

**HURRICANE KATRINA: URBAN SEARCH AND  
RESCUE IN A CATASTROPHE**

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**HEARING**

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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JANUARY 30, 2006  
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# CONTENTS

Opening statements:	Page
Senator Collins .....	1
Senator Lieberman .....	2

## WITNESSES

MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2006

William M. Lokey, Operations Branch Chief, Response Division, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Homeland Security ...	6
Brigadier General Brod Veillon, Assistant Adjutant General for Air, Louisiana National Guard .....	9
Lieutenant Colonel Keith LaCaze, Assistant Chief, Law Enforcement Divi- sion, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries .....	12
Captain Timothy P. Bayard, Commander of the Vice Crimes/Narcotics Sec- tion, New Orleans Police Department .....	14

## ALPHABETICAL LIST OF WITNESSES

Bayard, Captain Timothy P.:	
Testimony .....	14
Prepared statement .....	63
LaCaze, Lieutenant Colonel Keith:	
Testimony .....	12
Prepared statement .....	55
Lokey, William M.:	
Testimony .....	6
Prepared statement .....	41
Veillon, Brigadier General Brod:	
Testimony .....	9
Prepared statement .....	51

## APPENDIX

Questions and responses for the Record from Mr. Lokey .....	68
Exhibit 1 .....	73
Exhibit 6 .....	79
Exhibit 12 .....	80



# HURRICANE KATRINA: URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE IN A CATASTROPHE

MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2006

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:05 p.m., in room SD-342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Susan M. Collins, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Collins, Warner, Lieberman, and Pryor.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN COLLINS

Chairman COLLINS. Good afternoon. The Committee will come to order.

In the first hours and days after Hurricane Katrina struck, heroes emerged. Across all levels of government, search-and-rescue personnel took swift action, saving thousands of the storm's victims. These men and women saved the lives of others amid great peril to themselves. They demonstrated outstanding courage, devotion to duty, and inspiring ingenuity.

A great many of these rescuers carried on despite the fact that their own homes and communities had been destroyed. They also faced obstacles exacerbated by an absence of planning, a lack of direction and leadership, and a misallocation of resources.

The purpose of today's hearing, the 12th by the Committee on Hurricane Katrina, is to examine the search-and-rescue operations in New Orleans and its vicinity. Our witnesses today represent local, State, and Federal agencies that were involved in these operations. I look forward to their testimony as they recount their agencies' efforts to locate trapped hurricane victims and to move them to safety.

It is also the purpose of this hearing to dig deeper, to go behind the scenes. We will explore the planning that went into preparing for a disaster that had been predicted for years and was imminent for days. We will discuss how well those plans were carried out when disaster finally struck. We will learn of the impediments these agencies faced to full coordination and effective communication and the difficulties they encountered from the lack of necessary equipment to the management of volunteers and other offers of assistance.

More specifically, this hearing is intended to shed light on the following issues:

Were Federal, State, and local efforts to preposition search-and-rescue assets successful? While some efforts to position critical assets in safe areas near the strike zone worked well, it is clear that many did not. As a result, valuable transportation assets that could have been used to expedite the rescue of victims were lost. In other cases, extraordinary measures had to be taken to save those resources before they could be used to save people.

How effective was FEMA in supporting the search-and-rescue efforts mounted by the State of Louisiana? The record appears to be very mixed.

Should FEMA play a greater role in supporting search-and-rescue operations in flood situations? This hearing will demonstrate that FEMA has seen its search-and-rescue role as largely confined to situations involving building collapses such as occur in earthquakes. Yet testimony at the hearing we held last week on Hurricane Pam exercise indicates that drowning is the principle cause of death in natural disasters.

How well were search-and-rescue efforts coordinated? The individual heroism and the extraordinary efforts that occurred cannot mask the fact that coordination at all levels of government was poor, resulting in the inefficient use of resources, needless danger to first responders, and prolonged suffering for the victims.

One key search-and-rescue agency that is not testifying today is the U.S. Coast Guard. That is because we examined the Coast Guard's outstanding performance in great detail at our hearing on November 9. We learned that their success was largely due to three principles: Extensive planning and training that was actually put into practice when needed; the careful prepositioning of assets out of harm's way but close enough to the front lines to be immediately available; and a command and control structure that empowered front-line leaders to make decisions. I will be very interested in hearing the views of our witnesses on how these principles can be adopted across the entire emergency preparation and response community.

No one has ever doubted the courage and commitment of America's emergency responders. Time and time again throughout our history they have performed magnificently whenever disaster strikes. Hurricane Katrina added a new chapter to this outstanding record, but it also revealed significant and troubling flaws in planning, preparation, and coordination that made their jobs more difficult, put them in needless danger, and delayed the rescue of victims. We owe it to them, as well as to future victims, to do better.

Senator Lieberman.

#### **OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR LIEBERMAN**

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks very much, Madam Chairman. Thanks to our witnesses for being here.

As you indicated, Madam Chairman, today we begin our 12th hearing in this investigation, but it also begins a week of hearings that will examine how well the Federal, State, and local governments heeded the warnings over the years, particularly the warnings and lessons of the fictional Hurricane Pam exercise that was the subject of last week's hearing.

FEMA paid more than \$1.5 million for the Hurricane Pam exercise and follow-up workshops which began in July 2004 and continued through August 2005, just days before Katrina made landfall. One hundred and forty-seven representatives of 15 Federal agencies, 20 State agencies, 13 parishes, 5 volunteer agencies, the Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, FEMA Region VI, FEMA National Headquarters, and IEM, Inc.—the contractor that produced the exercise—all took part in the fictional Hurricane Pam exercise.

The first draft of the dangers this exercise revealed was released in August 2004, more than a year before Hurricane Katrina hit landfall, and it was followed by several redrafts until the final draft was written and distributed in January 2005, about 8 months before Katrina.

The Pam exercise predicted the flooding, the people left stranded, the need for fleets of buses to get them out. It also predicted that local first responders would be overwhelmed, not just figuratively, but literally by the flooding that occurred, and that FEMA would therefore need to be ready to step in quickly.

The Pam exercise was, as we know, only the most recent and detailed set of warnings given to all levels of government over the years about what would happen when the so-called big one hit New Orleans as everyone expected it inevitably would one day. There was a 1993 report by the former Government Accounting Agency, which warned of these dangers in the Gulf Coast. Flooding in Biloxi in 1998 after Hurricane Georges, in fact, was what convinced Gulf State officials that they were unprepared for the big one and led to the appeals for the Hurricane Pam exercise. But as we pointed out last week in testimony, it took 6 years for it to get going.

Today we are going to deal with the search-and-rescue part of the government's response to Hurricane Katrina. Tomorrow, the topic is pre-disaster evacuations, and following that there will be panels on post-disaster evacuations, law and order, and communications in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Unfortunately, these hearings will show that all of these warnings from Hurricane Pam and all that proceeded over the years were largely ignored, so that one of America's great cities and its people were unprepared and all too unprotected when Hurricane Katrina finally struck.

Today's hearing, Urban Search and Rescue in a Catastrophe, not only illustrates the lack of preparedness, but I must say also honors the heroes of Hurricane Katrina. Interesting that Senator Collins and I chose the same words without previous consultation.

These heroes stepped in, in some ways unprepared and unassisted, you might say with nothing but their courage and their wits about them, to save tens of thousands of lives. And we honor them today. More than 60,000 people rescued by a relative handful of these heroes. Today before the members of the panel speak and we ask questions, I want to say thank you to our witnesses and all of the heroes that you represent who are not with us today.

Although Pam was a clear warning that the search-and-rescue efforts in New Orleans would require boats, helicopters, and buses, the record shows that these alerts did not draw an effective or adequate response. As we will hear from our witnesses today, the he-

roes of Hurricane Katrina did not just fight against the predictable aftermath of an enormous, catastrophic storm, they also had, too often, to battle with bureaucracy, inadequate equipment, and poor planning, all of which, in hindsight, seem inexplicable and unacceptable given the years of warnings.

For instance, in that first dark night after the storm passed, rescuers went out in a small number of available boats, searching for the stranded, their spotlights providing the crippled city's only light. But while they had some eyes, as we know, they had no ears because their communication equipment either did not work or was not compatible with other rescue workers. New Orleans police and fire rescuers often had to wait 20 minutes to get their turn on the overloaded mutual aid frequency, and sometimes they had to resort to a variation of the childhood game "operator" to relay messages to different parts of the city step by step because of the limited range of the equipment that was still usable.

The New Orleans Fire Department, which was the city's designated lead agency for urban search-and-rescue, owned no boats, none, despite repeated requests to the city over the years to buy some. The Police Department had just seven. Police and fire rescue workers were forced to commandeer, even hot wire, boats to begin their life-saving critical rescue work.

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries rescue workers put on what I would consider to be an extraordinary display of both organization and courage. On Monday morning, as Katrina was still raging, they transported 60 boats to New Orleans from their prestaged areas around the State, and by 4 p.m. the same day they began to rescue people stranded in the storm. They succeeded in rescuing more than 1,500 by the next afternoon, and more than 21,000 before it was over. But many of these boats were too small for the job, and Wildlife and Fisheries requests to FEMA for larger boats went unanswered.

Unfortunately, it gets worse. There was no plan for the evacuation or care of those rescued once they arrived at the search-and-rescue collection points. This awful gap in planning was not resolved until 2 days after Katrina passed and created the grueling and inhumane conditions at the Superdome and on the Interstate 10 overpasses.

Lieutenant Colonel Keith LaCaze of Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries, who is here today to testify, has told us that his agency called for medical support at collection points after landfall, but to no avail. Ground transportation to evacuate was also lacking and fought over by competing agencies with competing evacuation missions. Obviously, when it comes to search and rescue in a case like this, time is of the essence. Hours or minutes wasted, certainly days wasted, can mean saving a life or not.

FEMA search-and-rescue teams did not arrive in New Orleans until late Monday afternoon and did not begin their missions until Tuesday morning, well after the other Federal, State, and local rescuers—and here when I say Federal I mean particularly the Coast Guard—had begun their work. It appears—and we will ask Mr. Lokey about that—that the FEMA search-and-rescue teams were not specifically trained for water rescue. When they got there, the members, I believe, also did some heroic work.

Why the delay and lack of training? Why did FEMA apparently have no plan for this particular kind of search-and-rescue mission? That is a question I think we are going to want to answer.

After finally beginning operations with those three rescue teams on Tuesday, FEMA suddenly stopped those rescue missions on Thursday, September 1, apparently because of security concerns, but the record seems to show that other Federal, State, and local rescue missions continued without interruption.

Today, and in other hearings to follow with other DHS and FEMA representatives, we are going to ask why FEMA decided to leave the scene of the tragedy.

Madam Chairman, as you and I have both said, many heroes were born in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and thousands and thousands of people are alive today thanks to them. What those brave men and women did recalls—I cannot phrase it better than Churchill did—how so many owe so much to so few.

But all we can do, and the greatest honor we can pay those who risked their lives in the aftermath of Katrina, is to make sure that the heroes of the next catastrophe, which will surely come, whether from a natural disaster, or God forbid, a terrorist attack, are given the proper equipment, a clear and comprehensive plan, and all the support they need to carry out their life-saving work. Thank you.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you.

I am very pleased to welcome our four witnesses today. William Lokey is the Operations Branch Chief in the Response Division of FEMA. He served as the Federal Coordinating Officer for Louisiana during Hurricane Katrina, and he has more than 25 years of emergency management experience.

Brigadier General Brod Veillon is the Assistant Adjutant General of the Louisiana National Guard, the Commander of the State Air National Guard, and its Search and Rescue Coordinator. The General is an experienced fighter pilot and served for 13 years on active duty with the U.S. Air Force.

Lieutenant Colonel Keith LaCaze is the Assistant Law Enforcement Division Administrator for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, which is the lead agency for search and rescue under the State Emergency Operations Plan. Lieutenant Colonel LaCaze has served with the Department for 28 years.

Captain Timothy Bayard is the Commander of the Vice and Narcotics Squad of the New Orleans Police Department and has been with the Department since 1975. In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, he and three fellow officers established a command post at a New Orleans casino.

I welcome you all to the Committee. I would ask that you all rise so I can administer the oath.

Do you swear that the testimony you are about to give to the Committee will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you, God?

Mr. LOKEY. I do.

General VEILLON. I do.

Colonel LACAZE. I do.

Captain BAYARD. I do.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. Mr. Lokey, we will begin with you.

**TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM M. LOKEY,<sup>1</sup> OPERATIONS BRANCH CHIEF, RESPONSE DIVISION, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

Mr. LOKEY. Good afternoon, Chairman Collins and Senator Lieberman. I am William Lokey, the Operations Branch Chief of the Response Division of FEMA. It's an honor to appear before you today to discuss the activities of the National Urban Search and Rescue System in response to Hurricane Katrina.

FEMA appreciates your interest in this particular part of our response to this unprecedented disaster. I think we all recognize that the hurricanes of 2005, in particular Hurricane Katrina, thoroughly stressed the capabilities of FEMA, as well as the Nation.

Under very difficult circumstances, members of FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue Program (US&R) rose to the occasion, working outside the scope of their regular mission, although well within the authority of the Stafford Act, and Urban Search and Rescue provided guidance and leadership to State and local personnel and volunteers who were organizing their response in this effort. These efforts resulted in saved lives, plus provided necessary assistance and comfort to numerous citizens in the affected disaster.

Allow me to provide a brief overview to the National Disaster System.

Experiences gained and awareness from the responses to the major earthquakes in Mexico City and Armenia in 1980 dramatically demonstrated the need for specialized urban search-and-rescue capability in the United States.

In March 1989, hearings were held in the reauthorization of the National Earthquake Hazard Reduction Act by the Subcommittee on Science of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. Following the Loma Prieta earthquake, which occurred in the San Francisco area in October of that year, \$800,000 was provided to FEMA for one-time grants to accredited State and local search-and-rescue organizations for the training and the acquisition of special equipment and to develop specialized teams. Thus, the National Urban Search and Rescue System was born.

After 17 years and numerous activations to hurricanes and earthquakes, as well as to the Oklahoma City bombing, the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and other emergencies, there are now 28 sponsored National Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces located throughout the United States that are trained and equipped to handle structural collapse rescue.

The 28 teams are comprised of State, local, nonprofit organizations, and volunteers. These teams are based in their home communities and States. Except when deployed for Federal activation, the team members and the teams themselves operate in their home States. One of the basic foundations of the system, in return for making these State and local resources available to the Federal Government, the Federal Government provides resources and training that allow the teams to better serve their communities.

Any of these national task forces can be activated and deployed by FEMA to a disaster area to provide assistance in structural col-

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<sup>1</sup>The prepared statement of Mr. Lokey appears in the Appendix on page 41.

lapse rescue or may be prepositioned when a major disaster threatens a community. When activated, the task force can be dispatched and en route to its destination in a matter of hours.

Each task force is comprised of 70 specialists and is divided into six major functional elements of search, rescue, medical, hazardous materials, logistics, and planning. They may be divided into two 35-person teams, which allows for rotation and relief of personnel for round-the-clock operations. A full team of this size is referred to as a Type I task force.

The task forces also have the flexibility to reconfigure and deploy as one 28-person team, which we call a Type III team, in response to small, primarily weather-driven incidents, where the requirements would be physical, technical, and canine search, and light search and rescue in wood frame construction. Such events typically include hurricanes, tornadoes, ice storms, and typhoons.

When the system responds, a management group called the Incident Support Team also responds to support the teams. The IST, as it's called, provides command and control for supporting local and State rescue operations.

Some of the capabilities of a US&R Task Force are: The physical search-and-rescue operations in damaged or collapsed structures; operation in known or suspected weapons of mass destruction environments; emergency medical care for entrapped victims, task force personnel and search canines; reconnaissance to assess damage and needs and provide feedback to other officials; assessment and shut-off of utilities to houses and buildings; hazardous material survey and evaluations; structural and hazard evaluations of buildings; stabilizing damaged structures, including shoring and cribbing; and they carry approximately 62,000 pounds of equipment with them, configured to quickly deploy with the team.

Let me now provide a brief overview of US&R operations for Hurricane Katrina. I was deployed and arrived in Baton Rouge on Saturday evening, August 27. Also with me was Richard Deir, my Emergency Response Team—the National ERT-N, as it's called—Emergency Services Branch Chief. He was an experienced person with ESF-9, which is the Emergency Support Function for Urban Search and Rescue. He began working with personnel for Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries, the National Guard, the Coast Guard, and others who were at the State EOC, planning for potential search-and-rescue operations. We had also embedded staff from IEM, the contractor who helped with the Hurricane Pam workshops, to be there also to provide technical assistance.

Before landfall, three task forces, one Type I and two Type III, and the Blue IST were stationed at Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, Louisiana. Two task forces, one Type I and one Type III, and the Red IST were staged in Meridian, Mississippi, at the Meridian Naval Air Station. Five additional task forces, two Type I and three Type III, were put on alert, and then on Sunday, five additional task forces were added to that.

By the morning of August 30, eight additional task forces, three Type I and five Type III, and eight of the California Swift Water Rescue Teams were activated and en route to operations in Mississippi and Louisiana. On August 31, 10 additional task forces, all Type I, were activated and staged to assist.

In Mississippi, the task forces responded the morning after Katrina. They were used in four counties. The theater of operations spread 85 miles along the Mississippi coastline. They worked in close cooperation with the Coast Guard in carrying out the searches and developing appropriate documentation. They located 60 deceased victims. They also located three live victims and gave medical care to 35 people. A total of 15 task forces worked in Mississippi and demobilized on September 10.

In Louisiana, the task forces departed from Barksdale Air Force Base when weather permitted on Monday afternoon, August 29. The leadership and some of the task force members came to Baton Rouge, where they were briefed, where they programmed their radios to work on local frequencies, and they departed for the New Orleans area. They were destined to go to what we called in Metairie the Sam's Club parking lot. Teams started arriving there Monday evening. The teams met up with U.S. Coast Guard representatives and those from Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries, who were leading the search operations.

They were later asked by the State to move their base of operations to Zephyr Field, which is about five miles from New Orleans. During this time the Louisiana State Wildlife and Fisheries Department was organizing boats for Urban Search and Rescue personnel use. When the boats were secured early Tuesday morning, the rescue operations were launched.

The water rescue operations carried out in the New Orleans area may be one of the largest life-saving efforts in history. It was a local, State, and Federal team effort. Tens of thousands of people were saved or assisted in the flooded area, and the FEMA US&R personnel accounted for 6,582 people saved or assisted. Over 22,300 structures were searched. They also helped to identify locations and helped recover more than 300 human remains, over 25 percent of the victims. They were also asked by the State to take a follow-up lead on 22,000 911 calls. They delivered food and water and assisted unaccounted numbers of people in distress.

Due to our training, we were able to work together with 40 different teams from 19 States to work as interchangeable parts in this rescue effort, and there were no serious member injuries in spite of the continuous operations in the highly hazardous environment.

Both Incident Support Teams were instrumental in working with State and local folks to set up a unified command that helped out a lot in organizing the diverse number of people that were there along with teams that arrived through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, or EMAC, that arrived over the first several days.

With the assistance from FEMA logistics, within 5 to 6 days, base camps were built from literally nothing to provide support to over 3,000 people and support helicopter rescue operations. Our teams also assisted in capping approximately 40 broken gas mains.

It is especially important to note that water rescue is not part of the US&R mission, although they were somewhat equipped to do their collapse structure rescue mission in the water environment with personal protective equipment.

We learned a tremendous amount from this event. We have had one meeting already with our task forces to identify lessons learned, and a second meeting is taking place as we speak in Miami, which I will be departing for tonight to take part in the planning effort.

One of the most significant efforts we have going from our lessons learned and for the program is the development of a 5-year strategic plan. Through this process, in the partnership with members of the system, the sponsoring chiefs, and the various organizations, our goal is to actually define what the system is and what we should be providing. It was designed for rescue in collapsed structures. The ability to work in a weapons of mass destruction environment was added as a result of the events of September 11. We recently added the capability to accomplish our structural collapse mission in a water environment such as providing personal flotation devices for the rescuers.

