

OPERATIONS SUPPORT DIRECTORATE

By Bruce J. Campbell, Executive Associate Director

Director Witt's was directly involved with the "new" Operations Support directorate from the outset in early October 1994. The November 1993 major FEMA reorganization created the initial Operations Support directorate which contained four Information Technology divisions, an Acquisition Management division, a Logistics division, an Administrative Services division and a Security division. While all of these divisions had FEMA-wide functional responsibilities, the size, scope and span of control involved in managing this particular FEMA group was far more complicated than what was originally imagined.

While the other major directorates created in November 1993 began to function well in the new organizational construct, Operations Support did not, for any number of reasons. Director Witt intuitively recognized that additional changes were necessary to achieve the new course he had set for FEMA, if this organization was to perform effectively in assigned critical mission areas. In my opinion he demonstrated leadership and courage in taking the necessary follow-up actions to correct the Operations Support situation within only 11 months of implementing the major reorganization that, in essence, saved the agency from abolishment.

Director Witt, in early October 1994, took aggressive and necessary actions to break up the 1993 Operations Support configuration. For example, Acquisition Management was transferred to the Office of Financial Management. The four Information Technology divisions formed the basis of the new Information Technology Services directorate. The remaining Security, Logistics, and Administrative Services divisions formed the basis for the "new" Operations Support directorate.

Director Witt assigned me, as the new associate director, specific goals that emphasized his vision of what FEMA, as an agency, should achieve. Specifically, I was given a "reorganization task" of making the directorate more operationally responsive, rather than administrative. He also assigned more specific goals – such as improving operational readiness and response capabilities, improving accountability and reducing costs, particularly in disaster response. These goals have been consistently followed in Operations Support since October 1994 and have produced agency capabilities that have contributed greatly to FEMA's success over the past seven years.

The director has been a dynamic leader throughout the agency, as well as a consumer of each directorate's capabilities. For example, Director Witt was baffled over the agency's apparent lack of capability to manage and control millions of dollars worth of accountable property, particularly as it related to the disaster program. He directed this be corrected and then supported the necessary actions required to implement the task he assigned to me.

As a result, the previous accountability methods were scrapped and an entirely new accountability and control concept was developed and put in place FEMA-wide. The 80 different warehouses throughout FEMA that stored disaster assets with no overall inventory capability have been replaced. We now have a consolidated FEMA logistics management concept that oversees agency disaster resources through the agency logistics center (ALC), three territorial logistics centers (TLCs), the disaster information systems

clearinghouse (DISC) and five mobile emergency response support (MERS) disaster response support facilities. To reduce response time and disaster costs, we initiated a pre-deployment concept that used new disaster warehouse facilities in Puerto Rico, Hawaii and Guam to store response assets (plastic sheeting, generator 50 packs, etc. that served well in recent hurricanes and cyclones. Through these new capabilities, the agency has greatly improved its operational readiness and response, the overall accountability of assets and reduced disaster costs. The director takes great pride in reporting to Congress each year the statistics attributable to these initiatives.

For example, between the inception of these capabilities in late 1994 and Jan. 1, 2000, the cost savings are impressive. The disaster clearinghouse recycled computer equipment sent to field offices has avoided over \$50 million in costs, compared to procurements of new equipment. Likewise, deploying FEMA generators vs. new procurements have resulted in avoiding over \$36 million. Packaging and deploying standardized 100-person disaster field office kits has resulted in over \$5.9 million in cost savings. In 1999, these FEMA Logistics initiatives were recognized when General Services Administration presented FEMA with a second place trophy, representing the Miles Romney Achievement Award for innovation in personal property management.

In non-disaster environments the director has also provided consistent and knowledgeable leadership sorely needed by the agency. Director Witt's concern for FEMA employees has also been a high priority. When informed that the agency did not have a safety program in place, even though it was mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the director assigned me the task of developing and implementing an agency-wide occupational safety and health program. With the director's support, we have established a Safety Program office in the Operations Support directorate and an agency-wide safety program.

In addition, we recruited and successfully deployed a cadre of OSHA-qualified safety officers to support disaster operations and disaster fixed facilities and introduced a five-year safety program line item to the FEMA budget. Operations Support established a safety orientation and training program that has provided safety training to over 1,700 permanent FEMA employees. An infectious disease protection program has been established for all FEMA employees that, as of summer 2000, has resulted in at least 5,366 vaccinations provided to 1,443 employees to protect them against disease during disaster deployments. These Safety and Health program initiatives can be directly attributed to the director's continuing concern for FEMA personnel.

These are just a few examples of the direct involvement between Director Witt and the Operations Support directorate. His assigned goals of improving readiness and response capabilities, improving accountability and reducing costs in disaster response have been more than met. The capabilities of the agency to support all of our assigned mission areas have also been significantly increased as a result of accomplishing these goals.

Directorate and Office Leadership

(For Department Heads Only) How did your leadership as director contribute to changes in your office or directorate? What were your primary objectives and how did you attempt to accomplish them? What were your successes?

Operations Support Leadership Objectives

The "new" Operations Support directorate was established in early October 1994. I, as the newly assigned associate director, was charged with establishing an organization "more focused on supporting FEMA program operations than administrative in orientation." I had to reorganize an organization and refocus the employees to support organizational goals that had a new mission orientation, i.e., to provide operations support to all FEMA program areas and directly support the achievement of the FEMA all hazard mission. In short, I was assigned the function of "Change Agent".

In order to expedite the process and incorporate employee, as well as organizational, views on how to accomplish this new approach, I solicited input from all of the headquarters Operations Support (OS) directorate employees, the regional directors and the existing OS managers. I also held "all hands" meetings and an OS managers off-site gathering to develop new OS mission statements, goals and objectives and resource allocations to achieve the director's tasking in the most expeditious and effective manner. I also put in place an interim OS Directorate Organization to implement these changes in mission support while we were simultaneously developing and formalizing the long-term structure and documentation.

More specific goals were also assigned i.e., improve operational readiness and response capabilities; improve accountability and reduce costs, particularly in disaster response. These goals have been consistently followed in OS since its inception and have helped to produce the significant OS capabilities that exist today.

Our major successes were accomplished since October 1994 in the following major program areas:

- The Operations Support directorate Security division now has a significant role over and above the protection of national security information entrusted to the agency. The division's assets and responsibilities had been focused primarily on national security interests. During the 1993/1994 timeframe, the division began initiating programmatic changes to also ensure the protection of personnel and assets at all regional and field locations, with special emphasis on security support to the agency's disaster operations. The division currently manages a disaster assistance employee (reservist) cadre of security experts to provide immediate on-site security expertise to the federal coordinating officer and staff. The division is responsible for the security of the Emergency Support Team (EST) operations; provides a FEMA deputy U.S. Marshal for security support on the Red, White and Blue emergency response teams; and provides security support and expertise to the General Services Administration in their emergency support function.
- In fiscal 1995, the OS Security division also took on the newly assigned agency function of counter-terrorism activities in addition to its normal physical and personnel security functions. The division has become proactive in providing early assistance in the handling of potentially hostile situations, such as adverse personnel terminations, violence in the workplace matters, threats, etc. The division has initiated emergency medical procedures to ensure that prompt and immediate medical assistance is provided to personnel at FEMA headquarters. The division has assumed responsibility for making initial suitability determinations on applicants and employees and has also developed

programmatic and policy changes in the assignment and determination of agency position sensitivity designations to ensure that all personnel undergo appropriate background investigations.

- The OS Logistics division continued to redefine its role within the agency and in response to disasters. Multiple warehouses managed by various FEMA organizations were consolidated into three major territorial logistics centers and two warehouses in both the Pacific and Caribbean area offices. This coupled with the tactical disaster warehouses at the five Mobile Emergency Response Support locations now forms the basis for FEMA's strategic warehousing and response capabilities. The disaster information systems clearinghouse operation continued to expand its role in recycling computer systems, printers, cellular phones, and facsimile machines used in disasters, thereby cost-avoiding millions of dollars annually. The establishment of the logistics information management system as the agency-wide standard property management and inventory system allows for the overall visibility of FEMA accountable property, elimination of duplication and dynamic reallocation and deployment of assets to better support FEMA mission efforts.
- The newly created OS Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) office developed, implemented, and monitors an agency-wide occupational safety and health program. The OSH office began on seed money of \$51,000 annually and has grown to over \$2 million annually over the past five years and is now implementing an accident-tracking system. U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration complaints and non-compliance notices for FEMA have waned considerably.
- An executive order was issued in 1980 to restate that OSHA regulations applied to federal employees. This led to the development of 29 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) 1960, which introduced the concept of a designated agency safety and health official (DASHO) to administer and implement safety and health program responsibilities. In 1995 Director Witt released a policy statement to demonstrate his commitment to safety in FEMA. This was the starting point for the creation of the FEMA Occupational Safety and Health Program office. I was appointed the FEMA DASHO and the current FEMA safety program was established.
- An initial risk assessment revealed that the majority of employee accidents and illnesses were occurring at disaster sites, so during its first two years the OSH program office focused on criteria for hiring and training disaster safety officers (DSOs). The emphasis was quickly placed on obtaining funding and personnel to focus on reducing or eliminating the hazards that led to those losses. A group of highly trained professionals in safety, industrial hygiene and related disciplines were recruited and the Disaster Safety cadre was established.
- In 1996 "Instruction 6900.5, FEMA OSH Program Authorities and Responsibilities," was published. By fiscal 1997 the "OSH Manual 6900.3" was published and implemented, a disaster safety audit program was instituted, safety committees were being formed at the FEMA fixed facility sites, standardized safety programs were developed, and safety training emerged as a priority.

- In the OS Program Services division, similar achievements were realized. For example, prior to fiscal 1995, management of agency-wide rent expenditures was fragmented throughout various FEMA organizations, each managing their own field offices and warehouses. Upon congressional inquiry, FEMA at that time could not answer the question, "How much does FEMA pay annually for rent?" FEMA government-leased and non-government (privately) leased facilities, FEMA-owned facilities, and facilities occupied through interagency agreement have now been arrayed into a single spreadsheet for over 70 FEMA facilities. These are funded through multiple appropriation sources and programs. It took five years, but FEMA can now answer the congressional question.
- Another major effort within the OS Program Services division was the consolidation of the furniture storage warehouse (Landover, Md.), the records storage facility at the Navy Yard, and the publications storage and distribution warehouse (Lanham, Md.) into one facility. This consolidation saved hundreds of thousands of dollars annually and added to the increased efficiency of operations and personnel.
- The directorate has also undertaken major programs transferred from other FEMA organizations, such as the closing of Palo Pinto storage facility in Texas; the agency underground and above-ground storage tank removal program; and the Disposal of Radioactive Sources program affiliated with the former National Instrumentation Center Project.

The overall capabilities of FEMA have been significantly improved through the director's actions in establishing the Operations Support directorate in October 1994. We have also made significant progress in achieving the director's assigned goals of improving accountability, improving operational readiness & response and reducing disaster costs.

Future Direction

***(For Department Heads Only)* How did you see your office/directorate evolving in the next ten years?**

Future Directions

In the next ten years, I see the Operations Support directorate continuing to provide the baseline operations support mission to all FEMA areas in the short term as well as the long term.

In the short term, the next two or three years, I see the continued integration of similar functions throughout the agency for continued improvement in overall efficiency and effectiveness. Continuation of redundant operations in an agency as small as FEMA works against the stated goals of the director and Congress.

I also see a continuing effort to improve FEMA internal management systems dealing with correspondence, property, printing, publications and records. In addition, there is a move toward integration of acquisition and logistics management systems; and personnel and security systems (background investigations and clearances). All of the

aforementioned efforts aim to achieve the goals assigned by Congress for greater efficiency and reduction of costs through automation and integration of agency management systems. The majority of these systems are in functional areas assigned to Operations Support and I would expect an aggressive move for improvement, modernization and economies in these areas in the immediate future. I would also not be surprised to see additional organizational realignments, for greater economy, through internal consolidation of similar functions within the current FEMA structure. The Operations Support directorate over the last five years has achieved major successes in accomplishing the director's assigned goals of improving readiness and response, improving accountability and reducing costs. I would expect the foundation established over the past six years would form the basis for further enhancements and improvements in the future.

Disaster Operations

Describe your office's role on the EST. Summarize an experience your office had working on the EST during one major disaster or emergency since 1992. What exactly did you do and what kinds of challenges did you encounter? Be specific and aim to leave the reader with a good understanding of what function your office fills on the EST, as well as the challenges you face.

OS: Emergency Support Team (EST) Role

The support services staff maintains the Operations Support (OS) directorate rosters for FEMA employees for the Emergency Support Team (EST) at FEMA headquarters and the national emergency response team. Early involvement of a disaster safety officer during emergency declarations ensures protection of FEMA employees working in the EST. The disaster safety officer acts as an advisor on safety and health matters to the EST team leader. EST safety-related issues include highly congested work areas with indoor air quality concerns, employee stress and fatigue from working long hours, and compliance with fire and life safety codes.

The security division provides security support and expertise to the General Services Administration (GSA) for their emergency role in federal resource procurement. During major disasters, the division monitors the need for security support and initiates appropriate action to provide it. For example, during Hurricane Georges in 1998, the division provided 12 security reservists, 67 U.S. Marshals, 39 Federal Protective Service officers, 135 contract guards, and two federal protective service mobile command vehicles, to ensure the safety and security of federal responders and their assets. The division coordinated the deployment of personnel and established a communications link to maintain and keep abreast of changing requirements to ensure that adequate security support was being fielded.

After deployment, the division maintained management and control of the security operation through daily situation reports and continuous contact with the on-site security manager. One challenge was to field a large number of security and law enforcement personnel when transportation was not immediately available due to limited resources and prioritization of needs, and balance that situation against the critical need for security/law enforcement at the disaster location before federal responders arrived.

Optional Essay

Write about anything else you think would be relevant and interesting from your office's perspective.

Operation Support Warehouse Crew: Unsung Heroes

On a football team, the agile quarterback, fleet-footed wide receivers, and the sure-handed tailback receive the lion's share of credit for winning the game. But, as coaches and fans know, a great deal of the success for the team's performance is due to the offensive line - the center, guards and tackles who work in the pit to protect the quarterback from being sacked and who open up holes for the running backs.

Just as the linemen are often overlooked in football, so possibly is the work of a premier FEMA support system: the Consolidated Furniture, Publications and Records Warehouse. Considered mundane and un-dramatic, and with little visibility, the warehouse staff on a daily basis provide the agency with the office furniture/expendable supplies, publications and storage of vital records needed to meet FEMA's all-hazards disaster mission. With the virtually constant migrations of personnel due to mission imperatives and other factors, there always is a need to store and retrieve office furniture and provide supplies. A similar situation exists for publications as they are updated and new documents come on line. In addition to normal service requests, demand greatly increases when disaster field offices are responding to emergencies throughout the country and require publications/forms such as "Emergency Preparedness Checklist" and the "Disaster Assistance Registration Application."

Records management is, of course, a key program. With FEMA's more than 2,400 permanent employees, a regular annual budget of over \$800 million, and disaster support funding of several billion dollars, the agency's records must be maintained, retired and stored in accordance with the stiff requirements of the National Archives and Records Administration.

To handle these programs in a cost-effective and efficient manner, an important step was taken in fiscal 1999 by consolidating three separate warehouses into one. The furniture/expendable supplies warehouse had been located at Landover, Md., the publications warehouse at Jessup, Md., and the records storage facility at the Washington Navy Yard. Different staffing and logistical support was necessary for each unit and deliveries to and from the facilities had to be made separately. The total leasing cost for all three facilities in fiscal 1998 was \$1.5 million.

There was a requirement of 120-days' prior notice to vacate the Landover and Navy Yard facilities and mandated upgrades to meet costly Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards at Landover, as well as the publications warehouse. With the aim of transitioning to a more efficient system, it was decided to discontinue operations at the three sites and combine all activities into one strategically located warehouse. Immediately, a new building was leased in Jessup, Md., to handle all FEMA warehousing for these activities.

At an annual cost in fiscal 1999 of \$1.2 million (a savings of \$248,337 compared to the previous year) the 74,000-square-foot warehouse in Jessup now handles furniture, expendable supplies, publications, and records storage. FEMA also saved \$400,000 in

cost avoidance by not having to bring the furniture and publications warehouse into compliance with OSHA standards. About 50,000 square feet is allocated to publications, and some 24,000 square feet for furniture, supplies and records storage. Within these parameters, an area has been set aside for the storage of excess computers. (The Program Services division oversees the project that donates surplus U.S Government computers to schools and other public entities.) For the first year of operations the combined warehouse saved the agency and U.S. taxpayers, \$648,337 (\$400,000 in cost avoidance plus \$248,337 in leasing costs). While somewhat difficult to quantify, there are other savings through using shared resources (forklifts and other equipment) and more efficient service by combining deliveries to a single facility. Another byproduct of the move is improved morale. The lone FEMA employee at the previous furniture warehouse is now part of a multi-person staff at the new facility in a safer and much more congenial environment.

Special Essays

Discuss the process of creating the Disaster Information Clearinghouse as an outgrowth of property accountability.

Disaster Information Systems Clearinghouse

When James Lee Witt became the director of FEMA he reorganized and reoriented the agency toward an all-hazards approach to emergency management. Based upon the need for logistics management throughout the agency, a new capability was developed within the Operations Support (OS) directorate. One of the key elements of the new logistics capability was the creation of the Disaster Information Systems Clearinghouse (DISC). The DISC is the agency's first source of automated data processing (ADP) and communications equipment to support disaster operations. It provides centralized control, deployment and accountability, refurbishment, quality assurance, and packaging for reuse. The recycling operation dramatically reduces FEMA's need to repeatedly purchase new ADP equipment when disasters are declared.

More recently, digital cameras, global positioning systems, and over 150 agency go-kits have been added to the DISC inventory. This leverages FEMA's savings in equipment acquisition cost and increased equipment reliability.

At the same time, equipment reliability has dramatically increased as the Information Technology (IT) operations and maintenance lab thoroughly tests each item before it is shipped from the DISC. DISC-supplied equipment is more likely to work right out of the box than new, untested equipment received directly from a vendor. Thus, disaster field offices are established in hours instead of weeks, increasing operational capability and timeliness.

The DISC property book contains more than 23,000 items. The annual inventory accuracy has exceeded 99.5 percent for the last two years.

Discuss the creation of the Territorial Logistics Storage centers and their role in disaster response.

Territorial Logistics Center

The agency logistics center (ALC)/territorial logistics center (TLC) was conceptualized in the spring of 1995 and its precursor was the regional disaster inventory (REDI) center, located at Fort Gillem, Ga. The REDI center was operated by Region IV and staffed by disaster assistance employees (reservists). The REDI center became necessary after Hurricane Andrew when storage was desperately needed for the massive amounts of disaster equipment and supplies accumulated during the multi-billion-dollar storm. During Hurricane Marilyn, in September 1995, FEMA headquarters Logistics staff assumed operational control of the REDI center in support of Region II. Shortly thereafter, the REDI center was formally "nationalized" and subsequently became the first of three territorial logistics centers.

TLC-East at Fort Gillem stocked furniture, equipment and administrative supplies and began supporting disaster field office setups. After Hurricane Marilyn, over 245 emergency generators, purchased by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), were transferred to TLC-East. These generators became part of the initial response resources inventory, thereby accreting the TLC mission. The ALC/TLC initiative was officially approved in March 1996 and the concept of operations was published in November 1996. TLC-East was the first commissioned TLC, followed by TLC-West (located at Moffett Field, Calif.) and TLC-Central, located at the General Services Administration Center, Fort Worth, Texas. The TLCs were strategically located to support FEMA's 10 regions, the Caribbean area and Pacific area offices. Formalized early in 1999, the ALC/TLC span of operations has extended to remote storage sites or off-shore disaster supply warehouses located in Puerto Rico, Hawaii and Guam. This effort is in partnership with Regions II and IX.

The agency logistics center (ALC) primarily serves as the management cell of the TLCs. The ALC and TLC are staffed by on-call response employees (COREs). The skill mix initially included logistics management specialists, inventory management specialists, transportation management specialists, materiel handlers and secretaries. During fiscal 2000, maintenance mechanics were added to the mix. There are a total of eight CORE personnel assigned to the ALC and 27 CORE personnel assigned to the three TLCs. The ALC reports to the logistics readiness branch chief in the Logistics division. The TLC supervisors and ALC staff report to the ALC supervisor.

The territory logistics centers were declared fully operational June 1, 1997. Soon after, the director issued a warehousing policy memo, dated July 1997, which directed all regions to turn over their disaster fund assets to the closest TLC or disaster information systems clearinghouse. Prior to this order, the logistics division contracted a commercial vendor to conduct a wall-to-wall inventory of all coded disaster assets held at FEMA regions and other fixed locations. As a result of the memo, the TLC stock levels of disaster equipment and supplies grew exponentially. To date, the TLCs' combined inventories are valued at over \$30 million. The TLCs occupy in excess of 800,000 square feet of covered and open storage space. Between fiscal 1998 and June 30, 2000, the TLC shipped 82 disaster field office kits to establish sites after disaster declarations. In further support of the mission, the TLCs maintain over 111 pieces of industrial transportation equipment which includes: tractor trailers; 48-foot and 53-foot trailer vans with electric lift-gates; flatbed, single-drop and double-drop trailers; and stake trucks. As of May 2000, the transportation management specialists assigned to the ALC have coordinated the shipment of 8.4 million tons and 295 trailer loads of disaster assets by

land, air and sea. As a result of a field office kit recycling/refurbishing strategy, the TLCs realized a cost-avoidance of \$719,560 in fiscal 1997; \$2.4 million in fiscal 1998; and \$2.56 million in fiscal 1999.

As a continuing strategic plan of the Logistics division, the OS directorate - in partnership with Operations and Plans division and Response and Recovery directorate - the TLCs also stock initial response resources (IRR) for both responder and disaster survivor support. The key IRR items are blankets, cots, ready-to-eat meals, personal wash kits, roofing-quality plastic sheeting, plastic tarps, sleeping bags, tents, bottled water, emergency generators and refrigerated vans. As of July 26, 2000, the TLCs carried in stock: 94,500 blankets; 41,600 cots; 497 generators; 143,900 non-perishable meals; 12,000 personal wash kits; 2,489 personal toilet kits; 54,100 rolls of roofing-quality plastic sheeting; 4,550 plastic tarps (20x20); 2,900 sleeping bags; 3,500 tents; and 279,500 gallons of bottled water. For the two-year period between 1997 and 1999, the TLCs realized a total cost-avoidance, by recycling IRR emergency generators, of \$28 million.

Early in fiscal 1999, the FEMA clothing stock mission was transferred from Mobile Emergency Response Systems (MERS) in Maynard, Mass., to TLC-Central in Fort Worth, Texas. In fiscal 1999, TLC-Central issued 2,025 baseball hats, 5,920 blue golf shirts, 1,272 white golf shirts, 18 white mock turtlenecks, 920 blue mock turtlenecks and 1,257 jackets. By August 2000, TLC-Central shipped 1,069 baseball hats, 3,992 blue golf shirts, 3,025 white golf shirts, 1,342 white mock turtlenecks, 1,620 blue mock turtlenecks, 3,164 jackets and 195 wool knit caps.

The ALC/TLC program has become an integral part of the FEMA integrated logistics system vision. The execution of its mission is laying a framework and foundation to integrate all federal disaster logistics activities, permitting more effective and timely support to federal response and recovery activities.

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

Customer Service Improvements

How has your office implemented FEMA's customer service policy? Please cite specific examples of research and/or surveys conducted by your office related to customer service. Also, cite specific changes that were made in the way your office does business as a result of the research and surveys that were done. Finally, give examples of specific improvements in the way your office has serviced its customers since 1992.

Office of General Counsel: Customer Service and Partnerships

The most basic change in the way the Office of General Counsel (OGC) has carried out its activities since 1993 relates to the office's emphasis on customer service improvements, both within FEMA and externally. Internally OGC has emphasized to clients the goal of striving to ensure that OGC advice is sought early and often with respect to implementing existing FEMA programs and new FEMA initiatives (such as reinvention of the public assistance program, *Project Impact* initiatives, New Mexico fire/claims processing activities, environmental trends, repetitive loss initiatives). As a result of the renewed emphasis on customer service internally, OGC has experienced a substantial increase in the number of requests for legal advice since 1993. FEMA Director James Lee Witt's practice of routinely seeking input from his attorneys has also encouraged others within the agency to follow his lead and routinely seek legal advice from OGC when appropriate.

Externally the office of General Counsel has emphasized the agency's customer service policy by partnering with groups outside of the federal government. For example, OGC representatives routinely attend NEMA (National Emergency Management Association) conferences to meet with state counterparts and discuss various legal issues that frequently arise in the course of disaster response and recovery activities and in the implementation of mitigation projects. Since 1993 OGC has begun to provide presentations on current important issues to NEMA attorneys at the group's conferences. In addition, along with representatives of the Human Services branch of the Response and Recovery directorate, OGC provides training throughout the year to the Disaster Legal Services section of the Young Lawyers division of the American Bar Association (ABA). This training enables the ABA to more effectively partner with FEMA, when called upon, to provide legal services to disaster victims pursuant to section 415 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. 5182, in the aftermath of presidentially-declared major disasters. Since 1993, the OGC field attorney cadre has grown in size and experience. Field attorneys are prepared to travel to disaster field offices with little notice to provide legal support to the federal coordinating officers. OGC attorneys provide legal advice on a wide variety of issues and are vital links in providing coordination and consistency in program interpretation and implementation. Field attorneys play a crucial role in identifying and resolving legal issues and in preventing legal problems from developing in the course of FEMA's responses to presidentially-declared emergencies and major disasters.

Another customer service technique promoted by OGC, both within FEMA and externally, relates to the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) by FEMA. In 1999, Janet Reno, the U.S. Attorney General, challenged each federal agency to develop a new alternative dispute resolution program or to significantly enhance existing ADR programs. Director Witt responded decisively, clearly signaling his commitment to the highest quality of customer service by appointing an ADR specialist for the agency and creating the office of Alternative Dispute Resolution in 1999.

FEMA's ADR office works within and outside the agency to manage conflict, avert litigation, and lessen the negative impact of disputes. The ADR office promotes a culture of open communication and creative problem solving. Improved communication can foster teamwork, cooperation and collaboration and can strengthen the agency by building stronger partnerships at all levels.

FEMA's ADR specialist, Cindy Mazur, joined the federal task force on Workplace Disputes and was a panel member for one of their interagency programs. Partnership with other agencies has assisted FEMA's ADR office in numerous ways, particularly as the agencies make their rules, policies, expertise, and services available to FEMA. The Justice Department, the White House, and members of Capitol Hill provided invaluable help to the OGC office in designing an arbitration program for the Cerro Grande fire legislation.

