

**A REVIEW OF THE STATUS OF EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES**

HEARING
BEFORE A
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

SPECIAL HEARING
JUNE 8, 2011—WASHINGTON, DC

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A REVIEW OF THE STATUS OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 2011

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 2:52 p.m., in room SD-138, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Mary L. Landrieu (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Landrieu, Leahy, Tester, Coats, Cochran, Murkowski, and Moran.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Senator LANDRIEU. Good afternoon, everyone. Let me call the subcommittee to order. This is the Subcommittee on Homeland Security appropriations hearing to consider the current status of emergency management in the United States and the important role particularly that the communications systems play in a disaster.

Let me begin by apologizing for being just a few minutes late. I had the honor to present two of my outstanding nominees before the Judiciary Committee for both the fifth circuit and the eastern bench, and I was very pleased to do that. And I am sorry to delay everyone.

I thank Senator Cochran for joining us, and Senator Coats, my ranking member, will be joining us in a minute. Senator Tester, thank you.

Today, I welcome two panels of witnesses to discuss the current status of our emergency management operations in the United States. I think this hearing is timely considering we are still battling ongoing disasters and recoveries in almost 40 States of our Union.

Since Hurricane Katrina and the attacks on our country on September 11, policies and laws have been rewritten, and significant investments have been made in upgrading our emergency management systems.

First, including investments in first-responder capabilities, communication systems, recovery relief, and rebuilding, significant change has happened at the local, State, and Federal levels of government, and within the private and nonprofit sectors as well.

In the United States, emergency management, be it preparedness, response, or recovery, starts at the level of government closest to the people. If a local government is overwhelmed, the State

must step up and provide support. If the State gets overwhelmed in its efforts, then the Federal Government steps up to provide support necessary to deal with the disaster in an orderly recovery process. This requires much advanced coordination and communication, first, to save lives and property and then to recover and rebuild smartly and quickly.

While we will look at emergency management as a whole today, I also want a special focus on communications during a disaster, and Mr. Beers, that is why we had you attend especially. The ability of emergency response personnel to communicate in real time prior to, during, and immediately after the disaster is critical to establishing command and control at the scene of an emergency and to maintaining situational awareness. And it is not only communication between local, State government, and all the various law enforcement and first responders on the scene, it is also communication with constituents, with citizens. As new technology is developed, it is forging an evolution in the way we can communicate to be even better and be more responsive. So keeping up with this evolution is a challenge to the emergency management community. We will be exploring some of that today.

The massive earthquake and resulting tsunami in Japan in March and the recent unprecedented flooding, tornadoes, and wildfires here in the United States are reminders that the Federal Government must continue to be a reliable partner with State and local governments, as well as with our private partners, to make sure that every community is prepared as possible, and can deal quickly and smartly with the disaster at hand, and then rebuild.

And in tight budgets, which is the situation that we are in, and difficult political and economic conditions, it is more important than ever to evaluate and to look at what is happening out there in the field and allocate our dollars wisely and carefully.

With that end, I welcome Mr. Craig Fugate, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and Under Secretary Rand Beers of the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD).

Mr. Fugate, let me conclude by saying a few things. In your testimony, you emphasized that it takes a whole community, not just the government, to ensure effective emergency management. I appreciate the important improvements FEMA has made, ensuring the needs of children are taken into account during disasters. It has been a focus of mine and other Senators as we realized with some great dismay that they had not been taken into consideration prior to Hurricanes Rita and Katrina and some of the other disasters along the gulf. For instance, planning for juvenile justice centers, pre-staging infant formula, baby food, and diapers. That is now standard operating procedure. It is important that the children, all 100 million of them, in our country should get our support, and I am pleased to see advancements in that area.

Secretary Beers, you have taken the first step in testing our interoperable communications in urban areas and ensuring communications training and technical assistance is available. I will never forget speaking to the commander of the Alabama National Guard a few days after Katrina, and he said to me in between a CNN interview, he said, "Senator, our communications is about where it

was during the Civil War. We are literally having runners carry handwritten messages to communicate what our next steps should be.” On that conversation, I thought if I could do something to upgrade our situation, I would, and we have worked very hard to do so.

Despite progress, we still have a lot to do. FEMA has not fully institutionalized the changes made by the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act. The National Disaster Recovery Framework has not yet been completed. An effective risk and preparedness assessment system is not yet fully in place, and FEMA information systems remain woefully inadequate.

NPPD is working to ensure State and local governments and the Federal Government stay ahead of evolving technologies and infrastructure.

Before turning to Senator Coats, I must return to the issue of the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) shortfall that I raised with Secretary Napolitano in an earlier hearing. If the Congress approves the President’s request for the DRF, there will be a shortfall of between \$2 billion and \$4.8 billion for fiscal year 2012. Without additional funding, it is very likely that this fund will be exhausted as early as January 2012. Recovery efforts, therefore, in all 50 States, including those recently hard hit by flooding and tornadoes will cease.

The House bill has attempted to make up for only a portion of this shortfall. However, it came at great cost to Homeland Security first-responder grants which were cut by 52 percent in the House version of this bill, by \$2.1 billion compared to fiscal year 2010, and \$1.4 billion or 40 percent, compared to fiscal year 2011. The House also cuts the Coast Guard and FEMA. It makes no sense to cut funding from the agencies that must prepare for and respond to future disasters, to use that money to pay for the cost of past disasters. We have never done that in the history of this country, and I do not believe we need to start now.

Following Senator Coats’ opening remarks, each of the other members will be recognized for up to 2 to 3 minutes.

PREPARED STATEMENT

I thank you so much. We are looking forward to this first panel and then particularly to our second panel that I will introduce in just a moment after opening statements. We have an excellent panel of State and local emergency managers and communications officials who handle day-to-day emergency management activities. We want to hear from them and I will introduce them at the appropriate time.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Today, I welcome two panels of witnesses to discuss the current status of comprehensive emergency management in the United States, and the critical role communications systems play in a disaster.

Since Hurricane Katrina and the attacks on September 11, policies and laws have been rewritten and significant investments have been made in an upgraded emergency management system, including first-responder capabilities, communications systems, and recovery and relief. Significant change has happened at the local, State, and Federal levels of government, and in the private and nonprofit sectors as well.

In the United States, emergency management—be it preparedness, response, or recovery—starts at the level of government closest to the people. If a local government is overwhelmed, the State provides support. If the State gets overwhelmed, the Federal Government provides support. This requires advanced coordination and communication to save lives and property and to recover and rebuild smartly and quickly.

While we will look at emergency management as a whole today, I also want a special focus on communications during a disaster. The ability of emergency response personnel to communicate in real time prior to, during, and immediately after a disaster is critical to establishing command and control at the scene of an emergency and to maintaining situational awareness. However, in numerous after action reports, communications deficiencies have been revealed. Unfortunately, this issue was amplified during 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina.

Further, technological developments are forging an evolution in the way government communicates, as well as how we communicate with citizens during a disaster. Keeping up with this evolution is a challenge to the emergency management community.

The massive earthquake, and resulting tsunami, in Japan in March; and the recent unprecedented flooding, tornadoes, and wildfires here in the United States are reminders that this Federal Government must continue to be a reliable partner with State and local governments as well as with private partners to make sure every community is as prepared as possible.

In tight budgets and difficult economic conditions it is more important than ever to allocate dollars carefully and wisely.

With that, I will welcome Mr. Craig Fugate, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and Rand Beers, the Under Secretary of the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD).

Administrator Fugate, in your testimony you emphasize that it takes the whole community—not just government—to ensure effective emergency management. I appreciate the important improvements FEMA has made in ensuring the needs of children are taken into account during disasters—from disaster plans at juvenile justice centers to pre-staging infant formula, baby food and diapers—important change has taken place.

Under Secretary Beers, your directorate has taken a first big step in testing our interoperable communications in urban areas and in ensuring that communications training, and technical assistance is available to first responders. With new technologies emerging everyday, this subcommittee is interested in your strategy to stay afloat.

Despite progress, we still have a lot to do. FEMA has not fully institutionalized the changes mandated by the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006. The National Disaster Recovery Framework has not been completed; an effective risk and preparedness assessment system is not in place; and FEMA disaster management information systems remain woefully inadequate. NPPD is working to ensure State and local governments and the Federal Government stay ahead of evolving technologies and infrastructures.

Before turning to Senator Coats, I must return to the issue of the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) shortfall that I raised with Secretary Napolitano in an earlier hearing. If the Congress approves the President's request for the DRF, there will be a shortfall of between \$2 billion and \$4.8 billion in the fund for fiscal year 2012. Without additional funding, it is likely that the fund will be exhausted as early as January 2012. Recovery efforts in 50 States, including those hard hit by recent flooding and tornadoes, will cease.

The House bill has attempted to make up for a portion of this shortfall, however it came at a great cost to Homeland Security and first-responder grants, which were cut by \$2.1 billion (52 percent) compared to fiscal year 2010 and by \$1.4 billion (40 percent) compared to fiscal year 2011. The House also cuts the Coast Guard and FEMA. It makes no sense to cut funding for the agencies that must prepare for and respond to future disasters, to pay for the cost of past disasters.

Following Senator Coats' opening remarks, Vice Chairman Lautenberg and each other member will be recognized for up to 3 minutes of opening remarks based on order of arrival. After we hear from the Administrator and the Under Secretary, each member will be recognized in order of arrival for up to 5 minutes of questions. I now recognize Senator Coats for any opening remarks he may wish to make.

I would like to recognize our panelists, in the following order, for their opening statements: Mr. Craig Fugate from FEMA, and Mr. Rand Beers from NPPD.

I thank our witnesses on the first panel for their contributions today.

I welcome our second panel. We have an excellent panel of State and local emergency managers and communications officials who handle day-to-day emergency

management and communications activities. Each of our witnesses has recently been through significant disasters or major exercises in their communities.

I would like to take a second to introduce Mark Riley from Louisiana. Mark Riley serves as chief of staff for the Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. He came to the agency in 2007 and previously served for 2 years as the deputy director for disaster recovery, where he managed \$11 billion in public assistance funding and \$1.4 billion in hazard mitigation funding for 24,000 projects throughout the State to support recovery from Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike. Mr. Riley served for 32 years in the U.S. Marine Corps, where he attained the rank of colonel and was assigned as legal advisor to the Department of Defense General Counsel's Office, U.S. Joint Forces Command, U.S. European Command, and U.S. Northern Command. He received his undergraduate and law degrees from Louisiana State University and a master of law degree from Georgetown University with a specialty in tax. He and his wife Susan live in Baton Rouge with their four children.

Next, I turn to Senator Coats to introduce Mr. Vice, our witness from Indiana.

Also let me welcome Mr. Hicks, director of Morgan County, Alabama Emergency Management and president of the International Association of Emergency Managers; and Mr. Ron Lane, director of Office of Emergency Services, San Diego County, California. We very much appreciate you being here today.

I welcome our panelists, in the following order, for their opening statements: Mr. Mark Riley, Mr. David Vice, Mr. Eddie Hicks, and Mr. Ron Lane. After we hear from each of the witnesses, members will be recognized in order of arrival for up to 5 minutes for questions. Mr. Riley, let's start with you.

Senator COATS. Thank you so much, Senator Landrieu, for your leadership on this subcommittee.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR DANIEL COATS

Senator COATS. Madam Chair, I thank you also.

I want to welcome our witnesses today, Director Fugate and Under Secretary Beers, as well as our second panel. I look forward to working with you. I am new to the subcommittee, but in that role as ranking member, I look forward to working with the chair, you, and members of the subcommittee, making some of the tough decisions that I think are ahead and not helped at all by the current weather that has devastated so much of our country and has required so much out of all of you. We really have a challenge ahead.

We are fortunate in Indiana that we have not had the worst of the catastrophic disasters like those that have happened in other parts of the country and impacted the chair's State and Senator Cochran's State, Missouri, and others. We have had some recent storms and some flooding. I have just returned from southwest Indiana where I was viewing that personally and working with FEMA there, glad to see that they were on the ground doing the assessments. I was impressed with the thoroughness and professionalism of their efforts, and so I commend you for that.

Before we delve into the substance of this hearing, I just want to reaffirm the statement just made by the chair, and that is that we have some serious decisions that we have to make relative to the kind of appropriations and numbers that we are going to be able to put up to deal with the situations that we have. This potential shortfall is going to have to be paid for somehow. We are going to have to be creative in looking for ways to do that. We know the hurricane season is in front of us. Hopefully the tornado season is behind us, but we are not even halfway into the year yet, and already we have had some significant situations which will require significant funding.

So I hope we will be able to discuss with you both and with all of our witnesses how we move forward from here, given not only the fiscal realities that we face as a Nation, but also the recent catastrophes that have taken place in a lot of people's lives and dealing adequately with those.

So with that, Madam Chair, I look forward to the hearing.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you.

Senator Cochran.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR THAD COCHRAN

Senator COCHRAN. Madam Chair, thank you very much for convening this hearing, and let me join you in welcoming our witnesses and thanking them for their leadership. As everybody knows, we have really had to confront some of the most serious disasters, weather-related, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, all kinds of challenges throughout our State of Mississippi and in other southern States as well, including Missouri, Alabama, Louisiana, and others.

So you have had your hands full with emergency demands, and we appreciate the dedication and the serious approach that you have taken to trying to deal with and help recover from these terrible disasters that have struck our country.

We appreciate this opportunity to discuss with you the funding needs for the next fiscal year and whatever other ways we can be helpful in legislative language or otherwise empowering your Agency to continue to help deal with these very serious challenges.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you, Senator Cochran.

Senator Tester.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN TESTER

Senator TESTER. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Administrator Fugate, first of all, first and foremost, I want to thank you on behalf of thousands of Montanans that have been affected by the severe flooding in my State, the job that you have done. From State officials to county officials to our citizens, they have been impressed by FEMA's rapid response to this disaster and truly are appreciative of your efforts.

Special thanks is due to Mike Erdonias and Charlie Bard, as well as the whole region 18. You can pass that along. Scott Logan, the travel liaison, is doing a tremendous job. And given the number of communities across the country that are experiencing disaster situations of their own, I appreciate your attention to Montana.

We have got a lot of snowpack that is left to melt. That does not bode well for the next several weeks. The flooding we are experiencing right now is due to a rain event. We have anywhere from 150 to 300 percent snowpack in the mountains that is just beginning to melt. So your efforts, as we move forward, are going to be critically important, and I hope we can work together to ensure the citizens receive the assistance they need in a timely manner from rebuilding infrastructure like roads to homes to farms and businesses in the communities.

There was a graph passed out the other day of the number of States that were impacted by disaster declarations, and at some

point in time, we might want to address why that is. It seems like it is more than ever.

PREPARED STATEMENT

So thank you for being here, Administrator Fugate and Rand Beers. Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR JON TESTER

Administrator Fugate, first and foremost, I want to say thank you on behalf of the thousands of Montanans who have been affected by the severe flooding across our State.

State officials and everyday citizens have been impressed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency's rapid response to this disaster and are truly appreciative of your ongoing efforts.

A special thanks is due to Mike Ordonez and Charley Baird, as well as the whole region 8 team. Scott Logan, the tribal liaison, is also doing a tremendous job.

Given the number of communities across the country that are currently dealing with disasters of their own, I appreciate your attention to Montana.

We have a lot of snow-pack that has yet to melt. That doesn't bode well for the next several weeks.

Moving forward, I hope we can work closely together to ensure that the citizens of my State receive the assistance they need to rebuild their roads, their homes, their farms, their businesses, and their communities in a timely manner.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you very much.

If the staff would put up the chart about the disaster, States that have been impacted, I think it is instructive.

Mr. Fugate, please begin.

This is a chart of all the recent current declared disasters, the green being disasters declared, and Montana is on the way because this chart was prepared before the floods began.

Senator COATS. And Indiana.

Senator LANDRIEU. And Indiana is on the way. No. I think we have got Indiana. Oh, no. Indiana is on the way. There is Indiana.

Senator COATS. Trust me. I know Indiana.

Senator LANDRIEU. I always think it is more west than where it is. This is my fault. But there it is right there.

Senator COATS. Where is Mississippi?

Senator LANDRIEU. Where is Mississippi? Yes.

All right, Mr. Fugate.

STATEMENT OF HON. CRAIG FUGATE, ADMINISTRATOR, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. FUGATE. Good afternoon, Madam Chair, Ranking Member Coats, and Senators.

I would first like to respond to the efforts of the team that I am part of and recognize that often I may get credit for what a lot of people who do not have the opportunity to come here and testify are really doing. So, first, I will pass on to the team your appreciation, but I always remember it is the team that I am part of. And although I am often recognized and am here representing the team, it is really the team effort.

To go into my opening statement, Madam Chair, because this topic was disaster communication, I realize I will have other questions on some of the issues you and the other Senators have raised. I want to use the tornado events that have occurred as examples

of the progress we have made since September 11 and since Hurricane Katrina in dealing with growing and building capability at the local and State level.

In the tornadoes that struck Mississippi and Alabama and again the tornadoes that struck Joplin, Missouri, in 2001, it would have been likely that we would have had to deploy federally sponsored urban search and rescue teams to do the primary search. We would have had to deploy a tremendous amount of Federal communication assets to help rebuild and establish communication infrastructure. Even though we would work hard to get those teams in there, they would not have been as fast as local teams, local mutual aid, in-State mutual aid, and neighboring States responding rapidly. But that does not just happen. It takes a lot of work. It takes training and exercising, and it takes the support to build that capability.

In the outbreaks that we have seen, the first responders, the local officials, mutual aid, and in-State resources did the response. Our role at FEMA in all of these disasters has been one of supporting the recovery. I am not sure we would have seen that prior to these investments.

I saw an example of communications progress as we were going from the tornadoes and the flooding that were occurring into our national level exercise (NLE) 2011, which was focused on the New Madrid earthquake. I was in the emergency operations center in the State of Missouri where Governor Nixon was showing me his interoperable solution with the State radio system. He was talking to one of the sheriffs in the southeast part of the State demonstrating the interoperable work they have done with funding and, more importantly, with the planning, training, and exercising that we had done. That was the very system that they implemented in Joplin when the city was struck, and they had to reestablish communication and begin bringing in mutual aid from not only within State but from around the surrounding four-State area.

So we have seen a tremendous improvement in capabilities at the State and local level, and some of that has been based on technology.

But I also want to point out the human factor. One of the primary responsibilities we have in the disaster emergency communications role is not only in supporting response to a disaster and supporting local officials and State officials with emergency communications, it is also our role in supporting and reviewing the State communication plans and the regional communication committees that bring together the various disciplines to decide what will be the strategies and how they will work together as a team and how they are going to communicate, and then to look at how we take the work that Under Secretary Beers' team provides with the technology and the practices that we can apply.

As former President, the late Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "Plans are nothing. Planning is everything". And I think it is that planning, the exercising, and importantly, the technology that has allowed us to build more effective interoperable solutions that allow us to rapidly bring not only the responders in the immediate area but responders across the State, in some cases across the Nation, in a rapid manner.

PREPARED STATEMENT

This role that we see for FEMA in our partnership within DHS and within the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) is again one of facilitation and the implementation of these plans, as well as to continue support as the grants administrator for the funding to support not only the planning but also the technology. We talk about the “whole of community”. I am reminded that, having come from State and local government, the fastest response is often your neighbor, not always the Federal Government. We do have a role to play, but if we cannot call on our neighbors and we cannot talk to them, that is not the time to figure out when people need to be rescued. That prior planning has made the difference, and the support that we have been able to give and continue to give to State and local governments and working on those interoperable solutions is not just about the technology. It is about the people that can work as a team.

Thank you, Madam Chair.
[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CRAIG FUGATE

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon Chairwoman Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. My name is Craig Fugate, and I am the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). It is an honor to appear before you today on behalf of FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to discuss the evolution of emergency management and communication at FEMA.

As you know, FEMA has completely changed the way we do business over the past several years. FEMA was included in the organizational realignment that led to the creation of DHS in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks. FEMA also underwent major organizational changes after Hurricane Katrina, and the Congress has provided increased funding for building emergency management capabilities. As a result, FEMA is a much more effective agency today than we were just a few years ago. Our enhanced ability to meet our mission is a direct result of the tools that we have been able to put in place with your help and support.

In my testimony today, I will share with you some of the major ways in which emergency management—from a Federal perspective—has shifted during my time as the FEMA Administrator. First, we acknowledge the importance of planning for disasters in a realistic manner, and we conduct our preparedness, response, and recovery operations accordingly. Second, we have adopted a “whole community” approach to emergency management, leveraging the expertise and resources of our stakeholders at all levels, both governmental and nongovernmental. And third, we have overhauled and improved the way we communicate in a disaster environment, using cutting-edge technology and availing ourselves of tools like cell phones and social media in order to more effectively engage with the public.

The devastating effects of the recent severe storms, including tornadoes and flooding in Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri, and other States in the South and Midwest continue to serve as a solemn reminder of the importance of maintaining a robust and efficient national emergency management capability. FEMA is expected to and will support the affected States and the region throughout the recovery process.

REALISTIC PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS

I often say that we can’t plan for “easy;” rather, we must plan for “real”. This means that we must use a realistic set of assumptions when we plan for disasters. Rather than assuming that a disaster will respect jurisdictions, we conduct exercises based on disaster scenarios that cross State lines and regional boundaries.

Further, rather than assuming that the individuals we serve all share the same ages and abilities, we plan for “real” by incorporating children and people with disabilities into our disaster planning at the outset, thus ensuring that we consider the “whole community”. And rather than assuming that all disasters will be small enough in scope for the State, local, and Federal governments to handle, we prepare

for a “meta-scenario” that might overwhelm the capabilities of every level of government to respond.

Conducting Realistic Exercises

Exercises play a crucial role in preparedness, providing opportunities for emergency responders and officials to practice, assess, and refine their collective capabilities.

Prior to the passage of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) in 2006, the Congress authorized several “top officials” exercises, which exercised how key Government officials would respond to simulated terrorist attacks. With the 2006 enactment of PKEMRA, the Congress created the National Exercise Program (NEP) in order to “carry out a national exercise program to test and evaluate the national preparedness goal”.¹ PKEMRA required that exercises be “as realistic as practicable, based on current risk assessments, including credible threats, vulnerability, and consequences, and designed to stress the National Preparedness System”.² These exercises, referred to as national level exercises (NLEs) in the statute, must be conducted at least every other year.³

We take very seriously the need to conduct exercises that reflect real needs and response capabilities in the event of a disaster. For that reason, in planning exercises, we create a realistic catastrophic disaster scenario that takes us past the point of failure, rather than create a manageable scenario that we know will allow us to succeed. Creating a realistic scenario is required by law and it is also essential to our ability to identify gaps and make improvements to our response and recovery plans.

This year’s NLE 2011 examined the Federal Government’s ability to implement catastrophic incident response and recovery plans by simulating a major earthquake in the New Madrid Seismic Zone in Central United States. The exercise was the first NLE to simulate a natural hazard and provided the framework for the eight impacted States and four FEMA regions to test and evaluate regional earthquake response and recovery plans.

This year’s NLE is different from similar exercises held in prior years because it was the first NLE to benefit from changes made to the NEP. As a result, it reflected more direct involvement and direction from senior levels of government, more frequent smaller-scale exercise elements, and a shorter timeframe for evaluation, after-action reporting and improvement planning. As the NEP continues to evolve, future exercises will continue to incorporate these same principles.

NLE 2011 also incorporated a comprehensive and efficient system of exercise evaluation that focused on the rapid identification, development, and dissemination of lessons learned, as well as the development of corrective actions. NEP’s rigorous evaluation methodology will help to ensure that issues identified during the exercise are remediated. Specific provisions for the NEP evaluation methodology are detailed in the NEP Implementation Plan.

Finally, this year’s exercise fully incorporated all aspects of the emergency management team, including not only Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial governments, but also nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private sector entities, individuals, families and communities, engaging FEMA’s “whole community” approach to emergency management.

Conducting realistic exercises allows us to practice our protocols, assess areas of both success and failure, and make necessary adjustments to ensure that we are as prepared as possible for a catastrophic disaster.

Incorporating Children and People With Disabilities Into Disaster Planning

A realistic approach to emergency management means not only conducting exercises that reflect real disaster scenarios, but incorporating the needs and abilities of real disaster survivors into planning and preparedness efforts. Our planning must be inclusive of people of different ages and abilities and it must meet the access and functional needs of children and people with disabilities.

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

¹ Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006, Public Law 109–295, 120 STAT. 1355, 1427 (Oct. 4, 2006).

² *Id.*

³ *Id.* at 1428.

FEMA is also committed to placing regional disability integration specialists in each of FEMA's 10 regions. Eight are already on board on a permanent full-time basis, and an additional one is in place on an acting basis. During the height of our response to the Southeast storms, five of these specialists were deployed to the region.

Emergency management officials at all levels need to plan and prepare for every member of a community, including children, who comprise approximately 25 percent of the U.S. population. For that reason, FEMA established a Children's Working Group (CWG) responsible for coordinating the agency's efforts—in partnership with other Federal agencies and nongovernmental stakeholders—to ensure that the unique needs of children are considered and integrated into all disaster planning, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts initiated and coordinated at the Federal level.

As an example, when we pre-stage commodities in preparation for disasters, we include basic items such as water, meals and generators. However, military-style Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) and other provisions are not necessarily suitable for the entire population, especially young children. So we transitioned from MREs to commercial shelf-stable meals and we pre-stage commodities including infant formula, baby food, electrolytes, and diapers to anticipate, understand, and specifically plan for the needs of children.

Planning for the "Meta-Scenario"

Historically in emergency management, we only planned for scenarios that we were capable of responding to and recovering from at the governmental level. That was simply not enough. We must also plan for the "meta-scenario" (or maximum event) that by its nature will overwhelm the ability of State, local, and Federal governments to respond. Because of the possible breadth and scope of a "meta-scenario", we cannot be satisfied with a "government-centric" approach to emergency preparedness. Rather, we must incorporate the "whole community" into our preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.

Therefore, in coordinating and facilitating the development of detailed State and regional response plans for earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, improvised nuclear device attacks, and other threats, our catastrophic planning, evacuation and transportation planning, and emergency communications planning are all based on worst-case scenarios that are designed to challenge preparedness at all levels, forcing innovative, nontraditional solutions as part of the response strategy to such events.

We have identified the highest-priority tasks necessary to save and sustain lives and stabilize following a catastrophic incident during the crucial, first 72 hours; and we have begun to work across all segments of society to identify how we can collectively achieve these outcomes. While the initial 72 hours following an incident are the most crucial for saving and sustaining life, our approach spans not only response operations following a disaster, but also prevention, recovery, protection, and mitigation activities that occur before, during and after a catastrophic event. Changing outcomes will require public engagement and public action, which means fully embracing dialogue between our public safety and emergency services institutions and the communities they serve. This planning process results in the development and identification of existing capabilities that can be employed using pre-established logistics protocols and deployment solutions.

Because a "meta-scenario" would be of such a catastrophic nature so as to overwhelm the capability of the Federal Government to respond, we have incorporated the entire emergency management team, or "whole community", into our planning and preparedness efforts.

A "WHOLE COMMUNITY" APPROACH TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Our planning and preparedness efforts translate into action through FEMA's "whole community" framework. This approach recognizes that FEMA is not the Nation's emergency management team—FEMA is only a part of the team. In order to successfully prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards, we must work with the entire emergency management community. This "whole community" includes FEMA and our partners at the Federal level; our State, local, tribal, and territorial governmental partners; NGOs like faith-based and non-profit groups, the private sector, and industry; and most importantly, individuals, families, and communities, who continue to be our greatest assets and the key to our success.