Our goal is to work with the task forces and the States to come up with a recommendation on what the system needs to be. An example of working in a water environment in a collapsed structure, down in the depths of the World Trade Center they were using boats several floors down due to the broken water mains, so it is necessary as part of that mission.

The men and women of the urban rescue program represent the finest tradition of search and rescue in America. For the job they did, and the risks they took, and the lives they saved, they deserve high praise.

Thank you very much for allowing me to be here. I stand ready to answer your questions.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Lokey. General Veillon.

**TESTIMONY OF BRIGADIER GENERAL BROD VEILLON,<sup>1</sup> ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL FOR AIR, LOUISIANA NATIONAL GUARD**

General VEILLON. Thank you, Chairman Collins and Senator Lieberman. I am Brigadier General Brod Veillon. I am the Assistant Adjutant General for Air of the Louisiana National Guard.

On Sunday, August 28, at about 10 a.m., the Adjutant General called and asked me to coordinate the Louisiana National Guard's support of the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries search-and-rescue efforts in response to Hurricane Katrina. I called a meeting at 2:30 p.m. of the agencies that would participate in the search-and-rescue operations. The meeting occurred at the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness. Representatives from the following agencies participated: The U.S. Coast Guard, Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries, Louisiana State Police, FEMA and FEMA DMORT personnel, as well as the Civil Air Patrol. We discussed capabilities of each of our organizations and areas of responsibilities.

I arrived at the Louisiana National Guard Headquarters, Jackson Barracks, New Orleans, on Sunday, August 28, at 5 p.m.

The National Guard, as well as the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries, had positioned small boats and rescue equipment at Jackson Barracks to be used for the search-and-rescue effort. Sunday night,

<sup>1</sup>The prepared statement of General Veillon appears in the Appendix on page 51.

I was in the National Guard Joint Operations Center monitoring the storm's progress.

Monday morning, August 29, as the eye of the storm approached New Orleans, flood water began to quickly rise. It went from about one foot deep, mainly associated with the heavy rain, to 10 feet deep in 30 minutes. This was a dramatic surge of water. Jackson Barracks was quickly covered. In some places it was over 20 feet deep. A local AM radio station was reporting that the Industrial Canal Levee had broken and that the 9th Ward was flooding.

We had prepositioned 18 boats at Jackson Barracks. The rapidly rising water prompted concern that we may lose the equipment and motors, so I directed the National Guardsmen to move all equipment and motors to the second floor. Wildlife and Fisheries had also parked their boats on trailers adjacent to our Operations Center and I noticed that they were all floating with their trailers attached.

By mid afternoon of Monday, August 29, the wind and the rain had subsided enough where we could use our boats to begin the rescue effort. Because of the depth of the water, we used one of our small boats to motor over to the larger boats. I put a guardsman into the water with bolt cutters to cut the boats loose from their trailers. We bailed them of their rain water and put two National Guardsmen in each. At that time I was thinking we would probably find a few people who would need help. We moved out into the immediate neighborhood, and as I looked around, there were people on rooftops in every direction calling for help.

There were many natural gas pipeline breaks, which formed small geysers, and several houses were on fire. I was expecting to find a few, but what I found were hundreds. My team and I began taking people into our boats. The water was deep enough to allow us to dock on the rooftops. The wind and the rain made it very difficult to maneuver in and around these homes. Telephone and electrical lines had to be lifted by hand to allow us to pass beneath them.

At the third house I approached, the people there advised me that their neighbor was trapped in her attic. We docked on her roof and removed the roof vent. Looking down, we could see her crying for help. My crew and I used an axe to cut a hole in her roof, and several of us reached down and lifted her to safety. The rapidly rising water had forced her up into her attic, where she became trapped, unable to go higher, and she could no longer go down.

This sequence of events was repeated over and over and over again, National Guardsmen cutting holes in rooftops to lift people out. Our boats would quickly fill, and we would motor toward the Mississippi River levee, which took them out of the immediate danger and placed them on good high ground. This action made them visible to follow-on forces who were tasked, during earlier coordination meetings, to evacuate them by air, land, or boats on the river.

We continued this effort until nightfall. At that time the Joint Operations Center moved from Jackson Barracks to the Louisiana Superdome. Search and rescue operations continued through the night. I boarded one of the helicopters to the Superdome and continued my coordination from there.

During the night, National Guard, as well as U.S. Coast Guard helicopters, began flying over the city and assessing the situation. It was clear that Hurricane Katrina had dealt a catastrophic blow to the city of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana. When the sun rose on Tuesday morning, the Superdome was an island, surrounded by 6 feet of water in every direction. I could see columns of smoke rising from several buildings in the city.

The Superdome had become the center of gravity of our search-and-rescue efforts. We used the top floor of a parking lot as an additional helicopter landing zone. Helicopters began lifting people from rooftops throughout the city, bringing them to the Superdome. National Guard medics would assess the rescued for medical care. We would give them food and water, and direct them away from our helicopter landing area. Sometimes we were lifting people to safety via hoist, and other times these helicopters would lightly land on the rooftops where people would climb in.

I direct your attention to my left and some of the photographs that we brought to accompany my testimony.

We used the EMAC process to request and receive additional helicopters from other States to assist us with the search-and-rescue effort. In every direction I could see helicopters all over the city, hovering and lifting people to safety. This helicopter operation went on 24 hours a day. At night our crews used airborne spotlights, night vision goggles, as well as on-board infrared capabilities. The city was completely dark at night, and many who were waiting rescue would flash flashlights at us.

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries used their boats to comb through the neighborhoods, house to house, searching and rescuing people from their flooded homes. All high ground, bridges and elevated highways, became drop-off points for the boats. Helicopters were used to pick up the people at these sites and transport them to the Superdome.

In the days following the storm, the number of helicopters, as well as boat assets, grew rapidly, as more and more States, as well as the Federal Government, sent personnel and equipment in to assist us. With each passing day more and more people were lifted to safety. By Thursday, September 1, most of the people in need had been rescued.

In many areas of the city the water was too deep for our high-water vehicles to enter. So we relied to a great extent on small boats and helicopters. Except for the Chinook helicopter, we were only able to take small groups at a time, but over time all were brought out to safety.

I am very proud of all who were involved, State, Federal, military, and local volunteers.

In the face of Hurricane Katrina, the greatest natural disaster to hit the United States, a disaster of biblical proportions, over 72,000 people were safely lifted to high ground and evacuated out of the city. I am proud of the National Guard and proud that I had a part in the Hurricane Katrina effort. I look forward to answering your questions. Thank you.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. Lieutenant Colonel LaCaze.

**TESTIMONY OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL KEITH LACAZE,<sup>1</sup> ASSISTANT CHIEF, LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION, LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES**

Colonel LACAZE. Thank you. Good afternoon, Chairman Collins, Senator Lieberman, and Senator Pryor. Thank you for having us here. My name is Keith LaCaze. I am the Assistant Chief of Law Enforcement with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries enforcement agents were among the first search-and-rescue teams to arrive in New Orleans. We had to wait for landfall and passage of Hurricane Katrina. We had experience with planning and response to storm impacts in Louisiana dating back as far as Hurricane Andrew in 1992. Prior to Katrina's landfall, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries had alerted its personnel and staged boats and vehicles at locations near Baton Rouge and the central part of the State in anticipation of response to the impacted areas.

By 9 a.m. of the morning of Monday, August 29, Wildlife and Fisheries response teams were moving to unite in Baton Rouge. By 1 p.m., the response teams were en route to New Orleans. The initial group was made up of 120 agents, boats, and four-wheel drive vehicles.

The teams arrived in New Orleans at about 4 p.m. We had boats in the water and started making rescues in the New Orleans East area at St. Claude Avenue Bridge, Esplanade, Elysian Fields, Franklin Avenue, and St. Bernard Avenue by dark. Prior to that, we had started evacuating a nursing home in the Power Boulevard area of Kenner. Rescues in the neighborhoods under the nighttime conditions and the flooded streets were further complicated by debris, downed power lines, obstructions, and water at depths of up to 15 feet in some areas.

I have to tell you that it's just unimaginable to see the conditions, and after dark, with the obstructions and the downed trees and the obstructions in the neighborhoods, in the dark, no lighting, you could hear the cries for help, and our officers went out in the boats into areas that they weren't very familiar with, and some of the city streets, and would go into those areas and come out with boat loads of people. And it was a very gratifying thing to see, and very remarkable.

Despite the challenges that we faced, the people were rescued from rooftops, attics, and makeshift boats floating in the neighborhoods. Anything that they could grab onto or they could place themselves on, we found them there. Many were sick and injured people. The population included elderly, people with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes and those requiring dialysis, and many who had suffered injuries due to falls or mishaps during and after the storm.

Rescue operations continued throughout the night, and by break of day on Tuesday, August 30, we estimated nearly 2,000 citizens had been moved to safety on the elevated portions of I-10 and I-610. By midmorning Tuesday, additional Wildlife enforcement

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<sup>1</sup>The prepared statement of Colonel LaCaze appears in the Appendix on page 55.

agents and Department biologists, technicians, and specialists, strengthened our rescue effort. We brought out even more people.

In the following days, we were joined by Conservation officers from responding States, including Texas, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Minnesota, Michigan, North Carolina, and South Carolina. We were joined by volunteers and fire rescue and police and sheriff's deputies from local agencies throughout the State. Everyone demonstrated levels of determination, dedication, and professionalism beyond my ability to adequately describe.

In all, Wildlife and Fisheries rescued an estimated 21,000 people. We were joined by the Louisiana National Guard, the Coast Guard, State Police, and local law enforcement. In all, I am told that 60,000 people were rescued in the New Orleans and St. Bernard Parish areas from houses, hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and churches, anywhere people had taken refuge to escape the flooding.

LSU Hurricane Center scientist Ezra Boyd wrote in the *Times Picayune*, January 16, 2006, Your Opinions column that the Katrina death toll could have reached 10,000 and that search-and-rescue operations of this unprecedented magnitude resulted in a significantly lower death toll than could have occurred.

Hurricane Pam exercise predicted that 60,000 would die in a catastrophic storm. We saved 60,000.

I am proud to have been part of this life-saving effort. I am proud of my Department. Where we met obstacles and challenges, we improvised. Where we found problems, we came up with solutions. Communications failures severely affected our ability to coordinate search and rescue effectively. Katrina destroyed the communications infrastructure. Without towers and antennas, the radios just don't work, cell phones don't work. Then came the flood, and this took out the land telephone lines. Louisiana had redundant communications. We had interoperability. Katrina just smashed it all to pieces.

In order to build more redundancy, we must get funding from Congress for expanded radio systems. The Nation's need for interoperable communications was identified after September 11. Homeland Security was created after September 11. We look to you, the oversight committee for Homeland Security, for this funding. We are already working on preplanning with other agencies, including Louisiana State Police, Louisiana Army National Guard, and U.S. Coast Guard, who are our partners in search-and-rescue operations. We want to use the lessons learned from Katrina to be ready for the next storm. Our biggest lesson, flexibility, was a key component to our success.

I am very excited about our initiative to create a trained search-and-rescue volunteer force. We are partnering with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary to accomplish this. We have designed the specifications for a new mobile command unit, and it is on order. We have already purchased 32 small boats with outboard motors to improve our response to urban flooding. We have obtained input from field level personnel, the guys on the ground, on ways to improve for future missions. More and better equipment is needed, especially in the communications area. We must develop a list of preapproved contractors who are authorized to perform search-and-

rescue missions on behalf of State or Federal agencies, with the expectation of payment for services provided.

Written standard operating procedures describing preparedness levels and specific actions to be taken with approach and landfall of major storms or events have been developed. In the next 6 months, our agency will provide additional search-and-rescue training for in-service personnel and future academy classes. We will apply for grants for money to acquire additional emergency search-and-rescue equipment needed for similar operations in the future. We will enhance the training of mid-level supervisory personnel in search-and-rescue organization and coordination. We will meet and train with other agencies involved in response for better joint agency performance. We will explore equipment and training levels at local agencies to determine resources available and their location. We want to build a better team with our local and Federal search-and-rescue partners.

In closing, I must emphasize the dedication of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries staff members who responded to this crisis, particularly those enforcement agents, biologists, and technicians who lost homes and personal property in the same flooded areas where they worked so diligently to help others. These men and women in many cases evacuated with nothing more than their families and the clothes they were wearing. They got their families to safety, then immediately returned to face this task. Without their knowledge of the local area and their ability to guide rescue forces through the confusion of flooded roads and streets, our mission would not have been nearly as effective and successful.

I would like to thank the Chairman and all Committee Members for the opportunity to speak and to answer any questions.

Thank you.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. Captain Bayard.

**TESTIMONY OF CAPTAIN TIMOTHY P. BAYARD,<sup>1</sup> COMMANDER  
OF THE VICE CRIMES/NARCOTICS SECTION, NEW ORLEANS  
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Captain BAYARD. Good afternoon. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. My name is Tim Bayard. I'm a Captain with the New Orleans Police Department, Commander of the Vice Crimes and Narcotics Division. I have been a member of the Department for 30 years. I coordinated and directed the water rescue and recovery operations throughout the city of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. I am here today to relay my experiences, which began prior to Katrina's arrival and include the 14 days that followed.

Let me briefly explain the events that led to my coordination of the massive water-based rescue and recovery operations.

In 1965, I experienced Hurricane Betsy. My father was a New Orleans fireman. Based on my conversations with him, I had a good recollection of the areas of the city which flooded as a result. I knew which areas of the city were high and the available routes to access bridges and overpasses suitable for boat launch locations.

<sup>1</sup>The prepared statement of Captain Bayard appears in the Appendix on page 63.

Forty years later, many of the same areas flooded again. The high ground was essentially the same.

On Friday, August 26, at approximately 11:30 p.m., I learned that New Orleans was in the cross-hairs of Katrina. I spoke with Deputy Superintendent Warren Riley, Commander of Field Operations, and suggested items that would be immediately needed following the storm's impact. This information was also forwarded to the Office of Emergency Preparedness.

On Saturday, August 27, I instructed the supervisors under my command to contact each member of our division with instructions to evacuate their families and rally at our office at 12 noon on Sunday, August 28. Each member was instructed to bring at least 3 days supply of food and clothing.

On Sunday, August 28, we removed our division's vehicles from the Equipment Maintenance Division, an area prone to flooding. All of our vehicles were fueled for deployment. With the exception of our high-water vehicles, all vehicles were secured in the Superdome parking lot and at the Convention Center.

My unit patrolled the central business district, while I privately negotiated safe housing for my officers. The Narcotics Unit was housed at the Maison Dupuy Hotel, the Vice Crimes Section was housed at the Marriott. Once the sustained winds reached 55 miles an hour, my units were instructed to return to their respective hotels.

I later met with Captain Jeff Winn, Commander of the Tac teams and Special Operations Command, and Captain Harry Mendoza, Commander of the Traffic Division. Together we established a rally point which was Harrah's Casino, which is at the foot of Canal Street, one of the highest points in the city. We agreed to meet there following the storm.

We, however, were not equipped with any emergency rescue equipment, provisions, or fuel.

Captain Robert Norton, Commander of the Bomb Squad and the Dive Team, was housed in the LSU Dental School, along with the Third District contingent. Captain Norton had previously deployed our Department's three boats. These boats were deployed in Mid-City, Algiers, and New Orleans East. Captain Norton, cut off a lot by rising water, was able to conduct a hasty rescue operation in the neighborhood adjacent to the dental school, utilizing a privately owned boat. Captain Norton's boat experienced motor failure, and he himself had to be rescued. The three departmental boats were also engaged in hasty rescue operations in the same areas. The issue here was that none of these efforts were coordinated by a central command. Additionally, due to the vehicles and the boat trailers being flooded, the mobility was limited.

Based on contact with our Communications Division, I knew that the lower 9th Ward was flooding. Later in the day, we additionally learned that Lakeview was also taking on water.

Immediately after the storm, Captains Winn, Mendoza, and I met at Harrah's. Absent instructions from superiors, we made decisions to save lives. Routes were identified to access bridges and overpasses we utilized as boat launches. The problem was that we only had five boats at our disposal, two of which were commandeered. The Harbor Police met us on the St. Claude Bridge and

worked side by side with members of the Tactical Unit and the Narcotics Unit in our continued efforts to save lives. Other members of the Tactical and Narcotics Units teamed up with firemen in conducting rescue operations in Lakeview Gentilly. The Vice Unit transported evacuees to the Superdome and Convention Center utilizing two 15-passenger vans and a pickup truck.

The first night, we lost communication with three detectives trapped by rising water. The batteries on our radios were depleted, and they were unable to call for help. After spending the night attempting to locate the missing detectives, they appeared at the hotel the following morning.

The following night, three Tactical Unit officers were lost. Again, without communication, officers set out in search of their colleagues. At 11:30 p.m., the officers returned to Harrah's. All six officers had to walk through the water to get back to their respective units.

By day three, Captain Winn was given the two-pronged task of rescuing trapped law enforcement officers and responding to violence. From that point forward, the Tactical Unit ceased civilian boat rescues and became the primary rapid response unit for the countless acts of violence.

Given the change of Captain Winn's mission and the fact that Captain Norton was trapped by surrounding water, I became the sole commander of the water rescue operations.

Our efforts were not coordinated with other agencies. Our communication system was inoperable. We had no aerial views to ascertain water levels necessary to prioritize our rescue operations. Through public service announcements, we welcomed citizens from various areas in the State of Louisiana and other States, equipped with privately owned boats, who met us at Harrah's, to assist us in rescue operations. In an effort to coordinate rescue efforts, several contacts were made with Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries.

By happenstance, I met with members of the U.S. Army 20th Group Special Forces. This meeting propelled our rescue operation to another level. We immediately gained access to helicopters, Zodiac boats, and trucks. Captain Will Lynn became my counterpart. With the Special Forces Group, we set up a forward command post equipped with maps, asset boards, and deployment strategy. This was the first incident command center established following the event. From that moment forward, it became the command from which all water rescue operations were deployed.

For 14 days, my division was involved in water rescue operations. At no point did we have a truly unified command.

In week three, we finally coordinated with FEMA. That is when we began conducting secondary rescue operations. We worked along with Fire Department search-and-rescue units from other States through November 2005.

Mistakes. The New Orleans Office of Emergency Preparedness failed. They did not prepare themselves, nor did they manage the city agencies responsible for conducting emergency response to the disaster. Their function was to coordinate with State, Federal, and other local agencies to enlist logistical assistance. We did not coordinate with any State, local, or Federal agencies. We were not prepared logistically. Most importantly, we relocated evacuees to

two locations where there was no food, water, or portable restrooms. We did not implement the pre-existing plan. We did not utilize buses that would have allowed us to transport mass quantities of evacuees expeditiously. We did not have food, water, or fuel for the emergency workers. We did not have a back-up communication system. We had no portable radio towers or repeaters that would enable us to communicate. The other mistakes have been mentioned previously.

The remedies. New Orleans Police Department now has a fully staffed Bomb Squad and Dive Team. It is equipped with four flat boats and one 16-foot V-hull. We have two 8-wheel all terrain vehicles for shallow water rescue. Captain Norton is currently negotiating with the State officials in an attempt to secure privately owned boats that were abandoned, as well as boats that are now owned by insurance companies, in order to increase our fleet.

Captain Norton has met with members of the New Orleans Fire Department in an attempt to cross-train police officers and firemen in water and urban rescue procedures. This will allow the New Orleans Police Department to be the lead agency in water rescue, with fire personnel in support, and will allow the New Orleans Fire Department to take the lead in structural damage rescue, with police officers as support personnel.

Captain Norton is also attempting to secure a facility to house large quantities of food and water for the 2006 hurricane season.

