



**NEMA COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**2018 MID-YEAR EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT POLICY AND  
LEADERSHIP FORUM**

**NEMA Legal Counsel Committee  
March 19, 2018  
Meeting Summary**

Committee Chairman Will Polk from North Carolina opened the session with welcoming remarks and introduced the speakers and directors.

**FEMA Office of Chief Counsel 2018 Priorities**

FEMA Chief Counsel, Adrian Sevier Chief Counsel discussed several items with the Committee. He started with a review of how the Chief Counsel's office will help implement the FEMA strategic plan for the next five years. As discussed in other committee meetings, the overarching priorities include building a culture of preparedness, reducing the complexity of FEMA, and readying the nation for a catastrophic disaster. One of the methods used to address these priorities is the FEMA Integrations Teams (FIT) which will be FEMA employees working inside state emergency management operations. Between the FIT teams, incentivizing risk reduction, and efforts such as the Grants Management Modernization project, a more efficient interface between FEMA and the states will help operationalize the strategic plan.

FEMA continues working with the administration to implement guidance on conditioning grants regarding sanctuary cities. The lawsuit is ongoing. He also discussed the new PA Policy for Faith Based Organizations being eligible entities under the Stafford Act, including the changes that were made through recent programmatic reforms included in supplemental legislative language.

**Presidential Authorities to Protect Energy Infrastructure**

The Department of Energy (DOE) is the lead agency for Emergency Support Function (ESF) 12, and Jeff Baumgartner, Senior Advisor for Infrastructure Security and Energy Restoration at DOE, joined the Committee to discuss ongoing priorities for the Department. In 2015, Congress passed the Enhanced Grid Security Act which gives the President the ability to declare a "grid security emergency" and the Secretary the authority to take measures to prevent potential consequences. The process by which all these authorities are implemented went through the rulemaking process, and was completed earlier this year. The Committee inquired as to the law and regulations related to this act, and subsequent to the meeting, DOE provided the following citations:

- Federal Power Act: 18 U.S.C. 8240-1 subsection 215A
- DOE Implementation Procedures Grid Security Emergency Procedures 10 CFR part 205 subpart W
- Public Comment on Procedures 83 FR 1174, pages 1174-1182
- Searching on the Federal Register Website for the information RIN 1901-AB40

Finally, Baumgartner outlined a new cyber office created by the Secretary to address the nexus between cyber-events and energy security.

**The Legal Liabilities of False Alerts**

Michael Vincent, Deputy Attorney General for the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency shared his experience from the fallout from the false nuclear alarm. He provided a timeline of the incident and some best practices for managing similar events such as understanding the compression of time, documenting how events play out, preventing the messaging from spiraling beyond control, and remaining cognizant of issues such as how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) may impact the

protection of sensitive documents. Such issues, however, vary from state to state. One of the most pressing issues raised was needing general liability protections between the emergency management agency and approved shelters. This has prompted some new legislation in the state which Vincent said he would share with the committee likely at the Annual Forum in Savannah, Georgia.

### **Easing Restrictions on Appeal Deadlines**

Ernie Abbot of Baker Donelson shared some thoughts on the FEMA appeals process. This issue was also raised when NEMA went through the process of recommending legislative response and recovery reforms last fall. Abbott reiterated his belief that FEMA is misinterpreting the legislative intent behind setting limits on the amount of time states must to submit appeals on behalf of local jurisdictions. He feels that instead of “arbitrary” deadlines, appeals should focus on whether work, costs, and the applicant are eligible. Currently, appeals must be submitted within 60 days, and Abbot indicated more than 25 percent of appeals last year were decided on the timeliness of the submission. Sevier indicated a willingness to explore the issue, but stated that in the absence of deadlines, appeals could be submitted in perpetuity post-event.

### **Committee Priorities for 2018**

Polk wrapped-up the committee meeting by conducting a roundtable for some future issues. The Committee raised issues such as concerns related to pre-stage disaster contracts; the relationship between EMAC and the National Guard; and exploring again the idea of webinars.

**NEMA Mitigation Committee  
March 20, 2018  
Meeting Summary**

Committee Chairman Mark Schouten from Iowa opened the session with welcoming remarks and introduced the speakers and directors.

**National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) Presentation**

Schouten introduced Ryan Colker and Phil Schneider from NIBS to discuss findings from the Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves: 2017 Interim Report. The project team examined the results of 23 years of Federally funded mitigation grants through FEMA, the Economic Development Administration (EDA), and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and found that these grants resulted in a 6:1 return on investment for the entire nation. They also studied the benefit-to-cost ratio (BCR) of designing all new construction to exceed select provisions in the 2015 International Building Code (IBC), and found a 4:1 return on investment.

Colker proceeded to detail more findings from their report. He noted that all housing stakeholders (lenders, communities, tenants, title holders, and developers) benefit from the 2015 IBCs. He also noted that when assessing the BCR, some benefits are difficult to measure such as societal impacts. Schneider then discussed the methodology for the report. They used a Common Framework of Probabilistic Risk Analysis. They used an asset analysis model, hazard analysis model, and loss analysis model to determine how stakeholders should manage risk. A key finding from this equation found that as elevation increases, so too does the BCR. This benefit, however, plateaus at a certain point.

Further, Schneider discussed the funding levels of the different modules of study subjects they are completing. Aggregation was 60 percent funded, Above-Code Design 70 percent, Up-to-Date Codes 100 percent, Retrofitting Structures 60 percent, Business Interruption 0 percent, Infrastructure 50 percent, Federal Grants 100 percent, Federal Activities 0 percent. Schneider made note that there are discussions of public-private partnerships to invest in mitigation and attempts to make a case for banks possibly investing in the form of mortgages. The Committee commented that there is not an adequate tool to mitigate fire and asked what can states do to help make a tool, outside of building codes or controlled burns which are costly. Schneider replied it will likely have to come from a Federal agency because it is largely a political issue.

**Update from FEMA by Roy Wright**

Deputy FEMA Administrator and Director of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), Roy Wright, provided an update on FEMA mitigation programs. The National Investment Mitigation Strategy (NIMS) is priority number one and they are examining, broadly, Federal investments in mitigation and how they coincide with state mitigation practices. He urged the audience to read through the NIMS, but also the FEMA Strategic Plan, as they both lay out FEMA's vision for mitigation best practices. Additionally, Wright noted FEMA is working closely with Congress on the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA), as it has major mitigation measures included.

