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Transforming Government: The Renewal and Revitalization of the Federal Emergency Management Agency

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The PricewaterhouseCoopers Endowment for
The Business of Government

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Through grants for Research, Thought Leadership Forums, and the SES Leadership Program, The PricewaterhouseCoopers Endowment for The Business of Government stimulates research and facilitates discussion on new approaches to improving the effectiveness of government at the federal, state, local, and international levels.

Founded in 1998 by PricewaterhouseCoopers, The Endowment is one of the ways that PricewaterhouseCoopers seeks to advance knowledge on how to improve public sector effectiveness. The PricewaterhouseCoopers Endowment focuses on the future of the operation and management of the public sector.

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Foreword

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On behalf of The PricewaterhouseCoopers Endowment for The Business of Government, we are pleased to present this report by R. Steven Daniels and Carolyn Clark-Daniels entitled "Transforming Government: The Renewal and Revitalization of the Federal Emergency Management Agency."

This is the first report in a series supported by The PricewaterhouseCoopers Endowment for The Business of Government in anticipation of the new presidential administration. Grants were awarded to leading academics for research reports that will provide insight into government management issues and offer present and future government executives case studies of leaders who have renewed and revitalized government organizations and brought about transformation in government.

In this report, Daniels and Clark-Daniels examine the transformation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the leadership of James Lee Witt. FEMA is now considered a leading example of the Clinton administration's efforts to transform and reinvent government.

This report is important because it outlines the revitalization of FEMA and provides readers with a set of lessons learned on how to lead change in government. We hope that understanding how Witt was successful in leading the FEMA transformation can help both present and future government executives direct their own change processes.

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Executive Summary

Although the U.S. Constitution places the executive power of the national government in the hands of the president of the United States, an incoming presidential administration confronts serious issues in managing federal agencies. The experiences of James Lee Witt at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reveal several important lessons that an agency should understand before attempting to transform an under-funded and under-performing government organization.

Lesson 1: Experience Counts: Recruit the Best

Lesson 2: Clarify Your Mission

Lesson 3: Structure Your Agency to Reflect the Agency's Mission

Lesson 4: Leverage the Presidency

Lesson 5: Use Your Career Staff

Lesson 6: Don't Be Afraid of the Press

Lesson 7: Provide Governmental and Nongovernmental Partners a Stake in the Outcome

In this study, the researchers investigated the evolution of the disaster assistance programs of FEMA from the Bush administration to the Clinton administrations. The federal response to Hurricane Hugo, the Loma Prieta Earthquake, and Hurricane Andrew revealed serious flaws in FEMA's structure and procedures. Extraordinary tensions existed between the secretive National Preparedness Directorate and the more public State and Local Programs and Support Directorate. The Bush administration frequently bypassed FEMA and centralized response in the White House. The administration's response to catastrophic disasters was largely reactive. Little of the funding went toward mitigation of future disasters. The media, Congress, and several evaluative organizations including the U.S. General Accounting Office (USGAO), the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), and FEMA's own Inspector General's Office (FEMA-IG) all underscored the shortcomings of FEMA's structure and operations.

Learning from the Bush experience, the Clinton administration moved quickly to recast federal disaster response. President Clinton appointed James Lee Witt, Arkansas's emergency services director, as director of FEMA and elevated the FEMA director position to Cabinet-level status. Director Witt moved to redefine FEMA's mission, reorganize the agency around basic emergency management functions, make FEMA more consumer oriented, rebuild the staff's commitment to FEMA's mission, and redirect the focus of disaster assistance toward mitigation. Consequently, media and political criticism has diminished. However, FEMA is not free from problems, with issues regarding financial management and decision criteria still remaining to be addressed.

Part One – Lessons Learned From the Transformation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Introduction

In anticipation of the new presidential administration, The PricewaterhouseCoopers Endowment for The Business of Government has awarded grants to leading academics to prepare research reports that will provide insight into government management issues and offer government practitioners practical tools to help them perform their jobs more effectively. An example of a best practice in agency transformation is the revitalization of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the leadership of Director James Lee Witt. FEMA serves as an instructive case study of how to transform a troubled organization. Many public administration academics and practitioners have studied the changes in FEMA under Director Witt to understand how organizations can be renewed and revitalized.

Lesson 1: Experience Counts — Recruit the Best

Recruitment leadership may be one of the president's and the agency director's most critical decisions at the start of an administration. The appointment of competent and experienced senior agency officials with a strong interest in the agency's policies can overcome even intermittent attention by the president. As long as the senior officials have the direct and constant support of the president, experience, competence, and interest can produce successful policy implementation.