Captain Jeff Strickland, Commander of Miami Dade's Urban Search and Rescue Unit, has been contacted by Captain Norton to attempt to secure training, as well as to obtain information on how and what is needed to outfit a US&R team.

He is also engaged in conversations with members of the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries in an attempt to secure boat safety training for each member of his unit and each member of the Vice, Narcotics, and Tactical Units. I would like to say that training will be conducted this Thursday with Louisiana State Wildlife and Fisheries.

Requests. I lived this horror, and as a result, I have identified the following equipment needed to adequately prepare for the 2006 hurricane season.

We must establish a regional communications system, as per the USAI agreement, that's the Urban Area Security Initiative, which allows us to coordinate rescue efforts with surrounding jurisdictions, St. Bernard Parish, Jefferson Parish, and Plaquemines Parish, all parishes that were affected by the storm.

We need additional flat boats, inflatable boats, air boats. We need a fully-equipped US&R trailer. We need training for 100 members of the New Orleans Police Department.

The most important thing to me is reimbursement for the damages and repairs to police officers and firemen who used their personal boats to rescue people, to get their boats repaired. The question is, can this equipment and reimbursement be funded through a Community Block Development Grant? That I don't know.

I would like to make two suggestions if I may. I suggest or request that someone draft legislation to mandate that all health care facilities, hospitals, raise their emergency generators and fuel reservoirs to a minimum of 32 feet. Also mandate that they have

enough fuel to operate the generators for at least 3 days. How many individuals on life support perished due to generator failure? Many generators are located in basements. The basement of every hospital in New Orleans flooded.

Additionally draft legislation to mandate mandatory evacuation of all one- and two-story elderly care centers in the event of a Category 3 or higher storm. The city and State will be responsible for supplying the vehicles needed to transport the elderly. These patients will be relocated to a facility that will accommodate their every need.

Conclusion. My purpose before you today is to help you understand what the members of New Orleans Police Department's Vice Crime/Narcotics Section experienced. I know numerous mistakes as it relates to planning and decisionmaking occurred. Mistakes were made in every level of government. I am not here to point fingers. I am here to relate my story and my experiences in an attempt to ensure that other agencies do not make the same mistakes that we made prior to, during, and after Katrina.

I would also like to say that I'm very proud of the members of the Vice Squad, Narcotics Section, and the other members who rallied with us to do rescues in the city of New Orleans.

Thank you. I am now prepared to answer any questions.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you, Captain.

Mr. Lokey, when you arrived in Baton Rouge on Saturday, you arrived amidst predictions for a catastrophic hurricane with enormous storm surges and the overtopping of the levees as a likely event. I recognize that FEMA is not the lead agency for search and rescue, but you do have Urban Search and Rescue Teams, and you do have an obligation to be the coordinator and to make sure that your State and local partners have what they need.

In light of these predictions for a truly horrific hurricane to strike the city, I would think that FEMA would have tapped every possible resource, would have responded very quickly to requests from State and local agencies for assistance, and would have eagerly taken up other offers of qualified assistance. And yet that is not what seems to have happened, and that perplexes me.

I want to ask you about two particular examples. If you would turn to Exhibit 6<sup>1</sup> in your book, this is a Louisiana form for State agencies to use to make requests for supplies, and I know that the staff has discussed this form with you. It shows that on Sunday, before landfall, the State asked for rubber rafts. It asked that these rubber rafts be delivered to New Orleans the next day, the day of landfall, to be used in rescue missions.

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has told our investigators that FEMA turned down that request, and indeed, you can see written on that document "Request Denied."

It is puzzling to me, given the predictions for flooding, for the storm surge, for the overtopping of the levees, that FEMA wouldn't have said, "Of course, we will get them to you instantly."

What happened in this case?

Mr. LOKEY. In this particular case, first of all, I first became aware of this when your staff showed me this. Literally hundreds

<sup>1</sup>Exhibit 6 appears in the Appendix on page 79.

of requests came through, many of which the level I was working, I did not know about. So on this particular one, I followed up with my staff.

The request for 300 did come in to the State EOC. That request was turned into a request for 1,000 rubber boats. That was sent to our regional office in Denton, Texas, where most everything—the actual procurement and things like that were taking place.

I am informed that a meeting took place there with the search-and-rescue people, the DOD, the Corps of Engineers, and the Coast Guard, where the decision was made that these rubber boats in the environment we were working in would not be useful with the debris and things like that. So the request was denied. More substantial boats were ordered, and although in lesser numbers, 20 Zodiacs and I believe 27 flat-bottomed boats were procured and sent in to use.

Chairman COLLINS. Mr. LaCaze, let me ask you to respond to that because the request was initiated by your agency. Do you think it would have been helpful to have those rubber rafts?

Colonel LACAZE. I think to us in the field, in the New Orleans area, the situation we were in, I believe that the rafts would have been beneficial, especially in the early stages, because in the situation we were in, we could have used the rubber rafts in tow with the small motorboats that we sent into the neighborhoods, and we could have loaded additional evacuees into the rafts and towed them.

The other benefit of the rafts would have been that in some of the very shallow water areas, say 2-foot to 3-foot, officers, rescuers could have actually taken the rafts and walked alongside and pulled them into shallow water areas, up onto porches, for example, or very near or up into the doorways of homes where we could have loaded mobility-impaired people or sick people that could have been placed in those rafts. So they would have had some benefit to us, I think, especially in the early stages of the rescue.

Chairman COLLINS. Mr. Lokey, I didn't know what Mr. LaCaze was going to say, but he just gave a very good reason why at least this initial version of the request should have been granted. But what troubles me is, Don't you all talk to one another? I mean, wouldn't this be a case if you thought that the State didn't really need this equipment, that you would have a conversation and try to figure out what assets are needed?

Captain, from your testimony and other interviews, what strikes me is the utter lack of coordination on search-and-rescue operations. It sounds like the New Orleans Police Department, your staff and officers, were operating all on their own and doing a great job, the best job that they could with search and rescue. But did you see coordination with the city, the rest of the city agencies, the State, FEMA, and the National Guard?

Captain BAYARD. No, ma'am, we did not actually get with FEMA until week four. Week three, we moved into the OEP at the Hyatt Hotel, but I did not actually meet with any member of FEMA until week four, and then we started doing secondary rescue.

Chairman COLLINS. Mr. Lokey, the other example that I want to talk to you about was an offer from the Department of the Interior. Now, this was after landfall. The levees had breached. The city was

80 percent underwater, and the Department of the Interior says to FEMA, Hey, we are experts at search and rescue. We have a lot of experience. What is more, we can help you out on law and order, which was one of the reasons that FEMA pulled back its Search and Rescue Teams temporarily.

The Department of the Interior offered 300 boats, 400 trained law enforcement officers, 11 aircraft, and, in fact, in its response to our inquiry, the Department wrote that these were clearly the assets and skills that were precisely relevant in the post-Katrina environment.

I know that you told the Committee that you were not aware of that offer either. Doesn't that suggest a systemic problem when you as the Federal coordinating official do not get word that these assets are available?

Mr. LOKEY. Well, yes, it does. And to back up, my report about the change in the order to the Zodiacs and the flat-bottomed boats was just a report of what I was told what happened, not that I disagreed that they needed it.

Communications and coordination was lacking. Preplanning was lacking. We were not prepared for this.

Relative to the DOI request, I was not aware of that at the time. I have since talked with my staff, and no one was. Those resources certainly could have been. At minimum, that shows that we have a lot more work to do at the Federal level.

I am sorry. I lost my train of thought. There was one other question you have about—

Chairman COLLINS. I was just suggesting that when you get offers of trained personnel assets—

Mr. LOKEY. Oh, yes. If we had gotten it, we certainly would have used it. But, again, I mainly in my operations partnered up with Jeff Smith, the State coordinating officer. I made every effort, anything he asked for, to try to get. And I even talked with him when the first issue of boats came up after my first interview with your staff, and he was not aware of this. I can assure you, had he approached me, things might have been different.

But, there was so much going on. We have a tremendous amount of work to do on this. There is no question.

Chairman COLLINS. I appreciate your candid answer to that. My point is that we have a broken system. We have a system when, even when desperately needed, personnel and equipment are offered, we don't seem to be able to incorporate them into the response. And in the meantime, we have thousands of victims on the rooftops waiting to be rescued. We have first responders—State, local, and Federal—doing their best, but going through the city with no maps to guide them in some cases and without coordination, so that you have rescuers from all different agencies literally bumping into one another, not dividing up the city in a logical way, not coordinating their efforts. And I want to come back to this. Mr. Lokey.

Mr. LOKEY. If I could add one other thing, and I could ask Wildlife and Fisheries to respond, because where we set up camp was at Metairie at Zephyr Field, and that is where plans were made on where to search for the whole area. And, that is where we partnered with them on Tuesday. Daily plans were done. Incident ac-

tion plans were done on who would search where. And I thought there was representation from the Police Department there. The New Orleans Police was doing their search and rescue there. But we were making every effort, with the number of people that came in at Zephyr Field, to do that coordination. It wasn't that it wasn't taking place or that people weren't trying. But there was a lot of great efforts going on by a lot of people. But as an overall single command post controlling everything going on in Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana, no, ma'am, that did not exist.

But we went to where the State asked us to go to work with them to do the unified command.

Chairman COLLINS. But I think that shows some of the lack of coordination between the State and local agencies as well that the captain alluded to. I will come back to that issue.

Senator LIEBERMAN.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Lokey, let me continue that line of questioning. I think in some sense you may have, in your own quiet response to Senator Collins, given us the bottom line when you said we were not prepared for this. And I take that to mean that FEMA was not prepared for Hurricane Katrina. And our responsibility here is to figure out why and what we can do together to make sure that the next time disaster strikes, natural or otherwise, we are better prepared.

I want to clarify that you are the Operations Branch Chief of the Response Division at national FEMA.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Which is to say that you are in charge of all operations, I suppose planning and implementation of the response to an emergency.

Mr. LOKEY. My specific responsibilities are the National Urban Search and Rescue Program, the National Disaster Medical System, the National Response Coordination Center. I do have a planning unit that was the—where Hurricane Pam was planned. But like in the Response Division, all the logistics and equipment and support and things come out of the logistics—

Senator LIEBERMAN. That is somewhere else.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, that is someplace else

Senator LIEBERMAN. OK.

Mr. LOKEY. I am not overall of all operations.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right. But am I right that you were asked to go to Baton Rouge to be the No. 1 person for FEMA in regard to Hurricane Katrina?

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. You have heard us talk about the Hurricane Pam fictional exercise, which FEMA sponsored and paid for. Were you aware of the Hurricane Pam exercise prior to the weekend before Katrina?

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir, I was. I assumed my job at headquarters in late April.

Senator LIEBERMAN. April 2005?

Mr. LOKEY. Of 2005, yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. OK.

Mr. LOKEY. And as I was coming up to speed on the various initiatives, I was briefed by my staff on the Hurricane Pam initiatives. My only direct involvement was on the July workshop in New Orleans, I was able to be there for the last day for the briefing from various working groups on, I think, specifically at that time on transportation and search and rescue where they were in the process.

Senator LIEBERMAN. As we go along today, I think we are going to want to ask you why to our eyes and ears, as we go on with this investigation, it seems that there was so little specific and tangible response to the deficiencies, not just in FEMA but State and local as well, that the Hurricane Pam exercise showed. In other words, we weren't ready for this. We weren't ready for Katrina at all levels of government. But I want to focus on having—well, let me ask you just real briefly: Did you take any specific action in your work in response to what you saw of the Hurricane Pam report?

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir, I did, and in hindsight, it obviously was not the right thing. One of the things, for example, we were briefed on was the locals were only 10 percent done with their planning for the use of buses for evacuation, and they told me they would need a Presidential declaration of emergency 72 hours in advance to be able to pay for it.

I went back to headquarters and sent a memo over to the Recovery Division where that declaration unit was housed, expressing this to get the discussion started. And also instead of making plans to do the buses myself, I went and worked on getting them more money so they could continue their planning. And so I worked to—because they had asked that—they had done a lot of good things in the Hurricane Pam process, and my main focus was trying to get continued money to do that. And then Hurricanes Dennis through before Katrina kind of wound us up, and we didn't do anything more than that.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Let me take you to August 27, 2 days before landfall. FEMA officials, including yourself, were e-mailed certain sections of the southeast Louisiana catastrophic hurricane plan, the plan that came out of the Hurricane Pam exercise, by Sharon Blades. Could you identify Sharon Blades?

Mr. LOKEY. Sharon Blades works for me. She is part of our planning unit in the Response Division. She had been intimately involved, one of the lead staff working on the Hurricane Pam process.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right. So did she circulate that at your request, or did she just find it and circulate it as a crisis reminder?

Mr. LOKEY. Well, it was kind of as a reminder because when I got tagged to be the—well, when Director Brown made the decision to send the ERT-N, the National Response Team, which the Blue Team was up and I was the FCO for that, on Saturday morning, and one of the things—and by that time, as the hurricane moved west, it became New Orleans and Louisiana were coming into the target area, I had asked that the contractors from IEM be embedded in Louisiana and in our NRCC to give technical advice to remind people what had been done through the planning.

I carried with me several of the documents, and I don't want to take credit for good staff work. I wanted to get the word out, and Sharon did the appropriate thing to plan that. And on the airplane

going down there, I thumbed through it and looked for things to—you tickle me on the things we need to be talking to the State about.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Don't you agree that by that time it was too late? In other words, the deficiencies that the Hurricane Pam exercise showed in FEMA would have required a response much earlier, training of your Search and Rescue Teams for water rescue, etc.?

Mr. LOKEY. Well, for overall system things to respond with, yes, sir, you are exactly right. As far as the prepositioning of assets and things like that, that was specifically challenging in Katrina because after it hit southern Florida and came out, the track had it going through Tallahassee. And then the track moved very rapidly west, and we were staging commodities and teams to respond to Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. And that was why when I got there on Saturday night and got the briefing we activated the additional Urban Search and Rescue Teams. They would have been entirely—we never could have gotten them on time there. We put them on alert to move them in as quickly as possible after.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Let me read you from the Hurricane Pam plan's section on search and rescue, "Parish resources in the most severely impacted areas will not be available for several weeks or even months, as they were not removed from the area prior to the storm."

My understanding from my staff in the pre-hearing interview that they had with you is that you indicated some awareness of that particular prediction in Pam, which is to say that the first responders locally would be overwhelmed by the flooding.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Why was that? It certainly appears in the explicit wording of the Pam plan that there is a prediction that this kind of hurricane would in some sense drown—not literally, thank God, but would overwhelm the local first responders.

Looking at the plan, in hindsight, knowing that it came out in January 2005, you arrived at FEMA in April 2005, it cries out for action at the Federal, State, and local level, which, unfortunately, did not happen.

In the case of FEMA, it seems to me to clearly say that if this big one hits, the locals are simply not going to be able to handle it and that FEMA has got to get ready to come in with everything and take over.

Am I reading it right? And if so, why didn't something more happen at FEMA national headquarters to get ready for it?

Mr. LOKEY. Well, let me say what I will express will be my opinions.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Please.

Mr. LOKEY. Not necessarily that of the Department. But before I came to headquarters, I was a Federal Coordinating Officer. What is ingrained in us is that the State is sovereign. We work for them. We partner up with them. And FEMA does not even have the authority to go in and take over. And so I did as I was trained and what I was used to doing, partnered up with the State, and made sure I met their objectives.

I was able to review the Hurricane Pam things, like, for example—I am not sure exactly where it is, but there is a suggested 24 hours out what to have available. And it was four NDMS teams and two DMORT teams, and it was a pretty short list. Boats were not on that list.

In my discussions with the State, the Coast Guard and the Fisheries folks were moving their boats to safe areas. I don't have boats. But I didn't get a request for boats.

In hindsight—I mean, next time, sir, I will be before this Committee wondering why I spent so much money on things that were not needed.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes, there you go. I mean, looking at the Pam exercise, you are responsible for the Urban Search and Rescue Teams.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Don't you agree that the Pam exercise really was a plea that the Urban Search and Rescue Teams have some water rescue capacities?

Mr. LOKEY. No, sir. I think the Urban Rescue Teams weren't even part of the Pam process. There is extremely robust water rescue capability in this country.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Within FEMA?

Mr. LOKEY. No, sir. FEMA does not have organic water rescue capability. We have found from experience our urban search-and-rescue people occasionally, in doing their collapsed structure mission, do need to be prepared to work in a water environment. Subsequently, they have the safety gear. But to expand that program into a water rescue asset, we don't have enough funding to even do our structural collapse program as we would like.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So part of it was a lack of adequate funding.

Mr. LOKEY. Well, initially. That has always been considered that is a local and State responsibility. And with the time we could get there with teams to perform water rescue, all through the EMAC program.

Senator LIEBERMAN. The EMAC is the State mutual aid programs. So you called in a water rescue team, as I recall you mentioning in your opening statement, from California.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes.

Senator LIEBERMAN. But, obviously, it was not there early.

Mr. LOKEY. No, because what happened was when early in the game I was talking to Jeff Smith, especially when water became an issue, I was giving him advice from my experience in search and rescue of where through EMAC they could get robust water rescue capability. I suggested California. I found out a few hours later California had not signed the EMAC agreement. Fortunately, we have cooperative agreements with the eight main jurisdictions that are sponsors of Urban Search and Rescue Teams, which I worked for 2 years for California OES, Office of Emergency Services. Those are the jurisdictions that have eight California Swift Water teams. So we had a legal mechanism to bring those teams on board, pay them through FEMA, provide them the liability, and—

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right. When did they get there, do you know?

Mr. LOKEY. We have a detailed record of that. I believe they got there by Wednesday, but I am not sure. I provided your staff a timeline of when they were in.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes. Do you think FEMA should have its own in-house water rescue capacity?

Mr. LOKEY. I personally do not. I think that we ought to train our teams and better prepare them to work in a water environment so they can help as they did in this event. I do personally feel we should take the leadership, though, to help develop a national system of standards and training, and we can pay to move other teams around the country. That would be much more cost-effective than developing 28 Swift Water rescue teams within FEMA.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Madam Chairman, may I ask your indulgence to ask one related question to Captain Bayard? And it is also similar to what I just asked Mr. Lokey, and we will be asking other city officials this.

Why after Pam's clear warnings, to the best of your knowledge, Captain, did the city barely have any watercraft to deploy for search-and-rescue missions? And why did neither the New Orleans Fire Department nor the Police Department, to the best of my knowledge—and you correct me if I am wrong—have any water rescue training before Katrina made landfall?

Captain BAYARD. Senator Lieberman, I cannot answer that one way or the other. I was not involved in the exercise with Hurricane Pam, and I know that there are requests that went up about boats.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Prior to Katrina?

Captain BAYARD. Prior to Katrina, yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. From the Fire Department, Police Department, or both?

Captain BAYARD. I think from both agencies, sir. I know for sure from the Police Department.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Up to the city government?

Captain BAYARD. It went up through the chain of command, yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And, of course, it was not responded to affirmatively in a timely way.

Captain BAYARD. Correct.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you. Thanks, Madam Chairman.

Chairman COLLINS. Senator Warner.

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

We have much to learn about this tragedy. Is America, today at this moment this afternoon, better prepared should we have the misfortune of a similar incident? In other words, are we learning from the past? Have we implemented correct steps as best we can? More is to be done, but are we in a better state than we were when this happened? Just a simple few remarks from each of you. Mr. Lokey.

Mr. LOKEY. I think we are because we learned some hard lessons that have already been instituted. And as I mentioned earlier, our Urban Rescue Teams are as we speak in Miami working on making things better and doing the things to implement what we learned so we don't make the same mistakes twice.

Senator WARNER. Good.

General VEILLON. Senator Warner, thank you for that question. We are better. Throughout the Katrina rescue effort, there was unity of efforts by all organizations. We were all focused on the same thing: Rescuing people and taking them to safety. We did not have command and control, one command and control cell that controlled this whole effort. But there are a lot of positive lessons learned from the efforts of New Orleans, and I know they will all be instituted by the coming hurricane season.

