



# 2023

OFFICE OF RESPONSE  
AND RECOVERY

## YEAR IN REVIEW

JANUARY 2024



# FEMA

# Contents

- Letter from the FEMA Administrator . . . . . 4**
- Letter from the Associate Administrator of Response and Recovery . . . . . 5**
- Report Organization . . . . . 7**
- Navigating the New Normal: Response and Recovery in 2023 . . . . . 8**
  - FEMA Regions . . . . . 10
  - FEMA Cadres. . . . . 12
  - FEMA Assistance in 2023 . . . . . 14
  - 2023 Response Missions By The Numbers . . . . . 17
  - 2023 Recovery By The Numbers. . . . . 18
- Instill Equity as a Foundation of Emergency Management . . . . . 20**
  - Enhancements to Applicant Services . . . . . 21
  - Individual Assistance Letter Improvements. . . . . 22
  - Leveraging Technology to Increase Equity. . . . . 23
  - Engaging Tribal Nations to Improve Survivor Assistance Programs. . . . . 24
- Q&A with Jane Norton . . . . . 26**
- Lead the Whole of Community in Climate Resilience . . . . . 28**
  - Guam Resilience Initiative . . . . . 29
  - Wildfire Commission . . . . . 30
  - Developing Climate-Centric Guidance to Support Our Partners. . . . . 33
  - New Mexico Wildfires . . . . . 34
  - Delivering Results while Protecting the Environment . . . . . 36
- Q&A with John Brogan . . . . . 38**
- Promote and Sustain a Ready FEMA and Prepared Nation . . . . . 40**
  - Driving Enterprise Readiness. . . . . 41
  - Investing in Our People . . . . . 43
  - Enhancing Our Structure to Meet Mission Requirement. . . . . 44
  - Working with Our Partners: Pre-Disaster Housing Initiative . . . . . 49
  - Delivering Critical Commodities . . . . . 52

- Q&A with Michael Spagnolo . . . . . 54**
- Field Innovations . . . . . 56**
  - California Atmospheric River Flooding (DR-4683, DR-4699) . . . . . 57
  - Mississippi Spring Tornadoes (DR-4697) . . . . . 60
  - Typhoon Mawar (DR-4715) . . . . . 63
  - Hawaii Wildfires (DR-4724). . . . . 68
  - Hurricane Idalia (DR-4734). . . . . 76
  - Kentucky Cottages Initiative (DR-4663). . . . . 78
  - Florida Hurricane Ian Recovery Update (DR-4673). . . . . 80
  - Puerto Rico Recovery Update . . . . . 83
- FEMA Moving Forward . . . . . 86**
- 2024 Office of Response and Recovery Leadership . . . . . 88**
- 2024 FEMA Regional Leadership . . . . . 90**
- 2023 Declarations . . . . . 94**
  - Emergency Declarations . . . . . 94
  - Major Disaster Declarations . . . . . 94
  - Fire Management Assistance Declaration . . . . . 97



# LETTER FROM THE FEMA ADMINISTRATOR



DEANNE CRISWELL

I am proud to share the first of its kind “Office of Response and Recovery Year in Review” report. This report highlights the innovative ways that the Office of Response and Recovery (ORR) team is working to better support communities before, during, and after disasters. In addition to responding to 114 disasters this year, including 84 Presidentially-declared disasters and 30 Fire Management Assistance Grants, ORR has continued to support dozens of complex ongoing recovery missions from years past.

When a disaster strikes, ORR leads disaster operational coordination for the Federal Government. Whether it is a typhoon in a territory thousands of miles away from the continental United States, a fire that defies state or tribal land boundaries, or a deadly tornado that impacts a rural community, ORR staff are often the first federal responders on the ground, ready and prepared to meet communities where they are.

As severe weather continues to become stronger and more frequent, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has maintained its ability to support survivors after a disaster occurs. In August, Disaster

Survivor Assistance teams, crews that embed into communities to help residents apply for assistance, were on the ground assisting survivors in Florida just four hours after President Biden declared a Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Idalia. Members of my senior leadership team were on the first official plane to reach Guam after Typhoon Mawar impacted Guam, ensuring we were coordinating with territory officials and filling immediate needs in the early days after the Typhoon made landfall. I personally was on the ground in the initial days of many of the incidents throughout the year, including Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi after severe tornado touchdowns, and in Hawaii following the devastating wildfires in Maui to meet with survivors to determine resource needs.

I want to thank all of the ORR staff who supported the FEMA mission this year, oftentimes making personal sacrifices and doing all they can to support survivors. Without you, we would not be able to achieve our mission of helping people before, during, and after disasters. Looking to 2024, ORR will continue to work to ensure that FEMA is ready to meet the mission, no matter when disaster strikes or what it may look like. By building a ready workforce, utilizing technology to streamline processes, delivering critical commodities, and enhancing programs to ensure communities are building back more resilient than before a disaster, ORR will continue to innovate to ensure FEMA is meeting the needs of survivors and their communities.

**In total, more than 9,300 ORR employees collectively spent more than 1.3 million days deployed to support disaster missions in 2023, serving communities from the Pacific Islands to the Caribbean.**

# LETTER FROM THE ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR OF RESPONSE AND RECOVERY



ANNE BINK

The Office of Response and Recovery (ORR) has done truly remarkable work over this past year. As our Nation calls upon FEMA more often and across varied incidents and emergencies, our team continues to meet the moment.

The ORR team provides life saving and life-sustaining support before, during, and after hurricanes, wildfires, tornadoes, flooding, and more. This includes supporting unified coordination among federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial partners, staging and deploying teams and commodities, establishing emergency communications, and conducting search and rescue operations. Our proactive posture ensures we are always ready to meet the needs of communities across the country, as we concurrently focus on life-saving response operations and expedited resilient recovery efforts.

ORR is dedicated to supporting survivors and communities during their toughest days, and we remain on the ground long after initial response operations, working hand in hand with state, local, tribal, and territorial officials, recovery personnel from the FEMA regions, and those across our incident management cadres to resiliently rebuild. In 2023, we used technology in innovative ways to deliver assistance to survivors and communities more quickly and robustly, including through the use of remote sensing to expedite damage assessments and provide assistance to survivors.

No two disasters affect communities the same way. That is why we implement an integrated and coordinated approach centered around the needs of impacted communities. Disasters can overwhelm any community, but we know they often exacerbate already-existing challenges, such as housing shortages, strained economic conditions, rising social service needs, and aging infrastructure. Often, these communities are attempting to create a new normal while still facing the challenges that existed before the disaster. Our recovery missions are a whole of community effort, where we focus on meeting people where they are. We jumpstart long-term recovery from day one post-disaster and stay in the community for as long as we are needed.

This report highlights just a handful of our accomplishments in 2023, including the implementation of the FEMA Readiness System to build and sustain operational readiness, creation of the National Incident Management Assistance Team for Homeland Security to support non-traditional missions, the formation of the first-ever Pre-Disaster Housing Initiative to better execute post-disaster housing with state partners, enhancement of a distribution center to improve logistical capabilities and increase cost-effectiveness for streamlined operations, and the establishment of the Office of Emerging Threats.

We know disasters will continue to strike, upending the lives of so many. But when they do, ORR will continue to lean forward to support survivors and their communities. As the threat landscape continues to change, ORR is committed to evolving and innovating to be the FEMA the Nation needs and deserves.





# REPORT ORGANIZATION

This first-ever Office of Response and Recovery (ORR) Year in Review report aims to highlight the innovative ways that ORR is working to better support communities before, during, and after disasters. This report identifies a handful of ORR’s accomplishments in 2023 that align with the FEMA 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

FEMA’s 2022-2026 Strategic Plan outlines a bold vision and three ambitious goals designed to address key challenges the agency faces during a pivotal moment in the field of emergency management. The three goals in the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan are the following:

## GOAL 1

**Instill equity as a foundation of emergency management.**

## GOAL 2

**Lead whole of community in climate resilience.**

## GOAL 3

**Promote and sustain a ready FEMA and prepared Nation.**

These goals position FEMA to address the increasing range and complexity of disasters, support the diversity of communities we serve, and complement the Nation’s growing expectations of the emergency management community. The graphic below displays this report’s organization and provides details on the contents to be found in each section.



### INTRODUCTION



### INSTILL EQUITY AS A FOUNDATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Highlights the work ORR has done to instill equity as a foundation of emergency management.



### LEAD THE WHOLE OF COMMUNITY IN CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Explores the work ORR has done in 2023 to lead the whole community in climate resilience.



### PROMOTE AND SUSTAIN A READY FEMA AND PREPARED NATION

Describes how ORR is building and sustaining operational readiness through the Ready FEMA Framework and the FEMA Readiness system.



### FIELD INNOVATIONS

Highlights innovative ways that ORR has supported disaster survivors in 2023.



### CONCLUSION



### APPENDIX

Lists the 2024 ORR Leadership, 2024 Regional Leadership, and every disaster declaration in 2023.



# NAVIGATING THE NEW NORMAL:

## RESPONSE AND RECOVERY IN 2023

**FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.**

As the Nation's leader in coordinating complex operations among a wide array of partners and stakeholders, FEMA is one of many partners that supports survivors and state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments in disaster response and recovery. FEMA's role is twofold. First, to provide support through its own statutory authorities and resources. Second, to coordinate the support of federal and non-federal partners to achieve response objectives and recovery outcomes. FEMA is the only federal agency with the programs and authorities that address all stages of the disaster life cycle: mitigating against, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters.

FEMA's workforce is comprised of more than 20,000 emergency managers nationwide. This includes 7,565 reservists as of Dec. 31, 2023. FEMA can also leverage volunteers from other federal agencies through the 8,433 rostered members of the Surge Capacity Force, enabling FEMA to surge resource capacity when needed during disaster response and recovery thanks to FEMA's reservists.

FEMA is comprised of (1) headquarters in the District of Columbia where the Office of the Administrator and headquarters program offices are located; (2) ten regional offices that work directly with states, territories, and Tribal Nations; (3) field offices, located around the country, that manage disaster response and recovery; (4) warehouses and staging areas throughout the country; and (5) other area offices including in the National Capital Region, Caribbean, and Pacific.

### ENHANCING PROTECTIONS FOR FEMA'S RESERVISTS:

President Biden signed the Civilian Reservist Emergency Workforce (CREW) Act into law on Sept. 29, 2022. FEMA's reservists leave their other forms of employment and answer the call to service after a disaster strikes. This legislation protects FEMA's reservists from losing their outside employment due to their work with FEMA. The law also protects individuals from discrimination in hiring, promotion, and retention based on present and future membership in the uniformed services.

**FEMA is constantly monitoring for emerging threats and often has people on the ground before there are impacts.**

FEMA's Office of Response and Recovery (ORR) provides guidance, leadership, and oversight to build, sustain, and improve the coordination and delivery of support to citizens and SLTT governments to save lives, reduce suffering, protect property, and recover from all hazards. ORR is made up of five directorates:

#### RECOVERY DIRECTORATE

The Recovery Directorate provides assistance to communities overwhelmed by acts of terrorism, natural disasters, or other emergencies. FEMA's Recovery programs focus on the timely restoration, strengthening, and revitalization of all aspects of communities affected by a disaster. Recovery also addresses the needs of individuals, families, and communities to build resilience in preparation for future disasters or emergencies and leads interagency coordination through the Recovery Support Function Leadership Group (RSFLG).

#### LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE (LMD)

LMD delivers critical commodities and manufactured housing units following disasters. There are eight distribution centers (DC) in the United States and outside the continental United States strategically located to provide rapid support wherever the need arises.

#### RESPONSE DIRECTORATE

The Response Directorate delivers the coordinated federal operational response needed to save and sustain lives, minimize suffering, and protect property in a timely and effective manner in communities that become overwhelmed by natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other emergencies. The Response Directorate leads unified coordination of all federal emergency management response operations during disasters, including integration of federal and SLTT response operations and response planning. This coordination enables the Federal Government to support impacted survivors and communities through delivery of immediate emergency assistance, maintain situational awareness of the disaster to anticipate emerging needs, and communicate with the public.

#### FIELD OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE (FOD)

FOD ensures the operational readiness of FEMA's incident workforce to achieve timely, effective, and integrated field operations that support the whole community across all mission areas.

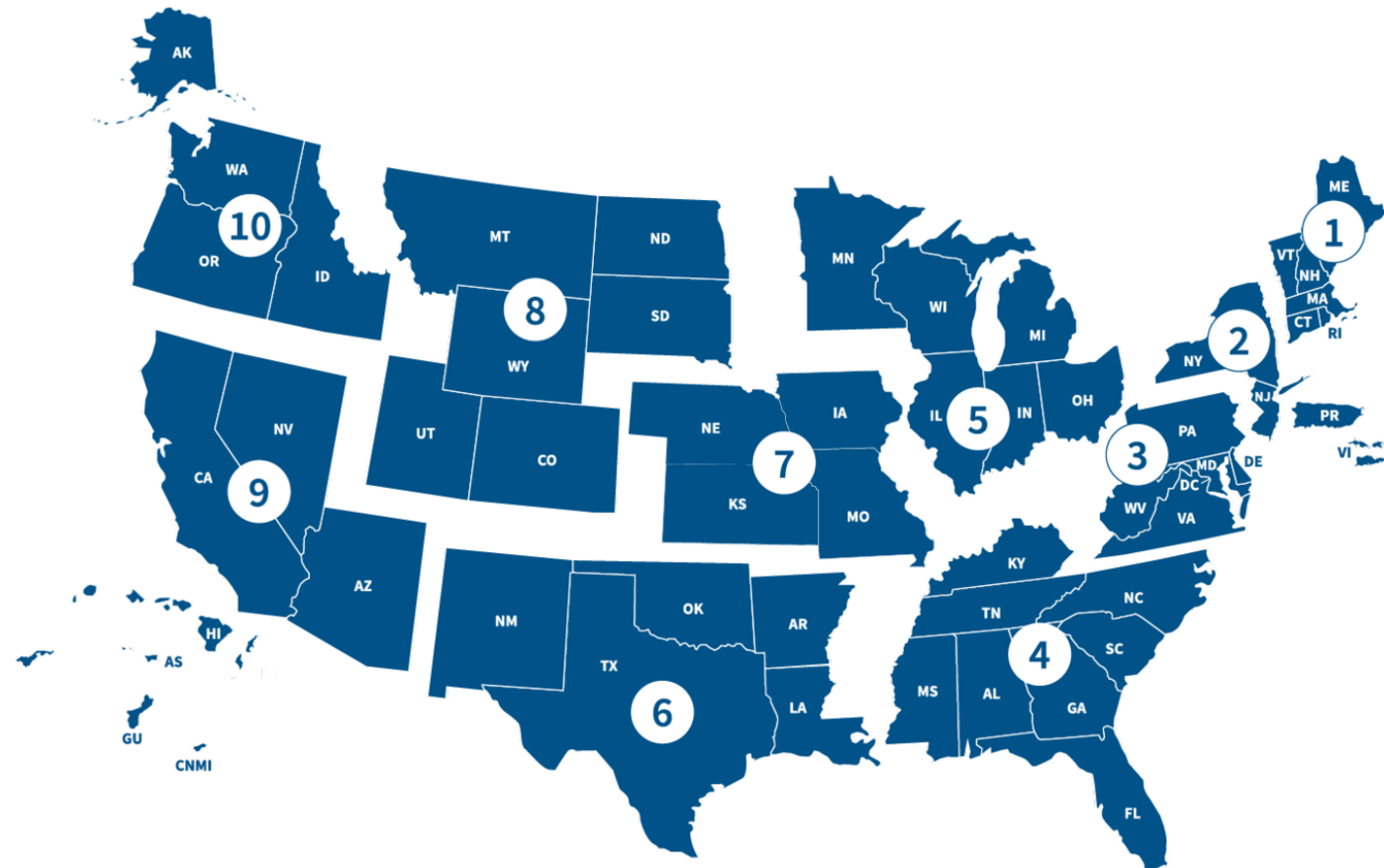
#### FIELD LEADERSHIP DIRECTORATE (FLD)

FLD manages and ensures FEMA has a dedicated cadre of professional, qualified, experienced, and operationally ready field leaders to support the agency's mission and operations.



# FEMA REGIONS

FEMA CONSISTS OF TEN REGIONS  
IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES AND TERRITORIES



**REGION 1:** The FEMA Region 1 office, located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with a Regional Response Coordination Center in Maynard, Massachusetts, partners with federal emergency management for the 10 Tribal Nations of New England and six states (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont).

**REGION 6:** FEMA's Region 6 office, located in Denton, Texas, partners with federal emergency management for 68 Tribal Nations and five states (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas).

**REGION 2:** The FEMA Region 2 office, located in New York, New York, partners with federal emergency management for eight Tribal Nations and four states/territories (New Jersey, New York, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands).

**REGION 7:** FEMA's Region 7 office, located in Kansas City, Missouri, partners with federal emergency management for nine Tribal Nations and four states (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska).

**REGION 3:** FEMA's Region 3 office, located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, partners with federal emergency management for seven Tribal Nations, the District of Columbia, and five states (Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia).

**REGION 8:** The FEMA Region 8 office, located in Denver, Colorado, partners with federal emergency management for 29 Tribal Nations and six states (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming).

**REGION 4:** FEMA's Region 4 office, located in Atlanta, Georgia, with a Federal Regional Center in Thomasville, Georgia partners with federal emergency management for six Tribal Nations and eight states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee).

**REGION 9:** The FEMA Region 9 office, located in Oakland, California, partners with federal emergency management for 150 Tribal Nations and 9 states/territories (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Republic of Marshall Islands, and Federated States of Micronesia).

**REGION 5:** The FEMA Region 5 office, located in Chicago, Illinois, partners with federal emergency management for 34 Tribal Nations and six states (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin).

**REGION 10:** FEMA's Region 10 office, located in Bothell, Washington, partners with federal emergency management for 271 Tribal Nations and four states (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington).





# FEMA CADRES

Cadres are groups of employees organized by type of work. These groups are based on skills and experience and play a key role in keeping FEMA ready to deploy the right people to the right jobs quickly in an emergency management situation. Reservists and temporary local hires are hired to positions within cadres. Cadre of On-Call Response/Recovery Employees and permanent full-time employees are assigned to cadres for deployment purposes.

## FEMA'S 23 CADRES ARE:

**ACQUISITIONS CADRE:** Provides timely, full-range acquisition services in support of disaster operations.

**ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION CADRE:** Supports field employees, leads, supervisors, and managers by providing a range of decision-making, conflict prevention, and conflict resolution services on request to prevent escalation.

**CIVIL RIGHTS CADRE:** Deploys Civil Rights Advisors and other personnel to support disaster response and recovery operation and ensures equal access to FEMA and FEMA-funded programs and activities by the whole community.

**DISABILITY INTEGRATION CADRE:** Deploys Disability Integration Advisors and Disability Integration Specialists to advise key leaders in Joint Field Offices (JFOs) and managers at the branch level to increase access and inclusion for survivors with disabilities in both the response and recovery missions.

**DISASTER EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CADRE:** Deploys, installs, operates, maintains, and protects telecommunications and operations assets in response to all-hazards disasters and in support of planned special events.

**DISASTER SURVIVOR ASSISTANCE CADRE:** Establishes a timely presence focused on addressing the needs of impacted populations and disaster survivors.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION CADRE:** Provides technical expertise and develops tools to address and resolve anticipated

environmental and/or historic preservation issues relating to compliance review and approval process for proposed actions to be funded by FEMA during emergency and recovery operations.

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS CADRE:** Engages and communicates with stakeholders in Congress, the media, state, local, tribal, and local governments, the private sector, and internal FEMA employees.

**FIELD LEADERSHIP CADRE:** Leads the federal response and recovery effort and is responsible for assuring that all federal assistance is provided in accordance with the Presidential Disaster Declaration, laws, regulations, agreements, and policies.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CADRE:** Creates, monitors, and verifies allocations and obligations in the appropriate financial systems and prepares financial reports at incident field offices.

**HAZARD MITIGATION CADRE:** Manages risk reduction activities from all-natural hazards to include public education, private sector partnership, technical assistance to local and state governments, grants management, insurance coordination, and community planning.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CADRE:** Identifies, acquires, sustains, and maintains a quality workforce to meet the FEMA mission.

**INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE CADRE:** Ensures that individuals and families affected by disasters have access to the full range of FEMA programs and information in a timely manner and provide the highest level of service to applicants.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CADRE:** Provides the most efficient, expeditious, and cost saving information services at all incident locations during initial setup, continuation of operations, phase down, and at closure.