Much of the success of the Federal Emergency Management Agency under James Lee Witt came from President Clinton's confidence in his leadership and competence, a fact that was evident to the president's staff and members of Congress. A senior White House official argued that future presidents should "pick as close as possible to the James Lee Witt model" in selecting agency heads, emphasizing "professionalism, empathy, articulateness with the media and disaster victims, non-political management, and a strong relationship with the President." Unfortunately, consistent recruitment is often the poor stepchild of presidential and agency management. Weak appointees can undermine implementation of the president's program and damage the public image of the administration.

Many of the problems in disaster management under the administration of President George Bush can be traced to its failure to appoint competent, experienced individuals to the senior positions in FEMA. Under President George Bush, congressional investigators concluded that FEMA was a "dumping ground" for political appointees. Many of FEMA's senior officials were transfers from other agencies, often as punishment for political infractions. Bush's only permanent FEMA director was an associate of Chief of Staff John Sununu who served as New Hampshire's transportation director. Conversely, President Clinton's FEMA appointments were all officials with considerable experience in emergency management. Two served as state emergency management directors. Two served as FEMA regional directors. One served as Governor Clinton's liaison with the Arkansas emergency management agency. Their background in emergency management allowed FEMA officials to restructure the agency's mission and organization within a year of the appointment of the new director. The cumulative experience of the senior political employees improved the integration of the agency's various directorates, a critical component of response and recovery to catastrophic disasters.

Lesson 2: Clarify Your Mission

Agencies need a clear mission and well-defined target population. One of the key weaknesses of the "reinventing government" movement's attention to customer service and agency performance is the often unspoken assumption that public agencies, like businesses, have a single, well-defined goal, such as profit, and clearly identified customers. Most public agencies, especially social service agencies, have multiple purposes and clients. Not all of these goals and clients are compatible. Most agencies resolve these conflicts by emphasizing one goal or population more than others. The choice of goals and populations is critical. To perform effectively and efficiently, the agency must define its mission and target population to make the most consistent use of its personnel and resources. This choice cannot be unilateral; it requires the support of both the administration and the agency's authorization and appropriations subcommittees and committees in Congress.

During most of President Bush's administration, FEMA was a schizophrenic agency forced to respond to catastrophic disasters with two incompatible missions — preserving the government during nuclear attack and providing support to state and local governments following natural disasters. The lack of cooperation among FEMA's key directorates made effective response and recovery difficult.

James Lee Witt and his senior staff refocused FEMA's mission on emergency management rather than national preparedness. The national preparedness functions were not abandoned, but were integrated with the more basic emergency management functions. The change in focus redefined the agency's primary target population as disaster victims, rather than executive branch officials central to the survivability of national decision-making capacity following a nuclear war.

Lesson 3: Structure Your Agency to Reflect the Agency's Mission

Most public officials recognize the importance of matching agency structure to agency policy goals. Implementing a program using existing agency structures and procedures invites policy conflict and the inefficient use of personnel and resources. One of the leading causes of the proliferation of government agencies is the recognition that matching agency structure to agency mission is easier in a new agency than an ongoing one. Ongoing agencies usually are expected to provide at least some of the new program functions from existing resources. Nevertheless, an ongoing agency with political support, strong presidential and agency leadership, a clear mission, and a well-defined clientele generally can find the wherewithal to implement a new program.

FEMA's structure under President Bush reflected its divided mission. The agency's prime missions were divided between the National Preparedness Directorate and the State and Local Programs and Support Directorate. Under Director Witt, FEMA resolved the conflict between national preparedness and disaster assistance by redesigning the agency structure to emphasize the latter. Director Witt separated the operational components of the State and Local Programs and Support Directorate into separate Preparedness, Mitigation, and Response and Recovery Directorates. The functions of the National Preparedness Directorate were spread throughout the agency. In addition, Witt assigned every employee of the agency critical roles during response and recovery operations, regardless of their normal agency functions.

Lesson 4: Leverage the Presidency

Effective policy implementation requires presidential support. Unfortunately, such support is a limited commodity. The demands of the office often focus the attention of the president on crisis decisions, symbolic leadership, and priority setting at the expense of routine decisions, coalition building, and implementation. Presidents frequently shift their attention from one policy priority to another once legislation has been signed into law. The absence of presidential support allows other forces to shape the implementation of presidential policy, frequently with contradictory results. Presidents need not follow administrative performance in detail. Nevertheless, failure to provide consistent policy leadership and appoint sympathetic administrators can lead to policy implementation that undermines the original intent of the statute.