Following the director's creation of FEMA's office of Alternative Dispute Resolution, Ernest B. Abbott, FEMA's General Counsel, issued a Feb. 2, 2000, memorandum, specifically changing the way OGC has serviced its customers. The General Counsel requested that all of his attorneys discuss with opposing counsel the General Counsel's support for ADR in all appropriate cases. Abbott requested that his attorneys recommend that non-binding ADR methods be pursued to resolve controversies in issue.

When ADR is used in place of litigation, significant time, money, and work-hours are generally saved. More importantly, however, ADR attempts to solve problem and increase customer satisfaction. People are empowered to join together to seek mutual gain and create a workable solution. The ADR office has used the Awards and Recognition system to motivate employees throughout the agency. Staff and managers alike are rewarded for seeking the benefits of ADR in solving disputes in the office and with the public.

The office of General Counsel has been training its attorneys in alternative dispute resolution methods and concepts. FEMA's attorneys have been attending Alternative Dispute Resolution conferences and training presented by other federal agencies. FEMA's ADR officer has settled numerous issues for FEMA employees, has been involved in the agency's efforts to institute required management training, and has begun the process of including ADR in the agency's administrative grievance system. OGC is also working on creating ADR mechanisms at all FEMA offsite facilities.

This summer, the Justice Department issued a report to the president (excerpted below) in which FEMA, along with six other federal agencies, was showcased for its outstanding accomplishments and commitment to ADR:

After Hurricane Georges wreaked havoc on the island of Puerto Rico in 1998, a local community had disputes regarding a debris removal contract, including disagreements as to which company actually performed the work, the total

amount of debris, and the amounts of money owed to the companies. This difficult situation was further complicated by an FBI criminal investigation, the incarceration of the community mayor, litigation filed against the community by a subcontractor, allegations of fraud and conspiracy by all parties, death threats, and bankruptcy petitions. Without a consensual resolution, expensive and time-consuming litigation involving all parties to the seven relevant contracts was virtually inevitable.

FEMA suggested mediation. The governor, the local community, and the three contractors agreed. The mediation was very difficult, but the mediators were able to craft an acceptable agreement. The principal contractor later wrote a letter to FEMA saying the following: "I write this letter to praise certain individuals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in representing FEMA and the people of the United States.... Through [FEMA's] initiative and good judgment, mediation was arranged.... Had [FEMA] not pursued the matter with uncommon vigor, it would probably be wrapped up in court for many years.

The settlement saved FEMA over 3 million dollars, considering all of the requested debris removal costs at the outset of the mediation. Through the use of ADR, OGC was able to increase public confidence and customer satisfaction both within the agency and externally.

Cost Reduction

Give examples of your office's efforts to reduce costs from 1993 to 2000. Highlight specific successful efforts and be specific about where costs were actually reduced.

Reducing Costs – Office of General Counsel

The Office of General Counsel (OGC) has assumed a lead role within FEMA in its efforts to institutionalize risk management activities which will lead to cost reductions. For example, OGC has worked with the Operations Support directorate to ensure that it is able to create and implement an effective Occupational Safety and Health program throughout the agency, for headquarters and regional offices, as well as disaster field offices. The OGC office has also worked closely with the office of Human Resources Management to ensure that the agency's worker compensation and unemployment compensation programs are implemented fairly and with assurances that such payments are made appropriately. In addition, OGC has successfully worked with the office of Human Resources Management and the office of Equal Rights to implement strategies to reduce the number of discrimination claims filed against the agency.

OGC outreach efforts within the agency have also resulted in being consulted routinely as FEMA's offices and directorates develop plans to refine their programs to accomplish cost reduction initiatives. For example, OGC has been an integral participant in the agency's efforts to promulgate new regulations relating to insurance purchase requirements by state and local governments. In addition, OGC has assumed a lead role within the agency in efforts to prevent duplication of benefits between federal disaster assistance and other sources of disaster aid. In this regard, OGC recently prevailed in litigation between the United States and a state government that received \$12 million in

insurance payments that duplicated funding assistance from FEMA in the aftermath of a hurricane. Finally, OGC has worked closely with the office of the Inspector General (OIG) to implement programs to combat fraud, waste, and abuse; also collaborating with OIG and the Department of Justice to recoup fraudulently obtained funds through civil litigation.

Use of Technological Innovations

Describe how your office has employed the use of new technology since 1992. Also describe ways in which old technology has been used in a new way, if applicable. How have these technological innovations affected your office's performance.

New Technology and the Office of General Counsel

The office of General Counsel (OGC) has used new computer technology since 1993 in ways that have made the provision of legal advice to clients more efficient. An OGC intranet capability has been developed which enables attorneys to provide thorough legal advice efficiently – both within the Washington D.C. office, as well as in disaster field offices. A developing OGC web page is expected to be useful to others within the agency, as well as partners in state and local governments. With the help of new computer technology, OGC is developing a process to allow staff to fully research legal advice provided in the past thereby ensuring comprehensive and efficient current legal advice. Finally, to assist clients who are required to file annual financial disclosure forms, OGC created an electronic version of the forms that may be saved and simply updated from year to year by FEMA filers.

Deregulation

What was your office's role, if any, in helping to get rid of unhelpful regulations within FEMA? How has deregulation efforts at FEMA resulted in the development of new innovations by employees in your office? How did deregulation improve your office's ability to respond more effectively during disasters?

Office of General Counsel: Deregulation

The Office of General Counsel (OGC) had the lead role in 1999 in coordinating with the agency's Internal Regulatory Review committee efforts to repeal or revise a substantial number of out-of-date regulations located in Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (Emergency Management and Assistance). As a result of those efforts, a final rule was published in the Federal Register on May 25, 1999, eliminating 20 parts of Title 44 of the code (CFR).

In addition, OGC is nearing completion of a complete rewrite of the agency's internal delegations, which appear in 44 CFR Part 2. Those delegations, which were last promulgated in 1994, are out of date in a number of respects, so the substantial effort to rewrite the delegations is important for internal and external purposes.

Finally, OGC recently rewrote the agency's guidance on the development and promulgation of regulations. The new guidance, which was distributed throughout

FEMA in the spring of 2000, will be the basis of training that OGC will present agency – wide later this year.

Training

Describe any new training initiatives or changes in old training offered by your office to employees since 1992.

New Training Initiatives in Office of General Counsel

In addition to the training that the Office of General Counsel (OGC) conducts for NEMA (National Emergency Management Association) attorneys and the American Bar Association, the office has institutionalized annual training provided to FEMA field attorneys. OGC has greatly expanded its training program for new and experienced field attorneys since 1993. Field attorneys receive intensive training on the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and its implementing regulations, the Freedom of Information Act, and the Privacy Act, FEMA's Public Assistance and Individual Assistance programs, Hazard Mitigation activities, and the National Flood Insurance Program. OGC attorneys not only become acquainted with FEMA's statutes and regulations, but the training also provides them with an opportunity to meet policy experts with whom they will consult once they are deployed to disaster field offices. OGC has developed an extensive Field Attorney Manual, which became available electronically in April 2000.

In addition, OGC has developed training for FEMA's employees on the development of regulations. The training, provided primarily by OGC staff, is expected to also include input from the Office of Management and Budget.

Director Witt's Leadership

Describe director Witt's direct involvement with your division or sub-office during and after the major reorganizations took place. How has he been directly involved during major disasters or events since then? How has he been directly involved during non-disaster periods? Please provide specific examples

Director Witt and the Office of General Counsel

Director James Lee Witt has played a significant role in the evolution of the Office of General Counsel (OGC) since he arrived at FEMA. While previous FEMA directors did not routinely travel to disaster sites and participate directly in the agency's disaster response activities in the field, Director Witt has been a key participant in these types of activities. The director has ensured that OGC is one of the most significant participants in his efforts to institutionalize comprehensive responses to presidentially declared emergencies and major disasters throughout the United States.

FEMA General Counsels under Director Witt travel much more frequently with him to disaster field offices. It seems incredible, but until the early 1990s FEMA attorneys rarely traveled to states in which the president had declared emergencies and major disasters and, when they did travel it was usually to address problems that had already

arisen. Since Director Witt arrived in 1993, that has changed dramatically. Federal coordinating officers often request the services of staff attorneys for their disaster operations to ensure that the agency is able to anticipate situations that might otherwise develop into problems.

Directorate and Office Leadership

***(For Department Heads Only)* How did your leadership as director contribute to changes in your office or directorate? What were your primary objectives and how did you attempt to accomplish them? What were your successes?**

Changes in the Office of General Counsel

During my tenure as FEMA's general counsel I have stressed the need for Office of General Counsel (OGC) staff to be as customer-service-oriented as possible, both to our clients within the agency and to our external partners. This emphasis on customer service has resulted in the office's provision of legal services promptly and efficiently – within headquarters, to our regional offices, and disaster field offices.

In addition, we have expanded our outreach activities with our counterparts in the states – in large part through our coordination with attorneys from the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) with whom we routinely interact in disaster settings. FEMA and NEMA attorneys frequently attend conferences together to share our experiences and to learn how we can most effectively relate to one another on a day-to-day basis. As a result of our established relationships with state emergency management attorneys, we are better able to effectively implement the Stafford Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Act throughout the United States.

We also have institutionalized our coordination with the Disaster Legal Services section of the American Bar Association's (ABA) Young Lawyers division, with whom FEMA works in our efforts to ensure the provision of disaster legal services pursuant to section 415 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. 5182. We routinely attend ABA conferences to provide training to members of the Young Lawyers division who have expressed a willingness to coordinate the provision of disaster legal services to low-income disaster victims.

As the agency's general counsel I have also emphasized to my staff my goal of ensuring that FEMA's offices and directorates consistently seek legal advice from OGC as early as possible. I take pride in the practice of FEMA offices and directorates routinely requesting input from our attorneys on issues which are pending before the agency, and I attribute that trend to the excellent legal services which my office provides throughout FEMA.

OGC has taken the lead within FEMA during my term as general counsel in implementing an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program. In 1999, Cindy Mazur, OGC's former associate general counsel for program law, became the agency's Alternative Dispute Resolution specialist. Since her appointment Ms. Mazur has aggressively performed outreach throughout FEMA in her efforts to implement a dynamic ADR program for the agency's internal and external use. FEMA's ADR program has already been cited in a Department of Justice report to the president on the effective use of ADR by the government.

Finally, I am pleased that during my tenure as FEMA's general counsel we have developed an ability to provide immediate electronic access to historical documents that have been generated by FEMA attorneys over the years. These documents are now available to OGC staff, as well as throughout the agency, and this capability will enable us in the future to provide more comprehensive legal services even more efficiently than we have in the past.

Future Direction

(For Department Heads Only) How do you see your office/directorate evolving in the next ten years?

The Next Decade

Over the next decade FEMA is likely to devote substantial efforts to working with agency program staff on the development of programs to institutionalize the effective practice of hazard mitigation techniques – not only by the federal government, but also by state and local governments and the private sector. The Office of General Counsel (OGC) will remain an active participant in FEMA's efforts to develop and promote a greater sensitivity to the routine implementation of hazard mitigation techniques throughout the United States. These efforts are likely to result in OGC staff involvement in: 1) drafting and coordinating Congressional consideration of new statutory mitigation authorities; 2) facilitating the promulgation of regulations to implement new mitigation authorities; 3) preparing legal opinions which interpret mitigation authorities; and 4) facilitating discussions among interested parties (e.g., federal, state and local officials, as well as representatives of private sector organizations) to address issues which will inevitably arise in the course of FEMA's implementation of its hazard mitigation authorities.

For years OGC has been a key player in the agency's implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which was established in 1968 pursuant to the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended. FEMA has already taken steps to address fiscal and environmental concerns relating properties which are insured under the NFIP and which are damaged by flooding on multiple occasions. It is likely that OGC will remain an active participant in the agency's efforts to address repetitive loss properties through its legislative drafting input, its regulatory development activities, and in the course of its provision of legal services to the Federal Insurance Administration and the Mitigation directorate as those offices strive to resolve the problem which is presented by multiple loss properties.

OGC is also likely to play a valuable role in promoting and implementing the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) within the agency. ADR can be a valuable tool for use in resolving issues before they become overwhelming problems, as well as a tool for addressing problems after they have developed. FEMA's ADR specialist has already demonstrated her ability to use ADR techniques to resolve issues within the agency, as well as disputes that develop between the agency and outside entities. It is likely that ADR will soon be recognized as a valuable asset for the agency, and such recognition will provide an opportunity for OGC to play a lead role within FEMA in its continuing efforts to promote the use of ADR.

Finally, it is likely that OGC will rely more heavily on electronic mediums in its efforts to ensure the efficient and comprehensive provision of legal services throughout the agency. We have recently developed the capability to share OGC legal opinions electronically – both within OGC and throughout the agency (including headquarters, regional offices, and disaster field offices), and it is clear that this trend will continue in the future. Such electronic capabilities will enable OGC to provide legal services throughout FEMA, as well as with our external partners, more efficiently than has been possible in the past.

Special Essays

Discuss key cases since 1993 that have had a significant impact on the agency.

Key Litigation

FEMA has been involved in a broad variety of litigation related to a number of its programs. Although the vast majority of cases involve traditional insurance issues arising under the National Flood Insurance Program, FEMA also has been involved in a number of Administrative Procedure Act cases requiring review of disaster-related programs, cases arising under the various environmental laws, cases involving the United States Fire Administration, floodplain management cases, affirmative fraud cases, personnel cases, and cases to recover duplications of benefits under the Stafford Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Act.

For example, in Key Deer v. Stickney, FEMA was challenged about the Federal Insurance Administration's (FIA) implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and its potential effect on endangered plants and animals. In part because of the impact of that case, FEMA has worked closely with the Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service to develop a more effective environmental strategy related to the NFIP. FEMA also has been involved in a number of other environmental challenges to its programs, including the City of Lakewood v. FEMA case that examined the environmental justice ramifications of FEMA's floodplain mapping regulations.

The litigation arising under the National Flood Insurance Program has continued, and a favorable body of case law is being developed that will further the FIA's programmatic initiatives. In particular, in the Gowland v. Aetna and Van Holt v. Liberty Mutual Fire Insurance Co. cases FEMA has developed some excellent case law establishing the federal interest in the write-your-own (WYO) sector of the NFIP and providing support for the proposition that the WYO companies should be subject to the same standards as the federal government when selling federal flood insurance.

The floodplain management regulations received judicial examination in Woodhill v. FEMA. That case led to re-examination of FEMA's practices relating to the issuance of Letters of Map Revision.

Several disaster-related cases also have set favorable precedent. In Thiess v. Witt the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals recognized the unique staffing requirements of effective disaster response and recovery and put its imprimatur on the Stafford Act hiring authority and the disaster assistance employee (reservist) program. In Hawaii v. Witt, FEMA obtained judicial recognition of its interpretation of the duplication provisions of the

Stafford Act and established the principle that if an applicant has insurance available for a loss, it must refund to the Federal Treasury the amounts received that duplicate that coverage. In the cases of Morrison v. City of Grand Forks and Phelps v. City of East Grand Forks, the standards used for the voluntary acquisition program under the Mitigation directorate received judicial approval. Finally, in Graham v. Witt, a case involving the Individual and Family Grant program, the Ninth Circuit explored the meaning of the non-liability provisions of the Stafford Act for FEMA's discretionary activities.

The following is a list of some of the most significant cases that have been litigated by FEMA's office of General Counsel in the past seven years, as well as a brief summary of the cases:

Key Deer v. Stickney

Plaintiffs, a group of environmentalists, filed suit on behalf of the Key Deer, an endangered species in southern Florida, challenging FEMA's failure to consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service when implementing the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The court decided that FEMA is obligated to consult when implementing the NFIP

Thiess v. Witt, 100 F.3d 915 (Fed. Cir. 1996)

In this case, a group of disaster assistance employees filed a class action challenging FEMA's implementation of ^{42 U.S.C. § 5149(b)}, which authorizes FEMA "to appoint and fix the compensation of such temporary personnel as may be necessary, without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in competitive service" to perform major disaster and emergency services for which the agency does not have sufficient full-time employees. The employees challenged their characterization as "intermittent" employees, as defined in Title 5 of the United States Code. Asserting that they worked defined schedules set in advance by the employer, they argued that they could not be treated as intermittent employees under Title V. They sought compensation similar to permanent employees, as well as back pay and benefits. The Federal Circuit decided that FEMA had the authority under the Stafford Act to hire employees without regard to the civil service requirements of Title V. Because FEMA had decided that the best way to implements its disaster-relief activities was through the use of a temporary and intermittent work force, and that decision was consistent with statute, the court refused to compel FEMA to provide enhanced benefits to its disaster reservists.

Gowland v. Aetna, 143 F.3d [951, 954-55 (5th Cir. 1998)

This case also arose under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). In it the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals determined that a write-your-own (WYO) company selling the Standard Flood Insurance Policy pursuant to the National Flood Insurance Program was entitled to be treated similarly to the federal government selling that same policy. Thus, the company was entitled to assert that a lawsuit should be dismissed because the insured failed to file a proof of loss in a timely manner as required by regulation. This case affirmatively recognizes that federal funds are at issue under a case filed against a WYO company, and notes that federal funds may only be spent as authorized by federal law.

Van Holt v. Liberty Mutual Fire Insurance Co., 163 F.3d 161 (3rd Cir. 1998)

This case also arose under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) as implemented pursuant to the write-your-own (WYO) regulations at 44 C.F.R. § 62.23. An insured filed suit against a WYO company and raised a number of claims related to, but not directly arising under, the Standard Flood Insurance Policy. Specifically, the insured asserted that the WYO company committed a number of fraudulent and tortuous activities. On appeal, the Third Circuit dismissed the case and remanded it to state court for lack of subject matter jurisdiction, claiming that the matter raised only state-law claims, and not matters of federal interest. FEMA filed an *amicus curiae* brief which asserted that even though the claims were based on state law, the insured was seeking federal funds and determination of the merits of the case intrinsically required interpretation of the National Flood Insurance Act and its regulations. On rehearing, the court agreed that exclusive federal jurisdiction for a claim on a Standard Flood Insurance Policy sold by a WYO company, even a claim that did not directly raise contractual issues, was properly based on the National Flood Insurance Act.

Morrison v. City of Grand Forks; Phelps v. City of East Grand Forks

Two separate class actions were initiated by property owners in Grand Forks, N.D., and East Grand Forks, Minn. They challenged FEMA's implementation of the voluntary acquisition program, designed to mitigate future flood losses by purchasing flood-prone property and dedicating it to open space. Plaintiffs asserted that the program was not being implemented as a voluntary program and that, in fact, they were being forced to accept below-market offers for their properties. They asserted, among other claims, that this constituted an unconstitutional taking of their property and that they were entitled to the fair market value of their property, which they asserted was equivalent to the expense of purchasing comparable housing in areas that were not prone to flooding. The courts disagreed and found that FEMA acted within its authority in implementing the program. The judge in North Dakota commended FEMA's response to the North Dakota flooding.

State of Hawaii v. FEMA

In this case, the state of Hawaii challenged FEMA's assertion that insurance funds paid to the state for approximately \$12.1 million in damage to a number of public buildings after Hurricane Iniki was a duplication of benefits that, pursuant to The Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5155, should be paid to FEMA. The state made a number of assertions, and argued that FEMA had overestimated the costs of repairs, that FEMA could not document the cost of repairs, and that FEMA was not entitled to return of the funds. The court agreed with FEMA that the amount of insurance available was the proper benchmark to determine the amount of duplication.

Graham v. Witt

This case involved a challenge to FEMA's Individual and Family Grant (IFG) program. Specifically, individual citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) challenged FEMA's decision to end the IFG program after it appeared that the grantee was not properly implementing the program. The United States District Court for the Northern District of California held that individual recipients of IFG funds awarded by the grantee

had no standing to sue and, alternatively, that the non-liability provision of the Stafford Act at 42 U.S.C. 5148 shielded FEMA from liability.

The plaintiffs appealed, and on appeal the Ninth Circuit agreed that those individuals whose appeals had not been decided when the IFG program had been closed had no standing to sue and affirmed the District Court's dismissal as to those plaintiffs.

However, the Ninth Circuit held that those citizens whose appeals had been decided, but who were not yet paid when the IFG program was closed, did have standing to sue. The Ninth Circuit agreed with the District Court that the non-liability provision of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5148, prohibited the court from revisiting FEMA's decision to bring the program to a conclusion, but also held that FEMA's decision to withhold payment of the appeals that were approved when the program closed was discretionary only if the FSM was not compliant with the regulations. The court held that FEMA's determination that the FSM was not compliant was review-able, and the court remanded the case to the District Court to determine whether FEMA's decision that the FSM was noncompliant was arbitrary and capricious.

City of Lakewood v. Witt

Plaintiffs in this case, a number of municipalities that were to be part of the new AR zone category on the Flood Insurance Rate Map, challenged the implementation of the AR zone regulations. In 1992, Congress enacted section 928 of the Housing and Community Development Act, P.L. 102-550, which amended section 1307 of the National Flood Insurance Act, by delineating a new special flood hazard area called the AR Zone, which results from the decertification of previously-accredited flood protection systems which are in the process of being restored. FEMA promulgated AR zone regulations to create a new category of Special Flood Hazard Area where low-cost insurance would be available pending recertification of the levees. The citizenry of certain California towns were not satisfied with the new rules and challenged them based on Environmental Justice and other grounds. The court decided that FEMA's regulations had been promulgated in accordance with the law.

Woodhill Corporation

In this case a developer challenged FEMA's Letter of Map Revision for Fill (LOMR-F) regulations. In accordance with those regulations, the developer had been denied a LOMR because it appeared that he had plans to construct buildings on the property. The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with the plaintiff that FEMA's regulations did not clearly set forth the applicable standards in a way that provided for fair notice and equal treatment of all applicants, and set aside the regulations. As a result, FEMA has published new interim guidance and is in the process of implementing new regulations.

General Counsel and Legislative Trends

There have been three principal trends in legislation affecting or administered by FEMA since 1993. These include legislation that would:

- shift federal policy away from emphasis on civil defense to all-hazards civil emergency management;
- shift federal policy away from limiting emergency management to “response and recovery” authorities and toward hazard mitigation authorities generally, especially pre-disaster hazard mitigation; and
- provide legislative “teeth” to enforce flood insurance purchase requirements and to encourage flood loss mitigation.

Repeal of the Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950.

Early in this administration the Congress repealed the Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950 (FCDA) and inserted most of the substance of the FCDA in the Stafford Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Act as Title VI. Title VI replaced the term “civil defense” with “emergency preparedness”, and that change, coupled with other relatively minor changes to the repealed statute helped shift federal policy away from Cold War defense against nuclear attack to planning and preparedness for emergencies or disasters resulting from natural disasters or accidental or man-caused events.

Hazard Mitigation

The shift in federal policy toward hazard mitigation in general is one of the hallmarks of James Lee Witt’s tenure as director of FEMA. Late in 1993, with support from Director Witt, Congress enacted the Volkmer Amendment, which substantially increased the amount of post-disaster hazard mitigation funding which becomes available (pursuant to section 404 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. 5170c) to fund hazard mitigation measures following presidentially-declared major disasters.

Subsequently Director Witt initiated an effort to authorize pre-disaster hazard mitigation authority. He obtained the backing of OMB (Office of Management and Budget) to include pre-disaster hazard mitigation funding in the budgets presented by the president, and gained legislative support through the appropriations process. He convinced the House and Senate Appropriations Committees that measures to prevent or reduce damages from foreseeable disasters are less disruptive and more cost effective than providing federal disaster assistance after the fact. The effort is an excellent example of using the appropriations process to support a creative idea and promote new and innovative legislation.

National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994

Begun in 1968 as a voluntary program, experience in the first 4 – 5 years of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) showed that property owners in flood hazard areas would rarely buy flood insurance voluntarily. After the devastating floods of Hurricane Agnes in 1972, the Congress enacted legislation requiring mandatory purchase of flood insurance under prescribed circumstances. Perceiving a need to increase compliance with the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, and to authorize measures under the NFIP for flood loss mitigation, the Congress enacted the National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994 (NFIRA).

NFIRA broadened the flood insurance requirements to include mortgages purchased by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and mortgages guaranteed or insured by federal agencies that act as lenders, and authorized these institutions to purchase flood insurance for a

property and charge the borrower if flood insurance is required but not in force. It authorizes regulated lending institutions and federal lenders to escrow for flood insurance. These and other requirements have brought about higher levels of compliance than previously, while also streamlining various aspects of the flood hazard identification and community notification processes. NFIRA also established a Community Rating System to reduce premiums in communities that implement loss reduction measures greater than FEMA's standards. It also established a state and community mitigation assistance program to stimulate mitigation planning and to provide financial assistance for flood loss mitigation measures.

FEMA's key objectives in flood insurance legislation pending before the 106th Congress are to strengthen FEMA's mitigation activities on repetitive loss properties and to remove the premium subsidies on repetitive loss properties whose owners refuse FEMA-funded mitigation offers. FEMA has also sought removal of premium subsidies for certain high flood risk properties on federally leased lands and, over a seven-year phase-in period, on all properties other than primary residences. Finally, FEMA has sought new ways to finance flood map modernization in order to keep flood maps current and accurate.

Labor-Management Partnership Council Enhancements In Labor-Management Relations

On Oct. 1, 1993 the president signed Executive Order 12187, implementing the enhancement of Labor-Management Relations through Labor-Management Partnership Councils (LMPC). FEMA Director James Lee Witt signed the charter establishing FEMA's LMPC on Oct. 19, the second council (by hours) to be established in the federal government. By Nov. 10, each of the agency's five existing bargaining units which existed at that time, as well as FEMA's corresponding management team, were represented on the LMPC. In addition, one OHRM (Human Resources Management) representative was appointed by the director, for a total of 11 LMPC members. Over the course of the almost seven years of the FEMA LMPC, there have been 64 meetings of the LMPC addressing over 700 different subjects. Representatives to the LMPC changed 14 times. The LMPC grew from the original 11 members to the current 22 members, resulting from the addition of four new bargaining units, a non-partisan Chair, a facilitator, and a secretariat.

Initially there were no funds budgeted for the LMPC. However, the director made approximately \$32,000 available annually for the past several years for the LMPC to conduct its meetings. While most LMPC quarterly meetings are conducted at National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Md., due to its location, attempts have continued to have one LMPC meeting annually at different FEMA sites to enable a wide array of FEMA employees to have an opportunity to understand how the council functions.

There have been LMPC conference calls each month, as well as two or three-day quarterly meetings of the LMPC, since the council was established. Literally hundreds of telephone calls and e-mail messages occur each year among members of the LMPC researching subjects for consideration by the council.

The LMPC has continually reviewed agency policy affecting labor-management relations and most of the recommendations made by the LMPC have been implemented by FEMA. Additionally, the LMPC has been instrumental in the development and implementation of several agency-wide initiatives resulting in the enhancement of agency operations and internal and external customer service, as evidenced in published results of a government-wide survey.