Wright then spoke directly to states and had a set of recommendations. He suggested "a menu of good work" in mitigation, especially because of the NIMS' "moonshot" goals of multiplying mitigation investments in states. He said this "menu" could lead to further investments. Additionally, he wanted

directors to look at any partnerships they might have because they could be eligible for Federal investment.

Next, Wright outlined the issue of the coverage gap versus underinsurance. He called upon state directors to be leaders in their states, work closely with their governors, and create a culture of accountability regarding insurance. He wants states to ask people, “have you talked to your insurance agent?” This is primarily important due to many wrongfully believing their policy includes coverage it may not. Furthermore, he mentioned how the lapses in the NFIP, due to shutdowns and delays in reauthorization, have placed the program in peril because it then cannot buy, sell, or borrow like a healthy insurance program during those times. The current Administration is focused on repetitive loss properties. Wright believes the next steps for the NIMS and strategic plan are bigger than FEMA and all levels of government and all sectors of industry must be involved in the process.

### **NIMS Comments**

The Committee briefly discussed New Mexico’s submitted comments regarding the NIMS. FEMA solicited comments from states on the NIMS and Jay Mitchell from New Mexico offered to speak. He first raised the point that mitigation means different things to different groups, and that the phrase “natural hazard risk reduction” should be the language used. A recommendation Mitchell had was that a benefit-cost analysis is not comprehensive because it does not include all social and environmental benefits of mitigation measures. Mitchell went on to say that HUD resiliency competition was more inclusive and flexible in its analysis, and a similar model should be used for FEMA programs.

### **Mitigation Best Practices: LiDAR Mapping in North Carolina**

John Dorman, of the North Carolina Emergency Management Department, was invited to speak about the state’s Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) technology and effect on the way they map floodplains.

Dorman’s first piece of information was that LiDAR allows elevation data to be classified by tier. He demonstrated the various colors used to denote various elevation numbers of specified areas. Dorman stated that his maps are more granular than ones normally used because he uses parcel and individual insurance information. He also showed how he models flooding risk, not just past floods.

Next, he walked the committee through the <http://flood.nc.gov> which allows individuals to look up their homes and find insurance and mitigation options. North Carolina State Director, Mike Sprayberry, added that this information was crucial in evacuations as well, because they could pinpoint individuals and exact locations that were at the highest risk.

When asked about the cost of the program, Dorman said that the drones used to map the state cost around \$21 million to fly, however, they received funding from various North Carolina agencies including the North Carolina Department of Transportation which invested around \$10 million. Upon questioning from the Committee, Dorman said this information could aid NFIP by affecting the risk-quotient, but beyond that was unsure of the long-term effects.

**NEMA Homeland Security Committee  
March 20, 2018  
Meeting Summary**

Committee Chairman Chris Kelenske from Michigan opened the session with welcoming remarks and introduced the speakers and directors.

**Reshuffling DHS: The New Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office**

Jim McDonnell is a new Acting Assistant Secretary within DHS charged with combining the Office of Health Affairs (OHA) and Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO) into a joint Office of Weapons of Mass Destruction. He sees this reorganization as an opportunity for a full culture change within OHA and DNDO and refocus on state and local support. One of his biggest priorities is shifting the spending ratio of the new office to get equipment in the hands of responders quickly. McDonnell also noted OHA's BioWatch program as one requiring a full reassessment of how the department does business. Finally, he announced the National Biosurveillance Integration Center (NBIC) will move to the National Targeting Center where it will be better suited to provide appropriate information through the Department's intelligence apparatus.

**Grant Opportunities: Violent Extremism and Complex Coordinated Attacks**

Katie Fox of FEMA and John Picarelli of DHS provided updates on grant efforts to address countering violent extremism (CVE) and complex coordinated terrorist attacks (CCTA). Picarelli manages the CVE grants from DHS headquarters with FEMA acting as the financial agent. The intent behind the program was using partnerships, engagement, intervention, and post-incarcerations programs to reduce radicalization. In total, the CVE grant saw 26 projects over 14 states which initiated more than 700 new partnerships since the grant award in August 2017. The CVE grant will be modeled after other prevention programs such as gang prevention, public health, and emergency preparedness. He also encouraged states to include radicalization in the THIRA process.

FEMA is managing the CCTA grants which were competitively awarded at the end of FY17. FEMA is working to follow dynamic tactics as they continue changing, especially with events such as the Las Vegas shooting, the deadliest shooting in U.S. history. One of the biggest lessons learned from the Las Vegas event was the need for mass care, managing people who will self-transport, and changing to be made in doctrine to direct issues such as the pre-positioning of assets. Fox outlined how the competitive nature of the program brought about unique relationships and ideas as well as non-traditional partnerships.

**Super Bowl Postgame: Best Practices and Gaps**

Kevin Reed, Deputy Director of the Minnesota Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) provided a brief after-action presentation from the Super Bowl recently held in Minnesota. The success of the event began with construction of the \$1.1 billion U.S. Bank Stadium and the inclusion of the built-in unified command space. Emergency management for the city began their ramp-up the week prior to the Super Bowl, and the state followed suit three days later. Most of the schedule for emergency management activities was based on intelligence shared from the fusion center. The Governor received daily situation reports which HSEM worked diligently to protect against dissemination. One decision he highlighted as one they would not repeat was positioning all the teams and radio personalities in the Mall of America at the same time. This created a vulnerability making many security officials uncomfortable. As the event approached, frigid temperatures, criticism of

“militarizing” the event with the National Guard, and some small protests provided some challenges, but overall the event ran smoothly.

### **DHS Fusion Center Priorities and Opportunities in 2018**

Kevin Saupp from the Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) of DHS is a regular contributor to the Committee and once again provided an update on the interface between I&A and state and local stakeholders. They are currently coalescing intelligence efforts across the Department and prioritizing issues such as terrorism, transnational organizations, cybersecurity, emerging threats, economic/trade threats, and counter-intelligence. As work continues on engaging with fusion centers, I&A is attempting to empower field personnel and leverage a decentralized intelligence network to manage diverse threats across the country.

The State and Local Intelligence Council (SLIC) met January 18 and Saupp summarized the three primary takeaways from the meeting:

- Partners are generally supportive of integrating intelligence efforts, but want more granularity in information. I&A is developing a communications plan to address this concern.
- Participants remain supportive of I&A enhancing their footprint in the field, but stressed the importance of diversity in intelligence and the need for information to flow down and out through the process.
- The quality and quantity of products developed by I&A is generally good, and stakeholders discouraged from attempts to “reinvent the wheel.”

Finally, Saupp discussed the fusion center threat assessment released December 2017. The new template standardizes processes and products in presenting information. Since this is aligned with FEMA requirements, the new template should be useful as states complete their Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) as well.