Senator WARNER. Good. Thank you. Colonel LaCaze.

Colonel LACAZE. Yes, sir, I think we are. I know certainly our agency learned a great deal from it. We have effected some changes and improvements already and have lots of plans to do additional planning. And for the rest of the country, I will say this: If we ever have to respond to another State in a similar situation the way those States responded to us, I think we would bring a very effective and experienced and useful force to their assistance. Within our State and with other groups, we are already getting requests to come speak at conferences and at meetings and things to share the knowledge that we have. So in that way, I think we are going to go out, go forward to a lot of the rest of the country and tell our story and share our experience so they can benefit and make plans to be better prepared for these things.

Senator WARNER. Thank you. Captain Bayard.

Captain BAYARD. Senator Warner, we definitely learned a lot. Right now we are going through a lot of training with the Wildlife and Fisheries as far as boat and rescue. We are trying to get a US&R team established on the Police Department because we already have on-the-job training, I guess you would say, through this one. Even though we had no experience, we did search and rescue. Then we did secondary search and rescue with breaching homes and all. So we got a lot of experience, and we are going to try to get better.

The Department has implemented training as far as leadership training. We are getting incident command training. I spoke with the superintendent prior to coming up here, and this training is being slated right now. DEA and FBI are doing the leadership training on behalf of the New Orleans Police Department, and the incident command training, to my understanding, will be coming from the FBI as well.

Senator WARNER. Thank you.

Madam Chairman, and I say to the Ranking Member, it is very important that we have had these series of hearings, and I thank the Chairman. And I think they have been very productive.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you.

General, I want to explore with you an issue of prepositioning assets. I recognize that hindsight is always 20/20, but the fact is that FEMA wasn't the only agency that turned down what at least today appeared to be reasonable requests.

Our Committee is informed that the Chief of Operations, now Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department, made a request of the National Guard Commander at Jackson Barracks for five high-water vehicles and five boats to be pre-staged at each of the eight police district stations around the city so that the New

Orleans Police Department could deploy immediately after the storm.

Are you aware that, in fact, Superintendent Riley was told that the National Guard felt that most of the assets should stay at Jackson Barracks, which subsequently flooded, and that, in fact, no boats were pre-staged at all and high-water vehicles, rather than being pre-staged at all eight stations, were placed at only three or four?

General VEILLON. Madam Chairman, I am not aware of that specific request. We placed high-water vehicles as well as boats at Jackson Barracks in order to be close to those people that may need us. We did lose some high-water vehicles due to the water, but those vehicles were quickly put back into commission and used after the floodwaters began to recede.

But specifically, ma'am, I am not aware of the request from the New Orleans Police Department.

Chairman COLLINS. Well, given that Jackson Barracks was in the flood zone, did anyone express concern that assets might be lost due to flooding? And I want to follow up on your previous answer by pointing out that the Committee is informed that 20 high-water vehicles were out of commission due to flooding. Those are 20 vehicles that would have been very helpful in rescuing people and bringing them out of the city.

General VEILLON. Yes, ma'am. It was a decision made that we should have assets at Jackson Barracks, our headquarters, in preparation for this storm. The catastrophic nature of the floods did have an impact on our prepositioned equipment. We have always positioned boats and high-water vehicles at Jackson Barracks for all hurricanes and have always had better luck. When the levees broke and Jackson Barracks flooded, we lost a lot of that equipment initially.

So, yes, ma'am, we were aware of the relative danger and possibility of loss, but we believed it was the right place for the equipment.

Chairman COLLINS. Mr. LaCaze, we have heard that you experienced difficulty in getting the National Guard to allow you to use buses that would have assisted in the evacuation of patients from Tulane Medical Center. Could you tell us about that incident?

Colonel LACAZE. Yes, ma'am. The Wednesday following the hurricane, we were asked that morning to go to the Tulane Medical Center to evacuate patients from that hospital and also if we would have the ability to evacuate some from Charity also. So we deployed into that area and began moving people from the hospital. We were met on scene by some people from the Shreveport Fire Department and some Shreveport medical first responder units that explained to us that they had a triage location set up in a small parking lot just across the street. This is at Loyola and Perdido. Just across the street from the Holiday Inn Hotel was the first dry ground that you could get to coming from Tulane Medical Center. And the plan was for us to take our boats, go to the hospital, move the people from the hospital to the parking lot where there would be ambulances that would be arriving to take the patients from there and to evacuate them out of the city.

So we started the evacuation, and in just a little while we had to stop with only about 20 patients because the parking lot area, that was about all they could hold at one time, and we were not getting the ambulances in as scheduled. So we held up on further evacuation and turned our efforts to just working in the city area evacuating people and assisting people who were trying to get out while we waited for the ambulances so we could resume the hospital evacuation.

It came to my attention sometime that afternoon that there were about—I think it was five buses that were parked on up near the interstate, just up the street, actually, from where we were. Our radio systems were very poor. You would get communication to the Emergency Operations Center in Baton Rouge occasionally, about 50 percent or less of the time, and I relayed a request and advised that there were buses that were on location here, they were very near to where we were, in the absence of the ambulances would it be possible to get the buses, to place the patients on board, and to move them out that way.

The initial response that we got back from Baton Rouge EOC was that that was approved to go send someone up there and get the buses. We sent one of the firemen, the Shreveport firemen. There was a 4-wheeler that they were using to run around in the area. It went up, contacted, and there were some National Guardsmen who had the buses, had a security watch on the buses. And I assume he made contact with them. He went up and talked to them and told them that we had a request and they had been authorized.

He came back to me and said that they would need to know who had authorized that, who was requesting it, and could I put that in writing. So I made a note with the authorization from the EOC, I think it was Colonel Smalley or Colonel Smith. I can't recall who the person in the EOC that had advised, that had authorized it. I told them who I was and signed my name to it and sent it.

He took the message and went up. He stayed a few minutes. He came back and said, "They want you to come up there." So I got on the 4-wheeler with him, and we rode up to the Guardsmen who were watching the buses, and I said, "We really need the buses." And the senior sergeant there advised that they did not have the authorization and they, therefore, couldn't release the buses. And I said, "Well, let me try to talk to somebody. Do you have something that beats the radio that I have that is not working very well?" They provided a cell phone, and I tried to make a phone call on the cell phone but couldn't get through on it either. It wasn't really working any better than the radio was. And just couldn't get through and couldn't talk—at that point communications were virtually lost again. And with that, he just said, "I am sorry. I know you and I would love to be able to. I just can't do it without the authorization." And I had asked, "Well, what is the purpose of the buses? What are they doing here?" And he said, "These are for special needs people."

Chairman COLLINS. What are patients?

Colonel LACAZE. And what did I have down the street? But I said, "Well, I understand the position you are in," and I knew that

it wasn't any use to pursue it at that level with him because he had his orders and I had my responsibility and my request.

So at that point we went back, and since we still were not getting ambulances and were not—and finally did, but not in any adequate numbers—I think there were five. That was when I made the decision to go ahead and load the patients in our pick-up trucks and load the equipment, the wheelchairs, and stretchers and things like that into the boats that we were trailering. After we got out of the water and got all the patients out of the hospital, we trailered our boats, loaded the people in the trucks, put the equipment on board the boats, and went to the causeway.

Chairman COLLINS. That sounds like bureaucracy at its worst. Here you are trying to evacuate patients. There are five empty buses available. And instead, you are asked to fill out paperwork, you cannot get the authorization, so you end up loading patients into pick-up trucks and other vehicles, which is much slower and delays the evacuation. Is that a fair assessment?

Colonel LACAZE. Yes, ma'am, that is a fair assessment. And I attribute it to the communication problem.

Chairman COLLINS. Did you see any evidence, as you are attempting to evacuate hospitals, of any kind of coordination among Federal, State, and local agencies to deal with the problems of the need to evacuate hospitals?

Colonel LACAZE. Helicopters were doing air evacuations very rapidly and very regularly from the hospitals, but at the ground level where we were, the situation that I have described to you there was the kind of things that we were encountering.

Chairman COLLINS. So on the ground there was no coordination that you could see.

Colonel LACAZE. Not at that point. The only coordination that I was able to see was at least the Shreveport Fire Department and medical service personnel who had been tasked to that assignment. They were on scene and in place, as were we. But as far as the coordination needed for the ground transportation, we ran into a problem there.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks again, Madam Chairman. Just let me continue on the question of red tape in the middle of the crisis.

I know that our staffs have received testimony from witnesses that indicated—and here, again, Colonel LaCaze, I am going to ask you—that when the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries went to make certain EMAC requests, which I take it to be requests from other States who could provide assistance, you also met with some red tape about whether FEMA had approved a particular State agency to deploy specifically to Louisiana. Is that correct? Did you have problems with red tape in that regard?

Colonel LACAZE. To some degree, sir. I know that Texas Parks and Wildlife was on scene—by Wednesday morning they had arrived. The remaining States that I mentioned showed up in the following days. But it did seem in all honesty that it was a little bit slow. Help was slow in coming. I think that anyone that was involved there and into the area immediately after impact will tell you that our feeling was that help was slow in coming at those levels.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And was it your impression that was because of some red tape within the FEMA system or just that FEMA had not been adequately prepared as the hurricane was coming to get people in there quickly?

Colonel LACAZE. The information that I was getting was coming from the Office of Emergency Preparedness in Baton Rouge, and what the Wildlife and Fisheries personnel were relaying to me there was that requests were bogged down in the process, in the pipe, so to speak.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Mr. Lokey, when you were there, were you aware that there was a logjam in terms of the EMAC request? Again, I'm talking about an EMAC request being a request from Louisiana for help from other States with the kinds of capacities that they needed.

Mr. LOKEY. Well, EMAC is strictly a state-to-state mutual aid operation. I do not believe FEMA has any dog in that fight, if you will.

I do remember delays of people not wanting to respond because they didn't have the right signature to assure they were covered under the EMAC compact, but that is strictly state-to-state.

Senator LIEBERMAN. In any case, just to clarify, am I right that wouldn't come through your division? Or would it?

Mr. LOKEY. No, sir, that would be strictly state-to-state. Now, we do have an EMAC representative at the National Response Coordination Center that helps coordinate things like that. But I do not believe there is any part of the FEMA approval process in an EMAC request.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So, therefore, your answer is, contrary to what the Colonel said, who felt that FEMA was part of holding up those—

Mr. LOKEY. I do not believe FEMA was part of holding that up.

Senator LIEBERMAN. OK. Let me go back to a baseline question. General Veillon, as you testified earlier, you began doing your water rescue on Monday, August 29, the day of landfall. I want to ask you a couple of questions. At what point did you realize that day that a major water rescue effort would be required? And as part of that, when did you know that any one of the levees, the significant levees around New Orleans, had been broken?

General VEILLON. Yes, sir, thank you. On Monday morning, mid-morning, around 9:30, the water rapidly rose with a significant current at Jackson Barracks.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Which is where you were.

General VEILLON. Yes, sir, which is where I was. From past experience with hurricanes and floods, charts, I expected some water at Jackson Barracks. This was different in how fast it rose and what a current it had. So it was significantly deep in a very short time.

I learned shortly thereafter, maybe 30 minutes, listening to the AM radio station in New Orleans, WWL, which was announcing that the Industrial levee had broke.

Senator LIEBERMAN. As far as you could tell, that announcement was made based on something the radio station had heard from a reporter or people in the area.

General VEILLON. Yes, sir. I am not sure how they came to that information.

Senator LIEBERMAN. But it turned out to be accurate.

General VEILLON. Yes, sir, it was accurate, and about an hour after that, the Emergency Operations Center in Baton Rouge advised us at Jackson Barracks that, in fact, the Industrial Canal had a levee breach.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So that would be what time?

General VEILLON. That would have been in a sequence of maybe 9:30 the water rose; 10, 10:30, the radio announces it; 11, 11:30, OEP advises.

Senator LIEBERMAN. OK. Colonel LaCaze, when did you first learn that the levees had been broken?

Colonel LACAZE. We had heard apparently the same radio broadcast from the public radio stations that morning around 9 o'clock, that they suspected that there were levee breaches. I did not get true confirmation of that until Tuesday morning, but we had made observation during the night Monday night and in the wee hours of Tuesday of fluctuation in the water levels that made us suspect that we had a levee breach.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Although, am I right, you were already out there on Monday afternoon?

Colonel LACAZE. Yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Captain, when did you hear about any one of the levees breaking?

Captain BAYARD. It was Monday morning. We were able to speak with Communications Section, and the Lower 9th Ward was inundated with 911 calls, so we knew we had a problem. And the levee actually breached in two locations—one right at Jordan Avenue, and the second, the major break, was at Pria.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And which levee was this, just for the record?

Captain BAYARD. Industrial Canal levee, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Lokey, at the State Emergency Operations Center, when did you first learn that the levees had broken?

Mr. LOKEY. Well, we were getting unsubstantiated reports starting Monday about the same time because I was right next to Colonel Smith in the Emergency Operations Center. I got confirmation with the eyes-on conference call I had with Marty Bahamonde, who had flown around in a Coast Guard helicopter.

Senator LIEBERMAN. We have heard from him. Right.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And did you then communicate that information to FEMA in Washington?

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir. Well, the conference call with Marty included my chain of command, and so we all got it at the same time.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And that was, as I recall, later in the day.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. More specifically, but not to the minute, it was more like early evening, am I right? Or later afternoon?

Mr. LOKEY. It was later in the afternoon, and I was with Jeff Smith, and we were trying to get reports. The Corps of Engineers was going out to inspect, and we were getting all sorts of things and seeing things on CNN.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Mr. Lokey, while I am directing a question to you, I want to come back to something I said in my opening statement, which is based on Exhibit 12.<sup>1</sup> It is a report from the Homeland Security Operations Center dated Thursday, September 1, 2005. And it states that FEMA Search and Rescue Teams stopped operations until the National Guard could provide adequate security for them. Explain first why that happened because my understanding is that the rest of the Search and Rescue Teams had continued in their work.

Mr. LOKEY. I followed up on this, even the discussions today, with members of our Incident Support Team on the exact timing of this. Monday night was the time the rumors were abounding about the breakdown of law and order and things like that.

Senator LIEBERMAN. The very first night.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir. And some of our rescue teams had even heard gunshots, although no fire was directed at them.

Search and rescue operations never totally stopped, and FEMA did not pull out. What occurred was, according to my folks who were on scene, that the unified command of the Coast Guard and the National Guard and the folks working out of Metairie pulled back in to make a decision on exactly what was happening and how to get protection for our forces in their boats.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Basically, they pulled back into temporary headquarters.

Mr. LOKEY. Well, into their command posts at Zephyr Field. Some of the assets that were in the field were diverted to neighborhoods they knew were safe. As soon as they identified where they could get law enforcement officers—and this was in coordination—I understand that Jefferson County Parish law enforcement was there. As soon as they got law enforcement officers to put in the boats to protect the people, they were back in the water again doing rescues.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So how long was that, would you say?

Mr. LOKEY. I believe that they pulled back in Monday midday, and they launched again early Tuesday morning when they got the law enforcement support.

Senator LIEBERMAN. OK. Now, there is a confusion here because in Exhibit 12 there is a reference to Thursday, September 1, later in the week, when the Search and Rescue Teams stopped operations.

Mr. LOKEY. Well, if I remember correctly, it was September 1.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes, that is the Thursday.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, that was—well, this is probably a later report. But by the time it got out from us—when I had heard that they had ceased operations—because the decision was made in the field. The decision to protect your forces I leave to my people managing in the field. When I got the word that they had pulled back because of this and finally made touch with them, they had already solved it and were working on their plans to get back with law enforcement people as soon as they could get that in the water.

<sup>1</sup> Exhibit 12 appears in the Appendix on page 80.

So I am pretty confident that the event that spawned this was the rumors from August 31 in the evening, and then the morning of September 1 was the day they—

Senator LIEBERMAN. That would have been Tuesday and—OK, Wednesday and Thursday.

Mr. LOKEY. Well, they stopped midday—I would have to check this. The night of August 31—September 1 was when they ceased until they got the law enforcement and launched again September 2, I believe. But they did not pull out.

Senator LIEBERMAN. They just pulled back.

Mr. LOKEY. They redirected in other places, and they did not go into the hazardous area until they ascertained exactly what the threat was and were able to get law enforcement people to accompany them.

Senator LIEBERMAN. General, to what extent did disorder inhibit search and rescue?

General VEILLON. Senator, there was probably a rumor an hour about snipers and other things going on in the city. The National Guard, we did not stop our rescue efforts for any security issue. It is my experience of Katrina that the National Guard did not experience security concerns. There were a lot of rumors of issues, but we continued our operations and did not experience any problems.

Senator LIEBERMAN. OK. My time is up. Thank you.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you.

Captain, it is my understanding that you have been with the New Orleans Police Department for some 30 years. Is that correct?

Captain BAYARD. Yes, ma'am, it is.

Chairman COLLINS. So during that time, you have undoubtedly been involved in preparations for other hurricanes. Could you give the Committee some comparison on the preparation for Hurricane Katrina versus other hurricanes during that 30 years?

Captain BAYARD. Well, for previous hurricanes, again, we would call people in early, just like we did for this one. We would go over the plan, make sure everybody understood what the plan was. Then we would start having—we would disperse food, water, everybody would fill fuel tanks up in their cars, just like we pretty much did for this one.

We would have some military vehicles staged at stations at the Mars Street compound where myself and the TAC teams were staged. Each district always had at least a Hummer or one truck at the station houses in the previous storms in my 30 years.

Chairman COLLINS. But that did not happen in this case.

Captain BAYARD. We didn't have any at Mars Street, and we pulled out of Mars Street probably 7, 8 o'clock that night to go to the hotels and then go patrol until the winds got up. So we pretty much planned just like we do for any other storm.

Chairman COLLINS. Were the plans more extensive for Hurricane Katrina?

Captain BAYARD. No, ma'am.

Chairman COLLINS. Were they less or just similar?

Captain BAYARD. I would say pretty much the same.

Chairman COLLINS. Pretty much the same. So even though this was a hurricane that was expected to be a far stronger hurricane, you did not see more robust preparations. Is that fair?

Captain BAYARD. Yes, ma'am. I did not experience that.

Chairman COLLINS. It is my understanding that the city has a mobile command center. Was that brought to the casino where you set up operations?

Captain BAYARD. No, ma'am, it is not. It is a tractor-trailer, and it was stationed at Elysian Fields or North Miro in the fire station, and it was moved. And I found out later on that it was moved to a safe haven in Algiers and that it is currently being used as a fire station by Holy Cross High School on Renee Street below the Industrial Canal. And our two mobile command posts were—we did not know where they were either. They didn't come into play until after, I think, like the third week.

Chairman COLLINS. Did that hinder your efforts?

Captain BAYARD. We were trying to coordinate everything off two picnic tables and chairs, and when I ran into the special forces group, we went and got plywood and two-by-fours, and then they built a little area, and that was the Incident Commander Center made out of plywood and two-by-fours, and that is where we worked.

Chairman COLLINS. Some have said that if the physical communications network had not been devastated, the response to Hurricane Katrina would have been far better and a lot of the problems that we saw would not have occurred. And there is no doubt that if people's cell phones and radios are working, obviously communication is a lot easier.

But in your report, you present a far broader indictment of what went wrong. I want to refer to Exhibit 1,<sup>1</sup> which is a memo that you wrote to Deputy Chief Steven Nicholas. Could you read the first paragraph under "Summary and Recommendations" for us?

Captain BAYARD. It says, "The Office of Emergency Preparedness needs to be revamped. If their role is to have us prepared to handle a disaster such as this, they failed. They lacked a plan, did not provide the necessary equipment, provided no direction or leadership, did not coordinate or attempt to have commanders of field operations coordinate with any State or Federal agency, etc. We really need to take a long, hard look at this section."

Chairman COLLINS. Can you tell us how this report came about? Was it an after-action review?