A "whole community" approach to emergency management does not mean that FEMA abdicates its role as the Federal Government's coordinator for disasters and emergencies. Rather, it means that we recognize our mission as supporting our citizens and first responders to ensure resilience to all hazards. In order to fulfill this

mission, we must leverage the resources and capabilities of all aspects of the emergency management team, both governmental and nongovernmental. As a result, a “whole community” framework means thinking about FEMA programs and policies in conjunction with how we work to support other aspects of the emergency management team. I would like to discuss FEMA’s “whole community” framework in the context of the recent severe storms, tornadoes, and floods in the South and Southeast.

Federal Agency Partners

Our partners within the Federal Government bring to the table a great amount of expertise and resources that we utilize in a disaster environment through mission assignments, interagency agreements and advanced contracts for commodities. These partnerships are essential to FEMA’s ability to carry out its mission by leveraging the full capacity of the Federal Government.

We continue to work closely with our Federal agency partners to help the States affected by the recent severe storms, tornadoes and floods in the South and Southeast get back on their feet. One of the ways we do this is through the use of mission assignments, which are work orders issued by FEMA to other Federal agencies that direct the completion of a specific task and are intended to meet urgent, immediate and short term needs. They allow FEMA to quickly request Federal partners to provide critical resources, services or expertise. To date, FEMA has developed 263 prescribed mission assignments with 29 Federal agencies.

Since the severe storms and tornadoes devastated the Southeast beginning in late April 2011, FEMA has directed the completion of more than 80 mission assignments in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee. A few examples of the support these mission assignments provided include:

- Coordinating with U.S. Northern Command to establish an incident support base in Maxwell, Alabama. The support base allows FEMA to move supplies (such as water, infant/toddler kits, and tarps) closer to the affected areas;
- Activating the Army Corps of Engineers to conduct debris clearance and removal, infrastructure protection, restoration, and emergency repair;
- Working with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to help support housing operations under emergency support function No. 6—mass care, emergency assistance, housing, and human services; and
- Activating Environmental Protection Agency personnel to perform the functions of emergency support function No. 10—oil and hazardous materials response, by conducting response efforts relating to oil and other hazardous materials and conducting short- and long-term cleanup.

These are just a few examples of our coordination efforts with other Federal agencies. We continue to work closely with our Federal Government partners to leverage the resources they bring to various aspects of our preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.

State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Governmental Partners

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

FEMA has been in constant contact with all of the impacted States as they responded to and began recovery efforts from the devastating storms, tornadoes and floods of spring 2011. At the request of the respective Governors, FEMA currently has teams on the ground in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, Kentucky, and Tennessee, as well as strategically pre-positioned commodities in the region to support the States. Federal coordinating officers have been working closely with these affected States to assist them in meeting the unique needs of their residents. Deputy Administrator Serino and I have visited with State and local officials throughout the Southeast, surveying damage and assisting in response and recovery efforts. Secretary Napolitano also has traveled to the region to view the damage first hand and provide her support. President Obama, in addition to visiting the impacted areas, has issued major disaster declarations related to severe storms and tornadoes in the Southeast for the States of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The States of Tennessee, Missouri, Kentucky, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Minnesota have also been granted disaster declarations related to the Mississippi Valley flooding, with the President issuing an Emergency declara-

tion for 22 Louisiana parishes. Finally, more than 1,530 FEMA employees have been deployed to the affected areas.

Our on-going preparedness efforts in support of State and local governments are paying tangible dividends. As an example, in 2009, Tuscaloosa Mayor Walter Maddox sent 66 city and county emergency management and response personnel to a 4-day exercise-based training program at FEMA's Emergency Management Institute. The integrated emergency management course they attended occurs every year, and stresses the integration of functions, resources, organizations and individuals in all phases of emergency management.

Mayor Maddox recently said in a New York Times article that the decision to have his city participate in the training "has done more to help Tuscaloosa handle the disaster than anything else".⁴ The training allows localities to more fully understand roles and responsibilities during a disaster, identify gaps in emergency management plans, and address those gaps through developing and implementing emergency policies to ensure an effective response.

Engaging Nongovernmental Organizations

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

We are working closely with NGOs in order to respond to and recover from the flooding and severe weather events of recent weeks. A few examples of our work with NGOs include the following:

- American Red Cross and FEMA are jointly leading emergency support function No. 6, the planning and coordination of mass care services;
- We coordinated with Verizon, AT&T, and other mobile carriers to make available their "Stores on Wheels" to provide docking and charging stations for customers near disaster recovery centers (DRC). By helping disaster survivors charge their cell phones, they can let friends and loved ones know their location and that they are safe;
- We connected American Red Cross with Tide to provide free laundry service for disaster survivors in parts of Alabama and Georgia;
- National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (National VOAD)-member organizations such as American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Convoy of Hope, and many others continue to be heavily involved in the disaster response by providing assistance to disaster survivors. The Red Cross Safe and Well secure Web site provides a way for people to find information on those affected by the storms.

We will continue to leverage the resourcing strengths of the private sector and NGOs, ensuring that they are fully engaged in all of our efforts.

The Importance of Individuals, Families, and Communities

We work not just with governmental entities and private sector organizations, but with the individuals, families, and communities who are our Nation's "first" first responders. Our State and local emergency management experience has taught us that, in the event of a disaster, individuals and communities are not liabilities; rather, they are our greatest resources and the key to our success.

FEMA's Individual Assistance Division in the Office of Response and Recovery helps disaster survivors with housing, crisis counseling, legal services, disaster case management, and unemployment assistance, among other services. However, in addition to supporting the individuals, families, and communities we serve through Individual Assistance, we also work to engage the public as a valuable resource through personal preparedness, citizen, and community training, and two-way communication that helps provide us with situational awareness in a disaster environment.

Ready is FEMA's national public service campaign in which we partner with the Advertising Council to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to all emergencies, including natural disasters and potential terrorist attacks. The

⁴Severson, Kim & Brown, Robbie. Mayor's World Remade in an Instant, New York Times, May 10, 2011, at A13.

goal of the campaign is to get the public involved and to increase the level of basic preparedness across the Nation.

In addition to focusing on personal preparedness, FEMA also taps into the great capacity of the public to look out for friends and neighbors in a disaster. In the aftermath of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, President Bush launched Citizen Corps, a community-based entity coordinated by FEMA. Citizen Corps recognizes that effective emergency management and response requires community leaders to participate in developing emergency plans for their own communities. These leaders conduct localized outreach to and education for the public, promote training, participate in exercises, encourage volunteerism, and form an integral part of the response effort when disaster strikes. The mission of Citizen Corps is to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues, and disasters of all kinds.

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

Finally, we engage the public as a critical resource by facilitating two-way communication that allows us to communicate with the public in a disaster environment rather than talking at the public. Social media is a key part of this effort, and is discussed in the next section.

COMMUNICATION IN A DISASTER ENVIRONMENT

The ability to effectively communicate during and immediately after a disaster is essential to fulfilling our mission. When working on a tight timeframe with many of our emergency management partners, making sure that everyone is on the same page is absolutely essential. For that reason, we have completely overhauled the way we communicate with each other and with the public in a disaster environment, leveraging cutting-edge technology as well as important social media tools that the public uses in their everyday lives.

Social Media and Disasters

Social media provides the tools needed to minimize the communication gap and participate effectively in an active, ongoing dialogue. Social media is an important part of the “whole community” approach because it helps to facilitate the vital two-way communication between emergency management agencies and the public, and it allows us to quickly and specifically share information with State and local governments as well as the public.

FEMA uses multiple social media technologies like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to reach the public. Rather than asking the public to change the way they communicate to fit our system, we are adapting the way we do business to fit the way the public already communicates.

In December 2010, FEMA also created a blog (<http://blog.fema.gov>), which provides information before, during and after a disaster strikes, and highlights the best practices, innovative ideas and insights that are being used across the emergency management community.

To date, FEMA has posted more than 200 messages to its blog, Facebook, and Twitter accounts relating to the severe weather in the Southeast, sharing information with disaster survivors, including how to register for assistance, the role of DRC and other information related to the Federal Government’s support to the affected States and their residents.

We value social media tools not only because they allow us to send important disaster-related information to the people who need it, but also because they allow us to incorporate critical updates from the individuals who experience the on-the-ground reality of a disaster. The exigent nature of emergency management makes time a critical resource. The sooner we are able to comprehend the full scope of the disaster, the better able we are to support our citizens and first responders. That is why we must seek out and incorporate information provided by the public, our most critical emergency management resource.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Mobile Web Site

One of the major lessons we learned from the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti was that even if the physical infrastructure of an area is completely destroyed, the cellular infrastructure may be able to bounce back quickly, allowing emergency managers to relay important disaster-related information and enabling the public to request help from local first responders.

In early 2010, FEMA launched its first-ever mobile Web site, which allows the public to view Web pages easily loaded on their smartphones. The mobile site features information on what to do before, during and after a disaster, along with the ability to apply for Federal disaster assistance directly from your phone and locate nearby DRC. As we witnessed during the response to the Georgia and Tennessee floods in 2009 and 2010, disaster survivors often have little with them but their phones. As a result, providing the ability to register for assistance from smartphones enables us to immediately mobilize the appropriate assistance to support our citizens' needs during disasters.

While social media and mobile technology will continue to be important tools, they are by no means exhaustive of our efforts to communicate with the public in a disaster environment. In addition to tapping into communications tools that already exist, we also work to ensure that we are at the forefront of communications technology that will allow us to share life-saving and life-sustaining information with first responders and the public in a disaster environment.

Personal Localized Alerting Network

Last month, I joined New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Julius Genachowski, and top executives from AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon, in publicly announcing the creation of the Personal Localized Alerting Network (PLAN). PLAN is a free service that will allow customers with enabled mobile devices to receive geographically targeted messages from State and local emergency management agencies alerting them to imminent threats to safety in the area.

FEMA developed the PLAN technology to allow any customers of participating wireless carriers to turn their mobile phones into personal alert systems. These alerts will be able to get through to phones whether nearby cell towers are jammed or not. The alerts are also completely free of charge, and individuals are not required to sign up in order to receive them.

Disaster Emergency Communications

Of course, in addition to communicating with the public, we must also help provide communications support to emergency responders in a disaster environment.

Emergency communications issues presented an impediment to operations in the immediate aftermath of both the September 11, 2001, attacks and Hurricane Katrina. As a result, FEMA's Disaster Emergency Communications (DEC) division was established in 2008 as the lead integrator of tactical Federal disaster emergency communications. DEC provides tactical emergency communications support to emergency managers and first responders when the Federal, State, local, tribal, or territorial infrastructure cannot support communications needs for emergency operations.

DEC represents a significant shift in the Federal Government's organization and integration of emergency communications in disaster response. Some of DEC's activities include:

- Deploying equipment and personnel for on-scene communications support;
- Offering operational support to emergency responders in the field;
- Providing mobile emergency response support (MERS) units that support disaster response by enabling seamless connectivity throughout the disaster area, State, and local emergency operations centers, and national-level command and control facilities;
- Conducting regional emergency communications coordination working groups, which provide a forum to assess and address the sustainability and interoperability of emergency communications systems at all government levels;
- Supporting the establishment of State-specific plans to improve the Nation's interoperability capabilities. To date, DEC has provided support in the establishment of 36 State and 3 territory communications plans, and we will deliver 3 additional State plans by the end of this fiscal year; and
- Developing a technology roadmap to evaluate current and emerging technologies and provide recommendations on which new technologies FEMA should invest in and which existing technologies to replace.

FEMA's DEC works closely with the DHS' Office of Emergency Communications (OEC), which serves as the primary Federal office for national interoperable emergency communications policy, planning, and analysis. For example, FEMA DEC coordinates closely with OEC, its National Communications System, and the Federal Communications Commission on all 10 of FEMA's regional emergency communications working groups (RECCWGS). The RECCWGS, which are comprised of State, local, and Federal organizations, serve as planning and coordinating bodies responsible for providing a forum to assess and address the survivability, sustainability,

operability, and interoperability of emergency communications systems at all government levels. We will continue to improve our ability to communicate in a disaster environment, including communication with emergency managers, first responders, and the public.

CONCLUSION

With your help and support, we have completely changed the way we at FEMA approach emergency management: adopting a pragmatic and realistic approach to preparedness, response, and recovery; incorporating the "whole community" into our efforts; and improving our ability to communicate with the public and among emergency responders in a disaster environment. Of course, these are just some of the ways in which the Congress' significant investment in FEMA over the past several years has allowed us to improve our ability to support our citizens and first responders. While I am proud of the progress that we have made together, I know that there is still more work to be done. So I look forward to working with you, Madam Chair, and the other members of this subcommittee, as we continue to build our Nation's capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am happy to answer any questions the subcommittee may have.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you very much.

Mr. Beers.

STATEMENT OF RAND BEERS, UNDER SECRETARY, NATIONAL PROTECTION AND PROGRAMS DIRECTORATE, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. BEERS. Thank you very much, Senator Landrieu. Thank you for the opportunity to be here. I want to talk about the three parts of NPPD that are responsible for working on emergency communications and the particular roles that they play and how that all works to make our national emergency communications much more effective than they have been in the past.

The first is OEC, which helps create the foundation of interoperable emergency communications by setting up the programs, the people, the training, and the exercises that help connect the Federal Government to the State, local, tribal, and territorial organizations.

Second is the National Communications System (NCS), which supports FEMA in restoring communication systems when they are disrupted by disaster. Additionally, the NCS also works in times of disaster to ensure that priority emergency phone calls get through between State, local, and Federal officials, particularly during spikes in phone traffic.

And third is the Office of Infrastructure Protection, which works with all sectors of critical infrastructure to help owners and operators find best processes and practices to prepare for disasters. We have protective security advisors in each State. They provide critical infrastructure owners and operators with a direct conduit to the Federal Government to address routine security questions in normal circumstances but also, and equally important, to offer assistance in times of emergencies.

I can elaborate more on this, but I just want to highlight two particular events that I think are demonstrative of how this team, together with FEMA, works together effectively.

The first is with the Deepwater Horizon event and the interoperability that was put in place immediately. As a result of the work of OEC, there was a statewide interoperability coordinator who developed a statewide plan that allowed the State of Louisiana to

quickly set up the Louisiana wireless interoperability network immediately upon the event; the network allowed State and local officials to be able to talk to one another. That was quickly spread by the movement of emergency communication systems initially to Alabama and Mississippi and then to Texas and Florida so that we had basically a coastal network set up that allowed local officials working with the Coast Guard to be able to combat that tragic oil spill.

PREPARED STATEMENT

The second issue or event is the one that Administrator Fugate spoke to, which is the Joplin tornado, the most trying of emergency situations. No warning. No chance to prepare in advance. If you do not have the plan, if you do not have the people, if they do not know what they are supposed to do, then it is a little late to make things work. But we have had just outstanding results in that situation, as well as in the tornadoes in Alabama and Mississippi. And I think that that is a testament to the work that has been done since Katrina to build this kind of a system, to exercise this kind of a system, and to make sure that we have an opportunity. Is there more work to be done? Absolutely. But I think we have gone a long way since that time in terms, Senator, of moving beyond Civil War communication systems.

Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RAND BEERS

Thank you Chairman Landrieu, Vice Chairman Lautenberg, Ranking Member Coats, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. It is a pleasure to join the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to discuss the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) efforts in support of emergency management operations across the Nation and our efforts to improve communications for emergency response providers and government officials. As we approach the 10th anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001, there is no shortage of reminders of the need for an effective and efficient emergency response framework to manage incidents and restore essential services in the aftermath of a disaster. As just one recent example of many, we are all aware of the tragic series of tornadoes that ripped through the Nation's heartland last month, causing billions of dollars in damages, killing hundreds, and leaving thousands homeless.

A top priority for DHS is improving the communications capabilities of those who are often the first to arrive at the scene of a disaster site—the Nation's emergency responders. Public safety personnel must have access to reliable and instantaneous communications at all times to effectively coordinate response and recovery operations. The Department recognizes that establishing emergency communications is not solely a technology problem that can be solved with just the "right" equipment or the "right" communications system. All of the critical factors for a successful interoperability solution—governance, standard operating procedures, training and exercises, and integration of systems into daily operations as well as technology—must and are being addressed through the collective work of our programs.

Effective emergency management and communications are not something we can accomplish on our own; achieving success requires the continued partnering with the millions of emergency responders that are the first to arrive on the scene of an incident, as well as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) like the American Red Cross, the general public, and citizens of affected communities. We look forward to discussing our respective efforts and key accomplishments to make the Nation more prepared in an all-hazards environment.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS RESPONSIBILITIES

Within the National Protection and Programs Directorate's (NPPD) Office of Cybersecurity and Communications (CS&C) are two organizations that focus on dif-

ferent but converging areas of telecommunications in support of emergency operations: the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) and the National Communications System (NCS). OEC and NCS are critical to shaping national policy and both work with FEMA and other departmental components, Federal departments and agencies, multiple levels of government, and the private sector to improve communications capabilities and achieve their mission requirements.

OEC was established as part of the congressional response to the communications challenges faced during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Created by the Congress in 2007, OEC coordinates policy and assists in the development and implementation of operable and interoperable emergency communications capabilities for emergency responders at all levels of government, including Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial. OEC also led the development of the first National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP).

The NCS, transferred from the Department of Defense to DHS in 2003, was created by Executive order under President Kennedy to support the telecommunications functions of the Executive Office of the President and all Federal departments and agencies for Continuity of Government, Enduring Constitutional Government, and Continuity of Operations. Presidents Reagan and George W. Bush each issued Executive orders that evolved the responsibilities and structure of the NCS. Today, the NCS is an interagency system comprised of the telecommunications assets of 24 Federal departments and agencies, each with significant operational, policy, regulatory, and enforcement responsibilities. The NCS coordinates telecommunications preparedness, response, and restoration activities across its 24-member agencies through the NCS Committee of Principals, which consists of senior government officials from each of the 24 member agencies, ensuring a diverse representation across the NCS that includes the full range of Federal telecommunications assets.

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

The creation of DHS and OEC were key steps toward improving the communication capabilities of those who are often the first to arrive at the scene of an incident—the Nation’s emergency responders. Inadequate emergency communications have been a critical gap in our Nation’s preparedness, and previous efforts to address this issue were hampered by the lack of a strong partnership between the Federal Government and the public safety community. In addition, the Nation lacked an overarching strategy to guide emergency communications planning and build capabilities at all levels of government.

In the last 4 years, OEC has worked to fill many of these and other gaps, and we are seeing progress in several key areas that enable emergency responders to interoperate in an all-hazards environment. As part of its mission, OEC led a comprehensive nationwide planning effort with more than 150 stakeholders from the emergency response community to develop the NECP. This included significant feedback and coordination with the SAFECOM Executive Committee, the SAFECOM Emergency Response Council, and the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council. These stakeholder groups represent the interests of millions of emergency responders, as well as the State and local governments that public safety communications serves. Involving these groups from the beginning ensured that the plan took stakeholders’ input into account and would be widely accepted in the public safety community.

In the almost 3 years since it was released, the NECP has been instrumental in defining communication priorities for public safety personnel at all levels of government. OEC has been driving implementation of the NECP in coordination with its Federal, State, and local partners, and we are seeing measurable improvements with building capabilities and closing gaps identified in the plan for governance, training, operating procedures, and others, including:

Enhanced Statewide Coordination.—The creation of statewide communication interoperability plans (SCIPs), statewide interoperability coordinators (SWICs) and statewide interoperability governing bodies (SIGBs) has improved coordination of emergency communications activities and investments throughout all 56 States and territories. Through the SCIP development and updating process, the SWICs, in collaboration with their SIGBs, have been effective in helping States define their communications needs and future investments and ensuring that Federal funding is directed where it is needed most. In addition, OEC has conducted nearly 150 workshops over the past 3 years to assist States implement and update their SCIPs.

Common Plans, Protocols, and Procedures.—The use of standardized plans and procedures is driving improved command, control, and communications

among emergency responder agencies in the field. To facilitate this, OEC and FEMA have worked with more than 140 jurisdictions, including urban area security initiative (UASI) regions, to develop tactical interoperable communications plans that document formalized interoperability governance groups, standardized policies and procedures, and emergency communications equipment inventories. States continue to develop these communications plans to cover additional regions.

Targeted Technical Assistance.—OEC has implemented a technical assistance strategy to ensure that all States and territories can request and receive its targeted, on-site emergency communications assistance, while also focusing support on the States and urban areas most in need. These offerings are tailored to support the priorities in each State's or territory's SCIP and the objectives of the NECP. Since 2008, the 56 States and territories have combined to request more than 750 individual technical assistance services from OEC for support with the development of governance structures, tactical and strategic planning, and a variety of engineering services.

Increased Training Opportunities.—OEC has developed Communications Unit Leader (COML) and Communications Technician (COMT) courses to improve emergency responders' proficiency with communications equipment and to assist them with coordinating roles and responsibilities during an incident or event. The COML program has been embraced by emergency responders nationwide, and OEC has trained more than 3,500 responders, technicians, and planners to lead communications at incidents across the Nation, including local floods, blizzards, and wildfires. Trained COMLs have also contributed to recovery efforts throughout the United States, including the recent outbreak of tornados and massive flooding in the Midwest and Southeast.

Enhanced Border Communications and Coordination.—OEC has been actively working with our international partners at the Northern and Southern borders to improve cross-border interoperable communications planning, policy development, and operations communications. Last month, DHS awarded \$25 million in grant funding to States and local communities under the Border Interoperability Demonstration Project—a one-time competitive grant program focused on developing innovative solutions to strengthen interoperable emergency communications along the United States borders with our partners in Canada and Mexico.

Improved Governance and Coordination.—OEC is working with Federal, regional, State, and local agencies to increase coordination, information sharing, and oversight of interoperability through formal governance structures and partnerships. For example:

- Statewide Interoperability Governing Bodies have been created in every State and territory and include representatives from all levels of government to coordinate and support statewide interoperability. The State of Indiana, for example, has implemented an effective governance process for emergency communications through the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee, which also serves as an advisory group to the State's Integrated Public Safety Commission. Many States have also implemented regional interoperability committees to provide insight into the statewide strategy from an operational perspective.
- OEC continues to receive insightful feedback and input from responders, associations, and emergency communications professionals through the SAFECOM Executive Committee, SAFECOM Emergency Response Council, and the newly chartered National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators.
- OEC recently instituted a regional coordination program to strengthen collaboration and knowledge sharing with our stakeholders. OEC has established a regional coordinator in each of the 10 FEMA regions, and they regularly participate in the statewide interoperability governing bodies, the UASI interoperability meetings and their respective FEMA regional emergency communications coordination working groups.
- The Emergency Communications Preparedness Center (ECPC) provides an inter-departmental mechanism to coordinate common solutions, streamline development of policy and plans, and jointly engage State, local, and tribal partners. The ECPC has achieved early successes through defining a strategic agenda that reflects shared member priorities and establishes issue-specific focus groups to drive immediate action. Key accomplishments include:
 - Coordinated inputs on national policy, such as Federal agency comments on the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) National Broadband Plan;

- Developed and published recommendations for common Federal grant guidance to synchronize emergency communications spending across more than 40 grant programs;
 - Initiated efforts to drive capability and resource sharing through mapping and analyzing existing Federal communications resources; and
 - Implemented a clearinghouse capability and data repository to yield improved information sharing and coordination.
- To complement intergovernmental activities, OEC facilitates the Department's One DHS Emergency Communications Committee. This subcommittee, comprising DHS headquarters and component senior executives, provides a vital mechanism for maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's emergency communications investments and activities. The One DHS Committee reached its most significant milestone recently with the creation of the first-ever unified One DHS Emergency Communications Strategy. The strategy establishes a common vision "to ensure access to and exchange of mission-critical information across the homeland security enterprise anywhere, anytime, through unified capabilities". The strategy also sets goals for coordinating and improving emergency communications architecture, investment, governance, and operations.

Further, OEC and FEMA have partnered on the Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program (IECGP), which has been a primary vehicle for implementing the Department's interoperability goals and has supported many of these initiatives through its emphasis on:

- Establishing governance bodies that conduct strategic planning and prioritize investments;
- Supporting SWICs who ensure federally funded projects align to strategic plans; and
- Funding the implementation of NECP goals, allowing DHS to measure progress in emergency communications capabilities nationwide.

By focusing on these core capabilities—planning, governance, training, interagency coordination, and technology support—emergency response agencies are becoming more equipped to establish and maintain interoperable communications during response and recovery activities. One such example of how this is translating into "real world" success can be seen in Louisiana, where recovery operations have benefited from years of governance planning, relationship building, and communications training. Using lessons learned and improvement efforts associated with Hurricane Katrina, Louisiana statewide officials are invested in improving interoperable and operable communications throughout the State, including the deployment of a robust statewide communication systems for public safety use.

The State's standards-based system—called the Louisiana Wireless Information Network—has effectively supported interoperable communications performance during evacuation efforts for Hurricane Gustav and, more recently, the response to the BP oil spill. Interagency coordination was tested from the moment that the explosion occurred last April, and local responders were able to successfully communicate with each other and with the United States Coast Guard. Louisiana also coordinated with surrounding States to create talk groups designated for the spill and effectively used trained COMLs to initiate the process of action planning and lead major communications efforts throughout operations, including connecting multiple systems from surrounding States. Of course our hope is that another large incident in the gulf will never happen, but if it does, Federal, State, and local agencies have demonstrated that they are more prepared and coordinated than ever before.

NECP GOAL ASSESSMENTS

More than 85 percent of the NECP milestones have been achieved to date, and progress is evident in all of the NECP priority areas, such as governance, training, and coordination. Nevertheless, considerable work still remains to achieve the long-term vision of the NECP, in which emergency responders can communicate as needed, on demand, as authorized, at all levels of government and across all disciplines.

To move the Nation even closer to that vision, OEC is engaged in a comprehensive, nationwide assessment of emergency communications capabilities as it implements the NECP goals. When complete, this assessment will provide a detailed view of capabilities at the county or county-equivalent level in all 56 States and territories. This detailed look at emergency communications—the first of its kind—will generate valuable data for both DHS and the States to use to more effectively and efficiently focus future resources and improvement activities.

OEC recently completed the measurement of goal 1 of the NECP, which focused on emergency communications capabilities in the Nation's largest cities. To measure

NECP goal 1, OEC worked with the UASI regions to assess their ability to demonstrate response-level emergency communications during a real-world event in each region. This approach enabled OEC to evaluate their use of emergency communications in real-world settings and in an economically efficient manner.

The results have been encouraging. Based on the capabilities documented at each goal 1 event, all 60 urban areas were able to demonstrate the ability to establish response-level emergency communications in accordance with NECP goal 1. This illustrated how the significant organizational and technical investments made by the UASIs have improved their emergency communications capabilities in recent years. In fact, OEC saw measurable improvements over key gaps identified in the previous DHS assessment of these urban areas in 2007, the Tactical Interoperable Communications Scorecards report. Some of these areas of progress were the result of DHS programs and funding, including the following:

Grants.—The NECP goal 1 results showed an increase in the number of UASI regions using Project 25 (P25) digital radio standards-based systems, which are designed to allow interoperability regardless of equipment vendor. The implementation of P25 systems has been a provision in DHS grant guidance for several years, including the SAFECOM grant guidance and the Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant Program.

Training and Technical Assistance.—As previously discussed, OEC has been offering a COML training program that has trained more than 3,500 responders, technicians, and planners to lead communications at incidents across the Nation. This program began in part as a response to gaps identified in the 2007 DHS Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) Scorecard assessment, specifically the lack of trained COMLs. During the NECP goal 1 events, OEC found that a large majority of the UASI regions had assigned DHS-trained COMLs to handle planning and implementing multi-system communications for the event.

Exercises.—Almost all UASI regions reported that agencies within their regions are now holding communication-specific exercises, and approximately one-half of them reported that the agencies are holding these exercises on a regular basis. This represents significant progress over similar findings from the DHS TICP report in 2007, which concluded that “almost no [UASI] region had completed a communications-focused exercise before the TICP validation exercise”.