Most notably the LMPC recently has addressed the following subjects:

The CORE Program

The council has been actively involved in the agency's development and implementation of CORE (cadre of on-call response employees) guidance since early in that process. During the meeting in the summer of 1998 the LMPC (Labor-Management Partnership Council) developed a set of comments on draft CORE guidance that had been prepared for the director's signature, and most of the LMPC comments were incorporated into the guidance that the director issued in August of 1998.

One of the LMPC suggestions was that FEMA conduct periodic audits of the implementation of the CORE program. The first of these audits is complete, and it is noteworthy that two representatives of the LMPC were involved in the audit process. It is anticipated that the LMPC will continue to play a constructive role in the agency's implementation of the CORE program.

Telework Program

The Labor-Management Partnership Council(LMPC) is proud that it was an early participant in the process of the agency's development of a telework program. Several years ago the LMPC conducted a survey of the agency's employees in an effort to determine whether a telework program would be feasible for FEMA to implement. The LMPC survey indicated that the majority of FEMA's employees, including approximately two-thirds of its managers, felt that it would be feasible for the agency to implement a telework program.

As a result of the LMPC survey, Director Witt assigned a manger (with assistance from a working group which included an LMPC representative) to develop a pilot telework program. Based on the results of the pilot program the director announced that telework would be adopted in appropriate situations throughout the entire agency. Given this history, the LMPC was pleased that it was able to play such an integral part in the evolution within FEMA of this process, and the LMPC hopes to remain involved as the new telework program evolves.

Violence in the Workplace Guidance

Although much of the credit for the agency's issuance of its Interim Policy on Violence in the Workplace must go to the Office of Security, the Labor-Management Partnership Council (LMPC) is also pleased that the LMPC identified this early on as the type of cross-cutting issue which was appropriate for its consideration. The LMPC suggested several years ago that this issue should be addressed by the agency, and on Nov. 24,

1998, the LMPC provided comments on draft Violence in the Workplace guidance that had been prepared by the Office of Security. Many of the comments made by the LMPC on the draft guidance were incorporated into the temporary Directive on Violence in the Workplace that was issued on Aug. 30, 1999.

Rewards and Recognition System

On several occasions during the past couple of years the Labor-Management Partnership Council (LMPC) has expressed an interest in helping the agency refine its rewards and recognition system. While it is recognized that no rewards system is ever going to be recognized universally as perfect, the LMPC remains of the opinion that there are steps FEMA can take to improve the current system which is used to recognize exemplary performance by agency employees. The LMPC prepared a set of recommendations to improve the system during its quarterly meeting in February of 2000, and the council forwarded those recommendations to the director. The LMPC believes that this is another excellent example of the type of issue which cuts across staff at all levels of the agency and which, therefore, is a subject that is uniquely suited for LMPC deliberations.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

There is a consensus within the council that the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) procedures can in many instances be useful in addressing disagreements which might otherwise fester and become even more contentious and divisive. The council believes that it is an ideal body to disseminate information about and promote the use of ADR throughout the agency. Therefore, the Labor-Management Partnership Council (LMPC) has offered to assist the agency in its efforts to promote the use of ADR in appropriate situations.

Office of Personnel Management Employee Satisfaction Survey

Following FEMA's receipt of information from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) about its Fiscal Year 1999 employee satisfaction survey, Director James Lee Witt asked the Labor-Management Partnership Council (LMPC) to review the survey results and report recommendations for action in response to the survey.

The LMPC spent a substantial amount of time at its quarterly meeting in May of 2000 analyzing the OPM survey results, and as a result the council provided the director with a May 30, 2000, memorandum addressing the survey and making recommendations about how FEMA might respond to the survey results.

The council's willingness and ability to provide substantial input to the agency indicates how significant a role a viable LMPC can play in the development of agency initiatives. Although on occasion the development of consensus positions within the council proceeds slowly, we believe that FEMA's LMPC has demonstrated the merits of partnering between labor and management representatives on a wide variety of issues.

Office Of Policy And Regional Operations

Mission Shift to an All-Hazards Disaster Response

Describe how your office's mission and functions have evolved since FEMA changed its focus to an all-hazards disaster response. Describe the evolution of your division's mission and functions from 1992-2000.

The development of the missions and functions of the Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO) is a unique and interesting one. Director James Lee Witt established the Office of Policy Assessment (OPA) on November 28, 1993, as part of his major reorganization of FEMA. As expected, the direction of OPA constantly changed in its early days, due to the continual reevaluation of its mission in the context of agency reorganization and reinvention. Despite the constant flux, the office as a whole was able to codify its mission. In early 1994, its mission read: "to support the director and senior agency members through managing and facilitating policy development, strategic planning, performance standards and assessment, innovation, and organizational development to achieve FEMA's overall goal." Once on a fixed course, OPA performed several important functions, including a systematic review and evaluation of policy, oversight of environmental responsibilities, assessment of compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), and oversight of FEMA's renewal and participation in varied initiatives of the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR).

The development of the missions and functions of the Office of Regional Operations (RO) however, stretches beyond the agency reorganization. As old as FEMA itself, the Office of Regional Liaison was created in 1979 to: 1) serve as a link between the director and the regional directors, 2) serve as a buffer between the regional directors and associate directors, 3) provide staff support to the director on headquarters and regional office matters, and 4) serve as a central information point for regional offices during transition periods. With this original purpose in mind, the Office of Regional Liaison was renamed the Office of Regional Operations during the 1993 reorganization. The change reinvented the partnership between headquarters and the regions, giving it structure and credibility. Regional directors were assured they could bring issues to headquarters and those issues would be resolved. The written mission of RO at this time was: "to serve as the director's lead staff office ensuring FEMA policies, programs, and administrative and management guidance are coordinated and implemented in the regions in a manner consistent with the agency's overall goals." Within this realm, the office itself saw its function as the promotion and facilitation of cooperative, effective, and efficient relationships between regional and headquarters elements to achieve a unified focus. As a staff element of the Office of the Director, the RO served as the staff advisor and coordinator for Director Witt on regional matters, including policy issues, day-to-day operations, and administrative and management matters. It served as the liaison between the regional directors and headquarters on program, management and policy issues, and provided a vital clearinghouse to identify policy and priority conflicts for executive resolution.

The need for a proactive, all encompassing regional operations office decreased as the link between headquarters' program offices and the regions grew stronger. While RO continued to develop performance plans for the regions, OPA was also coordinating between headquarters and the regions to develop program policies and guidelines for the regions. The functions of the two offices began to overlap, so the offices were merged in November 1995 to create the OPRO. A new mission then became necessary. The new office worked in support of Director Witt and agency managers by:

- conducting agency-wide planning
- developing policy
- managing reorganizations
- overseeing environmental reviews (a duty which now rests with the Mitigation Directorate)
- implementing strategic and administration initiatives
- ensuring regional coordination
- providing support on national security matters
- building partnerships with and among state and local government and non-government organizations

The office did not and does not proactively speak for the director on management review matters. However, the director has tasked the OPRO to conduct sensitive management reviews on a few occasions. This was done knowing that assessment, evaluation, and management and program reviews have proven effective in other organizations, when the reviews can be conducted in a friendly, constructive, and helpful manner, without appearing intrusive and attacking.

OPRO plays a major role in implementing various aspects of the GPRA, including to some degree, internal management systems. As of September 2000, the formal mission of OPRO is: "to support the director, agency leadership and agency organizations by leading agency-wide policy development and implementation, strategic planning and evaluation; by coordinating and implementing administration initiatives, external mandates, internal improvements and special projects; and by building regional capabilities and supporting regional operations."

Management Reorganization

Describe how your office's senior management was reorganized in 1993. Have major changes in your office's management structure occurred since then? If so, what was changed and why was it changed?

The history of the Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO) can be traced to the 1993 reorganization of FEMA and the subsequent merger of the Office of Policy Assessment (OPA) with the Office of Regional Operations (RO). The OPA was created on November 28, 1993. With this, of course, came the formation of a whole new staff, including senior management. In late February 1993, headquarters and regional offices were asked to give their views regarding the role(s) that the Office of Regional Liaison should play in relation to the regions and organizational elements in headquarters. Changes within the office, both managerial and otherwise, were made partially based on

those views. The short-term solution to all the challenges presented was to return the office to that of an Office of Regional Operations and give more power to the office director. The initial long-term goal of the office management was seen as the development and maintenance of a streamlined, mission-oriented, regional planning and reporting system that required less paperwork. FEMA brought in a new office director for RO during the early months of 1993. The Office of Regional Operations and its director became "the staff to turn to" when regional issues needed to be brought to the attention of Director Witt.

By September 1994, Director Witt set his vision for improved teamwork by all senior managers. This vision included eight points, namely to:

- 1) provide leadership for programs and people,
- 2) take care of all employees,
- 3) satisfy all customers (internal and external),
- 4) pull together as one team, not only to manage disasters, but also on tough budget issues, priorities, and day-to-day operation,
- 5) use a common-sense approach to managing,
- 6) minimize being bureaucratic with each other and the process,
- 7) resolve individual problems, and
- 8) empower employees to do their jobs.

Senior managers in OPA, RO, and now OPRO have all worked hard to fulfill this vision.

Without a doubt, however, the biggest structural change in office management occurred when the two offices, OPA and RO, were combined in November 1995. The agency realized earlier that year that the roles of the OPA and RO were not clear and defined. For instance, while OPA coordinated between headquarters and the regions to develop program policy and guidelines, RO was developing performance plans for the regional directors. The staffs of the two offices were combined, with the senior management of OPA taking over as senior management of the newly formed OPRO.

Customer Service Improvements

How has your office implemented FEMA's customer service policy? Please cite specific examples of research and/or surveys conducted by your office related to customer service. Also, cite specific changes that were made in the way your office does business as a result of the research and surveys that were done. Finally, give examples of specific improvements in the way your office has serviced its customers since 1992.

The Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO) had a fairly important role in issues dealing with the creation and improvement of customer service and customer satisfaction programs within FEMA. The role of the Office of Policy Assessment (OPA) -- a forerunner to OPRO -- was to bring ideas on how to improve customer service at FEMA.

The agency realized that in order to improve customer service, it must first find the root of customer dissatisfaction. In partnership with the Response and Recovery Directorate, OPA proposed and developed customer service surveys to gauge communication and satisfaction levels of disaster victims.

OPA also coordinated a customer satisfaction month in September 1994. Every day that month, easels were put on every floor of headquarters, and in every region, showing quotes from FEMA customers over their pleasure with the work the agency had done for them. There was also a weekly newsletter about customer satisfaction and several brown-bag discussions on the subject.

Initial survey results proved better than expected; FEMA's overall approval rating by disaster victims was found to be above 80 percent. The findings of the study were so favorable that President Clinton recognized and honored FEMA in September 1994 during a speech on national customer satisfaction day. FEMA disaster assistance customers were even flown in to Washington, D.C. for the event.

Corresponding with the customer satisfaction month in September 1994, OPA sent the director a proposal on how to improve customer service and satisfaction. OPA suggested that all organizations in FEMA develop their own action plan to survey customer satisfaction regularly — identifying the methodology, employee training, and contract assistance needed. Under its proposal, OPA would continue to “coordinate agency survey activities and serve as a resource to agency organizations.” In terms of customer service training, OPA proposed that instructing managers who attended the Federal Quality Institute (FQI) training in October 1994 create an action plan to share that FQI training with their staff. OPA further proposed that FEMA give out customer service awards. (The award program, to be managed by Human Resources, would reward outstanding examples of both internal and external customer service.) Other OPA suggestions included publishing a quarterly customer service bulletin, stressing customer service as the foundation of FEMA's strategic planning process, and holding quarterly manager and employee meetings to discuss customer service issues. OPRO led the way toward FEMA's renewed commitment to continuous improvement in customer service. These efforts of evaluating and improving customer service continue in 2000. OPRO is heading up a working group aimed at investigating the similarities and differences in customer and employee surveys throughout the agency. By sharing data, methodologies, and ideas, OPRO hopes to advance FEMA's goal of providing excellent customer service.

Cost Reduction

Give examples of your office's efforts to reduce costs from 1993 to 2000. Highlight specific successful efforts and be specific about where costs were actually reduced.

Laws passed in the 1990s require better financial systems, audited financial statements, and improved accountability for all federal agencies. As a forerunner to the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR), the National Performance Review also called for a concerted effort to reduce the cost of government.

The Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO) has been responsible for reducing costs within itself, as well as overseeing cost reductions on an agency-wide level. For example, the Office of Regional Operations (RO), one of the predecessors of OPRO, achieved significant cost savings by creating a regional travel policy that guarded against unnecessary and costly journeys. Under the new restriction, regional directors could not travel outside of their regions without first justifying the trip to RO and headquarters. In the early days after the reorganization, the Office of Policy and Assessment (OPA) was involved in many agency-wide projects aimed at meeting the requirements set forth by NPR. These projects frequently included cost-saving measures. The measures included reducing expenses and positions associated with management control structures, preparing a list of specific field offices to be closed as part of a presidential initiative, and using the cost savings realized from reinvention to pay for an increased investment in employee training and development. OPA was also responsible for creating solutions in accordance with Office of Management and Budget's attempts to cut personnel numbers government-wide. OPRO continues to help FEMA meet the requirements set forth by NPR.

Results-Oriented Incentives

How has your office adapted new ways of motivating employees and improving program performance? Specifically, which methods of reward or accountability practices have been implemented? Cite specific criticism and praise that prompted such changes in your office, if applicable.

In the professional workplace, most managers know that motivated employees are more productive and turn in a better performance overall. This is no less true for managers at FEMA and its Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO). The Office of Policy Assessment (OPA), a predecessor to OPRO, was responsible for attempts at motivating employees and improving employee morale agency-wide. One powerful motivator for employees around the world is seeing positive results stemming from their work. In emergency management, this motivational technique may not be used easily, especially at headquarters, often far away from actual disaster assistance. Realizing the importance and necessity of such motivation, OPA decided to give FEMA employees nationwide the chance to know that their work was helping. The office planned and staged customer satisfaction month in September 1994, hoping it would have positive effects on employee morale. That month, OPA put easels on every floor at headquarters and in every region, showcasing real quotes from actual FEMA customers, who praised the agency and its employees and their work. There was also a weekly newsletter about customer satisfaction and several brown-bag discussions on the subject.

Employee motivation within RO, OPA, and then OPRO is further achieved through strong leadership and an effective working relationship with the office director. Morale rises noticeably after pleasant social gatherings, such as lunches at the office director's expense and parties during the December holiday season. These events seemed to establish a sense of confidence and appreciation for the office director, in itself a motivation to get the job done and done well.

Use of Technological Innovations

Describe how your office has employed the use of new technology since 1992. Also describe ways in which old technology has been used in a new way, if applicable. How have these technological innovations affected your office's performance.

This office has employed the standard technologies, including computers and teleconferences. OPA has increased its efficiency on several levels through the use of these technologies.

Partnerships

What groups, organizations, companies or contractors are you now working with outside of FEMA. Summarize these partnerships and cite when and why each partnership began and how the working relationships have evolved. Provide insights about the partnerships in terms of how they have assisted your office in carrying out its functions and/or how they have contributed to FEMA's overall mission.

A predecessor to the Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO), the Office of Policy and Assessment (OPA), was heavily involved in reinvention and reorganization efforts within FEMA. Immediately after the agency reorganization in 1993, OPA worked very closely with the National Performance Review, now the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR), in forming and implementing agency requirements for the Government Performance and Review Act (GPRA) of 1993. The ongoing partnership with NPR was aimed at bringing reinvention ideas and techniques back to FEMA. OPA staff attended the weekly NPR meetings, during which representatives from other government agencies shared their reinvention attempts and successes. For a number of years, an advisory board, made up of representatives from other government agencies and private sector firms, met regularly and counseled the FEMA director on issues of emergency management. The advisory board disbanded shortly after the appointment of FEMA Director James Lee Witt, an experienced leader in emergency management.

The Office of Regional Operations (RO), another predecessor to OPRO, developed solid partnerships with the ten regional offices and, subsequently, with state emergency management agencies. Those partnerships were seen as so important that FEMA mandated each region develop a plan of action in regard to their customer and partner foci.

Deregulation

What was your office's role, if any, in helping to get rid of unhelpful regulations within FEMA? How has deregulation efforts at FEMA resulted in the development of new innovations by employees in your office? How did deregulation improve your office's ability to respond more effectively during disasters?

The Office of Policy and Assessment (OPA), before it became the Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO), was involved in many agency-specific deregulation issues in accordance with the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR). OPA was also responsible for:

- deregulation work in regard to issues surrounding the FEMA shift to preparation for and response to the consequences of all disasters.
- the reexamination of field structure in relation to the agency's mission.
- the development of objective criteria for declaring emergencies and major disasters.
- the use of performance agreements and other approaches to forge an effective team committed to accomplishing organizational goals and results.
- the encouragement of planning and measurements to improve agency performance.
- the clarification of agency goals and objectives, ensuring the identification of the agency's direct operating costs.
- the use of savings realized from reinvention to increase investment in employee training and development.
- the development of a corporate level succession plan.
- the establishment of a policy for delivering quality service to the public and the initiation of customer service programs.
- the reduction of costs and number of positions associated with management control structures.

One of the specific requirements of NPR was to create a 15:1 ratio between employees and supervisors. During the 1993 reorganization of FEMA, well before the NPR published its requirements, OPA worked to change the ratio of employees to supervisors at FEMA from 7:1 to 13.5:1. The number of supervisors within the entire agency was reduced by 33 percent. All told, OPA (and later OPRO) had a huge part in cutting the agency's workforce by 50 percent by the end of fiscal year 1995, well ahead of the requirements put forth by Executive Order 12861.

Organizational Culture

How did FEMA's mission shift change the agency's organizational culture? (This question refers to FEMA's shift from a focus on National Preparedness to a focus on Emergency Management.)

There have been numerous changes that have occurred in the Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO) since the reorganization of FEMA in 1993. Most of the changes in OPRO occurred as a direct result of the leadership of James Lee Witt. At the birth of the Office of Policy Assessment (OPA) in November 1993, the communication, morale, and working relationships within the office were excellent. This was largely due to the honesty and effort put forth by James Lee Witt and other agency leaders in addressing staff concerns about personnel issues stemming from the reorganization. Employees mainly worried about changes in pay scales and workloads. Once these fears were addressed, there was a sense of excitement in the air over the changes taking place in the agency as whole. This excitement was intensified as OPA took on a large role in the reorganization itself.

There was a large organizational change in OPRO's other predecessor, the Office of Regional Operations (RO), as a result of the 1993 reorganization. The office, formerly known as the Office of Regional Liaison, got a new name and a new office director. Its role within the agency as a staff element of the Office of the Director was reinforced and intensified to make the regional directors more aware of operations at headquarters, and thus increase their level of customer satisfaction. Communication between headquarters and the regions improved immediately. Based on the results of a later survey of the regional offices on its mission and function, RO changed its operational methods and further improved its communications. Constant communication was especially important because of all the internal changes taking place in the early years of Director Witt's tenure. A cultural change also occurred by increasing the level of awareness by the regions over the happenings at headquarters.

In late 1994, the focus of the agency as a whole seemed to change. With its internal reorganization complete, FEMA shifted its focus toward external disaster management. The regions were now able, even expected, to focus a great deal of their efforts on creating positive partnerships with state emergency managers. Communication between RO and the regions gradually decreased, diminishing the role and functional importance of RO. It was because of this change that the office was combined with OPA on November 21, 1995 to form the Office of Policy and Regional Operations.

Training

Describe any new training initiatives or changes in old training offered by your office to employees since 1992.

The Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO), and its predecessor, the Office of Policy and Assessment (OPA), have had a very significant role in agency-wide training initiatives since the 1993 reorganization of FEMA. OPA was a very strong advocate of the Federal Quality Institute (FQI) and its customer service training. The office recommended that FEMA managers who attended FQI training should develop a plan of action for sharing this training with their employees. OPA further suggested that savings realized from reinvention efforts should be used to increase investment in employee training and development. OPA was also responsible for incorporating Total Quality Management principles into training for managers and supervisors agency-wide.

In 1994, it became apparent to OPA and OPRO that training was needed before the implementation of a new grant program, called Performance Partnership Agreements (PPAs). Prior to the launch of PPA, OPRO created training modules for both the regions and the states, to familiarize them with the long-range planning initiative. Regional training was done at headquarters over a three-day period, and state training was done at the Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, Md. during the state managers' annual meeting. Both training sessions were conducted by OPA staff.

Director Witt's Leadership

Describe Director Witt's direct involvement with your division or sub-office during and after the major reorganizations took place. How has he been directly involved during major disasters or events since then? How has he been directly involved during non-disaster periods? Please provide specific examples.

Immediately after the reorganization in 1993, the director became very involved in the daily operations of the Office of Policy Assessment (OPA), one of the predecessors to the Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO). OPA was at the forefront of the reorganization process. All ideas and thoughts on the subject of reorganization within FEMA were funneled through that office. Director Witt often sat in on OPA staff meetings and discussed issues with the OPA staff. A few OPA staff members even reported directly to Director Witt. These staff members noted that the director always remained open and receptive to suggestions and ideas.

The same holds true for the other forerunner of OPRO, the Office of Regional Operations (RO). Director Witt and the chief of staff attended weekly meetings to discuss regional happenings and concerns with RO senior management. The office regularly facilitated communication between the director and the regions, and even between the director and directorates for certain special projects. OPRO's direct communication and involvement with the director has evolved as the director's relationship with the regions has evolved.

Optional Essay

Write about anything else you think would be relevant and interesting from your office's perspective.

A major initiative of the Office of Policy and Regional Operations (OPRO) under the leadership of James Lee Witt was the development of Performance Partnership Agreements (PPAs) with the states. The idea behind the PPA came from the Office of the Director. The task of creating and implementing the new grant program was given to the Office of Policy Assessment (OPA), a forerunner to OPRO.

Because of Director Witt's background as a state emergency manager, he was aware of the problems encountered and concerns raised by the states over FEMA grants. From the state, or customer, point of view, the grant situation was one of a top down bureaucratic approach by FEMA. The agency was in the practice of telling the states exactly what to do with the grant monies. Director Witt and many state emergency managers wanted FEMA to put an end to this direct control over the actions taken under the grants, as well as the approval of said actions. The state managers wished to have more flexibility in the use of FEMA grants, and the director had faith in their ability to know what they needed to do, and how they needed to do it.

The original idea behind the development of PPAs was to simply give block grants to the states, after which FEMA would just disappear from the picture entirely. However, it was learned that block grant programs, in general, had a tendency to be easily cut from budgets because of the lack of administrative control involved with them. Therefore, the planners decided against block grants. Instead, they developed a state grant program that

followed federal guidelines calling for a change in the assistance relationship between the federal government and the states. The guidelines suggested giving the states more flexibility and reducing administrative burden, in exchange for increased accountability for achieving measurable results.

In the short span of a few months in 1994, FEMA wrote a basic PPA document, developed PPA training, and launched the PPA program. The PPA plan was originally designed to enable FEMA to better establish clearly defined and mutually agreed upon strategic goals and priorities with all levels of government that would guide program and management processes to meet the needs of the American people with as little federal involvement as possible.

The PPA attempted to remove the prescriptive requirements of a prior initiative and its Comprehensive Cooperative Agreements (CCAs), which was program-driven, with funding controlled by headquarters. Dollars were "stove-piped" to each state for very specific programs, without coordination to overall emergency response needs of the state, and the states were required to report everything done with the grant monies. PPAs for the first time included goals of the "partnership" and objectives that the states could pursue individually. The national partnership goals exhibited the collective interests and concerns of the federal government and all of the states. The individual state objectives reflected the unique economic, demographic, and geographic needs of each state. The goal of the PPA document was for the states to specify what they were planning to do and accomplish with the grant money. The agreements acted as statements of work for grant applicants, or program narratives describing what was going to be done with the grant money the states were given. In the agreements, the states would put forth a five-year plan for how FEMA and the state would work together to establish and achieve pre-disaster performance goals.

One adjustment had to be made early in the PPA program: the states wanted their five-year grants in yearly increments, which prompted the addition of the Cooperative Agreement (CA). Newly signed PPA/CAs divided the grants into five payments. Grant recipients had to report on the status of the PPA every six months. Every year, the state would also be required to report how it would spend the next year's money in order to meet its five-year objective. Since the PPA/CAs fail to specify report format, however, some regions found it difficult to extract meaningful information from the reports and compare historical data from other regions or states.

Under the new PPA program, FEMA no longer micro-managed how each dollar was spent. In theory, this reduced the resources devoted to unnecessary bureaucratic administrative processes and increased resources devoted to technical assistance that helps states and local governments meet their emergency management objectives. The consolidation of programs and funding streams further reduced paperwork for the states and gave them more flexibility. The states alone determined which programs, activities, and projects get funded, without guidelines from FEMA.

An important motivator behind the development of the agreements was the idea of partnership. According to OPRO, the basic philosophy of PPA was to have the regional directors focus solely on four main areas:

- 1) relationships with state and local governments and emergency managers
- 2) relationships with regional staff and a need to team build

- 3) relationships with headquarter counterparts and the need to team build
- 4) relationships with all other emergency management groups (other federal agencies, other state and local groups, voluntary groups, etc.).

Originally, OPRO desired that the president and the state governor sign each PPA agreement. This was very important as it raised the status of the agreements in the eyes of the public and the state governors themselves, obligating them both to be aware of the existence of the program, and of FEMA. Eventually, Director Witt assumed this signing duty for the federal side of the deal.

After only four years (1994-1998), several challenges eventually led to other changes in the PPA program. First, the states were required to do strategic planning for their five-year plan. After consulting with the Office of Financial Management, FEMA then changed the goals and the strategy of the PPA: collapsing the funding streams to the states until the PPA program closely resembled block grants.

The grants evolved further, eventually becoming Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG). In 1999, FEMA completed the development of the EMPG program, which FEMA established to streamline the manner in which FEMA provides financial assistance to its state partners. By consolidating funding for state emergency management programs, FEMA hoped to provide flexibility to states for targeting resources to priorities, and require performance measurements to ensure accountability.

The states have been very positive about the consolidation of many programs under the EMPG program. They appreciate the flexibility and the recognition by FEMA's director that each state emergency management agency should be empowered with setting the priorities in their state for emergency management issues.

FEMA continues to make improvements in the way its financial system and processes operate and in the way management and internal controls are structured. FEMA strives to show that its money was well spent and effective.

Special Essays

Discuss which policy changes have had the greatest impact in dealing with disasters since 1993.