**INTERAGENCY RECOVERY COORDINATION CADRE:** Effectively, efficiently, and equitably supports states, territories, Tribal Nations, and local governments to define and achieve their recovery outcomes.

**LOGISTICS CADRE:** Coordinates and monitors all aspects of resource planning, movement, ordering, tracking, and property management of Initial Response Resources, teams, and accountable property during the life of an incident.

**OFFICE OF CHIEF COUNSEL CADRE:** Responsible for ensuring that FEMA field operations are consistent with all applicable statutes, regulations, executive orders, and agency policies, directives, and standards.

**OPERATIONS CADRE:** Ensures the efficient and effective delivery of immediate emergency assistance to individuals and communities impacted by major disasters, emergencies, or acts of terrorism.

**PLANNING CADRE:** Plans, collects, evaluates, disseminates, and manages information regarding a threat or incident.

**PUBLIC ASSISTANCE CADRE:** Aids with debris removal, emergency protective measures, and the repair, replacement, or restoration of disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities and some private non-profit facilities.

**SAFETY CADRE:** Provides a safe and healthy work environment for FEMA employees and our emergency management partners at fixed sites, incident operations, and facilities.

**SECURITY CADRE:** Implements and manages security programs in support of FEMA's all-hazard emergency management programs for the protection of personnel, property, and facilities.





# FEMA ASSISTANCE IN 2023

The persistent rise in the frequency, severity, and complexity of disasters has heightened demands for the Office of Response and Recovery (ORR). FEMA is now in its sixth year of this new operational tempo that has more than doubled our average daily deployment rate. Before 2017, FEMA was deploying 3,331 responders per year on average, compared to an average of 7,113 responders post-2017.

In the face of these increased demands, ORR has continued to find creative and innovative ways to meet its mission. ORR has been proactive in anticipating requirements, using all available authorities and funding streams to ensure it has the right resources in place to maximize support to survivors and their communities.

Within the Response mission area, ORR continues to showcase its ability to meet the needs of communities nationwide to tackle any threat and hazard. The natural, human-induced, and technological threat landscape continues to challenge ORR through more frequent and longer duration activations of national-level response resources, such as the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC), National Incident Management Assistance Teams, Disaster Emergency Communications (DEC) resources, and the National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) System. ORR's response support to impacted regions, states, tribes, and territories continued to increase throughout 2023, with disasters crossing the continental United States, the Caribbean, the Western Pacific, and Alaska. In support of these various incidents, ORR's response personnel and teams committed thousands of hours to support lifesaving and life-sustaining missions across the country.

**The National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) coordinates the overall federal support for major disasters and emergencies. During 2023, the NRCC deployed 1,253 FEMA staff and hundreds of interagency partners for over 150 activation days. The NRCC supported 13 incidents, in addition to providing support as needed during steady-state activation status.**



ORR led FEMA's efforts to conduct internal planning and preparedness, helping understand the scope of the threats and specific response actions we may take to address impacts of future threats across the country. Additionally, ORR conducted numerous engagements with international partners to share best practices, lessons learned, and common interests to work together to prepare for these threats.

Outside of large-scale response operations, ORR maintains vigilance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to stay prepared for the next incident or threat that may require FEMA support. FEMA's National Watch Center (NWC) and the FEMA Operations Center (FOC) maintain situational awareness of all threats and hazards, communicating emerging threat and hazard information to ensure ORR remains proactive in its ability to meet the needs of survivors nationwide.

To help communities tackle the difficult task of recovering from a disaster, FEMA has several Individual and Public Assistance programs designed to support disaster survivors and help communities recover. FEMA also provides a range of coordinating functions and assistance. These include facilitating federal interagency coordination, environmental and historic preservation, and community planning and capacity building. Federal Recovery Support Functions (RSF) support state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments with short-term and long-term recovery by coordinating and improving access to federal resources both in an operational capacity and through the RSF leadership structure at the headquarters level. Some RSFs work directly with local governments (with state support) to build capacity at the local level and provide targeted recovery assistance.

## Unlocking Assistance Through Disaster Declarations

The FEMA declaration process is the avenue through which state, tribal, and territorial governments can request and obtain federal disaster assistance when a disaster overwhelms their capabilities. After a governor of the affected state or territory, or the leader of a federally recognized Tribal Nation, requests a declaration, the President has the authority to declare one of the following:

**Emergency Declaration:** Declared for any occasion or instance when the President determines federal assistance is needed to supplement state, local, tribal, or territorial efforts to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety or to lessen the threat of a catastrophe.

**Major Disaster Declaration:** Declared for any natural catastrophe or fire, flood, or explosion that the President believes has caused damage of such severity and magnitude that it is beyond the combined capabilities of state and local governments to respond.



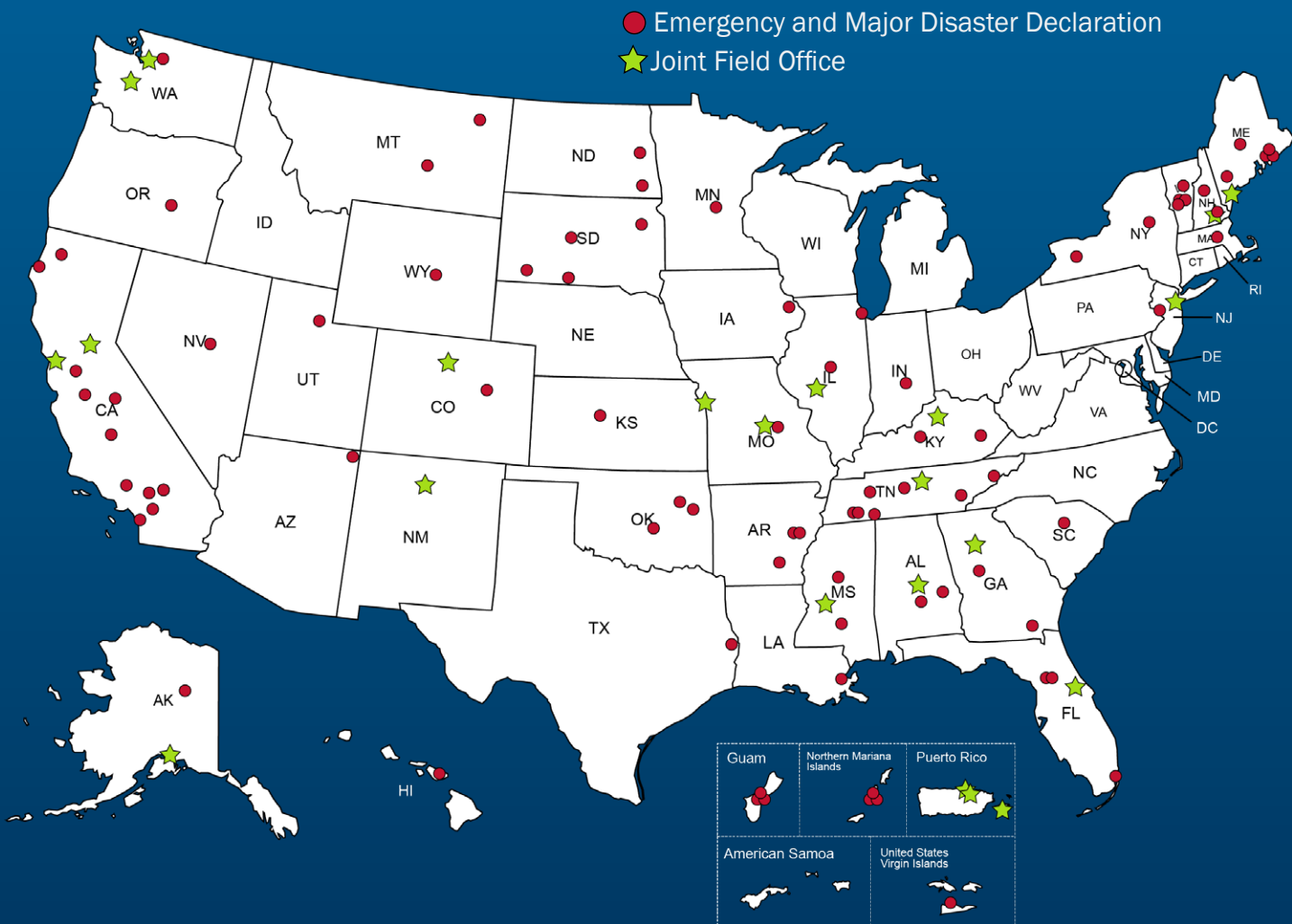


# 2023 RESPONSE MISSIONS BY THE NUMBERS

FEMA is committed to meeting survivors and communities where they are. At the close of 2023, FEMA was actively on the ground supporting disaster recoveries from over 100 events. This includes 84 of the Emergency and Major Disaster Declarations that occurred during 2023. FEMA supports disaster recovery in the community through Joint Field Offices (JFO) and Joint Recovery Offices (JRO). JFOs are temporary federal multi-agency coordination centers established locally to facilitate field-level response activities. They provide a central location for coordination of federal, state, tribal, territorial, non-governmental, and private sector organizations involved in incident support. JROs help FEMA

transition from response to long-term recovery and better prepare for future incidents by having recovery staff in place who are ready to assist with any new incidents that occur. While not all recovery operations that require a field presence require a JRO, when in place, JRO personnel also proactively work with SLTT partners to enhance capabilities, improve preparedness, and build stronger communities. Together, with the help of FEMA's government counterparts and our faith-based and community partners, FEMA will support recovery as long as it takes to help survivors recover from each disaster.

The map below identifies the locations of the 84 Emergency and Major Disaster Declarations from 2023 and the 22 JFOs open at the end of 2023.



This map does not highlight the 76 events from previous years that FEMA was actively on the ground supporting at the end of 2023.



## THE NATIONAL RESPONSE COORDINATION CENTER

The National Response Coordination Center deployed **1,253 FEMA staff** and hundreds of interagency partners for over **150 activation days**, supported **13 incidents**, and provided support as needed during steady-state activation status.



## COMMUNICATIONS

Disaster Emergency Communications personnel and resources deployed for **240 days** supporting:

- 28** major disaster declarations
- 8** national security and high-profile special events

Mobile Emergency Operations Vehicles and Mobile Communications Operations Vehicles **deployed 50 times** to support delivery of the Individual Assistance mission and helped **over 6,000 disaster survivors register for assistance.**



## SEARCH AND RESCUE

- 1,200** highly-trained personnel deployed
- 250** rescues completed
- 14,000** structures searched
- 1,000+** acres covered



## NATIONAL WATCH CENTER

- 1,605** incident-specific deliverables produced (this is a 500% increase from pre-2020)
- 1,402** geospatial imagery products produced for 29 incidents
- 6,461** foreign and domestic aerospace events monitored and processed through the FEMA Operations Center

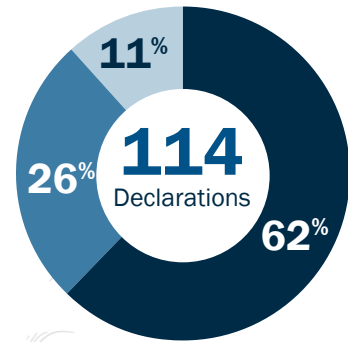


## TRAINING AND EXERCISES

- 1,206** personnel trained at the National Response Coordination Center
- 60+** weather-related training courses provided by the National Watch Center
- 90** FEMA Exercise Branch exercises conducted with federal and state, local, tribal, and territorial partners
- 45** FEMA Exercise Branch exercises executed for FEMA and its interagency partners
- 3,000** members of the Federal Government engaged in the FEMA Exercise Branch exercises



# 2023 RECOVERY BY THE NUMBERS



- 71** Major Disaster
- 30** Fire Management Assistance Grant
- 13** Emergency



## INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

- 22** IA Major Disasters Declared
- 435K** Registrations Completed
- 551K** Calls Answered
- 357K** Inspections Completed
- 1,889** Families Housed in Transitional Sheltering Assistance



## HERMIT'S PEAK/CALF CANYON CLAIMS OFFICE

**980** Claims Paid

**\$299M**  
Disbursed

## ASSISTANCE TO SURVIVORS

- \$1.4B** Individuals and Households Program
- \$273M** COVID-19 Funeral Assistance
- \$72M** Disaster Case Management
- \$54M** Disaster Unemployment
- \$33M** Crisis Counseling
- \$176K** Disaster Legal Services

## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

- 70** PA Major Disasters Declared
- 27K** Projects Approved

### COVID-19

Obligated **\$14.7B**  
Projects Approved **9K**

- State/Territorial Government **\$6.3B**
- Private Nonprofit **\$5.2B**
- Local Government **\$1.8B**
- Educational Institution **\$699M**
- Regional Government **\$677M**
- Tribal Government **\$60M**
- Other **\$7M**

### Non-COVID-19

Obligated **\$12.1B**  
Projects Approved **14K**

- State/Territorial Government **\$6.6B**
- Local Government **\$2.4B**
- Private Nonprofit **\$1.5B**
- Regional Government **\$1B**
- Educational Institution **\$451M**
- Tribal Government **\$38M**
- Other **\$535K**

## RECOVERY TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS



### DISASTERASSISTANCE.GOV

- 9.4M Site Visits
- 3.5M Users
- 82.1M Pageviews
- 407K Forms of Assistance Pageviews
- **830K** Clicks on Outbound Links



Launched new Streamlined Registration Intake, which will reduce time spent completing registrations by up to 15%

## INTERAGENCY COORDINATION



**29** Disasters Supported by the Interagency Recovery Coordination Cadre



**27** Disasters Supported by Recovery Support Function partners



Led the **Pre-Disaster Housing Planning Initiative** in 4 states



Developed a **\$7.5M technical assistance program** under the Insular Areas Act to support advanced construction projects in the U.S. Virgin Islands



Published the **Equity Guide for Local Officials and Leaders**

## RECOVERY REPORTING AND ANALYTICS



**111K** data checks with external partners to expedite assistance



### CUSTOMER SURVEYS COMPLETED

**21K** Individual Assistance  
**2K** Public Assistance



### ASSESSMENTS PERFORMED

**17K** Preliminary Damage Assessments  
**10K** Geospatial Imagery





# INSTILL EQUITY AS A FOUNDATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

All data in this section is as of Dec. 31, 2023 unless otherwise noted.







# ENHANCEMENTS TO APPLICANT SERVICES

Understanding the difficulty of navigating the disaster assistance process, FEMA's Recovery Directorate established Enhanced Applicant Services (EAS). EAS identifies and assists a targeted population of applicants who need proactive assistance navigating the FEMA process. The targeted population includes individuals with disabilities such as hearing, vision, and mobility impairments, individuals with mental or emotional distress, or who are over 65. This process intends to ensure that every survivor receives all the assistance they are eligible for. EAS team members also work with survivors to identify unmet or long-term needs and connect them with voluntary agencies, other federal agencies, and disaster case management. This quick-response, people-first focus is the goal of EAS and will continue to evolve in 2024 based on feedback.

In 2023, Enhanced Applicant Services were utilized in the following 20 disasters- California (DR-4683), Alabama (DR-4684), Georgia (DR-4685), Mississippi (DR-4697), Arkansas (DR-4698), California (DR-4699), Tennessee (DR-4701), Indiana (DR-4704), Oklahoma (DR-4706), Hoopa Valley Tribe (DR-4707), Florida (DR-4709), Guam (DR-4715), Vermont (DR-4720), Hawaii (DR-4724), Mississippi (DR-4727), Illinois (DR-4728), Florida (DR-4734), Georgia (DR-4738), Illinois (DR-4749), and Tennessee (DR-4751). In 2024, EAS will continue to be utilized as needed to ensure disaster survivors receive assistance for unmet needs as quickly as possible.

EAS team members assist the targeted population of applicants through the following:

-  Helping navigate the overall FEMA recovery process.
-  Identifying any unmet needs or long-term needs that FEMA may be unable to assist with.
-  Ensuring disaster survivors receive all FEMA assistance for which they are eligible.
-  Connecting applicants with voluntary agencies, other federal agencies, and FEMA's disaster case management program and partners.

Recovery staff conducted over **82,000 additional outreach calls** in **2023** through Enhanced Applicant Services (EAS), leading to over **\$60 million** in additional Individuals and Households Program assistance for disaster survivors.





# INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE LETTER IMPROVEMENTS

In their travels to disaster sites across the country, Office of Response and Recovery (ORR) leadership heard from survivors, state agencies, and local officials that letters to survivors relating to Individual Assistance (IA) applications were hard to understand. In response, the Recovery Directorate conducted a comprehensive review and, as a result, has added simplified and clarifying language to enhance communication. The images below show an example of the changes made to the Cover Letter Categories of Assistance Description.

## BEFORE

**Housing Assistance:** For uninsured expenses and temporary housing needs caused by the disaster, which may include:

**Rental Assistance:** Financial assistance to rent temporary housing if you are displaced from your home as a result of the disaster. This assistance may be provided for up to 18 months from the date of the disaster declaration.

**Hotel/Motel Reimbursement:** Financial assistance for reasonable temporary lodging expenses if you are displaced from your home as a result of the disaster.

**Home Repair or Replacement Assistance:** Financial assistance to repair or replace an owner-occupied home damaged by the disaster, which may include mold caused as a secondary effect of the disaster. By law, this assistance is limited to {IFG\_AWARD\_MAX}. This assistance may include funds for hazard mitigation measures, such as roof, furnace, water heater or main electrical panel mitigation, to help reduce the amount of damage to your home in future disasters, if those items were damaged by the disaster.

## AFTER

**Housing Assistance:** This assistance is money to help you with expenses not covered by insurance. This may include:

**Rental Assistance:** Money you can use to rent a home, apartment, or other type of housing if you can't live in your home because of the disaster. FEMA may provide this assistance for up to 18 months from the disaster declaration date of {APPL\_FROM\_DATE}.

**Lodging Expense Reimbursement:** Money to reimburse you for emergency lodging (such as hotel or motel) expenses if the disaster caused you to temporarily leave your home.

**Home Repair or Replacement Assistance:** Money to help you repair or replace your disaster-damaged home, which may include cleaning mold. FEMA can only provide this assistance to homeowners.

**Assistance for Disaster-caused Accessibility Real Property Needs:** If you or a member of your household has a disability, FEMA may offer additional money for specific repairs to help make your home accessible. This may include an exterior ramp, grab bars, or a paved path to the home entrance. If the disaster caused a disability for you or a member of your household, this money may also help you add these accessibility items to your home. Please contact FEMA's Helpline at 1-800-621-3362 if you need this assistance.

ORR is committed to continuing to improve communications with survivors in 2024 wherever possible.