One of the major differences between the Bush and Clinton administrations was the level of support provided by the president to disaster management. Bush's disaster response was largely reactive and bypassed the existing disaster management structure. Clinton's disaster management policy was more proactive and politically sensitive. Clinton also improved FEMA's political stature by emphasizing the lead disaster role of the agency and its director, and by raising the FEMA director to cabinet status. One former state emergency management official argued, "Witt's greatest impact was the fact that he linked FEMA to the executive branch, the Executive Office of the President, and the president. Witt had access." Given the increasing vulnerability of the United States population to natural and man-made disasters and the rudimentary steps taken toward sustainable development, access to the president and the elevation of FEMA to cabinet level seem to be critical first steps in ensuring presidential support into the future.

Lesson 5: Use Your Career Staff

None of the changes outlined above will be successful unless the political and career staffs of the agency are well integrated. Effective recruitment of experienced and competent agency leaders and program directors provides a basis for this integration. Of equal importance, however, is the degree to which the policy goals of the administration and the career staff mesh. The more common the policy ideas that are shared between an agency's political and career staff, the greater will be the likelihood of cooperation.

Most of the burden of pursuing cooperation between political and career staff will rest with the agency director. Successful directors achieve policy unity through one of two methods: political management or shared experience. The political managers enforce administration policy directives by issuing clear, consistent, and precise instructions. The more coherent, the more congruous, and the more exact the message, the more difficult it becomes for career staff to ignore or distort the intent of the policy. The Reagan administration changed the direction of federal government policy in many agencies by appointing secretaries or directors with clearly defined conservative philosophies promoting smaller government.

Managers who rely on shared experience most often lead by example. Cooperation between political and career staff arises from shared professional standards and general agreement on policy goals arising from those standards. Successful managers often know as much or more about the current policy functions of the agency as the career staff. Experienced managers also act as effective two-way communication conduits between the president and the career staff. The Clinton administration clearly chose the shared experience strategy in appointing James Lee Witt as FEMA director.

Lesson 6: Don't Be Afraid of the Press

For a modern government agency, the public affairs director plays a critical role in defining successful agency performance. Although most modern journalists are not investigative reporters, the standards of investigative journalism have permeated media coverage of government. A substantial proportion of Pulitzer Prizes for journalism have gone to news organizations that have exposed government malfeasance, misfeasance, and nonfeasance.

Therefore, agencies that can enlist the media in the pursuit of agency goals will better manage the flow of information concerning agency success.

Many of FEMA's difficulties under the Bush administration arose from its already negative public image in the media. Congressional reports charged that the agency was a "political dumping ground" for unqualified and marginal appointees. News stories highlighted tensions between political and career employees, prompting the creation of a FEMA chapter of the American Federation of Government Employees. FEMA officials aggravated the agency's media problems by trying to force a gay employee to identify other gay employees before releasing his travel funds for an overseas trip. These administrative failings prepared the Washington and national media to look for examples of FEMA incompetence.

Director Witt and Public Affairs Director Morrie Goodman quickly recognized that FEMA under President Bush had failed a critical political test. Even though FEMA performed well in some areas during Hurricane Hugo, the Loma Prieta Earthquake, and Hurricane Andrew, the firestorm of media criticism drowned much of this positive information. FEMA was used to operating in anonymity, and had no effective plan for involving the media and, by extension, the public in FEMA operations. As a result, many initial reports of FEMA response were based on inaccurate and incomplete information. Under Witt, Public Affairs Director Goodman and subsequent public affairs directors reshaped FEMA's communications to actively engage the media throughout the response and recovery period. By making the agency more accessible and by providing the media with prompt answers and information, FEMA disarmed much of the inevitable criticism that arose in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. More significantly, the agency opened a two-way channel for information between itself and the disaster victims it was serving.

Lesson 7: Provide Governmental and Nongovernmental Partners a Stake in the Outcome

State and local governments, nonprofit agencies, and private organizations implement most federal domestic policy. The relationship between the federal government and the other organizations is usually as principal and agent. The federal government provides incentives to the implementing organization to induce them to provide federal goods and services; and imposes penalties (usually the reduction or elimination of federal funds) for cooperating organizations that fail to follow federal guidelines.

The absence of direct authority between the federal government and its governmental and nongovernmental partners increases the likelihood that the policy goals of principal and agent will be incompatible. The nature and effectiveness of the federal incentives and penalties becomes critical to the overall success of the policy. The funding penalties are largely blunt instruments whose overuse undermines their effectiveness. The most effective incentives are those that recognize the differing goals of the federal agency's partners and actively enlist the state, local, nonprofit, or private organizations in the development, planning, and implementation of federal response.