Captain BAYARD. Yes, ma'am. It was an after-action summary. It was submitted on October 16, 2005, which is a little over a month after the storm had impacted New Orleans.

Chairman COLLINS. So does it remain your judgment that it was a lack of planning, direction, and leadership that were responsible for the poor response?

Captain BAYARD. Yes, ma'am. I read the mission statement. I gave it to the investigators, to you all, and I felt, based off of what that mission statement is, that they should have had us better prepared for this storm, and not only this, but any other storm that's coming. They were supposed to be coordinating with State, local, and Federal agencies. They were supposed to have equipment staged for us, things along those lines, and that didn't happen.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. Senator Lieberman.

<sup>1</sup>Exhibit 1 appears in the Appendix on page 73.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Madam Chairman. Mr. Lokey, I am going to come back to you. You happen to be the guy from FEMA here today, so you are naturally getting a lot of questions, and because we are focused on the Federal role, although we are interested, obviously, and concerned about State and local preparedness too. We had all of these warnings that built up over the years. We have the specific warnings contained in the Hurricane Pam report and plan, which showed in a test case of what turned out to be, thank God, worse than Katrina, that locals were overwhelmed, they could not handle it.

We heard you say earlier that you wish you had done more before to respond to the PAM report. You came in April. You were not there for a long time, and I can only ask you this from your perspective; we are going to have other people testify from FEMA as this goes on—and a lot of this, we are finding memos, and we are asking you questions about memos. But let's be honest about this, we were all watching television, and Max Mayfield was on TV Thursday and Friday, telling us this is a Category 4 or 5 storm. So neon lights are flashing saying, this is the big one. And I do not see within FEMA, even at that point, acknowledging that there was not enough earlier reaction to Pam, that somebody there said, "Hey, this is it. Pam warned us the State and local people are going to be overwhelmed. The levees are going to break. We have to mobilize everything we have to get in there as quickly as possible."

I do not see that it happened. I see that it happened as time went on, but I do not see that it happened, for instance, that weekend. Am I right or wrong?

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir. We certainly did not mobilize everything we had. We did mobilize more than we had ever mobilized before.

Senator LIEBERMAN. In advance or afterward?

Mr. LOKEY. In advance. We had a number of urban rescue teams, a number of National Disaster Medical Teams, the amount of commodities that were staged, and literally, they were spread from Florida through Texas to respond. But it certainly was not everything we had, but, again, our challenge was that this was a huge storm, and Mississippi took a terrible brunt of it also. Alabama took a brunt of it. And just with what we had available, in hindsight, yes, we should have put more teams in and brought them in.

Senator LIEBERMAN. How many search-and-rescue teams could you have brought into the Gulf Coast or New Orleans?

Mr. LOKEY. Well, theoretically, I could have brought 28 of them in, but we had a bunch of them on alert. We had two teams in Mississippi and three teams in Shreveport, and then when the storm—again, when I got there Saturday, the first thing I did was call my urban rescue people and put a bunch of more teams, I think five additional teams, on alert for quick response.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Looking back, you said you wish that over that weekend you had activated more of those teams to come in.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Because of the scope of it. How about Monday when you found out pretty clearly from people on the scene that the levees had broken? So now the nightmare, which had been predicted and could be reasonably foreseen over the weekend with

all the weather forecasts and, incidentally, some e-mail traffic within FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security, becomes real. The General and others can verify this. What should have happened then? For instance, looking back, do you wish that you had immediately notified people in Washington that the levees had broken, or do you think that they knew about it?

Mr. LOKEY. Well, they had some of the same information I did. They might have even had more because communications were so bad that even my chain of command was constantly on me that they could not get me on the phone because phone lines were saturated.

Senator LIEBERMAN. From Washington?

Mr. LOKEY. From Washington, yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So where do you think they might have gotten the information, from public sources?

Mr. LOKEY. Watching CNN because the media was out right away, showing those pictures of not only the problems that were developing at the Superdome and at the Convention Center, but the rescues, and I was scrambling from where I was to move everything under my control and to advise the State on where they could get additional water assets, and I had discussions with Under Secretary Brown that although it was not our policy, we were putting our people in the water, and we would make plans with the State, if they would provide the boats, we would put the people in them. And then we got the California teams in.

Senator LIEBERMAN. When did you have that conversation with Under Secretary Brown?

Mr. LOKEY. Monday and Tuesday.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Monday afternoon or evening?

Mr. LOKEY. Well, Monday afternoon. Mr. Brown did not get there until Monday afternoon.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Correct. This was face to face?

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir. We already decided that because the teams were appropriately equipped and appropriately prepared, and these firefighters, although water rescue was not their mission, these are some of the best rescue people in the world, and we certainly knew that—

Senator LIEBERMAN. I have to tell you, I applaud that decision. Even though they were not specifically trained, as I said before, they fall under the category of heroes because they just used their brains and their guts and saved an awful lot of lives.

Mr. LOKEY. Yes, sir. They improvised and made it work.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes, absolutely.

I wanted to ask just one general question, and again, this is about search and rescue. We are going to do a separate hearing on communications. But how much did the communications failure hurt the search-and-rescue efforts? Any of you want to reflect a little bit on what happened? Captain Bayard.

Captain BAYARD. Well, Senator, when we didn't have communication, it means we couldn't get real good intelligence back from the fields, and without communications, we couldn't coordinate with Wildlife and Fisheries, with the military, and things along those lines. So communication is vital in a time of crisis. If we can-

not communicate, we can't coordinate, and that's exactly what happened here.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right. Colonel LaCaze.

Colonel LACAZE. Yes, sir, I would concur with that. You have to have communication, not only among the rescuers within the teams that are out there affecting the rescues so they can help each other, but all the way up the chain of command, to be able to provide information as to how many people we have, what kind of condition they are in, the medical assistance and transport we need, the food, water supplies that we need. All of that information has to be relayed. And when you have the breakdown of communications, the very lifeblood of the whole search-and-rescue operation is severely cut back.

Senator LIEBERMAN. General, let me ask the question a little bit differently, which is: How manageable is the task of providing a sustainable communications system in a Katrina-like disaster? In other words, obviously, the system that existed was out. Is it just a question of having the will and the money to buy the system, to get one that stays in, that continues to work?

General VEILLON. What we had primarily was 800 megahertz radio.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General VEILLON. Where we communicated from the Superdome to Baton Rouge via radio. That radio was saturated, the frequencies, with all agencies trying to operate. We also used satellite phones, and they became saturated. Blackberries served a good purpose, where we did have e-mail capability.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Interesting.

General VEILLON. The National Guard possesses some communications assets unique to the military, radio pallets loaded in the back of a Humvee. We have a forward air control unit that has that capability, where we forward deployed those units to give us feedback.

What we need for the future is a communications package that has interoperability, that we can talk to everybody at this table, as well as a surge capability, that when everybody comes up on the frequency, the system can handle that.

So we had communications, but it was saturated.

Senator LIEBERMAN. As far as you know, does that kind of system exist? In other words, if we decided we want to buy it and give you the resources to buy it, I presume you could find it, it does not have to be developed.

General VEILLON. Sir, in this country, I presume it does exist. I am not an expert in that, but that is what I would think where we need to go.

Senator LIEBERMAN. One of the questions we are going to look at in another hearing is the sequence of events and decisions that were made about when to deploy the military more broadly than the National Guard. One of the questions I know will be whether the military, existing as it does and preparing as it does for combat situations, would have brought with it, if it had been sent in early, the kind of separate communications system that would have withstood the pressures of the situation on the ground? Do you know?

General VEILLON. Well, sir, the Iwo Jima arrived with a vast amount of communications capability. It did not—by that time that the Iwo Jima was in place—

Senator LIEBERMAN. When did it get there? I have forgotten.

General VEILLON. Sir, as I recall, it would have been about Saturday after the storm.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General VEILLON. By that point, most of the rescue and evacuation of the Superdome and the Convention Center had taken place. We were more into a hasty search mode.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right, and there was less demand on the system.

General VEILLON. Yes, sir. The peak had passed.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right, thank you.

Mr. LOKEY. If I may, just to let you know what we are doing to improve that, we got caught up in the communications problems. But we have been working with the Northern Command, which is the major military group we work with for military support to civilian authorities, in looking at what we're calling capability packages to predefine the capabilities they may have that are available to match up with what our potential needs are, so the time it takes for us to develop a scope of work and the exact needs can be shortened. We have been working with them on that, not only for communications packages, but also for medical capability, air capability, and ground transportation capability.

Senator LIEBERMAN. That is very reassuring because the poignant moment that you describe, where your superiors in Washington are having trouble contacting you as the chief FEMA person on the scene in Louisiana, is a moment that should never come again. I mean, you cannot imagine, if I may use the handy example, that General Abizaid at CENTCOM Headquarters in Qatar would have trouble getting General Casey in Baghdad. It would not happen, and it should not have happened in your case.

Mr. LOKEY. And one thing we have done also, that the availability to us of what we have now purchased as a result of Katrina, of additional satellite phones, and also for the ERT-Ns, the two National Response Teams, we are developing communications packages and caches for them. We are doing training that we were not able to do last year, and we are trying to make things better so something like this won't happen again, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Appreciate that. Thank you.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you.

I want to thank each of you for testifying today and for your cooperation with the Committee. As I listened to each of you testify, I was reminded of a phrase from the 9/11 Commission's report. When the Commission described "good people straining against bad structures," and particularly with the Lieutenant Colonel and the Captain's recitation of how they had to get around bureaucracy, or a lack of leadership and direction, a lack of planning, and be very innovative. I thank all four of you and your teams for all that you did to help the victims of Katrina. But good people should not have to strain against bad systems or inadequate structures, and that is one of the things that we want to help recommend remedies for.

I was also struck once again, as I have been throughout this series of hearings, by the absence of effective planning and determined leadership at all levels of government, and that is an issue that we will continue to pursue as well. I thank you for increasing our understanding.

Senator Lieberman, do you have any final comment?

Senator LIEBERMAN. I think you said it just right, and I appreciate it. These are good people who are working hard under tough circumstances, some of whom performed heroic service, and a lot of people are alive today as a result of it. But the really infuriating reality is the extent to which the warnings were being given and people at all levels of government did not respond. There was a lot more damage done to life and property as a result of an admittedly catastrophic storm than should have been the case.

I take some heart, Mr. Lokey, from hearing about some of the things you said that FEMA is beginning to do internally, and we hope that coming out of this, by telling the story, by putting it all together and enabling everybody, including the public, to look back and see how this happened, that we will generate both the pressure and, frankly, the kind of support that you all need to do the jobs you do, to put the structures in place, and then to fund them. I am sure there was a good reason why somebody in the New Orleans Government or in the Federal Government did not give you exactly what you needed. You requested the boats, and you did not get them. But it was not a good enough reason, as you look back at it, and it sure was penny-wise and pound-foolish when you think about the terrible damage that resulted from it.

So you have helped us very much today in your testimony, and we are going to take it and try to make something constructive out of it. Thank you very much for your service.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you for your cooperation. The hearing record will remain open for 15 days. This hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:55 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]



## A P P E N D I X

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**Testimony of  
William Lokey  
Operations Branch Chief  
Response Division  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Department of Homeland Security  
Before  
The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee  
January 30, 2006**

Good afternoon Chairman Collins and Members of the Committee. I am William Lokey, Operations Branch Chief of the Response Division of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). It is an honor to appear before the Committee today to discuss the activities of the National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) System in the response to Hurricane Katrina.

FEMA appreciates your interest in this particular part of our response to this unprecedented disaster. I think we all recognize that the hurricanes of 2005—in particular, Hurricane Katrina—thoroughly stressed the capabilities of FEMA, as well as the Nation. Under very difficult circumstances, members of FEMA’s US&R program rose to the occasion, working outside of the scope of their regular mission (although well within the authority of the Stafford Act). US&R provided guidance and leadership to state and local personnel and volunteers who were in organizing their first major search and rescue efforts. These efforts resulted in

save lives, plus provided necessary assistance and comfort to numerous citizens affected by this disaster.

Allow me to provide a brief overview of the National US&R System.

Experiences gained and awareness of response to major earthquakes in Mexico City and Armenia in the 1980's dramatically demonstrated the need for specialized urban search and rescue capability in the United States.

In March of 1989, hearings were held on the re-authorization of the National Earthquake Hazard Reduction Act (NEHRP) by the Subcommittee on Science of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology. Following the Loma Prieta earthquake in October of that year, \$800,000 was provided to FEMA for one-time grants to accredited state and local search and rescue organizations for training and for the acquisition of special equipment and to develop specialized teams. Thus, the National Urban Search and Rescue System was born.

After 17 years and numerous activations to hurricanes and earthquakes, as well as the Oklahoma City, the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and other emergencies, there are 28 FEMA-sponsored national US&R task forces located throughout the

continental United States that are trained and equipped to handle structural collapse rescue.

The 28 teams are comprised of state local and non-profit organizations. These teams are based in their home states and communities. Except when deployed for federal activation, the team members and the teams themselves operate in their home states. One of the pillars of the National US&R system is that, in return for making these state and local resources available to Federal Government, the Federal Government provides resources and training that allow the teams to better serve their communities on a day to day basis.

Any of these national task forces can be activated and deployed by FEMA to a disaster area to provide assistance in structural collapse rescue, or may be pre-positioned when a major disaster threatens a community. When activated, a task force can be dispatched and en route to its destination in a matter of hours.

Each task force is comprised of 70 specialists and is divided into six major functional elements: search, rescue, medical, hazardous materials, logistics and planning. The task force may be divided into two 35-member teams, which allows

for the rotation and relief of personnel for round-the-clock search and rescue operations. This is a Type I task force.

The task forces also have the flexibility to reconfigure and deploy as one 28-person (Type-III) team to respond to small, primarily weather-driven incidents.

Requirements would be physical, technical and canine search and rescue in light, wood-frame construction. Such events typically include hurricanes, tornados, ice storms, and typhoons.

When the system responds, a management group called the Incident Support Team (IST) also responds to support the teams. IST provides command and control for supporting local and State rescue operations.

Some of the capabilities of the US&R task forces are:

- Physical search and rescue operations in damaged/collapsed structures;
- Operations in a known or suspected weapons-of-mass-destruction environment;
- Emergency medical care for entrapped victims, task force personnel and search canines;

- Reconnaissance to assess damage and needs, and provide feedback to other officials;
- Assessment/shut-off of utilities to houses and other buildings;
- Hazardous materials survey/evaluations;
- Structural and hazard evaluations of buildings;
- Stabilization of damaged structures, including shoring and cribbing operations; and
- A 62,000-pound equipment cache, configured to quickly deploy with the team.

Let me now provide a brief overview of US&R operations in Hurricane Katrina. I arrived in Baton Rouge on Saturday evening, August 27. Also with me was Richard Deir, the Emergency Response Team-National Emergency Services Branch Chief and an experienced person with Emergency Support Function-9. He began working with personnel from Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries, the National Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and others on planning for potential Search and Rescue operations. Staff from IEM, the contractor who had worked on the Hurricane Pam planning, was also there to provide technical advice.

Before landfall, three task forces (one Type I and two Type III) and the Blue IST were staged at Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, Louisiana. Two task forces (one Type I and one Type III) and the Red IST were staged at Meridian, Mississippi at Meridian NAS. Five additional task forces (two Type I and three Type III) were put on alert.

By the morning of August 30, eight additional task forces (three Type I and five Type III) and eight California Swift Water rescue teams were activated and en route to operations in Mississippi and Louisiana. On August 31, ten additional task forces (all Type I) were activated and staged to assist.

In Mississippi, task forces responded the morning after Katrina. FEMA US&R assets were engaged in search & rescue operations in Harrison, Hancock, Jackson, and Pearl River counties. This theater of operations stretched for approximately 85 miles along the Mississippi coastline. FEMA US&R assets and the USCG worked in close coordination in conducting these searches and developing corresponding documentation.

FEMA US&R task forces located 60 deceased victims in these operational areas. FEMA US&R task forces also located and treated three live victims (non-

entrapped). Medical treatment was given to 35 other civilians. A total of 15 task forces worked in Mississippi and demobilized on September 10.

In Louisiana, the task forces departed from Barksdale AFB after weather permitted on Monday afternoon, August 29, to Baton Rouge where they were briefed, had their radios programmed, and departed for the New Orleans area. Teams began arriving at the Sam's Club parking lot in Metairie that night. The teams met up with the USCG and representatives from the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Department who were leading Search Operations. There they were asked by the State to move the Base of Operations to Zephyr Field, about five miles from New Orleans. During this time the Louisiana State Wildlife and Fisheries Department was organizing boats for US&R use. When the boats were secured early Tuesday morning, August 30, rescue operations were launched.

The water rescue operations carried out in the New Orleans area may be one of the largest such lifesaving efforts in history. It was a local, state and federal team effort. Tens of thousands of people were saved or assisted in leaving the flooded area. FEMA US&R personnel accounted for 6,582 souls saved or assisted.

They also identified the locations of and helped to recover over 300 human remains, over 25 percent of the victims. US&R delivered food and water to and assisted an uncounted number of people in distress. Due to our disciplined training, doctrine and equipment, over 40 different teams from 19 states seamlessly deployed as interchangeable parts in this rescue effort. There were no serious member injuries in spite of continuous operations in a highly hazardous, contaminated environment.

Both Incident Support Teams were instrumental in working with state and local responders to establish unified command structures among the many diverse government agencies and with state and local Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) organizations in the first days.

With the assistance from FEMA logistics within 5 to 6 days, base camps were built from nothing that provided support to over 3,000 people and helicopter rescue/evacuation operations. Teams also assisted in the capping of approximately 40 gas mains.

It is especially important to note that water rescue is not part of the US&R mission, although they were somewhat equipped to do their collapse structure rescue mission in a water environment.

FEMA and US&R learned a lot from this event. FEMA had a meeting with task force leadership in December to review operations and begin work on improvements. A second meeting is taking place as we speak in Miami, Florida. I will be joining them tonight to continue the work on lessons learned and system improvements.

One of the more significant efforts US&R working on is the development of a five year strategic plan. Through a decision process developed in the early years of the program, US&R's goal is to define US&R's system and mission. The system was designed for rescue in collapsed structures. The ability to work in a weapon of mass destruction environment was added after the events of 9/11. US&R recently added limited capability to accomplish our mission in a water environment, such as providing personal floatation devices. .

Our goal is to work with the Task Forces, our State and local partners, to determine and recommend how US&R should operate when faced with water environments,

such a flooding in a collapsed structure (which we encountered at the World Trade Center.

These men and women of the US&R program represent the finest tradition of search and rescue in America. For the job they did, the risks they took, and the lives they saved, they deserve high praise.

Members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to be here today. I am ready to answer any questions you may have.

**Prepared Statement of Brigadier General Brod Veillon**  
**Assistant Adjutant General**  
**Louisiana National Guard**  
**January 30, 2006**

Good afternoon Chairman Collins and members of the committee. I am Brigadier General Brod Veillon. I am the assistant Adjutant General for Air of the Louisiana National Guard.

On Sunday, August 28<sup>th</sup> at about 10:00 a.m., The Adjutant General called and asked me to coordinate the Louisiana National Guard's support of Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Search and Rescue efforts in response to Hurricane Katrina. I called a 2:30 p.m. meeting of the agencies that would participate in the search and rescue operation. The meeting occurred at the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness. Representatives from the following agencies participated: United States Coast Guard, Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries, Louisiana State Police, FEMA and FEMA DMORT, as well as Civil Air Patrol. We discussed capabilities of each of our organizations and areas of responsibilities.

I arrived at the Louisiana National Guard Headquarters, Jackson Barracks, New Orleans, on Sunday, Aug. 27<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm.

The National Guard, as well as the Louisiana Wildlife and Fishery had positioned small boats and rescue equipment at Jackson Barracks to be used for the Search and Rescue effort.

Sunday night, I was in the National Guard Joint Operation Center monitoring the storms progress.