### **Update on the Homeland Security Grants Return on Investment Survey**

NEMA Deputy Director, Matt Cowles, provided an update on the return on investment survey being conducted by NEMA, the Center for Naval Analysis (CNA), and partner associations. As of that week, 37 states submitted with the expectation of four more. The Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) jurisdictions had a much lower response rate with only 11 of 33 represented. He encouraged state directors to again reach out to those UASI jurisdictions. Early analysis of data by CNA does indicate evidence that Federal spending on terrorism preparedness is being met by comparable state investments. The final report is expected sometime early in the summer.

**NEMA EMAC Committee Meeting  
March 20, 2018  
Meeting Summary**

Committee Chair Brian Satula from Wisconsin opened the session with roll call. There was a quorum of the EMAC Committee voting membership.

**Thank you from Puerto Rico**

George Laws, the Deputy Director of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Office, reminded everyone that it is the 6-month anniversary of Hurricane Maria and thanked the 35 states that provided assistance through EMAC for their support.

**Update from the EMAC Executive Task Force**

Jonathan York, Kansas, provided an update on the EMAC Executive Task Force activities to include the 2017 EMAC hurricane response. The update included the following highlights:

- EMAC operations started in August of 2017 in response to Hurricane Harvey and missions are still on-going in both Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Thirty events have been opened since August 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 with the deployment of an estimated 17,644 personnel throughout all events.
- Operations calls were conducted from August 2017 through February 2018.
- States have been activated for the 2017 Hurricane Season response since August 21<sup>st</sup> – 211 continuous days of EMAC operations!

Mr. York thanked the EMAC Executive Task Force and the State Directors for all of their work to improve the EMAC system over the past two years - everything from updates to the training materials, to revisions on the EMAC Operations Manual and Standard Operating Procedures.

**Accelerating the EMAC Response**

Angela Copple, NEMA, reported that on February 15, 2018 the EMAC Committee voted to approve the recommendation from the Executive Task Force to remove Section 1 of the EMAC Request for Assistance, or REQ-A and to rename the form the Resource Support Agreement, or RSA.

NEMA is working now on changes to the EMAC Operations System to be able to complete the RSA within the system. This one change will be a major time savings within the EMAC process!

**Leveraging Survey123 for EMAC Response**

Director Mike Dossett, Kentucky, briefed on Kentucky's use of a free software tool called Survey123, available to anyone who has an ArcGIS license with Esri. Over the past four years, Kentucky has been working on advancing the use of Survey123 within the state to do everything from initial damage assessments in real time to documenting road closures and weather conditions within the 120 counties in the state. The Survey123 app resides in the cloud and can be accessed through an App or through a smart URL to input data.

Kentucky learned very quickly that most people respond better to checkboxes and dropdown menus. Kentucky has working FEMA PA and IA forms, mostly check-offs and some fill in the blanks. If internet access is unavailable, the data is stored on the device until it can upload the data. Data can be accessed in Excel format, imported into WebEOC, used from within Esri or a JSON feed.

Mr. Dosset asked the EMAC Committee to take some time to look at the application over the next few months to see how the EMAC system could have significant benefits from the use of the application within EMAC operations and for first responders deploying through EMAC.

### **National Coordination State Transition**

Mr. Satula acknowledged Kansas' role as the National Coordinating State and Lead for the EMAC Executive Task Force followed by a recognition by Mike Sprayberry, North Carolina, awarding Jonathan York and Angee Morgan with President Awards from the NEMA membership.

Mr. York reported that the EMAC Executive Task Force had nominated Greg Shanks from Kentucky to position of EMAC Executive Task Force Chair Elect. The EMAC Committee unanimously voted to approve the nomination. The motion was made by Mike Dossett (KY) and seconded by Patrick Sheehan (TN). Motion passed.

### **FEMA NIC Update**

Dan Alexander, FEMA, provided updates on the National Qualification System Guidance and Tools including the following:

- The NIMS refresh released on October 17, 2017 that supports the NIMS implementation objectives, NIMS training program, and NIMS reporting questions.
- Additional guidance and tools include the NIMS Public Information Officer (PIO) Guide, Intelligence and Investigation (I/I) Function Best Practices, and Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) Toolkit.
- NQS Guidance and Tools were covered including the NQS Guideline; *Provide guidance on building and maintaining policies and processes that create a deployable workforce of qualified, certified and credentialed personnel to manage all-hazard incidents.* Tools include NIMS Position Task Books, NIMS Job Titles/Position Qualifications, and other support technologies such as the Resource Typing Library Tool.

Mr. Alexander also talked about the tool FEMA is developing to capture education, certificates, and job positions qualifications – the National Qualification System. The system will be developed by FEMA but given to the states and locals to manage permissions, access, and who can see the data from their state.

During the discussion, states asked if FEMA would have access to the data. Mr. Alexander said they would only be able to see the aggregate data, not the individual user's data. The data would be used to determine, for example, on-going training needs to identify budget requirements in the coming years.

Another unresolved question was how current state systems would tie into the national system.

Mr. Alexander said the current plan of the system allows EMAC users to have access to the system for operational decisions.

### **EMAC After Action Report Update**

Cris McCombs, Hagerty Consulting, shared the preliminary survey data from 2017 Hurricane season after action report surveys. Some of the highlights included the following:

- 280 responses to the survey
- 40 states responded to Hurricane Irma in Florida

- 35 states responded to Puerto Rico for Hurricane Maria
- 36 states responded to Texas for Hurricane Harvey
- 19 states have responded US Virgin Islands for Hurricane Irma
- 20 states responded to US Virgin Islands for Hurricane Maria
- The highest number of personnel to deploy were from the National Guard and law enforcement
- Prior to the hurricanes, 78% of requesting states, 97% of assisting states, and 32% of deployed personnel had received EMAC Training
- States responded to requests less than 24 hours 36% of the time, 25-48 hours 36% of the time, 46-72 hours 26% of the time, and took more than 72 hours 3% of the time
- The typical time to fully execute the REQ-A from the time the request was submitted was two days or less 45% of the time, 3-5 days 45% of the time, 6-7 days 8% of the time, 11-14 days 3% of the time
- Typical amount of time to process reimbursement requests was 45 days or less 33% of the time, 46-60 days 17% of the time, 61-90 days 17% of the time, 91-120 days 17% of the time, and longer than 120 days 17% of the time
- Of the 280 respondents so far, 91% reported they found the EMAC Operations System easy to use, 4% reported it was not easy to use, and 4% answered the question as N/A.