There have been several policy changes under Director Witt, which have had a strong and positive impact on the way the agency responds to disasters. In addition, there have been numerous policy changes that have specifically impacted the way in which the agency now provides disaster assistance. A great example of one of these policy changes is the Logistics Information Management System (LIMS). The development and implementation of the LIMS has greatly reduced property loss and greatly enhanced the ability to perform inventory control. The development of the comptroller cadre has reduced regional financial involvement at the disaster field office and shifted the burden to the disaster cadre. The decision to intensify closeout efforts greatly increased

Operations Support's responsibility in post-disaster financial operations, requiring a commitment of additional personnel and placing more emphasis on using the existing staff. The creation of the specific disaster assistance temporary employees (SDATE) and cadre of on-call response employee (CORE) positions has enabled the regions to process hazard mitigation grant applications faster after the disaster field office has closed. This increase in staff has also allowed the regions more time to work with their state counterparts to improve mitigation planning at both the state and local levels. The implementation of the managing state concept has also expedited the processing of applications. Agreements for FEMA to process grant applications within a specific time frame and for the applications themselves to be submitted in a complete package have improved the quality of applications being presented for mitigation projects. Changes in the code of federal regulations that allowed mitigation funds to be spent statewide instead of just in the areas designated by a federal disaster declaration, have changed the focus of the program from mitigation in damaged areas to long-term mitigation. Coupled with other headquarters incentives, like *Project Impact* and the Repetitive Loss Strategy, this has encouraged states and local communities to include mitigation in their long-term planning. It is believed this has also led to the inclusion of emergency planning and mitigation in college courses and in the focus in schools on planning. Another change in regulations was the inclusion of the 5-percent initiative for projects that would not normally be funded by mitigation grants. This change along with the additional 5-percent initiative for tornado projects allowed for sirens, weather radios, training and planning funds to be distributed at the local level. Administrative changes in the hazard mitigation program have encouraged the states to become more efficient in using their funds. Headquarters now reviews all requests for management costs submitted by states. This review not only saves FEMA funds but also encourages the states to plan for the best and most efficient use of staff.

There are also many policy changes that have occurred on a disaster specific basis. Two examples of these changes occurred in response to the Red River (DR-1175-MN) floods in Region V. First, in response to a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) request to build within a levee system, FEMA and the USACE entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on construction within floodplains. This MOU has started an ongoing series of negotiations between the agencies on floodplain management policies. Also in response to this disaster, the substantial damage estimator, a computer program developed to assist communities in identifying structures that need to be brought up to code, was refined and used for the first time in the field. The region trained the local officials to use the software to perform a quicker and more efficient inventory of damaged property so they could make better floodplain management decisions based on accurate information.

In Region VI, five policy changes have greatly affected the region: *Project Impact*, The Safe Room Initiative, Repetitive Loss Strategy, the Comprehensive HAZMAT Emergency Response Capabilities Assessment Program (CHER-CAP), and Counter-Terrorism.

- In October 2000, Tulsa, Oklahoma—a *Project Impact* community once known as the flood capital of the nation—became the first to reach a “Class Three Rating,” meaning residents will pay 35 percent less for flood insurance as a result of enacting

and enforcing tough land use and building permit requirements. Tulsa is now seen as the ultimate model in mitigation for communities across the country.

- The second policy change encouraged everyone in a high-risk area to use available government aid to build an in-home Safe Room for protection against tornadoes. The Safe Room Initiative—developed by FEMA Region VI—included a publicity campaign, free construction plans, and a state-sponsored rebate program. As part of the campaign, the region also produced a video called “Safe Rooms Save Lives.”
- Repetitive loss properties covered by the National Flood Insurance Program account for a third of the program’s loss, draining about \$200 million a year from the Flood Fund. In 2000, FEMA targeted 10,000 of these flood-prone NFIP homes for buyout or elevation to put an end to these repetitive losses. Grouped by state, Louisiana tops the list with 3,086 flood-prone structures targeted for buyout or elevation. Texas follows with 1,351 targeted structures. FEMA plans to use the list to help focus its efforts to prevent further loss to these high-risk properties.
- FEMA’s Comprehensive HAZMAT Emergency Response Capabilities Assessment Program (CHER-CAP), which was also developed in Region VI, helps local communities improve their ability to plan for and respond to mass casualty incidents involving hazardous materials. A full-scale training exercise caps off the CHER-CAP curriculum, which requires a true partnership between public and private sectors. The final test—tailored to specific risks confronting a community—typically involves hundreds of participants and includes smoking props, staged hazards, and simulated casualties. Evaluators use checklists based on 16 objectives for subsequent review and analysis. Low marks may serve as a cold reality check for ill-prepared rescue units, police forces, fire departments, emergency medical services, industrial HAZMAT teams, or other first responders.
- In 1996—with grim images of the Oklahoma City Bombing burned in their memories forever—the two top leaders at FEMA Region VI invited the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in Dallas to set up a permanent satellite office at the Federal Regional Center (FRC) in Denton, Texas. The two agencies continue to benefit from their close, one-of-a-kind relationship, forged during the aftermath of that tragic event.

In Region III, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) has also has a huge effect by enhancing the ability to move people out of harm’s way and break the disaster-repair-disaster cycle. HMGP, which began as an initiative after the Great Midwest Floods of 1993, has become a consistent effort with a funding mechanism. In 1999, Region III approved 109 project applications for nearly \$26 million that resulted in the acquisition of 595 structures, the elevation of 29 structures and the relocation of four other building. Regional analysis shows almost \$47 million in benefit dollars. It also felt within the region that with the introduction of the new Public Assistance program, FEMA moved to place the emphasis for disaster recovery with the state agency or local government applicant. This allows the applicant, with hands-on involvement, the opportunity to define the work project. This change goes a long way in creating a “vested-interest” approach that takes away from having the “feds” dictating. With the development of the teleregistration program, FEMA took a major step forward in expediting the disaster application process for potential victims with the centralization of registration by a toll-

free telephone number. This means applicants are able to have their applications processed in a more convenient, more timely, and less threatening manner. Follow-up assistance via the national help line provides immediate attention and answers to questions about the process.

In the minds of Region IX, a major change occurred with the 1993 establishment of the Operations Support Division, which combined redundant administrative, financial, personnel and logistic functions (Disaster Assistance program and the regional administrative unit). During the Northridge Earthquake recovery operation in January of 1994, Operations Support staff deployed to the Pasadena area, but the majority of the staff established a central processing office in Redwood City. This office provided services and financial assistance to the victims of the Northridge quake. The telecommunications and computer networks for the processing and administration of these disaster claims served as the forerunner for what is now the National Processing Service Center. For Region IX, as in other regions, HMGP resulted in many changes. The implementing of HMGP and its policy changes has benefited the applicants and FEMA alike. By increasing the dollars available to local communities, greater protective measures are ensured, decreasing disaster relief fund expenditures. Now, once hazard mitigation is included in a declaration, it is also declared statewide. This increases the usage of HMGP funds by the state for those projects that meet the goals and priorities established in state and local mitigation plans.

In Region II, the policy change occurring with the broadening of the scope of the Federal Response Plan (FRP) to an all-hazards approach has had the greatest impact in dealing with disasters. Although the FRP was in the early stages of development before 1993, the original intent was to utilize the FRP for dealing with catastrophic disasters. With the extension of the FRP as a vehicle for responding to all hazards and all levels of disaster operations, the concept evolved into a far more effective approach to dealing with disasters – completely revamping the ways in which FEMA works with other federal departments and agencies. The organizational and operational structures which have developed over time to carry out the FRP have effectively reinvented and redefined disaster operations, not only at the federal level, but also for state and local level emergency managers who have adopted many of the FRP concepts and mirror these in their own planning and operations. Among the impacts of policy changes related to the FRP in dealing with disasters at the regional level are the following:

- the emergency support functions established under the FRP have strengthened planning and preparedness at the regional level, with the development of the Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC);
- the development of various emergency response teams under the FRP completely reinvented disaster operations; with the adoption of the incident command system, a coherent and consistent management structure for disaster operations was implemented nationwide for the first time in FEMA's history;
- within the regional offices, the approach to staffing disaster operations has come to cross-cut divisional lines in many instances (in Region II, for example, most employees have a position or function which they may be called upon to perform related either to ROC activation or ERT-A deployment);

- the creation of the Operations and Planning Team within the Response and Recovery Division at the time of the agency re-organization in 1993 established for the first time a specialized disaster planning capability at the regional level;
- other improvements in staffing, training, health and safety, and security have been put into place and are continually upgraded, due in large part to the more structured organization and administration of the disaster field office as an emergency response team;
- and institutionalization of the practice of co-locating the state coordinating officer and field coordinating officer at the disaster field office has improved communication and coordination not only between FEMA and the state and also between the emergency support function agents and their state counterparts.

It has been found that agency-wide policy changes having an effect on disaster operations have, for the most part, been associated with the revamping of the emergency management system, as opposed in a response to certain disasters. Granted there are cases of the latter, for example changes in the terrorism function of the Federal Disaster Response Plan following the 1993 World Trade Center Bombing and the 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing, but for the most part, regional problems in disaster response have led to regional policy changes. However, the need for the revamping of the emergency management system is often brought to light by specific disaster operations problems, especially those regional disasters, like the two bombings, which are seen to have a national scope or threat. The importance of this process is realized when the differences in disaster threats faced by each individual region are remembered. This is a great example of the balance between the centralized, yet at the same time de-centralized organization that is the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Discuss GPRA and what changes and effects it has had since 1993.

The first strategic plan in the history of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was published in December 1994. As part of the process of FEMA's renewal, "Partnership for a Safer Future" laid out the agency's mission and vision. Agency leaders recognized that FEMA's role in making a safer future would require FEMA to lay a solid foundation on which to build an effective organization of emergency management. FEMA recognized that the organization would need to lead and support the nation in a comprehensive, risk-based emergency management program. It also recognized that its mission to reduce the loss of life and property included protecting the nation's institutions from all natural and man-made hazards. Consequently, FEMA began to direct efforts towards creating an agency that would restore the confidence of the American people and fulfill President Clinton's promise to "be there" when America needed it.

During the intervening years, FEMA has enjoyed much success in its renewal. Internally, it improved management systems and streamlined operations to function more efficiently and with more accountability. Programmatically, FEMA redirected its services to give priority to identifying and meeting the needs of customers; and forged closer ties with state and local governments, other federal departments and agencies, business and

industry, voluntary organizations, and individual citizens. As a result, FEMA's response capability is stronger and more effective. The agency's delivery of individual disaster assistance and assistance to states and localities has been improved and the processes streamlined. Perhaps most important, the level of attention to and resources for reducing disaster losses by mitigating hazards have increased dramatically.

FEMA is committed to reducing administrative costs of disasters and improving financial controls associated with the disaster relief program. The agency is concentrating on activities that reduce costs through mitigation, because no other approach is as effective over the long term. FEMA addressed flood hazards—the most frequent type of disaster—by launching two nationwide campaigns. The first was to increase the number of flood insurance policies and thereby decrease the costs of flood disaster relief to the federal government. The second was to purchase thousands of parcels of property, voluntarily offered by owners, to remove homes and businesses from the floodplains across the United States. FEMA also led an important National Arson Prevention Initiative in response to the wave of church fires.

In response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993, FEMA produced a long-range strategic plan in fiscal year 1997 and a revised strategic plan in FY 2000. Beginning in FY 1999, FEMA developed annual performance plans in support of its strategic goals and annual performance reports marking the progress toward achievement of these goals. Working through representatives of each organization and region, FEMA continues to refine its GPRA requirements and to demonstrate to the public and Congress that FEMA is committed to leading the nation in a comprehensive risk-based emergency management program of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Office Of Human Resources Management

Mission Shift to an All-Hazards Disaster Response

Describe how your office's mission and functions have evolved since FEMA changed its focus to an all-hazards disaster response. Describe the evolution of your division's mission and functions from 1992-2000.

Prior to 1993, the responsibility for the disaster staffing and deployment programs was shared by the State and Local Programs and Support Directorate, and the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM). In 1993, FEMA underwent a functional reorganization which led to the responsibilities for the disaster staffing and deployment programs being moved to OHRM for stewardship. The cultural change of the disaster assistance program required change in the support given to the program from the human resources arena. In the past, the agency strictly relied on the Disaster Assistance Employee (DAE) program as its sole means of surging staff for disaster operational responsibilities.

The DAE program was established to provide staffing augmentation to FEMA's permanent workforce in responding to and recovering from disaster events requiring federal assistance. Hired by regional offices, DAE reservists are maintained on FEMA roles in a non-pay status when not deployed. DAEs receive salary payment when actually deployed and may be assigned to several functions depending on the needs of the disaster operations. DAEs surge to the disaster field location from their permanent residence and receive travel and per diem while deployed. Pay is administratively determined based on job titles and personal skills qualifications and competencies.

Following Hurricanes Hugo, Andrew and Iniki in 1993, FEMA looked for new ways to handle the large workload that accompanied the disaster closeout responsibilities. This led to the development of the Special Disaster Assistance Temporary Employee (SDATE) program.

The SDATE program was established to assist in the follow up of long-term work associated with extremely large, programmatically burdensome disaster closeout activities. It was designed to provide a staffing mechanism to meet the tremendous workload in headquarters and the regional offices which followed extraordinary disasters such as Hurricanes Hugo and Andrew, and the Northridge earthquake. These employees were appointed for up to four years and duty stationed to a regional or headquarters office. These term positions were established as full time and afforded leave benefits, health and life and retirement benefits. Salary was determined by the General Schedule with locality adjustments. Each office was authorized to hire and administer their recruitment effort. Work plans were initiated and allocation advices approved by the program and budget office with funds charged to a specific disaster.

In 1993, the teleregistration function was established within the National Processing Services Center (NPSC) at the Mt. Weather facility to provide more effective, centralized assistance to disaster victims, thus creating a corresponding need for ensuring that disaster surge staffing requirements were met. The center was originally staffed with permanent, full-time employees. When this proved insufficient due to increased disaster

workload, FEMA employed DAEs as local hires, converting these employees to reservist status after 120 days of service. These were two-year appointments, during which DAEs were permitted to actually work for only 18 months.

In 1994, OHRM created a disaster recruiting staff to assist the NPSC, as well as regional offices, in hiring DAEs and to serve as a central point-of-contact for the recruitment of highly-qualified employees to staff more specialized national cadres of professionals in the following fields: federal coordinating officers, stress management counselors, health and safety specialists, public affairs specialists, comptrollers, equal rights officers, and security specialists. In response to the on-going teleregistration and applicant assistance/benefits processing requirements in the processing centers and other agency divisions, OHRM transformed the recruiting function into a new Disaster Personnel Operations Division (DPOD) in 1996.

The SDATE program was gradually phased out, and two new reservist cadres were created in its place: the Cadre of On-Call Response/Recovery Employee (CORE) and Disaster Temporary Employee (DTE) programs, to meet FEMA's long- and short-term disaster surge manpower needs, and to provide continuity of experience and expertise at fixed-site facilities. At that time, DAE appointments at fixed site facilities were replaced by the newly initiated CORE and DTE employment programs.

CORE and DTE Appointments

The CORE program was designed as a successor to the SDATE program and developed to address the long-term staffing needs of the disaster fixed facilities and regional offices as approved by the FEMA director. The recruitment and placement efforts are centrally managed by the DPOD. Allocations and distribution of CORE resources require preliminary approval from FEMA's Disaster Resources Board who will make recommendations to the director for final approval. Appointments are temporary in nature with a full or part-time work schedule. Employees are placed on a position description and pay determined by the General Schedule with locality adjustment.

CORE positions are four-year appointments with full federal benefits, and are intended to provide continuity of service for long-term, disaster-related projects and activities.

DTEs are intermittent positions, not to exceed one-year, but renewable, and receive pay for hours actually worked and compensation for authorized overtime. The majority of DTE positions are intended for surge staffing in caller services functions within the NPSCs. DTEs who work regular full-time or part-time schedules are eligible for annual leave and sick leave, but do not receive federal life or health insurance coverage.

Results/Benefits of Reservist Programs

FEMA's mission shift to disaster response and mitigation sparked a need for a concentrated response to disasters. To enable FEMA to successfully fulfill this mission, the hiring and employment initiatives under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, developed and refined by DPOD, have ensured several results. They include continuity of experienced staff at fixed-site facilities; significantly faster deployment to disaster sites to provide effective assistance to disaster victims; improved customer service to both internal and external customers; shortened response timeframes; and enhanced disaster recovery activities.

Management Reorganization

Describe how your office's senior management was reorganized in 1993. Have major changes in your office's management structure occurred since then? If so, what was changed and why was it changed?

The senior management structure in the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) was not immediately reorganized as a result of FEMA's shift to a multi-hazard disaster response. However, as new recruitment issues developed as a result of the agency's mission shift, it was apparent OHRM had to adjust its focus. In keeping with the administration's goal to streamline operations and increase efficiency, existing resources were redirected to the disaster staffing function to meet the increasing demands. In 1993, the Equal Opportunity Division was transferred from OHRM to the newly created Equal Rights Office. This transfer was seen as a means of enhancing the equal rights programs and eliminating any perception of conflict of interest. Also, in 1993, the employee development training responsibilities that had been in OHRM were moved to the newly created Preparedness, Training and Exercises Directorate along with the other training programs in FEMA.

In 1996, to meet the increasing needs from the switch to a multi-hazards disaster approach, OHRM formed a new division to handle the resulting requirements. The most remarkable thing about the Disaster Personnel Operations Division (DPOD) is its evolution in only five years from a small recruitment function with a small staff, little funding and few resources to a fully operational, full service personnel office with responsibility for hundreds of employees. The division now offers services to customers that include benefits administration, staffing, classification, and employee relations functions, among other personnel specialties.

Customer Service Improvements

How has your office implemented FEMA's customer service policy? Please cite specific examples of research and/or surveys conducted by your office related to customer service. Also, cite specific changes that were made in the way your office does business as a result of the research and surveys that were done. Finally, give examples of specific improvements in the way your office has serviced its customers since 1992.

The Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) has implemented a number of customer service initiatives, including offering training on personnel topics and application procedures to employees; expanding recruitment accessibility using Internet job listings; providing customer service training to staff; and maintaining a toll-free number to facilitate recruiting, particularly during disaster surge situations. OHRM developed and randomly distributed surveys to employees on FEMA's Employee Performance System and the Rewards and Recognition System. In addition, OHRM has been conducting focus groups discussions with managers and employees. The purpose of the surveys and focus group discussions is to: obtain feedback on how the systems are working; get opinions and ideas about the system; and, to obtain suggestions on modifying the systems to better serve the agency and its employees.

In 1997, the OHRM contracted with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to provide retirement counseling services to FEMA employees. DOT's assistance was needed because FEMA had and continues to have a large volume of employees who are eligible to retire, as well as, the complicated nature of some retirement questions and cases. DOT's assistance in this area has improved the retirement process and has been greatly appreciated within OHRM and FEMA. The OHRM also uses the services of DOT in the position review process. DOT's assistance in the position review process has allowed human resources specialists to focus more on providing advisory and consultant services in terms of recruitments strategies and position management.

A reception area or information center was recently established for OHRM to improve customer service. The staff assigned to the information center is able to respond to general personnel inquiries immediately referring complex issues to a specialist for resolution.

In an effort to continue quality customer service to clients, OHRM recently conducted a payroll and personnel data survey to ensure that certain information contained in the agency's payroll and personnel system was accurate and complete for each employee. The survey has heightened awareness of ensuring that personnel and payroll, and personal data for employees is accurately reported in the payroll and personnel system from the beginning of the employees' accession and that follow-up is conducted with employees throughout their tenure when changes or additions have been made to their employee record.

Cost Reduction

Give examples of your office's efforts to reduce costs from 1993 to 2000. Highlight specific successful efforts and be specific about where costs were actually reduced.

With the implementation of the Automated Deployment Database (ADD) system, FEMA has experienced a decrease in man hours and communications costs with regard to staffing Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act operations. Under the previous agency disaster staffing strategy, the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) would determine that there would be a need for DAEs, whereupon OHRM would call all DAEs in the affected region to ascertain workforce availability. Regional DAE cadre size averaged 450 to 550 members. Contacting DAEs was very labor intensive and costly from a telecommunications standpoint. With the implementation of the deployment system, the onus was placed on the employees to notify FEMA of their availability via an automated call in system called Octel. This new process resulted in significant reduction in manhours.

The HR systems team within OHRM has significantly reduced processing and reporting costs. By providing routine quality assurance reports on various data within the payroll and personnel system, the team has reduced the number of processing and keying errors which resulted in high processing costs. The team was instrumental in designing a database that encapsulates vital information from the payroll and personnel system, and allows managers to have the capability used for ad-hoc reporting, statistical and management information reports. In doing so, the systems team has been able to reduce the costs associated with on-line computer processing unit (CPU) reporting time.

Additionally, the OHRM developed and disseminated time and attendance management reports to provide an overview of the number of hours worked, leave used, and overtime and compensatory time earned by employees in a given organization. This report enabled management to better manage their payroll cost by pay-period.

Results-Oriented Incentives

How has your office adapted new ways of motivating employees and improving program performance? Specifically, which methods of reward or accountability practices have been implemented? Cite specific criticism and praise that prompted such changes in your office, if applicable.

In the mid 1990s the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) assembled a FEMA work group to look at ways to improve the agency's performance system and to de-link awards and performance. As a result, the agency's current employee performance system was developed, which promotes and supports individual and organizational development; allows for greater employee involvement; and encourages greater communication between supervisors and employees.

In the mid 1990s, OHRM assembled a group of agency staff to look at ways to improve how employees are rewarded and recognized for exemplary work. This was in conjunction with an effort to de-couple performance from rewards. Under the guidance of OHRM, the Reward and Recognition Working Group (RRWG) was challenged to develop a system that provided for the fair and equitable recognition of employee achievements. The involvement of the RRWG, the Labor-Management Partnership Council (LMPC), unions, and many FEMA employees were instrumental in defining and refining this system.

The new Rewards and Recognition System (R&RS) exemplifies the collective ideas of FEMA employees, which were obtained through an agency-wide survey on performance management and awards. These ideas generally focused on fostering a climate of growth, opportunity, challenge, and recognition for employees. The new system created an environment where employees actively and continually seek better ways to: perform their work related responsibilities; improve organizational performance; take pride in their accomplishments; and recognize each other's accomplishments, contributions, and innovations in support of the agency's renewal.

All employees – managers, supervisors, and staff – share the responsibility of recognizing and rewarding accomplishments or contributions and quality performance. They are also eligible (permanent and temporary staff – to the extent allowed under the law) for monetary and non-monetary recognition and reward acknowledging their contributions to agency or government operations.

The success of the program has depended on peer involvement in the nomination and review process at all levels of the agency. The establishment of individual Awards Review Teams (ART), comprised of a cross section of employees at the directorate or office level has increased the individual organizational success of the R&RS. The ARTs have helped to ensure the integrity and credibility of the R&RS within each organizational unit.

The R&RS, although separate and distinct from performance ratings, does complement the new employee performance system. Performance criteria, such as “improving work processes” and “creativity and innovation,” have been included in employee performance plans to promote and support individual and organizational recognition and reward as an integral part of the agency’s work ethic. The R&RS affords employees the opportunity to offer creative ways to carry out agency missions and accomplish related objectives in a manner that exemplifies agency values.

Most importantly, however, employee accomplishments that qualify for recognition and reward must meet two, equally significant, core criteria. These criteria include: contribution to the accomplishment of the agency’s strategic plan; and furthering agency values. The requirement that accomplishments meet both criteria emphasizes FEMA’s belief that how it performs its work-related responsibilities and treatment of one another is equally as important as achieving programmatic goals.

Use of Technological Innovations

Describe how your office has employed the use of new technology since 1992. Also describe ways in which old technology has been used in a new way, if applicable. How have these technological innovations affected your office’s performance.

Through the use of new telecommunications techniques and a number of automated human resources systems, the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) has moved forward in providing its customers and staff with direct access to human resources information, reports and data. OHRM has made significant strides through the use of automated database systems, in providing desktop accessibility to human resources information, such as PERSDATA. This automated system provides quick access to personnel and payroll data for human resources staff in a non-technical, user-friendly format.

Web-based automated systems, such as Employee Express, affords employees the opportunity to access, review and process certain payroll and personnel data; Personnel, provides human resources staff desktop accessibility to federal regulations and policies; and, the National Finance Center’s (NFC) Personal Page allows employees to view their personal (retirement projections, life insurance, etc.) and personnel information (payroll, leave, savings, bonds, etc.) and the SF-171 tracking system maintains an automated log of applicant and current and historical vacancy announcement information. By implementing these systems it has given OHRM a means to provide its clients with up-to-date information and easy accessibility to human resources data and simplified processes to support certified human resources programs. In 1998 OHRM developed an automated Employee and Labor Relations (ELR) tracking system. This system has allowed the division to maintain an automated log of the many cases that the division handles, from disciplinary actions, grievances, unfair labor practice cases, etc. This system has served very useful for reporting purposes.

In the fall of 1998, OHRM embarked in an effort to simplify the position classification process for human resources specialists and managers. Through the purchase of **COHO**, an expert human resources system, managers and human resources specialists have the capability to develop positions descriptions, reviewuatement statements and related

documents in a matter of minutes, in lieu of hours. The system mimics the human reasoning process by analyzing the position and determining key relationships between job classification and recruitment and staffing criteria. This system has benefits from a management and OHRM perspective. It simplifies the process for management in terms of creating the necessary documentation for position and recruitment actions, and it allows human resources specialists to redirect their time to advisory and consultation services

Partnerships

What groups, organizations, companies or contractors are you now working with outside of FEMA. Summarize these partnerships and cite when and why each partnership began and how the working relationships have evolved. Provide insights about the partnerships in terms of how they have assisted your office in carrying out its functions and/or how they have contributed to FEMA's overall mission.

Currently, FEMA is in partnership with Verizon Communications to assist in the implementation of various telecommunication needs for the current payroll and personnel system and LMI/RCI contractors in the implementation of FEMA's first DataMart which will provide financial management and human resources information.

Verizon Partnership: FEMA's contract with Verizon provides an extremely critical and unique service in implementing new and improved telecommunications technology for use with the agency's payroll and personnel system (NFC). By doing so, this has allowed OHRM to connect to NFC through the use of SNA Gateways, achieve TCP/IP connectivity, TN3270 protocol uploads and printing and FTP transmissions.

LMI/RCI Partnership: In previous years, FEMA has had only two resources to provide agency payroll and personnel data to the agency. In most cases, this was the data that was used to populate various organizational home-grown automated database systems. To help in centralizing this data and making it easily accessible to the entire agency in a secure and user-friendly manner, LMI was contracted to review the agency's need for a Data Mart that provides financial management and human resources data for the entire agency. Upon determining that the agency had such a need, RCI's partnership has resulted in the development of an Oracle-based database system and a web-based reporting center to be implemented within the next 12 to 16 months.

OHRM has actively developed partnerships with colleges, universities, high schools, and state and local employment commissions to recruit a highly-skilled, diverse workforce and offer opportunities with the agency through its disaster staffing, Outstanding Scholar, welfare-to-work and other special emphasis programs. In addition, the OHRM maintains partnerships with various minority organizations to ensure a diverse workforce to assist disaster victims.