Although the federal role has been increasing steadily, the intergovernmental context of disaster management is easy to forget. Only the affected local jurisdictions can provide the kind of direct assistance that most disaster victims require immediately after a disaster. State and federal efforts remain largely supportive and financial. Mitigation and preparedness policies are only as effective as the local economic development policies make them. Under both Bush and Clinton, the political realities of disaster assistance steadily increased the scope of federal intervention. Over the long run, however, such federalization does not guarantee the kind of prompt response that comes from adequately prepared state and local jurisdictions. Director Witt has attempted to buck the trend toward federalization by emphasizing the importance of government, nonprofit, and private partnerships.

Part Two – The FEMA Case Study

Taking Over: FEMA Under President Bush

At the start of the Bush administration, FEMA was an agency with serious organizational problems that functioned adequately through the Carter and Reagan administrations only because the disasters between 1979 and 1988 were not catastrophic enough to exceed the agency's limited capacity. Unfortunately, the historical experience of the agency under the previous administrations provided President Bush with little incentive to overcome FEMA's organizational weaknesses. President Bush did not appoint a permanent agency director until August 1990, 19 months after his inauguration. Presidential attention to disaster management issues largely was reactive, responding to a series of catastrophic disasters throughout the administration.

The disaster agency that President Bush inherited was under-funded, loosely structured, poorly integrated, overly specialized in national security preparedness, and weakly led by a succession of political appointees with little emergency management experience. FEMA was adequate for the typical disasters confronted during the Reagan and Bush administrations where state and local governments provided significant resources. However, the agency proved entirely unprepared for catastrophic disasters like Hurricanes Hugo and Andrew and the Loma Prieta Earthquake, which shattered state and local capabilities.

Problems to be Fixed: The FEMA Legacy

In the wake of Hurricane Andrew, public and congressional response to FEMA's performance was extremely critical. In 1993, several organizations conducted formal evaluations of FEMA's performance during Hurricane Andrew including the FEMA Inspector General's Office ([FEMA-IG] 1993), the United States Government Accounting Office ([USGAO] 1993), and the National Academy of Public Administration ([NAPA] 1993). Both the informal and formal criticisms of FEMA highlighted four critical organizational problems.

Problem 1: The Inconsistency of Presidential Support

During much of the history of federal intervention, emergency management coexisted uneasily with the institutionalized presidency. During the Cold War, the national security concerns of emergency management (civil defense and continuity of government) seemed more critical and consistently important to presidents than response and recovery to natural disasters. The more formally organized and well-defined functions of commander-in-chief reinforced this focus. On the other hand, effective management of the domestic elements of emergency management (disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery) suffered from the high impact and low probability of most disaster events, the resulting fluctuation of presidential attention between crisis and indifference, and the need of the president to provide psychological support to the public but maintain administrative distance from the disaster agency's decisions (NAPA 1993: 21-23).

The consolidation of numerous federal emergency management programs into FEMA in 1979 offered the promise of enhanced authority. "The agency thus created came closer to having the size and substance needed to successfully stand outside the institutional presidency and to be of sufficient importance to warrant the attention and support of the presidency when needed (NAPA 1993: 23)." Despite the consolidation, however, a relatively small agency like FEMA found it difficult to command and coordinate much larger agencies without the Cold War connection. The President's executive power proved less useful than his commander-in-chief power in the development of emergency management authority in the institutionalized presidency. In foreign policy crises, FEMA could draw on the president's military authority to assure compliance by other agencies. In disasters, FEMA had less reliable access to the president's executive authority to guarantee performance. The end of the Cold War in 1989 further complicated FEMA's authority problem. One former FEMA and state emergency management official noted to the authors that "the Bush administration brought an end to the Cold War, but FEMA was slow to respond."

Problem 2: The "Stovepiping" of FEMA

The unprecedented scope of the disasters (Hurricanes Hugo and Andrew and the Loma Prieta Earthquake) confronting the Bush administration overwhelmed both the limited resources and the disjointed organizational structure of FEMA. The various functions and organizations within FEMA never fully integrated after the creation of the agency in 1979. One former senior official at FEMA noted that the agency was in "total organizational chaos. The director was isolated from the directorates and he was isolated from the regions."

NAPA concluded that FEMA lacked a coherent set of governing ideas. The absence of vision and mission prevented the development of core organizational values, which in turn precluded the agency's constituent parts from consolidating into a workable organization (NAPA 1993: 42-43). The lack of core values only reinforced the "stovepiping" of agency functions, the division of the agency into independent and poorly synchronized directorates (FEMA, 1993-1994). Several current and former FEMA officials, some of whom served in FEMA under the Carter, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton administrations, specifically identified the key agency problem as stovepiping.