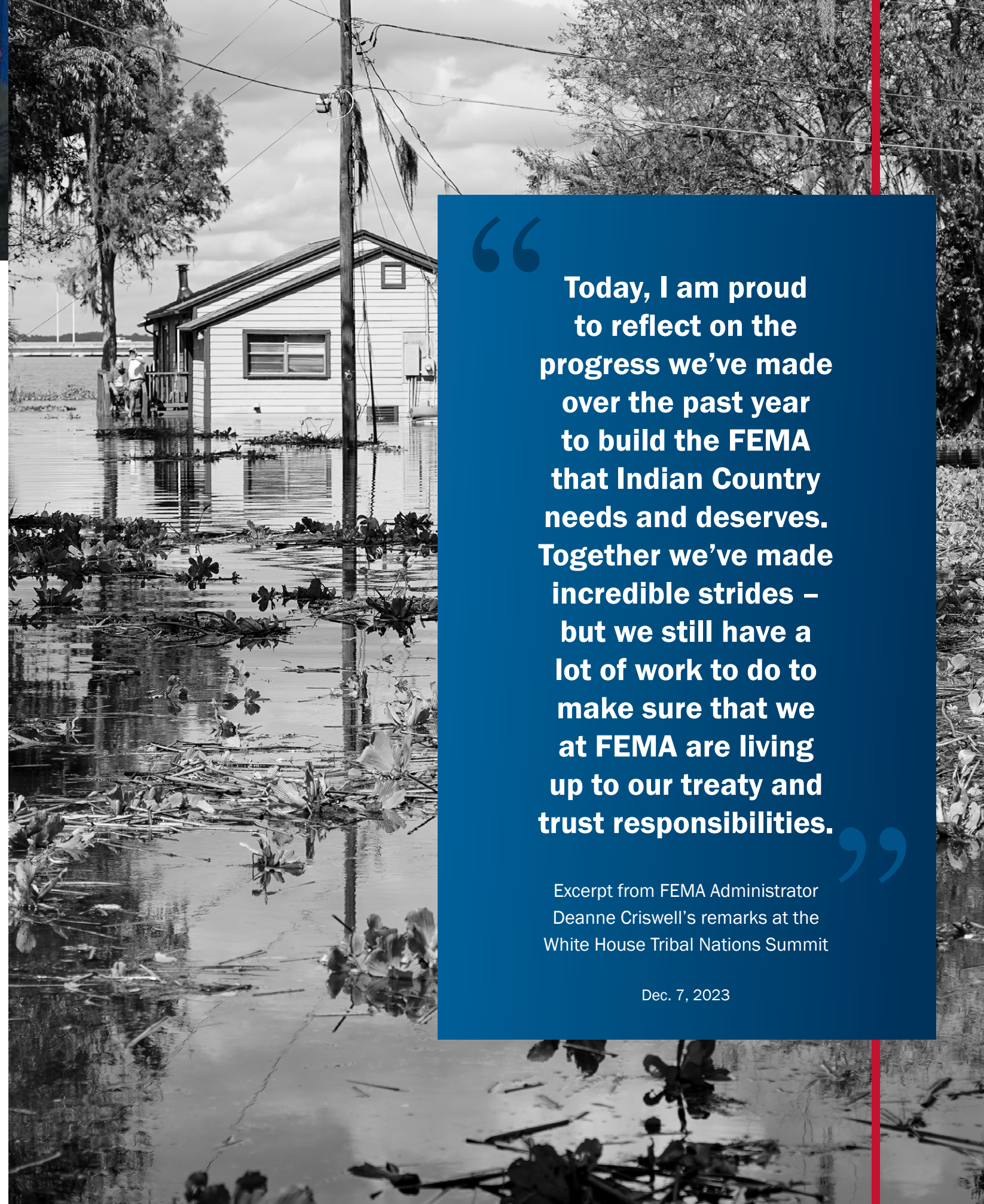
# LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO INCREASE EQUITY

In the 2022-2026 FEMA Strategic Plan, the FEMA Administrator set a goal for the agency to Instill Equity as a Foundation of Emergency Management. To support this goal, the 2023 Annual Planning Guidance (APG), a document that provides the Administrator's leadership intent and strategic direction to FEMA for the year ahead, prioritized developing tools, resources, and guidance to increase access to resources and support equitable outcomes across our programs. More specifically, it directed FEMA to continue increasing understanding of and access to resources for our whole community partners.

The Interagency Coordination Division (ICD), within the Recovery Directorate, is executing this guidance in multiple ways. In 2023, ICD's Office of Assessment and Technology coordinated with the Resilience Directorate, Mitigation Framework Leadership Group (MitFLG), and Recovery Support Function Leadership Group (RSFLG) to develop a single platform to house resilience and recovery resources. This platform is now accessible for federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial partners. Additionally, in recognition of the volume and complexity of the material, in 2024 the development team will leverage new technology to incorporate large language model components to improve access to complex sets of information.







## ENGAGING TRIBAL NATIONS TO IMPROVE SURVIVOR ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The Administrator's 2022-2026 FEMA National Tribal Strategy emphasizes the importance of proactive and deliberate support for Tribal Nations in building climate-resilient communities. Success requires full accessibility to our programs and a commitment to meeting Tribal Nations' unique needs along with our treaty and trust responsibilities.

The Office of Response and Recovery (ORR) is committed to supporting Tribal Nations before, during, and after disasters.

In 2023, the Public Assistance (PA) program office within the Recovery Directorate initiated an effort to strengthen their commitment to supporting Tribal Nations by engaging in consultations with Tribal Nations on PA policies and processes that will impact their

ability to respond to and recover from disasters. PA is also updating the Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide (PAPPG), a public document provides an overview of the PA program and compiles all of the PA policies into one document. The updated PAPPG is scheduled to be published in the summer of 2024. Throughout the PAPPG, language is being added to improve the understanding of policies relevant to Tribal Nations. In 2024, PA will begin tribal consultations on the PAPPG to ensure Tribal Nations are included in the development and drafting of the guide.

One program flexibility implemented in 2023 that was a result of working with a Tribal Nation in Alaska is Individual Assistance's (IA) Other Needs Assistance (ONA) program. This program provides direct assistance to disaster survivors to cover necessary expenses and serious needs not paid by insurance or other sources. These needs may

include transportation, childcare, and medical and dental expenses. ONA's increased flexibility for tribal-specific and cultural items in recent years has allowed Tribal Nations to expand assistance to their tribal communities for damaged items that are valuable and important to them. For example, in October 2023 a Tribal Council Member from the Native Village of Kongiganak in Alaska

thanked FEMA for providing assistance under ONA for damaged fishing camps and fishing supplies, which are not traditionally paid items.

In addition to working on updating the PAPPG to be more inclusive for Tribal Nations, ORR engaged Tribal Nations through nine consultations in 2023 to capture input and recommendations for the Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance, guidance on the declarations process specifically for Tribal Nations. Next year, ORR will continue to work to release and implement this guidance.



*In Alaska, a Tribal Council Member from the Native Village of Kongiganak thanked*

*FEMA for providing assistance for damaged fishing camps and fishing supplies, which are not traditionally paid items under the Individual Assistance program. The flexibility for tribal-specific and cultural items has allowed Tribal Nations to expand assistance to their tribal communities for damaged items that are valuable and important to them.*

“ Today, I am proud to reflect on the progress we've made over the past year to build the FEMA that Indian Country needs and deserves. Together we've made incredible strides – but we still have a lot of work to do to make sure that we at FEMA are living up to our treaty and trust responsibilities. ”

Excerpt from FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell's remarks at the White House Tribal Nations Summit

Dec. 7, 2023



# Q&A

**WITH JANE NORTON,  
RESERVIST- DISASTER RECOVERY  
CENTER MANAGER, COACH &  
EVALUATOR, AND RESERVIST  
ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER**

## CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE ROLE OF A RESERVIST?

There's no other job like a FEMA Reservist! We are national assets and intermittent employees who commit to deploy from 120 days to 365 days per year to support Presidentially-declared disasters throughout the continental United States, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Guam, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Due to the recent unprecedented number of disasters, we have been in demand and steadfastly working with survivors of fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, mudslides and rockslides, snowstorms, and other less commonly declared types of disasters. As a highly trained workforce ready to deploy with little notice, FEMA Reservists have also been called on to assist the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) missions to support the Southern Border, COVID-19 missions, and Operation Allies Welcome. Each Reservist belongs to one of 23 Cadres and must complete Congressionally mandated annual trainings and FEMA position-specific trainings through one of FEMA's websites or training centers. As Reservists, we are on call to deploy. However, we can also determine our availability, so the job is basically the best of both worlds.

## WHAT FIRST BROUGHT YOU TO FEMA?

In 2017, during Hurricane Maria, a FEMA friend reached out and asked me if I would be interested in applying for a FEMA Reservist position. Working for the government was never on my radar. However, I was intrigued by the description of the work and the opportunity to help people in crisis, so I pursued the position. FEMA offers a diverse workforce, opportunities for progression, and an abundance of training opportunities, which are all catalysts for continued professional growth. I wish I would have applied sooner.



## WHAT DOES A TYPICAL DAY LOOK LIKE WHEN YOU DEPLOY TO THE FIELD FOR FEMA?

Most of us keep our "go bags" packed so we're ready to take off after receiving a deployment request. Every deployment is different, and we understand that we need to be adaptable to whatever the current mission requires. Some Reservists work in offices, like the Joint Field Office (JFO) or Regional Offices, while others in public-facing cadres are working directly with survivors out in the field. When we arrive at our Temporary Duty Stations, the focus is on the mission, with little time for anything else. We usually start our day around 7:00 am and work long hours to reach as many survivors as quickly as possible. Teamwork is essential as there's a sense of urgency and many moving parts - we must be willing to wear many hats. Once survivors have registered for FEMA assistance, their recovery process begins. We carefully listen to their individual stories, answer questions, submit required documents, provide case updates, and try to give people hope that their situations will improve. We also work closely with other agencies and our state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) partners in a concerted effort to find the best and fastest solutions to survivors' immediate and long-term needs. The support and collaboration between headquarters, regional offices, the various cadres in the field, and our partners is essential to the mission's success.

## WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST IMPACTFUL PART OF YOUR WORK?

In my position as a Disaster Recovery Center Manager, the staff and I work closely with survivors who have experienced devastating loss and a high level of stress as they are likely going through the worst experience of their lives. Providing support to these individuals puts life in perspective, and I no longer say I'm having a bad day. My previous job in the finance world was all about maximizing profits, and now I get to focus on helping people. Working with people in crisis is a privilege. However, it can also be challenging when the long days and stress add up. Collectively, we have learned how to take better care of ourselves and each other while doing this important work. FEMA also provides additional support so we can stay strong and continue to help others. I consider the numerous friends I've made on deployments my FEMA family - we are always there for each other.

## WHAT WOULD YOU SHARE WITH FOLKS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN WORKING AT FEMA AS A RESERVIST?

With 23 cadres covering the Preparedness, Response, Recovery, and Resilience phases of disasters, there's a place for everyone who wants to work hard and has the desire to help people in crisis. With the recent passage and implementation of the Civilian Reservist Emergency Workforce (CREW) Act, people with full and part-time jobs can become FEMA Reservists and will be protected from losing their jobs while they're deployed to support disasters. There are numerous opportunities for traveling throughout the U.S. and territories, experiencing different cultures, making new friends, participating in training in a wide variety of areas, and feeling like you're making a positive impact. Our highly trained and diverse workforce helps ensure we have the right people with the right skills at the right place and time. FEMA Core Values of Compassion, Integrity, Respect, and Fairness are the foundation for every mission.







# LEAD THE WHOLE OF COMMUNITY IN CLIMATE RESILIENCE

All data in this section is as of Dec. 31, 2023 unless otherwise noted.



## GUAM RESILIENCE INITIATIVE

To bolster resilience against diverse threats, FEMA Headquarters and Region 9 are optimizing available FEMA and government funding sources to support a resilient recovery from Typhoon Mawar through the Guam Resilience Initiative. This involves a comprehensive approach that will maximize resilience funding through traditional public assistance. In cases where resilience projects were ineligible for Public Assistance, FEMA is collaborating across federal agencies for alternative funding.

Drawing from lessons learned in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands after Super Typhoon Yutu in 2018, FEMA is seeking new opportunities during rebuilding. The Guam Resilience Initiative, aimed to align federal funds with national priorities, enhances critical infrastructure resilience against climate and cybersecurity threats.

The Mawar Resilience Project is integrating data analytics and external affairs into the project from the onset to ensure quality data is collected and communications with internal and external partners were conveyed effectively. FEMA's Public Assistance division played a vital role in this integration. In 2023, FEMA Region 9 devised a three-phase strategy to accomplish seven lines of effort associated with this project. Phase 1 involved conducting 317 inspections across critical infrastructure sectors and federal agencies within a 5-week window. Phase 2 introduced a decision matrix for subject matter experts to prioritize potential projects and identify funding streams beyond FEMA's traditional avenues. In Phase 3 (Implementation), the pending project prioritization list is being managed through Public Assistance, Mitigation, and the Recovery Support Coordination Branch, fostering a stronger and more resilient Guam. Work on this initiative will continue in 2024.





# WILDFIRE COMMISSION

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law established the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission in December 2021, directing it to focus on recommendations to mitigate and manage wildland fires. The Commission is co-chaired by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) (through FEMA) and comprised of representatives from federal agencies, Tribal Nations, state and local municipalities, and private entities.

The Commission's main objective is to provide federal policy recommendations centered on ways to prevent, manage, suppress, and recover from wildfires. FEMA's participation is a unique opportunity to provide Congress with directional guidance and transformational recommendations.

## What is the Recovery Support Function Leadership Group (RSFLG) and Mitigation Framework Leadership Group (MitFLG)?

The RSFLG is a federal interagency body composed of over 30 departments and agencies that promotes unity of effort and addresses operational and policy issues at the national level.

The MitFLG includes representatives from the Federal Government and state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments. It provides a coordinating structure for mitigation across the Federal Government and with partners in mitigation nationally to strengthen the Nation's disaster resilience by expanding mitigation awareness, coordination, and action.

The FEMA Administrator is one of three chairs of the Commission, and the Office of Response and Recovery (ORR) has two named voting members on the Commission representing FEMA's interests overall. These members actively participated in the Commission's work throughout 2023 and, working with other members, engaged leaders and subject matter experts from across FEMA. In addition, they also engaged both the Recovery Support Function Leadership Group (RSFLG) and Mitigation Framework Leadership Group (MitFLG) on recommendations for development. Issues primarily focused on post-fire recovery, community resilience, and appropriations.

The Commission represents a whole of government approach to tackling the wildfire crisis, as an increasing number of communities face wildfires each year. Throughout 2023, members have provided diverse perspectives and expertise to develop ways to address the growing threat of wildfires across the country.



The Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission represents a whole of government approach to tackling the wildfire crisis, as an increasing number of communities face wildfires each year. The Commission's Sept. 2023 report to Congress is building momentum for the change needed nationally to address current wildland fire environment challenges.

The Commission was tasked with writing two reports for the U.S. Congress. On Feb. 14, 2023, the Commission released its first report, "Strategy to Meet Aerial Firefighting Equipment Needs." This report outlines a strategy to meet aerial firefighting equipment needs through 2030 in the most cost-effective manner.

On Sept. 28, 2023, the Commission released its second report, outlining a comprehensive, consensus-based set of recommendations to Congress to address the Nation's wildfire crisis—enhancing landscape and community resilience, supporting fire-adapted communities, and enabling safe and effective response to wildfires that will inevitably occur. The Commission recognizes the Nation's significant wildfire crisis and the ever-greater threats to human lives, livelihoods, and public safety. The Commission used the expertise of its 50 members to identify the actions needed at all levels to address this challenge and identify the key issues that only Congress can solve, resulting in 148 unanimous recommendations. Concurrently, FEMA has been evaluating what can be done under existing authorities for wildland fire disasters. Discussions with the Commission have informed these enhancements.





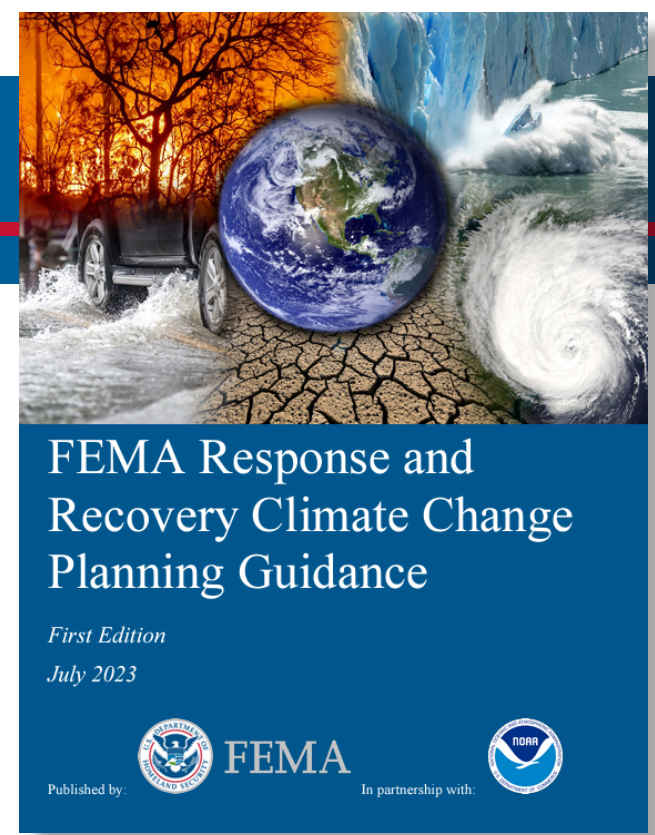
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Climate change and associated extreme weather events are being felt by communities across the country. We are seeing a surge in devastating floods, more energized hurricanes, and a wildfire season that’s now a year-long threat. Wildfires in particular are becoming a near-constant risk, destroying lives and property nationwide. To respond to these increasing threats, we must use every tool at our disposal while reexamining existing approaches to better protect people. This report is an example of the type of work required to mitigate climate risks and we will continue to work with our partners across the Biden-Harris Administration to improve federal policies related to America’s persistent fire problem.

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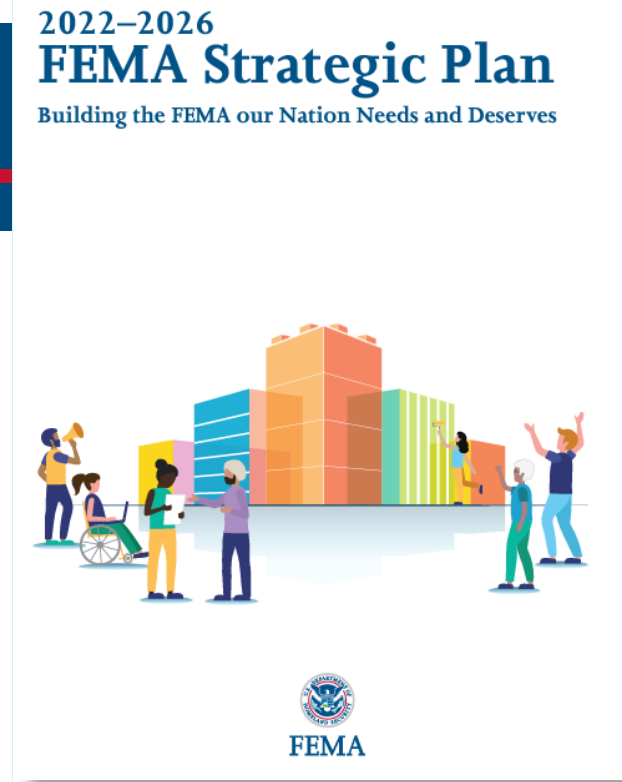
Administrator Criswell’s remarks on the Wildland Fire Management Commission’s Aerial Equipment Strategy Report

Feb. 13, 2023



## DEVELOPING CLIMATE-CENTRIC GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT OUR PARTNERS

In the 2022-2026 FEMA Strategic Plan, the FEMA Administrator set a goal to Lead the Whole of Community in Climate Resilience. The 2023 Annual Planning Guidance (APG), a document from the Administrator that provides strategic direction to FEMA for the year, prioritized developing a FEMA-wide standard for “climate literacy” and implementing it through agency programs, training, and exercises to support this goal. In 2023, the Office of Recovery’s Interagency Coordination Division (ICD) coordinated across the agency and with interagency partners to develop climate-centric guidance to support federal and state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments.



The Office of Resilience, in coordination with ORR, developed and released *FEMA Response and Recovery Climate Change Planning Guidance*. This guidance document provides background information on climate change, how it impacts emergency management operations, and the steps and considerations to incorporate into existing planning processes and products. This public document can be found on the FEMA website.

Additionally, ICD led the development of *Achieving Equitable Recovery: A Post Disaster Guide for Local Officials*. This guide, published in December 2023, was developed to help local officials and leaders incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in their post-disaster recovery management work. Successful disaster recovery requires communities to rebuild thoughtfully, equitably, and resiliently. Post-disaster, local officials and leaders are often overwhelmed, understaffed, and seeking resources to help the whole community rebuild and mitigate against future disasters and repetitive loss. This Guide supports local officials and leaders in identifying needs, establishing critical partnerships, leveraging new opportunities, conducting strategic public engagement, and making a strong case to leverage funding opportunities.



# NEW MEXICO WILDFIRES

Beginning on April 5, 2022, the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire burned more than 340,000 acres of land in New Mexico. On May 5, 2022, President Biden approved a Major Disaster Declaration for New Mexico to supplement recovery efforts in the areas affected by wildfires, flooding, mudflows, and straight-line winds.

To further aid recovery efforts impacted by the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon fires, Congress passed the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire Assistance Act, which President Biden signed into law on Sept. 30, 2022. The Act provides \$2.5 billion to compensate New Mexicans for injury and loss of property resulting from the historic Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire and subsequent flooding. This amount was further augmented by an additional \$1.45 billion authorized under the Fiscal Year 2023 Omnibus spending bill.

Once the act was signed, FEMA worked to quickly establish the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office to disburse the funds to survivors. The Claims Office made its first payment on Feb. 6, 2023, in the amount of \$2.6 million for the engineering and design of the City of Las Vegas's Water Treatment Facilities. In 2023, the Claims Office paid \$299 million in compensation to individuals and households, businesses, Tribal Nations, nonprofits, local governments, and others.

## Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office: Building Trust in the Community

The Claims Office model utilizes Navigators to guide applicants (referred to as 'claimants') through the claims process. Every Navigator is from the local communities in which they are working, helping to build trust between FEMA and the local communities impacted by these fires. These Navigators guide claimants through every step of the application process.

Public offices opened for survivors to visit in Santa Fe, Mora, and San Miguel counties in 2023. In addition to a helpline staffed by the Claims Office on weekdays, the Claims Office has also hired advocates that go out into the community to interact with survivors and let them know that compensation is available through the claims process.



## New Mexico Unified Long-Term Recovery Executive Steering Committee: Convening the Full Federal Family to Support Survivors

Many communities that were impacted by the fires continue to experience damage due to repeated flooding in the area of the burn scar that the fires left behind. To ensure that the federal family is doing everything it can to expedite and support the recoveries of New Mexicans, the FEMA Region 6 Regional Administrator and the State of New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management have formed the New Mexico Unified Long-Term Recovery Executive Steering Committee. First convened on Sept. 13, 2023, these meetings are focused on addressing watershed recovery and restoration through a unified, integrated, interagency approach.

## FEMA Leadership in the Community

During the week of Oct. 5, 2023, FEMA Administrator Criswell, Associate Administrator of Mission Support Eric Leckey, and ORR Deputy Associate Administrator Keith Turi visited New Mexico to check in on the recovery progress from the Hermit's Peak-Calf Canyon fire with survivors and local officials.



Hermit's Peak Claims Office Navigators help a resident with information on filing a claim with FEMA.

As of Dec. 31, 2023

- FEMA exceeded its compensation goal of distributing **\$200 million** by the end of the calendar year, paying **\$299 million** to over **500** impacted community members for **980** Claims.
- **95%** of payments have gone to individuals and families. Additional payments have gone to businesses, nonprofits, local governments, Tribal Nations, and others.
- **71%** of Hermit's Peak Claims Center employees are from New Mexico.
- **100%** of Navigators are from New Mexico.





# DELIVERING RESULTS WHILE PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

The Logistics Management Directorate (LMD) delivers critical commodities and manufactured housing units following disasters and establishes commercial contracts and agreements with multiple public and private sector partners to provide additional support. To fulfill this mission, LMD sets up incident support bases and federal staging areas to quickly deliver resources to disaster survivors.

Logistics continues to reduce Office of Response and Recovery's (ORR) environmental impact through green initiatives by (1) ensuring all new generator acquisitions meet the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards for emissions, (2) reducing waste from commodity packaging, and (3) reducing FEMA's dependency on fossil fuels by utilizing electric forklifts when feasible.

## Generators

FEMA's focus on environmental sustainability includes Tier IV compliant generator acquisitions, reducing carbon emissions by over 90%. Tier IV standards are higher standards that further reduce the emissions of two key pollutants- particulate matter and nitrogen oxides. In 2023, 50% of the generator fleet was Tier IV compliant, with ongoing plans for full compliance. FEMA's sustainability initiatives involve generator acquisitions with integrated load bank systems for installation flexibility and emission compliance. In January 2023, FEMA had 924 generators ready to be deployed to wherever they were needed.

## Packaging

In managing resources, plastic bottled water inventory has been minimized to 19%, with 80% in cardboard boxes (10-year shelf life) and 1% in aluminum cans (50-year shelf life). In packaging, FEMA's water inventory now boasts a 10-50-year shelf life, enhancing readiness while reducing waste.

## Electric Forklifts

LMD prioritizes electric forklift acquisitions, currently reaching over 45% electric forklift usage to meet mission requirements and decrease emissions at distribution centers (DC). Electric forklifts play a vital role, emitting five times less carbon dioxide per hour than internal combustion engines.

LMD will continue to ensure they are ready to support survivors before, during, and after a disaster and explore innovative ways to protect the environment.



# LIFE-SUSTAINING ITEMS DISTRIBUTED BY FEMA IN 2023



**463,536** Meals



**1,192,890** Liters of Water



**41,380** Tarps



**51** Infant and Toddler Kits (Perishable and Non-Perishable)



**180** Infant and Toddler Kits ala carte items (Bottles)



**344** Generators



# Q&A

**WITH JOHN BROGAN,  
FEDERAL COORDINATING OFFICER**



## CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE ROLE OF AN FEDERAL COORDINATING OFFICER?

Whenever the President approves a request for a disaster from a state, tribe, or territory, a Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) is appointed. The FCO's role is to oversee the Federal Government's response and recovery efforts by ensuring FEMA and other federal agencies work together to support the state's, tribe's, or territory's priorities and needs. While the FCO is responsible for overseeing the federal efforts, they are not in charge of the overall disaster effort. We always work to support our state, tribal, and territorial partners as they set priorities based on the needs of the local emergency management officials.

## WHAT FIRST BROUGHT YOU TO FEMA?

When I was preparing to leave the military, I wanted to continue to serve my country, and FEMA's mission in helping people and communities drew me to the agency. I participated in several humanitarian missions while in the military, including disaster relief in other countries. Those missions were always very fulfilling and helped give me a sense of purpose, so I wanted to continue that here at home.

## HOW DID YOU BECOME AN FCO? WHAT DREW YOU TO THE ROLE?

It took several years and a lot of hard work! Shortly after joining FEMA, I deployed to my first disaster and immediately knew that disaster operations in the field was my passion. As I looked to what the future held for my professional development, I thought it would be amazing to be an FCO not only for the ability to impact disaster operations but also as an effective agent for positive change. I spent several years working on learning a lot about our Stafford Act programs as well as working with other aspects of FEMA, such as Urban Search and Rescue, Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT), and a detail/temporary assignment with the

National Exercise Division. That helped me develop a strong foundation, allowing me to finally make the jump to FCO.

## WHAT DISASTERS DID YOU WORK IN 2023? WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST SUCCESS OR IMPROVEMENT THAT YOU SAW IN 2023?

I was busy in 2023 on several different disasters. I started the year by moving into an IMAT Team Leader position within Region 4 with the same IMAT I spent time with as the acting Team Lead during the response to Hurricane Ian. With that IMAT, we deployed to Alabama in support of the Selma Tornadoes in January, then to Tennessee in March after another tornado outbreak. In July, we held a joint exercise with the State of Alabama in Anniston. Following that exercise, I spent time in Kentucky as the FCO of record, overseeing several open disasters. Finally, I finished out the year deploying with the IMAT to Tennessee in response to the December tornado event impacting Fort Campbell and the Nashville area. I think the biggest improvement I saw in 2023 was my own professional development, spending time as the IMAT Team Leader. I honed my leadership skills, operational knowledge, and understanding of the day-to-day non-disaster work you don't see as an FCO (personnel management, budgets, training, etc.), and developed stronger relationships within Region 4.

## WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST IMPACTFUL PART OF YOUR WORK?

The most impactful part has been seeing the direct impact we have on survivors and communities. If you are at a disaster long enough, you'll see the transition from a chaotic response to community recovery, and knowing our team had a part in that is very rewarding. I've also been lucky enough to help several individual survivors in their recovery throughout my time with FEMA. Hearing from them several weeks or months later and seeing the results of how FEMA helped them after their loss is the ultimate validation for what we do.

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FOLKS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN WORKING AT FEMA?

It is an incredibly rewarding agency, so please don't give up if you are having challenges! There are lots of open jobs in a variety of areas that all help our mission. Get your foot in the door, be the best you can be at that job, and most importantly, take time to learn what others do. You may be a logistics specialist and find out you really want to work in mitigation, and that's ok. There are so many roles someone can perform, and the agency has such a diverse staff, so you'll find your passion that keeps you in the agency.







# PROMOTE AND SUSTAIN A READY FEMA AND PREPARED NATION

All data in this section is as of Dec. 31, 2023 unless otherwise noted.



## DRIVING ENTERPRISE READINESS

The Office of Response and Recovery (ORR) strives to build and sustain operational readiness by implementing the Ready FEMA Framework and the FEMA Readiness System. The Ready FEMA Framework serves as the foundation for building and maintaining a ready FEMA through the implementation of the FEMA Readiness System – a five-phase process established to identify, assess, build, validate, and monitor internal readiness and the agency’s capacity to execute the capabilities required to deliver its mission. ORR works in partnership with the regions, field leadership, and FEMA program offices to meet FEMA’s mission of helping people before, during, and after disasters.

### Publication of the Ready FEMA Framework

The Ready FEMA Framework is FEMA’s inaugural enterprise-wide readiness framework. It sets out readiness definitions, principles, and practices to be applied agency-wide, transcending individual organizations or program areas.

The Framework provides an integrated approach to enhance readiness amid more frequent, complex, and severe disasters. It focuses on building and sustaining internal capabilities to meet evolving threats while upholding mission essential functions.

The Framework and supporting resources were published in February 2023, followed by an awareness campaign across the agency. In April 2023, the FEMA Readiness Assessment Working Group identified 24 Enterprise Capabilities and initiated a proof of concept to design targets and measures for these capabilities. The FEMA Readiness System enhances operational readiness and supports a forward-leaning posture, improving disaster outcomes for survivors and communities.



## READY FEMA FRAMEWORK

“  
**This resource unifies the way our agency defines and evaluates readiness across all mission areas. Specifically, the Framework standardizes how the agency defines readiness, aligns FEMA doctrine and policy with the key concepts, and links readiness measures to solutions that drive decision-making and resource allocation through the creation of a Readiness System.**”

Excerpt from Deputy Administrator Erik Hook’s announcement on the release of the Ready FEMA Framework

March 9, 2023





### Implementation of the FEMA Readiness System

The Office of Response and Recovery (ORR) leveraged its senior leadership readiness meetings to drive enterprise readiness and implement the FEMA Readiness System. In the first half of the year, ORR leadership identified priority capabilities to focus on in 2023. ORR collaborated with partners and regions on identified readiness priorities. In July 2023, ORR convened a Recovery and Readiness Senior Leaders Summit to align leadership expectations for readiness requirements.

Following the summit, ORR Leadership codified expectations from the Administrator, ORR Leadership, and Regional Administrators into the *ORR Leadership Intent for Initial Response and Recovery Operations Memorandum* (ORR Leadership Intent Memo), signed by Associate Administrator Bink on Aug. 15, 2023. The ORR Leadership Intent Memo increases operational

readiness by setting leadership expectations to support a forward-leaning posture, increase and improve support for the FEMA workforce, and ultimately improve disaster outcomes for disaster survivors and communities.

ORR led FEMA in immediately implementing requirements outlined in the memo during Hurricane Idalia operations by helping disaster survivors as soon as the disaster was declared. This resulted in significant improvements to disaster operations for Hurricane Idalia. This memo enabled streamlined processes and effective decision-making, leading to the pre-staging of critical commodities, supplies, resources, and staff. Disaster Survivor Assistance teams were operational four hours after President Biden declared a major disaster for Florida on Aug. 31, 2023. The first Disaster Recovery Center, critical locations set up in partnership with the state or territory where disaster survivors can register for assistance and ask FEMA staff questions, opened 5 days later on Sept. 5, 2023.

From October 2023 to December 2023, ORR validated and reviewed capability delivery strategies implemented in 2023 to complete the full FEMA Readiness System cycle before identifying capabilities with the greatest risk to focus going forward into 2024. Enterprise readiness is an ongoing, cyclical approach to understanding the agency's greatest risks and allocating and prioritizing resources to address the risks.

**FEMA defines readiness as “the condition of being prepared and capable to act or respond as required.”**

## INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

### Enhanced Demobilization Process

FEMA implemented an Enhanced Demobilization Process on July 1, 2023, allowing all FEMA responders leaving (or “demobilizing”) from a disaster or incident to remain in a deployed status to utilize up to 16 hours of work for completing demobilization activities. These hours allow responders to complete close-out tasks such as returning equipment, completing final vouchers, participating in debriefing and exit interviews, and utilizing employee wellness resources. To support the execution of this new process, FEMA developed and distributed an implementation package, including checklists, frequently asked questions, and leadership implementation guidance. FEMA also established a centralized resources page, the Responder Demobilization Hub, which has been accessed over 11,000 times. Briefings and informational sessions have been conducted with various key stakeholders to communicate and foster cultural change in how FEMA supports its workforce. This enhancement is integral to FEMA's commitment to help responders transition effectively back to their daily lives.



### Core Values Guidance for Field Offices

In June 2023, FEMA released the Core Values Guidance for Field Offices. This resource assists field leaders in cultivating positive workplace environments and upholding FEMA's core values of compassion, fairness, integrity, and respect. Its development was prompted by surveys that highlighted areas for improvement.

This guidance equips field leaders with the essential tools and knowledge to assist the incident workforce during disaster operations. It enables them to create customized Core Values Action Plans with initiatives focused on creating a healthy, safe, and trusting work environment firmly grounded in our core values. To further support field leaders, FEMA created an online toolkit with specific tools, resources, and a step-by-step guide and methodology for implementing a Core Values Action Plan.

FEMA hosted three guidance workshops in 2023 for field leaders to better understand the Core Values Action Plan implementation plan methodology and how to successfully implement a Core Values Action Plan in their field offices. These documents will be used in 2024 to assist field leaders in cultivating positive workplace environments for employees.

“**Supporting our responders is fundamental to FEMA's mission success.**”

Administrator Criswell, “Enhanced Demobilization Process for All FEMA Employees”

memo released on June 5, 2023



# ENHANCING OUR STRUCTURE TO MEET MISSION REQUIREMENT

## Incident Management Assistance Teams

FEMA's Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT) are full-time, rapid-response teams with dedicated staff able to deploy within 2 hours and arrive at an incident within 12 hours to support the local incident commander. IMATs support the initial establishment of a unified command and provide situational awareness for federal and state decision-makers crucial to determining the level and type of immediate federal support that may be required.

There are 5 National IMATs and 13 Regional IMATs across the country that support Stafford Act Response and Recovery efforts.

The Stafford Act authorizes FEMA to provide federal disaster assistance, including funding or direct federal assistance for emergency protective measures, immediate needs of individuals, families, and households, temporary and permanent housing, repair of housing and public infrastructure, hazard mitigation, and community planning and capacity building efforts, as well as other forms of assistance. In recent years, FEMA has increasingly been asked to provide support for events that do not rise to the level of or receive a Stafford Act declaration (non-Stafford Act events). The response and recovery needs of non-Stafford Act events vary by event and community and are assessed by FEMA on a case-by-case basis.



## Formation Of National IMAT-Homeland Security, Homeland Security Domestic Incident Coordination Doctrine, and ORR Homeland Security Domestic Incident Checklist

In 2022, FEMA began establishing a new full-time National IMAT, NIMAT-Homeland Security (NIMAT-HS), dedicated to supporting federal responses beyond the scope of the traditional FEMA missions with a nexus to homeland and national security that requires incident management capabilities.

This dedicated non-Stafford Act incident management capability aids the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other federal agencies as the Lead Federal Agency for complex incidents. NIMAT-HS serves as a flexible and agile resource for responding to complex incidents, enhancing the Nation's ability to manage homeland and national security challenges while integrating standard FEMA Qualification System Incident Management positions and front office roles to suit its unique mission. NIMAT-HS, unlike other IMATs, have security clearances that allow them to support incidents in classified environments.

In 2022 and 2023, the NIMAT-HS, in coordination with partners at FEMA and DHS, focused on creating guiding doctrine and frameworks for the coordination, support, and management of homeland security domestic incidents (HSDI). This framework outlines DHS's process and

resources for managing domestic incidents and crises, forming a foundational guide for DHS and FEMA to coordinate homeland and national security incidents. The HSDI Checklist was developed in collaboration with FEMA Office of Response and Recovery (ORR), and it offers desired outcomes and guiding questions for ORR leadership when deciding to support HSDIs, aiding coordination, situational awareness, resource mobilization, and support monitoring.

The HSDI Coordination Doctrine and ORR HSDI Checklist serve as valuable references for FEMA, DHS, and related components, offering guidance for HSDI activities, particularly in the initial phase of an incident. They facilitate a proactive and comprehensive decision-making framework. The development of the Doctrine has unified DHS Components, establishing a shared framework for situational awareness, HSDI assessment, mission execution, support, and resource transition, contributing to effective incident management.

NIMAT-HS members have gained experience through deployments to Stafford Act incidents,

enhancing their roles. Training has encompassed leadership, Incident Command System courses, and future plans for additional training. NIMAT-HS is growing its subject matter expertise in the HSDI mission space and actively contributed to the Typhoon Mawar Resilience Initiative, focusing on critical infrastructure resilience in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The team's first deployment was in response to the Hamas terrorist attack in Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. They deployed to DHS HQ to establish the Department's Middle East Enhanced Coordination Team.

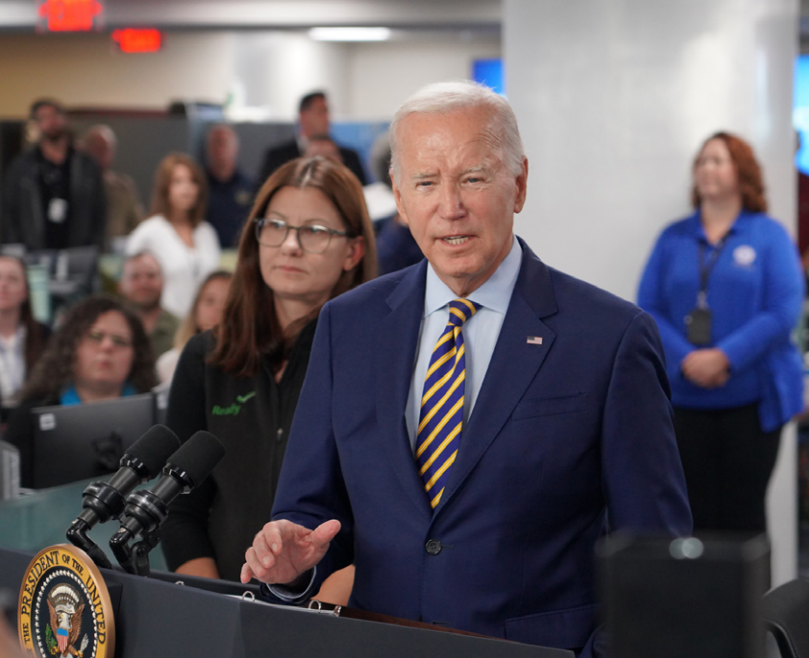
This inaugural deployment provided NIMAT-HS personnel with an opportunity to meet and re-engage with DHS Enterprise colleagues, explore future cross-training collaborations, and secure validation for the NIMAT-HS concept from DHS leadership. Additionally, this deployment and lessons learned, will also help inform ongoing updates to foundational program materials such as the NIMAT-HS Instruction and HSDI Doctrine.

## Launching The Federal Coordinating Officer Reservist Program

Reservists are a key component of FEMA's workforce. The Field Leadership Directorate has launched a Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) Reservist program, recruiting and hiring five former FEMA FCOs with a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences for the inaugural cohort. These highly skilled and qualified FCO Reservists can support complex operations and help mentor other FCOs.







On Aug. 31, 2023, President Joe Biden and Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas visited the FEMA NRCC to survey the response to Hurricane Idalia and meet with FEMA staff.



### Crisis Action Planning Teams: Maintaining ORR's Ability to Respond to Future Threats

ORR's crisis action planning teams, part of the Response Directorate, completed numerous iterations of contingency planning incident analyses to maintain ORR's ability to proactively respond to future threats while managing ongoing response operations in 2023. The Response Geospatial Office and its partners developed critical tools and products to support rapid decision making across numerous incidents, assessing thousands of damaged buildings to enable rapid response support and delivery of recovery resources directly to survivors. One example included the use of the FEMA Search and Rescue Common Operating Picture (SARCOP), which provides real-time information about the status of the federal and SLTT search and rescue mission. During severe weather outbreaks in the southeast U.S., ORR, in partnership with the region, state, and local communities, leveraged the information from SARCOP to drive local search and rescue teams to the most damaged areas immediately following the incident. These capabilities help ensure FEMA continued to enable locally executed, state/tribal/territorially managed, and federally support response operations.

### Volunteer Force Transition from DHS to FEMA

On Aug 30, 2023, the DHS Volunteer Force (VF) program transitioned administrative responsibilities from DHS to FEMA. The VF program was originally established in 2019 to support Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) critical mission to protect and secure the U.S. borders. The program has since evolved to be a staffing augmentation resource for federal agencies seeking assistance with non-Stafford Act missions, otherwise known as homeland security domestic incidents (HSDI).