Mr. Satula thanked Ms. McCombs and provided details on the upcoming AAR conference.

#### **The Role of the NRCC Liaison**

Satula asked Joyce Flinn, Iowa, to brief on the role of the NELT – the liaison who deploys to the National Response Coordination Center.

Ms. Flinn reviewed the role of the NELT and the value of the position at the NRCC. The Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Island missions required significant coordination with FEMA for housing and transportation. Without the NELT coordinating it at the NRCC, the missions likely would have not been able to deploy. The coordination of information is critical and it is especially helpful to be in close proximity to the National Guard Bureau to discuss issues and concerns as they happen in real time.

Mr. Satula thanked Ms. Flinn for her brief and stressed the importance of the NELT and RELT roles that are filled by the states during large-scale operations. Mr. Satula also thanked everyone who, like Ms. Flinn, served in the liaison role at both the NRCC and RRCC(s). NEMA will be updating the NELT/RELT roster in preparation for the 2018 hurricane season.

#### **National Guard – EMAC Update**

Mr. Kim Ketterhagen, NEMA, provided an update on NEMA's training activities with the National Guard to include the following:

- NEMA worked with FEMA to offer the E0431 Course (Understanding EMAC) in a special session to the National Guard session.
- NEMA is working with the National Guard Bureau on stabilizing a liaison that will share information with the National Guard Coordination Center (NGCC) during large-scale events and will be able to serve as the subject matter expert for questions and issues related to National Guard and EMAC.
- NEMA is working on adding a 3-day EMAC course that will be taught 1x/quarter for NGB J-37 at the Professional Education Center (PEC) in Little Rock Arkansas and possibly at Regional Training Centers around the US. The extent of the training will depend upon the availability of funding.

- NEMA is working on the development of a Mission Ready Package workshop for NBG.

Mr. Ketterhagen said at the end of the year they expect to have over 500 National Guard personnel trained. Mr. Satula thanked Mr. Ketterhagen and discussed the turnover within the National Guard as one of the biggest issues and the need for continual education.

The meeting ended with a formal motion for adjournment and unanimous approval of the motion. The motion was made by Mr. Lee Smithson (Mississippi) and seconded by Mr. Dossett (Kentucky).

**NEMA Response and Recovery Committee**  
**March 21, 2018**  
**Meeting Summary**

The meeting was led by Vice Chair Patrick Sheehan (TN) on behalf of Chair Angee Morgan (KS) who was unable to attend due to the state wildfire response.

**Discussion with FEMA Office of Response and Recovery – Jeff Byard**

Jeff Byard was named ORR Associate Administrator just prior to the 2017 hurricanes so it's been an exceptionally busy period of time. As FEMA responded to each event they tried to look at issues through the state perspective and provide flexibility and innovation wherever they could. Byard said FEMA waived 70 Individual Assistance policies which indicates to him those policies weren't necessary and there are likely many more. He discussed the implementation of Public Assistance Section 428 in Puerto Rico stressing it provides greater flexibility. Byard also spent time talking about FEMA's resources being stretched to the breaking point and they cannot continue to staff disasters the same way in the future. States need to build capabilities to manage more disasters on their own. The private sector must also be better integrated into response and recovery. FEMA would like the authority to give grants to states to handle disaster housing as they are better equipped than FEMA which has limited programs to offer. He also talked about the need to improve logistics and inspections. Emergency management must do more with technology to save time and money. FEMA wants to decrease the complexity of the Individual Assistance program and improve the experience for survivors. NEMA members recommended that management costs be increased and roll over from one disaster to another as ways to enhance a state's capacity to handle more disasters. FEMA supports increased management costs and expressed interest in the rollover concept.

**Sharing Best Practices; State-Funded Disaster Assistance Programs**

State Emergency Management Directors from IN, UT, NE, AR and ID shared information on their state funded disaster assistance programs. They highlighted the focus of those programs some of which are for Public Assistance, some Individual Assistance, some Unmet Needs; whether they are loans or grants; the funding source and amounts; and any challenges or model practices they've identified with creating/administering the programs. More detailed information regarding these and other state funded disaster assistance programs is available on the [NEMA website](#).

**The Future of Credentialing; Personal Identification Verification**

FEMA provided an update on progress being made with PIV. They're working with the District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management to test solutions for national implementation. For the State of the Union address, DC installed turnstiles that accepts all PIV credentials and FEMA personnel were successfully able to access their facility. Likewise, a group of local stakeholders with PIV credentials were able to access FEMA's facility. In some cases, this approach can reduce access cards from 5 to 1. FEMA is now ready to establish a national implementation plan.

**NEMA Preparedness Committee**  
**March 21, 2018**  
**Meeting Summary**

Committee Chairman Director Andrew Phelps from Oregon welcomed everyone and voiced the hope of the conversations and concepts that occurred today will be steps to changes in policies that will be a better fit to the preparedness posture of our Nation.

**FEMA Leadership Update**

Dr. Dan Kaniewski, Acting Deputy Administrator for FEMA, introduced the FEMA goal to invigorate and sustain a culture of preparedness. FEMA's vision is to better educate citizens on how they are a part of the preparedness initiative. Current disaster studies prove that mitigation strategies are effective in lessening the cost in response efforts; thus, FEMA looks towards an increase in mitigation efforts. As revised programs roll out, FEMA will provide materials the States and Locals can utilize to assist in educating on mitigation and insurance plans. Dr. Kaniewski further explained that the focus for the culture of preparedness goal gears towards those that can afford insurance to make sure they have proper coverage. Not to eliminate assistance to those that do not have insurance, but to figure out ways to further educate all citizens on insurance policies. Director Mike Sprayberry from North Carolina and NEMA President, introduced the need of a "transformative insurance initiative" to begin the conversation of reducing the insurance gap; helping the under and not insured; FEMA taking a keen look at NFIP; and sharing the materials needed for the States to further the education on preparedness.

Ms. Katie Fox, Acting Deputy Administrator for FEMA Protection and National Preparedness, provided updates to the THIRA and State Preparedness Report (SPR). The THIRA tool underwent a redesign to be more useful for programs' planning efforts. One of the major changes is that the information requirements are more standardized to provide FEMA the necessary data that Congress continuously requests. For THIRA and SPR, both will continue as an annual process until FY19. In FY19, FEMA will require programs to complete updates to their THIRA every three years. For SPR, there may be some changes to the core capabilities to ensure the goal of grant effectiveness and it will continue to be an annual update. FEMA will provide technical assistance this summer, along with an area dedicated to frequently asked questions on the website and one-on-one assistance.

**Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) Update**

Joe Wainscott, NEMA EMAP Commissioner, announced that EMAP needs two more States to sign-up for their baseline program. The baseline program evaluates States' programs to the emergency management standards. EMAP tiered their application process: Classic and Enhanced. The enhanced version provides document reviews for specific standards. EMAP has seen dramatic improvements in the quality in preparation of the on-site assessments for Programs that chose the enhanced tier. As part of the process to renew their strategic plan, EMAP will survey key partners for their input. In addition, the current emergency management standards will undergo evaluation and a 45-day public commit period will be announced. EMAP invited everyone to the gala event in Rhode Island that will conclude their professional week on April 20, 2018. The EMAP Commission will research the need of a cost analysis of comparing the cost of EMAP accreditation to the savings stemmed from a response of that same accredited program.

### **IPAWS/EAS/WEA Roles/Responsibilities, Challenges, and Moving Forward**

Director Mike Sutton from Alaska shared his experience in the tsunami warning that occurred on January 23, 2018. The measure for when to seek higher ground due to a tsunami hitting land is: if the ground shakes to a level that you are unable to stand or if the quake last 20 minutes plus. If the earthquake resulted by land, the damage of a 7.9 magnitude earthquake would be 419 times greater than the damage occurred at Hiroshima; luckily the epicenter was in the Gulf of Alaska. The area of the tsunami warning stretched the entire coast of Alaska, along with watches that continued into the States of Washington, Oregon, and California. Mr. Sutton and his team learned that there was inconsistency in how to access WEA providers on the EM side, as well as inconsistency in the receipt of those warnings on the citizen side. The National Weather Service message was “hit or miss” in warning all citizens. The tsunami website dedicated to Alaskans for information was shut down due to the overload of user capacity. The local sirens and communications for warnings, however, worked to evacuate communities safely. Currently there are two bills that have been introduced in legislation, Senate 2385 and House 4965, that look to improve the alerts and warning systems through policy initiatives.

Wade Whitmer, Deputy Director, IPAWS, informed the committee that from the late 2017 to recent events, the IPAWS system has seen a vast increase in usage. IPAWS has 40 different tool vendors that have the interface to keep up with the demand of variety of communications the public uses. IPAWS is re-evaluating their training focus to include a public alert warning section. They also look to engage the exercise division to provide more system wide exercises. The FCC has incorporated recent changes to provide a way for the system to pinpoint warnings to targeted areas for broadcasts. Mr. Whitmer warned that this geo-fencing will be a slow integration as carriers (vendors) phase in the software per their own calendars. Currently the FCC does not allow nationwide testing for wireless alerts. Until further measures are initiated at a policy level with the FCC, wireless will continue to be complex in the demands of the alert and warning system.

In communicating threats from sovereign nations, the NAWAS provisions state that once FEMA confirms and pushes the alert, it is the responsibility of the States to issue the alert to their respected publics. It is up to the President to ‘make the call’ on implementing a national alert directly. This current Administration states that it will be up to the States to send out those alerts. NAWAS works directly with the Department of Defense for national threats to verify their accuracy. In summary, the worry of such protocol is “time is of the essence” when an alert of a nuclear threat may involve any of our States. A recommendation of an alerts taskforce was made by Mr. Phelps for NEMA to research recommendations of a policy driven initiative in communicating threat warnings to the Nation.

### **Communications in a Catastrophic Event**

Mr. John Veatch, Assistant Administrator for FEMA’s National Continuity Programs Directorate, requested States to consider FEMA’s goal to ready the Nation for a catastrophic event by considering a re-evaluation of continuity of government plans; continuity of grants; and continuity of resource plans (communications, people and logistics). Mr. Veatch encouraged everyone to relook on the dependence of commercial communication devices in a catastrophic event where you may have zero back up. This effort looks to promote resilient communications and programs. With that, FEMA will roll out continuity planning guidance to assist.

### **Spotlight: How EM Fights the Opioids Crisis**

Director Kim Stenson from South Carolina shared how the State of South Carolina fights the opioids crisis. The State Declaration paved the way to create a multi-agency coordination in operations. In utilizing the framework of how emergency management responds, this coordinated effort provides

strong communication between all active agencies. Specifically, Mr. Stenson's team is assisting the effort with the planning development, analysis, measures the effectiveness of the group's coordinated efforts, and maintains the platform to collect public information.

**NEMA Past Presidents Committee**  
**March 21, 2018**  
**Meeting Summary**

Past President Chair Wendy Smith-Reeve kicked off the meeting with a question to get the conversation started: If you had the ability to take one action of change that would positively affect this industry, what would that action be? Responses:

1. Standard templates for plans that would be used at all levels of government that link to national standards. The plan template should be built in a way that ensures the plan is actionable.
2. Eliminate the requirement for local procurement processes to comply w/ federal procurement processes only during federally declared events. Every other day of the year they can use their own processes, yet on their worst day they are advised several weeks later that the action had to be in accordance with federal processes to attain reimbursement.
3. Address the trust deficit in the country by promoting direct online exercises with communities/individuals to elevate personal preparedness. Ensure the exercises have adjusting scenarios to continuously elevate family and personal preparedness.
4. Shadowing opportunity for local, state, and federal partners during blue sky days to gain appreciation for challenges within other levels of government.
5. De-emphasize money in the process and focus on the mission.
6. Identify ways to demonstrate funding levels required to execute at state/local level. (examples: Florida bill, Insurance industry)
7. Be honest with survivors. Modify the message.
8. Refocus priorities around R&R efforts and attention:
  - a. Respond
  - b. Save Lives
  - c. Restore normalcy around private sector through BECC and provide PA funding to private sector
  - d. Recover
9. Move FEMA NBEOC out of external affairs and place under operations
10. Divorce day-to-day priorities and requirements from federal funding at state/local level.
11. Elevate membership appreciation for the critical need for data. Data tells the story that advocates for the support needed to elevate the critical role of emergency management.
12. Quantify the WHY data matters to state directors by providing tangible examples or details on how their survey response will serve the industry and their program.

**NEMA-EMI State Director Training**

Recommendations for the agenda for the NEMA-EMI State Director Training on August 7-9, 2018 at EMI:

1. Helping directors understand the speed of information and lack of control.
2. Political Taboos in EM
3. Fake News Phenomenon
4. Application of Artificial Intelligence
5. Emerging Technology
6. Climate change and the cascading effects on emergency management
7. Speaker: Administrator Brock Long
8. Risk discussions in EM – analysis that evaluates cascading effects of decisions

9. Other federal agencies with ESF programs that will impact them directly

### **Leadership Development**

The Committee discussed ideas on how to best encourage and position State Directors to take on leadership positions within the association, and nationally. Past Presidents are ideally suited to serve as mentors to emerging leaders and are a valuable resource.