OEC is currently in the process of implementing goal 2 measurement, which calls for an assessment of emergency communications performance and capabilities at the county level (or county-equivalent level, such as parishes in Louisiana). This is a large undertaking, as there are more than 3,000 counties in the United States. OEC is working closely with the States and territories to complete this assessment by the end of this year and will be following up with them on how to use the results to update their SCIPs and more effectively utilize resources. From a DHS perspective, we believe the NECP goals assessment will generate much needed capability data to more strategically direct Federal and State emergency communications resources—including grant funds and technical assistance support—to where they are needed most.

PUBLIC SAFETY BROADBAND NETWORK

Earlier this year, President Obama outlined his commitment to the development and deployment of a nationwide, interoperable wireless network for public safety, a key recommendation from the 9/11 Commission Report. The administration’s program in support of such a network is a component of its Wireless Innovation and Infrastructure Initiative, which was outlined in its fiscal year 2012 budget. The public safety elements of the initiative include an accounting for the foregone auction revenues resulting from reallocation of the D block for use in the public safety broadband network; \$7 billion in direct financial support for network deployment; \$500 million for development and testing of broadband public safety requirements, standards and software applications (to be administered through the National Institute of Standards and Technology); and \$5 billion for support to rural broadband services, including public safety services. Many of these proposals are included in legislation that has been introduced in the Congress.

OEC has been extremely active in support of the President’s Wireless Innovation and Infrastructure Initiative and helping prepare the Nation’s responders for the deployment of broadband. This includes working closely with its Federal partners at the Departments of Commerce and Justice to help set the broad policy framework for the planned network, as well as coordinating with its State and local partners to ensure the public safety community’s requirements are fully represented in net-

work broadband planning and implementation efforts. More specific examples include the following OEC broadband-focused programs and activities:

Policy and Planning.—OEC is preparing an update to the NECP for release later this year that will identify key broadband challenges and recommend near-term actions to foster the integration of broadband technologies and data capabilities. The NECP update also will propose further measures to support current interoperability efforts and to maintain existing land mobile radio communications capabilities until broadband technologies can support mission-critical communications for first responders.

Outreach and Coordination.—OEC is working with all of its stakeholder groups—including the SAFECOM Executive Committee and Emergency Response Council, National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators, ECPC, and the One DHS Committee on Emergency Communications—to ensure the views and requirements of the public safety community are fully represented in broadband planning and implementation efforts.

—OEC supports outreach efforts related to the development and deployment of a nationwide public safety broadband network to include operational requirements, funding, standards, spectrum requirements, and governance. This includes support for an Innovation Roundtable with representatives from government, associations, public safety, and industry. OEC is also supporting a committee of jurisdictions that received FCC waivers for early deployment of 700 MHz broadband systems as they begin their efforts to build networks. Through these efforts, OEC is continuing to emphasize the need for planning and good governance, since these elements of emergency communications have yielded progress to date.

—OEC continues to coordinate with the emergency response community, preparing wireless broadband guidance documents for SWICs, urban area and regional interoperability coordinators, public officials and executives, and emergency responders to support current NECP initiatives on interoperability planning. OEC also continues to provide emergency response stakeholders up-to-date and comprehensive information about wireless broadband in the emergency response environment. In addition, OEC is working with States and jurisdictions to incorporate broadband initiatives into the SCIPs.

—To increase coordination of Federal efforts for broadband implementation, the ECPC is working to identify Federal broadband requirements, preparing a consolidated view of emergency communications assets, addressing associated legal and regulatory barriers, developing departmental positions on pending broadband regulatory matters and rulemakings, and establishing standardized grant guidance and processes. The ECPC has identified the development of broadband standards and research and development as one of its strategic priorities for the coming year.

—Concurrently, the One DHS for Emergency Communications Committee, comprising DHS headquarters and component senior executives, is providing consolidated departmental input into Federal interagency efforts, as well as developing strategies for broadband technology migration (i.e., transition from current land mobile radio technology).

Grants.—OEC's current SAFECOM grant guidance, which includes input from State, local, territorial, and tribal responders, contains a number of key provisions pertaining to broadband deployment. Further, the ECPC Recommendations for Federal Agencies: Financial Assistance for Emergency Communications, a document for Federal emergency communications grant programs, will include updated guidance concerning the deployment of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network.

Technical Assistance.—OEC has developed a wireless broadband technical assistance offering for 2011 to assist State, local, territorial, tribal, and regional users develop and improve their use of broadband technology in line with the vision of a nationally interoperable network. The offering, which can be tailored for each jurisdiction, will provide informational briefings, governance models and standard operating procedures, project planning, and engineering support.

In addition, NCS provides technical advice to OEC regarding communications standards to ensure the proposed public safety network is interoperable with the commercial communications networks. NCS also ensures that the priority functions for national security emergency preparedness function seamlessly as they operate between the networks.

NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

Since its inception, NCS has developed programs and services to address the unique communications challenges associated with communications divestiture, de-regulation, natural disasters, and terrorist attacks on our Nation.

As the co-lead for emergency support function No. 2 (ESF-2)—communications, under the National Response Framework, NCS coordinates government and industry during planning for and response to disasters and major outages. The operational arm for communications activities is the 24/7 National Coordinating Center for Telecommunications (NCC), which coordinates emergency response operations supporting the National Response Framework. The NCC is, and has been, a consistent coordinating mechanism for managing efficient communications restoration and recovery activity for more than 25 years. The NCC also coordinates the communications assets of the NCS members to provide communications assistance during disasters (manmade or natural). During a response, the NCC also provides requirements priorities to industry partners.

NCS also manages government industry partnerships to assist decisionmakers in understanding the risks to the communications sector. Under Homeland Security Presidential Directive-7, NCS is the sector-specific agency for the communications sector and coordinates government and industry partners under the Critical Infrastructure Protection Advisory Committee Act to reduce communications sector risk. NCS also manages the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (NSTAC), which comprises 19 chief executive officer-level members from communications, information technology, and defense corporations. Most recently, the NSTAC examined four scenarios designed to stress future 2015-level networks, and provided the President with recommendations for technology enhancements and government investments that would provide the best network resilience and recovery.

NCS capabilities include the following:

Operational Activities.—NCS develops and maintains national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) communications priority services programs, such as the Government Emergency Telecommunication System (GETS) and Wireless Priority Services (WPS), which provide users with priority on commercial networks. The GETS program is a White House-directed emergency telecommunications service managed by NCS. GETS supports more than 274,000 Federal, State, local, and tribal government, industry, and NGO personnel in performing their NS/EP communications missions by providing a robust mechanism to complete calls during network congestion from anywhere in the United States. Specifically, GETS provides 90 percent or more call completion rates when network call volume is up to eight times greater than normal capacity. For example, approximately 10,000 GETS calls were made with a 95-percent success rate during the 9/11 attacks, and 1,231 GETS calls were made with a 90 percent or more success rate during the 2003 blackout.

WPS is a nationwide program that provides priority NS/EP telecommunications via selected commercial wireless carriers. This program enhances the ability of 108,000 NS/EP subscribers to complete calls through a degraded public switched telephone network during a crisis or emergency situation. WPS calls receive the next available radio channel during times of wireless congestion and helps to ensure that key NS/EP personnel can complete critical calls by providing priority access for key leaders and supporting first responders. WPS service provides authorized cellular users with the ability to have priority within the public switched telephone network as well as access to priority channels.

The Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) program authorizes and provides priority treatment of NS/EP telecommunications services. The TSP program provides service providers with an FCC mandate for prioritizing service requests by identifying those services critical to NS/EP. For example, a telecommunications service with a TSP assignment will receive priority by the service vendor before a non-TSP service. The TSP program has two components: restoration and provisioning. A restoration priority applies to telecommunications services to ensure restoration before any other services. A provisioning priority is obtained to facilitate priority installation of new telecommunications services in response to an emergency. In addition to daily operations, TSP program office personnel are notified of presidentially declared disasters; activation of the National Response Framework, ESF-2; and continuity of operations and continuity of government (COOP/COG) plans. TSP program office personnel are on call 24/7. TSP can save days to weeks on the time required to return wireline voice/

data services, and there are more than 200,000 active TSP circuit assignments in support of NS/EP communications.

NCS continues to migrate GETS and WPS services to work across evolving networks. NCS works with industry to enhance and assure these priority programs are compatible with Next-Generation Network (NGN) technology.

The modeling, analysis, and technology assessments team provides expertise in modeling and analyzing current and future protocols, algorithms, network designs, and capabilities that will impact priority service communications in legacy and NGNs. The modeling team also maintains a suite of specialized infrastructure analysis tools to provide critical infrastructure risk assessments for the communications sector in the event of a manmade or natural disaster. The assessments consist of the following:

- Providing technical analysis of current and next-generation communications systems, new technologies, physical and logical architectures, and products related to communications network infrastructures.
- Determining what new and emerging communications technologies under various congestion and failure conditions to identify vulnerabilities and predict performance of existing and next-generation networks.
- Developing products to be used for COOP/COG functions during disaster response related to Federal, State, local, and tribal governments.

Standards Activities.—The NCS standards team is an active leader and contributor to various national and international standards developing organizations, ensuring industry-wide adoption of nonproprietary solutions for NS/EP preparedness telecommunications requirements.

The team provides leadership and representation in standards bodies to recommend standards that, when implemented in Internet protocol-based networks, will provide capabilities to ensure national, State, and local leadership's ability to communicate during times of crisis.

The Third Generation Partnership Project, known as 3GPP, is focused on the technical aspects associated with provisioning priority services in Long Term Evolution networks and is being pursued under the enhanced Multimedia Priority Service project. In cooperation with the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS), NCS is developing an end-to-end NGN GETS service call flow standard that specifies end-to-end call flows. ATIS is also developing the baseline text for an emergency telecommunications service wireline access requirements standard. This standard details the network element requirements for wireline access in support of digital subscriber line, cable, fiber, and metro Ethernet.

National Response Planning.—NCS is working with Federal, regional, State, and local agencies to increase communications coordination, information sharing, and oversight of emergency preparedness activities to improve response to manmade and natural disasters. NCS works with these entities to ensure a coordinated response through formal governance structures and partnerships.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY AND OFFICE OF CYBERSECURITY AND COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATION

FEMA and CS&C have collaborated on a number of programs and activities to improve communications for emergency responders in recent years and are committed to leveraging collective expertise to coordinate future programs, services, policies, and activities supporting emerging communications. This includes key policy and planning activities, such as emergency communications grants and implementing the NECP, as well as incident-based, field programs, such as ESF-2 and the national level exercise. Specific areas of coordination are as follows:

Grants.—In addition to managing the IECGP, OEC, and the FEMA Grants Program Directorate have chaired an ECPC focus group charged with improving the coordination of Federal grant programs that fund emergency communications with other departments and agencies. If IECGP is not reauthorized, the goals, priorities, and activities previously supported through IECGP must be incorporated into remaining DHS grant programs that fund emergency communications to preserve the gains that FEMA and OEC have made toward improving emergency communications. These activities include:

- Funding for SWICs;
- Funding to complete SCIP updates and reports;
- Funding for activities related the implementation of the NECP goals; and
- Funding for narrowbanding and public safety broadband activities.

Regional Coordination.—OEC regional coordinators are active participants in FEMA regional emergency communications coordination working groups. To-

gether, these regional coordination efforts work to strengthen emergency communications capabilities across tribal, local, State, and Federal governments at the regional level through trusted relationships, collaboration, and knowledge sharing.

Exercises.—Both OEC and NCS worked with FEMA’s National Exercise Division to develop criteria for the emergency communications component of the recently completed national level exercise 2011 and provided representatives to monitor and assess the emergency communications elements of the exercise.

Planning.—OEC and the FEMA Disaster Emergency Communications Division have worked together to implement dozens of NECP milestones and key activities and have coordinated on a number of State and territorial strategic and tactical planning initiatives for emergency communications.

DEDICATED COMMUNICATIONS WITH CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

As this week I transitioned from Assistant Secretary for Cybersecurity and Communications to the Acting Deputy Under Secretary of NPPD, I believe it is necessary for me to also highlight the important work under way within the NPPD Office of Infrastructure Protection (IP). IP is responsible for leading the national effort to protect and make resilient infrastructure critical to the Nation and its way of life. IP plays an important role in ensuring that emergency responders have the information that they need about the critical infrastructure in their communities so that their communities can make effective and risk-informed decisions before, during, and after incidents.

For example, IP deploys protective security advisors to every State to help State and local partners identify and protect critical infrastructure by working in close coordination and collaboration with the owners and operators of that infrastructure. By creating a community of interest around critical infrastructure protection and resilience issues at the local level, IP has helped prepare communities for incidents, whether natural or manmade.

During incidents, our protective security advisors become infrastructure liaisons, advising Federal, State, local, and private sector preparation and response activities. Their advice leverages the full capabilities of IP and other Federal partners, such as the advanced modeling, simulation, and analysis provided during incidents by the National Infrastructure Simulation and Analysis Center (NISAC). NISAC was created by the Congress “to serve as a source of national competence to address critical infrastructure protection and continuity”, and NISAC analysis helps Federal, State, and local partners prioritize their response and recovery activities to ensure that communities impacted by incidents minimize the consequences and can recover as quickly as possible.

The partnership structure established by the National Infrastructure Protection Plan, and managed by IP, also helps to ensure that emergency managers and communities benefit from the full breadth of expertise available for critical infrastructure protection and restoration activities. The partnership structure also provides a means by which to disseminate information to Federal, State, local, and private sector partners during incidents, enabling the efficient transfer of knowledge. Such information is both pushed to partners through dedicated critical infrastructure portals on the Homeland Security Information Network and pulled from partners who report infrastructure disruptions to the 24/7 National Infrastructure Coordinating Center, which is operated by IP.

CONCLUSION

The Department appreciates the subcommittee’s support for our emergency management and interoperable emergency communications activities. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. I would be pleased to answer your questions.

NATIONAL CAPABILITIES

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you very much.

Let me begin. We will do a first round of questioning.

Administrator Fugate, you have talked many times about fundamentally changing how we go about preparing for disasters. You have been able to implement some of those changes in your very impressive tenure as Administrator. But we have no common way right now, it seems, of assessing risks, measuring the capabilities,

and matching those risks to various levels of government, and then applying limited resources to the best possible investments.

As you remember, the Congress called for capability assessment in the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act. We still do not seem to have that assessment of readiness. In other words, a measurement to say how ready we are, such as using an international measurement—and the rule of thumb is if you cannot measure it, you cannot manage it. So as we are dealing with these storms, tornadoes and hurricanes, we must continue to run parallel, dealing with what is happening today but planning always for the future.

Are we any closer to getting that assessment that we need or a way to measure how ready communities are? So some communities might be five-star ready. Some communities could be three-star ready. Some communities would not have any star at all. Are we closer to getting that kind of system of measurement? Because that would really help us as Senator Coats and I try to allocate resources effectively to the areas that either need the help and are not quite there yet or stop funding programs where we have reached where we were trying to go. And that is an important, I think, focus of my appropriations leadership that I would like to provide to this budget. Do we have any measurements? I understand we have spent about \$58 million in a variety of different attempts to achieve that.

Mr. FUGATE. Madam Chair, my question when I got to FEMA was a question I had before: What is the national level we have to build to? I think when you start trying to measure below that level, it really gets away from the focus we should have had at the Federal level. What is the national threat? What do we have to respond against? How big is big? You hear the term “black swan” or the events you can never plan for. And then you saw what happened in Japan with the tsunami and the multiple impacts of that.

What we have done at FEMA—and it is now written in our strategic plan—is take the first steps to define what a national capability requirement looks like. We looked at several of the scenarios. We modeled them and we ran the numbers. We looked at an improvised nuclear device detonation in an urban area. We looked at our earthquake risk and looked at a maximum of maximums there. And we also looked at similar programs with hurricanes.

The first step is to define how big it could be. And we have those numbers. What we do know is there is no way we can respond to that, nor could we build the capability to do a government-only solution. But the analysis is giving us the tools to come back and go, “What are the things that we need to do to build a national response, not just a Federal response?” And so you talk about those measures. How do we determine how well prepared we are?

We are finding that maybe we need to come back and go, “Did we build the right structure?” We have provided a lot of funds to State and local governments to build capabilities based upon their local hazards and statewide risk, but we never really looked at those as national capabilities. So one of the things that we know States have done—all 50 States are currently participants in the Emergency Management Assistance Compact—is to ask the question, “Is now the time that we should start requiring that future

funding mandate continued participation in the Emergency Management Assistance Compact so we can look at this funding as a national asset versus State by State?

And then how effectively are States using those resources in-State? We have seen this in Indiana. We have seen this in the gulf coast. We saw in the response to Joplin that it was the mutual aid—these in-State capabilities many times that responded across State lines—that made the difference. So we are looking at how to start building that structure while you continue to define how you build, the national capability, and then what level each jurisdiction should be building as part of that on the basis of their hazards.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEMS

Senator LANDRIEU. The quicker we can get the answers to that, the better we will be able to build a bill to actually meet the needs of our country and our locals. So I will come back to you in a minute for dates or suggested dates on that.

But let me ask Mr. Beers. The Office of Inspector General made three recommendations to improve the efficacy of first-responder grants to ensure the grants were coordinated to mitigate duplication, document Agency rules, work with the Congress, et cetera. Are we making progress on those recommendations? And we seem to be sort of sitting at the crossroads on some of those issues. Can you respond?

Mr. BEERS. First of all, let me just say that in terms of trying to measure the capabilities that are currently in existence, we under the National Emergency Communications Plan basically have a three-goal measurement process that we are going through.

The first goal was to look at the major metropolitan areas and ensure that they were able to respond within 1 hour to an emergency communications event. Obviously, these are preplanned, and I think that the success rate that we had so far—there are differences. Some are better than others, but they all achieved basically the minimum goals that we have set. Those were the major cities.

We have gone now to the second phase, which is to take the non-major areas, and we are running that test to see whether those in other areas are able to be up and running with some kind of emergency response system within an hour of a time set. So we will move on with that and then do some further testing.

But I just want to give you a sense of the effort that we are making to ensure that we can actually see how capable these localities' emergency response systems are. And it is not just in the city itself. It is multijurisdictional. So we need to make sure the city and the surrounding areas can do that.

With respect to coordination of the grants program, we have in OEC a major effort to make sure that from the State level to the local level, those grants are all being coordinated. We work with the grant guidance that FEMA issues, and we work with FEMA for the grant awards. So it is actually a common effort for us on interoperable emergency communications.

Senator LANDRIEU. Because, as I turn it over to Senator Coats, it would be very troublesome and very disappointing to have spent the money that we are investing in communications systems that

do not talk to each other, and we need to make sure that they are as interoperable as we claim they are and that it works when the disaster strikes.

Mr. BEERS. If I may just add. That is what it showed in the Louisiana case or the gulf coast case with Deepwater Horizon, and that is what happened in Joplin, and that is what happened in Alabama and Mississippi. That was not just one locality that the tornado went through. It was adjacent localities that all came together working with FEMA and were able to talk to one another. So it is not that one locality can talk internally with itself. It is that they can talk across. And that is a result of the statewide interoperable plans that they have been developing. And that backbone allows those emergency responders to be able to talk to one another across jurisdictions, as well as to have resilient communications within a jurisdiction.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you.
Senator Coats.

MADRID EXERCISES

Senator COATS. Madam Chair, thank you.

Mr. Fugate, as you know, you have recently conducted a trial disaster situation relative to the New Madrid fault. Is there any preliminary information from that that gives you some insights as to what needs to be done, what was done effectively, what changes might need to be made in terms of preparing for a disaster of that nature, and the value of your test?

Mr. FUGATE. This was for NLE 2011, this year's New Madrid earthquake and other faults. We are still working on the quick look and the initial findings, but my observation was this was one of our largest exercises that we have conducted. It was an exercise in which we saw a lot more local and State participation as far as bringing teams in from different areas and working through problems. It continues to reinforce the need to do these levels of exercises to validate many of our planning assumptions and to test our communications and to test our ability to work as a team.

Fortunately—or unfortunately, many of the things that we practiced in NLE 2011 we actually implemented in Missouri in the Joplin tornado outbreak. So we know that the level of participation was good. We saw a lot of different site activities. We saw a lot of the testing of our equipment interoperability in the teams and the lessons from that. I think, as we get those, we will have a better idea where we have to continue to work.

But one thing that, coming back to Senator Landrieu, is really key to this is the ability to tie mutual aid and participation as mutual aid teams, to look at assets not as a local or State asset but as a national asset as part of the ability for Governors and local jurisdictions to share resources.

MOBILE DEVICES AND MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES

Senator COATS. Thank you.

I would like to direct the next question toward the use of social media to communicate and the interoperability of the public service connections, particularly in light of the changing technologies. It is so easy to commit to a certain program which will provide that

interoperability and ability to communicate only to find that the technology has changed dramatically and you have got to rework your whole system or make do with a less viable option. I mean, it is just a matter of time between laptops and now it is iPads, and if you do not have an iPad 2, you are not up to speed because the first iPad is obsolete and you have just spent a bunch of money on this or that or the other. And as soon as you get the iPad 2, somebody says you should have gotten a Droid because you can download more apps for free.

Senator LANDRIEU. I am impressed, Senator Coats.

Senator COATS. I am learning this the hard way. I actually ran into somebody. Somebody asked her a question—how is your social media? And a lady said it is fine, but we have a lot of groups at church that we get together with and we bowl together every Tuesday night. Our social network is pretty strong. So those of us of a certain generation had to catch up with the technology.

In any event, you get a situation like 9/11 and we were in the cell phone age at the time, but no one was able to get through as the lines were jammed or whatever. What types of considerations do you have to take relative to the use of the new technologies that will survive and be usable within a disaster of certain proportions that maybe takes down part of the network? What do we do then?

Mr. FUGATE. I think when you talk about social media and you talk about cells and other things, I think what we are really finding is more and more people are moving toward mobile devices and mobile technologies. And rather than focusing on a platform, we have to focus on the protocols to get information out. One of the things that Under Secretary Rand Beers' folks at the National Communications Service do is work with the wireless carriers to get restoration quickly.

One of the things that, in working with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), we are doing with the emergency alert system is addressing the issue of cellular congestion and looking at mobile devices as a way to alert and warn people during a crisis. Part of that has been working with industry to implement what is now called the Personal Location Alert Network (PLAN).

One of the things that cell phones can do that does not require—or it gets into the issue of congestion—is they are radio receivers and you can actually broadcast to them versus making individual calls or text messages and running into congestion issues. So we recently announced in New York City with Mayor Bloomberg kicking off the implementation of PLAN, which will allow people with mobile devices to receive alerts from the official sources, whether it is the National Weather Service or local or State officials, on the basis of where they are, not what they have signed up for. And that system is being rolled out across the Nation. More than 200 carriers are participating in this. Device manufacturers are providing the software updates and are identifying the devices that will work. And we feel that, over the next several years, this new tool will allow us to reach mobile users much more effectively than even some of the existing warning systems. But it is not based upon a platform or only one type of technology.

But the other part of that is also recognizing we have to ensure that we communicate the way people communicate, whether it is

going to the bowling alley or it is sending out a tweet or it is updating a Facebook page or it is walking down the street and talking to people.

Senator COATS. Thank you.

Mr. BEERS. Sir, might I add just one point to that?

The Administrator is talking about talking with the public. The thing to remember that is always significant here is that for emergency responders, we are still in a land mobile radio environment, and we cannot move off that environment until we have secure, resilient communications. That migration is going to take some time. To make the cell phone system and that resilient is, obviously, something we want to do, but for emergency responders, that has to work all the time. It cannot be something that does not work. So we are still using land mobile radios. We will move when we can move, but they are not going to give those up until they know what they move to is going to be able to work all the time or effectively all the time. So we have got that issue to deal with as well.

Senator COATS. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you.

In order of appearance, Senator Tester is next and then Senator Cochran.

DISASTER RELIEF FUND

Senator TESTER. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Administrator Fugate, as we have seen an almost unprecedented string of weather-related disasters across the country this spring, the communities and families who have been impacted will undoubtedly look to FEMA, as they already have, timely services and assistance to help them get them back on their feet. That is a significant responsibility that you have.

And as the disaster assistance fund is further depleted, it is going to force you to make some very difficult decisions. The Congress needs to do its job and it needs to get you the funding it needs. There is no doubt about that. But the cost of those disasters will continue to mount and there are a lot of folks out there that are in need.

I have several questions, and you can answer them in any order you want.

Can you provide us with an update on the current DRF shortfall?

And does the recently passed House Homeland Security appropriations bill even come close to providing what you need? It is my understanding it is at least \$1 billion short.

Mr. FUGATE. In the current fiscal year, we are watching very closely the obligations for the most recent disasters. Prior to the most recent flooding and tornadoes, we were projecting that we would remain above \$1 billion to the end of the fiscal year and not have to implement immediate needs funding. But with the more recent disasters and the fact that we do not have completed damage assessments, we are continuing to assess that very closely to see if the public assistance and requirements to support the initial response would require us to do immediate needs funding.

As for the fiscal year 2012, again this goes back to something the chairlady basically touched on, and that is the philosophical way of

funding disasters. Do we do that through full appropriations or do we look at that—particularly in the older disasters that were extreme events that go beyond what we have historically budgeted for, do we use another tool? And I think that is a question that needs a lot of discussion. How do we address the older disasters, as well as should we be budgeting at a continuation level of disasters we expect to get and treat these as extraordinary events, or do we look at that as a budget issue that we would look at in our baseline funding request?

FISCAL YEAR 2012 DISASTER RELIEF FUND BUDGET

Senator TESTER. You know what the needs are out there. The question I really had was, does the House-passed budget come close to meeting your needs?

Mr. FUGATE. For fiscal year 2012, sir, the answer probably is going to come back to, given what we had projected on closing out disasters and putting money back into the DRF, we were still looking at when we would require immediate needs funding for 2012. I do not have a timeframe on that, and with these most recent disasters, all of that projection I think has got to go back to what we are going to be dealing with this summer.

Senator TESTER. You got 36 States on the map. According to Senator Coats, he has got 37. I got 38, and God knows what else is out there. You are the guy on the ground. You are the guy that this Senate and the House, I think, look to to make sure that there is adequate funding out there because you know as well as I do. I ask things of you as a Senator from Montana on behalf of Montanans. Senator Coats, Senator Landrieu will do the same thing. It is not unlike any other budget. You got to tell us. Is it adequate or is it not?

Mr. FUGATE. Senator, for this year, we have to add up the damage to see if we are going to have to go to the immediate needs for 2012. The continued practice of this administration and previous administrations has asked for a baseline budget based upon a level of existing disasters that does not always factor in existing catastrophic disasters. But the other part of that is looking at how much of that we are going to need for the 2012 budget.

Senator TESTER. I got you. I do not want to beat you up too bad.

Senator LANDRIEU. It is a good line of questioning.

Senator TESTER. As I look at this map and as you propose the budget, because you were around for this budget that was proposed, did you anticipate the kind of emergency situations that were going to arise? I mean, I am looking at a map that is primarily green, and green is not a good color in this case.

Mr. FUGATE. No. This year has been rather exceptional. But I would also point out that, although you have many States that are green, many of those States are actually operating under what we call fire management assistance grants. So they do not have a large-scale event like a hurricane or some other large outbreak.

Many of these disasters, as unfortunate as they are, have been very focused. I think the chairwoman would recognize that, when you get a hurricane, they are so much larger. Again, as bad as the devastation is, as an example in Joplin, the public infrastructure losses will probably be primary debris. We only had a couple of

public buildings damaged unlike what we would see in an earthquake or hurricane. So again, although you have a lot of States colored, it is not always going to be to the same level we see in these more catastrophic events.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Senator TESTER. Look, none of us on this panel want to spend money that does not have to be spent, but by the same token, when I flew over southern Montana and see the roads and the bridges that are out—and I have northern Montana just getting hit this week. I mean, we have got Roundup that is going to be flooded again. It probably is already flooded right now. We got a levee in Glasgow that is about to be breached, if it is not breached right now, on the Missouri River.