Following the program's management transition to FEMA, the Field Operations Directorate in ORR has taken over recruiting and rostering federal employees interested in becoming VF members, deploying available VF members to the field, handling administrative duties (e.g., answering questions, ensuring accountability and safety of deployed members, etc.), and working in coordination with the requesting federal agency to determine staffing requirements and work duties for deploying members.

Since the VF program's inception, members have been deployed to support multiple incidents. This includes supporting CBPs Operations Allies Welcome, focusing on the resettlement of Afghan refugees from 2021-2022, and the Department of Health & Human Services expansion of shelter capacity for unaccompanied minors in 2021.

### Establishing the Office of Emerging Threats

On June 12, 2023, the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Office transitioned to the Office of Emerging Threats (OET) to support FEMA's goal of developing a preparedness strategy for the emerging threat of cyber incidents with physical consequences. OET's mission is to identify, assess, and inform FEMA and its mission partners of emerging threats that may significantly challenge the Nation's core capabilities for incident response and recovery. Building upon the existing CBRN enterprise, OET's role in addressing these threats requires close linkages between intelligence, data analytics, and risk assessment to drive the development, planning, and operations of FEMA and the Federal Government's response and recovery capabilities.

OET focuses on the unique challenges posed by emerging threats, with initial focus on cyber incidents with physical consequences. While the CBRN Office concentrated on low-risk, high-consequence threats, OET expanded to cover all emerging threats.

- OET's vision is to assist FEMA and its partners in comprehending and addressing various novel emerging threats.
- OET maintains its role in the CBRN enterprise, aiding FEMA and partners in identifying and assessing risks and gaps related to emerging threats for efficient preparedness, response, and recovery.

As part of the re-designation, all FEMA Regional CBRN Coordinators transitioned to OET Regional Coordinators. These OET Regional Coordinators broadened their involvement with state, local, tribal and territorial (SLTT) stakeholders to address threats beyond CBRN while continuing to support the CBRN enterprise. Ultimately, this transition and capability will allow FEMA and SLTT partners to remain proactive in its response and recovery approaches across a variety of threats to communities across the country, plan for future threats, and align resources to mitigate impacts from future disasters.







## National Response Coordination Center Modernization

The National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) is a critical national security asset that provides FEMA with multiagency emergency operations center capabilities for coordinating the overall federal response and support to major disasters, emergencies, and catastrophic incidents. The NRCC allows FEMA to respond to all hazards, establishing unified coordination, gaining and maintaining situational awareness, and delivering lifesaving and life-sustaining resources to ensure the immediate needs of disaster survivors nationwide are met. The NRCC serves in a support role, enabling operational and tactical response operations for other federal and SLTT responders to meet the demands of impacted communities.

Starting in 2020, FEMA partnered with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Lincoln Laboratory to optimize the NRCC and maximize facility performance during response operations. The project covered the primary and support facilities of the NRCC, with upgrades to shared spaces and state-of-the-art technology to enable timely resource deployment of critical resources to meet the needs of impacted survivors and communities. Compliance with the federal disability access laws and other access and functional factors were considered, making the NRCC accessible and comfortable for everyone. The NRCC achieved full operational capability on July 1, 2023, enhancing workforce wellness, readiness to support affected jurisdictions, and preparing for future challenges.

This budget-conscious project involved over a dozen FEMA offices and components, emphasizing cost-effectiveness and a collaborative, detail-oriented approach. It included over 100 key contributors due to its complexity and teamwork, which were essential for success.

This project modernized a critical national asset while incorporating changes for the betterment of the workforce and preparing the agency and its partners for the challenges of the future. This new, state-of-the-art capability allows FEMA to better meet the needs of impacted survivors and communities.



# WORKING WITH OUR PARTNERS: PRE-DISASTER HOUSING INITIATIVE

## Pre-Disaster Housing Initiative

Providing reliable, resilient, affordable, and safe housing for disaster survivors is a priority for FEMA and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Both agencies are leading efforts to improve outcomes for housing recovery.

Following a disaster, pre-existing challenges on the availability and affordability of safe housing have become even more daunting. Disasters compound an already challenging and complex housing system and exacerbate ongoing barriers such as limited housing stock, a patchwork of assistance and timelines, and availability of support. To address this challenging issue, in 2023 FEMA and HUD partnered with Louisiana, Montana, New Jersey, and Washington in a first of its kind program to:

1. Ensure that there is collaboration on housing operations between a state's emergency management (EM) agency and its housing agencies in steady-state operations as well as in the event of a disaster; and
2. Develop or mature a pre-disaster housing strategy or plan that:
  - Identifies the existing housing stock in the state and localities;
  - Documents current and potential strategies for temporary/permanent housing options to be pursued after an event; and
  - Creates implementable strategies to provide resilient, affordable housing to survivors as soon as possible.



To provide tailored support to each participating state, this effort reviewed existing housing and mitigation plans to identify what gaps existed. State agencies engaged in two virtual working sessions to build on existing plans, partnerships, and authorities to modify/enhance or potentially create the roadmap for what hand-off and coordination between state agencies looks like when executing housing recovery.

FEMA worked to identify avenues for direct technical assistance, including planning support, data analysis, needs assessment, and resources for states to conduct planning efforts. HUD undertook a similar initiative to understand the capacity they can bring to states.



## Initiative Outcomes

**Louisiana** used the Initiative to revise its 2019 Disaster Housing Strategy. The state focused on identifying and clearly defining transitions between agencies during the housing response and recovery phases. Additionally, the state working group discussed developing in-state educational efforts to increase the public's and local housing agencies' knowledge of state and federal resources.

**Montana** used the Initiative to update its Disaster Housing Strategy Framework. To identify what areas of the Framework needed additional input, the state working group conducted a gap analysis. Montana's working group discussed additional meetings after the conclusion of the Final Summit to continue the work the Initiative began, including additional stakeholder input and review.

**New Jersey** used the Initiative to create a Housing Recovery Support Function (RSF). The state's existing Emergency Support Function was focused on short-term and sheltering actions without considering long-term recovery plans. The State working group focused on defining roles and responsibilities in the RSF.

**Washington** used the Initiative to revise their existing RSF plan for housing. In addition to revising their Housing RSF, the state working group formed a Disaster Housing Committee to carry on their collaborative housing work after the Initiative ended.



## Increasing Information Sharing and Engagement

The Individual Assistance (IA) Voluntary Agency Coordination Section hosts monthly webinars for all non-governmental organization (NGO) partners. The virtual platform shares best practices to build capacity and resiliency for the NGOs that are meeting the unmet needs of survivors.

Voluntary Organization Information Sharing and Engagement Partner Calls created a more diverse and inclusive platform reflective of whole community partners. This led to an increase in attendee participation, averaging over 930 registered participants per call, a 500% increase in attendance from the year before. Guest speakers included several senior executives, the current FEMA Administrator, a former FEMA Administrator, and other experts.



# DELIVERING CRITICAL COMMODITIES

## Pacific Readiness

In response to lessons learned from the 2017 hurricane season and the challenges of overseas disaster response operations, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) increased stock levels outside the continental United States to meet initial demand, assess private sector resilience, and ensure readiness in the Pacific through storage and distribution center (DC) upgrades.

## Installing Double Deep Racking In The Warehouses

Installing double deep racking within existing facilities increased Logistics Management Directorate's (LMD) commodity storage space for immediate deployment during disasters.



## Distribution Center Move from Frederick to Greencastle

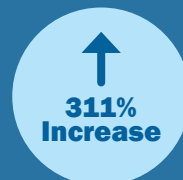
The relocation of the distribution center (DC) from Frederick, Maryland, to Greencastle, Pennsylvania, provides a strategic advantage, offering improved logistical capabilities and increased cost-effectiveness for streamlined operations. This move not only optimizes supply chain efficiency but also positions the facility closer to key interstates, enhancing responsiveness and reducing transit times.

DC Greencastle introduces a cutting-edge double deep racking system, effectively doubling the storage capacity for essential resources. Accompanied by expanded acreage for additional pre-loaded commodity trailers, our facility streamlines disaster response efforts with efficiency. Positioned strategically near key interstates (I-70, I-76, and I-80), it optimizes operational effectiveness while minimizing lead times. Beyond operational benefits, this expansion contributes to alleviating community traffic congestion during disaster responses and provides a designated space for staging commercial transportation within the facility. DC Greencastle not only meets but exceeds space requirements for storing and deploying disaster commodities and equipment, ensuring a highly efficient response to a variety of disaster scenarios.

## NOTABLE INCREASES IN PALLET POSITIONS:



**DC Guam:**  
1,980 to 3,970



**DC Hawaii:**  
2,345 to 9,643

## Supporting Hawaii's Board Of Water Requirements With Additional Generators

To aid Hawaii's water needs, LMD increased stock water objective to 4M liters of packaged water and 26 large 455 kilowatt generators to support the municipal water system during disasters. LMD has acquired 16 of the 26 Gensets and reached the packaged water target with 4.13 million liters on-hand. LMD issued 58,500 liters of this water in support of the Maui wildfire response.

## Upgrading Distribution Center Guam To Facilitate Immediate Disaster Needs

The relocation of the distribution center (DC) from Frederick, Maryland, to Greencastle, Pennsylvania, provides a strategic advantage, offering improved logistical capabilities and increased cost-effectiveness for streamlined operations. This move not only optimizes supply chain efficiency but also positions the facility closer to key interstates, enhancing responsiveness and reducing transit times.

## KEY BENEFITS RESULTING FROM THE RELOCATION:



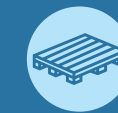
Increase square footage from **230,000 to 252,000**



Increase dock doors from **37 to 45**



Increase acreage from **10 to 32.8**



Increase pallet positions from **8,812 to 21,280**



**50** Trailer parking spaces to **250**



Reduce load-out time from **150 min (30 trucks) to 40 min (30 trucks)**



# Q&A

## WITH MICHAEL SPAGNOLO, FEMA LIAISON TO THE NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER



### CAN YOU EXPLAIN YOUR ROLE AT FEMA?

I serve as one of FEMA's liaisons to the National Hurricane Center (NHC) in Miami, FL. I work in person at the NHC but report through the National Watch Center (NWC) at FEMA Headquarters (HQ). My position serves as the bridge between the NHC forecasters and the emergency management community. In addition to providing operational support to FEMA HQ, the Hurricane Liaison Team directly supports the FEMA regions, states, Tribal Nations, the U.S. territories, and, during major incidents, even local emergency managers.

During hurricane season, this role consists of briefings and coordination, and during the "off-season," staff travel to conduct trainings and outreach for various partners.

### WHAT WOULD YOU CONSIDER THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS OR SUCCESSES IN YOUR ROLE AS A FEMA LIAISON TO THE NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER OVER THE PAST YEAR? DID YOU FACE ANY CHALLENGES?

While providing support during operations is a key part of my position, I think the most significant achievement last year was providing training to thousands of emergency managers across various hurricane readiness courses.

I knew we would have plenty of opportunities for in-person interaction with emergency managers during the off-season, but we exceeded any goals and expectations we had. We held three offerings of the week-long L8324 course at the NHC, the Emergency Management Institute's L311 and L310, hurricane short courses for the FEMA regions and headquarters, HURREVAC training, and conference workshops. We had thousands of emergency managers attend the National Hurricane Program's training last year. It was great to be back in person as the pandemic waned and I look forward to facilitating updated training courses this spring.

### ARE THERE ANY NEW INITIATIVES THAT FEMA HAS IMPLEMENTED TO ENGAGE WITH AND SUPPORT COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY HURRICANES?

In April, the FEMA Administrator requested a study on hurricane evacuation behavior and best practices. Over the last few months, members of the National Hurricane Program have been holding workshops with various state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) emergency managers to discuss the evacuation process in their jurisdictions. This project will continue into 2024, which will include attending an evacuation workshop with the Miccosukee Tribe of Florida. This initiative is still ongoing, but the results of meeting with so many evacuation decision-makers will help to develop guidance, resources, and recommendations in support of SLTT evacuation planning and response.

### BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF THE PAST YEAR, WHAT KEY LESSONS HAVE BEEN LEARNED, AND HOW WILL THESE LESSONS INFORM FUTURE STRATEGIES FOR HURRICANE RESPONSE?

One of the biggest challenges of the 2023 Hurricane Season was not just the number of threats we saw, but the wide geographical area over which these threats occurred. Tropical activity was everywhere

this year including Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Hawaii, California, Texas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia, New England, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. All in all, managing resources across the FEMA regions and prioritizing threats was critical. It is important to keep looking ahead to the next threat and not get tunnel vision on just one storm.

### WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES AND PLANS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR IN YOUR ROLE AS A FEMA LIAISON TO THE NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER?

A reoccurring priority ahead of each hurricane season is to communicate new product changes that will be coming from the NHC. For 2024, this will be no different. Several changes will likely be made this year, with more significant changes coming down the pipeline over the next few years.

### IN THE 2023 SEASON, THE NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER TRANSITIONED TO 7-DAY OUTLOOKS RATHER THAN 5 DAYS. HOW DID THE ADDITIONAL LEAD TIME IMPACT YOUR WORK AND COORDINATION?

The main impact of the 7-day outlook was formally briefing some potential threats a day or two earlier. However, given how active this hurricane season was and how much overlap we had between the different threats, it was hard to identify the exact magnitude of the impact the 7-day outlook had.

From June 12 to Nov. 5, every FEMA Daily Operations Briefing had at least one item in the Outlook to brief, with many of those days having three or four, peaking with eight systems to brief on Aug. 31 and Sept. 1. At the end of the day, when we are seven days out from the development of a new tropical cyclone, the details of the potential impacts on U.S. interests are few and far between, and there are not many decisions to make.





# FIELD INNOVATIONS

All data in this section is as of Dec. 31, 2023 unless otherwise noted.



## CALIFORNIA ATMOSPHERIC RIVER FLOODING (DR-4683, DR-4699)

Multiple atmospheric rivers resulted in significant precipitation, causing numerous rivers in California and Nevada to flood. Multiple consecutive atmospheric rivers combined with snow melt elevated the risk for flash flooding, requiring increased support and coordination with the FEMA Liaison Officer (LNO) to the National Water Center (NWC). The flooding caused impacts to multiple critical infrastructure sectors, posing a significant challenge to responders and resulting in fatalities and mandatory evacuations, and posed a significant challenge to responders. The President declared Major Disaster Declarations on Jan. 14, 2023

(DR-4683) and April 3, 2023 (DR-4699).

FEMA Region 9 worked with California and Nevada Emergency Management to assist impacted communities. The Response Directorate coordinated national support requested by FEMA Region 9 and conducted conference calls between headquarters (HQ) programs and Region 9, which facilitated open communication and ensured critical information and analysis was available to inform decision-making.

### The science behind atmospheric rivers

An atmospheric river (AR) is a flowing column of condensed water vapor in the atmosphere responsible for producing significant levels of rain and snow, especially in the Western United States. When ARs move inland and sweep over the mountains, the water vapor rises and cools to create heavy precipitation. Though many ARs are weak systems that simply provide beneficial rain or snow, some of the larger, more powerful ARs can create extreme rainfall and floods capable of disrupting travel, inducing mudslides and causing catastrophic damage to life and property. Visit [www.research.noaa.gov](http://www.research.noaa.gov) to learn more.

A strong AR transports an amount of water vapor roughly equivalent to 7.5–15 times the average flow of water at the mouth of the Mississippi River.

ARs are a primary feature in the entire global water cycle and are tied closely to both water supply and flood risks, particularly in the Western U.S.

On average, about 30-50% of annual precipitation on the West Coast occurs in just a few AR events and contributes to the water supply — and flooding risk.

ARs move with the weather and are present somewhere on Earth at any given time.

ARs are approximately 250–375 miles wide on average.

Scientists' improved understanding of ARs has come from roughly a decade of scientific studies that use observations from satellites, radar and aircraft as well as the latest numerical weather models. More studies are underway, including a 2015 scientific mission that added data from instruments aboard a NOAA ship.

3/2015

Image not to scale.

WATER VAPOR COOLS

CALIFORNIA





## FEMA Liaisons

The FEMA LNO to the NWC analyzed the potential risks and threats by utilizing available Flood Inundation Mapping (FIM) guidance and other existing resources. To assist this effort further, the FEMA LNO to the NWC was able to grant FIM access to limited, relevant FEMA personnel to review existing FIM guidance. Future FIM updates and expansion, planned in coordination with the FEMA LNO to the NWC, will further assist with conveying riverine flooding threat potential and fulfilling requests.

Although the risk for severe weather was low, it was never zero. As a result, FEMA's liaison to the Storm Prediction Center (SPC), a recognized subject matter expert in severe weather hazards, continually monitored for activity so that FEMA was not potentially caught unaware. Through daily coordination between forecasters at the SPC and senior FEMA officials, the FEMA LNO to the SPC ensured the agency was well-postured to support potential impacts from all hazards.



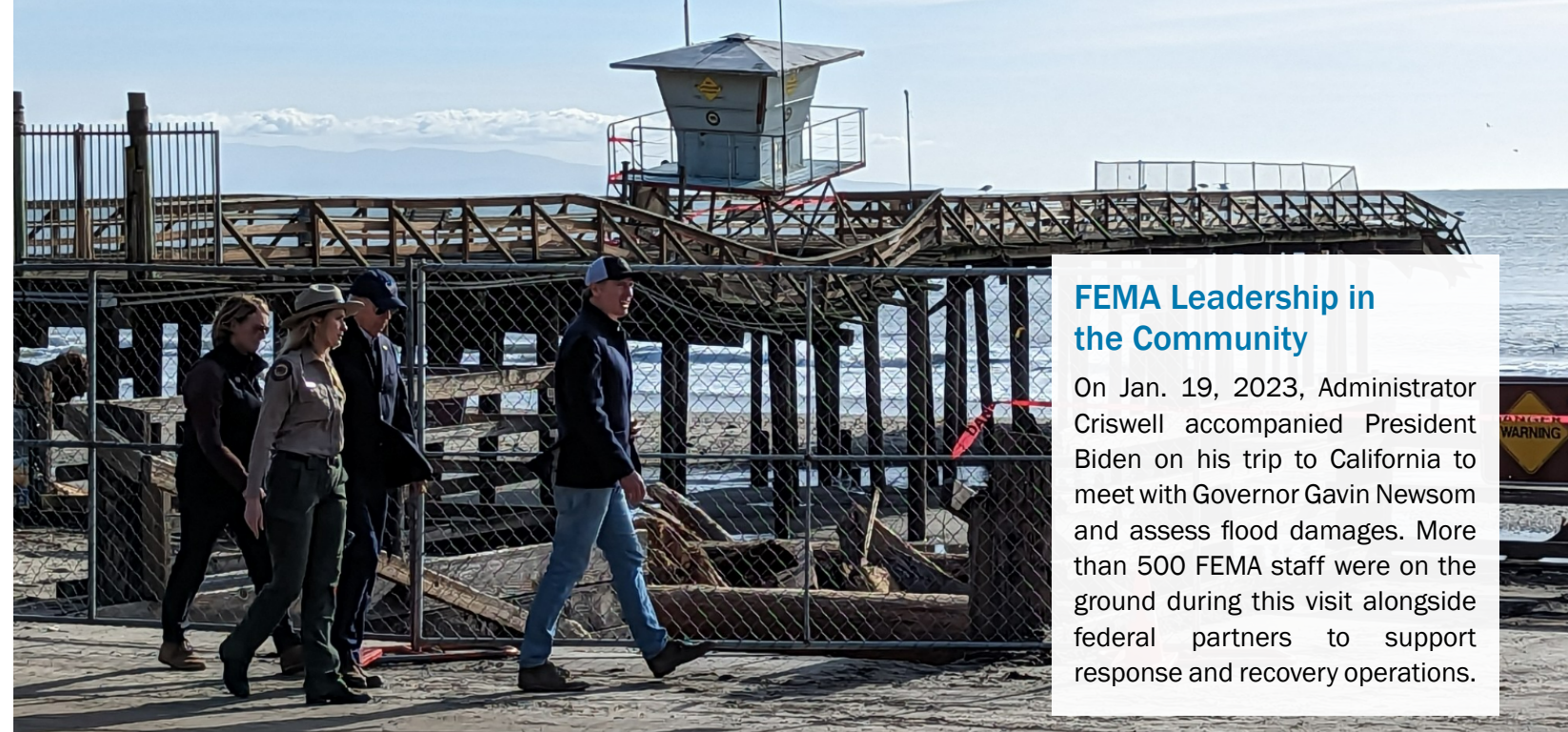
The National Watch Center (NWC) directly contributed to responder effectiveness through enhanced situational awareness. Utilizing the information resources provided by our liaison to the NWC, as well as analysis and coordination with previously established partnerships, the NWC developed dozens of reports that were distributed directly to state, tribal, and territorial partners regarding the threat and impacts from the series of atmospheric rivers.