### **Discussion on Incentives for States to Build Greater Capacity to Manage Disasters**

Recommended incentives for increasing state program capability/capacity:

1. Council of Advisors for EMI – collaborate on guiding training in EM
  - a. CDP – Basic (Associates)
  - b. EMI – Advanced (Bachelors)
  - c. CHDS – Executive (Masters)
2. SHMOs were initially 100% federally funded positions. Establish State Disaster Recovery Coordinator (SDRC) positions within state offices. Provide initial 100% federal funding to seed the effort. This aligns with FEMA's strategic plan of maturing the NDRF and elevating state capability to manage disasters.
3. White paper regarding FEMA Integration Teams – identify areas of need/intent, and what are the measures of success. Ensure it is tangible and factual vs subjective.
4. Engage with ESF/RSF lead federal agencies - invite them to future NEMA meetings/conferences and involve them with respective committee meetings.

**NEMA Private Sector Committee**  
**March 22, 2018**  
**Meeting Summary**

Shandi Treloar, Private Sector Committee chair opened the meeting, welcomed the attendees and guests and briefly explained the nature and purpose of the committee. Treloar briefed on the status of a survey of state private sector programs which is still in process. An analysis of the results of the survey will be available in a few weeks. The chair then called on Joel Thomas for an update on the Information Sharing Task Force.

The Information Sharing Task Force recently published the [Building Operational Public Private Partnerships Guide](#) that focuses on how to integrate private partnerships into planning, and creating and maintaining partnerships between public and private sectors. The Task Force provided four key recommendations on how to better operationalize the concepts explored within this guide:

1. Realigning the national BEOC into the office of response and recovery
2. Establishing information sharing standards between public and private partners
3. Facilitating the sharing of private sector resources from state-to-state through the development of MOU/MAs
4. Using standardized economic risk assessments to inform mitigation projects

**Q:** Measuring capabilities - how do we know if we have strengthened partnerships and improved operational coordination?

**A:** There is a Capability Maturity Model that allows us to monitor and measure the information sharing progress across five core elements between Private/Public over multiple years. This model will be tested during the 2018 NLE. Additionally, there will be a significant push to help prepare businesses for hurricanes this summer and fall, through virtual exercises and seminars, helping to build a culture of preparedness. Please note that if you and your state are interested in participating in this model, email Karen Cobuluis.

A 2006 statistic shows that 85% of critical infrastructure is privately owned. There is a need for coordinated planning to identify capabilities, resources, gaps, etc.

The chair introduced FEMA Administrator Brock Long to discuss the agency's priorities for private sector engagement.

There is a need to start cross-training FEMA to be project managers as opposed to focusing on ICS and response as we have done in the past. Prior to Harvey, FEMA had 59 private sector contracts established. Post-Maria, FEMA had more than 9,700 contracts established with our private sector partners. But the role of private sector engagement cannot fall solely on the shoulders of FEMA. There needs to be a push for directors of other agencies or departments to think about how they can engage and collaborate with the private sector before an emergency.

The FEMA [2018-2022 Strategic Plan](#) identifies three overarching goals:

1. **Building a Culture of Preparedness:** We need to establish a contract toolkit that allows local, state, and federal departments to evaluate gaps in their operations and establish needed private sector contracts *prior* to an event. Establish a contract toolkit – what are the contracts that you

need prior to events? Additionally, we need to plan to routinely evaluate and reevaluate these contracts.

- a. Push for Bill that allows for 6% of all pre-disaster mitigation to be given to the applicants up front, and increase the management costs from 3.34% to 12%. This increase to twelve percent will allow states and localities to better invest in mitigation and preparedness, and diminish state and local's reliance on FEMA.
2. **Ready the Nation for Catastrophic Disasters:** We need to elevate the conversation about interdependencies in sectors and identify these critical interdependencies prior to disaster.
3. **Reduce the Complexity of FEMA:** We, as an agency, need to start evaluating our operations. We need to adapt the contractor mentality and identify ways that we can reduce the administrative and bureaucratic burdens that hinder our ability to work more efficiently. Additionally, FEMA can't be the only agency that is focused on expanding private sector contracts. Other agencies, departments, etc. must expand their coordination with the private sector prior to an emergency. There needs to be a portal for our private sector partners, that acts as a forum for them to voice themselves to FEMA and other public sector agencies and departments. There should be an educational program with procurement officers so that they are able to better understand the private sector and what is needed for the private sector to enter contracts. A potential solution to this would be to use a Private Sector Scorecard that evaluates and measures the ethics of business's practices, ensuring that our local and state partners are entering into contracts with reputable businesses.

The administrator introduced FEMA Chief Procurement Officer, Bobby McCane to the committee and audience to discuss contracting with FEMA.

- FEMA is open for business.
- It is a long-standing fallacy that FEMA does not and cannot communicate with the private sector.
- The way forward is to expand lines of communication with the private sector.
- Recent disasters have shown FEMA no longer has the luxury of being reactive.
- The agency must be proactive with the private sector.
- Share with procurement what is working in the states. If new practices, abilities, technologies, or any other information have been explored, please share that with FEMA. If it works, it should be shared.

In recent years there has been an increase in the blending of skillsets between private and public emergency management. There are companies, particularly in the utility sector, that are starting to adopt the ICS Model as they recognize its efficiency in responding to incidents and incorporating into the overall response.

The blending of skillsets was exemplified in the Caribbean power restoration efforts. FEMA used a standard model of practice to plan. FEMA has been very proactive in the development of the Power Outage Incident Annex. The response raised several crucial questions:

- How could FEMA's standard approach to planning be integrated into the utility sector for power and communication restoration?
- How can FEMA leverage existing partnerships with the private sector to better inform planning?
- How can we standardize a planning model for mid- and long-term planning for incidents?

The chair opened the floor for questions and discussion.