I am going to shut her down. Affected communities. The representatives of those affected communities—what can they do to best ensure that they are in the proper position to receive the assistance that they need in a timely manner?

Mr. FUGATE. The most important thing is, again, once a Governor has requested a disaster declaration—not every disaster warrants a Stafford Act declaration. We do say no. That is a fact of life. But when the President has declared that disaster, the important things are again to get their documentation, work with the State and with FEMA to get their claims in that are eligible, and process those quickly. There is a lot of work on the initial end of these responses. As we get into the out-years, things can slow down. I think it is important that as quickly as we can identify what the total cost impacts will be, the better we can assess where the DRF is and whether there would be a shortfall requiring any immediate needs funding restrictions.

Senator TESTER. I appreciate that.

And I thank the chair.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you.

And I will call the subcommittee's attention to the chart that is being put up that gets to the heart of what Senator Tester was asking. The President has requested \$1.8 billion in the baseline for 2012, but your estimate, your low estimate, is \$3.8 billion and your high estimate is \$6.6 billion. So there is quite a delta that we are going to have to fix to attend to the needs that the Senator from Montana was raising.

Senator Cochran.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

Senator COCHRAN. Madam Chair, thank you for chairing this important hearing.

Mr. Fugate, we are aware of the fact that you served as head of the Florida Division of Emergency Management in your earlier incarnation as an administrator, having jurisdiction over many of these programs that we are talking about today. And I know that our State has benefited from your experience because of the damages that we have sustained in Mississippi during the hurricane season and beyond. Recent events have demonstrated how serious that can be.

Just looking on the television screen and trying to imagine what it was like during those times when the tornadoes were coming through our State and neighboring States, it is just totally unbelievable. And what is really unbelievable is that people survived it.

Tell me how important the early warning system is and what was your experience that you gained from these recent events that helped equip you to know how to respond as a Federal administrator?

Mr. FUGATE. The first part is that the National Weather Service's approach to forecasting for severe weather is not much unlike forecasting hurricanes. They have the Storm Prediction Center, which gave the outlooks. In both of these outbreaks, they had identified a very significant risk of violent tornadoes. Actual warning times varied, but 15- to 20-minute warnings were issued prior to the tornadoes touching down. And when you ask people if they had somewhere to go, and they go, "Well, we did not have a basement. A lot of our homes are slab on grade". And when you are dealing with F4 and F5 tornadoes, there are not too many places to go. They did the things that reduced the loss of life. They got in their bathtubs. They got in their closets. They did things that reduced that impact.

The United States had seen a significant reduction in loss of life for tornadoes, it seemed like, every year, but we are seeing an uptick. People are questioning why. I think it is because you are dealing with the rarity of these extremely violent tornadoes, and I think it goes back to some of the things we need to look at. And building in these areas, if people get the warning but have nowhere to go or do not know what to do, we do not change the outcome. I think we need to put a renewed emphasis on things such as safe rooms in home construction, but particularly in public safety buildings where we may not be able to harden a building for an F5 tornado, but we certainly should be able to build a space so that firefighters, police officers, and paramedics have a safe place to be during the storm so they can respond to their community after the storm.

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

Senator COCHRAN. In our recent experience with gulf coast hurricanes, we got another wakeup call. Just because you had one last year does not mean you are not going to have one this year. It seems like Haley Barbour, our Governor, has had his hands full in responding to hurricanes. Katrina was the huge one.

Were you here in Washington or in Florida when Katrina hit?

Mr. FUGATE. I was in Florida for the 2004 and 2005 hurricane season, sir.

Senator COCHRAN. Do you have any observations about the budget request now specifically as it relates to hurricane preparedness and preparedness for Mississippi River flooding like we have seen this year, like we had not seen since 1924 I think was the big flood year? What is your estimate of the sufficiency of the budget request to deal with events like this?

Mr. FUGATE. Again, I think looking at what it would take to do the initial response—and that is one of the reasons we watch the DRF so closely. We do not want the balances dropping below the

point where we cannot respond to the next disaster. We, going into this hurricane season, are in good shape.

But I will tell you this. If we have a large-scale outbreak or a big hurricane hit, those funds will diminish rapidly. The costs of responding to these larger-scale disasters are substantially greater than what we have seen in the recent response. So that is always a factor when you look at large-scale impacts from earthquakes or from hurricanes. As bad as these have been, they have been rather focused in their areas, and therefore do not require a substantial amount of resources to complete an initial response to.

Senator COCHRAN. Do we have a supplemental pending at this time that contains funding that your Agency needs?

Mr. FUGATE. Not based upon the hurricane season, sir. And we are looking at where we are on our damage assessments to determine if we would need any additional funds this fiscal year for the current response to the tornadoes and floods.

Senator COCHRAN. We do not want you to be shy about sitting there and not asking for the funds that we need in our States that have been hit hard by these storms. I hope you will be arguing in the meetings you have in the administration to be generous.

Mr. FUGATE. Yes, sir.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you, Senator Cochran.

Senator Leahy.

VERMONT FLOODING

Senator LEAHY. Thank you very much.

Mr. Fugate, you and I had a nice chat the other day, and I appreciate you calling me back on what I understand was a very busy day. I guess most of your days are pretty busy.

As I mentioned in our conversation, I talked about those series of devastating flooding disasters we have had in Vermont. I am not suggesting it is like along the Mississippi River, but for our little State of 600,000, it is virtually unprecedented.

Lake Champlain, which goes the length of the western side of the State, is 103 feet above sea level. We have had a huge amount of snow over the winter that has melted and then the rain started. We have more thunderstorms coming again tonight. It is the wettest spring we have ever had. No lives lost, but I know that in our capital city of Montpelier and in the city of Barre homes and businesses have been flooded out and destroyed. I know both of these places very well. I was born in one, and my father in the other. The Governor, Peter Shumlin, requested a major disaster declaration from the President. He has the full support of all of us in the delegation.

And I know the FEMA investigators went up to Vermont to assess the damage. I appreciate that. They were there right away. I think your staff was there for weeks. And I think we certainly met the threshold for a declaration. I hope it can be issued soon. I hope they will have individual assistance for the hardest hit communities. Some of these homes and businesses are totally destroyed. Other buildings that have been there for 100 years without anything hurt are now destroyed. Vermont and New Hampshire are about the only two States on Senator Landrieu's chart that have not been hit.

Can you give me an update on Vermont's application?

Mr. FUGATE. Yes, sir. We talked to the Governor yesterday morning. We also got some more information that answered a couple of questions and that paperwork is now moving. When I talked to you, I told you I would put my personal attention on it. We did. We had to get some more information. The State provided that. They had an amendment they wanted to get into that original request. So we took that and worked to get that into the original request. So it is moving, sir.

Senator LEAHY. As I said, your folks have been up there and have been really working hard. And I appreciate that because it has not been a comfortable or easy time for them, but I suspect that is part of the rule of the game. When you get called out, it is not because it is an afternoon on the beach. It is a bad time.

Mr. FUGATE. Again, Senator, in this response to the flooding, we have been working with the State. Again, most of the response they have done themselves with their resources. This is really looking at the economic impacts and that threshold. Again, the Governor had requested to amend his original request. We have worked that request, and that is now moving, sir.

Senator LEAHY. Thank you. And please keep or have your staff keep mine posted. I appreciate it. I am supposed to be at another hearing, but I wanted to come here and wanted to thank you for taking my call and for giving it your personal attention.

Mr. FUGATE. Yes, sir, Senator.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you, Senator Leahy.
Senator Murkowski.

DISASTERS IN REMOTE AREAS

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Administrator, thank you for being here. I appreciate all that both of you do.

We have had a tough spring in the interior part of Alaska. We have got two communities that had some pretty exceptional flooding this year, that of Crooked Creek and Red Devil, both small villages, interior villages, not a lot of people, subsistence lifestyle, seasonal economic opportunities, but very hard hit by the 30 feet of flood waters and ice jams. You know well about it.

The question that I have today—and I guess more of an assurance. The situation in Crooked Creek and Red Devil is not making the national news. It was not on anybody's radar screen outside of the State of Alaska, but incredibly important, not unlike what Senator Leahy was speaking about in Vermont. And as I was home over the recess, I had several come up to me and say in view of what is happening in Joplin and with the flooding along the Mississippi, is it a situation that our smaller communities, perhaps our more rural communities like Crooked Creek and Red Devil, will be put at the bottom of the priority list when it comes to gaining the disaster declaration that our Governor has sought.

And what I would like to hear from you today is in view of all that you have before you—and I appreciate the enormity of it, but can you give me some assurances that the disaster declarations that are being requested from some of our very remote, very rural

areas that again are not making the front pages will get the attention from your Agency that they certainly deserve?

Mr. FUGATE. The answer simply, Senator, is yes. I think one of the things that the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act did was to strengthen our FEMA regions. And if we were trying to do this all from headquarters, we may miss a few disasters, but because our regional offices, geographically spread across the country, work directly with our counterparts at the State level, we do not miss these requests. When the Governor sends a request from any State or our territories, our regions work those requests, work with the State, determine if there is any immediate Federal assistance needed, and will process the recommendations. Not all requests are declared, but all requests are treated with the same level of consideration. And it is our regional staff and offices working day to day with their State counterparts that ensure we do not miss even one. As I like to tell my folks, we do not go just where the TV cameras go. We go where the need is based upon what the Governors have requested of us.

ALASKA—CATASTROPHIC PLANNING

Senator MURKOWSKI. I appreciate that, and I know that the people of Crooked Creek and Red Devil will as well.

I want to ask you a couple questions about earthquakes, tsunamis following the natural disasters there in Japan, Fukushima, a lot of attention, clearly, on the magnitude of what Japan felt. Alaska has similarly seen some pretty substantial earthquakes, our 1964 earthquake, and the result of a devastating tsunami. And so we pay particular attention.

The question that I have for you is the intensity of FEMA's planning efforts to prepare or to deal with any—I guess you cannot prepare, but how do you deal with a catastrophic earthquake, a tsunami that might impact the State of Alaska.

I am singling out Alaska specifically. Obviously, I represent an incredible State in terms of its geography but also recognizing that our geography puts us away from the rest of the country. And when you were discussing the issue of mutual aid earlier, we recognize that in so many of our States, it is not just what that one State provides, it is the surrounding assistance. We do not have that. And in the event of a natural disaster that might take out our port, aid could be 48 hours plus away, if not longer.

Can you speak to just again the planning efforts that might be underway and whether or not in your view FEMA is working adequately with the State of Alaska to identify the challenges that we face as a remote State or a State that is remote from the rest of the country in terms of any outside assistance, mutual aid?

Mr. FUGATE. Senator, I will do this in two parts. First, I am going to offer up Ken Murphy, our regional administrator, to work with your staff to set up a meeting and brief you on the catastrophic planning that we do with Alaska.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I would like to do that.

Mr. FUGATE. We also recognize that, because of the isolation of Alaska and the fact that many of the lifelines may be disrupted in this type of scenario, we work very closely with the State looking at how we would get back to Alaska and how quickly we can get

there. This is going to take a sizable response capability. We are working with our partners at the Department of Defense. There are also, in several of these scenarios, not only the impacts that would occur in Alaska but maybe also those occurring further south, particularly in Seattle, that would affect a lot of our shipping, which again is a key lifeline for the State of Alaska.

So our catastrophic planning initiatives are really based upon what we call the maximums of maximums. How bad would it get? What gets severed? What is the backup, and how do we still get back to these areas?

But I will offer up that our regional administrator get with your staff and set up, at your convenience, a briefing on what we are doing with Alaska for the catastrophic plans.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

Senator MURKOWSKI. I appreciate that and would look forward to that meeting.

You have just gone through this catastrophic disaster response exercise, the New Madrid fault. And I am assuming there were good insights and lessons learned from that exercise that may or may not be applicable to the situation in Alaska. Can you comment on that, or is that something that I should discuss further at this meeting?

Mr. FUGATE. I think a briefing would probably answer a lot of those questions. I will tell you, though, one of the things that we have not done in a lot of our exercises is look at how we would bring in our international partners. Within the urban search and rescue (US&R) community, there are a lot of other nations that are very effective and that we work with through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and International Response. We have not always looked at those resources as to how they would help us in the United States. I think Alaska would be a perfect example of working with our neighboring countries that would have resources in the theater that may actually be more quick and could get to areas. So one of the things we are really exploring is not looking just at what we have within our national capabilities, but what do our international partners bring that would be specific, particularly search and rescue because that is such a specialized application that many countries have worked on with us and developed those capabilities, often based upon our team models.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I look forward to the meeting.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you.

The panelists have been very generous with their time. We are going to forgo a second round of questioning so we can get to our second panel. We are very anxious to hear from our local leaders that have traveled a distance to testify.

But Mr. Fugate, I am going to ask you just in closing if you can tell me today or submit to me in writing within a week when that Pre-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act requirement to do an assessment is going to be completed by your Agency. Do you have a timeframe in mind?

Mr. FUGATE. We will submit that within the week in writing, Madam Chair.

[The information follows:]

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) agrees that we are at a crossroads of building more readiness capacity and sustaining the capacity we have built to date. FEMA believes that grant dollars should go toward developing and sustaining national capabilities that could be called up by any jurisdiction at any time through national mutual aid. FEMA has been working to streamline the process and set priorities that will encourage grantees to build national capacity according to gaps in coverage of capabilities.

To achieve this, the fiscal year 2011 FEMA grant guidance sets three new priorities for the grantee:

- whole community strategy;
- building prevention and protection capabilities; and
- the maturation and enhancement of State and major urban area fusion centers.

Grant applicants will be developing their investment justifications based, in part, on capability requirements identified through the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) process. THIRA is based on analysis of each State's relative consequences of the various threats and hazards, and allows the applicant to compare and prioritize risks. THIRAs will be used to update State homeland security strategies, which identify the capability gaps that States most need to fill in order to meet the State's individual risk priorities and FEMA's priorities. Gaps identified in THIRA will assist FEMA in assessing national gaps in capabilities and help us further refine grant guidance to maximize benefit.

From fiscal year 2006 to fiscal year 2009, States identified the highest funding requirements as communications, intelligence and information sharing and dissemination, and planning. The States based these funding requirements on their homeland security strategies, which include their capability development requirements and grant guidance provided by FEMA.

The top three capabilities developed through Federal investments, as collected through progress reports from fiscal year 2006 to fiscal year 2009, include communications, planning, and critical infrastructure protection.

FEMA is making a number of key reforms to the design and implementation of its grant programs to build and sustain national capability. First, and most important, FEMA is working to implement the requirements of Presidential Policy Directive-8 which includes the development of a new national preparedness goal, national preparedness system, and other key strategic policy doctrine that will help us better focus where investments go.

Second, we are working closely with State, local, tribal, and private sector partners and stakeholders to develop a culture of partnership in everything we do. Last summer, our grant program developers, managers, and analysts met with our partners at the National Urban Areas Security Initiative and After Action conferences in San Francisco over the course of 4 days from June 20–23, 2011, to review, assess, and improve all aspects of how we work together.

A third key reform lies in our ongoing commitment to improving and integrating a risk-based approach into the design and implementation of our grant programs. We are continuing to refine our risk models and allocation methodologies to ensure that grant funds are deployed across our grant portfolio in a way that reflects the best possible information about threats, risks, and vulnerabilities that we face.

Finally, FEMA is evaluating the findings arrived at via direction from the Redundancy Elimination and Enhanced Performance for Preparedness Grants (REEPP) Act, in coordination with the National Academy of Public Administration, to identify and eliminate redundant reporting requirements and to develop meaningful performance metrics for Homeland Security preparedness grants. This effort may help FEMA further measure the effectiveness of grants. FEMA also is evaluating the recommendations from the Local, State, Tribal, and Federal Preparedness Task Force Report to improve coordination and consolidation of FEMA's grant programs, including coordination of interagency grant programs and more closely linking capability assessment and grant activities.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you very much. Thank you both, and we appreciate it. We will have further questions, of course, in writing and we thank you for your testimony today.

Mr. BEERS. Thank you.

Senator LANDRIEU. Let me quickly, as these two leaders are moving their chairs, introduce our second panel, as they come forward.

We are very happy to have Mark Riley from the State of Louisiana. Mark is the chief of staff to Louisiana's Governor's Office of

Homeland Security. He came to the agency in 2007, previously served for 2 years as deputy director of disaster recovery. He has managed an \$11 billion public assistance fund, a \$1.4 billion hazard mitigation fund, funding more than 24,000 projects throughout the State for four hurricanes. Prior to that, 32 years in the U.S. Marine Corps and a master of law degree from Georgetown University. We are very happy to have Mr. Riley leading our efforts in Louisiana.

Let me turn to Senator Coats to introduce our witness from Indiana, Mr. Vice.

Senator COATS. Thank you, Madam Chair.

David Vice is executive director of the Integrated Public Safety Commission (IPSC) in Indiana. He spent nearly 10 years with that agency promoting interoperable communications between local, State, and Federal first responders. Prior to his appointment as executive director in 2011, he served as the agency's field coordinator and in this role was the agency's ambassador to the local and State public safety agencies, promoting the benefits of joining the State's 800 megahertz interoperable communications system and a number of other projects. I am pleased to have him here and thank him for his service to our State but also to our country and look forward to his testimony.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you.

And let me welcome Mr. Hicks who is the director of Morgan County, Alabama Emergency Management and president of the International Association of Emergency Managers.

And finally, Mr. Ron Lane, director of the Office of Emergency Services from San Diego County, California.

We appreciate you all being here today, and Mr. Riley, we will begin with you for your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF MARK RILEY, CHIEF OF STAFF, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, STATE OF LOUISIANA

Mr. RILEY. Madam Chairwoman, subcommittee members, on behalf of Governor Jindal and Director Mark Cooper, I appreciate the invitation to speak here today.

As I understand your interest, you are looking for information on the state of emergency management within Louisiana focused on communications and interoperability.

Louisiana has been a laboratory for some of the most significant events in emergency management over the last 6 years. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, followed by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008, followed by the Deepwater Horizon spill in 2010, and most recently the record level flooding of the Mississippi River.

Since FEMA started tracking in 1953, Louisiana ranked sixth amongst States in Stafford Act type events. This count does not include the myriad of other emergency events that are significant at a local level but do not rise to the level of requiring a Federal response.

At the State level, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness has respond to more than 130 emergency events in the last 3 years, 44 of which have activated the State Emergency Operations Center for a total of 519 days during

that 3-year period. All of these events depend on the capabilities of emergency managers at the local level.

It is an axiom of emergency management that every disaster is local. Therefore, we must develop an emergency management process that thoroughly integrates all levels of government and the private sector to support local emergency management. Eighty percent of all the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) funds received by the State are sent to the parishes to build a robust and resilient emergency management capability at the local level.

What is confusing is at the same time the Presidential Policy Directive-8 on national preparedness cites the need to support local emergency management through a preparedness planning for business, communities, families, and individuals, the State of Louisiana is notified of a 57-percent cut to the HSGP, a key resource for emergency management at the State and local levels.

Louisiana is, in fact, the laboratory for emergency management, and I would like to briefly outline initiatives Louisiana has taken to enhance the emergency management process over the past several years.

Within the last 3 years, the State has built the Louisiana wireless information network which is now the largest 700 megahertz radio system in the country and provides portable radio coverage across 95 percent of the State. In 2010, there were more than 60,000 users at the Federal, State, and local level and more than 95 million push-to-talk accesses.

We have enhanced interoperability through a Google Earth project known as Virtual Louisiana. We photographed the entire State using 6" high resolution and are in the process of geocoding all infrastructure facilities throughout the State. We have completed 25 percent of the State's critical infrastructure. When complete, Louisiana will have the most extensive geographic information system (GIS) database in the country available to all first responders to provide critical and real-time data during an emergency response.

Three years ago, Louisiana aggressively embarked upon a multimedia awareness campaign focused on individual responsibility and preparedness. The "Get a Game Plan" campaign uses public service announcements like the Louisiana celebrity Donna Douglas from "The Beverly Hillbillies", provides detailed Web-based information on preparedness and emergency events, and publishes informational brochures and maps.

It includes social media tools like Facebook and Twitter. We have the largest emergency management Facebook following amongst the 36 States that have a Facebook page. We have the fifth-largest following on Twitter.

Recently we have rolled out an iTunes application for Get a Game Plan which can be downloaded to your cell phone.

Last year, Get a Game Plan partnered with WalMart pharmacies to distribute a hurricane preparedness checklist with each prescription it filled, more than 600,000 prescriptions.

To engage the private sector, we have established the Louisiana Business Emergency Operations Center. It includes representation from several of DHS' 18 critical infrastructure key resource sectors and supports the State's Emergency Operations Center. It has the

ability to quickly access resources of the private sector to more efficiently support response and recovery needs during an emergency.

Louisiana is also developing a comprehensive leadership and training certification program for emergency management and homeland security professionals and political leadership, the Louisiana Command College. The training will result in the establishment of standardized best practice emergency managers, knowledgeable political leadership, and a resilient private sector which understands the need for preparedness and its role in the response and recovery process.

Louisiana has built three type-3 US&R teams, each of which has been modeled in accordance with FEMA guidelines. Recently, the Louisiana USAR teams were deployed to Tuscaloosa, Alabama to assist in the aftermath of that devastating tornado.

A 57-percent cut in Homeland Security funding includes the total elimination of urban area security initiatives for the New Orleans and Baton Rouge areas. We fear this cut will completely expose the underbelly of this Nation in that it ignores the interdependencies of the national economy which flows through Louisiana.

PREPARED STATEMENT

Louisiana emergency management practices are constantly tested, and we are, in fact, a living laboratory that is constantly identifying improved emergency management practices. We would argue that this warrants strategic investment of Federal dollars to leverage this living laboratory. The end result of these investments, as illustrated by the practice outlined above, are in fact best practices that can be rapidly shared across the Nation resulting in a more resilient Nation. Remember, every disaster is local and the resources should be focused to increase the effectiveness of the local emergency manager and first responder.

Thank you very much.
[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARK S. RILEY

INTRODUCTION

It is an axiom of emergency management that every disaster is local. As local as every disaster is, the effects of a disastrous event are often national in scope. During Hurricane Gustav in 2008 the Governor of Maine contacted the Governor of Louisiana wanting to know if Maine's gas prices were going to increase because of a disruption in the refining and distribution of gasoline in the State of Louisiana, as occurred during Hurricane Katrina in 2005. During the recent flooding events along the Mississippi River there was fear that river traffic would be halted with a multi-billion-dollar effect to commerce. For example, 40 percent of all fertilizer used in the Midwest farm belt flows through the Port of New Orleans. The response to this axiomatic problem is an emergency management process that thoroughly integrates all levels of government and the private sector to support the "local" emergency management process. For this to be effective we must build and maintain a robust and resilient emergency management capability at the local level.

For those in the emergency management business, this is not a novel concept. On March 30, 2011, Presidential Policy Directive-8 (PPD-8), National Preparedness, was published and it recognizes this concept in the statement "Our national preparedness is the shared responsibility of all levels of government, the private and nonprofit sectors, and the individual citizens." In PPD-8, the President directs the development of a national preparedness system which shall include "resource guidance", and shall provide "equipment guidance aimed at nationwide interoperability; . . . national training and exercise programs . . . and guidance to support preparedness planning for businesses, communities, families, and individuals".

What is confusing is that at the same time this guidance is published, we are notified of a significant cut to the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP), which is a key resource for State and local governments to develop the type of resilience that is envisioned in PPD-8.

On behalf of the State of Louisiana, I would like to thank this subcommittee for the opportunity to discuss initiatives we have taken over the last several years, many of which have been identified in the emergency management community as best practice, and the anticipated disastrous effects the HSGP cuts are going to have on Louisiana's ability to continue these initiatives.

Louisiana is in fact a laboratory for emergency management. Since FEMA started keeping statistics in 1953, Louisiana ranks sixth amongst the States in declared Stafford Act type events. In recent years, this includes Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 (combined, more than four times larger than the next largest disaster in U.S. history), followed by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008 (direct impact to public infrastructure of more than \$1 billion), followed by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010 (although not a Stafford Act event—the largest oil spill in U.S. history spilling 205.8 million gallons of crude oil just 48 miles from Louisiana's coastline with severe economic impact to oil production and the fisheries industry), and most recently, the record level flooding of the Mississippi River (flooding 1,482 homes, camps, and business in Louisiana alone to date; placing almost 3 million sandbags and 9 miles of HESCO bastions). This count does not include the myriad of other emergency events that are significant at a local level that include scenarios like tornadoes, water shortages, wildfires, hazardous cargo spills, oil well fires, winter weather storms, flooding, and the like. As not all these events require a Federal response, not all have required a State response because of the preparedness of the local government. At the State level, Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) has responded to more than 130 emergency events in the last 3 years, 44 of which have activated the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for a total of 519 days during that period. With this experience Louisiana has become a living laboratory for disaster innovation which has given rise to several key innovations since our experiences in Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. The below will discuss actions Louisiana has taken to enhance the emergency management process in the State and highlight innovations we have implemented.

STATUTORY INITIATIVES

Louisiana amended its Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act in 2006 to re-organize the principle State agency responsible for emergency management (GOHSEP) and have that agency report directly to the Governor. Each Parish is required to have an equivalent office and it is a primary function of GOHSEP to support the activities of the Parish emergency management office. As discussed below, 80 percent of HSGP dollars are distributed to the Parishes to support activities of those emergency management agencies and local law enforcement. Without these resources it will be very difficult for local governmental entities to continue the planning, preparedness and response activities necessary to maintain capability at the local level given their limited resources and the high risk for emergencies such as Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike in 2005 and 2008, last year's Deepwater Horizon oil spill, and the recent flooding event along the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers.

Recognizing the importance of communications and interoperability, in 2008 the Legislature amended the Homeland Security Act and created the Office of Interoperability within GOHSEP. The stated legislative intent was to create solutions for a secure and interoperable communications system accessible to public safety agencies and personnel, first responders, decisionmakers, and the public, allowing for clear and efficient exchange of voice, data, image, and video information for emergency management purposes. Again, this effort, as discussed below, depends heavily on the HSGP for implementation.

During Hurricane Gustav in 2008, Louisiana conducted the largest single evacuation in U.S. history, evacuating more than 1.9 million people from coastal Louisiana prior to landfall of the storm. At a cost of more than \$100 million of Federal and State funding, some 25,000 people were sheltered out-of-State. This experience brought home the inherent disruptive nature of sheltering citizens in other States and the difficulty of rapidly bringing a community back when its citizens are gone. By Act 353 of the 2009 legislative session, the State Legislature declared its intent that Louisiana shall become "shelter independent" by the year 2014. We have targeted two goals to achieve this independence. One, encourage parishes to clearly identify sheltering requirements, especially for those categorized as "critical trans-

portation needs” individuals (CTNs). In this endeavor we have encouraged parishes to create point-to-point agreements with other parishes that are likely not going to be greatly impacted by the most common weather disaster (hurricanes/flooding). Second, the State has identified the need to be able to provide up to 50,000 CTN shelter spaces and is working to identify suitable State facilities for that purpose. The State has appropriated \$7.5 million to develop and upgrade facilities to meet sheltering standards. We have requested FEMA to allow the use of Stafford Act Hazard Mitigation funding for the development of multi-use facilities that can be used for sheltering in an emergency. The logic is that the use of available Hazard Mitigation funds to provide for long-term shelter needs will be a logical and efficient expenditure of Federal dollars and save the Federal Government millions of dollars in future Hurricane Gustav-type events.

We anticipate that the decrease in HSGP grant dollars will impact our ability to support in-parish or in-State evacuation and sheltering plans. Additionally, many of our host States rely on Federal preparedness grant dollars (SHSP, EMPG, and HM) to support planning, preparedness, and mitigation efforts to support evacuees who may be sheltered in their State.