The worst organizational separation and the worst tensions arose between the National Preparedness Directorate and the State and Local Programs and Support Directorate. These directorates performed the primary preparedness and disaster assistance functions of the agency and were continuations of the Federal Preparedness Agency and the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration, respectively. The two directorates were intended to be the core of the dual use strategy envisioned by the President's Reorganization Project in 1978 (McIntyre, May 25, 1978). However, the high level of secrecy associated with the preparedness function made the transfer of information and technology across directorates nearly impossible. As a result, even 10 years after the creation of FEMA, dual use was honored more in the breach than in practice.

Problem 3: The Circumvention of FEMA

The organizational instability and limited resources of the disaster assistance agency often prompted earlier presidents to bypass the agency altogether during catastrophic disasters. Following the Alaskan Earthquake in 1964, the Johnson administration and Congress created the Alaskan Reconstruction Commission (ARC) to fund the rebuilding of the Alaskan cities and towns destroyed by the earthquake and subsequent tsunami. Although the director of the Office of Emergency Planning (OEP) was on the commission, OEP had little responsibility or the recovery operation. After the collapse of the Teton Dam in 1976, the Ford administration quickly concluded that the federal government had political, if not legal, responsibility and used Interior Department authority to compensate for private damages (Lynn, June 5, 1976). The funding was provided by a supplemental appropriation and administered by the Department of the Interior rather than the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration (FDAA).

President Bush at site of the Loma Prieta Earthquake, San Francisco Marina District.

The Bush administration continued this tradition of bypassing FEMA during particularly devastating disasters. After Hurricane Hugo's landfall in South Carolina, President Bush sent Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan to assess damages in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico (Bates, September 27, 1989). In the aftermath of the Loma Prieta Earthquake on October 17, 1989, the President appointed Secretary of Transportation Samuel Skinner to oversee the recovery operation in California (Skinner, November 16, 1989). In the wake of Hurricane Andrew, President Bush went a step further and appointed a task force headed by Secretary of Transportation Andrew Card to coordinate federal efforts (Bush, August 26, 1992).

The bypassing of the official disaster agency by various presidents had a number of serious consequences. The first was the inevitable duplication of effort. Despite presidential intervention, FEMA and its predecessors nevertheless retained both the inclination and the statutory requirement to intercede on behalf of disaster victims. The separate presidential and agency response efforts unavoidably wasted resources. The second consequence was the management of disaster response and recovery by less qualified personnel. The White House staff invariably had much less emergency management experience than permanent agency employees. As a result, each administration that relied heavily on presidential preemption of disaster recovery had a much longer learning curve than administrations that relied on a permanent disaster agency, such as FDAA or FEMA.

The third serious side effect of presidential preemption of disaster relief was politicization. White House interventions generally had more direct and short-term political goals than relief efforts mounted by FEMA and other disaster relief agencies. The final serious side effect of presidential intervention in disaster management was federalization. The centralization of disaster management in the White House usually emphasized response and recovery over mitigation and preparedness. Combined with the short-term, political focus of most White House disaster efforts, the outcome of the federal disaster program has been the gradual shift of responsibility from the state and local governments to the national government.

Problem 4: Reactive versus Proactive Response

During the Bush administration, federal law, FEMA regulations, and FEMA policy limited the agency's ability to anticipate disasters for which there was adequate warning. Although FEMA officials were in place 24 hours prior to landfall of both Hurricanes Hugo and Andrew, resources took much longer to deploy. Sufficient quantities of food and clothing did not arrive in Charleston until six days after Hugo's landfall ("Charleston Begs Government for Help," September 28, 1989). Following Hurricane Andrew, FEMA found itself unable to respond quickly despite administrative changes. The bulk of the federal aid effort did not arrive until August 29, again six days after the disaster (Clary, August 29, 1992).

These delays seriously damaged FEMA's political reputation and its support base in Congress. Part of the difficulty rested with FEMA's coordinating function. The Stafford Act required FEMA to coordinate the activities of 26 federal agencies (including FEMA) and the American Red Cross. Most organizations resisted such outside direction. Without top-level presidential support, FEMA found it difficult to achieve rapid response. Coupled with the level of damage in South Carolina in 1989 and South Florida in 1992, FEMA's ability to act was strictly limited. Nevertheless, to most political and media observers, FEMA's performance was unnecessarily bureaucratic and dilatory (Andrews, August 27, 1992; Lippman, August 28, 1992).