- Funding and grant solutions should be explored to improve FEMA's response. Housing, for instance. If FEMA was given grant authority by Congress they would be able to increase funding to impacted areas. This would allow us to move away from the traditional trailers that are provided to victims and tap into other, comfortable, more permanent housing solutions.
- There was an overwhelming willingness of the power companies to support the restoration in the Caribbean. Within the industry, there are mutual aids/compacts that allow companies to support one another. It would be great to take these existing tools in order to leverage the private sector personnel that understand or are familiar with ICS/NIMS in the planning process. For example, USACE's mission is immediate restoration of power; they do not do grid construction. However, there are thousands of people in the private sector that do this daily and understand what is needed to restore the grid. The resources these companies can provide should be utilized early on in an event to expedite long-term restoration.
- We need to identify these companies and resources and incorporate them into planning ahead of time. Be proactive and move away from the longstanding tradition of "post-disaster acts". It is important afterwards, but if we start exploring these options ahead of time, it makes response and recovery so much easier.
- Additionally, there needs to be a push for the private sector to prepare employees to be self-sufficient for emergencies. This can be as simple as training and developing an emergency kit.
- UBER is talking about solutions but not understanding the problems. The federal government should build processes and programs that aren't solutions, but aimed at understanding problems.
- There will be an uptick in communication with the private sector. We want to open two-way communications where businesses talk to us about their information and communications systems, and we come to businesses to communicate what we can provide and what we do. The point – we are open to hear your ideas and innovations. This needs to happen to facilitate and grow the whole enterprise approach.
- We would love to do that, but the truth is we do not have the staffing pattern and operational budget. We need to prioritize our operations.
- A challenge that we will face as an agency is "what do you want FEMA to be good at?" Again, looking at housing, FEMA is decent at sheltering, and is able to put up blue tarps quickly and efficiently. We're good at sheltering, blue roofs, provision of individual assistance. We don't know construction. We don't know permanent housing. This needs to be part two. Give the Governor the authority to purchase what they need and FEMA can provide technical assistance. There also needs to be a clear handoff from FEMA to HUD. This handoff currently takes far too long. The way we do housing is not getting any better until authorities change.
- Earthquake Working Group is a public private partnership that also includes scientists and academic institutions. Stress in training to get businesses and their employees trained to respond to an earthquake and more importantly come back to work. We have a good tool for providing early warning for earthquakes. But there needs to be a better way to communicate *how* this information/warning can be acted upon when received.
- NOAA is part of the Department of Commerce which needs to be included in recovery discussions. Additionally, NOAA is creating an external affairs directorate division that will be engaging the private sector from an emergency preparedness position. They will hopefully have a private sector director by next fall.

- Aside from the traditional role that NOAA plays in weather related disasters, the NOAA has a wide variety of capabilities that can be tapped into before and after an event including:
- Providing LIDAR photographs following disasters. These photos were particularly useful in the recent hurricanes, as it allowed evacuees to see whether or not their homes were impacted without having to physically enter a disaster area.
- Technical assistance as to where to move key resources and supplies to avoid flood damage.
- The anonymous text software that Uber and Lyft use. Twilio was able to establish and run a contact center for Harvey to provide informational services for local government.
- Silicon Valley Disaster Working Group is comprised of several messaging and information system tech companies, which can be reached out to following an incident. (They do webinars and have a one pager that provides information).
- There needs to be more collaboration between our groups as many of these companies can be linked to our core capabilities and provide valuable information to our response and recovery efforts.
- The information provided by these apps is great but the Holy Grail is how we can integrate this information to inform decision making and response actions.
- It's not just having the data and integrating it. We need to have the authorities to *do something* with the data. Until we have that it's unfortunately going to remain a big "so what?"
- National VOAD – It was interesting to see how many organizations did not have emergency planning or training. Look to the VOAD. Many non-profits and faith-based organizations are willing to come out to your companies to provide this basic safety training. Additionally, they are great at sheltering and housing operations. However, what they lack is financial operations. They are looking to leverage public sector funding and military funding as well. As you look within the states, please understand what laws exist that may limit what volunteers are able to do in the states. But these laws should be conducive to the VOAD operations in your state to facilitate all that they may provide following an incident. One of the negative examples: Florida has a law in their books that limits Habitat for Humanity's construction operations. California law prevents volunteers from helping victims sift through the debris of burnt houses, which limited volunteerism in recent wild fires.
- VOAD and volunteer laws and regulations – the private sector should get more engaged in law making. Additionally, look at tools that FEMA can provide your company/business with emergency preparedness information/training/tools.

An update on the NEMA Webinar Series was scheduled but cut due to time constraints but is included here for informational purposes.

### **NEMA Webinar Series**

Of the scheduled 4 webinars for Season 3 of the NEMA Webinar Series, 2 have been completed. IMMERSED: A VR Experience about Flooding & Resilience hosted 156 participants; **The Place of Death in Emergency Management: Community and Responders' Impact had 310 participants. Attendance for Immersed was 156 and for The Place of Death was 310. The third, Virtual Teams: Role in Supporting Responders will take place on April 18 (moved from April 4 due to scheduling difficulties). That registration went out last week and has almost 200 registrants currently. The final webinar in the current season is scheduled for June 6 and the topic is cyber incidents. Another topic search will be conducted in the summer with more details on that to come. All previously recorded webinars are available on the NEMA YouTube channel, NEMAforYou. Attendance to date for the three seasons**

exceeds 2500 participants and at the completion of current programming should exceed 3000 participants.

**NEMA Legislative Committee  
March 22, 2018  
Meeting Summary**

Committee Vice Chairman Jimmy Gianato from West Virginia sat in for Chairman Jeffrey Stern. Gianato opened the session with welcoming remarks and introduced the speakers and directors.

**Update from Capitol Hill**

Staff from Congressional committees with jurisdiction over emergency management provided updates on the priorities of their committees for this year. Briefings included:

- *Kerry Kinirons, Majority Staff Director, House Committee on Homeland Security, Emergency Management, Preparedness, Response, and Communications Subcommittee.* She began by saying that there was bipartisan disagreement over the cuts to critical emergency management programs in President Trump's FY19 budget proposal. In the short term, the committee is focused on the desire by DHS to conduct a small reorganization and combine the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office and Office of Health Affairs into a larger Office of Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction. They are also monitoring FirstNet activity, and said members of the committee are displeased with the requirement to abandon the t-band.
- *Lauren McClain, Minority Staff Director, House Committee on Homeland Security, Emergency Management, Preparedness, Response, and Communications Subcommittee.* Ranking Member Bennie Thompson's (D-MS) major priorities are Hurricane Maria recovery and school security. Specifically, to Hurricane Maria, Thompson wants to further examine potential disparities in recovery in Puerto Rico versus Texas. Regarding school security, Thompson is seeking to work with DHS on a path forward to mitigate school shootings.
- *Alexa Noruk, Minority Professional Staff, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC), Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management* where she works predominately on spending oversight of FEMA. She said that HSGAC's main priority is securing the passage of the first-ever DHS Authorization bill, as it has a healthy amount of emergency management language included. The committee is also monitoring response issues around the country and what improvements are needed to provide better aid to affected communities. Lastly, she stated that much of the committee is interested in legislation concerning grant oversight, particularly Senator Rand Paul (R-KY).