## Interagency Relationships

FEMA HQ and Region 9 coordinated a mission assignment to the General Services Administration (GSA) to provide buses to stand ready to support evacuations in California. This was the first time this process was fielded to support response efforts. The Response Directorate leaned forward on innovative solutions to provide Air Operations field staff who worked directly with the California Office of Emergency Services and Region 9 to provide air transport and evacuation solutions to support the need, if requested.

Similarly, the Response Directorate coordinated with LMD, the Department of Defense, National Guard Bureau, GSA, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, and the Defense Logistics Agency to source heavy snow-blowers at the request of the State of California on behalf of a Mono Lake community. The Response Directorate led the team to source and respond to requests for information within hours, highlighting the success of the established interagency relationships.

Managing requests and participation amongst various briefings and coordination calls was imperative to adequately convey a historic flash flood threat and assist multiple agencies engaged with response efforts in a timely manner. Having developed existing partnerships with multiple entities involved with flood threat forecasting/monitoring, including the Department of Interior, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) offices, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and other geospatial systems agencies, over the past two years was critical for providing more expansive and informative updates, in turn leading to response efforts and decision making.



## FEMA Leadership in the Community

On Jan. 19, 2023, Administrator Criswell accompanied President Biden on his trip to California to meet with Governor Gavin Newsom and assess flood damages. More than 500 FEMA staff were on the ground during this visit alongside federal partners to support response and recovery operations.



Administrator Criswell also spoke to the chairman of the Kasha Pomo tribe to discuss how the California flooding had impacted his Tribal Nation.

As of Dec. 31, 2023

For DR-4683,  
**26 Disaster Recovery Centers** (DRC) opened and had **15,618 visitors**.

For DR-4699,  
**22 Disaster Recovery Centers** (DRC) opened and had **10,603 visitors**.

More than **\$148.2 million** in federal assistance has been awarded, including

  
**\$43.4 million** for Public Assistance

  
**\$97.8 million** approved for housing assistance

  
**\$7.0 million** approved for Other Needs Assistance.



# MISSISSIPPI SPRING TORNADOES (DR-4697)

On March 26, 2023, federal disaster assistance was made available through a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for the state of Mississippi after severe storms and tornados devastated communities. The Office of Response and Recovery's (ORR) call to action was focused and immediate: meeting disaster survivors where they are to help jumpstart their recovery, quickly and proactively.

Within hours after the tornados hit, FEMA staff were on site with the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency. This rapid response included the deployment of Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) Teams, an Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT), and several other staff to the state emergency operations center and affected areas. Critically, these teams provide disaster survivors with on-site registration, applicant status checks, on-the-spot needs assessments, requests for disability-related accommodations, and access to partners offering survivor services to speed their recovery.



## Proactive Disaster Relief

The disaster relief resulting from the Agency's proactive approach was felt immediately. In a little more than two weeks following the Major Disaster Declaration, more than \$7.7 million in federal assistance had been approved to support survivors. Six months later, the mission's successes were ever more apparent.

FEMA's DSA teams visited roughly 14,000 homes, 545 businesses, 108 community-based organizations, 37 government agencies, and 936 faith-based groups. Many homes were severely damaged or destroyed, which led to survivors temporarily relocating to nearby communities and hotels. DSA teams met survivors where they were and helped them apply for assistance, verify contact information, and answer any questions on their FEMA application.

Additionally, a small team of Individual Assistance (IA) personnel from FEMA's Enhanced Applicant Services (EAS) Team identified and contacted applicants traditionally challenged by the application and appeals process—those with hearing and vision problems, mobility issues, mental or emotional distress, or who are over 65. Nearly 17% of Mississippi's population is over the age of 65, and more than half of the state's older adults have some form of physical, mental health, sensory, intellectual, or cognitive disability. The EAS team completed more than 4,900 interviews with applicants, resulting in grants to survivors who otherwise might have struggled to navigate the assistance process.

More than \$33 million and counting in federal support has been approved by FEMA and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for homeowners, renters, and businesses. At the end of 2023, ORR staff remain on the ground in the affected communities to support recovery, working with local and state officials.

“  
We are committed to helping people get a safe roof over their heads as quickly as possible. Our focus is to meet the immediate sheltering need, give survivors a jumpstart on their recovery, and to bridge the gap between today and the long-term solutions.”

Federal Coordinating  
Officer John F. Boyle

April 26, 2023.





## 16 Disaster Recovery Centers

(DRC) opened and had **7,967 visitors.**

Direct Housing Mission was approved on **April 17, 2023**



Approved forms of assistance include Direct Lease, Multifamily Lease and Repair, and Transportable Temporary Housing Units

FEMA has approved **\$13 million** for individuals and households, including:



**\$8.6 million** approved for housing assistance



**\$4.4 million** approved for Other Needs Assistance.

## FEMA Leadership in the Community

On March 26, 2023, President Biden, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas, and Administrator Criswell met with local officials and survivors in Rolling Fork, Mississippi in the wake of strong tornadoes that damaged towns across Mississippi on March 24, 2023.



# TYPHOON MAWAR (DR-4715)

On May 24, 2023, the center of Typhoon Mawar passed 15 miles north of Guam with maximum sustained winds of 150 mph, a Category 4 storm and the strongest storm to affect the island of Guam since 2002. The storm caused power outages across Guam and the nearby island Rota in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The response community initiated a joint effort to address resource shortfalls, including fuel distribution, generator installation, communications restoration, food and water delivery, and medical staff support.



The collaborative response environment established between the field, FEMA Region 9, and FEMA Headquarters (HQ) enabled the rapid support with significant time and distance challenges and resulted in a proactive response to Typhoon Mawar, overcoming the challenges presented with responding to a disaster operation in a remote location. This deliberate and collaborative approach demonstrated the importance of unified coordination across planning efforts ahead of the storm, which was integral to ensuring all life-sustaining and lifesaving needs were met.

## Overcoming Distance and Time Zone Hurdles in Response Operations

Support for Guam and the West Pacific territories presents unique challenges not otherwise seen across other U.S. locations. These challenges include the following:

- Significant distance to the nearest resource hubs, making moving necessary resources and personnel into the impacted area challenging.
- Significant differences in time zones delaying the coordination and processing of imagery to facilitate the movement of information between field personnel and field leadership within FEMA HQ.
- Lack of high-resolution aerial imagery and open-source imagery, such as news and social media reporting by local officials and disaster survivors, which FEMA typically leverages early in a disaster. Power outages, post-storm inclement weather, and challenges associated with Guam's remote location limited the availability of imagery, number of reports, and internet-user-submitted photos.

FEMA addressed these challenges in numerous ways, as outlined in the rest of this section.



## Planning and Operational Coordination between National Response Coordination Center, Region, and Field Components

As soon as Typhoon Mawar was identified as a credible threat to the Western Pacific, the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) Operations and Planning Sections immediately began inclusive coordination between FEMA Headquarters, Region 9, and the field to deploy teams and equipment ahead of storm impacts and ensure commodities were available in the stocked Distribution Center (DC) in Guam. These DCs hold critical lifesaving and life-sustaining commodities like food, water, tarps, generators, and more. This coordinated effort decreased the time and distance risks inherent to response outside of the continental United States and enabled resources to be ready immediately after landfall. FEMA Headquarters, Region 9, and the field invested well in anticipatory planning that bolstered Western Pacific preparedness, resulting in a speedy, well-coordinated, and proactive response that contributed to addressing time and distance concerns in response to this disaster.



The NRCC Planning Section immediately began working on collaborative current and future planning with the field, region, and headquarters. Decision support tools were developed in collaboration with the Region and the Field, including National Support Plans (NSP) and Incident Analysis Briefs (IAB), and were provided to senior leadership to drive decision-making in support of the Region and Typhoon Mawar response. Common collaborative platforms such as Microsoft Teams and SharePoint were utilized to support

real-time and integrated holistic communications and invest in inclusive product development. The collaborative approach to current and future planning efforts resulted in more operational and actionable information.

During the response to Typhoon Mawar, the development of the IAB was focused on a 24-hour planning cycle that allowed the Planning Section to look at the entire environment across the country to understand what impact programmatic, territory, and regional capability could have on response.

This allowed them to receive information from the field during the region's 12-hour operation period to understand what happened, then look ahead into the next 12 hours and integrate both pieces into a holistic IAB.

The Planning Section also created a Preparedness Estimate that was initiated immediately following the NRCC activation and continued throughout the operation. The Preparedness Estimate focused on maintaining awareness of additional current and future threats to the islands following Typhoon Mawar's landfall. When there was concern about a possible second typhoon strike, the Planning Section was ready and able to share an additional IAB quickly with the field personnel supporting

the island and response activities. The IAB included a scenario focused on a second typhoon strike with possible paths and what commodities and resources would need to be moved. While a second-strike typhoon did not become a threat, the field personnel were prepared due to the foresight of the Planning Section to keep future planning efforts active throughout the operational period.

“As our community continues making progress towards recovery in the wake of Typhoon Mawar, I've been assured that Guam will be provided with every necessary resource for a complete and speedy recovery.”

Guam Governor  
Lou Leon Guerrero

May 29, 2023

## Using Geospatial Information System Tools to Streamline Disaster Assistance

The FEMA response to Typhoon Mawar included using Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) tools to identify disaster impacts and relay information in an easy-to-understand format essential to lifesaving and life-sustaining operations. FEMA's Response Geospatial Office provided support by obtaining imagery, both high resolution and satellite, and by conducting Geospatial Damage Assessments (GDA). GDAs involve reviewing and assessing pre- and post-incident imagery to inform response organizations of total incident impacts, including extent, severity, and types of structures.

High-resolution imagery and Geospatial Damage Assessments provided data that:

- Focused delivery of critical disaster aid to state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) jurisdictions and survivors.
- Assisted ground-based teams with damage location information so they could focus their efforts in areas of greatest need.
- Assessed the success of previous disaster mitigation efforts, including previously installed cement power poles, concrete roofs, and concrete structures that withstood hurricane-force winds.
- Assessed impacts on infrastructure, including power, roads, hospitals, and wastewater treatment facilities.
- Assessed the number of permanently displaced residents.

Through this technology, FEMA rapidly deployed critical resources to the hardest hit areas to meet the immediate needs of survivors following the storm.







### FEMA Leadership in the Community

Following Typhoon Mawar, members of the FEMA leadership team and additional response personnel were a part of the first official plane that landed in Guam

As of Dec. 31, 2023

## FEMA GEOSPATIAL DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS (GDA) ANALYSTS USED PHOTOS AND SATELLITE IMAGES TO ASSESS 8,600 STRUCTURES.

**893** structures were destroyed or had major damage.

**6,065** structures were found to have no visible damage.

**1,642** structures had minor damage or were affected.

Visible damages to critical infrastructure were also documented, e.g., broken power poles, damaged wastewater facilities, or damage to hospital roofs.

The near-real-time analyses were distributed via a geospatial damage assessment viewer, and decision-makers at the federal, territorial, and local levels used them for planning and decision-making, including where to dispatch and provision supplies and send response and recovery teams. The GDA data also helped decision-makers understand the number of permanently displaced families and why shelter numbers remained high many days post-incident.

### Expedited Survivor Benefits

GDA data was used to expedite Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to survivors, ensuring the survivors received critical services following the disaster and allowing FEMA to adjust the resource deployment to get the appropriate resources to meet the immediate needs of survivors.

The program is coordinated by the Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VAL). VALs utilize relationship building with voluntary, faith-based, and community-based organizations, foundations, and philanthropic partners, who provide additional humanitarian resources to assist communities in meeting their needs after a disaster.

### GUAM Strong

In response to the survivors' needs for a safe, sanitary, and secure home, FEMA initiated GUAM STRONG (Getting Urgent Assistance Mobilized to Support Typhoon Repairs On Guam) to assist affected households by undertaking temporary emergency repairs to make homes habitable.

These voluntary organizations, including Adventist Community Services, Heart 9/11, Mennonite Disaster Service, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief, and United Methodists Committee on Relief (UMCOR), deploy skilled volunteers to conduct repairs for those survivors. FEMA covers the travel expenses and provides lodging support for the volunteers.

GUAM STRONG brings together the efforts of various agencies and organizations. This includes collaboration with the local government, such as the Guam Homeland Security/Office of Civil Defense and the Mayor's Council. The program also relies on village mayors to refer their most vulnerable residents.

The emergency repairs started on Aug. 27, 2023. As of December 2023, 24 homes had been successfully repaired, with repair efforts continuing in 2024.

**5 Disaster Recovery Centers**  
(DRC) opened and had **29,501 visitors.**

Direct Housing Mission was approved on **July 10, 2023**



Approved forms of assistance include Direct Lease and Multifamily Lease and Repair

FEMA has approved

**\$70.3 million**

for individuals and households, including:



**\$39.4 million** approved for housing assistance; and



**\$30.8 million** approved for Other Needs Assistance.





# HAWAII WILDFIRES (DR-4724)

## SEARCH AND RESCUE MISSION

Beginning on Aug. 8, 2023, several wildfires started burning in Maui and Hawaii counties. In the days after the fires, over 1,000 people were reported missing, and the President's Major Disaster Declaration allowed FEMA to surge personnel to support the state. By Aug. 12, Urban Search and Rescue Teams (US&R) were on the ground in Maui - augmenting the county's search and rescue mission for missing persons.

### Operational Challenges

During the Hawaii wildfire response, FEMA HQ coordinated the deployment of four Type 1 US&R task forces, one Type 3 US&R task force, 40 Human Remains Detection Canine Teams, and nearly 500,000 pounds of equipment, requiring 20 federally contracted flights and a significant number of passenger commercial flights. This represents a coordinated and comprehensive effort to effectively and efficiently locate residents impacted by the wildfires.

The remote island location of Hawaii poses logistical challenges for transporting US&R equipment, often requiring specialized shipping arrangements and longer transit times.

### National Urban Search and Response System

The National US&R Response System (the System) is comprised of 28 task forces (TF), three Incident Support Teams (IST), and federal partners that provide a coordinated, national, all-hazards capability for locating, extricating, and stabilizing survivors of structural collapse, and to conduct other life-saving operations resulting from natural and man-made causes.

The primary purpose of the System is to provide a nationwide network of search and rescue resources that can be rapidly deployed to disaster incidents. The 28 System task forces located throughout the continental United States are established at the local jurisdiction level and can be federalized and deployed by FEMA as needed anywhere in the Nation in response to a request for assistance by state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments.



### What is a Type 1 Task Force?

A Type 1 Task Force is a team that deploys with the necessary tools, equipment, skills, and techniques to conduct life-saving search and rescue operations.

A task force consists of 70 multi-faceted cross-trained personnel, four canines, and one comprehensive equipment cache.

Each task force can be divided into two 35-member teams to provide 24-hour search and rescue operations. Self-sufficient for the initial 72 hours, the task forces are equipped with convoy vehicles to support over-the-road deployments and can be configured into smaller task forces to support weather events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and other similar incidents that historically do not result in damaged or collapsed reinforced concrete buildings.







*President Biden and First Lady Jill Biden meet with search and rescue personnel while visiting Lahaina after the wildfires.*

### Human Remains Detection Canines

As of December 2023, there were 86 operational US&R Human Remains Detection canines within the National US&R Response System. These 86 canines are accompanied by a single highly trained US&R task force member. This highlights the relatively small number of these specialized assets nationwide.

*President Biden and First Lady Jill Biden survey damage in Lahaina alongside Hawaii Governor Josh Green and the FEMA Administrator on Aug. 21, 2023.*



### Community Impacts/Outcomes

During the Hawaii wildfire response, the US&R resources on the ground searched over 2,000 structures, highlighting the demanding nature of their work. In addition to the 2,000+ structures searched, Human Remains Detection canines were employed to search areas impacted by the wildfires, totaling over 2,100 acres.

Using Human Remains Detection Canines, US&R resources were able to locate deceased persons following the wildfire's impacts in Hawaii. By locating these loved ones, grieving families were provided with a sense of emotional closure, allowing them to begin the grieving process and start the journey toward recovery.





# RECOVERY MISSION

## Maui Fires Long-Term Recovery

The August 2023 wildfires in Hawaii devastated the community, immediately indicating the need for the full capabilities of the federal government to bring together knowledge and skills from across the federal agencies to deliver integrated disaster support through a whole-community approach to recovery. This level of impact to individuals and the community requires dedicated coordination. FEMA is leading the integration efforts across the response and recovery continuum, providing technical assistance to state and county partners, and coordinating across federal partners. The Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) mission is supporting the development of a structure for long-term recovery for the community. A key element of the IRC mission is the capabilities of our federal partners through the Recovery Support Functions (RSF). RSFs provide structure to facilitate problem-solving, foster coordination, and improve access to funding resources and technical assistance. All six RSFs were activated within the first 30 days of the disaster declaration.

## Interagency Coordination

All recovery missions are community-driven. For this mission, local, state, and federal agencies are working with trusted local community leaders and faith-based organizations who understand the unique history and culture of Maui. Their guidance enables recovery teams to address the challenges on the ground and connect with survivors in a way that is consistent with the cultural practices of the community. The federal interagency has 34 missions supported by RSFs to support the development and implementation of long-term recovery strategies.

FEMA, via the Community Assistance RSF, is coordinating with the Maui County Office of Recovery to establish a recovery structure and a reporting and information-sharing process.

Initial interagency coordination with Maui County Office of Recovery included:

- Coordination between U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, FEMA, Department of Transportation (DOT), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to identify Geographic Information System (GIS) resources to support Maui as they begin to map out ongoing project sites and plan for large and long-term recovery efforts.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service authorizing a waiver of the cost-share requirement for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP) to address watershed impairments in Maui. The waiver will allow USDA to pay for 100% of the cost.



- The Housing Task Force providing Maui County with an overview of housing programs and resources available to assist with recovery needs. Including information on home loans and home repairs, as well as potential support from modular housing projects.
- Establishment of a Joint Volunteer and Donations Management Task Force between Maui Emergency Management Agency, Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, and FEMA to build critical connections with grassroots organizations, cultural leaders, and whole community partners that enabled an equitable distribution to survivors and established processes for tracking systems, warehouses, and volunteers in Oahu and Maui.

## FEMA Recovery in Action

There were many challenges in the initial days of recovery, including reunifying families, registering people for assistance, and setting up Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC). Throughout these challenges, FEMA worked in partnership with state and local officials to ensure that the needs of the community were met.

During the initial days and weeks following the wildfires, FEMA took the following actions to support a successful recovery:

- Holding initial IRC partner kick-off meeting with 48 federal partners, FEMA IRC staff, and advisors;
- Mission Assigning all six RSFs, DOT, EPA, SBA, and USDA for initial 90-day deployments; and
- Holding initial educational meetings with county partners and state partners to introduce IRC concepts and processes.
- Completing initial Community Analysis Tool (CAT) evaluation to help identify communities that have specific recovery concerns related to population vulnerability, community capacity, or disaster impact.
- Activating the Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) Program within 48 hours from the state's request.
  - The updated, survivor-friendly TSA website was completed one week ahead of schedule, and therefore able to be used for the Hawaii TSA activation.

“We want to thank our partners at the American Red Cross, FEMA, the hotel industry and Airbnb, for stepping up during this unprecedented tragedy. Only together can we rise up, recover and bring healing to the Lāhainā community.”

Josh Green  
Governor of Hawaii

Aug. 25, 2023







FEMA established a Sheltering and Housing Task Force in order to support the State of Hawaii, Maui County, and local officials in identifying, evaluating, and implementing innovative sheltering and housing solutions for survivors. The Task Force was supported by subject matter experts from FEMA, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and other whole of government partners to support a comprehensive approach for meeting immediate sheltering, interim, and permanent housing solutions. The Task Force continues to evaluate all potential options for supporting sheltering and short/long term housing recovery efforts.

As of Dec. 31, 2023

**3 Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC)** in Maui have assisted over **10,000 survivors**.

More than **\$125.16 million** in federal assistance has been approved for **5,759 households**.

Direct Housing Mission was approved on **September 12, 2023**



Approved forms of assistance include Direct Lease and Alternative Transportable Temporary Housing Units on Group Sites.