Partnership with the Department of Transportation (DOT)

OHRM has partnered with DOT to provide service to FEMA employees in relation to all of their retirement needs. Their assistance was needed because FEMA had and continues to have a large volume of employees who are eligible to retire as well as the complicated nature of some of the retirement questions and cases. Their assistance over the last three

years has been greatly appreciated within OHRM and FEMA. As previously mentioned, OHRM has also partnered with DOT for classification services.

Partnership with Public Health Services (PHS).

Since FEMA has been in existence, the OHRM has contracted with the PHS. PHS has served useful whenever a need arises to obtain a fitness for duty examination for an employee.

Partnership with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

For approximately the last 10 years, OHRM has had one year contracts for EAP. Throughout the years, the EAP counselors have provided effective counseling to employees and managers on job-related problems and have assisted employees in dealing with substance abuse, emotional, family, financial and other problems. Since FEMA and the Department of Education use the same EAP counselor and are located in close proximity to each other, it was decided by both work life coordinators to form a partnership to combine the Elder Care Support Groups for maximum participation. The merging of the Elder Care Support Groups has helped OHRM to better utilize its resources.

Partnership with LIFECARE.

In July 1999, OHRM contracted with LIFECARE, to manage the workers' compensation cases for FEMA. The contract was entered into in an effort to reduce the number of long-term workers' compensation cases and return injured employees to work as quickly as possible and ultimately to reduce the cost that FEMA expends in this area.

Partnership with the FRICK Company.

In FY 1997 the OHRM partnered with the FRICK Co. to manage unemployment compensation claims for FEMA. This relationship was established to manage most effectively and efficiently, and to reduce costs associated with unemployment compensation claims. Given the scope of disaster staffing operations and intermittent nature of appointments of many of the personnel assigned, this partnership was much needed.

Partnership with the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA).

NAPA assisted OHRM with workforce planning that will contribute to the successful accomplishment of the agency's strategic goals and business objectives. Every strategy goal and business objective has a human element that will be identified and provided in OHRM's business plan – just as surely as that strategic goal or business objective's financial requirement will be identified and provided for.

Deregulation

What was your office's role, if any, in helping to get rid of unhelpful regulations within FEMA? How has deregulation efforts at FEMA resulted in the development of new innovations by employees in your office? How did deregulation improve your office's ability to respond more effectively during disasters?

In response to the National Performance Review, FEMA offices were tasked to review all cognizant regulations to determine those that should be retained and those that were no longer necessary. During this process, OHRM staff eliminated outdated policies and procedures and began the process to update or revise remaining policies. Since 1993, the OHRM has completely revised the policies for the employee performance system and the reward and recognition system. These new policies are the result of a collaborative effort involving managers, employees and labor partners, and represent a major shift in focus in these areas. Additionally, the OHRM like other federal agencies, worked cooperatively with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in its effort to eliminate the voluminous Federal Personnel Manual (FPM). The FPM was recognized throughout the federal sector as the primary basis for most personnel decisions. With its elimination, agencies were given the latitude to frame their personnel policies to meet their unique requirements, so long as they were consistent with the intent of Title 5 USC. FEMA fortunately, has the latitude to develop its own policies and procedures for disaster staffing matters without regard to the compensation and classification provisions of Title 5. To this extent, the OHRM was instrumental in the creation of the Cadre of On-Call Response/Recovery Employee (CORE) and Disaster Temporary Employee (DTE) programs as a means of meeting the agency's disaster staffing requirements.

Training

Describe any new training initiatives or changes in old training offered by your office to employees since 1992.

The Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) has developed and conducted training for all FEMA employees, including disaster employees and the permanent workforce. This training encompassed retirement seminars, time and attendance administration, application preparation, and new employee orientations. Additionally in 1997, OHRM developed and conducted labor relations training for headquarters supervisors and managers. In 1998, OHRM developed and conducted employee and labor relations training for supervisors and managers. The training contains modules on topics including disciplinary and adverse action, and administrative and negotiated grievance procedures. Other modules included violence in the workplace, equal employment opportunity, sexual harassment, and performance, rewards and recognition. Ongoing since 1998, the goal is to train every supervisor and manager in the agency. As of July 2000, the division has trained supervisors and managers in Regions II, III, IV, and VI. It has also trained the Office of Inspector General (OIG), the Preparedness, Training and Exercises (PTE) Directorate, Denton and Virginia National Processing Service Centers, and the Mt. Weather facility. MWEAC. On June 23, 1999, OHRM sponsored a brown-bag seminar on "Caring for Aging Parents and Relatives." The speaker was Jane Sahmel from the Jewish Social Services in Maryland. The seminar provided employees with helpful information on caring for aging parents and relatives, and also provided them with information on support and community resources for caregivers of the elderly.

On Oct. 6, 1999, OHRM sponsored a brown-bag seminar on "Alzheimer's Disease" with speaker Peggy Daley, RN, MA, from the Family Respite Center in Falls Church, Va. During the seminar, employees were given an overview of Alzheimer's disease including symptoms of the disease, and received information on how to communicate with family members who have Alzheimer's.

Director Witt's Leadership

Describe director Witt's direct involvement with your division or sub-office during and after the major reorganizations took place. How has he been directly involved during major disasters or events since then? How has he been directly involved during non-disaster periods? Please provide specific examples.

One of the important legacies FEMA Director James Lee Witt will leave, which became apparent soon after he arrived in 1993, was the value (or emphasis) that he placed on the employees of FEMA as its most important resource. Part of his vision for the agency, was his insistence that all senior officials and managers would focus on leading and developing their staffs and building a sense of teamwork within the organization. Toward that end, he immediately began working with both executive boards, OHRM and the Senior Executive Service (SES) corps. The goal was to create a challenging climate for senior executives that fostered responsibility for excellence in leadership, encouraged continued growth, and, for the first time, helped develop a corporate culture and vision. It is widely known that the director's reorganization of FEMA significantly improved the agency's performance in all-hazards response and recovery activities. However, the reorganization was also significant in that it broke down the stove piping among the different organizations and provided Director Witt with an opportunity to assign most of the career senior leadership to new positions. This was one of the few times such whole scale change had been accomplished within current agency resources – and had the added effect of proving change invigorates and challenges executives to reach new heights and helps to create a corporate culture. Building on that success, the director continues to encourage his senior leadership to request different assignments to round out their experience and increase their value to the organization.

To further support his conviction that senior managers should demonstrate excellence in leadership, Director Witt fully supported the development of a new SES performance management system that tied performance to core executive competencies, and corporate goals and values. FEMA was one of the first agencies to implement such a system for its executives and that system was subsequently mirrored by other agencies. As another step toward building a corporate culture, he supported the implementation of an Honorary SES Peer Award to allow executives to recognize from among their peers the individual who most embodies the values of the SES.

While continuing to emphasize quality management, Director Witt had concerns that he needed a more institutionalized means for both determining the current executive needs for the agency and ensuring that there would be effective succession planning for future leadership positions. He requested the ERB to undertake a comprehensive review of FEMA's SES resource needs and provided continuing support for that effort, which he

subsequently recognized as their having set a standard for future reviews of this kind. It is expected that the planning document that resulted from that effort will assist him and future leadership in determining resource needs and future directions for the agency. Director Witt has supported many new initiatives as part of his vision for strengthening the SES corps, some of which are discussed here. While the list is not complete, it would be remiss not to include the SES all-hands meetings that he reinstated. The meetings provide a forum for executives, outside of their normal meeting structure, to come together and discuss with him issues of concern for all. All of these initiatives play into his larger vision for supporting and providing opportunities for growth for all of FEMA's employees. The director continues to believe the employees are the agency's greatest asset and credits them with much of the agency's tremendous success. He also gives credit to the many loyal executives who supported him.

As one outside indicator of the stature he has gained within the federal community, Director Witt was recently asked by the SES to address their annual meeting of career executives - to share his secret in transforming FEMA into one of the most respected agencies, and his success in building an effective partnership of political and career executives that helped in the effort. The career executives wanted to hear about his vision for the future and share, just a bit, in the legacy he will leave FEMA and the federal government.

Directorate and Office Leadership

(For Department Heads Only) How did your leadership as director contribute to changes in your office or directorate? What were your primary objectives and how did you attempt to accomplish them? What were your successes?

Under my leadership as Acting Director and now Director of the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), I have always focused my attention on mission critical matters. I recognized early on, that the office would have to dedicate more resources to disaster staffing in order to meet the ever-growing demands that are result of the agency's shift to a multi-hazards disaster response and recovery organization. In addition, I noted that many of our business practices were dated and required a major overhaul in order for the office to support FEMA's efforts. At the onset, I began laying the groundwork to address our business practices. I challenged the division directors to rethink the way we conducted business and to come up with new ways to accomplish our mission which included: attracting, building and retaining a quality workforce that was representative of country's population; and improving service to all customers – managers, employees, labor partners and the public.

In this age of technology, I knew there were systems that would aid our office in accomplishing the mission. In the Human Resources arena, other agencies were turning to expert human systems to accomplish many of the process-related functions. I assessed our operations and identified what I considered major obstacles to our business success. Over the years, I have always been confronted with the issue of timeliness. Timeliness in terms of classifying positions and in terms of recruiting for and staffing positions. I elected to approach this issue incrementally given our resource constraints. Since position classification was the first step toward creating and recruiting for a position, I decided to

focus on reducing the time and efforts associated with this process. I wanted to reengineer our process with the objective of being less burdensome, timelier and above all user friendly from a customer standpoint. After months of searching the market and reviewing our practices, I authorized the procurement of the COHO System. COHO is an expert human resources system that assists managers and human resources specialists with the oftentimes arduous process of developing position descriptions and related documents. However, COHO takes it a step further by classifying the position description, preparing the reviewuotion statement and even generating the related staffing documents, such as the vacancy announcement, reviewuotion criteria to rate the applications and even interview questions. Within FEMA, COHO is considered the primary classification tool for positions GS-13 and below and since its implementation has resulted in a significant reduction in the time required to prepare these documents. From a staff perspective, my goal is to continue to ensure that the OHRM has a highly trained and skilled workforce to meet the needs of our customers. With the support of my management staff, we have been successful in providing on-the-job and classroom training from a technical and administrative standpoint. My objective is to equip the staff with the technical job knowledge but also the human relation skills required to support the agency. At the same time, we are also requiring our employees to transition from the old way of doing business and adopt new methods employing systems technology. In summary, I will continue to look for ways to employ technology where applicable and implore my staff to offer suggestions on improving our business practices. I will maintain continuous communication with the leadership of the agency to ensure that the direction of the OHRM is in keeping with the strategic goals and objectives of the agency. In retrospect, I believe OHRM has been successful in improving customer service. We have reduced processing times associated with position classification actions. The OHRM has developed, through the use of technology, means to provide management with information necessary for the day-to-day management of their respective organizations. In a previous essay, we talked about PERSDATA, ADD, Data Mart, and time and attendance management reports. Our objective is to provide management with all of the needed information available in our personnel and payroll system to help them manage their resources.

Future Direction

***(For Department Heads Only)* How do you see your office/directorate evolving in the next ten years?**

My goal for the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) is to evolve to a paperless human resources environment. In the near term, the OHRM is working jointly with the Information Technology Services Directorate (ITS) and the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to develop a DataMart that enables agency officials to view financial and human resources data on all of its employees. Included in the DataMart is an SF-52 tracking system. For years, the agency has been without a system available to managers to track the status of their personnel requests. The goal of the DataMart is to offer managers a one-stop shop to obtain all of the interrelated information necessary to manage their resources.

Currently, efforts are underway to improve our staffing and recruitment processes. Throughout the federal sector, agencies are moving towards a paperless human resources environment. In this context, I have closely monitored the number of online application systems that are available in today's market. No longer is it necessary to manually generate hardcopies of the many staffing and recruitment documents, nor is it necessary to submit a hardcopy application or resume. Several companies offer online systems that process all of your staffing and recruitment actions online. My vision is to pilot a system to assess its effectiveness in our environment. I am convinced that automation is the way to improve many of our practices.

With this shift toward a paperless office, the vision is to use staff more in an advisory and consultant capacity. No longer will there be need to process the paper. Conversely, there will be a growing demand for advisory services in terms of position management and recruitment strategies.

Disaster Operations

Describe your office's role on the EST. Summarize an experience your office had working on the EST during one major disaster or emergency since 1992. What exactly did you do and what kinds of challenges did you encounter? Be specific and aim to leave the reader with a good understanding of what function your office fills on the EST, as well as the challenges you face.

The personnel branch of the Emergency Support Team (EST), staffed by a representative from the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), performs a full range of human resources functions for the EST, and provides technical support to disaster field offices and Regional Operations Centers (ROCs). This work includes staffing, payroll, deployment, and employee relations duties. The work of the branch involves not only the filling of positions, but also the balancing of work needs against the physical and emotional impact that long hours and stressful work has on employees.

The most challenging disaster experiences have occurred during the 1995, 1998 and 1999 hurricane seasons, when EST activity continued uninterrupted for weeks while one hurricane after another took aim at Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the continental United States. It fell upon the personnel branch to ensure that an adequate number of staff members were always available to be deployed in support of the EST to the *next* disaster, without hindering the response activities for the current disaster.

Special Essays

Discuss the development of the reservist cadre and the importance of its development.

FEMA's Reservist Cadres: An Essential Resource For Disaster Management

Purpose

To accomplish FEMA's mission of disaster assistance and coordination, the agency maintains three cadres of disaster employees: Disaster Assistance Employees (DAEs),

Disaster Temporary Employees (DTEs), and Cadre of On-Call Reserve Employees (COREs). These are excepted service appointments, under the special hiring authority of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, for temporary, intermittent, or on-call work for specific disasters or emergency situations within the United States or its possessions. These employees may work at FEMA's fixed-site facilities, disaster field offices, or at other sites, depending on disaster needs.

Background

As disasters are unpredictable, each event requires differing levels of response. To ensure a supply of surge disaster staff in addition to FEMA's permanent, full-time employees, the agency, through its regional offices, has maintained rosters of DAEs for immediate, temporary deployment to disaster sites. In addition, the agency employed staff under the SDATE program for longer term assignments, primarily in disaster closeout activities. In 1993, the teleregistration function was established within the National Processing Services Center (NPSC) at the Mt. Weather facility to provide more effective, centralized assistance to disaster victims, thus creating a corresponding need for ensuring that disaster surge staffing requirements were met. The center was originally staffed with permanent, full-time employees; when this proved insufficient due to increased disaster workload, the agency employed DAEs as local hires, converting these employees to reservist status after 120 days of service. These were two year appointments, during which DAEs were permitted to actually work for only 18 months.

In 1994, the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) created a disaster recruiting staff to assist the NPSC, as well as regional offices, in hiring DAEs and to serve as a central point-of-contact for the recruitment of highly-qualified employees to staff more specialized national cadres of professionals in the following fields: federal coordinating officers, stress management counselors, health and safety specialists, public affairs specialists, comptrollers, equal rights officers, and security specialists. In response to the ongoing teleregistration and applicant assistance and benefits processing requirements in the NPSCs and other agency divisions, OHRM transformed the recruiting function into a new Disaster Personnel Operations Division (DPOD) in 1996. The SDATE program was gradually phased out, and two new reservist cadres were created in its place: the CORE and DTE programs, to meet FEMA's long- and short-term disaster surge manpower needs, and to provide continuity of experience and expertise at fixed-site facilities. At that time, DAE appointments at fixed-site facilities were replaced by the newly initiated CORE and DTE employment programs.

CORE and DTE Appointments

CORE positions are four-year appointments with full federal benefits, and are intended to provide continuity of service for long-term, disaster-related projects and activities. DTEs are intermittent positions, for a one-year term and renewable, and receive pay for hours actually worked and compensation for authorized overtime. The majority of DTE positions are intended for surge staffing in caller services functions within the NPSCs. DTEs who work regular full-time or part-time schedules are eligible for annual leave and sick leave, but do not receive federal life or health insurance coverage.

Results/Benefits of Reservist Programs

FEMA's mission shift to disaster response and mitigation sparked a need for a concentrated response to disasters. To enable FEMA to successfully fulfill this mission, the hiring and employment initiatives under the Stafford Act, developed and refined by the Disaster Personnel Operations Division, have ensured a) continuity of experienced staff at fixed-site facilities, b) significantly faster deployment to disaster sites to provide effective assistance to disaster victims, c) improved customer service to both internal and external customers, and d) shortened response timeframes and enhanced disaster recovery activities.

Discuss the creation of the ADD system and how it is utilized.

The NEMIS Automated Deployment Database (ADD) was developed to meet the agency's need for a skills database for its disaster workforce and the need to automate its procedure for deploying disaster workers to wherever they are needed. The development team, consisting of seven individuals from across the agency, was selected because of their extensive disaster staffing experience in the field. They designed the system and tested it during 1995 and early 1996. Agency managers and system users were trained in the spring of 1996 and the system was made available for entry of employee and disaster duty stations records in June of 1996. It was first used to handle a disaster deployment in August 1996 and was fully operational by October 1996. Over the four years since then, the ADD system has handled deployment of over 135,000 individuals to almost 200 disasters. Supervisors can now readily access detailed records of the availability, work and training histories of their disaster employees for staffing, review and promotion purposes. More importantly, data from this system is routinely used by top agency managers for decision-making on a variety of disaster workforce matters.

Discuss the development of relationships with labor unions and what affect that has had in employee management.

Between 1993 and the present, FEMA has undergone a dramatic cultural shift in how management and labor coexist. The relationship in 1993 was legalistic, rights-oriented and marked by frequent disputes.

Upon enactment of Executive Order 12871 establishing labor-management partnerships, FEMA was the second executive branch agency to officially establish a Labor-Management Partnership Council (LMPC).

Since the establishment of the LMPC, disputes have declined and communication has increased. Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) activity has, in all but one year, declined by two-thirds from its 1993 level.

Most new initiatives are established by a consensual basis rather than by negotiation because of the union's pre-decisional involvement. The renegotiation of an agreement in the agency's largest bargaining unit was conducted without ground rules or bargaining teams and was completed in two days. No negotiability appeals have been filed in any bargaining unit since the LMPC's inception. Several agreements have been permitted to "roll over" without renegotiation with the local parties deferring to partnership to resolve new issues.

Partnership remains a work in progress. At times, there are disagreements over whether partnership equates to co-management and conflicts will arise when suggestions advocated by union representatives are not adopted by management.

OHRM has introduced interest-based bargaining (IBB) to negotiations. In the partnership era, OHRM has been able to arrive at agreement without third-party intervention.

Partnership and an interest-based relationship are carrying over to the workplace.

Managers have become receptive to alternative forms of discipline and unions have been more pragmatic and judicious in deciding when to file grievances.

These cultural changes have created an irreversible maturation in the way management and employees relate. In addition to avoiding the costs of conflict, we all benefit from higher morale created by a businesslike relationship between management and its representatives.

Project Impact and the FEMA Mission Shift

When talking about FEMA's mission shift from national security to natural disaster hazards, the *Project Impact* initiative can be viewed as the agency's most visible working example of reinvention. *Project Impact* was designed to meet the challenge of this mission shift in an era of downsized federal budgets and of the inherently limited authority of the federal government in emergency management and community planning.

Project Impact can be viewed as a third wave in FEMA's reinvention. The first wave occurred in the wake of the Cold War, hurricanes Hugo and Andrew, and intense public and congressional criticism. On top of this wave, Director Witt took the helm with a mandate to shift the agency's mission from its prior national security focus.

Within a few years, FEMA would be transformed into an effective coordinator of federal response to natural disasters and respected for emergency management the world over. However, the increased frequency and severity of disasters during this same period began to teach the agency that focusing only on disaster response and recovery would lead to ever-increasing costs that the American people and the Congress would not be able to abide.

The second wave of reinvention was fueled by not only an increase in disasters, but in the greater national emphasis on balancing the budget. Emergency spending on disasters needed to be reined in and at the same time, at a grassroots level, repetitive heartache from disaster damage was taking its toll. With this, began the political and emotional determination necessary to gain momentum behind the concepts of preventing damage from occurring and of breaking the cycle of damage – repair – damage – repair. Partly as a reaction to the change in emergency spending by both Congress and the administration, FEMA would begin to promote disaster damage prevention (mitigation) as a national priority and the way to reduce the cost of disasters to the nation.

However, it was quickly found that the problem was not a lack of research and development of technical solutions to damage prevention. The problem was much bigger in terms of why communities were not taking action. The question was: "If we know what it takes to prevent damage then why, as a nation, are we not doing it?"

In consultation with the federal, state, and local emergency management community, the conclusion was that a big part of the problem was an apparent low level of desire within communities to face up to and confidently deal with their natural hazard risks. *Project Impact* was conceived to address this problem. The third wave was forming as an initiative to build disaster resistant communities throughout America.

Although the *Project Impact* approach would be something new for FEMA, it was not necessary to reinvent the wheel. There already were examples of federal government engaging in community-based management initiatives and in nation-wide campaigns to change the way America views important public issues. Existing federal initiatives such as community-based policing and the auto seatbelt campaign provided good learning models.

But it still remained for FEMA to explore creative and innovative ways of implementing community-based mitigation. These new methods would entail prioritizing prevention as an emergency management *responsibility*, as well as focusing on preventative action at the community level. It also meant enlisting business, non-profit, and government sector commitments through national, regional, state, and local partnerships. There would need to be a greater appreciation of the role of public education and marketing as a means to influence public perspectives and attitudes toward disaster damage prevention.

At the El Niño Summit in Santa Monica, Calif., in October 1997, Director Witt launched FEMA's Disaster Resistant Communities initiative, christening it "*Project Impact*." Seven pilot communities were selected to serve as the test bed for building disaster resistant communities through risk assessment, partnership building, prioritized action, and communicating success. By February 1998, the *Project Impact* national office was established and the initiative was in full swing.

At the start of fiscal year 2001, nearly 250 communities nationwide are receiving direct support from FEMA for building disaster resistance. These communities serve as clear demonstrations that preventing disaster damage is best accomplished from the ground up and that any community can become disaster resistant. This marks how far FEMA has come from the days when it focused solely on national security threats.

Customer service improvements

How has your office implemented FEMA's customer service policy? Please cite examples of research and/or surveys conducted by your office related to customer service. Also, cite specific changes that were made in the way your office does business as a result of the research and surveys that were done. Finally, give examples of specific improvements in the way your office has serviced its customers since 1993.

Customer Service: a Mainstay of Project Impact

The *Project Impact* office's mission and functions are steeped in customer service to both internal and external customers. The internal customers include the offices of the Director, Public Affairs, Intergovernmental Affairs, Congressional Affairs, and Corporate Affairs. The *Project Impact* office coordinates with these and other FEMA entities to integrate *Project Impact* into agency operations.

In 1998, when the *Project Impact* national office was created, it began holding weekly agency-wide meetings to keep other offices informed of progress in *Project Impact* communities and to gain input and support for the program. The *Project Impact* staff prepared a survey for meeting participants that helped ensure that the meetings were an effective use of their time. When meetings became unnecessary, they were discontinued. Weekly team staff meetings are now held with the offices of Public Affairs, Intergovernmental Affairs, Congressional Affairs, and Corporate Affairs to coordinate *Project Impact* activities.

The *Project Impact* office assigned a liaison to provide assistance and support to FEMA regional offices and serve as a point of contact within FEMA headquarters for *Project Impact* community activities and information. A list of weekly community highlights was developed and continues to be provided electronically to FEMA headquarters and regional staff. In addition, a calendar of *Project Impact* signing ceremonies is provided to agency offices with an open invitation to participate in these events.

The regional *Project Impact* staff members are integral partners and customers. The national office holds conference calls with regional offices on a regular basis to coordinate *Project Impact* activities and brainstorm ideas for improvement. Regional feedback regarding the initiative is actively solicited and acted upon as a method of building trust in the working relationships. The office also hosts bi-annual *Project Impact* retreats for regional staff as a means of establishing and maintaining relationships.

Project Impact's external customers include federal, state, and local government officials, community leaders, businesses, and non-profit organizations. Program information is disseminated to external audiences via letters, electronic mail and bulletin boards, *Project Impact* web site – which includes a vehicle for feedback, and an annual national *Project Impact* summit. (The use of technology for electronic communications systems for external customers, such as List Serve and Web Board, is discussed elsewhere.) The office is responsive to issues raised in order to develop trust and teamwork. This year, requests for suggested summit topics and speakers were disseminated to communities and those who provided input were grateful to be included in the process. The national *Project Impact* office will use the topics to develop the agenda for the 2000 Summit.

Improving customer service is a matter of communicating with customers to determine their needs and acting on them. The *Project Impact* national office has been successful in doing this with both its internal and external customers.

Standard Essay Topics

Cost Reduction

Give examples of your office's efforts to reduce costs from 1993 to 2000. Highlight specific successful efforts and be specific about costs were actually reduced.

Project Impact: Reducing the Cost of Disasters

The primary goal of *Project Impact* is to reduce the cost of disasters on the nation's economy. In 1997, Congress appropriated \$2 million to FEMA to begin the process of moving toward a meaningful pre-disaster mitigation program. There is no doubt that *Project Impact* is a common sense approach for the way America deals with disasters. The incentive is clear: a disaster-resistant community is able to bounce back from a natural disaster with far less loss of property and, consequently, much less cost for repairs. Moreover, the time lost from productive activity is minimized for both

businesses and their employees. Indeed, FEMA estimates that for every dollar spent in damage prevention, two dollars are saved in repairs.

Some residents of Southampton County's Dockside area in Virginia are living proof that it pays to mitigate, especially in a floodplain. When hurricanes Floyd and Dennis hit the region with back-to-back flooding in September 1999, many homes in Dockside, near the North Carolina border, were devastated. But thanks to preventive measures, several newer homes in Dockside were left virtually unscathed.

No strangers to flooding, Southampton County officials signed up with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in 1982. Under terms of that agreement, the lowest floors in all new homes had to be elevated at least 4 feet above the 100-year flood level. But some homeowners went further and elevated 8 feet - with little added cost.

The extra effort paid off. During heavy flooding in September 1999, water levels in the Dockside area were 3 to 5 feet above the 100-year flood level. Of approximately 30 homes in the area, about 20 residences had 7 feet of floodwater in their first floor living areas. The homes with extra elevation were safe, sound, and dry. Homeowners who elevated 4 feet above the 100-year flood level also received extra dividends. Not only did they avoid flooding, they combined the elevated space with existing yardage to create parking and storage areas at minimal cost.

A few of the efforts supported by the *Project Impact* office to reduce costs are as follows:

- Encourage partnerships in communities, as a means of developing comprehensive strategies and increasing resources for mitigation activity;
- Provide seed money in the form of a grant that can be used to attract other resources;
- Work with other organizations such as ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute) and Strohl Systems (continuity planning software and services) to provide tools to communities; and
- Offer *Project Impact* training courses, mentoring, and technical assistance to newly named communities to assist them with the challenges that lie ahead as they become disaster resistant.