During some comments, the Committee indicated excitement to work with these committees in the coming year, but cautioned them from chasing headlines and being reactive. The Congressional guests pointed to ongoing reforms being considered in the DHS Authorization bill as well as the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) as steps in the right direction. The Committee also reiterated NEMA's support of a five percent increase for Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG) despite not being included in the FY18 Omnibus agreement the night before. Kinirons stated that she wishes other grant programs had the same return on investment and that they had the 50-50 match that the EMPG does. McClain replied to Gianato's question with similar praise for the program, but said not to be discouraged that there was not an increase, and to possibly expect one next year. Given the timing, no appropriators could attend the committee meeting.

### **Policy Partnerships: The Disaster Recovery Reform Act; with IAEM and ASFPM**

Gianato explained that the Policy Partnership portion of the agenda would be a new mainstay of the Legislative Committee meetings. For the first iteration of this discussion, the Committee chose to discuss the status and content of the DRRRA being considered by Congress. Joining the Committee for this discussion was Nick Crossley, President of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) and Director of Emergency Management for Hamilton County Ohio, and Chad Berginnis, Executive Director of the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM).

Crossley addressed the DRRRA in a global sense, driving home the point that policy “rolls downhill,” and cuts to emergency management programs or major policy changes greatly affect local agencies like his. He emphasized strong relationships between all levels of government, and how local emergency managers need to be involved in policy discussions from the very beginning. He spoke generally of many DRRRA provisions which are also supported by NEMA such as improvements to calculations for funding predisaster mitigation, increases to management costs, and some of the cost share adjustments. One shortfall he pointed out was primarily regarding process. The DRRRA was introduced, marked-up, and almost immediately given consideration for inclusion on pending legislation already moving through the process. This gave IAEM and NEMA little time to substantively address certain provisions, and Crossley noted the importance of conducting a deliberative process when considering such substantive changes to the emergency management business.

Following Crossley, Berginnis, provided thoughts on the DRRRA from the perspective of the state floodplain managers. He first stated that while the DRRRA contains many positive aspects from their point of view, they had major concerns with the following provisions:

- Section 202 allows extra hires to earn base and overtime wages for implementing building codes, which Berginnis said should be done through EMAC.
- Section 212 outlines a new model for the delivery of Public Assistance. ASFPM believes this section, as written, will cause a backlog in building inspections. delivery model which, in ASFPM’s eyes, backlogs building inspections); and,
- Section 207 which allows HMGP funds to go to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) projects. This provision will essentially fund UASCE projects directly out of the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF). Given the other ongoing issues with ensuring the health of the DRF, this could be prohibitively expensive and significantly impact the ability of FEMA to deliver funding to states. This dynamic would be further exacerbated by the \$60 billion backing in UASCE projects. He posed these concerns to Pam Williams, Emergency Management Subcommittee Director for Majority side of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, as her subcommittee authored the bill. She replied that those concerns are valid and that she looks forward to continuing to work with all partners to address all their concerns. She also stated that Rep. Bob Schuster (R-PA), Chairman of the Subcommittee is committed to passing the bill, as he is in his last term as chairman.

The Committee vowed to continue working closely with both IAEM and ASFPM to secure the passage of the DRRRA, but to also address some of the stated issues raised by Berginnis.

### **Update from Congressional Research Service (CRS)**

Despite a short-term fix in the FY18 Omnibus package passed by Congress the night before, the calculation by which allowable space is found for the DRF within statutory spending caps will be up for renewal in FY21. Will Painter, Homeland Security and Appropriations Specialist at CRS, provided an overview of the Disaster Cap issue, and how it could affect states. He outlined how since the FY18 fix

was now in place, policy makers had some time to determine next steps. The amount of funding available for appropriators to provide to the DRF is determined by a formula established in the Budget Control Act (BCA) of 2011. Five other departments, however, have access to this adjustment, not just FEMA. As the BCA is set to expire in FY21, the DRF is facing a fiscal cliff as the structure of the formula has forced the allowable cap adjustment to decrease the past several years, and likely will continue for the next several years. This is particularly due to the 10-year average utilized in the calculation, and storms such as Katrina, Rita, and Wilma falling outside the window Painter said that ultimately, this leads to supplemental appropriations being relied upon to fund disaster recovery, which presents problems for states because they begin to lack reliable funding to fight smaller disasters.

### **FEMA Legislative Priorities for 2018**

Jessi Nalepa, Director of Congressional Affairs at FEMA, began by stating that FEMA is aware of the issues Painter raised, and said that the conversation is becoming more urgent at the Agency for a fix. Nalepa also laid-out Administrator Brock Long's priorities for the coming year. First, he wants to streamline the fragmented disaster process because he does not like the idea of multiple people knocking on someone's door after a disaster – all from FEMA. Next, was housing which has become an increasingly burdensome issue for FEMA, according to Nalepa. She stated that FEMA is pleased that Section 2010 of the DRRRA grants some housing authority to states. Another priority stated was training emergency management personnel. Nalepa said that it has proven difficult to retain and train adequate personnel and they want to see that fixed. The next priority was state management costs, and Nalepa said the Agency understands that state, local, tribal, and territorial governments bear a lot of the administration costs of disasters, but that they were glad that Section 2014 of the DRRRA raises the management cost share of assistance between Federal and state to 12 percent. Lastly, Nalepa said mitigation is a massive priority for the agency, so they continue supporting the DRRRA provision which front-loads predisaster mitigation with 6 percent of disaster costs.

### **Update from National Weather Service**

John Sokich, Director of Congressional Affairs at the National Weather Service, provided a brief update on their priorities for the year. Sokich first said that they have been focused on the past disaster season, and how to improve forecasting for devastating hurricanes like Harvey, Maria, and Irma. The main point he wanted to drive home to states was that of those 3 Category 4 hurricanes, no one died from storm surge. Sokich told the states he wants to continue to work closely with them to improve the forecasting they provide.

### **Database of State Legislation Best Practices**

Due to scheduling changes for the Forum, the Committee was not able to address the final agenda item. Establishing a database of state-based legislation has long been a priority for the Committee, and significant progress has been made in recent months. Despite having to skip this agenda item during this Forum, the Committee intends to address it in more detail during the Annual Forum in Savannah, Georgia, when representatives from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) is scheduled to be on-hand to help outline their work with NEMA staff on this project.