FEMA has approved **\$41.4 million** for individuals and households, including:



**\$20.9 million** approved for housing assistance



**\$20.5 million** approved for Other Needs Assistance.

At the request of the Governor of Hawaii, on Aug. 10, 2023, FEMA activated the Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) program to shelter survivors to support emergency shelter for eligible displaced households using hotels and motels.

More than **\$2.1 million** in federal assistance was provided to support this sheltering effort.

**3,520** households were immediately notified of their eligibility.

Within hours of activation, survivors were able to easily access listings of available hotels via the newly redesigned TSA hotel locator website.



The intuitive search function and new sort/filter features allowed helpline agents to quickly assist survivors locate potential TSA lodging options.



The October 2023 TSA Customer Satisfaction Survey for the disaster saw a higher user satisfaction rate compared to other disasters.

A total of **3,648 nights of stay** were provided before transitioning all households out of TSA and into other programs such as U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), state-managed non-congregate sheltering, or other resources.

### Stakeholder Meetings

As part of the recovery process FEMA met with stakeholders to learn about recovery priorities, needs and opportunities. Stakeholders that have met with FEMA include:

- Maui Economic Development Office
- Maui County Economic Development Board
- Maui Economic Opportunity
- Maui Chamber of Commerce
- Maui United Way
- Hawaii Chamber of Commerce
- Economic Development Alliance of Hawaii
- HI Dept. of Business, Economic Development & Tourism
- HI State Office of Planning & Sustainable Development
- Operation HOPE
- Hawaii Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO)
- Maui County Department of Management
- Kuha'o Business Center (technically a program under Maui's Office of Economic Development, but operates independently on Moloka'i)
- The Federal Reserve Bank
- Waianae Economic Development Council (WEDC)
- Pacific Basin Development Council (PBDC)
- Hawaii Foodbank
- Hawaii Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
- Ulupono Initiative
- Kosasa Family Foundation
- Shifted Energy



# HURRICANE IDALIA (DR-4734)

On Aug. 30, 2023, Hurricane Idalia made landfall in the Florida Big Bend region as a Category 3 hurricane, with maximum sustained winds near 125 mph. Idalia was one of the strongest hurricanes to hit the Big Bend region and the first major hurricane to make landfall in this area since 1950. Disaster Emergency Communications (DEC) Division Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) resources were deployed ahead of the incident and positioned immediately following post-landfall to enable holistic unified coordination for lifesaving and life-sustaining missions. Additionally, Disaster Survivor Assistance Program (DSA) team members were out in the community within four hours after the hurricane passed through the community and the first Disaster Recovery Center (DRC), critical locations set up in partnership with the state or territory where disaster survivors can register for assistance, opened 6 days after the President declared a Major Disaster Declaration on Sept. 5, 2023.

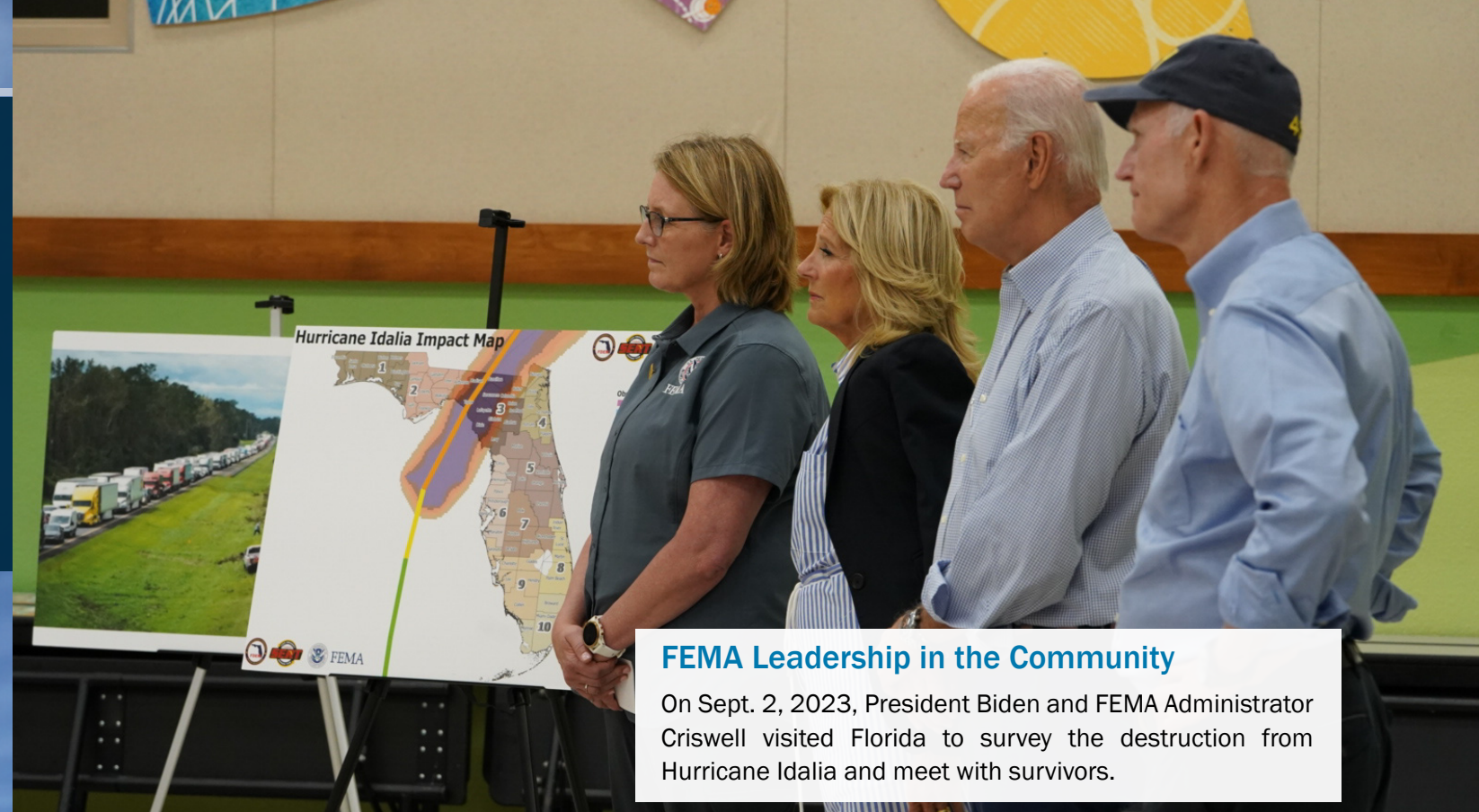
## DEC MERS Critical for Mobile Disaster Recovery Center Success

FEMA has increased the delivery of Individual Assistance services using Mobile DRCs and Mobile Registration Intake Centers (MRIC) to aid in the rapid recovery of impacted survivors. This allows FEMA to help reach the most remote areas within an impacted community where socially vulnerable populations are and assists by allowing rapid, equitable delivery of recovery support to everyone. DEC MERS is the critical piece to making this mobile DRC program successful, supporting command and control communications and bringing remote communication access to survivors.

During Hurricane Idalia's response and recovery, DEC MERS operations were instrumental in establishing communications in sixteen counties in the Big Bend area of Florida, as well as integration with the State of Florida to ensure a unified approach to interoperable communications across the federal and state response and coordinate with telecommunication partners to expedite restoration of services. This allowed for the rapid deployment of response and recovery resources to reduce impacts on survivors. DEC MERS enabled holistic and unified federal operations for lifesaving and life-sustaining missions through reliable, interoperable communications.

## Positive Community Impacts

DEC MERS resources established mobile, tactical, and fixed voice and data services across the 16 impacted counties at more than 36 locations to enable response and recovery operations. Additionally, 18 mobile DRCs and two MRIC locations through the use of 10 Mobile Communications Operations Vehicles (MCOV) to support response and recovery efforts. This effort has resulted in over 60,000 registrations through the FEMA Individual and Households Program, resulting in nearly \$60 million in funding for survivors to expedite recovery.



**FEMA Leadership in the Community**  
On Sept. 2, 2023, President Biden and FEMA Administrator Criswell visited Florida to survey the destruction from Hurricane Idalia and meet with survivors.

## Adapting to Remote Environments

The Florida Big Bend region is very remote and has a higher socially vulnerable population compared to other parts of Florida. Centralized locations to establish a fixed DRC were not practical, so the mobile DRC mission was especially critical to rapidly register impacted survivors and begin to deliver services across the area. The DEC MERS personnel adapted to the challenging conditions across this rural area to ensure all impacted survivors had the ability to register for disaster assistance.

The first Disaster Recovery Center, critical locations set up in partnership with a state or territory where disaster survivors can register for assistance and ask FEMA staff questions, opened five days after the disaster declaration was declared on Sept. 5, 2023.



Other Innovative Methods:

### Starlink



DEC and MERS used a new emerging satellite technology, Starlink, in the continental United States for the first time.

**15 Starlink** satellite units provided high-speed data at mobile and fixed facilities without commercial services, allowing rapid response to changing needs of the Response and Recovery operations and reducing impact to survivors.



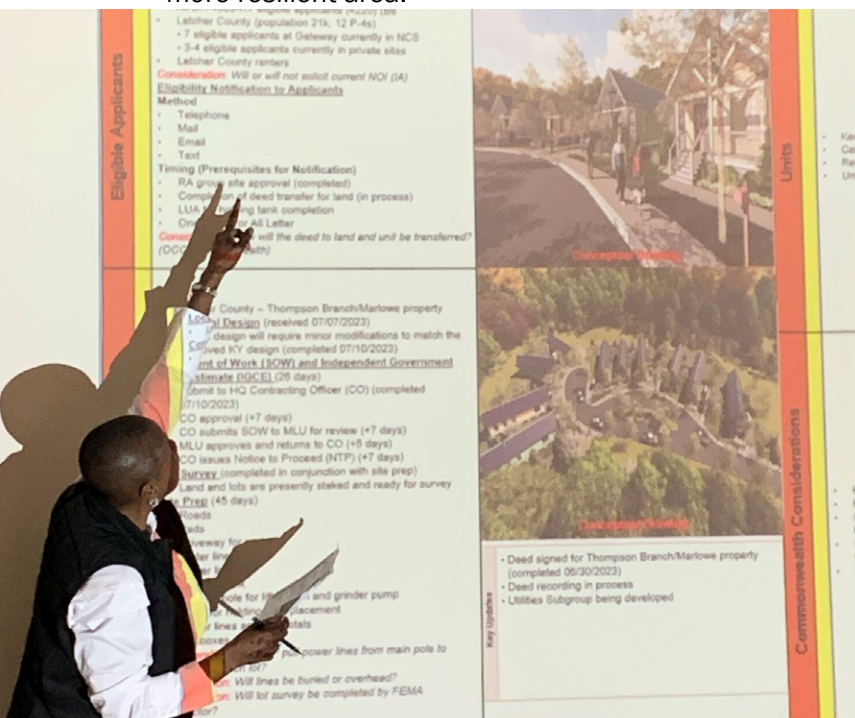


# KENTUCKY COTTAGES INITIATIVE (DR-4663)

In July 2022, severe storms, landslides, mudslides, and floods devastated homes and lives across Eastern Kentucky. On July 29, 2022, President Biden declared a Major Disaster Declaration for Eastern Kentucky (DR-4663-KY), which included 13 counties for assistance to individuals and households and 20 counties for assistance to communities and certain private nonprofits to aid their recovery. Following these unprecedented floods, FEMA's temporary housing program has provided short-term housing to survivors while allowing them time to identify permanent housing solutions. Through a close partnership with the Commonwealth of Kentucky and local, nonprofit, and private sector organizations, FEMA developed an alternative housing solution to offset the shortage of housing options and help approved applicants find a long-term housing solution more quickly.

## The Cottages at Thompson Branch

At the end of June 2023, the Commonwealth acquired six acres of land close to downtown Whitesburg, Kentucky. FEMA will place alternative manufactured housing units (AHMU) on the land, allowing the community to keep living near each other and improve community resilience for future storms by moving people out of high-risk flood zones. AMHUs are fixed structures, not temporary units like travel trailers or mobile units on wheels, placed on land that the state government has purchased in an area located away from high-risk flood zones. The AMHUs have a larger living space, a front porch, and an exterior that can be made to look like a cottage with aftermarket upgrades. Survivors will be offered furnished two- or three-bedroom units according to their household needs. The AMHUs also comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, which is standard for FEMA direct housing. While the program is not intended to be a solution for a survivor's immediate sheltering needs, it allows the community to remain intact in a more resilient area.



“**The Commonwealth and FEMA are collaborating on a housing option that will allow survivors of the devastating floods in Eastern Kentucky the chance to move into a new manufactured home on land outside of a high-risk flood zone**”

Colt Hagmaier, FEMA Recovery Leadership

June 30, 2023

“**This is a first-of-its-kind partnership with local, state and federal groups coming together to support this new, safe, high-ground community and 10 families who lost their homes in the historic floods,**”

Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear

June 30, 2023



This initiative — dubbed The Cottages at Thompson Branch — is the first recovery effort of its kind in the country. After recovery is complete, the property can be developed into a community with paved streets, streetlights, and other amenities. Two acres of the Whitesburg property have been designated for greenspace where hiking trails, a playground, and other community services can be developed.





# FLORIDA HURRICANE IAN RECOVERY UPDATE (DR-4673)

On the morning of Sept. 28, 2022, Hurricane Ian intensified into a Category 4 hurricane over the Gulf of Mexico with maximum sustained winds of 155 mph. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), when Hurricane Ian came ashore near Cayo Costa in Florida's Lee County, it tied the record for the fifth-strongest hurricane to strike the United States. Damage from Hurricane Ian is estimated at \$115 billion, including insured and uninsured losses, making it the third costliest cyclone to strike the United States after Katrina and Harvey, according to NOAA.



As of Dec. 31, 2023

## HURRICANE IAN



All 67 counties in Florida were included in the disaster declaration.

**\$7.5 billion**

in total federal assistance provided to individuals, households, and businesses, including:



\$1.14 billion in FEMA grants to 386,700 households;



\$1.94 billion in U.S. Small Business Administration disaster loans approved; and



\$4.42 billion in National Flood Insurance Program payments; 47,300 claims filed.



## HURRICANE IAN SCOPE AND SIZE



**2.7 million** power outages.



**32.6 million** cubic yards of debris.



More than **6,100 structures** were destroyed and more than **15,700** sustained major damage.



**183** healthcare facilities evacuated.



**3,700** individuals treated by **7** federal Disaster Medical Assistance Teams.



**11** federal and **8** state Search & Rescue task forces conducted **5,572** rescues and **86,722** building inspections.



**11 million** liters of water and **6.8 million** in other commodities provided to the state for distribution.



More than **5,000** federal responders deployed.

## Major Milestones and Successes

Following Hurricane Ian, FEMA provided \$1.14 billion in grants to more than 386,000 households in 26 counties. To ensure survivors could easily apply for assistance, FEMA operated 57 Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC) in affected areas with 138,000 visits from survivors, and FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) teams visited 354,600 homes to assist survivors. Additionally, to expedite damage assessments and applicants' home inspections, FEMA used geospatial information systems (GIS) and other technology in response and recovery operations.

Many survivors were displaced due to the impacts of Hurricane Ian. More than 4,500 families were provided temporary hotel stays through the Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) program while looking for longer-term housing. More than 1,370 households were given the keys to FEMA temporary housing, including travel trailers, manufactured housing units, or apartment homes leased by FEMA for hurricane survivors. More than 450 households have moved on to more permanent housing solutions and vacated their units.

In addition to the assistance provided by FEMA, Hurricane Ian survivors were assisted by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and multiple voluntary organizations. SBA approved \$1.94 billion

in disaster loans for homeowners, renters, and businesses and operated six Business Recovery Centers and two Loan Closing Centers. Voluntary organizations have been active since the storm made landfall. More than 670 organizations helped survivors with cleanup, financial and housing aid, mental health, and other types of support.

## Advanced Geospatial Technology

During the response to Hurricane Ian, geospatial technology was used to expedite the disaster declaration process and to produce comprehensive incident impact assessments following landfall. FEMA geospatial information systems teams conducted 56,000 remote assessments that identified 24,000 residential structures with visible damage. Assessments were conducted using artificial intelligence, crowdsourcing, and high-resolution imagery from satellite, air, and ground. After landfall, 5,627 GIS inspections were performed, resulting in \$78.3 million in assistance to survivors without requiring an in-person inspection.





### Rapid Debris Removal Task Force

Hurricane Ian left behind an estimated 32.6 million cubic yards of debris, presenting a major challenge across Florida. FEMA worked with the state to develop a strategy prioritizing debris removal so communities could begin recovery. Thousands of structures were damaged, and many of them were on private or commercial property. Following the standard process for Private Property Debris Removal (PPDR) and Commercial Property Debris Removal (CPDR) would take more time than FEMA had to help these communities. To expedite debris removal to eliminate threats to public health and safety and ensure economic recovery operations, a Rapid Debris Removal Task Force used technical and observational information to identify areas where FEMA could shorten the PPDR/CPDR application process for eligible communities. FEMA estimates that this use of geographic and spatial data reduced debris removal timeframes by approximately 6 months.

### Direct Housing in Special Flood Hazard Areas

Hurricane Ian left thousands of Floridians unable to live in their damaged or destroyed homes. As a first option, FEMA never places manufactured housing units or travel trailers in a Special Flood Hazard Area. However, after Hurricane Ian, most areas with severely damaged housing were in Special Flood Hazard Areas, and after assessing flood risk, FEMA approved special considerations for Temporary Housing Units in Special Flood Hazard Areas to better meet the needs of the survivors. Approving the placement of these Transitional Temporary Housing Units in the Special Flood Hazard Areas allowed for additional units to be safely installed and provide a wider range of temporary housing options to eligible households.

## PUERTO RICO RECOVERY UPDATE

DR-4336 (Hurricane Irma), DR-4339 (Hurricane Maria), DR-4473 (Earthquakes), DR-4560 (Tropical Storm Isaias), DR-4571 (Severe Storm and Flooding), DR-4649 (Severe Storm, Flooding, and Landslides), and DR-4671 (Hurricane Fiona).

### Joint Recovery Office 2023

FEMA continues to support areas where there have been recurring disasters with compounding impacts by remaining on location to help communities recover stronger and better prepare for potential future disasters. Since September 2017, Puerto Rico has received 12 Presidentially-declared Emergency and Major Disaster Declarations. Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico in September 2017, and multiple earthquakes impacted the island in January 2020. Repair projects from these disasters were still underway when Hurricane Fiona hit in September 2022. These disasters have compounded impacts on Puerto Rico's infrastructure and exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities. FEMA has had a JRO in Puerto Rico since Hurricane Irma in September 2017. In 2023, FEMA staff were working on the ground in this office to support Puerto Rico's long-term recovery from disasters dating back to Hurricane Irma.

2023 has been a year of many challenges and many accomplishments for the Joint Recovery Office (JRO). In the sixth year after Hurricane Maria, over 10,900 projects have been approved and over \$31.6 billion obligated, making Hurricane Maria one of the largest disasters in FEMA's history. Some of the JRO accomplishments include the following:

- Obligating over \$31.6 billion in allocations for over 10,900 projects.
- Attending multiple engagements with local community leaders and state agencies to maintain and improve upon communication in support of Puerto Rico's continued recovery process.
- Approving an estimated 90-100 Public Assistance (PA) projects per month to support Puerto Rico's recovery process.
- Obligating funds for 99% (10,530) of projects submitted.
- Completing 565 Recovery Transition Meetings to close out projects in the PA process.







### Public Assistance

As of Dec. 13, 2023, there were 153 PA staff, led by Division Director Danna Planas Ocasio and Deputy Al Gomez, supporting both Hurricane Maria and earthquake recovery.

#### Program Highlights

In 2020, FEMA announced the FEMA Accelerated Awards Strategy (FAASt), which allows critical infrastructure projects to be grouped together in order to expedite energy grid work in Puerto Rico. In 2023, FEMA obligated \$3.142 billion in non-FAASt projects and Hazard Mitigation FAASt funding.

As part of the ongoing effort to support recovery, the JRO began conducting site visits to assess municipal projects across Puerto Rico. As part of this initiative, 1,077 Damage Inventories (DI) were conducted between January and October 2023. The primary goal of this initiative was to assess the construction progress of PA projects completed or underway by applicants using FEMA funds.