FEMA Under James Lee Witt: The Phoenix Rises

The criticism directed at FEMA's response to Hugo, Loma Prieta, and Andrew demoralized agency staff and seriously compromised public confidence in federal response to disasters. Nevertheless, the controversy provided a new president and a new FEMA director a unique opportunity to redefine agency performance.

The Appointment of James Lee Witt

Reflecting President Clinton's commitment to emergency management, in April 1993 James Lee Witt became the first director of FEMA who had extensive emergency management experience. Director Witt brought a different focus to the agency. Several FEMA and White House staffers interviewed by the researchers indicated that he arrived at the agency with a greater knowledge of agency functions, limitations, and possibilities than even long-term employees of the agency.

Witt took over FEMA with several organizational changes in mind:

- The reestablishment of FEMA's authority in disaster management
- The appointment of senior executives with extensive emergency management experience
- The redefinition of FEMA's missions and goals
- The restructuring of the agency along functional lines
- The redesign and reinterpretation of the Stafford Act and supporting legislation
- The creation of effective media and political linkages
- The development of a proactive strategy for disaster response

The Reestablishment of FEMA's Disaster Authority

Critical to FEMA's transformation was presidential confidence in FEMA's ability to perform its statutory functions. President Bush bypassed the agency and established independent task forces for the Loma Prieta Earthquake and Hurricanes Hugo and Andrew, relying on his Secretaries of Transportation (Samuel Skinner and Andrew Card) for leadership. By contrast, President Clinton placed primary responsibility for response and recovery with FEMA Director James Lee Witt. President Clinton raised the FEMA directorship to cabinet-level status in February 1996. Interviews with White House personnel conducted by the researchers suggested that the Office of the Secretary of the Cabinet placed a priority status on communications from Director Witt. The Office had more contacts with FEMA's director than with any other cabinet post.

The Appointment of Experienced Emergency Management Executives

Unlike President Bush, President Clinton had a strong interest in disaster management. On Witt's recommendation, the President filled the many politically appointed positions in FEMA with individuals with extensive experience in emergency management. The Deputy Director, Robert M. "Mike" Walker, served previously as under secretary of the Army, where, in addition to his general management responsibilities, he supervised the Defense Department's response to domestic disasters. Executive Associate Director for Response and Recovery Lacy E. Suiter, worked in the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency for 30 years, the last 12 as its director. Associate Director for Mitigation Michael J. Armstrong, worked as Regional Director of Region VIII, after working for more than 10 years in Colorado state and local government specializing in conservation, land use, and personnel matters. Kay Goss, the associate director for preparedness, worked for 12 years as then-Governor Bill Clinton's senior assistant for intergovernmental relations, often acting as liaison with the State Office of Emergency Services.

The Redefinition of FEMA's Mission and Goals

Director Witt's experience and the ongoing criticism of FEMA performance led him to strategies to make FEMA function more productively. Relying on input from FEMA employees, emergency management partners, and an internal reassessment of priorities, the agency developed its first new mission statement in 10 years: "The mission of the Federal Emergency Management Agency is to provide the leadership and support to reduce the loss of life and property and protect our institutions from all types

An Interview with James Lee Witt Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency

(The interview below is excerpted from May/June 1998 issue of *The Business of Government*, published by The PricewaterhouseCoopers Endowment for The Business of Government.)

In your role as chief executive officer of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), how do you define your job?
I found that the job came with a lot of responsibility, and I have taken the job very seriously. Shortly after assuming office, I undertook two major initiatives. First, I worked within the agency to strengthen it. I wanted to involve employees in the future of the agency. Second, I refocused the organization on the customer by placing emphasis on those we were serving externally.

As a new agency head, it was my job to describe where FEMA needed to go. After describing where we wanted to go, it was my job to involve the entire organization. I wanted employee input into how we could best meet our goals because I strongly believe in involving our people. I met with the FEMA's senior managers during a three-day retreat in which I described where I thought the agency was heading.

Can you tell us more about your efforts to involve your employees?
I made a special effort to visit with employees, both at headquarters and in the regions. I am constantly asking them what they think we should be doing. I also developed an open-door policy: any employee can make an appointment to see me on Tuesdays to discuss any matter. For those in the regions, they can call and make telephone appointments to speak with me on Tuesdays. The open-door policy has been very effective. I also started lunch sessions with employees from all over the organization.

I have worked closely with members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) in FEMA. When I came in, I told them that I thought the agency needed new ideas and new faces. I thought that they could all benefit from a rotation system for SES members. All but two of the SES members were enthusiastic about assuming a new job and new challenges. The two who were reluctant turned out to be happy with their new assignments, and they are now two of my most effective senior managers.