Monday morning, August 29<sup>th</sup> as the eye of the storm approached New Orleans, flood water began to quickly rise; it went from about one foot deep, mainly associated to the heavy rains, to 10 feet deep with in 30 minutes. This was a dramatic surge of water. Jackson Barracks was quickly covered, in some places it was over 20 feet deep. A local AM radio station was reporting that the industrial canal levee had broken and the 9<sup>th</sup> Ward was flooding.

We had pre-positioned 18 boats at Jackson Barracks. The rapidly rising water prompted concern that we may lose the equipment and motors, so I directed national guardsman to move all equipment and outboard motors to the second floor. Wildlife and Fisheries also had boats parked on trailers adjacent to our operation center and I noticed they were all floating with the trailers attached.

By mid afternoon on Monday, Aug 29<sup>th</sup>, the wind and rain had subsided enough where we could use our boats to begin the rescue efforts. Because of the depth of the water, we used one of our small aluminum boats to motor over to the larger Wildlife and Fisheries boats. I put a guardsman into the water with bolt cutters to cut the boats loose from their trailers; we bailed them of their rainwater and put 2 National Guardsman in each. At that time I was thinking we would probably find a few people who would need help. We moved out into the immediate neighborhood and as I looked around, there were people on rooftops in every direction calling for help.

There were many natural gas pipeline breaks which formed small geysers, and several houses were on fire. I was expecting to find a few, but what I found were hundreds. My team and I began taking people into our boats. The water was deep enough to allow us to dock our boats on the rooftops. The wind and rain made it very difficult to maneuver in and around these homes. Telephones and electrical lines had to be lifted by hand to allow us to pass beneath them. At the

third house I approached, the people there advised me that their neighbor was trapped in her attic. We docked on her roof and removed a roof vent. Looking down we could see her crying for help. My crew and I used an ax to cut a hole in her roof and several of us reached down and lifted her to safety. The rapidly rising water had forced her up into her attic where she became trapped, unable to go higher and could no longer go down.

This sequence of events was repeated over and over and over again. National Guardsman cutting holes in rooftops to lift people out. Our boats would quickly fill and we would motor toward the Mississippi River levee, which took them out of immediate danger and placed them on good high ground. This action made them visible to follow on forces who were tasked during my earlier coordination meeting to evacuate them by air, land, or boats on the river.

We continued this effort until night fall. At that time the Joint Operations Center moved from Jackson Barracks to the Louisiana Superdome. Search and rescue operations continued thru the night. I boarded one of the helicopters to the Superdome and continued my coordination from there.

During the night National Guard as well as United States Coast Guard helicopters began flying over the city and assisting the situation. It was clear that Hurricane Katrina had dealt a catastrophic blow to the city of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana. When the sun rose on Tuesday morning the Superdome was an island, surrounded by 6 feet of water in every direction. I could see columns of smoke rising from several buildings in the city.

The Superdome had become the center of gravity of our search and rescue efforts. We used the top floor of a parking lot as an additional helicopter loading zone. Helicopters began lifting people from roof tops throughout the city bring them to the dome. National Guard medics

would assess the rescued for medical care, we would give them food and water and direct them away from the helicopter landing area. Sometimes we were lifting people to safety via a hoist and other times these helicopters were landing lightly on rooftops where people would climb in.

We used the EMAC process to request and receive additional helicopters from other states to assist with the search and rescue effort. In every direction I could see helicopters over all parts of the city hovering and lifting people to safety. This helicopter operation went on 24 hours a day. At night our crews were using airborne spot lights and night vision goggles as well as on board infrared capabilities. The city was completely dark at night and many who were awaiting rescue, would use flash lights to signal us.

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fishery used their boats to comb through neighborhoods, house to house, searching and rescuing people from their flooded homes. All high ground, bridges and elevated highways, became drop off points for the boats. Helicopters were used to pick up people at these sites and transport them to the Superdome. In the days following the storm, the number of helicopter as well as boats assets grew rapidly, as more and more states, as well as the federal government sent personnel and equipment in to assist us. With each passing day, more and more people were lifted to safety. By Thursday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, most of the people in need had been rescued.

In many areas of the city the water was too deep for our high-water vehicles to enter. So we relied to a great extent on small boats and helicopters. Except for the Chinook helicopter, we were only able to take small groups at a time, but over time all were brought out to safety.

I am very proud of the efforts of all who were involved in this effort, State, Federal, Military and local volunteers, in the face of Hurricane Katrina, the greatest natural disaster to hit the United States, a disaster of biblical proportions, over 72,000 people, were safely lifted to high ground and evacuated out of the city. I am proud of the National Guard and proud that I had a part in the Hurricane Katrina effort. I look forward to answering your questions...

Thank you,

**ACTIVITY REPORT ON HURRICANE KATRINA**

**By Lt. Colonel Keith LaCaze  
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
Enforcement Division**

The first activity involving preparation for Hurricane Katrina was notification on August 27 – 28, 2005 which was the Saturday and Sunday prior to the Hurricane to all wildlife enforcement regions throughout the state, in particular to the northern regions. Regions 1, 2, 3, and 4 were advised to have all wildlife agents prepare to respond in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. They were instructed to fuel all vehicles and boats, have all maintenance activity done on those vehicles and boats, and to have them ready to travel. They were also instructed to acquire food, water, linens, clothing, personal effects and be prepared to stay in the hurricane stricken area for several days if need be, in our rescue operations that were anticipated.

After those instructions were given, we followed with instructions to have all wildlife enforcement agents that were assigned from Regions 1, 2, 3, and 4 to assemble at the education center at Woodworth, south of Alexandria, on Monday, August 29, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. At that time, we had 14 agents from Region 1, 15 agents from Region 2, 19 agents from Region 3, and 14 agents from Region 4, totaling 62 agents with 31 boats that assembled at the education center at Woodworth at 9:00 a.m. At approximately 10:00 a.m., that caravan embarked to the State Police headquarters in Baton Rouge. We arrived at the State Police headquarters at approximately noon that day where we received an assessment of the damage that had been done. We were advised about the flooding and the conditions that existed in the New Orleans area. The group went ahead and proceeded from there with a state police escort, including one state police officer and four bridge inspectors in two pick-up trucks who preceded our convoy down I-10 toward New Orleans. We arrived in the Metairie/Kenner area that afternoon at approximately 4:00 p.m. due to delays we experienced where the bridge inspectors had to check the elevated portions of the highway just east of LaPlace, as well as the elevated portion of the highway over Lake Pontchartrain leading into the New Orleans area, to assure it was safe to travel and that no damage had been done from the Hurricane. After the bridge inspectors checked that for us, we proceeded into the New Orleans area. We made it to Causeway Blvd. and I-10 which was as far as we could travel due to water being over the interstate beyond that point. We also encountered at that location, personnel from the Shreveport Fire Department who had already arrived. We had a request for evacuation of a nursing home where there were about 50 residents on Power Blvd. which was very nearby this location. This request was submitted to us by State Police Troop B. We dispatched five boats and 10 agents to that nearby location to begin the evacuation of those people. We also had some requests from people shouting along the roadside asking for help for people with medical conditions or people who needed to be evacuated from houses or apartments where they were stranded due to the water. There were water levels in the neighborhoods at the lower elevations along the highway right there. We effected some rescues there. We sent some of the agents, Capt. Brian Clark and Sgt. Rachel Zechenelly ahead of our convoy to try to find a route around the water with our goal

being to try to get to the Superdome area to coordinate with other rescue workers congregated there, as well as to get some information about where we could deploy our forces and begin rescue operations. Once they had determined that a route could be taken going over the Huey P. Long Bridge, taking the I-90 East Expwy. over the Crescent City Connection into the Superdome area, we took that route and arrived at the Superdome shortly after dark. We met up with some fire rescue workers and some state police officers who advised us that the Elysian Fields area, New Orleans East area, St. Bernard Ave., and the intersection of I-10 and I-610 were underwater and a great many people were stranded in homes in those areas. We proceeded East on I-10 into the Elysian Fields area, St. Bernard Ave., I-10 and I-610 split and divided our forces into three groups. We deployed into those areas and launched our boats off of on-ramps and off-ramps of the interstate. There were some New Orleans Fire Department personnel who were engaged in rescue at that point. At one of those locations there was also one fire truck set up with a generator that had lights providing some visibility to us in the launch area. There was no lighting at the other two locations. We put boats in the water and began going out and rescuing people. At approximately 9:00 p.m., the fire department advised that they were going to discontinue operations for the night. They pulled back and turned over the operation to us. We continued with the operation and approximately an hour later, a few of the firefighters returned on their own and assisted us with directions and operations there.

Some of the problems we encountered were low visibility at night, a lot of downed power lines, a lot of underwater obstructions, vehicles that were underwater, debris that was everywhere, and large numbers of people shouting for help from the houses. We continued throughout the night to load, go out in the boats, load people in the boats and bring them back to the elevated portion of the interstate where we could get them up to a dry area. Initially, there were two vans that were being driven by two New Orleans Police Department officers who were coming down and picking up evacuees that we were getting out of the water. They were bringing the evacuees to shelter at the Superdome. They made a few runs during the night. Later on during the night, approximately 10 ambulances arrived at two of our evacuation points and picked up evacuees who had very serious medical conditions and transported them out. At this time, security concerns began to arise as one stabbing and two fights occurred among evacuees at the St. Bernard Ave. location. The wildlife agents at that location also reported to me that many of the evacuees were getting restless and anxious and were questioning when transportation, food and water would arrive. I instructed the agents to tell them we were doing everything we could and were working on getting transportation and more medical care. I also advised the agents to wear body armor if they were not already doing so and to stay in pairs to protect each other. However, this did leave a great many people with medical conditions who were unattended. We attended to them and made them as comfortable as we could, as well as continuing with rescues. Rescue operations went on until approximately 3:30 a.m. the next morning. At that point, I made the decision to stop for an hour or so to allow our agents to get a little rest and regroup somewhat. Therefore, at 3:30 a.m. we stood down and the agents slept on their truck seats or wherever they could lie down to rest for an hour or so. Just prior to daylight, we got up and began making more recoveries. There was a CNN reporter that was on

location there and I did a couple of interviews with CNN around midnight advising them of what we were doing and the numbers of people we were bringing out. At daylight the next day, we had approximately 300 to 400 evacuees at each of the locations. At one location, I believe St. Bernard Ave., we had an estimate of 500 evacuees there. At the other two locations we had an estimate of 300 to 400 remaining after some of them had been transported out. After daylight, in the morning, there were a couple of military vehicles or large transport vehicles, referred to as a deuce and a half, which arrived and made a few runs and picked up some evacuees. As it went on into the day, until approximately noon, we were not getting near enough ground transportation to move the evacuees that we already had, so we began taking some of our pickup trucks and loading evacuees in the backs of the pickup trucks and bringing them to the Superdome. This operation continued through the remainder of the day into the early afternoon. At that time, we began to pull our boats out of the water and to get ready to pull out of the area prior to dark. This was to allow our agents to rest since they had been up for approximately 36 hours by this time and to also regroup and try to get some organization and communications with the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) to determine what our next duties would be and to work on the transportation problem. The number of people evacuated during that 36 hour period, in my estimate, would be approximately 1,500 people at the three sites we performed evacuations. The problems that we encountered were officer security, people with many medical conditions, no ambulances or medical assistance to tend to their needs, and of course the overall problem with ground transportation for anyone we had evacuated from the areas. That concluded our operations for Tuesday. We stood down that evening at approximately 6:00 p.m. and ceased operations. Agents were sent back to whatever location they were staying to rest and prepare for the next day.

On Wednesday, August 31, 2005, at 7:00 a.m., we assembled at the Tanger Mall Outlet in Gonzales. At that time, we were joined by a contingent of 50 agents from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department who came to assist us with rescues. We began returning in convoy to the New Orleans area. Our instructions for that day were to go into the medical area around Tulane Medical Center, Charity Hospital and the Loyola/Perdido area to evacuate patients and staff from those hospitals. We arrived in that area about mid-morning and came in contact with personnel from the Shreveport Fire Department who were responsible for triaging those patients. They had a small area set up on a parking lot that was out of the water just near the Holiday Inn Hotel at Loyola/Perdido. Our mission was to launch our boats into the water, go into Tulane Medical Center and any other hospitals in that area, specifically Tulane and Charity, and to move the patients by boat from the hospitals to the area set up for medical evacuation. The plan was for ambulances to pick those patients up and move them out. We initially began moving patients out of Tulane Medical Center to the area and it wasn't very long before we were told by the Shreveport Fire Department to stop because no ambulances had arrived to transport patients from the location. While we stopped moving patients from the hospitals and were awaiting ground transportation for the patients, we went ahead and made more evacuations of residences and other people that needed help in that area. We also at that time, established a security perimeter around the medical evacuation point because we had a lot of evacuees who were assembling there and asking for water and

food, which was interfering with the medical staff who were trying to attend to the patients we had on the ground. We also were given instructions to tell people who were walking out of the water and those people we rescued from the water to go to the Convention Center which was a few blocks away. From there they were supposed to be taken from the Convention Center and evacuated. We transported some evacuees by truck to the Convention Center and encountered people throwing various objects down on us and on our vehicles from rooftops for no reason we could discern. This operation continued through the afternoon. We continued to wait on medical evacuations and at that point, mid-afternoon, we began to see this was not going to happen. We became aware of some large transport buses that were parked and under guard by the National Guard near the interstate in a parking lot. We contacted the OEP to see if those seven buses sitting, not being used for any purpose, could possibly come to our location to pick up the medical patients and staff and remove them from the area. After making this request to the OEP, we were initially told that we could have the buses. The authorization came down and we sent personnel up there to ask for the buses to be brought to our location. Initially a fireman went there and made the request and he returned and stated he had instructions from the National Guard guardsmen who were guarding those buses to put that information in writing, including the request for the buses, who the authorization had come from (Col. Smalley), and who was requesting it. I wrote a brief statement to that effect, signed it and sent it there. The fireman returned from that trip and stated they requested that I go and talk to them. I went back to the area with the fireman (we were traveling back and forth on a 4-wheeler) where the guardsmen were guarding the buses and was told by them that we could not have the buses because they had no authorization to release them and that those buses were on standby for "special needs people". Apparently, the special needs people are different in some degree from the medical patients we had that needed to be evacuated. At that point, I determined that it was futile to pursue the buses. We returned back to the evacuation area and began loading up the patients in our vehicles. We loaded them into the backs of our vehicles. We put our boats on the trailers and put wheelchairs and other medical equipment into the boats on the trailers and began preparations to evacuate them out of the area. We got all of the patients out of Tulane Medical Center. I believe about five ambulances showed up and moved five patients and their family members, leaving approximately 50 patients we transported in our vehicles. We had a large number of vehicles with ourselves, as well as the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department personnel. We left that area just prior to dark and transported those patients to the triage location which at that time was at the Causeway Blvd. and I-10 area. It was well after dark by the time we got those patients there. The medical staff made the decision not to leave the hospital to go to the evacuation point. They sent patients and the medical staff remained in the hospital with the hope they would be evacuated on the following day. After depositing the medical patients at the triage location at Causeway Blvd., we returned to the Tanger Mall Outlet area, to the Baton Rouge area, and to the Carville area where agents were staying overnight. That concluded operations for that day.

On Thursday, September 1, 2005 we proceeded back to the New Orleans area with our same large convoy of LDWF wildlife agents and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department agents. Just prior to getting into the evacuation area, we were given

instructions from the OEP to stop and to standby and do not go into the area due to security problems, and until the State Police could get the area somewhat secured we were to hold off on any further evacuations. There were reports of gunfire, looting, and violence happening in the area we had worked the day before and in the Superdome area also. We complied with that order and at approximately noon we were given information that the area had been secured and it was okay to begin evacuations again. At that point, we went back into the hospital area and continued evacuations of Charity Hospital which was completed on that day. Also at that time, we acquired five school buses that were brought to the command post at Elmwood, off Clearview Pkwy. The school buses had been commandeered from throughout the state and ordered into the area to assist with evacuations. The five school buses were brought to the hospital evacuation point where the staff from Tulane, and the patients and staff from Charity were evacuated. There were also some evacuations from Lindy Boggs Hospital. There was a different group that had made some evacuations, so we did a partial evacuation of Lindy Boggs Hospital. The hospital evacuations were concluded at approximately 5:00 p.m. Some of the staff returned with us to our Elmwood command center to assist with our missions. Evacuations of the hospital area were completed that day.

Following hospital evacuations on Friday, and at this point, our force was growing by a number of wildlife enforcement agents from several other states. They began to arrive into the New Orleans area. We also had a number of volunteers that began coming in so we were able to assemble larger teams. On an average, we were sending out teams of approximately 30 men with approximately 20 boats that were being dispatched to different areas to work. We had wildlife enforcement agents from Texas who we mentioned earlier. We also had wildlife enforcement agents from Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Minnesota, Michigan, and North and South Carolina. Those are the ones that I am actually aware of that reported and worked with us in our operations. Through Friday, evacuations continued in residential areas. We worked again in the Elysian Fields area and the New Orleans areas east of New Orleans.

On Saturday and Sunday, September 3 – 4, 2005 we continued similar operations through those areas. On each of those days that we were evacuating people, there were approximately 800 – 1000 people who were evacuated.

On Saturday, September 3, 2005 we assembled at approximately 4:30 a.m. at the Tanger Outlet Mall where tetanus inoculations were given to the wildlife agents present. There was also nursing staff that went down to the Elmwood command center and gave tetanus inoculations to agents that were in that area, as well as other law enforcement personnel assisting us with our operations. According to Colonel Vidrine and the information I had, some of the inoculations given were tetanus and Hepatitis A. Other inoculations were strictly tetanus and I do not have records of who received what inoculations, but it would be safe to say that everyone who was working in the area on September 3, 2005 did receive a tetanus inoculation. At noon that day, I took off and did not report back to duty at the command center at Elmwood until the following day on Sunday, September 4, 2005. I returned there at approximately mid-afternoon and began supervising operations again.

On Monday, September 5, 2005 we had again staged a large number of wildlife enforcement agents. One of the operation plans requested was to have three boats prepared for the State Police so they could check radio towers. Apparently there was a miscommunication, because although we did have the boats prepared and sent over to the Troop B office to go on that mission, nobody at Troop B was aware of the request, so that mission was cancelled. We had requests to go and check different houses and specific requests were coming in for particular missions to certain houses. These requests were coming from the OEP or certain people with those types of requests. We had noticed most everyone in the downtown area that we encountered appeared to be involved in looting and leaving with stolen goods. There were reports from some of our agents of supposed New Orleans Police Department officers, or either people posing as these officers who were loading stolen goods and taking them from the area. This was also the same day there was a report of the hotel owner/operator in Hotel Amerihost being held hostage as items from his hotel were being looted. This was reported on WAFB TV 9 out of Baton Rouge later that day. We did have some specific information from some of the agents in the area who observed some of this activity. I believe there were some Tennessee agents who may have taken photographs of that activity and may have information to report on this. We had a request from the New Orleans Police Department requesting 25 – 30 boats to go evacuate some of their personnel. There were approximately 40 of their personnel who needed evacuating. There were requests for evacuations in the uptown area which included six families, as well as approximately 16 nuns around the Ursuline area at a convent. We received an evacuation request from Andrew Jackson High School for some students there which was taken care of. We also had in operation that day some amphibious vehicles that were brought in and helped immensely with evacuations from some of those areas still underwater. Amphibious vehicles are commonly referred to as ducks and would be a very essential and beneficial piece of equipment to have in the event we would ever have an evacuation of a flooded urban area in the future.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, September 6 – 7, 2005 we were concentrating primarily in the St. Charles area and the Carrollton area, also referred to as the Garden District. With flooding in that area, there were a number of residents who were still in their homes. We covered those areas coming in from different points of entry. Some entry points were from Tchoupitoulas St. and St. Charles Ave. We had buses staged there. We also had boats that came in from Jackson Ave., Louisiana Ave., Napoleon Ave., Jefferson and Nashville and performed a very detailed sweep of the whole St. Charles and Carrollton areas on these days. At that point, we were beginning to come into contact with a number of people who did not wish to be evacuated. They would decline evacuation making the decision to remain in that area. We had prior requests for specific addresses where people were supposed to be who needed evacuations. In some of those situations, we arrived and found that those people had already been evacuated. By Wednesday, September 7, 2005 it was becoming fairly common to find only those people remaining in the area who wished to remain there. All of those who wished to be evacuated had been evacuated. It was becoming somewhat repetitious to control and sweep these areas

again only to find the same people who no longer wanted to be rescued or all evacuations having been done.