Recognizing the success of the support between States provided by the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) process, Act 1035 of the 2010 legislative session provides for the establishment of an Intrastate Mutual Aid Compact (IMAC) within the State of Louisiana. We have recognized that too often States default to FEMA and other Federal agencies to source requirements, and this is logically more expensive to a response than sourcing locally. The IMAC process will provide an organized and deliberate method to ensure that resources within the State are used effectively and efficiently before requesting other States or Federal agencies for those same resources.

INTEROPERABILITY

During Hurricane Katrina there were multiple disparate systems at the local and State level that failed causing a significant failure in communications greatly hampered the emergency response. While the State was able to bring up the existing analog system fairly quickly, the system was never designed for the amount of users that had to depend on it as a lifeline to coordinate operations. As a result there was considerable congestion and busy signals, impeding operations throughout the immediate period following Katrina landfall. Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, State, and local officials came together to focus on a single statewide system that all emergency response officials could use. This system was the first statewide system based on the recently released 700 MHz spectrum and replaced the State’s existing analog system with a Project 25-compliant digital system. Using \$29 million in Federal recovery dollars, the system was initially designed to encompass the Greater New Orleans area. However, by leveraging approximately \$40 million of Federal grant funding from multiple sources, to include HSGP funding, as well as \$30 million of State funding, the State was able to build what is now the largest statewide radio system in the country which provides daily voice communications to more than 60,000 users at the Federal, State, local, and nonprofit levels. Of these users, more than 70 percent are from local jurisdictions. The system, called the Louisiana Wireless Information Network (LWIN), is fully maintained by the State, at a cost of \$9 million annually, and charges no fees to its users. LWIN was put to the test during Hurricane Gustav and the use of the system greatly facilitated the evacuation of 1.9 million people, the largest single evacuation in U.S. history. Pivotal to the success of this evacuation was the ability to achieve multijurisdictional and multiagency coordination through a single shared radio system. During the 10-day operational period of Hurricane Gustav, LWIN supported more than 1.2 million push to talk communications with less than 500 busies.

LWIN was also leveraged during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill by serving as the backbone to link six other systems along the gulf coast which allowed the United States Coast Guard and other responders to have seamless interoperable communications from Galveston, Texas to Pensacola, Florida.

LWIN, when completed in September 2011, will provide 95 percent portable on street radio coverage throughout the State through 118 individual sites. LWIN is also providing 95 percent in-building coverage to the nine largest metropolitan areas in the State. In calendar year 2010, there were more than 95 million push-to-talk communications which utilized more than 114,000 hours on LWIN. Out of the 95 million push-to-talks, users only experienced 16,446 busy signals or “busies”. Today, LWIN is experiencing a major capacity expansion that should eliminate virtually all busies and allow sufficient capacity to continue expanding and adding new users over the next 10 years.

While the State has achieved great success in voice interoperability, the State is now embarking on compiling data that can be used to establish data interoperability through a common operating picture that is accessible to Federal, State, and local users. Virtual Louisiana is a Google Earth Enterprise platform that provides secure access to the first-responder population throughout the State. GOHSEP is currently in the process of geocoding all infrastructure facilities throughout the State through the use of Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding. The Geospatial Project in the first 8 months of implementation has allowed GOHSEP to map out 25 percent of the State's infrastructure and has seen more than 20,000 facilities mapped. Each facility has been mapped, photographed, and has associated attribute data based on the critical infrastructure/key resource layers identified by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Louisiana has, for the first time, photographed the entire State using 6" high-resolution imagery, and the dated layers created by the Geospatial Project can be overlaid on this imagery for high-resolution viewing. Both the imagery and the data are available to the first-responder community through Virtual Louisiana. Upon the completion of this project, Louisiana will have the most extensive GIS database in the country.

INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

As important as the interoperability activity discussed above, is the ability to provide good planning information to the general public before a disaster and the ability to quickly communicate at the individual level during a disaster. GOHSEP has worked extensively to encourage Louisiana citizens to have their own family plan. Beginning in 2008 GOHSEP initiated the Get a Game Plan campaign which encourages self-reliance and preparedness. A major effort of this initiative has been the Public Service Announcements (PSA) that have been aired throughout the State with high profiled individuals such as Governor Bobby Jindal, LSU football coach Les Miles, the band Better Than Ezra, and football players from the world champion New Orleans Saints creating messages encouraging our citizens to be prepared for any type of disaster by having a personal family plan. This year we have added two new components to the campaign. The first is the Get a Critter Plan which encourages our citizens to have a plan for their animals during disasters. Donna Douglas, a Louisiana native who starred on the long-running comedy hit "The Beverly Hillbillies" as Ellie Mae Clampett, has become our ambassador for this initiative and has appeared in a PSA to promote pet preparedness. The other new component introduced this year is the Get a Game Plan App which is now available to download to a cell phone through iTunes. The Get a Game Plan App contains all the content on the Get a Game Plan Web site, to include checklists, evacuation maps, and links to other State and private partners who provide information to the public during disasters. The intent is to provide information that encourages family and personal preparedness to lessen the effects of a disaster and create resiliency. As an example of the "whole community" approach to preparedness and response promoted by FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, GOHSEP has also engaged in public, private, and nonprofit partnerships for the Get A Game Plan Campaign including projects with Walmart, Red Cross, and the United Way. GOHSEP utilized all of the Walmart pharmacies in coastal Louisiana, at no cost to the State, to distribute hurricane checklists and information about our Web site with each prescription that was filled at a pharmacy. As a result, more than 600,000 prescriptions included information on how to prepare for the hurricane season and contact information on our all encompassing Web site. The Red Cross and the United Way continue to help fund our hurricane evacuation guides that are made available to residents from coastal hurricane impacted parishes.

GOHSEP has been very proactive in the area of social media and was an early adopter of Facebook and Twitter to leverage our ability to communicate to the citizens of Louisiana.

Louisiana has the largest amount of "likes" (followers) of any of the 36 States that have official Facebook pages. We have recently identified more than 11,015 followers. The second-highest total is for the State of Mississippi which has 5,759, followed by Alabama with 4,371. There are only nine States that have more than 2,500 followers with the average number of followers being 1,638.

Likewise our use of Twitter has been very successful. We have the fifth-largest following of the 36 States that have official Twitter accounts, at 4,196. There are only 11 States with 2,500 or more followers and the average account for the States is 2,067. During the Deepwater Horizon oil spill GOHSEP's Twitter account was considered one of the most influential Twitter accounts as determined by a Klout score of 79 out of 100.

PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVES

As FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate will tell you, ordinarily the private sector is a missing team member at the table when involved in the planning or response to an emergency event. That lesson was brought home to Louisiana during Hurricane Gustav. We planned on the availability of Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) to provide food for shelters and to distribute to those without power. Because of the size of the event, the FEMA logistics pipeline for MREs hit a snag. Concerned about providing affected individuals with food, the Louisiana Division of Administration turned to the Louisiana Restaurant Association to determine what capacity they might provide. For the next several days, the restaurant industry activated mobile kitchens that provided more than 500,000 hot meals to needy individuals. The surprise came after the event when we calculated the cost. The private sector provided hot meals for less than \$6 a meal, compared to the cold meals we would have acquired from FEMA at a cost of more than \$9 a meal. Louisiana realized it had to bring the private sector (literally) to the table.

In response, the Louisiana Business Emergency Operations Center (LA BEOC) was established through a partnership among the Louisiana Economic Development Agency, GOHSEP, Louisiana State University's Stephenson Disaster Management Institute (LSU SDMI) and the National Incident Management Systems and Advanced Technologies Institute at University of Louisiana at Lafayette (NIMSAT). The LA BEOC is both a physical and virtual structure which houses key representatives from the business community and volunteer organizations, such as Volunteers Active in Disasters, along with government counterparts from GOHSEP and LED. The LA BEOC facility, which is interconnected to the State EOC, is housed on the LSU South Campus in Baton Rouge and seats up to 40 business leaders, industry trade associations, and organizations across several of the DHS-identified 18 critical infrastructure/key resource sectors. When activated, the LA BEOC supports the State's Emergency Operations Center and its representatives make recommendations to LED, GOHSEP, and the Unified Command Group from the private sector perspective. It has the ability to quickly access resources of the private sector to support response and recovery needs during an emergency event. It also assists in coordinating volunteer and nonprofit needs during a disaster with donations made by private industry. It provides political leadership important information about the economic impact of a disaster to businesses, which information is important to identify recovery needs. This innovative government-industry-university collaboration provides the State numerous advantages including efficient and economical access to needed response and recovery resources, enhanced resilience of businesses and the critical infrastructures that support their supply chains; rapid recovery of the business community to facilitate the rapid recovery of the community—all resulting on less reliance on Federal and out-of-State resources.

The LA BEOC was activated in response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and the current Mississippi River flood fight to provide economic impact analysis and manage the many offers, vendor proposals, and response suggestions being received from the active private sector. Additionally, the LA BEOC assisted in the creation of technical interfaces with Deepwater Horizon, along with the coordination of a scientific review panel to review proposed technical solutions. The LA BEOC has been recognized by FEMA as a model for the public private partnership. During the Mississippi River Flood Fight the LA BEOC WebPortal provided an exchange of information between the emergency management community and the private sector. More than 1,200 businesses have registered with the LA BEOC to receive situational awareness reports and respond to resource requests. The development of the LA BEOC concept and its continued implementation has been supported by both SHSP and EMPG grant funds. Decreased grant funds will severely impact Louisiana's ability to continue this innovative project.

To support the resilience of the private sector, GOHSEP and the LSU SDMI will soon announce the Louisiana Pilot for an International Center for Small Business Preparedness and Resiliency in order to promote a cultural shift in the understanding and promotion of small business preparedness. Currently, the field of preparedness research lacks the baseline metrics and business benchmarks needed to promote the values and business case of preparedness to small businesses. LSU SDMI will engage researchers, agencies, trade associations, chambers of commerce, existing service providers, and delivery networks across the Nation to promote programs focused on small business preparedness and disasters. This initiative will integrate identified best practices of preparedness, and the results of economic impact studies, surveys, and focus groups will form the content for mitigation and preparedness practices to be used by small businesses. A high level summit was convened in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, this year with DHS, FEMA, and other major

stakeholders, which identified four areas around which to develop an actionable framework, as follows:

- research and a clearinghouse for coordination;
- messaging and marketing activities;
- communications and message delivery; and
- the development of a business justification for small business preparedness.

One of the outcomes from this endeavor is the current development by GOHSEP of a iTunes downloadable business application similar to the individual application for Get A Game Plan that was released this hurricane season. The development of both the individual and business application is being funded by Homeland Security grant funding.

COMMAND COLLEGE

As stated earlier, every disaster is local. Thus local emergency managers and first responders must be well-trained professionals and clearly understand the process and terminology of sound emergency management practices. GOHSEP and LSU SDMI have partnered to provide a comprehensive leadership and training certification program for emergency management and homeland security professionals—the Louisiana Command College. The Command College is currently focused on delivering quality training to meet the needs of local and State-level emergency management personnel, to include State and parish executive leadership, and the private sector and nonprofit organizations. The training will result in the establishment of standardized, best practice emergency management practices, knowledgeable political leadership who would not otherwise have an opportunity to be exposed to emergency management concepts, and a resilient private sector which understands the need for preparedness and its role in the response and recovery process. The goal of the Command College is to evolve into a regional certification institute around which the Federal, State, local, and private sector team can coalesce.

URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE

In response to the aforementioned disasters that have affected Louisiana and the gulf coast region, Louisiana has invested in a comprehensive equipment cache and a robust training matrix that currently supports the State urban search and rescue (US&R) task force. Louisiana has built three core teams in the New Orleans area, Baton Rouge area, and the Shreveport/Bossier area, and has six additional State regional teams capable of making up a FEMA-type I US&R team. Each Louisiana task force has been modeled in accordance with FEMA guidelines and is capable of supporting the national US&R response system. Moreover, Louisiana's central geographic location is ideal to support the gulf coast region where a gap in coverage currently exists.

Since 2005, Louisiana has experienced four major hurricanes related federally declared disasters and across the Gulf Coast States during that time period there have been more than 68 declared emergency events in which US&R capabilities could have been critical. These events required the deployment of US&R teams from as far away as California to assist in search and rescue activities. Given the frequency of these presidentially declared disasters in the gulf coast region requiring the deployment of FEMA national US&R teams, our task force in Louisiana proves to be a highly effective resource for the citizens of our Nation by lowering the cost of deployment and providing coverage to an area that statistically requires US&R response all while reducing the time of response to an incident.

Most recently, the Louisiana US&R teams deployed to Alabama based on an EMAC request to assist in Tuscaloosa Tornado Incident. This was far more cost-effective than a request through FEMA for a FEMA national US&R team. The removal of grant funding to this program will cut needed training and exercises that threatens the safety of the responders and the welfare of the public.

HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING

DHS recently notified the State of Louisiana, through GOHSEP, that Louisiana is losing homeland security program funding. The loss of funding to Louisiana will directly impact the National Preparedness System intended to protect this Nation, as outlined in PPD-8.

The Department sent notice that GOHSEP will receive \$17.8 million less in Federal grant funding than last fiscal year, a cut of 57 percent. The notice was part of a larger budget cut that randomly eliminated \$780 million in Homeland Security funding to the States for fiscal year 2011. Funds from the fiscal year 2011 grants were expected to be received in August 2011.

As stated, the cut will have significant impact on Louisiana's local governments and drastically impact the innovative programs discussed above. More than 80 percent of the Federal Homeland Security grant funding that the GOHSEP receives is passed down to local governments to build and enhance national preparedness capability.

New Orleans and Baton Rouge were also determined by DHS to be a low risk of attack and were among 33 cities across the country to arbitrarily lose their urban area security initiative (UASI) grant funding. DHS will continue to fund 31 cities this year. The fiscal year 2011 UASI grant allocated 82 percent of funding to the 11 tier-one cities, 18 percent to another 20 cities prioritized by size and risk, and eliminated all other cities from the program. This formula completely exposes the underbelly of this Nation. The interdependencies of the national economy flow through Louisiana and the regions that have been discarded as low risk of attack.

Last year, the New Orleans UASI region, comprised of Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard parishes received \$5.4 million in Federal funding and the Baton Rouge UASI region, comprised of East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Pointe Coupee, East Feliciana, West Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, and Ascension parishes received \$2.9 million.

UASI funding is awarded to cities to address the unique planning, organization, equipment, training, and exercise needs of high-threat, high-density urban areas, and assists them in building an enhanced and sustainable capacity to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism. GOHSEP is required to ensure that 25 percent of the total award is dedicated to law enforcement terrorism prevention activities.

Louisiana no longer has any UASI regions or funding to provide a continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking corrective action in an effort to ensure effective coordination during incident response as defined by the National Incident Management System (NIMS). This preparedness cycle is one element of a broader National Preparedness System intended to prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other manmade disasters throughout the Nation.

GOHSEP has used the majority of the States portion of the UASI funding to support the Louisiana Wireless Interoperability Network within the regions and the New Orleans and Baton Rouge US&R task force program. Both investments directly support local government and their regions. Other investments include the hardening of security sites, security assessment initiatives and the creation of a regional fusion center in New Orleans. UASI funding has sustained core all-hazard capabilities within these two geographic areas. Our approach to emergency management and homeland security is based on an all-hazard approach. Thus, significant cuts to these grants impact the local jurisdiction's ability to prepare and respond to a variety of incidents.

Two other Federal grant programs, the Buffer Zone Protection Plan (BZPP) grant, and the Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program (IECGP) were completely eliminated in Louisiana. Last year, Louisiana received \$1.4 million in BZPP funding that went directly to local law enforcement to protect the States critical infrastructure and \$945,500 in IECGP funding to improve interoperable emergency communications, to include communications in collective response to natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other manmade disasters.

Louisiana received a 12.3 percent cut to the \$1.1 million Metropolitan Medical Response System Program grant and a 19.6 percent cut to the \$161,434 Citizen Corps Program grant.

Louisiana has only been awarded \$6.9 million from the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) funding, a 50-percent cut from last year's award. Again, the cut will have significant impact on local government homeland security initiatives. The GOHSEP awards 80 percent of the total award directly to local governments and just like the UASI award is required to ensure that 25 percent of the total award is dedicated to law enforcement terrorism prevention activities.

GOHSEP has used this funding to support SHSPs, equipment, planning, training, exercises, and other innovative initiatives, as discussed above. The SHSP funding allows GOHSEP to proactively support and protect the States critical infrastructure and fund Homeland Security stakeholders to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism and other catastrophic events.

Programs at risk of being completely or partially cut include:

- planning, training, exercise, and management personnel;
- Command College (Louisiana's training and exercise program);
- three urban search-and-rescue teams;
- Louisiana State Analytical and Fusion Exchange (Fusion Center) in Baton Rouge;

- Louisiana’s Cyber Assurance and Defense Center;
- Louisiana Wireless Interoperability Network;
- State and local interoperable communications;
- Virtual Louisiana;
- Get-A-Game Plan;
- See Something Say Something;
- LA agro-terrorism and assessment teams;
- Louisiana Business Emergency Operation Center (public/private partnership);
- maritime special response team;
- swift water rescue team;
- hazmat and radiological response;
- terrorism rapid response teams;
- critical infrastructure assessment team;
- public health and medical services;
- Citizen Corps;
- the hardening of critical infrastructure; and
- intelligence and information-sharing initiatives.

In addition to local government, the GOHSEP has awarded Homeland Security grant funding to numerous stakeholders in support of the State’s homeland security initiatives. Those agencies include:

- Louisiana State Police;
- Attorney General’s Office;
- Department of Wildlife and Fisheries;
- Department of Agriculture;
- State Fire Marshal;
- Louisiana State University;
- University of Louisiana—Lafayette;
- Secretary of State;
- House of Representatives;
- Senate;
- Louisiana Sheriffs’ Association;
- Louisiana Chiefs of Police Association;
- Louisiana National Guard;
- Division of Administration; and
- the Cyber Innovation Center.

CLOSING COMMENTS

All of the initiatives discussed above, many of which are considered nationwide best practices, would not have been made possible without the funding provided through the HSGP. Reduced funding and, in the case of UASI, BZPP and the IECGP, eliminated funding, will greatly impede our ability to not only maintain what we have been able to accomplish, but significantly curtail if not eliminate our ability to continue moving forward as we strive to provide our emergency management community with the resources necessary to ensure they are able to respond to manmade and natural disasters as well as communicate to our citizens as a whole as we encourage them to be self-reliant, which ultimately allows us to focus our efforts on those within our communities that truly need assistance.

Louisiana exercises and activates so often that our systems are constantly tested and there is a natural continuous improvement methodology embedded into our State emergency management practice. We would argue that this warrants strategic investment of Federal funds into these and other innovative programs to leverage the “living laboratory” and those practices earned and learned during large scale activations.

By tasking Louisiana as well as other critical resource risk States with these challenges (like evolving and expanding the interoperability, citizen preparedness, education for emergency managers, the LA BEOC and Global Small Business Preparedness Center), these battle-tested innovations and outcomes can be shared quickly and broadly back out to the national community of emergency managers as best practice. These programs not only reduce loss of life and suffering but also engage individuals and the local private sector in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery; which in turn reduces Federal costs for FEMA and other responding Federal agencies, reduces critical interruptions to local economic activities and the tax bases, and establishes a resilient Nation. Remember, every disaster is local and resources should be focused to increase the effectiveness of the local emergency manager and first responder.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you very much.

Mr. Vice.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID VICE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INTEGRATED
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION, STATE OF INDIANA**

Mr. VICE. Good afternoon, Madam Chair Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats, and Vice Chair Cochran. It is a great honor to appear before you today to present information about the importance of interoperable communications and what we have done in Indiana to address those issues.

My testimony today will provide you with a brief description of the state of interoperable communications in Indiana, three reasons for our success, and a short summary of what we view to be critical issues that will directly impact first-responder safety in the near future.

Project Hoosier SAFE-T, as it is known, is an 800-megahertz trunked voice and data communications system which provides both day-to-day and mission-critical interoperability for nearly 60,000 Indiana local, State, and Federal first responders and public safety officials. The State fully funded the system build-out and the implementation and funds the continued operation and maintenance costs. Participation in Project Hoosier SAFE-T is voluntary and agencies pay no access or monthly user fees. To date, as I said, nearly 60,000 radio IDs from all 92 counties are programmed into the SAFE-T database.

The story of how Indiana got to this level of interoperability can be summarized into three concepts: one, a visionary and inclusive planning process; two, a pragmatic balance between technology and financial reality; and three, timing.

The IPSC is made up of 12 members representing fire departments, emergency management agencies, emergency medical service providers, police departments, elected officials, and other public safety disciplines. The input of practitioners at all levels and disciplines, teamed with a governance board composed of members from these groups, resulted in a plan for an interoperable communications system that truly reflected the needs of those people who are using it.

As it turns out, we have been a victim of our own success. The flexibility, cost savings, and ultimate performance of the system have attracted new agency users in unforeseen numbers. In the year 2000, Indiana had a visionary user-driven plan for interoperable communications in place, but frankly, progress was slow. A lack of dedicated funding translated to an ever-changing construction schedule.

Then during the morning hours of September 11, 2001, as we all know, the inability to communicate was cited as a major reason so many firefighters lost their lives that tragic day. Interoperability became the buzzword for successful response.

As a result, two massive financial shifts occurred in Indiana.

First, the Indiana General Assembly passed the Enrolled Act 1001 which dedicated a portion of existing Bureau of Motor Vehicle fees to help fund the SAFE-T build-out. This guaranteed revenue stream allowed IPSC to proceed with site construction and implementation across the State.

Second, the Federal Government established DHS and funded new Federal grants that addressed the lack of interoperable communications.

We have a great working relationship with FEMA and the DHS Federal partners, especially with OEC. At times, I will admit that the requirements seem a little onerous, but the result of many of the requirements is undeniable. For example, the process of creating our Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) was difficult but allowed for us to refocus our efforts and identify the gaps that needed attention.

We have continued our emphasis on local involvement by holding an annual Indiana interoperable communications conference. The Statewide Interoperable Executive Committee, formerly known as the IPSC Policy Subcommittee, was reorganized to include a member from each of the 10 Indiana Department of Homeland Security districts.

As we all know, technology is developing at a rapid pace. It is impossible to predict and thus plan for the future. One result of changing technology and proprietary systems is that many States are now having to address system limitations or end-of-life issues. Because of the success of the SAFE-T network, we are now at system capacity. The process of migrating to a fully P25-compliant system, which will double our system capacity, is not inexpensive.

PREPARED STATEMENT

On behalf of the staff of IPSC and Indiana's first responders, I would like to thank you for allowing me to address you today.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID VICE

INTRODUCTION

Good morning, Chairwoman Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am David Vice, and I am the executive director of Indiana's Integrated Public Safety Commission (IPSC).

It is a great honor to appear before you today to present information about the importance of interoperable communications, and what we have done in Indiana to address the issue.

While I am new to my role as executive director of IPSC, I have worked for the agency since 2002. I feel quite fortunate to have been involved "from the ground up" in the project that has made Indiana a national best practice in the interoperable communications arena.

My testimony today will provide you with a brief description of the state of interoperable communications in Indiana, three reasons for our success, and a short summary of what we view to be critical issues that will directly impact first-responder safety in the near future.

INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS IN INDIANA—"SAVING MONEY, SAVING LIVES"

Project Hoosier SAFE-T, completed summer 2007, is an 800 MHz trunked voice and data communications system which provides both day-to-day and mission critical interoperability for nearly 60,000 Indiana local, State, and Federal first responders and public safety officials. SAFE-T supports both analog and digital radios, and provides greater than 95 percent mobile and portable radio coverage statewide using 139 communications sites throughout Indiana.

The State fully funded the system build-out and implementation and provides continued operation and maintenance costs. User agencies purchase their mobile and portable radios and dispatch consoles along with mobile radio modems and laptops for access to the mobile data system. Agencies retain significant autonomy with regard to use the system, structure/sharing of talkgroups and interoperable communications planning at the local and regional levels.

Participation in Project Hoosier SAFE-T is voluntary and agencies pay no access or monthly user fees.

The statewide goal—to make interoperable communications affordable and available for every community—has exceeded all expectations. To date, nearly 60,000 radio IDs from all 92 Indiana counties are programmed into the SAFE-T system database. These numbers include first responders and public safety professionals from 320 local and county law enforcement agencies; 439 fire departments; 72 Emergency Medical System (EMS) providers; 19 State agencies; 41 school districts; 88 hospitals; 29 universities/colleges; and four Federal agencies.

The story of how Indiana got to this level of interoperability can be summarized into three concepts:

- a visionary and inclusive planning process;
- a pragmatic balance between technology and financial reality; and
- timing.

A VISIONARY AND INCLUSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

Back in the late 1990s, responding to requests from Indiana State Police officials, State legislators established a commission to address the severe deficiency in public safety communications. Their primary goal was to transition to a statewide, all-agency inclusive, communication system. During the months that followed, the State-coordinated several focus groups, held four regional meetings, and conducted three Governor's summits to engage public safety professionals in the discussion about the benefits of shared resources. Hundreds and hundreds of stakeholders at all levels participated in this process.

Based on these discussions, the State issued an RFP in 1999 and selected a vendor—Motorola—from the eight proposals submitted. Also that year, the Indiana General Assembly created IPSC to coordinate the project and to coordinate other multi-agency public safety issues. The IPSC is made up of 12 members representing fire departments, emergency management agencies, emergency medical service providers, police departments, elected officials, and other public safety disciplines.

In January 2000, nearly 500 public safety professionals and local first responders attended the third Governor's summit to discuss what was now known as Project Hoosier SAFE-T and the benefits of shared interagency communications.

The input of practitioners at all levels and disciplines, teamed with a governance board composed of members from these groups, resulted in a plan for an interoperable communications system that truly reflected the needs of those who would be using it.

BALANCING TECHNOLOGY WITH FINANCIAL REALITY

I'll say it up front—we Hoosiers are proud of our frugal reputation. Some people call us cheap, we prefer to define ourselves as pragmatic. This characteristic was definitely present as we were making our decision about which communications technology to adopt more than a decade ago.

Back then, we had the choice to go “bleeding edge” with a fully P25-compliant system. It was tempting—everyone likes to be viewed as progressive. The reality, however, was that communications in Indiana consisted of a variety of technologies and that many local agencies would be unwilling or unable to migrate to a new system. We also could have chosen to implement a fully compliant P25 system on a more limited scale, say for State agencies only. Our goal, however, was to cast as wide of a net as possible.

This goal led us to choose a phase II P25-compliant 800 Mhz platform. Our strategic direction was to facilitate and encourage as many public safety entities as possible to participate in the statewide 800 MHz SAFE-T system, while allowing for the greatest flexibility for users of other technologies. IPSC established interoperable communication talkgroups, enabled for the least-capable radio affiliating with SAFE-T. Support for non-SAFE-T users was supported through the use of radio caches, gateways, and “patching” technologies.

As it turns out, we have been a victim of our own success. The flexibility, cost savings, and ultimate performance of the system has attracted new agency users in unforeseen numbers, a success story for sure, but one that has consequences that I'll briefly address later in my testimony.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Looking back again, as the new millennium begin in the year 2000, Indiana had visionary, user-driven plan for interoperable communications in place. The State legislature had created IPSC, a 12-member, bipartisan group representing the diverse range of public safety stakeholders across the State. This governance group,

which met quarterly, using a creative combination of Federal grants and partnerships with State and local agencies, construction on a handful of sites for Project Hoosier SAFE-T had begun.

But frankly, progress was slow. A lack of dedicated funding translated to an ever-changing construction schedule. The financial incentive of a State-funded system with no user or access fees was great, but local agencies still had trouble coming up with the dollars needed to replace legacy VHF and UHF radios. And despite the locally driven plan, first responders out in the field had doubts that the statewide system would ever be completed, dampening enthusiasm for joining the system.