There are many anecdotal examples of cost savings in communities having implemented *Project Impact*. Those communities do a baseline study to document their vulnerabilities and identify structures at risk during the second phase of the program. The list of structures at risk is updated on a regular basis and over time this, and other measurements of progress, will help quantify cost savings associated with *Project Impact*.

Results-oriented incentives

How has your office adapted new ways of motivating employees and improving program performance? Specifically, which methods of reward or accountability

practices have been employed? Cite specific criticism and praise that prompted such changes in your office, if applicable.

Motivating the Project Impact Team

As the *Project Impact* initiative transitioned from a pilot project to a program in the Mitigation directorate, the *Project Impact* staff devised its own creative methods of rewards for *Project Impact* office members and Mitigation directorate staff alike.

For instance, a glitter wand was used as a reward for good performance and passed from person to person as employees chose the next honoree. Stickers were used by the supervisor to recognize a job well done and certificates of appreciation were provided to other Mitigation staff to acknowledge their contributions to the team.

This year, a *Project Impact* office member was chosen by the Mitigation directorate to serve on the Awards and Recognition Team, which reviews employee recommendations for awards. This demonstrates the *Project Impact* staff integration into the greater body of Mitigation.

The national *Project Impact* office also uses its regional conference calls and retreats as an opportunity to affirm positive behaviors, such as highlighting the creativity of a region among their peers. Conference calls are also used to follow up on tasks as a means of holding the regional staff accountable. At the retreats, the national office periodically provides awards or affirmations for behaviors it wants to foster.

The national office has improved overall program performance by motivating *Project Impact* communities through the Summit Awards, which affirm and highlight positive actions; holding communities accountable by requiring annual progress reports; and encouraging agency participation and coordination by marketing the initiative internally through the distribution of Community Highlights.

Use of Technological Innovations

Describe how your office has employed the use of technology since 1993. Also describe the way in which old technology has been used in a new way, if applicable. How have these technological innovations affected your office's performance?

Using New Technology in *Project Impact*

Since the *Project Impact* office was created in 1998, it has been looking for ways to transfer information to *Project Impact* communities in an expeditious and consistent way, as well as keeping states, FEMA and partners informed of community developments. Communications have been enhanced by the development of new technologies and tools, in addition to the electronic capabilities available through the agency.

The *Project Impact* office extensively uses the FEMA-only *intranet* and also the Internet. The *Project Impact* intranet keeps FEMA employees informed of program activities and contains internal points of contact for the communities. The *Project Impact* Internet web site provides general information as well as resources for community implementers. It contains an overview of *Project Impact*, a listing of *Project Impact* communities with links to their web sites where applicable, information on national partners, press releases, risk maps, resources, regional activities and photos. During the *Project Impact* summit in 1999, the first electronic commerce was used in FEMA for on-line registration.

The *Project Impact* office developed The *Project Impact* Commitments Management System, a web-based application accessible through the national emergency management information system. The Commitments database is the storehouse for valuable information concerning *Project Impact* communities, their supporting partners and projects, as well as the commitment of resources for disaster-resistant communities. The intended design allows communities to input data which partners are able to read nationwide.

A *Project Impact* Web Board was recently developed. The web board is a tool to set up multiple topical "conferences" for posting messages. Subscribers may set up notification of new messages by e-mail and have the capability to set up chat rooms for each conference for real-time discussions. The web board currently contains three conferences that allow participants to discuss their experiences and post upcoming events, references, stories, ideas, etc., related to the four phases of *Project Impact*:

- 1) Building partnerships
- 2) Identifying hazards
- 3) Assessing risks
- 4) Communicating success

The conferences active on the web board are:

- *PI* Grads Conference -allows subscribers to post messages and have chat room discussions
- ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute) Challenge Grant Conference - a private conference for ESRI Challenge Grant communities and geographic information systems (GIS) experts
- *Project Impact* Notes Conference - nationwide informational bulletins appropriate to all communities (*Project Impact* Consensus Course schedule, grant opportunities, web sites, and new national partners)

The *Project Impact* national office is also promoting the use of geographic information systems (GIS) in communities. ESRI, a national *Project Impact* partner, is helping communities across the nation to use GIS as a tool for implementing disaster resistance. One of the primary components of this partnership is the development of the ESRI-*Project Impact* web site. This web site is designed to help *Project Impact* and other communities start assessing their risks. The web site provides hazard maps along with tips for using GIS in support of achieving *Project Impact* goals and objectives, especially hazard identification, risk assessment, public awareness and mitigation planning and

management. The partnership has also sponsored the ESRI – *Project Impact* challenge grant, developed to build capacity in community use of GIS technology as a tool for developing and/or implementing disaster-resistant strategies.

Electronic mail is used to distribute information related to *Project Impact* courses, conferences, meetings and other activities to FEMA regional personnel, state officials, and to local *Project Impact* coordinators. E-mail has allowed the team to reduce paperwork and provide timely delivery of information. This is the mechanism used to share success stories with *Project Impact* communities nationwide. *Project Impact* initiated a List Serve, another form of electronic mail transfer to a group of addressees. The *Project Impact* e-mail group includes: *Project Impact* community coordinators, FEMA headquarters, *Project Impact* regional staff, and state *Project Impact* staff. Messages with a long-shelf-life are also posted on the Web Board in the *PI* Notes Conference.

To assist *Project Impact* communities with reporting requirements, the office is developing an automated system. This reporting system is part of a total Internet life-cycle grant management project to emphasize on real-time, outcome-oriented reporting. One of the benefits of this proposed system is the ability to generate a wide variety of reports. It also provides a central location for facilitated information transfer between *Project Impact* communities. This project represents a significant work effort involving a number of offices both within, and outside of, the agency. This project affects all aspects of the financial management and tracking process.

In addition, the national *Project Impact* office hopes to use this system as another mechanism to get information to the communities and to share best practices among them. Currently the office has developed and is using a mechanism to manage the grants. This mechanism is a web page which contains the electronic version of the grant package as well as the community baseline and progress reports. The information on the web page is updated quarterly and allows for real-time accessibility in a format that is useful in meeting local, state and federal needs.

The eventual goal for use of the Internet is to provide a central location for *Project Impact* communities to get information and also the medium for submitting information on the management of their community initiatives. This mechanism also keeps states, FEMA and partners informed on developments in the various communities. As a result, technology has greatly improved customer service for the *Project Impact* program office and provided an expeditious and consistent way to transfer information to interested parties as well as receive information on the community effects of the *Project Impact* initiative.

Partnerships

How is FEMA working with outside organizations to meet its mission goals? Summarize these partnerships and cite how these working relationships have

evolved. Provide insights about the partnerships in terms of how they have assisted the *Project Impact* initiative and how they have contributed to FEMA's overall mission.

Project Impact: Built on Partnerships

Project Impact is a nationwide initiative that operates on a common-sense pre-disaster approach to protecting human lives and property from the devastating effects of weather events. This community-based initiative is rooted in three basic principles:

- Disaster resistance strategies must be locally generated
- Private sector participation is vital
- Long-term efforts and investments in risk prevention measures are essential.

To help communities understand and capitalize on the need to build partnerships FEMA has developed an aggressive outreach campaign aimed at creating and fostering connections with private business and other governmental agencies at all levels. The main focus of this effort is to develop strategic relationships that can infuse needed skills, resources and energy into the local comprehensive planning process. By tapping into private businesses, government agencies and non-government organizations, communities can begin to spread the message of disaster resistance to a wider and more diverse audience with partnerships formed at the local level mirrored at the national level. Through *Project Impact* FEMA has strengthened overall public emergency management policy.

In 1997, seven pilot *Project Impact* communities began the process of assessing local hazards and developing disaster-resistance strategies and programs to be conceived and implemented locally. Within a very short time, these communities had created networks and strategic partnerships that have been very effective in creating a more livable and disaster-resistant place.

By autumn of 2000, nearly 250 communities across the nation are following this lead and assessing their local risks, developing approaches, fostering partnerships and taking proactive steps to create a physical and social environment that can withstand a disaster, no matter when it happens. It is within this context that FEMA has realized that emergency management issues do not exist in isolation. The process set forth in *Project Impact* has reinforced the idea that infrastructure, economic/community development and environmental systems and policies must be integrated with proactive and aggressive risk assessment and reduction strategies at all levels of government.

One of the major hallmarks of building a strong foundation of community-based disaster resistance is bringing together community stakeholders to be decision-makers. This process of reaching out to community partners brings a wide range of perspectives and additional resources and expertise into the community capacity building process. This idea of bringing diverse and non-traditional partners together to protect communities from disasters runs counter to the command-and-control method of traditional emergency management and has served as a major culture change for FEMA. However, it is clearly evident that these valuable opportunities are helping forge essential public/private and

public/public partnerships to reduce the impact disasters have on communities and the nation.

Communities do not exist in isolation and are highly interdependent on regional and local economic factors and constraints. As this interdependency, and its relation to disaster risk and hazard vulnerability, was better understood it became apparent that bringing private business partners into *Project Impact* was an essential component to creating a stronger and better-prepared community. The disruption of business and break in the continuity of operations after a disaster means lost income for citizens who depend on these businesses for services or livelihood. By working with government to incorporate the *Project Impact* approach toward building consensus on local risks and then dealing with those risks in a collaborative manner ensures that businesses, government and utilities reduce economic impacts that often come with a disaster.

From another perspective, local businesses and civic organizations have direct contact with citizens on a daily basis. As a result, stores and organizations provide an excellent venue to educate community members on the benefits of taking an active role in creating a disaster resistant community. Working together, *Project Impact* communities and businesses of all sizes are teaming up nation-wide to develop and implement proactive steps to ensure that access to vital commodities and services are not lost in the event of disaster.

Project Impact is also helping communities become stronger, safer and more livable by providing a decision-making framework of local citizens to identify and mobilize organizations that might not normally be involved in protecting a community's assets. The collaboration and consensus-building techniques promoted by *Project Impact* are teaching local officials how to better tap into the cultural and social resources of their community and activate these resources to promote chance and sustainability.

Traditionally, the development of partnerships with government has focused on how to increase private sector involvement. In the wake of the devastating disasters that have hit every part of the United States in the past several decades, communities are finding another important asset that is readily available at the local level, the private community-based and faith-based organizations (CBO/FBO). These organizations have a significant presence in the local community and offer a tremendous opportunity to reach out to those who are most vulnerable to disaster risks: those of limited means; those who are under-represented or have become disenfranchised in the traditional service delivery system. Community and faith-based organizations have the unique ability to access these populations, reach out to them and organize them into action in a coordinated manner.

While the role CBO/FBOs play in responding to a disaster is clear, how to integrate those organizations into local risk assessment and mitigation activities *before* a disaster strikes is not so clear. Local communities often do not fully understand the unique and vital organizing, information dissemination and planning skills these organizations can bring into pre-disaster mitigation activities. In many cases, CBO/FBOs are already involved in projects and programs that support hazard mitigation and preparedness at the local level

but may not realize they are already helping create a disaster resistant community. Local community leaders may not recognize how to capitalize on these endeavors to create a comprehensive community action plan. A disconnection between the CBO/FBOs and the local community could compromise the safety of local citizens, particularly those citizens at greatest risk. Since local CBO/FBOs are uniquely suited as trusted information conveyers, they can reinforce the message of protecting community resources and mobilize the general population to proactive measures to create a higher level of disaster resistance.

Project Impact has taken proactive and innovative steps to better understand the structure of community stakeholders and resources and have created opportunities to maximize partnerships and direct local decision-making into a coordinated hazard mitigation strategy. Citizens, local officials, states and the federal government have learned to integrate additional stakeholders into local disaster resistance efforts and created a more resilient community with a sustainable economy and the social capital to solve a multitude of local problems from the local perspective.

Deregulation

What was your office's role, if any, in helping to get rid of unhelpful regulations within FEMA? How has deregulation efforts at FEMA resulted in the development of new innovations by employees in your office? How did deregulation improve your office's ability to respond more effectively during disasters?

Project Impact and Deregulation

In 1997, the Mitigation directorate rescinded the regulations for the 1362 property acquisition (buyout) program, which had been funded through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The 1362 program was repealed by the passage of the National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994 which also created the Flood Mitigation Assistance program (FMA). Written regulations for FMA were based on experience from implementation of the earlier 1362 program - as well as the post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). These regulations provide for streamlined program implementation.

The Mitigation directorate also published a final rule in April 1998, which reduced the number of Hazard Mitigation Grant Program appeal levels from three to two. This reduced the average time for reviewing and resolving appeals significantly, resulting in better service to grant recipients and reduced burden on FEMA and state mitigation staff.

Organizational Culture

How did FEMA's mission shift change the agency's organizational culture?

Agency Mission Changes and Project Impact

In a speech at the Excellence in Government conference on July 11, 2000, **(copy follows)** FEMA Director James Lee Witt described how the change in national priorities led to a shift in the agency's mission and he outlined his leadership strategy for accomplishing the transition that began in 1993. The director's speech identified the importance of internal/external customer satisfaction and explained the need to reorganize the agency to support the mission shift. The agency reorganization created the Mitigation directorate as a main component of FEMA's organizational structure, thus establishing disaster mitigation as an important function of FEMA. It became apparent that to reverse the trend on rapidly increasing costs of disasters there also needed to be a shift in the way the nation views/ deals with disasters.

To achieve this shift externally, the agency brought focus to a community-driven process for implementing mitigation. *Project Impact: Building Disaster Resistant Communities* was launched as the vehicle to change the way the nation deals with disasters. The initiative emphasizes a comprehensive, collaborative approach to emergency management with decisions made at the local level. FEMA's role in this initiative is one of an influential partner. This represents a peer approach that is horizontal in nature rather than the more traditional hierarchical approach. As a result, FEMA deals with the community directly, providing more effective feedback that facilitates the development of user-defined products and need-driven systems. This feedback is also the impetus for the evolution and growth of the program.

Project Impact also heavily promotes the concept of peer-to-peer mentoring as a means of increasing disaster resistant capabilities of community implementers. Systems and processes are being developed and refined that not only encourage peer-to-peer exchanges but facilitate them as a means of sharing knowledge, experience and technical expertise. The nature of the *Project Impact* initiative is having a ripple effect on FEMA's organizational culture as well.

One of the main components of *Project Impact* that is causing changes in organizational culture is the *Project Impact* grant that goes directly to the community - unlike most FEMA funds that are channeled through the states. FEMA stresses that this one-time community grant should be used as seed money to attract other resources and "grow" the initiative. The guidelines for use of the funds are flexible, by design, to allow communities' spending to make best use of partnership resources. To accomplish this goal, regional personnel are working directly with the *Project Impact* communities. Thus, FEMA is getting firsthand knowledge of the constraints to implementing mitigation at the community level. Conversely, the agency is also discovering what approaches or solutions provide the best results. The *Project Impact* program office is using this information for program planning and implementation, and shares the information with other offices in the Mitigation directorate for their use in planning.

In order to support community efforts and maintain the initiative, the *Project Impact* program office is actively pursuing strong internal partnerships (similar to the partnership effort of the *Project Impact* communities) that provide technical information and other

resources to community efforts. In return, *Project Impact* staff provides these internal customers with feedback from the communities to assist with their future development processes. The *Project Impact* national office also celebrates the success of the initiative by sharing highlights of community activities toward becoming more disaster resistant, and encouraging other offices to attend events such as community signing ceremonies.

Remarks for James L. Witt, Director
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Describes Agency's Reinvention at Excellence in Government Program
Washington, DC
July 11, 2000

Today I thought I'd talk with you about what I view as the central ingredient in excellent government: the ability to lead change.

I keep a sign on my desk that says: "When entering this room, don't say, 'We've never done it that way before.'"

I do that for two reasons. The first is that I believe in that motto deep down. The second is that I know it's often a needed reminder.

It's only human to be a little resistant to change, whether it's change in government, change in a business or just change in your own life.

We've had a lot of change at FEMA in the last few years -- most it, I hope, for the better - - and I thought I'd share with you today a little bit of what we've learned.

Call it my Eight Rules for Successfully Leading Change.

Rule 1. Never lose your focus on the customer.

Obvious advice, right? It is. And like a lot of advice, it's easier to say than do. That's especially true in government, where the rules often center on programs rather than people.

Our first step toward reinvention was defining our customer -- in our case, people either preparing for or recovering from disasters. The moment we decided to measure our success based on how those people were served instead of how our programs were run, we were on the road to change.

Our next destination was deciding what service we were going to provide. Which brings me to:

Rule 2. State your mission.

That, too, seems like obvious advice - but it rarely gets implemented.

When FEMA was established in the 1970s, its mission focused mainly on natural disasters. In the 1980s, the priority was preparing for nuclear attack. By the time I got there, the Cold War was over but natural disasters were still occurring and nobody had a clear sense of what to do. So we re-stated our mission in clear terms -- help the nation

prepare for, respond to and recover from natural disasters. Once you have a mission, you also have a blueprint for structuring your organization.

Rule 3. Structure your organization around your mission.

Seven years ago, FEMA was organized to run programs, not to serve people. Just about every program had an office. As a result, everybody came to work in the morning and said: What does my program need today? But nobody woke up in the morning thinking: How can we do a better job of preventing disaster damage? Or, how can we do a better job responding when disasters strike? Once we identified our customers and articulated a mission, we began the process of restructuring FEMA.

The results were directorates built around central aspects of our mission -- mitigation, preparedness and response and recovery.

Organizations help drive a mission, but it's people who make organizations work. That's why this next rule is especially important in leading change in government.

Rule 4. Work with your career employees.

I'm a baseball fan. Every baseball fan knows that when you've got a great lineup that's working hard but losing games, you don't blame the players. You blame the manager. The manager is responsible for directing their skills toward a clear goal. That's what FEMA was like when I arrived. We had terrific people who weren't producing because they weren't being led. And it wasn't their fault. More than anyone else, they wanted to make FEMA the best agency it could possibly be.

I was convinced that more than anyone else, our career employees knew how to make change occur. From day one, I put FEMA's career employees in the driver's seat. And no matter where in government you work, career employees are your most valuable assets. As any good businessperson will tell you, if you want the full value out of any asset, you have to invest in it. Which brings me to:

Rule 5. Give your employees the tools to do their jobs.

These days, the most important tool for any job is information. And that makes information technology an essential tool for leading change.

Technology today lets you provide quick, rapid service. Early on, we started using 800 numbers to give our customers easier access to our services. It's also critical to use technology in-house. FEMA used to have an alphabet soup of information systems. Just about every program had one. When a need arose, an information system was developed to handle it. The problem was, they couldn't talk to each other. People didn't have the benefit of knowing what the person next door did -- even if that information would help them to serve the customer better. That's why part of our reorganization included establishing a directorate for information technology. Its biggest project has been developing and testing NEMIS, our agency-wide information system.

And speaking of information:

Rule 6. Communicate your message.

Let me say it again. Communicate your message. If you expect people to buy into change, you have to tell them exactly why you're doing it and exactly how. You have to say it quickly, you have to say it concisely, and you have to say it repeatedly.

At FEMA, we established clear lines of both internal and external communication. Two internal publications -- the Director's Weekly Report and The Rumor Mill -- provide a direct link between my office and every employee's desk. They know exactly what I expect and what we're doing. Our most important external initiative is *Project Impact*, our nationwide effort to make whole communities resistant to disasters. For *Project Impact*, we enlisted the help of outside professionals to develop and communicate a clear, concise message.

Speaking of clear communication with people outside your agency:

Rule 7. Secure support from your constituents.

Let me give you a sure-fire method for failing at change. And that's to tell other people what to do. That won't work for two reasons. First, chances are people won't do something if they don't believe in it.

Second, if you don't get an outside perspective, you're likely to be wrong in the first place. At FEMA, our most important constituents are our state and local partners. We might be leading change, but they're the ones who have to implement it. That's why I don't make major decisions that affect our state and local partners without talking with them first.

We also have a good relationship with the Congress. Just talking with your constituents isn't nearly enough. My next rule -- also the last -- may be the most important.

Rule 8. Build partnerships.

It doesn't matter what your business is -- whether it's public or private sector, national, state or local -- you can't succeed alone. If you want to lead change, you have to reach out. That's why we made *Project Impact* a true partnership involving businesses, state and local governments, civic groups and more. Because they are partners, they're more committed. Many are even contributing their own resources. This partnership model is the reason *Project Impact* has been so successful -- and it's one we apply to everything we do.

Each of these lessons work for any agency in government. I'm convinced, in fact, that they're solid advice for just about any kind of organization you seek to change. But I'm also convinced of this: The most important rules about change are the ones you discover. So I think I'll close this speech where I started, with the most important advice about change itself: Never say, "We've never done it that way before."

Thank you.

Director Witt's Leadership

Describe director Witt's direct involvement with your division or sub-office during and after the major reorganizations took place. How has he been directly involved during major disasters or events since then? How has he been directly involved during non-disaster periods? Please provide specific examples.

The Leadership Behind Project Impact Initiative

FEMA Director James Lee Witt's leadership was instrumental in launching the initiative that led to creation of the *Project Impact* national office. *Project Impact: Building Disaster Resistant Communities* is a unique disaster prevention initiative that began as a pilot project managed by an ad hoc team in the director's office. The objective in creating *Project Impact* was to provide communities with seed money, information about disaster prevention, and the tools needed to develop community-based disaster prevention initiatives. Given the information and resources, it is believed that communities will take action to reduce their risks from natural hazards events.

The *Project Impact* initiative itself was very much an outcome of Director Witt's own professional experience as an emergency manager. He says on many occasions that he has witnessed the damage-repair-damage-repair cycle too many times and the nation can no longer afford to build its communities in harm's way. Augmenting Director Witt's experience was knowledge gained during a series of roundtable meetings with chief executive officers of major corporations and town meetings with citizens across the country. This series of discussions established the foundation of knowledge upon which *Project Impact* is built; that community disaster prevention initiatives need to be products of community processes, and private businesses will be supportive if they are shown the benefits.

Project Impact was first implemented by Director Witt's office as a pilot program in 1997, when seven communities received funding to create disaster prevention initiatives. The initiative was coordinated out of the director's office by a staff of volunteers drawn from throughout the agency. The director's office took an active role in assisting communities with developing initial action plans, public community ceremonies, and special events intended to raise public awareness of natural hazards and *Project Impact*.

Toward the end of the pilot first year, Director Witt determined that the long-term success of *Project Impact* required that it be placed in a permanent coordinating office. Director Witt created the *Project Impact* office Feb. 1, 1998, placing it in the Mitigation directorate. Director Witt selected Maria J. Vorel to be the first national director of *Project Impact* and to lead the team. The national director of *Project Impact* reports directly to the associate director for Mitigation. The creation of the *Project Impact* office moved daily coordination of *Project Impact* activities from the director's office to the Mitigation office. Director Witt has continued to participate in *Project Impact* partnership events, such as the Bell South partnership summit, and community

ceremonies, as his schedule permits. In addition, *Project Impact* continues to figure prominently in all of his speeches and public forums.

The Standard Essay Topics

Disaster Operations

Describe your office's role on the Emergency Support Team (EST). Summarize an experience your office had working on the EST during one major disaster or emergency since 1993. What exactly did you do and what kinds of challenges did you encounter? Be specific and aim to leave the reader with a good understanding of what function your office fills on an EST, as well as the challenges you face.

Project Impact and the Emergency Support Team

Project Impact, which focuses on the reduction of community vulnerabilities, is not a disaster response activity. Thus, the *Project Impact* office is not actively involved with the Emergency Support Team (EST).

SECIAL ESSAY ON PROJECT IMPACT

Discuss the creation of *Project Impact* and some of the key challenges in developing the initiative and the relationship between the Federal government, State and local governments and private business and how they were formed.

Project Impact: Creation and Challenges

In the decade before 1997, FEMA spent over \$25 billion to help people repair and rebuild their communities after disasters. State and local governments, insurance companies and businesses spent even more ten of billions of dollars. The increasing number and severity of natural disasters and the tremendous public cost of responding to disasters demanded that proactive steps be taken. *Project Impact* was established to help local communities create a higher level of hazard awareness and, through a collaborative process, develop the capacity to establish strategic public/private partnerships and devise locally driven actions to create a community that is more resilient to the effects of disaster.

As a pilot initiative of the agency, *Project Impact* goals and ideas appeared to be contrary to the typical model of emergency management. Rather than simply focusing on predicting a disaster event, getting people out of the way, letting nature takes its course and then cleaning up the damage, *Project Impact* represented a fresh approach to the

entire way America deals with disasters. Rooted in three basic principles: (1) disaster-resistance strategies must be locally generated; (2) private sector participation is vital; and (3) long-term efforts and investments in risk prevention measures are essential, *Project Impact* challenged local communities to take control of their future rather than allowing the future to control them.

From the beginning, a major obstacle *Project Impact* faced as it was being introduced to the states and communities around America was the top-down, command-and-control structure of traditional emergency management. *Project Impact* represented a break in this structure by transferring to each community the tools and skills to control its own destiny by looking at things in a different way. As a community-generated pre-disaster mitigation approach, *Project Impact* has given local citizens the capacity to examine their vulnerabilities and, through a consensus-based community development model, determine how to protect the future of their community. Free of the typical stringent administrative restraints of a typical government grant program, this initiative truly puts the task of creating a sustainable local community in the hands of the people that live there. *Project Impact* has proven that risk assessment and hazard mitigation approaches that are grown and nurtured locally survive long after the federal or state resources have been expended.

While the benefit of creating a disaster-resistant community is clear, the indirect benefit of *Project Impact* - communities learning how to create an inclusive local decision-making structure - is not as tangible. This aspect of the community learning and evolution process has presented a challenge to the traditional focus of emergency management.

Project Impact is better described as an economic and social development initiative - a community that has achieved a higher level of disaster resistance has a stronger economy and ability to react to change. Being able to integrate disaster prevention ideas and techniques into the day-to-day business of planning and development is a way to weave sustainability into all aspects of community life. Designed not only to represent a new model of emergency management; its intent is also to increase the local citizens' involvement in the business of their community.

However, as citizens, local officials, civic organizations and business leaders have come together to find ways to mitigate their hazard risks, they have also built the confidence to come together and solve other, often more contentious issues that face communities in the 21st century. The civic capacity *Project Impact* communities have gained as a result of this experiment is creating the type of social and physical environment necessary to increase disaster resistance and also to make American communities better places to live.

Numerous linkages have been formed at all levels of government between public organizations and private businesses. These linkages have evolved from the fact that both government and business have a keen interest in protecting investments and consumers at the local and regional level. Through these linkages and partnerships government and private businesses are learning to work together on the common cause of

building healthier, more sustainable communities - prepared for disaster and able to bounce back quicker and stronger after a disaster occurs.