Wednesday afternoon was my last day on assignment at the command post at Elmwood.

On Thursday, September 8, 2005 I returned to the Baton Rouge headquarters and began taking up my duties in the office.

This concludes the report on my activities from the date of the impact of the hurricane through the following week, up to September 8, 2005 when I returned to headquarters.

My observations of things that could be corrected in the event we would have this type of situation occur in the future are:

1. The primary problem we had was communication. Failure of the radio system caused us to have to resort to some alternatives, one of those being, we acquired some hand-held talk around radios/citizen band radios which were distributed among the teams of agents who were out working so that they could at least communicate with each other. Overall, communications was a great hindrance to us. I believe the radio system needs to be addressed so that we do not have this problem in the future.
2. The next problem we experienced was with follow-up support in the form of ground transportation. We were very able with our equipment, abilities, and training to remove people from the flooded areas and get them to areas that were accessible by vehicle. However, there was a great failure on the part of other agencies to provide ground transportation to us to transport the evacuees once they had been rescued from the area.
3. We did have adequate supplies of food and water supplied to our agents following the initial couple of days. It would probably have been beneficial in many cases to have a supply of food and water that we could have provided to evacuees in certain situations, but our agents entered into the rescue mission with supplies they had brought with them that were only adequate to take care of themselves for a couple of days. Food and water supply issues need to be addressed and make sure that they follow as they did this time with improvement in the next event of this nature.
4. Fuel considerations and consumption issues are very important. We did have fuel delivered to us on Tuesday, August 30 on-site the day after the hurricane. We continued to have fuel delivered throughout the operation. I can say the provisions of fuel were very adequate to keep us in operation. Fuel was provided by the Department of Agriculture.
5. Maps of the areas we were working would have been a great help to us. That was another deficiency we experienced. We did not have maps of the area adequate to

provide copies to all agents who were operating in the area. We had numerous requests from many of our agents and many of the other agents coming in from other states for maps which we were unable to provide. In the future, detailed maps of the city and area of operation, with street addresses, would greatly assist us in our mission.

6. Another problem encountered was confusion caused by the use of local names or common names for different areas or different buildings, hospitals, etc. For example, you find people in this area who refer to Charity Hospital as: 1) Big Charity; 2) Charity; or 3) Hotel Dieu. Other common names and local names referring to different places caused confusion because they did not match up to the proper names or street addresses displayed on maps. It would be very beneficial for us to get a clearer structure with maps and detailed directions to different areas with proper names so there will not be confusion between proper names and common names of buildings, hospitals, etc. Any of those types of clarifications beforehand to reduce confusion during operations would greatly benefit our mission.
7. Security concerns when operating high risk areas are a major issue. Proper firearms, protective gear, and training must be provided for future high risk areas of operation.
8. Hazardous materials and biological threat training and equipment must be provided for future operation in contaminated areas, as well as proper vaccines against common diseases which may be present in such areas.

This concludes my report and observations of activities from my perspective during Hurricane Katrina.

Testimony of Captain Timothy P. Bayard  
Commander of the Vice Crimes / Narcotics Section  
of the New Orleans Police Department  
before the  
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
Monday, January 30, 2006, 2:00 p.m.

Good Afternoon. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today.

My name is Timothy Bayard. I am a Captain with the New Orleans Police Department and the Commander of the Vice Crimes / Narcotics Division. I have been a member of the Department for 30 years. I coordinated and directed the water rescue and recovery operations throughout the City of New Orleans, following Hurricane Katrina. I am here today to relay my experiences which began prior to Katrina's arrival and include the 14 days that followed.

Let me briefly explain the events that led to my coordination of the massive water-based rescue and recovery operations.

In 1965, I experienced hurricane Betsy. My father was a New Orleans Fireman. Based on my conversations with him, I had a good recollection of the areas of the City which flooded as a result. I knew which areas of the City were high and the available routes to access bridges and overpasses suitable for boat launch locations. Forty years later, many of the same areas flooded again. The high ground was essentially the same.

On Friday, August 26, 2005, at approximately 11:30 p.m., I learned that New Orleans was in Katrina's cross hairs. I spoke with then Deputy Superintendent Warren Riley, Commander of field Operations and suggested items that would be needed immediately following the storm's impact. This information was also forwarded to the Office of the Emergency Preparedness.

On Saturday, August 27, 2005, I instructed the supervisors under my Command to contact each member of our Division, with instructions to evacuate their families and rally, at our office, by 12:00 noon, on Sunday, August 28, 2005. Each member was instructed to bring at least a three (3) day supply of food and clothing.

On Sunday, August 28, 2005, we removed our Division's vehicles from the Equipment Maintenance Division, an area prone to flooding. All of our vehicles were fueled for deployment. With the exception of our high water vehicles (vans and pick up trucks), all vehicles were secured in the Superdome parking lot and at the Convention Center.

My unit patrolled the Central Business District, while I privately negotiated safe housing for my officers. The Narcotics Unit was housed at the Maison Dupuy Hotel, located at 1000 Toulouse St. and the Vice Unit was housed at the Marriott Hotel, located at 555 Canal St. Once the sustained winds reached 55 MPH, my units were instructed to return to their respective hotels.

Page 2 of 5

I later met with Captains Jeff Winn (Special Operations Commander) and Harry Mendoza (Traffic Division Commander). Together, we established a rally point (Harrah's Casino) located at the foot of Canal St., where we agreed to meet immediately following the storm.

We, however, were not equipped with any emergency rescue equipment, provisions or fuel.

Captain Robert Norton, Commander of the Bomb Squad and Dive Team, was housed in the LSU Dental School along with the 3<sup>rd</sup> District contingent. Captain Norton, had previously deployed our Department's three boats. These boats were deployed in Mid-City, Algiers and New Orleans east. Captain Norton, cut off by rising water, was able to conduct a hasty rescue operation, in the neighborhood adjacent to the dental school, utilizing a privately owned boat. Captain Norton's boat experienced motor failure and he himself had to be rescued. The three Departmental boats were also engaged in a hasty rescue operation in the same area. The issue here was that none of these efforts were coordinated by a central Command. Additionally, due to the vehicles and boat trailers being flooded, their mobility was limited.

Based on contact with our Communications Division, I knew that the lower Ninth Ward was flooding. Later in the day, we additionally learned that Lakeview was also taking on water.

Immediately after the storm, Captains Winn, Mendoza, and I met at Harrah's. Absent instructions from superiors, we made decisions to save lives. Routes were identified to access bridges and overpasses we utilized as boat launches. The problem was that we only had five boats at our disposal; two of which were commandeered. The Harbor Police met us on the St. Claude Ave. Bridge and worked, side by side, with members of the Tactical and Narcotic's Units, in our continued efforts to save lives. Other members of the Tactical and Narcotic's Units teamed up with firemen, in conducting rescue operations in Lakeview Gentilly. The Vice Unit transported evacuees to the Superdome and Convention Center, utilizing two fifteen (15) passenger vans and one pick up truck.

The first night, we lost communication with three Detectives trapped by rising waters. The batteries on their radios were depleted and they were unable to call for help. After spending the night attempting to locate the missing Detectives, they appeared at the hotel the following morning. These officers had walked, at times in chest-high water, from Canal Blvd. and Rosedale St. to the Maison Dupuy Hotel, a distance of approximately 5 miles.

The following night, three Tactical Unit officers were lost. Again, without communication, officers set out in search of their colleagues. At 11:30 p.m. these

officers returned to Harrah's Casino. They too, walked through the water, leaving their vehicle disabled in an open man-hole.

By day three, Captain Winn was given the two-pronged task of rescuing trapped law enforcement officers and responding to violence. From that point forward, the Tactical Unit ceased civilian boat rescues and became the primary rapid response unit for the countless acts of violence.

Given the change of Captain Winn's mission, and the fact that Captain Norton was trapped by surrounding water, I became the sole Commander of the water rescue operation.

Our efforts were not coordinated with other agencies. Our communications system was inoperable. We had no aerial views to ascertain water levels necessary to prioritize our rescue operations. Through Public Service Announcements, we welcomed citizens from various areas the State of Louisiana and other states, equipped with privately owned boats, who met us at Harrah's, to assist in the rescue operation. In an effort to coordinate rescue efforts, several contacts were made with the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries. Each contact was met with a great deal of resistance. I was refused access to twenty flat boats that were parked near City Hall, by a supervisor for the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries. The boats were property of the State of Texas Wild Life and Fisheries. To the best of my knowledge, those twenty boats were not utilized that day. I often wonder, how many stranded citizens we could have rescued with those boats!

By happenstance, I met with members of the United States Army 20<sup>th</sup> Group Special Forces. This meeting propelled our rescue operations to another level. We immediately gained access to helicopters, zodiac boats and trucks. Captain William Lynn became my counter part. With the Special Forces group, we set up a forward Command Post, equipped with maps, asset boards and deployment strategies. This was the first Incident Command Center established following the event. From that moment forward, it became the Command from which all of our water rescue operations were deployed.

For fourteen (14) days, my Division was involved in water rescue operations.

At no point did we have a truly unified Command.

In week three, we finally coordinated with FEMA. That is when we began conducting secondary rescue operations. We worked along with Fire Department Search and Rescue Units from other states through November 2005.

#### Mistakes:

The New Orleans Office of Emergency Preparedness failed. They did not prepare themselves, nor did they manage the city agencies responsible for conducting emergency response to the disaster. Their function was to coordinate with state, federal and other local agencies, to enlist logistical assistance. We did not coordinate with any state, local

or federal agencies. We were not prepared logistically. Most importantly, we relocated evacuees to two locations where there was no food, water or portable restrooms. We did not implement the pre-existing plan. We did not utilize buses that would have allowed us to transport mass quantities of evacuees expeditiously. We did not have food, water or fuel for the emergency workers. We did not have a back up communication system. We had no portable radio towers or repeaters that would have enabled us to communicate. The other mistakes have been mentioned previously.

Remedies:

The New Orleans Police Department now has a fully staffed bomb and dive team. It is equipped with four flat boats and one 16' V-hull. We have two eight wheel, all terrain vehicles for shallow water rescue. Captain Norton is currently negotiating with state officials, in an attempt to secure privately owned boats that were abandoned as well as boats that are now owned by insurance companies, in order to increase our fleet. Captain Norton has met with members of the New Orleans Fire Department, in attempts to cross train police officers and firemen in water and urban rescue procedures. This will allow the New Orleans Police Department to be the lead agency in water rescue, with fire personnel in support and will allow the New Orleans Fire Department to take the lead in structural damage rescue, with police officers as support personnel. Captain Norton is also attempting to secure a facility to house large quantities of food and water for the 2006 hurricane season. Captain Norton has contacted Miami Dade County's Search and Rescue Captain Jeff Strickland, in an attempt to secure training as well as to obtain information on how and what is needed to outfit a USAR team. He is also engaged in conversations with members of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries, in an attempt to secure boat safety training for each member of his unit and each member of the Vice, Narcotics and Tactical Units.

Needs:

I lived this horror and as a result have identified the following equipment needed to adequately prepare for the 2006 hurricane season:

- We must establish a regionalized communications system, as per the USAI agreement (Urban Area Security Initiative) which allow us to coordinate rescue efforts with surrounding jurisdictions (St. Bernard Parish, Jefferson Parish and Plaquemine Parish). Our existing radio system failed along with the current Mutual Aid system.
- Fifteen, 18 foot, extra wide, flat boats equipped with center console, marine radio, GPS, bilge pump, depth finder, 75 horsepower four stroke motor, Coast guard package, trim and tilt and trailers at a cost of \$255,00.00.
- Seven, 12 foot inflatable boats equipped with 25 horsepower four stroke motors, tiller handle with the Coast Guard package at a cost of \$ 70,000.00.

- Three air boats and trailers at a cost of \$112,000.00 (training is imperative)
- One air compressor at a cost of \$3,000.00.
- Twenty 24" chain saws at a cost of \$4,000.00
- A fully equipped USAR trailer cost not known at this time.
- USAR training for 100 members of the New Orleans Police Department.
- Reimbursement for damages and repairs, to members of the New Orleans Police and Fire Departments who used their personal boats to engage in water rescue.

The question here is: "Can this equipment be funded through a Community Block Development Grant? "

I would like to make two suggestions:

1. Draft legislation to mandate that all health care facilities (hospitals) raise their emergency generators and the fuel reservoirs to a minimum 32 feet. Also mandate that they have enough fuel to operate the generators for at least three days. How many individuals on life support perished due to generator failure? Many generators are located in basements. (The basement of every hospital in New Orleans flooded.)
2. Draft additional legislation to mandate a mandatory evacuation of all two story elderly care centers in the event of a category 3 or higher storm. The City and/or State will be responsible for supplying the vehicles needed to transport the elderly. These patients will be relocated to a facility that will accommodate their every need.

Conclusion:

My purpose before you today is to help you understand what the members of the New Orleans Police Department's Vice Crime / Narcotics Section experienced. I know numerous mistakes, as it relates to planning and decision making occurred. Mistakes were made in every level of government. I am not here to point fingers, I am here to relate my story and my experiences in an attempt to ensure that other agencies do not make the same mistakes that we made prior to, during and after Katrina.

Thank You – I will now answer any question that you may have.

**Post-Hearing Questions for the Record  
Submitted to William M. Lokey  
From Senator Daniel K. Akaka**

**“Hurricane Katrina: Urban Search and Rescue in a Catastrophe”**

**January 30, 2006**

1. In your interview with Committee staff you spoke of the difficulties involved with state officials conveying their requests for resources to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) staff due to failed communications. How does FEMA plan to improve communications between state and local responders and FEMA so that similar problems do not occur again in future responses?

In getting ready for the 2006 Hurricane Season, we have been working on Emergency Manager Command, Control, and Coordination. FEMA IT/DHS Wireless Working Group/National Communications System (ESF#2) is developing communications doctrine and DHS Standard Operating Procedures. This item is addressed as part of FEMA’s initiatives to improve response efforts.

Additionally, efforts are underway to develop a communications plan that details Emergency Manager Command, Control, and Coordination requirements from DHS/FEMA National Headquarters to the Regional Level, then to the field level.

We are working to ensure Federal Coordinating Officers are aware of the available voice and data systems (Land Mobile Radio, Repeaters, HF, Satellite Iridium Telephones and INMARSAT phones) which can provide communications connectivity for Federal and State First Responders, as well as available Emergency Operating Vehicles and Mini-Emergency Operating Vehicles which can provide the required command and control platforms.

Government at all levels has recognized the critical importance of tactical interoperable communications. In support of this priority, the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Preparedness Directorate Office of Grants and Training (G&T) continues to work with States and local communities to enhance the ability of our Nation’s first responders to communicate quickly and effectively during a catastrophic event. This priority requires Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)-designated urban areas and other State-designated metropolitan areas to develop and test their Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) with a full-scale exercise. These exercises will be planned, executed and evaluated under the guidance of G&T.

We have been conducting planning with the Department of Defense, including US NORTHCOM, to better coordinate Federal, Federal military, State, and State National Guard activities at the Joint Field Office and State and Local Emergency Operating Centers. National Emergency Management Information System and Homeland Security

Information Network applications also can provide a common operating environment to ensure continuity of operations across the disaster area.

FEMA is coordinating with the Preparedness Directorate in regional exercises with our State, local and ESF partners in preparing for this hurricane season. This provides an opportunity to strengthen the State and local knowledge and capability to request Federal resources. Also, as part of the planning effort for the Concept of Operations for the 2006 Hurricane Season, we are working on over 35 pre-scripted Mission Assignments with many of the ESFs to shorten the time from when a request is made to when the service is delivered.

2. In your interview with Committee staff you indicated that the distribution and tracking of resources proved to be extremely problematic, with the result being that resources were not always put to their best use. Moreover, the Department of Defense (DOD) had to assume a large logistical role. I understand that FEMA has made a large investment in a total asset visibility system, which is designed to track commodities through the use of satellite technology. Can you describe how this system will better prepare FEMA to fulfill its role during the next emergency response?

FEMA is working hard to develop an improved logistics capability. Our goal is to develop a sophisticated, efficient, agile national logistics supply system capable of meeting emergent needs, responsive to trends, and anticipating long-term requirements. We are collaborating with our public and private partners to achieve total system integrity and visibility and accountability over select disaster resources. We want to ensure that the right commodities can be provided at the right time to meet victim needs.

The TAV initiative, a major part of logistics improvements, provides FEMA with the tools necessary to perform inventory management and warehouse management and will assist the Agency in providing accountability and visibility over disaster commodities (including water, ice, and emergency meals). Phase I of TAV will provide FEMA with the ability to inventory and track certain commodities with GPS satellite tracking devices and provide "trading partners management" and "warehouse management" software systems that will allow electronic creation and tracking of supply orders and capture inventory movement (shipping and receiving) in Regions IV (Atlanta, GA) and VI (Ft. Worth, TX). Phase I has been implemented and is operational for this Hurricane Season. Phase II of TAV is scheduled to be fully implemented by June 2008, to extend these abilities nationwide, and include additional features, such as connectivity to financial systems and Radio Frequency Identification.

The TAV designed to keep track of commodities during disasters while these commodities are in the hands of vendors, inside FEMA and other facilities, in transit, and at delivery points. The automation of FEMA warehouses initiated in FY2005 will continue, as will the GPS trailer tracking system, which proved to be successful in supporting the response to Hurricane Katrina. These measures will help close what had been a 20-year technology gap between the public and private sectors.

3. There has been a significant amount of confusion concerning FEMA's role in search and rescue efforts. On the one hand, planners and participants at the Hurricane Pam exercise worked with the explicit understanding that FEMA was a lead federal agency for search and rescue. However, in your interview with Committee staff you stated that FEMA should not be viewed as a "federal 911." Can you explain what FEMA's role should be in emergency search and rescue efforts?

The Hurricane Pam Plan identified the organizations/agencies that had the lead and support responsibilities for emergency search and rescue at each of the three levels of government--Federal, State, and Parish. The Plan stated that DHS/FEMA would be responsible at the Federal level with the U.S. Coast Guard taking the lead for water search and rescue and Emergency Support Function #9/Urban Search and Rescue/FEMA taking the lead for land search and rescue. At the State level, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries was designated as the lead for search and rescue. At the Parish level, the Parish Sheriff's Office and Fire Departments were designated as the leads.

The initial search and rescue personnel should come from the local then State levels—first responders from the local Fire Departments closest to the scene of a disaster who can respond the quickest and are most knowledgeable about the local area. FEMA's role in emergency search and rescue is in a support/supplemental role. FEMA provides coordination and management assistance when State and local capabilities are overwhelmed. Additionally, during times of non-disasters, FEMA's role is to provide funding support, training, and program/policy guidance to State and local representatives.

The Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response Program dispatches Incident Support Teams (ISTs) along with US&R task forces. The ISTs report their assigned location and are integrated into the local incident command system (ICS) structure (usually in the US&R Branch of the ICS structure), and communicate directly with the Emergency Response Team/Joint Field Office.

The ISTs have proven quite effective in organizing and addressing the management of multiple, complex task force operations to assist the local Incident Commander. In both New Orleans and Gulfport/Biloxi, the ISTs were instrumental in establishing a unified command structure with the local jurisdictions, FEMA US&R, US Coast Guard, State National Guard, Federal military forces, and other State and local responders. While FEMA cannot force State and local entities to participate in unified command, the presence of the ISTs and their efforts in ICS and establishing unified command provide a tremendous improvement that otherwise would be lacking.