Even though the strong foundation was set, it appeared that progress would be slower than anyone wanted or anticipated.

And then, during the morning hours of September 11, 2001, terrorists attacked the United States. As we all know, the inability to communicate was cited as a major reason so many firefighters lost their lives that tragic day.

Suddenly, interoperability became the buzzword for successful response. As a result, two massive financial shifts occurred here in Indiana. First, the Indiana General Assembly passed House Enrolled Act 1001, which dedicated a portion of existing BMV fees to help fund the SAFE-T buildout. This guaranteed revenue stream (approximately \$13 million annually) allowed IPSC to proceed with site construction and implementation across the State.

Second, the Federal Government established the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and funded new Federal grants that address the lack of interoperable communications. Many local agencies benefited greatly from these grants, allowing them to upgrade user communications equipment. Ensuing disasters such as Hurricane Katrina kept the critical need for interoperable communications at the top of the funding priority list.

While one can never say that these tragedies were “good” for Indiana, they certainly had a profound influence on the state of public safety as we know it today.

WHY IT KEEPS WORKING

IPSC’s locally driven foundation, pragmatic approach to interoperable technology, and the timing of the 9–11 terrorist attacks are the three largest reasons for Indiana’s interoperable communications success, but several factors continue to influence the success of the system.

I’m proud to stand before you and say that it has been a truly bipartisan effort in Indiana. Both parties recognized the urgency of the issue, and both parties were a part of the solution. To my knowledge, no one at the local, State, or national level has ever made claim to “owning” the issue or taken credit for the success of our efforts.

We have a great working relationship with our FEMA and DHS Federal partners, especially with the Office of Emergency Communication. At times, I’ll admit that the requirements seem a little onerous, especially since we are such a small agency, but the result of many of the requirements are undeniable. For example, the process of creating our Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) was difficult, but it allowed us to refocus our efforts and identify the gaps that need attention.

As Director Fugate mentioned in his testimony earlier, DHS’ unified approach to emergency planning and response has yielded measurable results. IPSC was a major player in the NLE 2011 exercise, both as a communications restoration agency, but also in our role as the lead ESF-2 agency. We’re still evaluating our response and assessing internal after action reports, but the exercise was invaluable.

We have continued our emphasis on local involvement. In addition to user groups, we hold an annual Indiana Interoperable Communications Conference, during which several hundred first responders and public safety professionals gather to discuss current and future interoperable communications issues. Additionally, we recently strengthened our governance structure to facilitate the flow of information between local and State agencies. The Statewide Interoperable Executive Committee (SIEC)—formerly the IPSC Policy Subcommittee—was reorganized to include a member from each of the 10 Indiana Department of Homeland Security districts. This change has greatly improved the bi-directional flow of planning, best practices, and policy recommendations between local, regional, and State communications communities.

Based on the reputation and success of the voice system, Indiana is currently moving into next-generation public safety communications:

- integrated public safety data sharing by deploying a statewide multi-agency;
- multijurisdiction police, fire, and EMS computer-aided dispatch (CAD); and
- records management system (RMS).

Implementation of the project is similar to that of the voice system—the State will provide the infrastructure and central server systems; user agencies will own, operate, and manage the daily use of CAD/RMS applications. Deployment and testing is currently occurring in the Indiana State Police dispatch centers across the State. The system will be made available to local agencies in 2012.

ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

I mentioned earlier that I would briefly address some of the looming issues that we face as a State—and I believe as a Nation.

First, as we all know, technology is developing at a rapid pace. Bleeding edge becomes obsolete at the blink of an eye. It's impossible for "normal" civil servants—even the technologically savvy ones—to predict and thus plan for the future. Further complicating the issue is the fact that vendors have been guilty in the past of extreme proprietary tactics. This has improved somewhat in recent years with the implementation of new standards, but I believe even greater emphasis must be placed on changing the old way of doing business. It is our responsibility as civil servants and as elected officials to bring about these changes.

One result of changing technology and proprietary systems is that many States are now having to address system limitation or end of life issues. Because of the success of the SAFE-T network, we are now at system capacity. We have had to put a hold on adding additional agencies to the system id database until we can add capacity. The process of migrating to a fully P25-compliant system—which will double system capacity—is not inexpensive. Fortunately, many of our public officials and budgetary executives in Indiana understand that this is an infrastructure issue—much as roads and bridges are—but this understanding cannot overcome the fact that these are lean economic times. Where will the money come from?

And then, of course, there's the social media conundrum. Weighing the risks and benefits, getting past legal and security issues, and then figuring out how to talk about the issue in a room filled with techno geeks on one side and old-school responders on the other . . . Let's just say it is proving to be a stickier issue than plain language.

CONCLUSION

On behalf of the staff of IPSC and Indiana's first responders, I'd like to thank you for allowing me to address you today. I'd also like to thank you for your past support and commitment toward improving interoperable communications. I look forward to working with you in the future to ensure that we make the most efficient use of all available resources in our shared goal of "Saving Money and Saving Lives".

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you very much.

Mr. Hicks.

STATEMENT OF EDDIE HICKS, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS-USA, PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF MORGAN COUNTY, ALABAMA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Mr. HICKS. Madam Chair Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats, Senator Cochran, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony.

I am Eddie Hicks, the emergency management director for Morgan County in Alabama. I have been a local emergency management director for 31 years. I also serve as president of the U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers, our Nation's largest association of emergency management professionals.

We deeply appreciate the support that this subcommittee has provided to the emergency management community, particularly your support for the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program, the Emergency Management Institute, and also in strengthening FEMA.

Morgan County, which is in north central Alabama, has a population of 160,000. We have a concentration of industries, chemical plants, steel production facilities, an appliance manufacturer, and

even a maker of rockets. Part of my county is within the 10-mile emergency planning zone of Browns Ferry nuclear plant. We have a history of being proactive in preparing with our industrial neighbors that stretches back to the early 1980s.

Morgan County faces hazards including flooding, ice storms, tornadoes, hazardous material incidents, and wildfires.

We utilize a comprehensive planning process, incorporating nearly 50 agencies, disciplines, and interest groups across our community. We are also involved in a radiological emergency preparedness program with the Browns Ferry nuclear plant, and we conduct annual drills with them.

In April, Alabama experienced more than 103 tornadoes, killing 241 of our citizens and destroying or damaging more than 13,000 buildings.

On April 27, my county, Morgan County, was under three separate tornado watches, 20 separate tornado warnings, experienced three tornado touchdowns. One was an EF4. Another was an EF5.

I would like to highlight two good practices that are Federal partners utilized during this response.

In Alabama, FEMA has appointed liaisons to each of the counties affected to enhance the flow of communications and resolve issues. This practice should be continued.

The Army Corps of Engineers initiated Operation Clean Sweep, a program to remove debris from private property that is impacting public safety and health.

One area with the potential for improvement is the timeliness of the availability of post-disaster hazard mitigation grant program funding. Local communities within Alabama have requested that the State and FEMA consider making a significant portion of the anticipated mitigation funding available more quickly instead of the usual 8 months to 1 year. This would allow people to take advantage of protective measures as they are rebuilding.

The Emergency Management Assistance Compact, an agreement between States to provide mutual aid, is not run by FEMA, but there are opportunities to improve the timeliness of FEMA reimbursement associated with it. Slow reimbursements could eventually result in reluctance to lend critical resources under this program.

We appreciate that the subcommittee recognizes that EMPG funding is fundamentally different than the post-9/11 Homeland Security grants. EMPG funding has a history of more than 50 years and has a 50 percent cost share to demonstrate the commitment of State and local governments and requires performance measures. In Alabama, without EMPG support, there would not be full-time emergency managers in every county.

In Morgan County, we conduct an annual full-scale exercise which is designed by EMPG-funded local emergency management staff. Last year's exercise involved working with the Alabama mortuary team in identifying the simulated victims of a simulated tornado. Fortunately, our tornado events of April 27 did not produce fatalities in Morgan County, but the experience gained in the simulation by that team was regretfully utilized in DeKalb County in Alabama.

Another program we are enthusiastic supporters of is the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS). The funding from this program has provided training, exercise, and equipment for responders and hospitals which are invaluable in our tornado outbreaks.

Communications before, during, and after a crisis are critical. During the alert and warning phases and after our tornadoes, we did have communication challenges, but they were overcome by a combination of resources and ingenuity.

PREPARED STATEMENT

In closing, I would like to say that there is a more nimble FEMA on the ground in Alabama.

Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EDDIE HICKS

Chairman Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, I would like to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on this critically important topic.

I am Eddie Hicks, the director of emergency management for Morgan County, Alabama. I serve as the president of the U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA) and while I am providing this statement on their behalf, I also want to describe some of the experiences that my county has had in the recent tornadoes, as well as the experiences of other Alabama counties. I would like to begin by talking a little bit about IAEM followed by some background information about Morgan County. After that, I'd like to move into comments on how the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responding, and how the programs this subcommittee helps to fund are operating in actual disasters and emergencies. I have been a local government emergency manager for 31 years. I also served three terms as president of the Alabama Association of Emergency Managers.

U.S. COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS

IAEM-USA is our Nation's largest association of emergency management professionals, with 5,000 members including emergency managers at the State and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business, and the nonprofit sector. Most of our members are U.S. city and county emergency managers who perform the crucial function of coordinating and integrating the efforts at the local level to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters including terrorist attacks. We deeply appreciate the support this subcommittee has provided to the emergency management community over the past few years, particularly your strong support for the Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG), the Emergency Management Institute (EMI), and for strengthening FEMA.

MORGAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

My jurisdiction is Morgan County which has a population of 160,000. We have a major concentration of industries that includes chemical plants, steel production facilities, an appliance manufacturer and even a rocket manufacturer. Additionally a portion of the county is in the 10-mile emergency planning zone (EPZ) for the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant, one of the largest nuclear power plants in the Nation. The Tennessee River forms the northern border of the county and is a major river transportation corridor. We are served by two railroads and an interstate highway. Morgan County has a history of being pro-active in industrial emergency preparedness as there was an industrial planning group active years before local emergency planning committees (LEPCs) were mandated by the Congress in title III of the Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act (SARA) of 1986.

Morgan County faces a number of different hazards including flooding, ice storms, tornadoes, hazardous materials transportation incidents, and wildfires. While our industrial facilities are good corporate neighbors, we are subject to the vulnerabilities that come along with the assets they provide to our community.

Many things have changed in emergency management from my first involvement with it just more than three decades ago. One example of this is our emergency operations plan. When I was hired in 1979 as the civil defense director of my county, my first assignment was to update the emergency operations plan (EOP). While that plan was a good plan there is little comparison to the comprehensive plans that are standard in today's modern emergency management offices. In Morgan County we augment our all-hazard EOP with special annexes that address specific issues or concerns, examples are:

- mass casualty plans;
- emergency commodity distribution plans; and
- mass medicine distribution plans.

One planning effort that I am especially proud of is our suite of continuity of operations plans. These plans outline the procedures to re-establish the critical functions of government after a disaster would destroy facilities. We have developed these plans for all essential county and municipal offices including all 21 of our volunteer fire departments.

I'd also like to take a moment and describe the comprehensive process and involvement of stakeholders that happens when we make or update our plans. When our current plan was created, we assembled a diverse array of stakeholders including, among others, the Morgan County Sheriff's Department, Police Chiefs from Decatur, Hartsell, Priceville, Sommerville, Trinity, and Faulkville; the Decatur and Hartsell Fire and Rescue departments; the 21 volunteer fire departments within our county; our municipal utilities and a Rural Electric Co-op (REC); various public works departments; the three school systems within our county; and, representatives of the local industrial base. These partners were not only involved in the creation of our EOP, but they are also helping us to review our plan and planning process regarding our response to the recent tornadoes. In addition, we also engage in a Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program (REPP) in conjunction with the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant. We engage in exercises annually with this facility. The exercises are "graded" by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) on an every other year basis. To further our training and expertise we regularly exchange staff during emergency drills with the Farley Nuclear Plant in Houston County in South Alabama.

Our Alabama tornadoes—and those in other States—have made national news and are rewriting the record books. During April 2011, Alabama experienced more than 103 tornado touchdowns including tornadoes with tracks of 132 miles, 122 + miles, 122 miles, 98 miles, 80 miles, and 72 miles. According to the American Red Cross, an estimated 7,300 homes were destroyed and an additional 5,800 received major damage. The death toll for the April 27 tornadoes in Alabama stands at 241. Total debris from all the April storms in Alabama has been estimated at 8,441,970 cubic yards. According to FEMA, more than 4 million cubic yards of debris has been removed as of June 3, 2011. Alabama has a total of 67 counties—and 43 of them have received major disaster declarations. On April 27, Morgan County was under three separate tornado watches, 20 separate tornado warnings, and experienced three tornado touchdowns (one of these was an EF5, and one was an EF4).

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY RESPONSE TO THE ALABAMA TORNADES

Next, I would like to address the issue of FEMA response during the Alabama tornadoes. To do this I asked several of my colleagues in Alabama counties a series of questions.

What has been going well, and what is going better compared to past disasters?

Where is there room for improvement in our interactions with FEMA?

What is going well and what is going better compared to past disasters?

FEMA has responded in a much more efficient way than in past disasters. One thing, in particular, that most of the counties in our area agreed on was how beneficial it was when the counties affected by the tornadoes were assigned a FEMA liaison. This greatly enhanced the flow of information and coordination, especially during the initial response phase. During a discussion with one of the FEMA county liaisons, he said, ". . . the mind set of FEMA has changed over the past few years from preparing to respond 3 days after the disaster to preparing for immediate response in the affected State or 5 days prior to landfall for a hurricane."

I was involved in the response during Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Katrina and the difference between then and now is night and day. Anyone working in response activities in Alabama will quickly realize that there is a true partnership between local, State, and Federal organizations. The much needed resources are being efficiently delivered on time and where they are most needed.

In Huntsville, Madison County, 16,000 residents were registered by FEMA. The disaster recovery centers (DRC) were expanded to include not only FEMA and the Small Business Administration (SBA) but also the Social Security Administration (SSA), the Veteran's Administration (VA), the local builder's association, local real-estate association, the Better Business Bureau (BBB), crisis counseling, faith-based and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) representatives. The FEMA folks were actively engaged in providing one-stop service for the affected families.

FEMA and the Army Corp of Engineers (CoE) have begun to initiate a new program called "Operation Clean Sweep". This program will enable property owners in the worst impacted areas to apply for assistance to remove debris from their private property when it impacts public safety. They must submit a right of entry form to CoE in order to receive this assistance.

Where is there room for improvement in our interactions with FEMA?

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) provides post disaster assistance. The availability of these funds normally takes from 8 months to 1 year after the disaster happens. At the request of local communities, both Alabama and FEMA are trying to coordinate the immediate availability of a significant portion of the anticipated funding. Our recovery from this tornado will be the largest re-building effort Alabama has ever faced. People want to start rebuilding now and may not take protective measures—like in home or community safe rooms—if mitigation funds are not readily available for another year. If this first time "early" funding becomes a reality our citizens can start planning and building back for a safer community now instead of next year. Disaster survivors across our Nation could benefit if this practice were adopted for future disasters.

While the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is not a FEMA-run program, there are FEMA reimbursement issues associated with it. EMAC is the agreement between all 50 States approved by the Congress for mutual aid—and it works well to get the right resources to the right place in time to conduct rescue and response in the impacted area. However, some States have had problems with the reimbursement process. Alabama's counties and cities were able to provide resources to other Gulf States through EMAC within 48 hours and some counties were still not reimbursed after 30 months or longer.

The Madison Fire Heavy Rescue Unit and a team of Madison County sheriff's deputies were deployed during the Hurricane Gustav response in September 2008. While the response was immediate and the mission only lasted a couple of weeks, it took until January 2010 to get reimbursed. A number of Alabama counties had the same experience.

It is our fear that slow reimbursement will eventually result in reluctance to lend critical resources under EMAC due to the adverse economic impact on local budgets during these difficult economic times.

THE IMPACT OF PROGRAMS FUNDED BY THIS SUBCOMMITTEE

Earlier in my remarks, I extended a thank you to the subcommittee for its support of EMPG. Emergency managers appreciate that this subcommittee recognizes that EMPG funding is fundamentally different than the Homeland Security grants which came into existence only 10 short years ago. EMPG funding has a history of more than five decades, and has a 50-percent cost share to demonstrate the commitment of State and local governments to being prepared for all hazards. In fact, EMPG funding has been called the backbone of the emergency management system. I would like to tell you about some of the specific things that helped us funded by EMPG or coordinated by emergency managers partially funded by EMPG.

Emergency management programs at the local level in Alabama have been able to build partnerships between local governments, volunteers, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector. Some of the specific examples that illustrate this are:

- Partnerships involving volunteer reception centers in our Alabama counties. These centers provided for a place to receive volunteers and to match volunteer resources with the unmet needs in the community. This matching has allowed our communities to increase their speed of recovery. In addition, these centers have helped us to control one of the potential "disasters after the disaster" by making sure volunteer resources are applied to areas in need with some logic and rigor.
- For the last few years the State of Alabama has passed through 65 percent of available EMPG funding to local government emergency management agencies. The creation of strong local programs and fostering mutual aid agreements statewide enabled counties to quickly assess the extent of and begin the response to a truly catastrophic disaster before the wind stopped blowing. Coun-

ties were helping each other during the initial response and are still providing mutual aid as we speak.

- Morgan County conducts an annual full-scale exercise typically designed by EMPG funded staff. Last year’s exercise involved working with the Alabama State Mortuary Team in identifying the simulated victims of a simulated tornado. Fortunately our tornado event on April 27, 2011, did not produce fatalities—but the experience gained in the simulation by that team was regrettably utilized in DeKalb County.
- Some counties used community emergency response teams (CERT) to distribute ice, water, food, and tarps in the affected areas. Others had their CERT teams active in the immediate response. Billy Green, assistant director for Tuscaloosa EMA, writes:

“I guess my biggest highlight was on Saturday, April 23, 2011, when I graduated my first Hispanic CERT Team. They were all members of the Knights of Columbus from Holy Spirit Catholic Church . . . Who would have ever known that on Wednesday they would be putting all their skills to use? . . . Several of them lived in the Alberta city area that was affected . . . They came together and first began search and rescue . . . I was actually unaware of them getting out until we took the tour with the Governor and we passed a truck. As we passed, I looked up and there was a truck load of Hispanic guys wearing CERT vests and helmets . . . Those were my guys. I actually got a call from Indiana about their use of USAR markings . . . They would later assist the Tuscaloosa Police Department with translators. They would later go on to staff a shelter at Holy Spirit Catholic Church . . . I’m really proud of them . . . I also had several individuals who graduated from my Campus CERT class that helped out in the areas where they lived . . . They however acted individually and not as a group . . . But they used the training to take care of themselves which allowed them to help their neighbor. One of them has gone on and initially volunteered at our Volunteer Reception Center and is now working for the city of Tuscaloosa as part of the disaster response . . .”.

The Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) has been a cornerstone of our medical and responder team building since 2002. We have been able to develop plans and purchase medical response capability across 16 counties in north Alabama with MMRS funding coordinated by my colleague John “Rusty” Russell, the emergency management director of Madison County (Huntsville) Alabama. We provided training and exercises that have added cohesion to the way traditional responders and medical professionals work together during emergencies.

In November 2007 a Huntsville City School bus with a driver and 41 students, plunged 75 feet from an interstate overpass. The bus landed vertically and toppled over killing three students and injuring several others. The response was immediate and working within the MMRS plan, 40 students were transported to our two major hospitals within 40 minutes. Plans were activated and surely helped save many lives as trauma victims were quickly triaged and cared for. Our MMRS group had provided an exercise that was called “eerily similar” in the weeks preceding the fatal bus crash. That training and exercises in which responders and hospital staff had participated enabled them to coordinate and communicate and provide efficient patient tracking.

After the April 27 tornadoes, the emergency medical equipment and supplies provided by MMRS were deployed and used in the impacted areas of even the most rural North Alabama counties. The North Alabama Medical Reserve Corp, serving 16 counties, was deployed and staffed 211 medical hotlines and temporary clinics in the impacted areas to administer tetanus vaccine and treatment of minor injuries. The North Alabama Medical Reserve Corp was developed under MMRS in 2006. The State mortuary teams—partially funded by MMRS—were deployed in north east Alabama. Twenty-six deceased victims were processed in DeKalb County during the initial response to the tornadoes.

SOME BEST PRACTICES

Since 1971, north Alabama has been drawn together through the North Alabama Mutual Aid Association which includes 16 counties. The association consists of local EMAs and the extended community of response and public safety organizations such as the Alabama Department of Environmental Resources, Department of Public Health, National Weather Service (NWS), local, State, and congressional elected officials’ staff members. Every county and city government has signed the mutual aid agreement. Coordination and response from county to county has become almost

automatic and is encouraged by the State. The majority of emergency incidents are coordinated locally without help from the State or Federal agencies. It is the practice of our association that local resources should be used first.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications before, during, and after a crisis are crucial and there are various different types of communication.

Predisaster Communications.—Communications before a disaster consist of continuing public education and training programs, public appearances before almost any group that will give us time to share the message of preparedness, storm spotter training, the media, and working with our frontline emergency responders. In the last three instances in particular we are concentrating on building relationships so that we know each other well in advance of a disaster. We have a particularly close bond with our colleagues at NWS. In my county we test our outdoor warning sirens once a month year-round to determine the status of the system and to remind the public of what sound the devices make when activated. An additional purpose of this testing is to remind people to seek out information as soon as the outdoor warning sirens activate so they can take appropriate action to save their lives and the lives of their loved ones from a disaster or emergency.

During the Disaster.—Communications during the disaster are typically broken down into three areas:

- emergency alert and warning;
- communications among emergency responders; and
- emergency information to the public.

For alert and warning we capitalize on relationships with local media and activate our outdoor warning devices to indicate that the public should seek information on how to protect themselves. Communication among responders involves the use of two-way public safety radio systems and the issues of interoperability inherent in those systems. In my county and other areas of Alabama we have multiple ways of approaching interoperability including “black box” solutions and public private partnerships.

In Morgan County we have a multi-use radio system with the major industrial facilities to provide warning and coordination during emergencies. For public emergency information, we rely mainly on our traditional news media outlets. The State of Alabama is actively engaged in utilizing social media to get emergency messages out to its citizens. It is an emerging capability for many of the counties but lack of personnel in most counties has inhibited its use to the fullest.

After a Disaster.—Communications after a disaster can pose numerous problems. In an attempt to provide adequate redundancy, we have multiple ways to communicate with our neighboring counties and the State of Alabama. These include “plain old telephone system” (POTS), cellular telephones, 800 MHz statewide two-way public safety radio systems, and the Internet. As communications systems are restored and conditions return closer to normal, communications once again assumes a “predisaster” footing.

Outcomes.—I had conversations with several of the emergency managers from the most impacted Alabama counties regarding their communications issues after the April tornadoes. Almost every one of them said they had challenges but were able to solve most of the issues. Alabama has eight mobile communication units and all eight were activated and used to restore communication gaps. Many of the communication issues involved areas of the State that were underserved by communications prior to the storm. A combination of augmenting existing communication towers and networks and sometimes commercial cell phone providers providing temporary service to the area solved many of the communication issues. While many areas had less than perfect communication, the ability to utilize alternate towers and or frequency in many cases provided basic communication capabilities. In many cases where power to communication systems was disrupted the systems continued to work due to battery backups and the ability to provide generator power to the repeaters. Many of the counties in Alabama utilize a commercial 800 MHz radio system. This system, Southern Link, was able to provide dependable service throughout the whole State. When counties needed additional capabilities they were provided with additional radios.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

EMI and its predecessor—the Civil Defense Staff College at Battle Creek, Michigan (1954–1980)—have been essential in the development of emergency managers and the overall professionalism within our field. When I began my emergency management career, I attended what was then called “The Phase Courses”, followed by

a “Capstone Course” at EMI. Over the years, this changed, and my colleagues and I at the local level—as well as IAEM–USA are thrilled with the development of the new Foundational Academy at EMI. Once again, EMI will be able to offer the basics of becoming an emergency management professional—from a practical perspective—to those who will comprise our next generation. We urge the subcommittee to continue its support of EMI. We gratefully note that the Senate Appropriations Committee Report on the fiscal year 2011 Appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security (S. Report 111–222) included \$11 million for EMI. If it had been enacted, this modest increase would have allowed for a more aggressive timeline to revise, update and modernize their portfolio of offerings.

CLOSING

In closing, we want to make sure and communicate that there is a new and more nimble FEMA on the ground in Alabama. Our local Alabama emergency managers especially appreciate having FEMA liaisons to provide information and solve problems quickly. We are hopeful that the HMGP program will be made available to our citizens more quickly than the typical 1-year timeframe so that opportunities for safer rebuilding can happen now so they are not lost in the future. We are especially grateful for the support of this subcommittee for EMPG and for EMI. These are critical elements in the maintenance and development of our local emergency management capability. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information in this hearing. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you very much.
And Mr. Lane.

STATEMENT OF RON LANE, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Mr. LANE. Thank you, Madam Chair Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats, and Senator Cochran, for inviting me here today to provide you with a large local community’s perspective on the current status of emergency management in our country. My testimony today is framed in the context of the two major firestorms that have devastated the San Diego community over the past 8 years and the continued vigilance and preparedness needed knowing that there could be another firestorm the next time the Santa Ana winds blow.

San Diego County is a community of more than 3.1 million residents. The county is roughly equivalent to the land size of the State of Connecticut. We have several large military bases, a nuclear power plant, the world’s busiest international land border crossing, and several stadiums and amusement parks. All of these attributes, which makes San Diego a great place to live, also factor into the challenges to ensure San Diego is safe and prepared for both natural and manmade disasters.

We have all heard the axiom “all disasters are local”, but in reality all disasters start local and very quickly require State and Federal assistance. Emergency management is very much a team sport and only through tremendous coordination at all levels of government can we effectively respond and recover from disasters.

The frequency of major disasters in San Diego has emphasized the need to focus on community resilience. I define “resilience” as the sum of three key components. First, the sheer number of first responders and their capability to effectively divert from their day-to-day duties to perform disaster response duties. Second, a specific and dedicated emergency management capability; and finally, the overall civil preparedness of our residents.

As to the first responders, San Diego invests hundreds of millions of dollars each year in public safety and fields more than

5,000 law enforcement, firefighter, and Emergency Medical System personnel. In the past, most first responders did not have the training, experience, or equipment to most effectively respond to major disasters or emergencies. But that has changed, thanks to the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP), as we have been able to use Federal grant funds to conduct hundreds of training programs, dozens of exercises, and to equip our first responders with the personal protection equipment and robust communications equipment needed for an effective initial response to a catastrophic event. Bottom line, the Federal investment in this area has effectively leveraged the local investment in our public safety and has resulted in a tremendously enhanced disaster response capability.

In addition to helping prepare our first responders, Federal grant funds have supported our efforts to maintain a robust and dedicated emergency management and homeland security capability. Largely through the Emergency Management Preparedness Grant and Homeland Security grants, the region maintains significant emergency management capability, including a state-of-the-art emergency operations center, a series of plans addressing mitigation, evacuation, recovery, and continuity of operations, and we also operate 1 of the Nation's 72 law enforcement fusion centers. While the very basic and core elements of emergency management and homeland security capabilities are funded with local funds, the majority of the enhanced activities have been funded through Federal investment.

The final component of community resiliency is civil preparedness. In 2007, San Diego firestorms burned 369,000 acres, destroyed more than 1,600 homes, and resulted in 10 deaths, and forced the evacuation of more than 500,000 people. The narrative of the 2007 wildfires is replete with stories of neighbors helping neighbors during the evacuation, of businesses voluntarily providing cots, food, and water to shelters, of animal rescue workers saving horses and livestock, and the list goes on and on. One of the key observations from the 2007 wildfires is that a disaster response is not just a government response, but rather a community response. We wholeheartedly support Administrator Fugate's "whole community" initiative as the resiliency of a community is truly tied to the civil preparedness and spirit of the community as a whole.