As citizens and local officials learn ways to protect the fabric of their own communities they have begun to share those experiences with other, less experienced communities. The horizontal mentoring networks that have formed at the local level as a result of *Project Impact* clearly demonstrate the unique adaptability of this initiative. New and innovative ideas for creating sustainable disaster-resistant communities are being shared among local jurisdictions without needing to flow back through the federal and state emergency management structures. This free flow of skills and technical resources are bringing new partners into the effort. While previously perceived as a possible threat to the control state and local emergency managers have on disaster planning and resources, the ability to collaborate across jurisdictional lines is now recognized as a beneficial way to help create a stronger America.

In fiscal 2000, *Project Impact* was allocated \$25 million, approximately 9 percent of the total FEMA budget for pre-disaster emergency management planning and assistance. However, *Project Impact* represents .02 percent of the \$1.2 billion average annual appropriation FEMA receives for disaster relief. Each community nominated by their state to be a *Project Impact* community receives "seed money" in the amount of \$300,000 to grow the initiative locally.

In the spirit of partnership and cooperation, *Project Impact* communities are trained on ways to better approach and assess their local risks, and given instruction on developing and fostering strategic partnerships to bring external funds to support local activities. In 1999, it was determined that *Project Impact* communities had leveraged over \$3.50 for every dollar they received in seed money from FEMA. With the billions of dollars that insurance companies, businesses and local, state and the federal government have saved by taking steps to become disaster-resistant, *Project Impact* represents an extraordinary return on such a relatively small public investment.

PREPAREDNESS, TRAINING, AND EXERCISE

Mission Shift to an All-Hazards Disaster Response

Describe how your office's mission and functions have evolved since FEMA changed its focus to an all-hazards disaster response. Describe the evolution of your division's mission and functions from 1992-2000.

As the foundation of emergency management, the Preparedness directorate is in the forefront of tribal, local, state, national and international partnership and outreach in developing proactive emergency planning, training and higher education, and exercise technology and techniques. Building the emergency management profession into one in which the current complexities, hazards, and challenges can be met and resisted.

The preparedness mission is to work in close partnership with and provide extensive expertise, guidance and assistance to help federal, state, local, and Indian tribal governments *establish, maintain, improve, and ensure the success* of the national comprehensive emergency management system. Preparedness, Training, and Exercises directorate (PTE) activities develop the capability to prepare for, mitigate against, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters through the implementation of programs in the broad functions of *emergency planning, training, exercising, partnership, and outreach*. These activities include developing all-hazards emergency operations plans, partnerships, and outreach; conducting training and exercise programs; identifying resources to carry out responses; developing warning and communications systems, etc. The Preparedness, Training, and Exercises directorate also has responsibility for carrying out a variety of specific emergency preparedness programs focused on: earthquakes; hurricanes; flooding; nuclear power plant emergencies; chemical weapons stockpile emergencies; hazardous materials incidents; dam safety; the fire service; community and family preparedness; and emergency food and shelter.

The emergency management system in the United States is large and complex. At the state and local level, there are over 7,000 emergency managers operating in more than 3,000 jurisdictions throughout the country. FEMA provides up to 50 percent of the funding necessary to support these individuals. Preparedness, Training, and Exercises directorate staff get to know government officials because they work with them daily. They form a partnership and friendship that pays off in a disaster because they are working with people they know and trust, and who know and trust them. Effective emergency management programs require coordination among many different organizations at the local level: fire departments; law enforcement; emergency medical services; public health; public works; utilities; voluntary organizations; schools and businesses. Partnership with the private sector is especially important because the private sector helps and provides resources in disaster responses. Partnership with volunteer organizations is also important because they can provide sheltering, food, clothes, counseling, and clean up in disasters.

Emergency preparedness is important for several reasons:

1. Simply stated, it works;
2. It helps lessen the threat of litigation;
3. It helps prevent devastating health, safety, economic, and political problems; and
4. In the United States, it is a federal requirement.
5. It is the foundation of emergency management;
6. It builds the profession of emergency management.

This is a far different mission than its historic one.

During the Cold War, the states and local jurisdictions were provided funding under the *Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950* to prepare for the nuclear attack threat posed by the Soviet Union. Despite the focus on nuclear attack preparedness during the Reagan military buildup of the 1980s, civil defense-funded emergency managers had, since the 1970s, been allowed by Congress to address all-hazards issues as long as they did not detract from national security requirements. However, with the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, it was clear that there was no longer a need to focus so much effort on nuclear attack preparedness.

Congress recognized this shift with the all-hazards amendment to the *Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950*, as amended. FEMA Director James Lee Witt then codified this formal change in the civil defense program in his May 3, 1994, memorandum to the FEMA regional directors that directed that, "State and local recipients may now use funding under the Act to prepare for and provide emergency assistance in response to all hazards based on the jurisdictions' assessment of hazard vulnerabilities". Also, at that time, the President and the director nominated to become associate Director for Preparedness Kay C. Goss, who had been the President's liaison to fire services and emergency management in the governor's office in Arkansas, and who, after being confirmed by the U.S. Senate, brought a state and local perspective to our programs and a customer service orientations to our delivery. This was a major step forward in efforts to efficiently and effectively utilize scarce resources for all types of emergencies by allowing the state and local governments to use the funds where they determined the most critical requirements existed.

A comprehensive agency-wide review and update of all guidance and implementation documents in the Civil Defense arena was accomplished. As a result, all of the old attack preparedness guidance was rescinded or replaced with new guidance stressing the all hazards approach. Most notable in this area is the *State and Local Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning* (SLG-101) published in September 1996 (copy attached).

Within the then-extant State and Local Preparedness Division (SLPS), the movement had already begun toward the first consolidation of all non-national security exercise program requirements under one umbrella. FEMA's November 1993 reorganization reflected this movement toward a risk-based, all-hazards emergency management program involving four basic operations: mitigation, Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP), response, and recovery. As part of this reorganization, the responsibility for FEMA's exercise activities was consolidated in the Preparedness, Training, and Exercises directorate, Exercises division. The Exercises division's mission was to "...improve the ability of federal departments and agencies, state and local governments, and private sector and

volunteer organizations to respond to and recover from all types of emergency and disaster situations through the implementation of a comprehensive all-hazard emergency management exercise program.”

The November 1993 reorganization also combined several separate exercise programs including the national security exercises, legislatively mandated exercises (REP and Chemical and Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program), and other natural, technological, and man-made disaster exercises into FEMA’s Comprehensive Exercise Program (CEP). This led to the development and issuance of FEMA’s *Comprehensive Exercise Program Policy Overview* in July 1995. This document delineated the overarching policy needed to build a disciplined structure for designing, developing, conducting, and evaluating exercises. The *Comprehensive Exercise Program Policy Overview* was updated in January 1998.

During 1998, the occurrence of several terrorist incidents raised the emergency management community’s awareness of the increasing potential for terrorist incidents with catastrophic or potentially catastrophic results. These incidents included the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City, the release of Sarin gas into the Tokyo subway system in March 1995, and the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in April 1995. These and other incidents, plus numerous threats and false alarms in recent years, have significantly increased the threat of terrorist weapons of mass destruction incidents involving nuclear/radiological, biological, and chemical agents as well as conventional explosives. Consequently, FEMA’s Exercises/Readiness division has become actively engaged in recent years with the federal departments and agencies, state and local governments, and volunteer organizations and the private sector as a participant in a number of exercises simulating terrorist incidents involving weapons of mass destruction. Some examples include the following: ILL WIND Exercise Series in 1996-1997; KEYSTONE 2-98 Exercise in September 1998; ELLIPSE ALPHA Exercises in June 1998 and August 1999; VAIL, COLORADO, Exercise in September 1998; WESTWIND Exercise in February 1999; and TOPOFF and National Capitol Region Exercises in May 2000.

In February 1999, FEMA’s associate director for the PTE directorate reorganized the directorate. The Exercises division was renamed the Readiness division. Its mission was redefined to “...effectively facilitate the assessment and improvement of the emergency management community’s REP and readiness to mitigate, respond to and recover from natural and technological disasters and incidents involving weapons of mass destruction.” Second, the responsibility for REP exercises was shifted to the newly formed Chemical and Radiological Emergency Preparedness Branch. Third, the responsibility for FEMA’s Capability Assessment for Readiness (CAR) program was assigned to the Readiness division.

In recent years, FEMA and its federal/tribal/state/local partners in exercise planning, conduct, and evaluation have begun to consider foregoing large-scale command post and field exercises such as CATASTROPHIC 97 and RESPONSE 98 in favor of smaller, regionally oriented, functional and tabletop exercises and seminars. Limited exercise resources will be devoted to the support of smaller, regionally oriented exercises impacting specific functions and issues identified from previous exercises. This will become a greater emphasis as part of the Comprehensive Exercise Program in the future as well as seeking more creative ways to conduct exercises such as using more computer

simulations and the Internet.

In 1992 FEMA's training efforts through the Training division and the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) focused primarily on state and local emergency management officials, as well as FEMA employees. Although this training was ostensibly intended to be all-hazards or—as was said at the time—dual use, there was still an overriding concern with REP for strategic nuclear attack. Civil defense, radiological defense, and shelter operations, for example, comprised a significant portion of the Institute curriculum.

The change in the disaster response focus, combined with the unmistakable lessons learned from Hurricanes Hugo and Andrew, profoundly reshaped not only the EMI curriculum but also the entire purpose of FEMA's emergency management training effort. Hands-on response-to-disaster training became preeminent, plus the audience and focus of EMI's efforts shifted from dealing exclusively with state and local officials to include aggressive efforts to train FEMA's own personnel regarding their disaster response roles.

Another significant change has been the tremendous growth in hazard mitigation. In 1992, with the exception of two National Flood Insurance Program courses, EMI offered only 10 training courses in the area of mitigation. Over the past eight years, and in keeping with the director's emphasis on disaster resistance and resilience, EMI has doubled to more than 20 mitigation courses, and the number continues to grow.

The training has become more sophisticated in the last few years, including a higher education component, known as the Higher Education Project (also see PTE Standard Essay Topic 10, Training), a distance learning system, the Emergency Education Network, independent study on the Internet, as well as in-residence training.

Through the international affairs programs, emergency management exchange programs and Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with other nations have greatly increased. Over 1,000 international visitors come to FEMA each year and MOUs and protocols have been signed with several nations, including Russia and Japan.

The shift to an all-hazards approach had a considerable impact at the Mt. Weather Management division. The use of Mt. Weather as a fixed facility supporting the all-hazards response has been furthered through the use of Mt. Weather by other FEMA activities, disaster personnel, disaster finance, the agency logistics center, and the conference and training center.

Management Reorganization

Describe how your office's senior management was reorganized in 1993. Have major changes in your office's management structure occurred since then? If so, what was changed and why was it changed?

Prior to November 1993, FEMA's exercises program, now centered in the Readiness division, was concentrated in the National Preparedness Office (national security exercises) and the Office of Technological Hazards (Radiological Emergency Preparedness and Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness program exercises). Partly as a result of the 1993 reorganization, FEMA's exercises program was formally centralized within the PTE directorate, Exercises division though movement in this

direction had commenced much earlier. Specifically, the division was divided into three branches.

- Policy, Development, and Conduct branch
- Evaluation and Corrective Action branch
- State and Local Regulatory Evaluation and Assessment branch (REP exercises)

With the agency reorganization in 1993, the Office of Technological Hazards was dissolved and its Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP), Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness (CSEP) and Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) programs were split between the newly formed Exercises and State and Local Preparedness divisions and the Regulatory Services Coordination Unit (RSCU). In 1999, all three organizations were dissolved and the programs combined under one of the newly formed divisions under PTE, the Chemical and Radiological Preparedness Division (PT-CR). Associate Director Kay. C. Goss combined the programs under one division in order that they might be better integrated, cross-cutting issues and activities better managed, and economies of scale realized, while combining technological hazards preparedness programs that could provide synergy and support terrorism preparedness. Four new divisions - Partnerships and Outreach, Readiness, Training, and Mt. Weather Management, were created along with four units - Emergency Food and Shelter, International Affairs, Customer Service - and Support Services - to carry out the functions of the directorate.

As a result of that reorganization, the Exercises division was renamed the Readiness division. Specifically, the Readiness division is now divided into two branches.

- Program Development branch
- Analysis and Assessment branch

The rationale for renaming the Exercises division as the Readiness division was twofold. First, the primary purpose of exercises is to test and evaluate the preparedness and readiness of the federal, tribal, state, and local governments/sectors of the emergency management community to respond to and recover from all-hazard disasters and emergencies in a cost-effective and timely manner. Thus, it was the general consensus of the division's management and staff that "readiness" more accurately reflected the division's responsibility of assessing the emergency management community's overall preparedness and readiness for disaster/emergency response and recovery. Second, the addition of the Capability Assessment for Readiness Program to the division significantly enhanced the "readiness" component of the division's overall responsibility, allowing combination with corrective actions after exercises and "after action" reports after disasters, to build an agenda for the future activities.

EMI became the basis for a comprehensive new Training division that was formed as part of the new PTE directorate. The Training division consolidated virtually all FEMA training, except for the National Fire Academy, into a single organizational entity. Three major components were added to EMI to form the Training division: the Employee Development function that had formerly been part of the Personnel office, the Emergency Education Network, which was formerly part of the U.S. Fire Administration, and the Mt. Weather training which had formerly been part of the National Preparedness directorate.

The new Partnerships and Outreach division was assigned responsibility for outreach to the tribes, states and regions; tribal policy; terrorism preparedness; school emergency preparedness and violence; outreach to minority communities, with emphasis on African Americans and Hispanics.

With the inclusion of other FEMA activities at Mt. Weather under the all-hazards approach, the Management division director gained additional responsibility as the senior resident manager for the facility. In addition to reporting to the associate director for PTE as her division director, the senior resident manager reports directly to the FEMA director.

Another example of cost efficiencies can be found in the REP program. The program assists state and local governments in the development of off-site radiological emergency plans and preparedness within the emergency planning zones of Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) licensed commercial nuclear power facilities. Prior to 1994 the REP program was funded through the normal appropriations process; however, beginning in 1994 the direct and indirect REP program costs have been gradually shifted to the nuclear utility industry. Today user fees are collected to recover 100 percent of the costs to provide radiological emergency planning, preparedness, response, and associated services.

Customer Service Improvements

How has your office implemented FEMA's customer service policy? Please cite specific examples of research and/or surveys conducted by your office related to customer service. Also, cite specific changes that were made in the way your office does business as a result of the research and surveys that were done. Finally, give examples of specific improvements in the way your office has serviced its customers since 1992.

Under Executive Order 12862, the mandates of the National Performance Review (NPR) and directives from FEMA Director James Lee Witt, the customer services initiative, later customer services unit, was created under the leadership of the office of Policy and Regional Operations. Its purpose was aimed at transforming FEMA into a customer-focused organization committed to effective and efficient service to all of its customers, both internal and external.

To accomplish this goal, FEMA adopted standard private sector definitions of customer service and implemented a survey/research operation to measure customer satisfaction levels. Simultaneously, training became a significant component of the initiative aimed at "establishing a common language among FEMA employees, creating a baseline of skills and behaviors, and developing a uniform understanding of customer service within the agency." All agency staff were required to attend a mandatory, two-day customer service training program.

Currently, the customer service unit resides in the PTE directorate and is charged with a two-fold responsibility. The unit develops training to inform, enlighten and continuously improve and/or change behavior and performance agency-wide. The unit is also responsible for supporting the FEMA customer satisfaction survey research operation involving the analysis, interpretation, reporting and monitoring of statistical data.

FEMA has a highly regarded customer service training program as evidence by its high score in the 1999 NPR federal employee survey and will continue to aggressively pursue higher customer satisfaction levels as part of the agency strategic plan.

Since its inception in 1993, FEMA's PTE directorate has always placed great emphasis on the importance of providing high quality service to both its internal (within FEMA) and external (other federal departments and agencies, state, local, and tribal governments, volunteer organizations, private sector entities, special interest groups, etc.) customers. The associate director for PTE included every employee in the process of reorganizing the directorate in February 1999. Their opinions and concerns were the foundation of the reorganization.

While there has not been all encompassing specific research and/or surveys completed by the Exercises/Readiness division relative to customer service, the division has implemented and undertaken a number of initiatives during the 1993-2000 time period that reflect FEMA's customer service policy. For example, participants have always had the opportunity to provide feedback on the exercise and process following major exercises. Such initiatives have and continue to provide the division's customers/partners with pertinent information about ongoing division programs and solicit input from these customers/partners relative to the design and implementation of specific division project and program activities. A brief description of a number of these initiatives follows.

Comprehensive Exercise Program (CEP) work group conference calls

This is a standing work group, which holds regular, monthly conference calls to discuss and provide assistance in the formulation and implementation of CEP on a nationwide basis. This work group's membership consists of one representative from each FEMA Region's Preparedness, Training, and Exercises division, one state exercise/training officer from each FEMA region, and, when appropriate, one representative each from pertinent federal departments and agencies.

Emergency management exercise reporting system

The emergency management exercise reporting system (EMERS) was originally designed and developed by FEMA for use by state and local emergency managers to track response activities to (a) state and local jurisdictions' exercise activities and (b) real life disasters and emergencies in 1993. During the 1993-2000 time period, EMERS has been enhanced significantly and numerous state and local jurisdictions have successfully used it to accumulate invaluable information and data for a variety of programs. Specifically, the basic information and data collected through EMERS is used to assess readiness capability, determine state and/or national hazard trends, facilitate strategic planning, identify funding/budgetary priorities, and develop more focused future exercises. Since 1999, the Readiness division has been working closely with an EMERS work group consisting of emergency management personnel from seven states (six state and one local) to facilitate the overall development and fine-tuning of the EMERS system.

FEMA/North Atlantic Treaty Organization exercise coordination

Since 1996, FEMA has coordinated and worked closely with the North Atlantic Treaty

Organization (NATO) in the annual planning and conduct of a joint NATO-Western European Union (WEU) crisis management exercise. The purpose of these exercises is to practice and validate WEU and NATO crisis management procedures and the consultative arrangements between WEU and NATO in the event of a WEU-led operation using NATO assets and capabilities, including the interaction between each organization's headquarters and the WEU nations/NATO nations.

FEMA region terrorism preparedness fact finding meetings

During the spring of 1997, the former Exercises division met with each of the 10 FEMA regions to discuss each region's assessment of its relative preparedness to deal with a terrorist incident and the support required to enhance their preparedness and ability to respond to the needs of the region's customers. The information gained through these meetings provided the basis for designing the makeup and content of the Phase I FEMA region terrorism consequence management orientation/seminars.

Federal Response Plan exercise planners work group meetings

This is a standing work group that meets once every month to discuss and provide assistance in the formulation and implementation of the Comprehensive Exercise Program on a nationwide basis. This work group's membership consists of one representative from each signatory, i.e., federal department and agency, to the federal Response Plan.

Federal and state capability assessment for readiness customer feedback workshops

These workshops are scheduled following the conclusion of the Capability Assessment for Readiness (CAR) survey and are designed to refine and enhance the CAR process, instrument, and supporting materials based on experience gained in the just-concluded survey. The initial workshops were held in San Francisco, Chicago and Washington, D.C., following the conclusion of the 1997 state CAR survey.

Federal/state/local coordination

The PTE directorate coordinates and works closely with both the National Emergency Management Association (state governments) and International Association of Emergency Managers (local governments), National Association of Counties, National League of Cities, International Association of Fire Chiefs, International Association of Fire Fighters, Minority Emergency Preparedness Information Partnerships and many other organizations through participation in these groups' annual meetings, involvement of these groups in occasional "focus groups" about specific directorate projects and programs. During CATASTROPHIC 97, for example, the Exercises division worked closely with the Central United States Earthquake Consortium. In developing the response to the National Security Council's Policy Issue 6 (Assisting and Planning with Multiple Jurisdiction Metropolitan Areas for Weapons of Mass Destruction), the Readiness division coordinated closely with the International Association of Fire Chiefs. At the federal level, the Readiness division coordinates with and is a member of the following interagency groups that oversee interagency terrorism exercises: (a) interagency work group on domestic/international counter terrorism exercises subgroup, (b) Presidential Decision Directive 62 contingency planning and exercises subgroup, and

(c) Multi-agency task force on Nunn-Lugar-Domenici exercises.

Local and Native American/tribal capability assessment for readiness survey development

Since 1999, the Readiness division has been working with the National Emergency Management Association, International Association of Emergency Managers, National Association of Counties, National League of Cities, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and International City/County Management Association to develop a local Capability Assessment for Readiness survey instrument. Similarly, the Capability Assessment for Readiness (CAR) staff has been coordinating closely with PTE directorate, tribal policy staff, the National Congress of American Indians, and the tribal governments to explore the development of an appropriate CAR survey instrument for the American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments. Both the National Congress of American Indians and tribal governments have expressed significant interest in developing and implementing a CAR survey process and instrument for the tribal governments.

National Emergency Management Association capability assessment for readiness work group

Since the inception of the Capability Assessment for Readiness (CAR) process in 1996, this group has worked closely with the division's CAR staff to strategize, plan, implement, evaluate, and modify the CAR process, instrument, and results. The closeness of this working relationship is evidenced by the 100 percent participation of all states and territories in the 1997 CAR survey. The work group is composed of eight state emergency managers. The CAR provides for a self-assessment by the states and territories of their capabilities in preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery.

National exercise schedule

A national exercise schedule is maintained by the Readiness division's Analysis and Assessment branch staff partnering with a task force consisting of representatives from 10 federal departments and agencies. On a quarterly basis, the task force representatives review and update the schedule in accordance with pre-established criteria to ensure that it contains all currently scheduled national and/or regional level federal exercises as well as any other exercises with significant federal involvement, at either the inter/intra-department or agency level. This updated schedule is then distributed to the 27 Federal Response Plan signatories for their review and input, as appropriate, of additional exercise information. Following this review and modification, the updated schedule is provided to the federal, state, and local emergency management communities for their use.

National exercise/training officers conference

This is an annual conference brings together the state exercise/training officers from each of the 50 states with the Readiness division staff to discuss and refine exercise and training related project and program activities under the Consolidated Exercise Program. During this conference, the attendees receive updates on other PTE directorate activities such as the Comprehensive Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Capability Assessment Program. Daily workshops address pertinent emergency management issues

such as school violence, terrorism, pets/animals in disasters, managing training and exercise programs, building and maintaining a training cadre, and emergency management exercise reporting systems.

Phase I FEMA region terrorism consequence management orientation/seminars

During the period from September 1997 - February 1998, the former Exercises division conducted the Phase I FEMA region terrorism consequence management orientation/seminar in each FEMA region. The goal of these orientation/seminars was to increase the region's awareness and understanding of the interagency concept of operations for responding to a terrorist incident and discuss the concept's application to facilitate the regional officials identification of requirements for planning, training, exercises, and equipment.

Readiness division liaisons to the FEMA regions

Program development branch staff members have been assigned as liaisons to the FEMA regions to provide assistance that might be required on pertinent exercise related activities and other Consolidated Exercise Program activities.

Standard exercise report format

During the 1994-1995 time frame, the Exercises division coordinated and guided the development of the Radiological Emergency Preparedness Standard Exercise Report Format that was issued in October 1995. This document was developed through a joint, coordinated process involving those federal, state, and local entities that participate in the preparation of the Radiological Emergency Preparedness exercise reports. The standard exercise report format facilitates preparation of REP exercise reports in a timely manner with greater uniformity in the content and organization.

United States/Canada emergency management coordination

In accordance with the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada on Cooperation in Comprehensive Civil Emergency Planning and Management dated April 28, 1986, FEMA and Emergency Preparedness Canada coordinate on a continuing basis with various United States and Canadian civil emergency planners and working groups to enhance bilateral cooperation and participation in civil emergency preparedness exercises. This coordination occurs through the United States/Canada (a) consultative group on comprehensive civil emergency planning and management and (b) civil emergency preparedness exercise working group.

As trainers, most Training division personnel were already quite sensitive and committed to providing excellent service to the wide variety of individuals, both inside and outside the agency, who comprise our customers. Nevertheless, the Training division recommitted itself to this function and worked hard to find ways to continuously improve its performance. In 1994, the Training division revised its student opinion survey to capture information on the actual success of the training provided in changing behaviors and not just on how the students liked the training. In 1997, the Training division implemented a 100 percent survey of the long-term results of its resident training courses. A comprehensive strategic review of the Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP)

program was initiated in 1996 to factoring in needs and concerns of that community. The results of the review were implemented beginning in 1999. During the preparations for the Year 2000 transition, multiple surveys were conducted of FEMA's state and local emergency management partner organizations to assess their needs and capabilities. The REP and Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness programs conduct or participate in conferences throughout the year to solicit feedback from program participants.

The most significant change in customer service at Mt. Weather Management division has been through the use of customer surveys given to each attendee at all conference and training activities. These survey responses receive in-depth attention by all branches within the division and have resulted in dramatic improvements in the surveys over the last five years.

The customer care branch in the Mt. Weather Management division was created solely to take care of customer needs at Mt. Weather and in fact the overall mission at Mt. Weather is built around satisfying the customer. Throughout the PTE directorate there are many examples of the focus of the programs on customer needs. For example, the comprehensive strategic review of the Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) Program was undertaken in direct response to customer requests and recommendations. In the Training division, overall goals have been more closely aligned with the agency's initiatives and priorities. The board of visitors at the Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, Md., is comprised of representative from across the spectrum of FEMA's customers, including state, local, and tribal officials, as well as representatives from academia and the private sector. In selecting students for training programs, everything possible is done to accommodate applicants from the state level and representatives from tribal governments are given priority status for admission. Each year a higher education conference is convened at the Emergency Management Institute to further develop the program and design course delivery. Over the years the Employee Development branch has increased their focus on satisfying the needs of internal, as well as external customers of the agency.

Cost Reduction

Give examples of your office's efforts to reduce costs from 1993 to 2000. Highlight specific successful efforts and be specific about where costs were actually reduced.

Every attempt has been made to streamline operations and reduce costs in PTE programs wherever possible. While cost reduction was not the primary reason leading to the former Exercises division's development and issuance of the standard exercise report format, as noted in the response to essay topic 3, cost reduction in the preparation of REP exercise reports was certainly a by-product of the standard exercise report format. This occurred due to a significant reduction from 12-15 months to three months in the average time required for the preparation, review, and approval of the REP exercise reports for transmittal to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Consequently, the cost reductions resulted in reduced FEMA contractor and staff costs.

Alternatives to the large-scale command post and field exercises have been considered and a shift is underway to smaller, regionally oriented exercises and seminars that can

result in cost savings to the agency and its participating customers. Large-scale command post and field exercises, while still conducted, occur at less frequent intervals, resulting in some cost savings. These changes reduced FEMA's contractor and staff costs for design, planning, conduct, and evaluation of whatever "mix" of exercises was used.

Results from the Capability Assessment for Readiness (CAR) process provide states and the federal government with valuable emergency management data that allows them to strategically plan for and budget resources so that they can be used most effectively and efficiently.