How do you spend your time externally?
I spend a lot of time with Congress. Since President Clinton elevated the position of FEMA director to cabinet status, I've spent more time with other cabinet members and on special assignments from the White House. For instance, FEMA was placed in charge of the Church Arson Program. Being in the cabinet has also allowed me to share my experiences at FEMA with other cabinet departments. FEMA is responsible for coordinating 27 federal agencies. This takes time.

What is the best preparation for the position of director of FEMA?
There is no shortcut for experience in emergency management. As a local elected official in Arkansas, I had the opportunity to work with FEMA at the local level. As state director of the Arkansas Office of Emergency Services, I saw how FEMA programs could be run more efficiently and effectively.

In the future, I think it is likely that Congress will require that all FEMA directors have some experience in emergency management. I think state and local experience provides an essential background for this job.

How did you go about selecting your team at FEMA?
When President Clinton appointed me, I asked him for the opportunity to interview all the political appointees who might serve with me in FEMA. The President agreed, and it has made a huge difference. I was able to put together a top-notch team. It has worked out very well.

Another factor that has made a big difference is the "crash" training program that we provide to all new political appointees. The training course discusses all issues, programs, and problems they will be dealing with. It has made a difference. We try to train them during the time period prior to their confirmation. We have also found that our effort in preparing appointees for their confirmation hearings is a tremendous learning experience by itself.

FEMA has dramatically improved its image and performance under your leadership. How did you do it?
As I mentioned before, a major part of the transformation was getting all employees involved. We worked hard at creating a more customer-focused agency. A major initiative was to provide customer service training to all FEMA employees, including senior management. This was a huge undertaking.

Our goal was to make FEMA a better agency, a better place to work, and an agency that provided better service to its customers. We were very pleased that our latest customer survey found that over 85% of our clients approved of our programs.

Another aspect of managing change is constant communication to employees. You have to keep employees informed. I have a director's report that goes out weekly. I have received a very positive response to it. The report, two to three pages in length, describes what is going on in the agency and how we are doing in meeting our goals for the agency.

At the same time that we were involving employees, we were also improving the operations of the agency. We decreased the number of our financial accounts from 45 to 14. We simply had too many accounts. We have also moved to quarterly spending plans, which was a major change from the past when we never quite knew how much money we had remaining. I am now holding our senior managers responsible for their spending. In addition, I'm working closely with our chief financial officer in overseeing the agency's financial management systems.

All of our changes at FEMA were based on my trusting my managers. I trusted my people to make the agency work. I gave them authority to do their jobs and I resisted the temptation to micro-manage.

We also found that we could improve the delivery of our services. After the Northridge earthquake, we found ourselves facing long lines of people waiting to apply for loans. Based on that experience, we revamped our 800-telephone system. We also worked with other agencies, such as the Small Business Administration, in improving the loan process. We have dramatically speeded up the process and made it more user friendly. We also gave our field investigators the latest technology to do their jobs. They now all have Palm Pilot computers to take their claims that can then be downloaded and transmitted. The system used to be paper based, with the forms being sent via Federal Express. All these efforts have reduced the cost of an application from $100 to $46. This has resulted in $35 million in savings, as well as improved customer service.

Another major innovation was our initiative to close out as many previous disasters as we could. I found that we were still working on Hurricane Hugo. We created special closeout task forces across the nation. This was a huge problem in that we were still holding money for those disasters. As a result of this initiative, we have found $485 million that can now be transferred to our emergency disaster account. We anticipate that we will find over $800 million after we close out many of our open accounts. I found that we had over 476 open disasters that needed to be closed out.

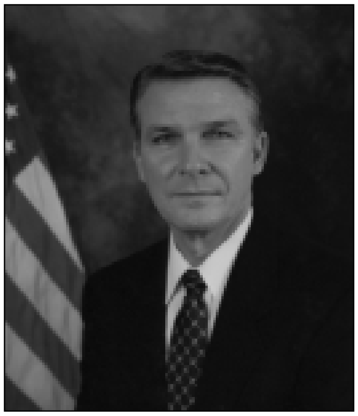
We have also worked hard to cut out as much red tape as possible and make the agency more responsive to its customers. We are now operating in a much more business-like environment; where we serving customers and taking responsibility for how our business is run.

What have you learned about public private-sector partnerships from your experience at FEMA?
Our newest project is Project Impact. It is based on creating more public-private partnerships. We have found that while we can't prevent disasters, we can do a much better job at prevention. Investing in prevention can improve the economic impact of disasters which now cause so much pain, anguish, and suffering by disaster victims.