As the HSGP evolves to reflect the many changes to our Nation's preparedness levels and budget realities, from a local perspective we ask that you consider two key concepts.

First, the grant program's primary effort should be to ensure that we are able to sustain the tremendous capability that we have achieved over the past 8 years of grant funding. Sustainment is a priority.

Second, while the level of grant funding is important, flexibility in how we use grant funds is equally important. Increased flexibility allows local emergency managers to maximize the use of funds to achieve the greatest local level of preparedness. If grant funding is to decrease over time, a corresponding increase in flexibility in how grant funds are spent would help mitigate some of the impact.

In sum, Federal investment has been a force multiplier.

PREPARED STATEMENT

I appreciate the opportunities like this one to share and exchange ideas. Thank you for your interest and support in local disaster preparedness activity and providing the county of San Diego the opportunity to participate in today's hearing. I am happy to answer any questions.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RON LANE

INTRODUCTION

Thank you Chairman Landrieu, Ranking Member Senator Coats, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, for inviting me here today to provide you with a large local community's perspective of the current status of emergency management in our country. I am Ron Lane, director of emergency services for the county of San Diego and a participant in the Big City Emergency Managers' Group. My testimony today is framed in the context of the two major firestorms that have devastated the San Diego region over the past 8 years, and the continued vigilance and preparedness needed knowing that there could be another firestorm the next time the Santa Ana winds blow.

San Diego County is a community of more than 3.1 million residents, comprised of 18 cities and a large unincorporated area. The county is large geographically with its land size roughly equivalent to the State of Connecticut. San Diego County is landlocked with the Pacific Ocean to the west, border with Mexico to the south and a desert to the east. We have several large military bases, a nuclear power plant, the world's busiest international land border crossing, and several stadiums and amusement parks. All of these attributes which make San Diego a great place to live also factor into our mutual effort to ensure San Diego is safe and prepared for both natural and manmade disasters. Preparedness in such a large and diverse community is only achievable through a sophisticated level of coordination, communication and efficient application of resources. We have all heard the axiom "all disasters are local", but in reality, all disasters start local, but very quickly require State and Federal assistance. Emergency management is very much a team sport, and only through tremendous coordination at all levels of government can an effective disaster response and recovery be achieved. In my remarks today, I will highlight how the Federal investment in local disaster preparedness and homeland security has been invaluable, and how this continued partnership is positioned to ensure that our Nation continues to achieve its preparedness goals.

LOCAL COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

The San Diego region is exposed to many potential natural disaster risks including a year-round fire season and dispositions for earthquakes or tsunamis. San Diego is also exposed to manmade or terrorist threats the region's proximity to an International border, numerous military facilities, and a nuclear power plant. The frequency of major disasters in San Diego has emphasized the need to focus on community resilience. Achieving resilience in a local community, however, requires efforts from all levels of government as well as businesses, local organizations, and citizens. I define resilience as the sum of three key components:

- the number of first responders, and their capability to effectively divert from their day-to-day duties to disaster response;
- the specific and dedicated emergency management capability; and
- the civil preparedness of our residents.

First Responders

San Diego invests hundreds of millions of local dollars each year in public safety and fields more than 5,000 law enforcement, firefighter, and Emergency Medical System personnel. At the time of a disaster or act of terrorism, these first responders become our key initial response capability. Unfortunately, in the past, most first responders did not have the training, experience, or equipment to most effectively respond to major emergencies. The Homeland Security Grant Program has dramatically changed this equation. Over the past several years, the San Diego region has used Homeland Security grant funds to conduct hundreds of training programs on everything from anti-terrorism to hazard materials, and from incident management to mass casualty response. We have conducted four regional full-scale exercises and dozens of functional exercises. Additionally, using Federal grant funds, we have

equipped our first responders with the personal protection equipment, decontamination trailers, detection equipment, and robust communication equipment needed for an effective initial response to a catastrophic event. Bottom line: the Federal investment in this area has effectively leveraged the local investment in our public safety and has resulted in a tremendously enhanced disaster response capability. This is an excellent example of the Federal-local partnership and how Federal investment can be a force multiplier to dramatically increase local capability.

Emergency Management Capability

In addition to the traditional first responders, a community needs to maintain a robust and dedicated emergency management and homeland security capability. Largely through the Emergency Management Preparedness Grant (EMPG) and Homeland Security grants, the region maintains significant emergency management capability, including; a state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center; a series of plans addressing mitigation, evacuation, recovery, and continuity of operations issues; and caches of critical shelter supplies. The region tests our plans by conducting regular exercises, training, and coordination activities. The region has also implemented sophisticated mass notification systems and an emergency management information system. The region's 24-hour Staff Duty Officer Program is another critical function that is largely funded through EMPG. In San Diego, we have 1 of the Nation's 72 law enforcement fusion centers, and this center was developed and is maintained with joint local, State, and Federal staff and funding. The fusion center includes the Joint Terrorism Task Force and several intelligence analysts, and is the focal point of our region's local prevention activities. The fusion center serves as a conduit of two-way information and analysis between the street level personnel and all levels of the national intelligence network. While the very basic and core elements of emergency management and homeland security capabilities in our community are funded with local funds, the majority of the enhanced activities have been funded through Federal investments. Again, a relatively small Federal investment has provided significant and meaningful increase in our community's preparedness in the San Diego region.

Civil Preparedness

The 2007 San Diego firestorm burned 369,000 acres, destroyed more than 1,600 homes, resulted in 10 deaths, and forced the evacuation of more than 500,000 people. The narrative of the 2007 wildfires is replete with stories of neighbors helping neighbors during the evacuation; of businesses voluntarily providing cots, food, and water to shelters; of animal rescue workers saving horses and livestock; of college students volunteering at the Qualcomm Stadium mega-shelter; and the list goes on and on. One of the key observations from the 2007 wildfires is that a disaster response is not just a government response, but rather, a community response. We wholeheartedly support Administrator Fugate's "whole community" initiative, as the resiliency of a community is truly tied to the civil preparedness and spirit of the community as a whole. While help and leadership from citizens, businesses, and organizations will seemingly spontaneously emerge where needed in disasters, there is much that can be done pre-disaster to establish conditions for these emergent groups to be as successful as possible. Civil preparedness, in this context, not only means that individual citizens and families have taken basic disaster preparedness steps. True civil preparedness also means that families and businesses have taken pro-active steps to mitigate the most likely danger in their area (e.g., wildfires and earthquakes). Support of neighborhood and community programs like the community emergency response teams (CERT), business emergency response teams, and community Fire Safe Councils has proven instrumental in increasing community resilience—one neighborhood, one small community at a time. It is equally important to establish coordination and preparedness with other key community stakeholders. In San Diego, we have a very active business alliance with more than 300 participating businesses. The alliance ensures that businesses are provided key training pre-disaster and vital information during a disaster, and also serves as a resource for government to obtain critical resources. We have equivalent partnerships with the military and universities in the area. In the end, the more that is done to ensure all elements of the community are included and coordinated with, the more resilient the community will be.

How can the Federal Government support the building of resilient local communities?

Accepting the premise of a resilient community outlined above, the Federal Government policy and funding is critical in assisting local communities achieve resilience, which in turn strengthens our overall national preparedness.

Balance Prevention, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery Efforts

While most resources and effort goes to promote prevention and response activities, there is much that can be done in the mitigation and recovery realms that can make a meaningful difference. In San Diego, significant mitigation efforts were conducted after the 2003 wildfires. These included local changes to building codes (e.g., fire-resistant roofs in high-risk areas), as well as the use of more than \$55 million in Federal funds to remove dead, dying, and diseased trees near roads and buildings, and to conduct brush management. These types of mitigation efforts made a monumental impact in limiting the severity of the even more powerful firestorm to strike our region again just 4 years later.

Likewise, San Diego has implemented an “advanced recovery” initiative to take actions pre-disaster to accelerate recovery after a catastrophic event. This initiative is comprised of four key components of recovery:

- helping individual citizens recover;
- restoring community lifelines;
- rebuilding the community fabric; and
- readying a trained workforce to conduct recovery activities in our county.

The goal is to make recovery from a disaster more efficient, rapid, and effective through advanced planning of recovery activities long before disaster strikes. Included in this effort are pre-qualification of debris-removal contracts, pre-planning of local assistance centers, and plans to understand and mitigate the interdependencies of electrical power, water, communication, hospital, and transportation systems.

Actions taken by FEMA and through Federal grants that incent and support community efforts in the mitigation and “advanced” recovery realm would be helpful to balancing the Nation’s preparedness efforts.

Foster Effective Communication Systems

In a local response, the ability to communicate is fundamental to success. In San Diego, we focus on two separate communication systems—internal agency communications and public communications.

The radio system used by first responders in their day-to-day operations is the radio system that will be primarily used during a disaster. Fortunately, the many different cities and agencies in San Diego long ago took a regional approach to communications, and developed a “regional” 800MHz communication system. By having more than 200 different agencies, from city fire departments to university police departments, all sharing a common system, ensuring we have a capability to communicate effectively during disasters. However, unquestionably, communication systems are costly to operate and maintain, and expensive periodic upgrades are required. For example, during our 2003 wildfires, we identified that our communication systems towers located throughout our back country were vulnerable to the wildfires. San Diego County invested more than \$20 million to upgrade our communication infrastructure, and build in needed redundancy. This investment paid off, as no significant communication issues occurred, even though 19 separate transmitter sites were damaged/destroyed by the fire. San Diego has spent a significant portion of our Homeland Security grants on our communication systems, and conversion to the new P25 standard will require continued investment in upcoming years.

A second key component of our internal communications is our emergency management information system. Through this Internet-based system, we have connected more than 300 agencies, including all local responding agencies as well as our State and Federal partners. This information system provides real-time situational awareness between all agencies, and proved invaluable during the 2007 firestorm. Despite the tremendous capabilities we have in our primary communication systems, the very nature of disaster response requires the need for redundant back-up systems. We have several back-up contingency systems, ranging from the latest technology in satellite phones, to the 1950s technology of the ham radio operators.

The second critical communication channel is our ability to communicate with the public during a disaster. For the wildfires, we made more than 415,000 calls directly to our citizens homes through our public mass notification system, AlertSanDiego. This allowed us to conduct the Nation’s largest fire evacuation expeditiously and without major incident. This system is vitally important because it allows us to call the home phones of those in danger to give them critical information about evacuations, etc. We also allow residents to register cell phones. We currently have around 300,000 cell phones registered. Ultimately, I believe the best solution for public communication is the cell broadcast capability being developed under the Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS) program. While the current mass notifica-

tion to home landline phones is currently a viable capability, the country is fast becoming a wireless nation. Already, our analysis shows that more than 17 percent of the homes in San Diego do not have a landline phone. Further, the CMAS capability will allow us to not only communicate to the homes, but also to contact citizens in their cars while they are evacuating, as well as to notify them on their cell phone when it is safe to return home. San Diego did a FEMA-sponsored test of this project last year and look forward to its roll out in the upcoming months. For this system to be valuable to local agencies, however, it is important that the system be designed to be managed at the “cell tower” level. Early discussions indicated that alerts would be controlled at the county level. While this may work in some States, where counties are relatively small, it would not be feasible in States like California. The true value in CMAS will be the ability to identify an area that is threatened or impacted by an emergency, and to contact the cell phones only in that immediate area.

In summary, the communities in the San Diego area have invested tens of millions of dollars in our public safety communication systems. Through Federal Homeland Security grants, we have enhanced and hardened this day-to-day capability into a robust disaster response capability. Sustaining and upgrading the systems will require significant continued investment.

Assist in Creating a “Culture of Preparedness”

FEMA’s “whole community” effort is vitally important and should be supported and enhanced. Ultimately, to truly create a culture where our citizens make preparedness for disasters a priority, the effort must begin with our school-aged children. The Local, State, Tribal and Federal Preparedness Task Force provided a recommendation that preparedness materials and education should be integrated into educational curricula. While this recommendation requires State and local school district support, any national recognition of the importance of preparedness is helpful.

Implement the National Preparedness System

It is with great anticipation that we look forward to the implementation of the National Preparedness System that is being developed in accordance with Presidential Preparedness Directive-8. From a local perspective, the key to success in this effort will be the close coordination between all levels of government, as envisioned in the recommendations of the Local, State, Tribal, and Federal Preparedness Task Force in their report to the Congress last fall. While there are a number of ways to implement a National Preparedness System, I believe the starting point must be a Threat and Hazard Identification/Risk Assessment (THIRA). Like many large communities, as part of Hazard Mitigation Plan process, as well as our urban area security initiative (UASI) security strategy plan, San Diego has developed a very accurate THIRA in which measure our gaps and capabilities. The integration of these local and State THIRAs with the national and multi-State THIRA process currently underway by FEMA will provide an excellent benchmark and index on which to build the National Preparedness System. As discussed, our mutual efforts post 9/11 have resulted in San Diego having a tremendous capability to successfully conduct prevention and an initial response to a disaster or terrorist attack. We have also developed significant capability that is readily available to assist other communities who suffer a catastrophe. Through the National Preparedness System process, it is hopeful that both community preparedness gaps, as well as the capabilities each community has available to assist others in need, can be identified. From a local perspective, the end result of the National Preparedness System will be:

- an accurate analysis of the threats and risks throughout the Nation (at the local, State and national level);
- an assessment of where Federal investment can best be used to mitigate these threat and risks (i.e., link THIRA to grant investment justification process); and of critical importance;
- an in-depth analysis of the “seams” between local, State, and Federal response capabilities for each region, and identification on how capabilities and resources can be shared and allocated to meet gaps.

Evolution of the Homeland Security Grant Programs

As discussed above, Federal EMPG and Homeland Security grants have played a critical role in the evolution of preparedness at the local level. Local governments have been able to build upon their local funding investment in public safety and leverage Federal funds to significantly improve preparedness. As we approach the 10-year anniversary of 9/11, and we take stock of the evolution of preparedness that has occurred over the past decade, it is entirely fitting that the various grant programs should be reviewed. Changes in the grant programs should be made to reflect

the changes in budgets, risks, threats, and preparedness improvements that have taken place. From a local perspective, we are hopeful that any changes to the grant programs consider:

Sustainment.—While many grant programs were one-time equipment purchases, most major improvements funded by the grants require ongoing sustainment, or the gains made would be lost. For example, the ongoing funding of intelligence analysts is critical to maintaining the value of the fusion center investment. Ongoing training and exercises are necessary, as are quadrennial updates of key plans and operations.

Flexibility.—At this point, most communities have conducted fairly extensive risk analysis, and understand their most critical gaps in relation to their greatest risks. If grant funding is to decrease over time, a corresponding increase in flexibility in how funds are spent would help mitigate some of the impact.

CONCLUSION

The Federal investment in support of local homeland security and emergency management over the past several years has paid tremendous dividends in the overall preparedness of our Nation.

I appreciate opportunities, like this one, to share and exchange ideas. Thank you for your interest in the San Diego region, for your support of local disaster preparedness activities, and for providing the county of San Diego the opportunity to participate in today's hearing. I am happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you very much.

Let me begin. All of you have testified that the Federal grant program has been effective and useful and essential for building the operations that you currently have. We, unfortunately, as Mr. Riley pointed out, were in a position to have to reduce that funding fairly substantially in the final negotiations over the last year's budget. This subcommittee, at least this chair, is committed to hold those cuts to a minimum moving forward. It is going to be extremely difficult.

So I am going to ask each one of you what would you say to people that say that this particular program needs another 20- or 30-percent reduction. Would you say that you can absorb that? Can you manage with it? What is it actually going to mean on the ground to you should you lose an additional significant portion of the Federal money coming your way? We will start with you, Mr. Riley.

Mr. RILEY. What I attempted to say in my testimony was that funding is important to build a capability at the local level. If it not there, that capability goes away. And those people that are saying that we can cut this another percentage are not looking at the long term because if that capability is not there, when something does happen, it costs us even more than the grant funding is to maintain that emergency management capability. If the emergency managers are not there, if the first responders are not there, the cost is going to be greater and the response is going to be more robust.

We have seen time after time where you have effective emergency managers on the ground, and what they need even from the State is much less. But if you have someone on the ground that does not know what they are doing, does not know the processes, then they default to the State or to the Federal Government to come in and provide resources.

Senator LANDRIEU. Mr. Vice.

Mr. VICE. Our agency is a separate State agency from the homeland security. So we actually get our grant funds passed through through them. As it relates to interoperable communications, that

lack of funds then affects the ability for them to get pieces of equipment that allow interoperability. We have received some funds to do what is called the communication assets survey and mapping (CASM) tool, which is a community assets management, which allowed us to determine what each community needed to be interoperable. So as it affects the emergency responders, it directly affects the way that they would be able to interoperate with everyone across the State.

Senator LANDRIEU. Mr. Hicks.

Mr. HICKS. I can tell you that these grants are really engaged in building capacity at the local level, and that is really where the key part of this is. This is teamwork, as you mentioned in your testimony. It is a team and you have got to have resilient locals. You have to have strong States, and we really do need a strong FEMA. In our Alabama tornadoes, 43 out of 67 counties were declared disaster areas. But I can tell you that the amounts of funds that will be expended there are less than they would have been if we did not have strong local programs, and we have some good programs in Alabama. With our EMPG funding, we have instituted in our State performance measures where we just do not get the dollars. We have to back that up with production from our local counties.

Senator LANDRIEU. Mr. Lane.

Mr. LANE. A great portion of the Homeland Security funds that come to us are spent on sustaining what we have already built, that capacity. So, for example, our fusion center—in order for it to be functioning, we have to have the intelligence analysts that now man that. So as we look at modifying grant programs with the fiscal realities, I think it is essential that we carefully look at making sure we do not take steps backwards and that we look at first making sure that we can maintain and sustain all the capabilities that we have had moving forward, and then given the fiscal realities, we have got to be a lot more precise in the types of additional and new and enhanced capabilities that we continue to buy. And as long as we do that effectively, I think we can achieve what we need to do to maintain preparedness.

Senator LANDRIEU. My last question. Then I will turn it over to Senator Coats.

As you are all aware, there are 12 Homeland Security grant programs which focus on terrorism and then only two that focused on flood map modernization, pre-disaster mitigation that are specific to natural disasters. Then finally, we have EMPGs and the fire grants are available for expenses related to all hazards.

The President has put forth a budget that combines some of these programs and reduces slightly some of the funding. The House has taken this budget and reduced it even significantly more for 2012.

Are you all familiar with the way the President has proposed the combination of these programs? What are your thoughts, very quickly, how you would manage under that sort of new framework? And this is something that will work for you? Do you support it or not? Mr. Riley.

Mr. RILEY. I have not had an opportunity to look at it, but my kind of kneejerk reaction to it is—and it was something that was said down the table—having more flexibility, because I can tell you

the State of Louisiana's needs and wants are going to be different than the State of Vermont. And so having the flexibility to take that money and address the things that are important to us in terms of what we respond to is going to be important.

Senator LANDRIEU. Mr. Vice.

Mr. VICE. I am sorry. I cannot speak to that. I would not want to speak for our homeland security agency.

Senator LANDRIEU. Okay.

Mr. Hicks.

Mr. HICKS. I can tell you the greatest thing that we want as locals, we want local impact into those grants. We do not want it to be just passed to the State because it is under another umbrella. MMRS is one example. We want that local input because our local counties are the ones that are determining how that money should be spent and where it is best utilized. It does not need to be, first of all, coming from Washington and, second of all, does not need to be coming from Montgomery and those decisions made that way.

Senator LANDRIEU. So you like the money being sent down in a broader range with locals being able to make more choices. Is that what you are testifying?

Mr. HICKS. Choices and input into how the expenditures are being made.

Senator LANDRIEU. Okay.

Mr. Lane.

Mr. LANE. At this point in the evolution of the grant cycle, every community has different gaps. We have been spending a tremendous amount of money and effort over the past several years trying to mitigate gaps. The more flexibility we have at the local level now because, as Mr. Riley indicated, every city, every community is in a different place right now and the less prescriptive the grant money is and the more flexibility that the money arrives in will allow us to maximize the use of the grant funds at the local level.

Senator COATS. Thank you all for your testimony. It was helpful and important for us.

Mr. Vice, you say in your statement that the NLE 2011 exercise was invaluable. I know you are still assessing that, and I am not going to ask you to get into that, although we would appreciate, when you do have your assessment in and draw your conclusions and recommendations, passing them on to us. It would be very helpful. So I would ask you to do that.

But just from what you have learned to date, what made the exercise invaluable? Why was it necessary? What was invaluable about the results, and what changes do you think it will bring about based on the information that you have received from that exercise?

Mr. VICE. The first thing, I think that it brings to everyone's attention when they are made aware that they do not have communication initially that they have to have other plans in place. We all become too reliable, thinking that our cell phone is going to work if our radio does not work and so on. So sometimes we do have to resort back to the runners. So I think from our State perspective, that is one of the issues, is getting all the agencies and the responders to recognize that there will be a period of time

where they probably have no communication. So they have to have an alternate means.

For our agency, we had people involved at all levels. We had people involved at Muscatatuck. We had our radio techs involved all over the State. So we were able to review a number of functions that our agency is responsible for.

So those two things are probably the most valuable that we got out of it.

Senator COATS. Madam Chair, that is all I have. Thank you very much for the hearing.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you, Senator Coats, very much. And I really appreciate that all the members participated. I think we have had a very good and thorough hearing.

I thank our witnesses for their testimony. I thank the thousands of individuals at all levels of government and our private sector partners who are committed to this mission.

We are going to try to write a bill in our subcommittee that reflects the needs of the country and the challenges that are out there.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

So any questions for the record should be submitted to subcommittee staff by close of business Wednesday, June 15.

[The following questions were not asked at the hearing, but were submitted to the Department for response subsequent to the hearing:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO HON. CRAIG FUGATE

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Question. On March 30, 2011, President Obama signed Presidential Policy Directive-8 (PPD-8) on National Preparedness. It calls for a comprehensive approach to assess national preparedness that uses a consistent methodology to measure readiness for all levels of government to prevent, protect against, mitigate against, respond to, and recover from disasters. What specific resources, in funding and people, will you dedicate to this effort in fiscal year 2011 and fiscal year 2012?

Answer. PPD-8 represents a significant evolution of our national preparedness efforts. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has established a Program Executive Office within its Protection and National Preparedness/National Preparedness Directorate to assist with PPD-8 implementation across the Federal Government and through engagement with the whole community. In support of this office, we are focusing a number of existing activities to be in greater alignment with the PPD-8 effort, including the pending revision of the National Response Framework, our exercise and training programs, assessments and the development of State and local guidance. For the duration of the PPD-8 implementation, we have assigned 18 full-time employees to directly support the implementation. Additionally, 20 percent (approximately \$20 million) of our discretionary funding activities are aligned in support of specific PPD-8 requirements and for implementation of the directive. A number of other efforts throughout FEMA, including our planning activities in the Office of Response and Recovery, and in Mitigation, are also aligned with this effort.

Question. Budget pressures have forced a reduction in the amount of funding available for grant programs. Grants were reduced overall by 19 percent from fiscal year 2010 to fiscal year 2011. The House proposal takes another 40 percent in fiscal year 2012.

We seem to be sitting at a crossroads of building more readiness capacity and sustaining the capacity we have built to date. While we are missing a collective way to describe the Nation's capability gap, evidence demonstrates there is still need. According to the National Associations of Counties, and Other Associations, grantees devote as much as 50 percent of State grants to interoperable communications;

grants also fund fusion center operations, specialized emergency response teams, and critical infrastructure protection.

Administrator Fugate, what are the top three gaps that you, as an emergency manager, still see in State and local capabilities related to all-hazards before, during, and after a disaster?

What top three capabilities have been developed through Federal investments?

What specific reforms can be made to the grant programs to ensure they are best meeting the needs of the Nation's needed capability to prevent, prepare for, respond to, mitigate against, and recovery from disasters?

Answer. The three capabilities for which States have identified the highest funding requirements from fiscal year 2006 to fiscal year 2009 are:

- communications;
- intelligence and information sharing and dissemination; and
- planning.

The States based these funding requirements on their homeland security strategies, which include their capability development requirements and grant guidance provided by FEMA.

FEMA agrees that we are at a crossroads of building more readiness capacity and sustaining the capacity we have built to date. FEMA believes that the grant dollars should go toward developing and sustaining national capabilities that could be called up by any jurisdiction at any time through national mutual aid. FEMA has been working to streamline the process and set priorities that will encourage grantees to build national capacity according to gaps in coverage of capabilities. To achieve this, the fiscal year 2011 FEMA grant guidance sets three new priorities for the grantee:

- whole community strategy;
- building prevention and protection capabilities; and
- the maturation and enhancement of State and major urban area fusion centers.

Applicants will be developing their investment justifications based, in part, on capability requirements identified through the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) process. THIRA is based on analysis of each State's relative consequences of the various threats and hazards, and allows the applicant to compare and prioritize risks. THIRAs will be used to update their State homeland security strategies, which identify the capability gaps that States most need to fill in order to meet the State's individual risk priorities and FEMA's priorities. Gaps identified in THIRA will assist FEMA in assessing national gaps in capabilities and help us further refine grant guidance to maximize benefit.

The top three capabilities developed through Federal investments, as collected through progress reports from fiscal year 2006 to fiscal year 2009, include:

- communications;
- planning; and
- critical infrastructure protection.

FEMA is already making a number of key reforms to the design and implementation of our grant programs to build and sustain national capability. First, and most important, FEMA is working to implement the requirements of PPD-8 which includes the development of a new national preparedness goal, national preparedness system, and other key strategic policy doctrine that will help us better focus where investments go.

Second, we are working closely with State, local, tribal, and private sector partners and stakeholders to develop a culture of partnership in everything we do. Most recently, our grant program developers, managers, and analysts met with our partners at the National Urban Areas Security Initiative and After Action conferences in San Francisco over the course of 4 days from June 20-23 to review, assess, and improve all aspects of how we work together. Through town hall meetings, technical sessions, a training expo, and an all-day after action feedback session, our team gained a deep first-hand understanding of what we are doing well, what should be maintained, and what we need to improve. There is no substitute for working partnership, as through teamwork we can leverage our grant resources so much more effectively.

A third key reform lies in our ongoing commitment to improving and integrating a risk-based approach into the design and implementation of our grant programs. We are continuing to refine our risk models and allocation methodologies to ensure that grant funds are deployed across our grant portfolio in a way that reflects the best possible information about threats, risks, and vulnerabilities that we face.

Fourth, FEMA is implementing the Redundancy Elimination and Enhanced Performance for Preparedness Grants (REEPP) Act, in direct coordination with the National Academy of Public Administration, to identify and eliminate redundant reporting requirements and to develop meaningful performance metrics for homeland

security preparedness grants. This effort will help FEMA further measure the effectiveness of grants. FEMA is also in the process of implementing recommendations from the Local, State, Tribal, and Federal Preparedness Task Force Report to improve coordination and consolidation of FEMA's grant programs, including coordination of interagency grant programs and more closely linking capability assessment and grant activities. As a requirement of this act, FEMA has also submitted an initial report to the Congress on further steps we are taking to reduce burdens on our stakeholders by refining grant processes.

Finally, in response to Government Accountability Office (GAO) and Office of the Inspector General (OIG) recommendations and our own internal process improvement efforts, we are actively exploring opportunities to consolidate grant programs when it makes sense for FEMA and our grantees in a way that does not diminish the efficacy of the overall homeland security enterprise. A March 2011 GAO report, *Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenues* (GAO-11-318SP), noted that the number of FEMA preparedness grant programs has grown from 8 in 2002 to 17 in 2010 as the result of congressional and executive branch actions. A number of these programs fund common eligible recipients (such as State homeland security agencies) for similar purposes. The Department of Homeland Security OIG reported in March 2010 that FEMA's application process for its preparedness grant programs did not promote effectiveness and efficiency, because FEMA did not compare and coordinate grant applications across preparedness programs to identify and mitigate potential duplications (for example, planning, and interoperable communications are two activities that can be funded by almost all of the programs reviewed by OIG); the report recommended FEMA do so. We are incorporating specific requirements into our grant program guidance to minimize potential sources of duplication, and over the longer term we look forward to working with the Congress to streamline and consolidate program-specific legislation to ensure alignment and efficiency.