We are also working on improved coordination to expand ESF 9 to all Federal Search and Rescue resources. FEMA US&R is working with the Department of Defense, US Coast Guard, US Department of Agriculture (US Forest Service) and Department of Interior and their subordinate agencies (National Park Services and Fish & Wildlife) to identify available resources and how they can be better integrated in complex search and rescue operations with State and local first responders.

We have specifically been working with the US Coast Guard and the Dept. of Interior to identify resources and develop draft proposed changes to the ESF-9 Annex in the NRP as a result of the direction from the White House Report Recommendation 44.

4. FEMA officials have acknowledged to this Committee that the agency was aware that New Orleans faced the possibility of cataclysmic losses if the city were struck by a Category 4 or 5 hurricanes. Loss of life estimates ranged from tens of thousand to over 100,000 residents, with the city submerged by up to 20 feet of water. What role did FEMA plan to fulfill in the search and rescue response as Hurricane Katrina approached the Gulf Coast?

US&R Incident Support Teams are sent whenever task forces are activated. The IST and task forces report to, and work within, the local incident command structure at the impacted jurisdiction. The IST strongly encourages and assists the local incident commander with establishing unified command on any major incident requiring multi-agency operations. This would include all Federal, state, local and EMAC organizations involved in search and rescue operations. The Blue IST in New Orleans and the White IST in Mississippi were very successful in promoting and attaining this requirement.

The premise for the FEMA US&R response to New Orleans was that US&R personnel would assist local (and other State and Federal) responders in search and rescue operations. The FEMA US&R Response Program does not incorporate water operations as part of its direct operations (while the US&R task forces do have personal protective equipment - helmets, personal flotation devices, etc. – they do not have boats and motors for directly conducting water movement operations). Our planning was based on activating task forces to be in a position to directly assist the local incident command structure should any building collapse, as well as be in a position to assist other responders who have boats (or resources with fixed or rotor wing assets) with search and rescue operations in a water environment. One of benefits of expanding ESF-9 to all Federal Search and Rescue resources will be to better incorporate the water rescue assets of other Federal agencies, allowing these water rescue operations to be better integrated in complex search and rescue operations with State and local first responders.

Ten task forces were activated for Hurricane Katrina prior to landfall. These resources, once engaged after landfall, were instrumental in coordinating and conducting effective multi-agency search and rescue operations in both Louisiana and Mississippi. To maintain continued search and rescue operations for more than five weeks, all of the other 28 task forces in the National System were activated for operations in Mississippi and Louisiana (ten of the task forces were activated twice for Katrina).

5. The Committee heard testimony that the bodies of many victims could not be recovered for days and on some occasions weeks. The planners and participants of the Hurricane Pam exercise expected up to 60,000 casualties. What did you plan to do with such a large number of fatalities?

The Hurricane Pam Plan stated that deceased individuals would become the responsibility of the Parish Coroner with support from the Louisiana Mass Fatalities Task Force. Federal assistance through the National Disaster Medical System's (NDMS)

Disaster Mortuary Response Teams (DMORT) would support the State and local governments; if/when their capabilities became overwhelmed.

The number presented in Hurricane Pam planning activities was 60,000 fatalities. A mass fatality plan was not included in the Hurricane Pam document. State officials said that they already had a State mass fatality task force and a plan. NDMS representatives at the Pam Exercise reviewed the three-page plan and relayed to the State that it had no specific details on how, when, and where they would collect, process, and complete final disposition of the remains. Although NDMS representatives attending the Hurricane Pam planning sessions developed a plan, the plan did not become an official part of the State Plan developed from Hurricane Pam.

During the response to hurricane Katrina, NDMS took the NDMS mass fatality concept of operations plan that they had developed during the Hurricane Pam planning session and applied it to the estimates on fatalities that surfaced after Katrina (5000-10,000). The concept of operations for the NDMS mass fatality plan required Search and Rescue resources to transition from rescue to remains recovery on or about day 7 post-landfall. Since this CONOPS was not formally adopted into the plan, no fatality recovery resource was available to begin to collect remains. NDMS DMORT personnel were brought in to support recovery, but the State pushed for a contractor to manage this piece of the recovery operations. FEMA could not come to an agreement with the proposed contractor (due to very high costs) and the State ultimately contracted them instead (for roughly the same amount in recognition that FEMA would reimburse).

The NDMS plan was written by the NDMS DMORT Region 6 team during and immediately following landfall of Katrina. It was completed on August 31, 2005, and presented to State Officials on that same day. NDMS finally obtained a State signature of acceptance on September 3, 2005, and this is the plan (operational footprint) from which DMORT worked.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs <b>EXHIBIT #1</b>
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**Department of Police  
Interoffice Correspondence**

**Deputy Chief Steven Nicholas**

**To: Chief of Operations  
Captain Timothy P. Bayard**

**Date: 10-16-05**

**From: Vice Crimes – Narcotics Section**

**Subject: Hurricane Katrina -2005**

**After Action Summary**

Sir,

As per your request, I respectfully submit the following summary for your review. This document was prepared with input from the personnel assigned to the Vice Crimes – Narcotics Section.

**Summary / Recommendations:**

- 1) The Office of Emergency Preparedness needs to be revamped. If their role is to have us prepared to handle a disaster such as this they FAILED. They lacked a plan, did not provide the necessary equipment, provided no direction or leadership, did not coordinate or attempt to have commanders of field operations coordinate with any state, or federal agency etc. We really need to take a long hard look at this section.
- 2) Connect with FEMA as soon as possible. They have an unlimited amount of assets, personnel and equipment available. We must assign a Captain to FEMA as soon as they arrive. This Captain must coordinate all search, rescue and transportation operations with the FEMA commanders.
- 3) Purchase flat and airboats, trailers and outboard motors. Purchase the oil and other equipment needed to make these boats fully operational for an extended period of time. Provide training on how to operate both types of boats.
- 4) Position modes of transportation (school and RTA buses) on high ground, with full access to, in the event that emergency personnel have to utilize this equipment to evacuate refugees. Spare keys should be secured in the OEP. Secondly, the city should have a signed contract with bus companies throughout the metro area, in the event of an emergency such as this, to ensure that there are more than enough buses available to evacuate our citizens. Rescue and the transportation of evacuees must work as one entity. Train and issue CDL licenses to officers certifying that they can drive commercial vehicles.

Page 2 of 4

- 5) Have MRE's and water stored in a building located on high ground. If it floods around the location we can still access the food and water by boat and truck it to the evacuation centers. Store enough for 50,000 people, not including emergency personnel for a ten-day period.
- 6) Fuel reserves – Unleaded and Diesel - Trucks need to be in our city, on high ground two days prior to the storms arrival. Several hours prior to the arrival of the storm all emergency personnel SHALL top off the fuel tanks in each and every vehicle (including spare vehicles) at the gas pumps. The trucks are reserves only to be used if our pumps are inaccessible. We cannot be without fuel.
- 7) Mandate that each hospital and nursing home is equipped with an emergency generator large enough to provide electricity to ensure the housing of critical care patients. Secondly ensure that each hospital and nursing home has a yet to be determined amount of fuel to ensure that the generators can operate independently for at least a ten day period. Store MRE's and water in a secured area inside the hospital/home to ensure that the medical staff and patients can sustain themselves for a ten day period.
- 8) Purchase twenty (20) 5550 watt gasoline generators to be distributed to each district and section in order to partially operate an exterior base of operations. Purchase commercial diesel generators to operate the city owned fuel sites. Also purchase portable electric gas pumps with extended tubing in the event that a fuel site has to be commandeered during a disaster.
- 9) Park both fully equipped mobile command post on high ground to ensure that our command staff can immediately locate, establish and operate a centralized command center.
- 10) Satellite telephones.
- 11) Purchase several portable communication systems that were utilized by the Military while deployed inside our city. Our failure to have a functional backup Communication system in a time of crisis should not happen again.
- 12) Purchase trucks and sport utility vehicles with 4 X 4 wheel drive, towing packages, heavy-duty winches and a snorkel package so that these vehicles can maneuver in three to four feet of water.
- 13) Immediately provide emergency personnel with all aerial views of the effected area(s) to ensure that command decisions and tactical plans are formulated with current accurate intelligence information.
- 14) Purchase chainsaws and protective gear as well as front end loaders so that major thoroughfares can be cleared by emergency workers to ensure immediate access to effected areas. If we cannot purchase this equipment the Park and Parkway commission shall supply and stage this equipment in a building located on high ground.
- 15) Each District, Division and Section shall have a rally point located on high ground. If they have to surrender the station they must rally on high ground.
- 16) Based on this experience all departmental vehicles should be secured at the Convention Center or any elevated parking facility located within the warehouse district. We lost hundreds of vehicles to wind related and water damage.

- 17) Emergency personnel shall report to work one day prior to the storms arrival. Each district and unit commander shall forward to the Chief of Operations the total number of officers sick, furlough, IOD etc. as well as the number of officers that reported as instructed. This gives our Command staff an accurate depiction of our workforce. Reporting personnel shall have enough clothing, food, water and bedding for six days. On the day prior to the storm personnel shall move all vital equipment into areas for immediate deployment and to locations designated as safe havens.
- 18) Designate a rally point for all outside law enforcement agencies to report to. A NOPD Captain shall coordinate with the lead supervisor from each and every agency represented. The personnel and assets from each agency will report to the District Commander of the area they are assigned for specific instructions.
- 19) Purchase a completely equipped Urban Search and Rescue Unit for our Department. With the on the job training and experience gained by many members of our department, (Vice-Narcotics/ Tactical) along with proper training we will have a fully trained and equipped unit that can deploy immediately.
- 20) Coordination of water rescues or any type of rescue is a must. Hasty, primary and secondary rescues must be coordinated. Thirteen days into the storm, we knew that the entire city had been offered hasty and primary rescue opportunities. When in reality, the entire city was covered twice if not three times. This was because FEMA was launching boats, the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries was launching boats and the NOPD & NOFD were launching boats. This entire operation was NOT coordinated and had no centralized command center. This was a major flaw that must be corrected.
- 21) The secondary rescue did not get into full swing until the end of the third week. The NOPD was involved with this operation for fifteen straight days. We worked daily with Fire Department Urban Search and Rescue Units for all over the United States. The NOFD was NOT represented. FEMA provided our officers with some equipment needed to conduct secondary rescue. (boots, mask, gloves, paint ).
- 22) Purchase twelve (20) additional breaching kits – one for each district and section. (RAM – Pry bar – Mall)
- 23) Recovery of Human Remains: We drove trucks, piloted boats and walked past bodies in the first fourteen days of the storm. We did not have the proper clothing, equipment or training to attempt body recovery. We notified the communications section where human remains were and secure the bodies to unmovable objects. No one knows when these bodies were recovered or if they were even in the location initially reported. Kenyon was the contractor for the recovery phase. When they commenced operations they did an outstanding job. My concern is when did their operations commence. This needs to be part of the COORDINATED search and rescue operations. That means they need to engage

Page 4 of 4

within the first few days. Many remains floated away with the waters currents and will never be recovered. I know it would have been impossible to recover all of the remains, I feel we could have recovered more.

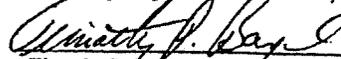
- 24) News Media – I do not know if we could have slowed them down. I granted their every request. Therefore I created the monster. Their presence in an around our Harrah's command post, at times hindered our operations. They blocked the driveway and street, interrupted meetings and were a distraction especially in the first two weeks when our operations were at its peak. In the first couple of hours, we need to designate and cordon off an area for media interviews and keep them in this secured area for the entire event. When available the Superintendent, Deputy Chiefs and personnel assigned to the department's Public Information Office can meet the media in this area.
- 25) We need to move our food and water supplies to an area away from our Command Post. Our officers choked the access points just as the media did. Our supplies (MRE & Water) and chow line should have been set up on the river front (Spanish Plaza) with parking in the Hilton Circle and on Poydras St.
- 26) Each district commander will establish relationships with the owners / managers of businesses such as Wal Mart and Walgreens and secure these locations prior to the storms arrival. This will curtail looting and can provide resources for emergency workers.
- 27) Distribute fliers notifying officers where Red Cross, Insurance Companies, FEMA and other benefit resources are located. Many officers worked into the night and feel that they missed out on some opportunities.

**QUESTION:**

- 1) Where is the mobile command center that was housed in the fire station located at N. Miro St. and Elysian Fields Ave.?

In closing, our biggest flaw is the fact that we failed to communicate. This has been our problem for the 30 plus years that I have been associated with the department. The instructions and plans that are formed at the top are not clearly communicated to the rank and file. This leads to individual commanders implementing the operation as they understand it. This causes confusion and misdirection. In the time of crisis our leaders need to be SEEN and HEARD.

Yours in Quality Law Enforcement,



Timothy P. Bayard – Captain  
Vice Crimes-Narcotics Section

## DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

## INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

Deputy Chief Steven Nicholas

TO: Chief of OperationsDATE: 10/17/05

Captain Timothy P. Bayard

FROM: Vice Crimes / Narcotics SectionSUBJECT: After Action Report II

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Sir,

It is my understanding that our Office of Emergency Preparedness should have had a plan prior to the storm that included staging equipment, coordinating operations, providing food and water for the emergency personnel etc. Additionally the plan needs to be implemented and monitored. The final stage was a plan to rebuild the city. As you know, this did not happen.

This office should have had the following equipment staged to the west:

- 1) Food and Drinking Water.
- 2) Trailer trucks with water for bathing and to supplement hotels.
- 3) Generators and portable Air condition to keep hotels operational so that all emergency personnel would have a place to sleep.
- 4) Diesel and Unleaded fuel trucks.
- 5) Work clothing for emergency personnel
- 6) High water vehicles and boats with fuel and oil to sustain operations for an extended period of time.
- 7) Refrigerator trucks loaded with ice.
- 8) Disaster mortuary teams with equipment to commence immediately.
- 9) Utilize the tractor trailer command post if we can find it.
- 10) Transportation – buses should have been staged on high ground.
- 11) Plans for an alternate command post with appropriate equipment (Royal Sonesta)

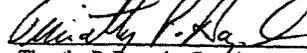
Suggestions:

- 1) Keisler Air Force Base – purchase 5 ton trucks, boats, clothing, MRE's, etc. at one tenth the price. We do this with vehicles in Baton Rouge.
- 2) Build a large scale warehouse on city property to store equipment and provisions.
- 3) Do not secure our vehicles where we are bringing evacuees. Our vehicles were vandalized.
- 4) Identify a specific location for emergency operations command center.
- 5) Form a partnership with businesses who utilize flat and airboats on a daily basis. R&R Construction company that worked with Vice and Narcotics daily. They saved thousands.

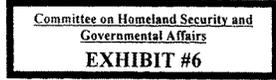
Page 2 of 2

- 6) Inform the Governor and Mayor that when New Orleans is effected by a disaster, that the New Orleans Office of Emergency Preparedness is the coordinating agency in conjunction with FEMA throughout the entire event. This ensures greater command and control. We needed a centralized command post with a coordinated effort. What we had was people stepping up and getting jobs done. Many times our efforts were in triplicate. This prolonged the hasty and primary rescue which delayed our attempts at secondary rescue.
- 7) Communication must improve. We did not have specific instructions on where to bring evacuees, hospital (MASH) locations etc. In a crisis communication is vital.
- 8) Have all police personnel report to work. Keep skeleton crews in place. Relocate all additional personnel north of I-12 with the necessary transportation to return this entire workforce to our city for deployment.

Yours in Quality Law Enforcement



Timothy P. Bayard - Captain  
Vice Crimes / Narcotics Section



**(E) Resource Request**

Priority: Red-High  
 Status: Red-Action Required  
 \*Request Number: Res-113736-911-082805

**WHO IS MAKING THE REQUEST?**

**Requesting** LA Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries  
**Organization:** Phone: 225-765-2984  
**\*Requestor's** Fax: 225-763-3548  
**Contact Info:** Pager: 225-852-5622  
 Frequency: 800  
 Talk Group: WLF Reg 7 Dispatch  
 Cell:  
 Other: VHF  
 Call Sign: HQ-8  
**Related Event/** E - Hurricane Katrina

**Incident/Activity:**  
 Display All resource requests related to: E - Hurricane Katrina

**WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED?**

\*Resource Type/Kind: Boat  
 Quantity: 300  
 Qty Unit Of Measure:  
**When Needed:** 08/29/2005 at 11:39 CDT  
**Mission:** LDWR requests from DOD, or FEMA Rubber Rafts that can be delivered to the New Orleans area if it floods for either land delivery or air drop. Will be used by LDWF in tow for additional rescue asset to move stranded persons to safe collection points.

*Request denied*

**Resource must come with:**  
 Other:

**DELIVER THIS RESOURCE TO:**

**Site Name** LDWF On Scene Command Post or in flooded area to be determined.  
**Street Address**  
**City**  
**Intersection - Street 1**  
**County**

**Site Type** State Government Facility  
**Apt or Lot #**  
**State** LA  
**Zip**  
**Intersection - Street 2**

**Geographic Area**  
 (Region, District, Campus, etc.)  
 New Orleans area

**Additional Location Information**

**GEO LOCATION & MAPPING**

**Show on Map?** No  
**Geo Located By**  
**Latitude**  
**Longitude**

**Contact on scene:**  
 (Name, Phone, etc.)  
**Special Instructions:**

**FORWARD REQUEST TO:**

**Individual:**  
**Organization/** LOEP  
**Location:**  
**Position:**  
**Agency:**  
**Vendor:** Not Related to a Vendor  
**Summary of actions taken:**  
**Estimated Resource**  
**Cost:**

**DISTRIBUTION**

(Unless you limit distribution as specified below, this document is viewable by all E Team users.)

**Group:**  
**Individual:**

**NOTIFICATION**

**Send Notification?** No  
**Message**

Committee on Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs  
**EXHIBIT #12**

From: FEMA-NRCC [/O=ORGANIZATION/OU=FEMAUS/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=FEMA NRCC]  
Sent: Thursday, September 01, 2005 8:31 PM  
To: Blong, Clair, Buikema, Edward, Craig, Daniel; 'DHS ASWO'; EST All Hands; EST-DIR; 'FEMA desk at HSOC'; 'FEMA IIMG'; FEMA OPERATIONS CENTER, Garratt, David, Hammett-Morgan, Linda; Jamieson, Gil; Lowder, Michael, Pawlowski, Michel; Shea, Michael  
Subject:

**HSOC SPOT REP# 53**

Date/Time (EDT):  
09/01/05 @ 2015

Reference:

Status of US&R Task Forces in LA

Source of Information:

Urban Search and Rescue

Type of Incident:

Hurricane Katrina

Update

Summary:

All assets have ceased operations until National Guard can assist TF's with security. Staging site areas are as follows:

- Camp Shelby, MS

- Gulfport City Hall

- Zephyr Field

TF's are running low on food and water. Coordination was made with ESF06 to find out if provisions were available, and the possible location. We don't have information on when they will be made available.

UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

HSOC SPOT REP

<b>SPOT REP #:</b>	# 53
<b>Date/Time (EDT):</b>	09/01/05 @ 2015
<b>Reference:</b>	Status of US&R Task Forces in LA
<b>Source of Information:</b>	Urban Search and Rescue
<b>Type of Incident:</b>	Hurricane Katrina

Update	
<b>Summary:</b>	<p>All assets have ceased operations until National Guard can assist TF's with security. Staging site areas are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Camp Shelby, MS</li> <li>- Gulfport City Hall</li> <li>- Zephyr Field</li> </ul> <p>TF's are running low on food and water. Coordination was made with ESF06 to find out if provisions were available, and the possible location. We don't have information on when they will be made available.</p>
<b>Significance:</b>	
<b>Actions/Follow-Up:</b>	
<b>Miscellaneous:</b>	
<b>Prepared By:</b>	NRCC Planning Section