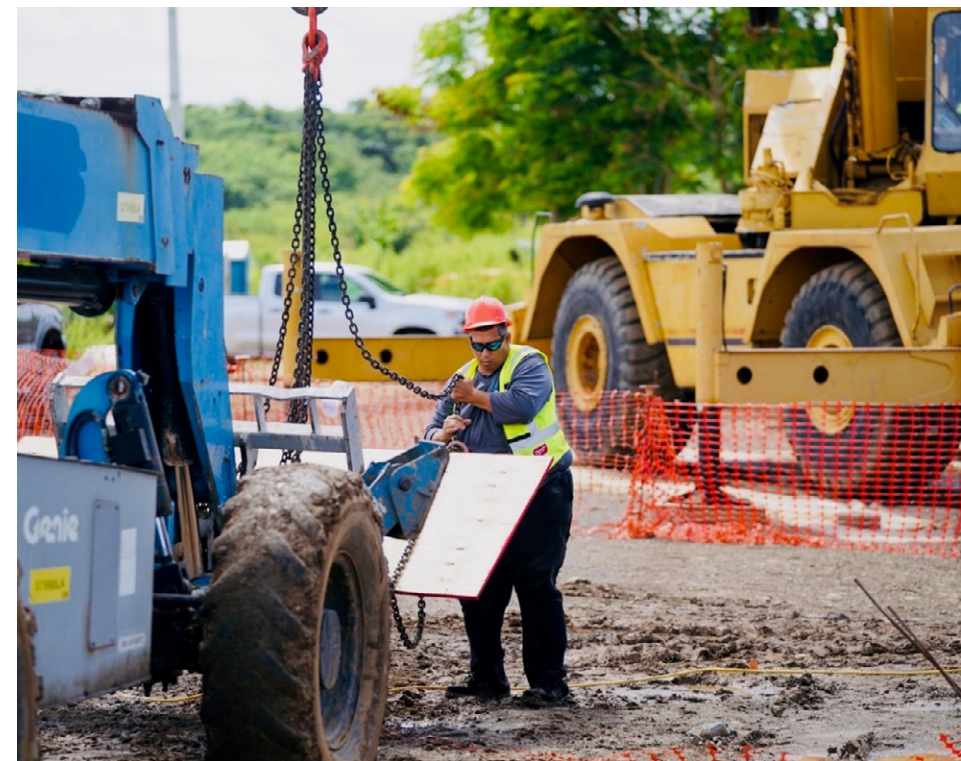
In tandem with these site visits, FEMA has maintained consistent engagement with applicants and their respective points of contact. Regular meetings provide a platform to discuss pending projects and construction status and emphasize the various flexibilities available to applicants, such as alternate project approaches, improvements, fund sharing, and Statements of Work change project requests. By highlighting these flexibilities, FEMA aims to empower applicants to tailor recovery solutions that align with their specific needs.

Over the past 6 years, the Puerto Rico Joint Recovery Office (PR JRO) team has been actively involved in providing assistance to the public in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria (DR-4339). As of Nov. 5, 2023, nearly all projects related to DR-4339 (excluding Sub-FAASt) had been initiated, reaching a significant 99% completion rate. In 2020, the PR JRO expanded its efforts to manage the delivery of PA for earthquake-related disaster DR-4473. As of the same date, 98% of DR-4473 projects have commenced.

### Interagency Recovery Coordination Branch

Through coordination and consultation with impacted states and communities, interagency recovery coordination (IRC) personnel identify resource gaps and coordinate with interagency partners to develop strategic solutions that fit their unique circumstances. To engage participants from various sectors, including representatives from local government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions, a series of seminars and events have been held both virtually and in person. In 2023, a total of 13 seminars and webinars were conducted as part of the Climate Change Initiative Project, in addition to four Water Summit events, among other related activities.

Concurrently, the JRO undertook 18 participatory mapping exercises with municipalities, further enriching the collaborative efforts towards comprehensive recovery and resilience.



“  
**This year, the Puerto Rico JRO has obligated 1,314 projects, surpassing our 2-billion-dollar (non-FAASt) obligation goal by over 50%. This year we have transferred over \$1.83 billion from FAASt projects to sub-FAASt projects, and to date, we have obligated 10,900 projects totaling over \$31.6 billion. We look forward to continue supporting Puerto Rico in the upcoming year in their recovery plans processing alternate and improved projects, changes in scopes of work, fund-sharing, and other PA related activities.**  
 ”

Danna Planas Ocasio

Infrastructure Division Director

Dec. 21, 2023





# FEMA MOVING FORWARD

Each of the 84 Emergency and Major Disaster declarations FEMA managed in 2023 required efficient, coordinated efforts to deliver lifesaving and life-sustaining support to impacted communities and help survivors jumpstart their recovery. The Office of Response and Recovery (ORR) met each declaration with **compassionate customer service, equitable resource delivery, and a collaborative federal approach to respond and recover.**

Although much has been accomplished this year, there is more work to be done in 2024. In alignment with the Administrator's vision that 2024 will be the 'Year of Resilience,' ORR will examine its programs to see how it can advance new, innovative ideas to protect even more Americans against disasters.

In addition, ORR will continue to build the capacity of our partners to advance equity, climate resilience, and readiness for a more resilient Nation. To do this, ORR will:

- Foster a Ready Nation by helping the emergency management community incorporate emerging and catastrophic threats into planning, training, partnerships, and consequence management.
- Improve community recovery through accessible, equitable, and coordinated disaster assistance to meet the needs of our customers.
- Grow FEMA's capacity and capability in consequence management, continuity, and interagency coordination to emerging and non-traditional threats.
- Support SLTT partners' efforts to conduct immediate lifesaving and safety planning and response, informed by risk and behavioral research.
- Increase recruitment of FEMA's diverse and talented workforce through directed engagement, incentives, and strategies.
- Provide guidance, training, and exercises to increase understanding of climate risks and spur adaptation activities.
- Increase SLTT partners' resilient recovery through improved information, use of data, incentives, and customer experience.

ORR will continue to lean forward and innovate to ensure we provide communities and survivors with the best possible support during and after their hardest days. **No matter the challenges we face in 2024, ORR will remain steadfast in meeting survivors and communities where they are.**







# 2024 OFFICE OF RESPONSE AND RECOVERY LEADERSHIP

Associate Administrator  
ANNE BINK



Deputy Associate Administrator  
KEITH TURI



## Field Operations Directorate

Assistant Administrator  
LEILONI STAINSBY



Deputy Assistant Administrator  
ROBERT SULLIVAN



## Recovery

Assistant Administrator  
COLT HAGMAIER



Deputy Assistant Administrator  
PAUL JUDSON



## Logistics

Assistant Administrator  
JEFFREY DORKO



Deputy Assistant Administrator  
CARLA GAMMON



Deputy Assistant Administrator  
JULIA MOLINE



## Response

Assistant Administrator  
JOHN RABIN



Deputy Assistant Administrator  
MATTHEW PAYNE



## Field Leadership Directorate

Assistant Administrator  
DAVID SAMANIEGO







# 2024 FEMA REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

## Region 1

Regional Administrator  
LORI EHRLICH



Deputy Regional Administrator  
JARRETT DEVINE



## Region 4

Regional Administrator  
ROBERT SAMAN



(A) Deputy Regional Administrator  
ROBERT ASHE



## Region 2

Regional Administrator  
DAVID WARRINGTON



Deputy Regional Administrator  
ANDREW D'AMORA



## Region 5

Regional Administrator  
THOMAS SIVAK



Deputy Regional Administrator  
MICHAEL CHESNEY



## Region 3

Regional Administrator  
MARYANN TIERNEY



Deputy Regional Administrator  
JANICE BARLOW



## Region 6

Regional Administrator  
TONY ROBINSON



Deputy Regional Administrator  
TRACI BRASHER







# 2024 FEMA REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

## Region 7

Regional Administrator  
ANDREA SPILLARS



Deputy Regional Administrator  
CATHERINE SANDERS



## Region 10

Regional Administrator  
WILLIE NUNN



Deputy Regional Administrator  
VINCENT MAYKOVICH



## Region 8

Regional Administrator  
NANCY DRAGANI



Deputy Regional Administrator  
KATHERINE FOX

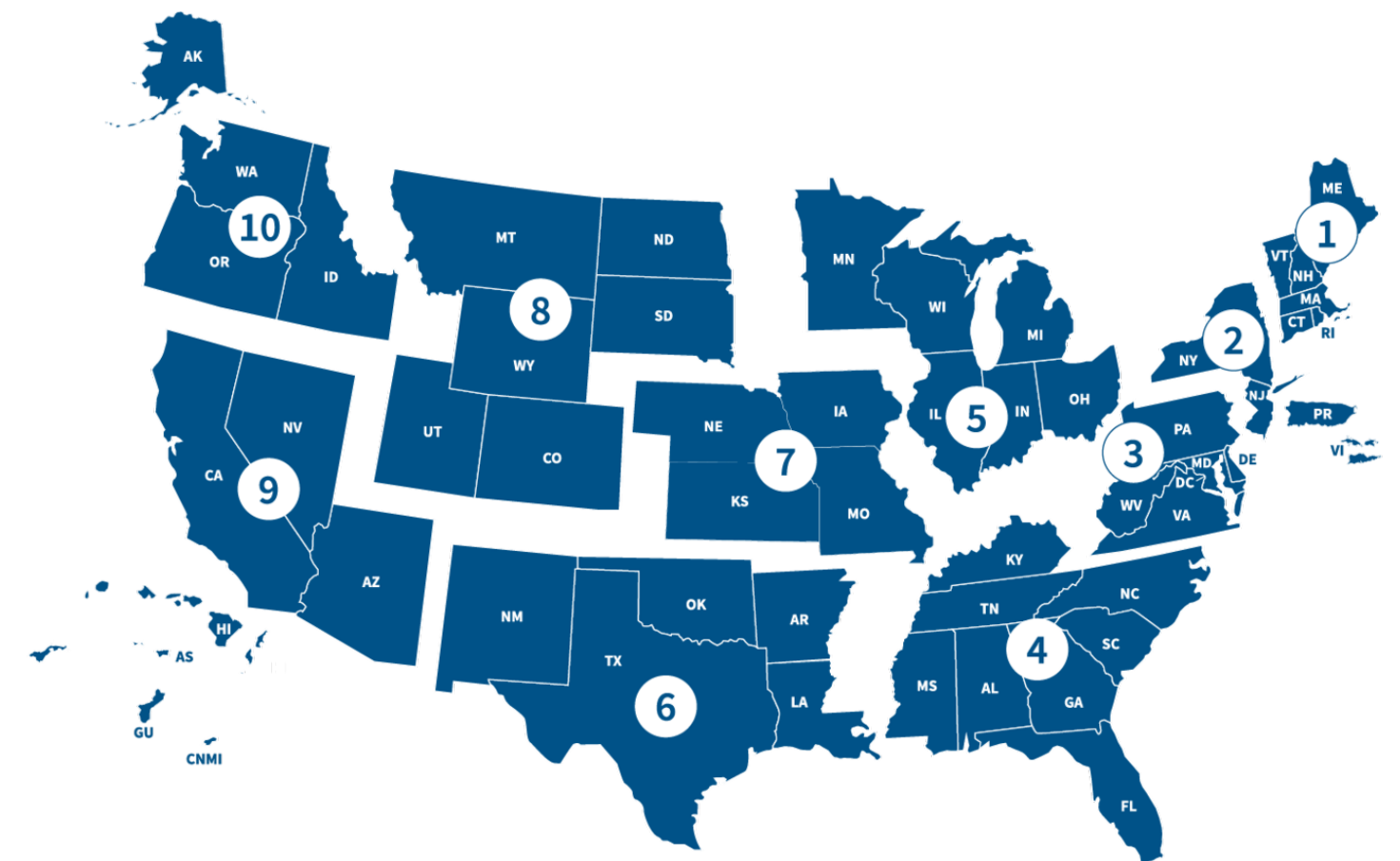


## Region 9

Regional Administrator  
ROBERT FENTON, JR.



Deputy Regional Administrator  
TAMMY LITRELL







# 2023 DECLARATIONS

There are two types of disaster declarations provided for in the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act: Emergency Declarations (EM) and Major Disaster Declarations (DR). Both declaration types authorize the President to provide supplemental federal disaster assistance. However, the event related to the disaster declaration and type and amount of assistance differ.

Additionally, when a fire is burning uncontrolled and threatening such destruction as would constitute a major DR, states can request a fire management assistance declaration.

## EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS

An EM can be declared for any occasion or instance when the President determines federal assistance is needed. EMs supplement State and local efforts in providing emergency services, such as the protection of lives, property, public health, and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe in any part of the U.S. In 2023, there were 13 EMs declared across the Nation.

- California Severe Winter Storms, Flooding, and Mudslides (EM-3591-CA)
- California Severe Winter Storms, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides (EM-3592-CA)
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Typhoon Mawar (EM-3593-MP)
- Guam Typhoon Mawar (EM-3594-GU)
- Vermont Flooding (EM-3595-VT)
- Florida Tropical Storm Idalia (EM-3596-FL)
- South Carolina Hurricane Idalia (EM-3597-SC)
- Maine Hurricane Lee (EM-3598-ME)
- Massachusetts Hurricane Lee (EM-3599-MA)
- Louisiana Seawater Intrusion (EM-3600-LA)
- Guam Tropical Storm Bolaven (EM-3601-GU)
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Tropical Storm Bolaven (EM-3602-MP)
- Virgin Islands Elevated Levels of Lead and Copper in the Water Supply (EM-3603-VI)

## MAJOR DISASTER DECLARATIONS

The President can declare a DR for any natural event, including any hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought, or, regardless of cause, fire, flood, or explosion, that the President believes has caused damage of such severity that it is beyond the combined capabilities of state and local governments to respond. A DR provides a wide range of federal assistance programs for individuals and public infrastructure, including funds for both emergency and permanent work. In 2023, there were 71 DRs declared across the Nation.

- Washington Severe Winter Storm, Straight-line Winds, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides (DR-4682-WA)
- California Severe Winter Storms, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides (DR-4683-CA)
- Alabama Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Tornadoes (DR-4684-AL)
- Georgia Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds and Tornadoes (DR-4685-GA)
- North Dakota Severe Winter Storm, Snowstorm, and Straight-line Winds (DR-4686-ND)
- Rosebud Sioux Tribe Severe Winter Storms and Snowstorm (DR-4687-SD)
- Oglala Sioux Tribe Severe Winter Storms and Snowstorm (DR-4688)
- South Dakota Severe Winter Storms and Snowstorm (DR-4689-SD)
- Muscogee Creek Nation Severe Winter Storm (DR-4690)
- Tennessee Severe Winter Storm (DR-4691-TN)
- Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria Earthquake (DR-4692)
- New Hampshire Severe Storm and Flooding (DR-4693-NH)
- New York Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm (DR-4694-NY)
- Vermont Severe Storm and Flooding (DR-4695-VT)
- Maine Severe Storm and Flooding (DR-4696-ME)
- Mississippi Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Tornadoes (DR-4697-MS)
- Arkansas Severe Storms and Tornadoes (DR-4698-AR)
- California Severe Winter Storms, Straight-line Winds, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides (DR-4699-CA)
- Arkansas Severe Winter Storm (DR-4700-AR)
- Tennessee Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Tornadoes (DR-4701-TN)
- Kentucky Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, Tornadoes, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides (DR-4702-KY)
- Navajo Nation Severe Winter Storms and Flooding (DR-4703)
- Indiana Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Tornadoes (DR-4704-IN)
- Texas Severe Winter Storm (DR-4705-TX)
- Oklahoma Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Tornadoes (DR-4706-OK)
- Hoopa Valley Tribe Severe Winter Storms and Mudslides (DR-4707)
- Nevada Severe Winter Storms, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides (DR-4708-NV)
- Florida Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Flooding (DR-4709-FL)
- Alabama Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Tornadoes (DR-4710-AL)
- Kentucky Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides (DR-4711-KY)
- Tennessee Severe Thunderstorms and Possible Strong Tornadoes (DR-4712-TN)
- Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians Severe Winter Storm and Flooding (DR-4713)
- Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians Severe Storm and Flooding (DR-4714)
- Guam Typhoon Mawar (DR-4715-GU)
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Typhoon Mawar (DR-4716-MP)
- North Dakota Flooding (DR-4717-ND)



- South Dakota Flooding (DR-4718-SD)
- Maine Severe Storm and Flooding (DR-4719-ME)
- Vermont Severe Storms, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides (DR-4720-VT)
- Oklahoma Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Tornadoes (DR-4721-OK)
- Minnesota Severe Storms and Flooding (DR-4722-MN)
- New York Severe Storms and Flooding (DR-4723-NY)
- Hawaii Wildfires (DR-4724-HI)
- New Jersey Severe Storm and Flooding (DR-4725-NJ)
- Montana Flooding (DR-4726-MT)
- Mississippi Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Tornadoes. (DR-4727-MS)
- Illinois Severe Storms and Flooding (DR-4728-IL)
- Tennessee Severe Storms and Straight-line Winds (DR-4729-TN)
- Alaska Flooding (DR-4730-AK)
- Colorado Severe Storms, Flooding, and Tornadoes (DR-4731-CO)
- Iowa Flooding (DR-4732-IA)
- Burns Paiute Tribe Severe Storm, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides (DR-4733)
- Florida Hurricane Idalia (DR-4734-FL)
- Tennessee Severe Storms and Straight-line Winds (DR-4735-TN)
- Maine Severe Storm and Flooding (DR-4736-ME)
- Maine Severe Storm and Flooding (DR-4737-ME)
- Georgia Hurricane Idalia (DR-4738-GA)
- Wyoming Flooding (DR-4739-WY)
- New Hampshire Severe Storms and Flooding (DR-4740-NH)
- Missouri Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, Tornadoes, and Flooding (DR-4741-MO)
- Tennessee Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Tornado (DR-4742-TN)
- La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians Tropical Storm Hilary (DR-4743)
- Vermont Severe Storms and Flooding (DR-4744-VT)
- Montana Flooding (DR-4745-MT)
- Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Tropical Storm Hilary (DR-4746)
- Kansas Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, Tornadoes, and Flooding (DR-4747-KS)
- Arkansas Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Tornadoes (DR-4748-AR)
- Illinois Severe Storms and Flooding (DR-4749-IL)
- California Hurricane Hilary (DR-4750-CA)
- Tennessee Severe Storms and Tornadoes (DR-4751-TN)
- Utah Flooding (DR-4752-UT)

## FIRE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE DECLARATION

When an uncontrolled fire on public or private forest or grassland is such a threat that, in the opinion of the on-scene commanders or other government officials, the fire threatens such destruction that would constitute a major disaster, the Governor may request assistance from the FEMA Regional Administrator (RA). FEMA will approve declarations for fire management assistance when the RA determines that a fire or fire complex on public or private forest land or grassland threatens such destruction as would constitute a DR. In 2023, there were 30 Fire Management Assistance Declarations across the Nation.

- Oregon Cedar Creek Fire (FM-5457-OR)
- Oklahoma Simpson Fire (FM-5458-OK)
- Oklahoma Hefner Fire (FM-5459-OK)
- Oklahoma Gap Road Fire (FM-5460-OK)
- New Mexico Echo Ridge Fire (FM-5461-NM)
- Nebraska Waconda-beaver Lake Fire Complex (FM-5462-NE)
- Kansas Haddam Fire (FM-5463-KS)
- Rhode Island Exeter Fire (FM-5464-RI)
- New Mexico Las Tusas Fire (FM-5465-NM)
- Arizona Diamond Fire (FM-5466-AZ)
- Washington Tunnel Five Fire (FM-5467-WA)
- Washington Mcewan Fire (FM-5468-WA)
- Washington Baird Springs Fire (FM-5469-WA)
- Washington Newell Road Fire (FM-5470-WA)
- Oregon Golden Fire (FM-5471-OR)
- Washington Eagle Bluff Fire (FM-5472-WA)
- Alaska Lost Horse Creek Fire (FM-5473-AK)
- Hawaii Kohala Ranch Fire (FM-5474-HI)
- Hawaii Lahaina Fire (FM-5475-HI)
- Hawaii Upcountry Fire (FM-5476-HI)
- Hawaii Pulehu Fire (FM-5477-HI)
- Hawaii Mauna Kea Beach Fire (FM-5478-HI)
- Washington Gray Fire (FM-5479-WA)
- Montana River Road East Fire (FM-5480-MT)
- Washington Oregon Fire (FM-5481-WA)
- Louisiana Tiger Island Fire (FM-5482-LA)
- Oregon Liberty Fire (FM-5483-OR)
- Louisiana Providence Fire (FM-5484-LA)
- Louisiana Lions Camp Road Fire (FM-5485-LA)
- Louisiana Highway 113 Fire (FM-5486-LA)





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