Question. In Mr. Fugate's testimony, the use of social media to make sure the public and emergency management agencies can share information quickly is highlighted. Across the Nation, local, and State emergency management agencies are at greatly varying abilities to be able to use two-way communications during a disaster. An ability to harness the power of social media will need both technology improvements but also personnel and training to manage this emerging tool.

Can you describe in more detail exactly how social media has been employed in communities that have used it successfully during a disaster? In State and local communities who have harnessed this important communication method, what obstacles did they have to overcome? For example, if a disaster survivor reaches out to FEMA or the State with a request for assistance or useful information about what is happening on the ground, how is that information coordinated with the local manager who is the lead during the disaster?

Does FEMA have technical assistance programs available to communities who are venturing into social media, and if so, how much funding is dedicated to these programs in fiscal year 2012?

Social media is the way of the future for some, but not everyone uses it. What is the emergency management community doing to ensure people without technology do not get left behind?

Answer. In the tornadoes that struck Tuscaloosa, Alabama on April 27, social media allowed survivors to connect with one another and return a sense of normalcy to their lives. For example, thousands of Facebook users self-organized almost immediately after the storm to help survivors find precious pieces of debris that were blown miles from where the tornado struck. This debris consisted of family photographs, clothing, and personal possessions that offered survivors a piece of normalcy and emotional support. Over time, the page became more than survivors finding their possessions—it became a place for them to share stories and help others find resources if they were in need. In this way, social media connected survivors with other members of the public who were in a position to help—either by locating an item's proper owner or answering others' questions about where to go for assistance.

While this example is one of many, it shows the power of social media to connect survivors with resources from the emergency management team, including the public.

To have an effective social media presence, emergency managers must be able to devote the time necessary to post content and respond to questions and comments as necessary. Making time to learn, use, and adopt social media is often the most formidable obstacle for emergency managers to overcome. In addition to time constraints, the State and local agencies we talk to often cite the importance of leadership support in adopting social media. When management within the organization is supportive of learning and using social media as a tool for communicating with

the public, favorable policies (such as information technology, cybersecurity, legal, and privacy) often follow, helping emergency managers adopt these tools more effectively.

As for the example listed in the question, FEMA or the State should direct the survivor to contact his or her local emergency management office for the latest information on the ground. If the local office has an up-to-date Web site with information on the disaster, then FEMA or the State should direct the survivor to this resource, as well as to any social media sites that are providing timely, relevant information. However, the presence of a useful Web site and/or social media channels at the local level depends on how much time and effort that local emergency managers have invested to keep these channels up-to-date. FEMA currently is exploring ways to help our State and local partners get involved with social media.

Social media is only one way in which we communicate and engage with the public, and we are committed to using multiple channels to get our messages out and to engage with stakeholders before, during, and after a disaster. After a Presidentially declared disaster, we continue to use traditional forms of communication such as radio, TV, and print media to let the people know about available assistance. Also, our community relations teams go door-to-door in the community to meet with survivors and provide information on FEMA assistance.

In addition to using the Agency's ability to communicate, we also leverage the capabilities of the private sector and faith-based, volunteer and community groups to reach their audiences as well. Reaching as many people as possible after a disaster requires a team effort, with multiple channels and methods of communication.

Question. The latest estimate for the fiscal year 2012 the shortfall for the Disaster Relief Fund is somewhere between \$2 billion and \$4.8 billion. In April, the Congress made deep cuts in first-responder grants in order to pay for the fiscal year 2011 shortfall. This unfortunate decision was necessary because the President failed to propose an emergency supplemental.

The House passed their fiscal year 2012 Homeland Security bill. They make even deeper cuts in the first-responder grants in order to pay for the fiscal year 2012 shortfall. For months I have been urging the President to send up an emergency request for the shortfall. When will we get the request?

Answer. On September 9, 2011, the Office of Management and Budget submitted an emergency funding request for \$500 million to sustain the Disaster Relief Fund through the end of fiscal year 2011.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR FRANK R. LAUTENBERG

Question. In New Jersey, the stretch of land between the Port of New York and New Jersey and Newark Liberty Airport was designated the most at-risk area for a terrorist attack in the United States by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2005. The stretch of land includes a variety of potential targets, including ports, chemical plants, airports, and commuter freeways. This is an especially important area because it is so close to the population center of the greater New York area, which would magnify the effect of an attack. It is estimated that 12 million people could be impacted by an attack.

According to the FBI, New Jersey is home to the most at-risk area for a terrorist attack in the United States. This area has targets ranging from the port to airports to chlorine gas plants. An attack in this area could impact 12 million people who live nearby.

How are the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) working with State and local entities in New Jersey to prevent and prepare for a possible attack in this area?

Answer. Since the inception of the Homeland Security Grant Program, DHS's FEMA has provided to New Jersey more than \$2 billion to support anti-terrorism and all-hazards preparedness, including funding for equipment, fusion centers, training, exercises, etc. FEMA also has provided catastrophic planning assistance to New Jersey through the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP). This has resulted in integrated planning efforts across northern New Jersey, as well as in New York City and parts of Connecticut and Pennsylvania. Examples of projects are a Regional Radiological Dispersal Device Plan, a Regional Housing Recovery Center Plan, and a Regional Mass Fatality Plan.

In one specific example of improved planning, the New York/New Jersey/Connecticut/Pennsylvania site has developed critical parts of its Regional Disaster Housing Plan (different from their Housing Recovery Center Plan, above) through partnerships with two national leaders in building design and land use: the American Institute of Architects and Urban Land Institute. Two-day working sessions co-

organized with these groups put emergency management specialists side-by-side with experts in housing and planning to develop solutions to the region's post-disaster housing challenges. The resulting plan is being used as a primary example by other RCPGP sites nationally. In addition to progress in developing plans, New Jersey and New York City have made great strides in improving their regional collaboration as a result of RCPGP. New Jersey officials have credited these efforts with improving operations for both the recent helicopter and small plane mid-air crash over the Hudson River, as well as the safe rescue of passengers from the water landing of U.S. Airways flight 1519.

Question. FEMA manages the majority of Federal grants for disaster preparedness and response. The House recently passed its version of the fiscal year 2012 Homeland Security appropriations bill, which provides \$1 billion for DHS to allocate, at its discretion, funding to nine State and local Homeland Security grant programs. This amount is 65 percent less than the President's fiscal year 2012 budget request for these grant programs.

According to reports, evidence found at Osama bin Laden's compound showed al-Qaeda was planning to attack our rail system and our ports. The House-passed fiscal year 2012 Homeland Security appropriations bill includes \$1 billion for FEMA and DHS to allocate, at its discretion, funding to nine Homeland Security grant programs. This amount is 65 percent less than the President's fiscal year 2012 budget request for these grant programs.

What impact do these cuts have on FEMA's ability to help our Nation prevent, prepare for, and respond to an emergency such as a terrorist attack?

Answer. While much has been accomplished with the grant programs over the past several years, much remains to be done. Cuts in Homeland Security grant funding directly affect State and local governments' ability to build and sustain capabilities that they have identified as necessary based on their homeland security strategies and national priorities. Homeland security strategies developed by the State and local governments articulate gaps in capabilities and investment justifications submitted by the grantees articulate how they will fill identified gaps. These strategies and investment justifications show us that more remains to be done. A refined Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) process that has already started and is rolling out as a part of the fiscal year 2011 grant programs will further improve our ability to identify and fill gaps in capabilities.

Since fiscal year 2003, more than \$33 billion has been awarded in preparedness grants and all levels of government have worked to develop robust preparedness policy, guidance, and priorities. These investments have helped increase the capabilities of local, State, tribal, and territorial authorities where, in many cases, only limited capability previously existed. Grant funds have supported development and sustainment of emergency operations centers, fusion centers, interoperable communications systems, information and intelligence sharing mechanisms, specialized response assets, a multitude of planning activities, and unprecedented regional collaboration. These gains were most recently evident in the response to the tornadoes in the Southeast and in Joplin, Missouri. Responses were handled entirely at the State and local levels. The 2011 national level exercise provided the State of Missouri the opportunity to test its interoperable communications system 2 weeks before the State used these tools in its effective response to the May 2011, Joplin tornado. Since 9/11, State and local jurisdictions have scheduled more than 10,000 exercises. All 50 States now collaborate to maximize resources and cost effectiveness. States use the Nation's mutual aid networks daily, and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact ensures the sharing of resources between States, averaging 30 exercises per year and 19 real-world events in 2009 alone.

Despite progress made, any significant reduction in funding realistically can be expected to impact the ability to sustain the capability achievements demonstrated above. Grant funds are a critical component of our Nation's ability to prevent, protect, and respond to natural and manmade disasters.

Question. FEMA manages the majority of Federal grants for disaster preparedness and response. The House recently passed its version of the fiscal year 2012 Homeland Security appropriations bill, which provides \$1 billion for DHS to allocate, at its discretion, funding to nine State and local Homeland Security grant programs. This amount is 65 percent less than the President's fiscal year 2012 budget request for these grant programs.

If FEMA and DHS were to receive funding levels below what the President's fiscal year 2012 budget requests for FEMA State and local programs, how would it ensure that the country's highest-risk areas receive adequate funding?

Answer. If funding is reduced below the fiscal year 2012 President's budget amount, funding to build and maintain critical capabilities will be impacted. However, our commitment is to ensure that our grant funding at any level is deployed

in a manner that reflects, to the maximum extent possible, the best information about the threats, risks, and vulnerabilities that we face as a Nation. We are continuing to integrate a risk-based approach into the design and implementation of our grant programs, as described below.

Risk is evaluated at the Federal level using an analytical model developed by DHS in conjunction with other Federal entities. It includes these related components:

Threat.—The likelihood of an attack occurring;

Vulnerability.—The relative exposure to an attack; and

Consequence.—The expected impact of an attack.

The risk model used to allocate funds considers the potential risk of terrorism to people, critical infrastructure, and economic security to estimate the relative risk of terrorism faced by a given area. In evaluating risk, DHS considers the populations in a particular area that could be at risk, the concentration of people in the area, and specific characteristics of their location that might contribute to risk, such as intelligence community assessments of threat, proximity to national critical infrastructure, and the economic impact of an attack. In considering threat, DHS uses the intelligence community's best assessment of areas of the country and potential targets most likely to be attacked. For vulnerability and consequence, DHS considers the expected impact and consequences of successful attacks occurring in specific areas to people, the economy, national critical infrastructure, and national security facilities.

Question. When evaluating a request for a Federal disaster declaration, FEMA analyzes a variety of factors to determine if a disaster is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local governments. A key factor in the decision process is the statewide per capita indicator. This statistic measures the estimated public assistance damages relative to a State's population and is derived by dividing the value of public assistance damages by the State's population.

However, the statewide per-capita methodology implies that States with higher populations have more capacity to respond to disasters. This approach does not account for anything other than a high population and it does not recognize the services that a State typically expends tax dollars on to meet the needs of its population. Therefore, a State with a high population may have a stronger tax base but the State government must spend more of that tax base on services.

When evaluating a request for a Federal disaster declaration, does FEMA account for the increased services that a government responsible for a high population typically provides?

Answer. In evaluating a request for a major disaster declaration, FEMA assesses whether the disaster is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments and Federal assistance is necessary. When a Governor requests a major disaster declaration including authorization of public assistance, FEMA evaluates the request based on a number of factors as stipulated in 44 CFR part 206, including the estimated cost of the assistance, localized impacts, insurance coverage, hazard mitigation, recent multiple disasters, and other Federal assistance.

When requesting a major disaster declaration, Governors are statutorily required to furnish information describing the State and local efforts and resources which have been or will be used to alleviate the results of the disaster. Therefore, FEMA also takes into consideration any resources that are expended by a State or local government to respond to or recover from a disaster as well as any available resources of the State and local governments, and other disaster relief organizations.

Question. Currently, the only law on chemical facility security is the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS), which became law through the fiscal year 2007 appropriations process and provides temporary authority to DHS to establish regulations for protecting chemical facilities from attack.

CFATS requires covered chemical facilities to prepare security vulnerability assessments, which identify facility security vulnerabilities as well as develop and implement site security plans to address them. However, it specifically exempts drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities from security requirements and does not require any facilities to implement inherently safer technology. Both the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and DHS have testified in the past that the exemption of water facilities represents a "critical gap in the U.S. chemical regulatory framework".

The existing CFATS—our Nation's only law on chemical facility security—exempt wastewater and drinking water facilities, even when those facilities handle hazardous chemicals.

Should these security measures be required at all facilities that handle dangerous chemicals?

Answer. DHS and EPA have stated that there is a critical gap in the U.S. chemical facility security regulatory framework—namely, the exemption of drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities from CFATS. DHS supports amending the current exemption for drinking water and wastewater facilities to specify that EPA would have the lead on regulating such facilities for security, with DHS supporting EPA to ensure consistency across all sectors while respecting the unique public health and environmental requirements and responsibilities of water and wastewater facilities. DHS and EPA are happy to work with the Congress to address this issue.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL COATS

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DURING DISASTERS

Question. What has been the investment to date by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in social media communications?

Answer. FEMA has full-time staff dedicated to digital communications, at both headquarter and regional offices. We have also provided training for FEMA employees on the use of social media in emergency management and the details of FEMA's policy on employee usage of social media.

Question. How does FEMA plan to forward any information it receives through social media to local first responders?

Answer. Establishing strong relationships before a disaster is crucial to success after a disaster strikes. Because of this, we continue to strengthen relationships with State and local emergency managers, working through our regional offices across the United States. As relevant information is received through social media, we work through our regional offices to make sure our partners at the State and local levels receive the information.

Question. What resources does FEMA devote today to monitoring and responding to incoming communications over Facebook or Twitter?

Answer. We monitor comments and questions on Facebook and Twitter multiple times each day. We also respond to comments and questions as appropriate. If we cannot answer someone's question, we will point that individual to the best place to find the information.

On the FEMA blog, Facebook page, and Twitter page, we clearly state that for emergencies, the public should call their local fire, Emergency Medical System (EMS), police, or 9–1–1. It's important to continue to reiterate the message that FEMA is not a first-responder agency.

Question. Has FEMA made enough investments to be able to respond when a citizen posts information on the FEMA Facebook or Twitter account—to connect that individual with the right local first responder to ensure that assistance will be provided?

Answer. Through monitoring our channels multiple times each day and working with other members of the emergency management team, we make every effort to connect individuals with the right resource at the State and local levels. However, the success of these efforts also hinges on other members of the team taking steps to provide the requested information or assistance.

As noted above, on the FEMA blog, Facebook page, and Twitter page, we clearly state that for emergencies, the public should call their local fire, EMS, police, or 9–1–1. It's important to continue to reiterate the message that FEMA is not a first-responder agency.

Question. During 9/11, getting a cell phone call through was nearly impossible. How does use of social media alleviate that issue?

Answer. For disaster survivors looking to communicate with loved ones after a disaster, social media provides another way to let family and friends know their status. This may alleviate some traffic on cellular telephone networks since survivors are able to contact loved ones ways besides making a phone call. This is one of the reasons we encourage every American to have a family communication plan before a disaster strikes. Having a plan allows all family members to know how to get in touch with one another after a disaster strikes, whether through a phone call, text message, Facebook post, or Twitter message.

For those trying to get a call through to 9–1–1 dispatchers just after a disaster, social media may not alleviate this issue, but add more complexity to it. Social media provides an additional avenue for the public to reach out to local responders for assistance. This means that first responders may become overwhelmed with

Facebook or Twitter messages asking for assistance after a disaster, similar to 9-1-1 dispatchers and systems being overwhelmed just after September 11. Local response organizations must be strategic about how they will intake social media messages following a disaster, and what their capacity is to handle a large volume of requests and traffic.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO RAND BEERS

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Question. The National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) lays out three specific goals to be accomplished by 2013. The first being demonstration that 90 percent of all high-risk urban areas can establish emergency communications with adjoining jurisdictions within 1 hour by 2010. In your testimony, you stated that all 60 urban areas that were required to demonstrate this did achieve that goal. The Secretary also cited this accomplishment in her recent testimony, and she also indicated that in doing the assessments, areas for continued improvement were identified.

What areas for continued improvement are there and how will the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD) aid in facilitating those improvements? What sort of resources and/or incentives will communities need to continue to make improvements?

The second goal in the plan requires 75 percent of nonurban areas to be able to establish emergency communications with adjoining jurisdictions within 1 hour by 2011. What unique challenges do nonurban areas face? Do you anticipate these areas will be able to achieve the goal?

The third goal requires jurisdictions to demonstrate emergency communications during a significant incident—like a catastrophic event—by 2013. Is NPPD on track to ensure this final and very important goal is met? Is there any way to expedite this timeframe?

Answer. As addressed in the testimony, all 60 Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) regions (as of July 2008) demonstrated response-level emergency communications in accordance with NECP goal 1. The demonstrations illustrate how the significant organizational and technical investments made by the UASI regions have improved their emergency communications capabilities in recent years. Primary radio systems effectively supported NECP goal 1 event responses, and additional voice and data systems provided redundancy and increased situational awareness.

The completion of goal 1 represents an important step toward achieving national interoperability; however, significant work remains. The results of goal 1 showed that despite an existing culture of cooperation among law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services and other disciplines, coordination across these disciplines is not fully integrated into incident planning or consistently carried out. The goal 1 assessments also showed that incident planning and execution approaches that were segmented by discipline raised concerns about the ability of UASI regions to achieve similar success during a large-scale emergency incident where the incident site is not known and responders face more complex requirements for coordination.

The Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) within NPPD is addressing these findings and other cross-disciplinary communications issues through various improvement activities, including training, technical assistance, stakeholder coordination, and planning efforts. These activities include specialized, follow-up technical assistance services to those UASIs that achieved goal 1, but experienced some complications in achieving response-level communications.

Federal grant and loan programs have played a vital role in helping State and local jurisdictions build emergency communication capabilities nationwide. Numerous Federal departments and agencies administer grant and loan programs that support continued operations and modernization of communications equipment and systems, as well as emergency communications planning and governance activities. This funding has been used to augment capital expenditures (e.g., planning for, building, and deploying new infrastructure), as well as to offset operational costs (e.g., training, procedure development, equipment purchases, operations, and maintenance) based on the specific needs of the funding recipients.

To drive the further improvement of interoperable communications capabilities at the State and local levels, DHS and other Federal grant programs that support emergency communications should continue to emphasize the following actions:

—Establishing State governance bodies that conduct strategic planning and that prioritize investments;

- Supporting statewide interoperability coordinators, who ensure that federally funded projects align with strategic plans; and
- Funding the implementation of NECP goals, which enable DHS to measure progress in emergency communications capabilities nationwide.

Further, Federal grant programs have helped States and territories develop and implement their statewide communications interoperability plans (SCIPs). All 56 States and territories have developed a SCIP, and NPPD/OEC has been working with the States to update their plans on an annual basis. Each SCIP defines a vision and mission for statewide emergency response communications interoperability across a State or territory; reflects the current status of State, regional, and local agency systems and challenges; and identifies key initiatives moving the State or territory toward integrated statewide interoperability.

In addition, NPPD/OEC will further target the offerings of its technical assistance program to ensure that all States, localities, tribes, and territories can request and receive assistance for emergency communications while also focusing this technical assistance on those jurisdictions most in need. In 2010, for example, NPPD/OEC received 260 technical assistance requests from States, localities, tribes, and territories.

Due to their remote locations, low-population density, and limited resources, many rural communities continue to experience basic operability and interoperability challenges. The emergency communications systems in some rural jurisdictions are often outdated and hampered by inadequate infrastructure, limited geographic coverage, and limited capacity because multiple agencies within the locality sometimes share the available channels.

With goal 2 of the NECP, the Department is for the first-time assessing the ability of jurisdictions outside of the UASI regions to implement key operational factors for successful emergency communications. These factors, which are the same for both urban and nonurban areas, draw from the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum and include:

- the establishment and maintenance of common policies and procedures for communications;
- the clear definition and execution of responder roles and responsibilities throughout the response; and
- the availability of high-quality and continuous communications to foster situational awareness and coordination among responding agencies.

NPPD/OEC is optimistic that the work that has been done in jurisdictions across the Nation—including the training of more than 3,500 communications unit leaders—has provided public safety agencies outside of the UASI regions with the skills and capabilities needed to successfully demonstrate goal 2 of the NECP.

NPPD/OEC has worked with its DHS partners—including the Federal Emergency Management Agency—and with other Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies and governments to improve jurisdictions' emergency communications capabilities for use during a significant event through the development of tools, technical assistance, training programs, grant policies, and other initiatives.

To measure goal 3, NPPD/OEC will assess the jurisdictions' ability to establish interoperable emergency communications during large-scale emergency situations where the incident site is not known and where responders face larger requirements for coordination. These requirements include their ability to recover from primary communications loss and to request, activate, and plan for regional, State, and Federal responders. While NPPD/OEC will work to expedite the timeframe for assessing goal 3, it is currently on track for completion at the end of 2013.

Question. The NPPD mission statement says it is responsible for assuring the security, resiliency, and reliability of the Nation's communications and cyber infrastructure. While there is an increase in the President's budget proposal for cybersecurity, the budget request for communications and infrastructure protection programs are level funded at \$150 million and \$322 million, respectively. With evolving technology and an ever present threat, it seems demand for technical assistance on telecommunications, vulnerability assessments for critical infrastructure, and information analysis about the impacts of disasters on things like power sources and food and agriculture would be going up.

Is NPPD receiving requests from State and local governments or industry partners for assistance or information that are going unfilled in either communications or infrastructure protection? For example, how many requests were made for technical assistance from OEC in fiscal year 2010, and how many were fulfilled? How many requests were made for vulnerability assessments in fiscal year 2010, and how many were fulfilled?

With an essentially flat budget, how can NPPD programs keep pace with needs in a dynamic environment? For example, what process is used to determine the level

of NPPD resources dedicated to support current needs—such as interoperability of radios, and physical security of infrastructure—and to ensure resources are also dedicated to emerging topics—such as use of broadband, and building resiliency into new infrastructure?

Answer. NPPD/OEC is charged with providing technical assistance on interoperable emergency communications issues to Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial agencies through the development and delivery of training, tools, and onsite assistance. NPPD/OEC provides technical assistance services on a range of critical emergency communications issues, including development of effective multijurisdictional and multidisciplinary governance structures; training and exercises; systems engineering; radio frequency/channel planning and use; interoperability needs assessments; and the integration of voice and data technologies. Each of these service offerings, detailed in the Technical Assistance Catalog, is designed to prepare States and localities to communicate during all types of incidents—from routine to disaster.

On an annual basis, each State and territory is able to request multiple technical assistance offerings from the catalog, one of which must be for an urban area. NPPD/OEC prioritizes and fulfills these requests based on available resources and an assessment of capabilities and gaps. Each State and territory is provided at least one technical assistance offering per year upon request. In fiscal year 2010, NPPD/OEC received 260 individual technical assistance requests from the 56 States and territories. NPPD/OEC prioritized and fulfilled 136 of these requests with the resources available.

Similarly, the Protective Security Coordination Division within NPPD's Office of Infrastructure Protection (IP) conducts voluntary assessments of critical infrastructure through several activities, including Enhanced Critical Infrastructure Protection (ECIP) security surveys, Site Assistance Visit (SAV) assessments, buffer zone plan technical assistance and workshops, and computer-based assessment tools. In fiscal year 2010, NPPD/IP received and granted 682 requests for ECIP security surveys.

NPPD/IP does not track the number of requests for buffer zone technical assistance or workshops; however, in fiscal year 2010, it conducted:

- 50 buffer zone workshops;
- 107 computer-based assessments; and
- 217 SAVs.

In addition, the National Cyber Security Division (NCSD) within NPPD's Office of Cybersecurity and Communications conducts cybersecurity evaluations of critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR) networks and industrial control systems. NPPD/NCSD has conducted these assessments through the Cyber Security Evaluations Program and the Control Systems Security Program since fiscal year 2009, and the demand for the program has grown each year. The total number of assessments conducted to date includes:

- Cyber Security Evaluations Program assessments:
 - fiscal year 2009: 17;
 - fiscal year 2010: 58; and
 - fiscal year 2011 (as of July): 65.
- Control Systems Security Program assessments:
 - fiscal year 2009: 20;
 - fiscal year 2010: 52; and
 - fiscal year 2011 (as of July): 63.

NPPD/NCSD also provides its public- and private-sector partners with the cyber security evaluation tool (CSET) at no cost to them. CSET enables users to conduct systematic and repeatable self-assessments of the security posture of their cyber systems and networks. It includes high-level and detailed questions related to information technology and industrial control systems. CSET is available for download at http://www.uscert.gov/control_systems/satool.html or as a DVD.

NPPD's mission is to lead the national effort to protect and enhance the resilience of the Nation's physical and cyber infrastructure. With such a broad and diverse portfolio of responsibilities, it is critical that NPPD's programs have the resources to perform their current requirements while having the flexibility to manage emerging risks effectively.

Like all DHS components, NPPD takes part in the DHS planning, programming, budgeting, and execution (PPBE) system to determine how to allocate its resources. The PPBE system is similar to the process used by the Department of Defense (DOD) and several other Federal departments and agencies to allocate their resources. Like DOD, DHS also practices resource planning over the 5-year Future Years Homeland Security Program period. Outyear planning enables NPPD to take a strategic approach to resource allocation so that both current and future needs can be anticipated and budgeted.

To ensure that its programs are adequately resourced, NPPD is working to improve its internal decisionmaking processes. As NPPD matures, it is working to link its strategic planning, budgeting, and performance management processes. NPPD also is working to improve the integration of business lines across its various sub-components.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL COATS

INTEROPERABLE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS

Question. Resource constraints will make it difficult for Federal law enforcement and public safety agencies to make significant investments to continue upgrading mobile land radio systems, and to invest in broadband communications systems. Just within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has requested no funds to continue to upgrade its tactical communications in fiscal year 2012. Is the Federal Government falling behind the States and locals in radio communications due to resource constraints?

Answer. According to the National Communications Capabilities Report developed in May 2008, by the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) within DHS' National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD), the ability to achieve interoperable emergency communications varies widely across the Federal Government as agencies work to meet Federal communications mandates, deliver reliable communications using legacy systems, and meet mission-critical communications requirements. DHS components continue to develop and refine their tactical communications systems across the United States to meet their mission of protecting the homeland.

DHS components are focusing efforts primarily on land mobile radio technology as the current source of mission-critical voice and data communications. The Department has acknowledged the emergence of broadband as a significant technology for the future and seeks to plan and prepare for the convergence of this capability with current land mobile radio technology.

To avoid a potential technology gap, it is essential that future public-safety technologies can be used by all levels of government. To that end, DHS has led efforts to define Federal requirements and mission assessments for broadband internally in the One DHS Emergency Communications Committee and among Federal departments and agencies through the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center.

Through the establishment of high-level requirements, the Department and the Federal responder community will be better positioned to invest in and adopt broadband as part of a tool-kit approach to emergency communications capabilities. DHS, through NPPD/OEC, also is working closely with key public-safety organizations and jurisdictions that are implementing next-generation public-safety technologies such as broadband. Through these relationships with broadband-waiver recipients, the Federal Government's public-safety and homeland security organizations are able to maintain awareness of and fully support the efforts and advancements of technology led by these entities.

CONCLUSION OF HEARING

Senator LANDRIEU. This meeting is recessed. Thank you all for attending.

[Whereupon, at 4:27 p.m., Wednesday, June 8, the hearing was concluded, and the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]