation of a tiered COTR certification program to better match COTR competencies to contract complexity
- Shaping of the COTR workforce that will ensure a higher level of competency and professionalism
- Definition of the COTR role to better meet the needs of the agency and its mission
- Compliance with DHS and Office of Management and Budget regulations and policy while leveraging best practices

FEMA's contracting process is guided by a complex set of regulations, statutes, and procedures established throughout the various layers of the government. In some cases, FEMA's mission and the environment in which it operates creates a unique contracting process for the OAM. Based on these contracting situations, OAM published the Emergency Acquisition Field Guide, which ensures that non-1102 (contract specialist) personnel can effectively and appropriately contract for goods and services in an emergency situation. The guide defines the critical elements of an emergency acquisition in plain language so that any member of the disaster support team can understand and apply proper procedures. It includes information on purchase cards, program management, and contracting.

## CONCLUSIONS

Today, I have been able to give you a glimpse into the new FEMA, and to highlight only a handful of examples of the sea change that is post-Katrina, post-Rita FEMA.

We are preparing for the January 2009 Administration change, and I am confident that FEMA's transition plan will be in place in early Fall. We are committed to the safety of the American public during the transition period between administrations. The public needs to know that FEMA will still be able to respond, and that FEMA will not stop enhancing the preparedness of the United States.

To this end, FEMA's Transformation Management Office, part of the Office of Policy and Program Analysis, has been charged with ensuring FEMA is ready for the transition. We have filled all senior career positions in FEMA. This will ensure that there is continuity in day-to-day operations during the transition period. It will allow the American people to maintain their confidence that FEMA will continue to perform as strongly as we have in the past year if a disaster should occur during this time. We will be conducting exercises for incidents that may occur during a period of transition. Employees at all levels will understand who has the authority to make timely decisions during the transition.

For the remainder of my tenure, I will work to ensure FEMA continues to be an empowered agency able to meet the needs of the American people in times of disaster. This agency has already improved tremendously since my first day on the job. With the help of my skilled and dedicated staff, I can be confident FEMA will continue to improve. My successors and America will be in a far better position because of their work.

In the past year, FEMA has been able to respond rapidly and effectively to the disasters we have encountered. We are more nimble and responsive than we were last year when I appeared before you. I thank you for your past support and in advance for your support of our FY 2009 request. While we have not faced a catastrophic disaster, I am confident saying that we can and will perform well. I hope we have demonstrated FEMA is a wise investment, and we encourage the American people, through their Congressional representatives, to continue to invest in FEMA. We guarantee that the return on the investment will be an emergency management and preparedness agency second to none, and one that the American people can trust and believe in.