The Training division has implemented several cost-saving strategies during the period covered. Some, such as the following example, have exploited advances in technology. Others have simply used sound management to discover creative approaches, such as partnering with other organizations, to reduce costs.

In 1995, the Training division spent more than \$850,000 to print training materials for distribution to the states. In addition to the \$850,000, considerable other expenses were involved in warehousing and shipping the materials around the country. In 1996, the Training division implemented a process to distribute the materials to the states electronically via CD-ROM and the Internet. The transition took more than two years, but the result was that EMI's printing budget was reduced by just under 75 percent. In FY 2000, despite an increase in the demand for independent study courses that still must be printed, the Training division will spend less than \$250,000 on printing, and the warehousing and shipping costs have been almost totally eliminated. In another example the number of Emergency Education Network (EENET) broadcasts has increased during this period and the cost per broadcast dropped five-fold.

The annual technology transfer workshop brings together federal, state, and local emergency managers and representatives from the private sector and national research laboratories to exchange information and ideas using technology to improve emergency management and first response operations to save time, money and lives. The exchange of information with other governments has similarly provided lessons learned and improvements that have the potential to improve operations that will save lives and money.

During the period of FY 1993 to the present, the PTE directorate has undergone a significant downsizing. The funds available for program development, revision and evaluation, as well as exercising and technical assistance to state and local governments has been reduced by 67.63 percent, from \$29,230,000 to the current request of \$9,461,000, and of the FY 2001 request, approximately 80 percent is for the operation of EMI. During the same time the staffing of all preparedness activities has been reduced by 59.73 percent, from the FY 1999 actual of 591 employees to the current request of 238.

The best example of cost reductions has been the conversion of Mt. Weather Management division from appropriated funds to a working capitol fund. Since the implementation of the working capitol fund the division has received no appropriated funding for any of its activities, renovations, or capitol improvements and has increased revenue by over \$5 million.

Since the creation of the Partnerships and Outreach division, which replaced the State and Local Preparedness division after the PTE directorate reorganization, much greater

emphasis has been placed on partnerships and outreach and supporting our primary constituents at the state, local, and tribal level. Several initiatives illustrate this emphasis. Outreach was increased in all programs. As an example, we are coordinating with the African American emergency preparedness and information project (EPIP), a public/private partnership established to provide outreach to minority communities in emergency preparedness—having materials translated into Spanish and working with Hispanic staff in the areas of training; chemical, radiological, and hazardous materials preparedness; and customer service. EPIP provides a vehicle for national organizations, historically black colleges and other stakeholders to learn about the importance of emergency preparedness and incorporate these principles into community action. Through enhancements in the community and family preparedness program and participation in more conferences and outside activities, the outreach to women, the elderly, children, and minorities to spread the emergency preparedness message has been greatly expanded.

Implementation of the agency's American Indian and Alaska Native tribal government Policy was assigned to the Preparedness, Training, and Exercises directorate and we have been aggressively reaching out to and coordinating with Native-American organizations across the country. tribal liaison officers were designated in each FEMA region and the associate director serves as the national level representative. Everything possible is being done to help the tribes strengthen their emergency preparedness and to incorporate tribal policy principles into existing policies and programs to the maximum extent possible.

Some examples are:

1. including the tribes in the REP program strategic review;
2. conducting training for our tribal liaison officers on the unique and relevant issues related to working with tribes;
3. publishing a new policy on how tribal government public assistance funding will be administered directly from FEMA to tribal governments when they choose to act as their own grantee;
4. designating the Eastern Band of the Cherokee as the first tribal *Project Impact* community;
5. conducting the first tribal integrated emergency management course for the Gila River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community in Arizona;
6. coordinating with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to develop a Memorandum of Understanding affirming working cooperatively with the tribes to foster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery;
7. increasing discussions with tribal colleges to bring more of them into a higher education program; and
8. moving forward with tribal pilot projects to implement our policy.

Everything in the directorate is geared toward integrating the functional areas of planning, training, exercises, partnerships, and outreach in a manner that will provide only the best emergency preparedness. In order to “raise the standard” of emergency preparedness, these functional areas must not stand-alone and must be fully integrated.

Training and education are critical linchpins in all preparedness activities. Training and education are critical in developing the capability to respond to present and future

challenges, no matter how great or complex these challenges may be. Training and education have been a commitment of the PTE directorate management in order to maintain and upgrade not only the performance capabilities of emergency managers, but also their professionalism.

In the higher education project, formal degree programs have been established in 48 states, either at the certificate, associate, bachelor, masters, or Ph.D. level. In the other two states, a program has been authorized in one and several emergency management courses are available in the other. As of September 2000, program participation continues to grow and 67 colleges and universities participate:

- 23 schools offer *certificates, diplomas* or a *minor* in emergency management
- 12 offer *associate's degrees*
- 11 offer *bachelor's degrees*
- 16 offer *master's degrees*
- 5 offer *doctoral degrees*

Eighteen additional colleges or universities are in the process of developing programs or looking into our program. As part of this initiative, prototype bachelors-level courses, a prototype associate of arts degree curriculum, and 11 college level courses in emergency management-related topics that can be handed off to colleges for their use have been developed.

Great emphasis has also been placed on reaching out to and communicating emergency preparedness information with school systems and pursuing the incorporation of emergency preparedness materials into school curriculums. This initiative was launched with the suburban D.C. Bowie, Md., School System and the state of Maryland in 1999, including a successful yearlong pilot test in which emergency preparedness materials were incorporated into the Bowie School curriculum. The goal is to expand this program into other Maryland schools and across the nation. A similar rural pilot project was launched in the Yell County, Ark., schools.

In the longer term we want to incorporate hazard awareness and emergency preparedness information into school programs, primarily through curriculum materials, and to find innovative, no-cost ideas to motivate school kids to get involved in supporting and encouraging each other when they have experienced emergencies or disasters, natural or through school violence, as well as providing desperately needed resources to teachers. As another part of the PTE directorate's increased outreach and focus on helping state, local, and tribal constituents, has been convening workshops to facilitate the transfer of technology from the national labs and others to the emergency management and first response communities. The fifth workshop was held in June 2000 with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and Department of Energy in Colorado Springs, Colo. These workshops draw federal, state and local emergency management officials; representatives from the fire service and law enforcement communities; and representatives from research labs. Some real practical and interesting technologies have been identified in the five workshops that have been held, including:

1. A breathing apparatus for first responders developed using NASA technology;
2. A communications capability for fire fighters developed using Navy technology;

3. Ground penetrating radar developed by Oak Ridge National Laboratory and used by the Virginia State Police;
4. Aqueous foams developed by the Sandia National Laboratories to decontaminate chemical and biological weapons agents. These foams can be rapidly deployed, work in minutes, and do not generate toxic byproducts. They are currently being commercialized.
5. A disaster warning and communications system developed by the Mitre Corporation, and used by Alaska in remote areas of the state;
6. And PTE is working with the national Search and Rescue community on a system to improve search and rescue for downed pilots and survivors of boating accidents. This system can give the position of a downed aircraft or a disabled ship to within 10 meters, helping to save lives and money in search and rescue operations.

Through an agreement with the National Technology Transfer Center at Wheeling Jesuit University in West Virginia emergency management and first responder requirements are being assessed and technologies and ways to commercialize products and services to meet emergency management and first responder requirements effectively, rapidly and inexpensively are being identified. The initial focus was on identifying the needs of first responders, especially in responding to hazardous materials incidents and an Emergency Technology Partnership Council on Hazardous Materials was appointed to help in this effort. The council is prioritizing a list of needs that has been developed, and when technology applications are identified or developed, they will test and evaluate the effectiveness of these new applications.

Results-Oriented Incentives

How has your office adapted new ways of motivating employees and improving program performance? Specifically, which methods of reward or accountability practices have been implemented? Cite specific criticism and praise that prompted such changes in your office, if applicable.

The Preparedness, Training, and Exercises (PTE) directorate has always utilized cash and/or time off awards, quality step increases, customer service awards, certificates, etc. to recognize and motivate employees and improve program delivery. The associate director for PTE established a reward system of "OKay" mugs that were given to employees who had displayed extraordinary professionalism in program delivery.

Staff has always been encouraged to identify requests for training and to seek different opportunities for professional development, but funds available for staff training and development are usually very limited. Hence, training opportunities have been limited to priority training needs. In the future, additional emphasis will be placed on building professional and technical capability of all staff by taking advantage of many different opportunities available such as participation in training provided free by other organizations.

The PTE reorganization in 1999 was a result of recognizing the need to improve organizational performance, morale, and efficiency and all employees were provided ample opportunity to participate in the process and be heard. They were invited to request reassignments that better suited their skills or interests and numerous requests were honored.

The associate director established a task force on improving internal relations that included representatives from each division, and held regular meetings with employees, without managers, to identify achievements, issues or concerns to be addressed.

An annual award was established to recognize and remunerate the employee who has done the most to improve internal relations within the directorate.

Although the agency awards program has received much attention, one recognition method that has been especially effective at Mt. Weather is the selection and announcement of a "Personality of the month." The individuals selected are profiled for their peers and we have seen other staff members begin to emulate the positive elements discussed in those profiles.

Use of Technological Innovations

Describe how your office has employed the use of new technology since 1992. Also describe ways in which old technology has been used in a new way, if applicable. How have these technological innovations affected your office's performance.

The introduction and use of advanced computer technologies in the Preparedness, Training, and Exercises (PTE) directorate (including the internal office network or intranet, access to the worldwide web as a research utility and for external electronic mail, external access to the email system from outside the office, and the availability of advanced computer programs for performing work) and advanced telecommunications technologies (pagers, cellular phones, voice mail, faxing, conference and meet-me calls) have significantly improved the ability of staff to complete work on time and to do a better job.

The availability of internal and external electronic mail, with the capability of attaching documents, has significantly speeded up distribution of documents and increased the efficiency of the coordination of those documents. In addition, it has enabled staff to produce work despite the reduction in secretarial support. The ability to use conference and meet-me calls, along with faxing and electronic mail, has enabled much work to be done without having to travel. This has been especially critical with reduced travel budgets. It has also enabled staff to be located at different work sites and still perform work in a timely and effective manner.

Early in her work at FEMA, Kay Goss, associate director of the PTE directorate, suggested that there might be opportunities to incorporate new or existing technologies more fully into the emergency management community, thus leading to the FEMA technology partnership workshops. The goal of the workshops is to improve emergency preparedness and response to disasters, as well as to reduce the loss of life and destruction of property. One of the major goals of the workshops is to adapt defense and advanced technologies to modern domestic preparedness, mitigation, recovery, and response needs.

To determine if there was a genuine interest in exchanging information about new and existing technologies between the public and private emergency management groups, a workshop of representatives from the fire and emergency management communities and the nation's laboratories was convened. This workshop was conducted at FEMA's Mt. Weather Emergency Assistance Center in November 1996. In attendance were 168 people. Six co-sponsors funded most of the costs associated with the event that were minimal because of the location. Participants judged this first workshop to be highly successful and urged FEMA to hold additional workshops around the country to reach a wider audience of emergency managers.

FEMA then joined with the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory to conduct the second annual workshop in Richland, Wash., in September of 1997. Nearly double the size of the Mt. Weather workshop, 300 emergency managers and first responders were once again able to lay out their needs and seek solutions from the technology community. Technology providers from the private sector as well as the national laboratories were invited to attend the Richland workshop. At the conclusion of this second workshop, participants again encouraged FEMA to conduct future events.

The PTE directorate then partnered with the Argonne National Laboratory to hold the third annual workshop in July 1998. Unlike the previous workshops, a new feature was added – interactive demonstrations. First responders and emergency managers could see first hand demonstrations of new technological applications and how they might improve emergency response. About 380 people attended. There were 15 co-sponsors and an additional 17 exhibitors.

Encouraged by the results at Argonne, the Preparedness directorate next co-sponsored a workshop with the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Gatlinburg, Tenn., May 17-20, 1999, that was attended by about 300 people. Round table discussions were added to the agenda to provide another avenue for direct contact between the first responder/emergency manager community and technology providers from the private sector and the national laboratories. There were 10 co-sponsors and 17 additional exhibitors.

The workshop continued in the year 2000, with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory hosting the event in Colorado Springs, Colo., June 12-15, 2000.

Approximately 450 attended the event, which focused on wildfires, school safety, and counter-terrorism. There were five co-sponsors and an additional 39 exhibitors.

Each workshop opened many doors for emergency managers and first responders to existing and new technologies. For example, new technologies to search for bodies provide better warnings of imminent storms and disasters, constructing earthquake-resistant buildings, and identifying chemical/biological agents have been highlighted. The next workshop, to be held in partnership with the U.S. Navy, will take place in San Diego, Calif., in the summer of 2001.

As with most organizations, the Training division made significant progress in exploiting technology in three primary areas: (1) office automation, (2) instructional technology and systems, and (3) training delivery.

In 1992, the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) had one computer laboratory with 30 workstations. EMI now has so many classrooms with computers that it is difficult to decide what constitutes a computer laboratory. The Training division now has more than

200 student computer workstations

In 1992, EMI taught the use of computers themselves to encourage emergency management officials to use this emerging technology in preparing for and managing the response to disasters and emergencies. Today, automated systems are such an integral part of the emergency management business that almost every subject taught has an information technology component.

The period since 1992 also saw the explosion of the Internet, the worldwide web, and universal email which has changed our lives. The Training division worked hard to take advantage of all these facilities by, for example, making registration via the Internet for EMI independent study courses available starting in 1996 and by posting EMI resident schedule information in 1997. EMI offered its first Internet-based course in 1998 and now routinely uses the world wide web and email to conduct a large portion of its business.

In 1994, the Emergency Education Network (EENET) broadcast 17 programs, often lasting most of a day at a cost of \$50,000 each. Now the EENET broadcasts for two hours every Wednesday at 2 p.m. Eastern Standard Time and cost only \$10,000 each. The simple increased reliance on electronic communication has shown the greatest improvement in efficiency at the Mt. Weather Management division. The ability to more rapidly transmit and insure receipt of everything from customer work orders to calendar and meeting changes has improved the division's performance.

Partnerships

What groups, organizations, companies or contractors are you now working with outside of FEMA. Summarize these partnerships and cite when and why each partnership began and how the working relationships have evolved. Provide insights about the partnerships in terms of how they have assisted your office in carrying out its functions and/or how they have contributed to FEMA's overall mission.

There are multiple outside groups the PTE directorate coordinates and works with. One of the primary partnerships is with the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA). NEMA is the association of state emergency managers. The PTE directorate coordinates all program activity with NEMA. Others are listed below.

Terrorism consequence management preparedness assistance

Terrorism consequence management preparedness assistance partners include state and local governments, and the U.S. Department of Justice, National Domestic Preparedness Office. Through this partnership, we have conducted preparedness workshops for FEMA Regional Terrorism coordinators; developed a Terrorism Annex to the State and Local Guide 101; and developed input to FEMA's Terrorism Preparedness Strategic Plan.

Community and family preparedness program

Working through a broad coalition of partnerships, the community and family preparedness program (CFP) supports disaster public education programs and activities. The program's goal is to ensure that all Americans have the necessary information,

education and skills to protect themselves, their families, their homes, and their businesses from disaster and its devastating consequences. CFP partners have either signed memorandums of understanding or have agreements in the form of Cooperative Interagency Agreements. Other partnerships have formed while working together in common efforts for effective disaster public education. The following are our partners in this program:

The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM)

IAEM represents local emergency managers who are the primary partners with the community and family preparedness program. They cooperated with FEMA in establishing the CFP program—the founders at the grass roots level. IAEM's leadership established a family protection task force in the late 1980's. IAEM contributed to the case studies and program models promoted in CFP's basic Guide, The Good Ideas Book, and in annual CFP conference reports. Local directors in IAEM helped to develop most CFP program materials, including the new Disaster Education Organizer's Course. IAEM also supports PTE in other program activities such as in Y2K preparations, school violence, emergency preparedness curricula, etc.

NOAA/National Weather Service (NWS)

From FEMA's creation, we have worked jointly with NWS, an active member of the National Disaster Education Coalition, to develop all weather-related public information and standard guidance materials. NWS and FEMA are currently working together in the development of public awareness and preparedness information materials about drought and severe heat. NWS materials that include multi-media materials are excellent for classroom use and are promoted in CFP's annual conferences and utilized in CFP's curriculum project. PTE works with NWS to develop disaster resistant communities. CFP promotes the use of NWS severe weather forecasts, watches and alerts to improve preparedness. NWS recently participated in CFP's African American Emergency Preparedness and Information Project.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

As a community and family preparedness partner, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) provides technical expertise for public disaster education and preparedness on earthquake, volcano, tsunamis and landslides, and also works actively with other agencies to develop standard answers for disaster preparedness and emergency public information for joint publications. USGS is a National Disaster Education Coalition partner. USGS has cooperated with FEMA to develop earthquake materials for the technical and professional fields, business and industry, school curricula and the general public.

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)/National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH)

CFP works with CDC/NCEH to coordinate emergency public information and disaster education materials. We update FEMA materials based on disaster research findings and injury prevention measures, for which CDC/NCEH is the lead federal agency. The objective is to redevelop joint materials about public and environmental health and sanitation.

U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES)

This partnership formed under the Civil Defense Act as part of the evolution of an all-hazard system. The extension service role in small towns and rural areas was the basis for initial partnership. As a result of this partnership, the Texas A&M extension coordinator has been an active participant in the community and family preparedness (CFP) program and its annual conferences, and helped in developing the Disaster Education Organizer's Course. Through this partnership we strengthened our relationship with USDA headquarters, the Internet-based Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN), and linked with the national 4-H program. Several extension agents from state land-grant institutions participated in the 1999 community and family preparedness conference, and EDEN representatives will assist with the CFP 2000 conference to address youth in disaster preparedness and emergency management. The preparedness mission and extension agents' roles in damage assessment during response and technical assistance through recovery periods are an important segment within FEMA's overall coordination responsibilities. USDA and the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service are also members of the National Disaster Education Coalition (NDEC).

National Emergency Management Association (NEMA)

As a result of our partnership with NEMA, the organization passed a resolution in 1997 urging states to establish community and family preparedness (CFP) as a required activity of local directors.

National Disaster Education Coalition (NDEC)

Community and family preparedness (CFP) is an active member of the National Disaster Education Coalition (NDEC). This partnership evolved from federal departments and agencies coordinating emergency preparedness information and events for the International day for natural disaster reduction (IDNDR). NDEC is the informal organization through which standard messages and co-logoed public information materials are developed cooperatively by various federal agencies having lead roles in disaster preparedness and other organizations. NDEC is a valuable mechanism for coordinating the dissemination of disaster information to the public that is technically accurate and carries a consistent message. NDEC members coordinated the development and production of "Talking About Disaster: Guide for Standard Messages." NDEC also aids FEMA's mission to disseminate reliable emergency and disaster preparedness materials to our national emergency management system.

Emergency Information Infrastructure Partnership (EIIP)

Community and family preparedness' (CFP) partnership with EIIP began in 1997 with the development of mailing lists for periodic email newsletters, posting program information in the virtual library, and, in 1998, virtual forum chat sessions. EIIP's email address and website have become the Internet site used by CFP to distribute information and discuss disaster public education topics. EIIP provides CFP the mechanism to reach our emergency management constituents, voluntary organizations and agencies interested in disaster public information and education. EIIP enables CFP to reach audiences interested in disaster public education activities and issues, and allows us to promote

current FEMA and CFP priorities through extensive outreach initiatives to minority communities, women and children.

State and local emergency management data users group (SALEMDUG)

SALEMDUG began approximately 15 years ago under sponsorship from FEMA with the mission to foster extensive development and use of computer technology to assist state and local emergency managers and other first responders in the performance of their jobs. More recently, SALEMDUG has become an independent, member-supported organization. The group publishes a quarterly newsletter, sponsors an annual conference for emergency managers, and has recently begun sponsorship of a certification program for professional emergency managers with primary emphasis in information technology implementation.

Firehouse.Com

The magazine *Fire House* has an Internet website which features a monthly column by Associate Director Kay Goss regarding updates on the Chemical Hazard Emergency Response-Capability Assessment Program.

Voluntary and Community Organizations

The Emergency Preparedness and Information Partnership (EPIP)

EPIP is a public/private partnership with FEMA. The EPIP partnership was initiated in FY 1999 to communicate and disseminate emergency preparedness information to African American communities and national Black and other ethnic minority organizations that are high risk in vulnerability to disasters. In EPIP, three outreach techniques are utilized: A website (www.epipgateway.com), an Internet newsletter, and workshops. EPIP has enabled FEMA to encourage national organizations representing African-American communities to learn more about emergency preparedness.

Women in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) (WIN)

WIN partnership is a new partnership that developed as a result of the first EPIP workshop held Oct. 4-5, 1999. As a result of this partnership, FEMA PTE directorate staff has been invited to present disaster preparedness information at three NAACP regional conferences and was requested to participate in the national NAACP conference in Baltimore, Md.

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NOVAD)

NOVAD is an intermediate partnership that assists CFP in outreach to its members. Several of the voluntary organizations have shown an interest in the CFP program.

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army, a NOVAD member, has participated in the 1998 and 1999 annual CFP conferences and workshops. CFP program materials were first furnished to all Salvation Army divisions in the Western Region in 1997 (Portland, Ore., division).

The American Red Cross Community Disaster Education (CDE)

The partnership with the American Red Cross CDE program was formed in 1980. CFP and CDE have coordinated the development of FEMA-funded documents and videos.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic Charity and NOVAD member, adopted CFP as a national program in their 1997 conference and signed a Memorandum of Agreement in 1998. The society focuses on keeping at-risk families together and noted the impact of disasters on such families. St. Vincent de Paul modified the first page of the Emergency Preparedness Checklist to add their name, and furnished an initial copy to every Catholic parish in the United States.

Church World Services (CWS)

Church World Services (CWS) has been active with CFP for over a decade. CWS volunteers usually represent the West Virginia Emergency Management Agency at CFP conferences and have been active in leading conference workshops. CWS helps CFP on the issues of promoting and advocating broad-based community coalitions to mobilize community resources and leadership to minimize the impact of disasters and implement broad-based recovery in ways that will improve preparedness substantially. They have contributed to FEMA's overall mission by their involvement in public education promoting mitigation practices, supporting the public education about *Project Impact*, and using their extensive involvement in disaster response and recovery to promote improved preparedness and mitigation measures with the general public and special populations.

Adventist Community Services

Adventists are active in NOVAD, assisting disaster victims, and in promoting preparedness in their own programs. We provide FEMA materials and occasionally participate in their events. Adventists have participated in recent CFP conferences and in the new disaster education organizer's course. This year they will furnish two instructors for the organizer's course broadening the cadre of FEMA-trained instructors on approaches to developing more effective community disaster public education programs.

Other Non-Profit Organizations and Associations

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

Although founded years ago and well established as a professional association to promote fire safety and protection, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) extended its fire public education standard to include all hazards. This partnership provides FEMA with a strong program at the national level, promoting integration of fire and emergency management at the local level in broad based disaster public education for prevention and preparedness for all hazards. NFPA and the community and family preparedness (CFP) program work cooperatively with NFPA's risk watch and CFP's curriculum project. The partnership is currently working together on a pilot project in Prince George's County, Md., and rural school systems in Yell County, Ark.

International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)

These groups represent the fire fighters and first responders in the U.S. and PTE directorate routinely reaches out to them to solicit their input and participation in different PTE programs.

Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS)

IBHS is a member of the National Disaster Education Coalition and cooperates with FEMA in promoting mitigation to the general public and the business community. IBHS's vice president for public education participated in the 1999 community and family preparedness conference and the curriculum development project.

National Sheriffs Association (NSA)

NSA's neighborhood watch program was community and family preparedness program's (formerly the family protection program's) first partnership. NSA adopted a special version of FEMA's Emergency Preparedness Checklist.

Youth Organizations and Programs Boy Scouts of America (BSA)

FEMA and scout officials signed a Statement of Agreement for the Exploring Program in the early 1990's. Development of exploring posts in emergency management began nearly a decade ago with a draft manual. The final manual was printed by FEMA in 1995. Merit badges in emergency management were developed in cooperation with the Boy Scouts almost 20 years ago. Through this partnership we are able, working with youth, to integrate disaster preparedness and response into a disaster resistant culture and community, that fulfills FEMA's public education objectives.

4-H Clubs

The partnership with 4-H Clubs is under development. The 4-H youth are being sponsored by USDA/CSREES extension agents. CFP is involving 4-H youth in the CFP Conference 2000. A panel and workshop will include discussion of how to work with youth.

Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

A written Statement of Agreement was signed in 1995. The Girl Scouts developed a merit badge in emergency management. The merit badge program is an important ingredient of FEMA outreach to children and youth in developing a disaster resistant community. The Girl Scout program is important to the effort to reach children and youth in disaster education and school safety.

Camp Fire Boys and Girls

Camp Fire Boys and Girls signed a Statement of Agreement in 1995. This partnership allows direct contact as part of the effort to reach children through schools and school-related programs.

Partnerships with Particular tribal/State/local Jurisdictions & Programs

PTE worked with Pointer Ridge Elementary School in Bowie, Prince George's County, Md., to integrate emergency management into existing school curriculum. Faculty volunteered to identify needs, review materials and assess curriculum materials under consideration for adoption and/or adaptation to various grade levels.

Lyndon Hill Elementary

Capitol Heights, Md., will be the Prince George's County pilot site for implementing and evaluating NFPA's Risk Watch™ curriculum.

Tony Siciliano, Emergency Management Agency Director, Quincy, Mass.,

Instituted one of the most successful Exploring Posts. The Quincy post recently formed and trained a community emergency response team (CERT). They will participate in the community and family preparedness conference 2000 and participate in the youth panels and workshop. Winter Park, Fla., is the site of an alternative CERT program, organized and trained at a high school rather than from a community agency as an after school activity. Representatives will be invited to the CFP conference 2000 to join youth from Quincy, Mass., and the 4-H in a panel and in workshops.

The Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA)

GEMA developed a legislatively mandated school safety program and led statewide implementation. They will participate in the community and family preparedness conference 2000 school safety discussions.

Ohio School Safety

Ohio state program in school safety is another model, which focuses on a "safe school audit" to identify and recognize school safety programs meeting the safe school criteria. The program will be the subject of a workshop session at the community and family preparedness conference 2000.

Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

MEMA is the state emergency management agency partner in the Maryland curriculum project, and will participate, supported by a FEMA grant, in the identification and adaptation or development of curriculum materials to meet identified needs and opportunities.

Pulaski County (Little Rock), Ark., sickle cell support group

President Louis Perry reflects a special application of partnering with organizations supporting vulnerable populations in disaster preparedness.

Peace Links

Peace Links, founded by Betty Bumpers, as well as Youth Links, interface with both our school emergency preparedness activities and our international outreach.

South Carolina African Methodist Episcopal Conference

A task force on emergency preparedness partnership with FEMA has been established.