We have selected seven pilot communities for Project Impact. In these communities, business CEOs and elected local officials, as well as FEMA staff, are working together to undertake prevention initiatives. Our goal is to build disaster resistant communities. We have learned from our experiences, such as the 1993 Des Moines floods. While we could rebuild the water treatment facility in Iowa at a cost of about $14 million, the local economy lost over $300 million. We now need to take more preventive measures in advance of disasters. Another example is Seattle, which has an important project to retrofit homes to make them more disaster-resistant.

Are you enjoying your second term? You now have the longest tenure of any FEMA director. What are the advantages of a second term?
After the 1996 election, I thought long and hard about returning to Arkansas. But I talked to the President about this and he asked me to stay and finish the job. I am now looking forward to working with Congress in a bi-partisan initiative to get FEMA ready for the 21st Century. We have made much progress and now have the opportunity to really put FEMA on solid footing for the future. I'm also enjoying our new initiatives, such as Project Impact, which I think can really make a difference.

James Lee Witt



James Lee Witt was appointed by President Clinton and confirmed by the U.S. Senate as director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in 1993. He was the first agency head who came to the position with experience in emergency management, having previously served as the director of the Arkansas Office of Emergency Services for four years.

Mr. Witt's professional career includes the formation of Witt Construction, a commercial and residential building company. After 12 years as a successful businessman and community leader, he was elected county judge for Yell County, serving as the chief elected official of the county, with judicial responsibilities for county and juvenile court. After being re-elected six times to that position, Mr. Witt was tapped by then Governor Bill Clinton to assume leadership of the Arkansas Office of Emergency Services.

of hazards through a comprehensive, risk-based, all-hazards management program of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery" (FEMA 1994).

Under Witt's direction, the agency based future management decisions and programs on six goals related to the new mission:

- Create an emergency management partnership with other federal agencies, state and local governments, volunteer organizations, and the private sector.
- Establish, in concert with FEMA's partners, a national emergency management system that is comprehensive, risk-based, and all-hazards in approach.
- Make hazard mitigation the foundation of the national emergency management system.
- Provide a rapid and effective response to any disaster.
- Strengthen state and local emergency management.
- Revitalize the agency and develop a more effective and involved cadre of FEMA managers, permanent employees, and disaster reservists (FEMA 1994: 2).

The goals reflected a shift in agency focus from national preparedness to disaster assistance. The dominant philosophy became one of customer service. All senior managers in the agency participated in a retreat to outline the customer service strategy. The managers then had to sell the philosophy to FEMA employees and implement training programs.

The Reorganization of FEMA

To better structure the agency to pursue its mission, FEMA undertook an extensive reorganization. Maximizing input from all levels of the agency, FEMA restructured itself over a six-month period in 1993. The new structure reflected the changes in the mission statement and highlighted the agency's commitment to a comprehensive, all-hazards approach to disaster management. The new agency directorates were organized around the basic functions of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

The reorganization ensured rapid and effective response to any disaster. FEMA also overhauled the Disaster Assistance program to take advantage of developing technology (National Performance Review, 1996). It streamlined the disaster application process through teleregistration, computerized application forms, computerized inspection through


President Clinton talking to California disaster survivors.

the use of palm-pad computers, and centralized processing at two locations.

Part of the process of reorganization was Director Witt's commitment to improving agency morale. He actively sought employee input on the reorganization. He made all agency personnel critical elements in the disaster assistance effort. In addition, Witt instituted extensive cross training of FEMA personnel. Under his authority FEMA conducted numerous workshops, retreats, and conferences to educate FEMA staff in the revised mission and goals of the agency. He empowered employees with more responsibilities and obligations (Schneider 1998), and sought to improve labor-management relations by creating the Labor-Management Partnership Council to maintain strong relationships between senior officials and FEMA staff.

The Redesign and Reinterpretation of the Stafford Act

Before James Lee Witt became director, FEMA had already begun the process of improving coordination among the various elements of disaster response and recovery. In April 1992, FEMA negotiated the Federal Response Plan with other federal agencies and the American Red Cross. The firestorm of criticism that followed Hurricane Andrew revealed serious weaknesses in the Plan. The most serious were FEMA's belief that the Stafford Act prevented federal intervention until after the disaster and FEMA's assumption that federal, state, and local agencies would cooperate without prior planning (Schneider 1998).

One of Director Witt's first actions in cooperation with his senior staff was to broaden the agency's interpretation of the Stafford Act to allow for the prepositioning of personnel and resources when adequate warning existed. The director's plan also included the development of multi-agency Emergency Response Teams, Emergency Support Teams, and Field Assessment Teams with the ability to respond to disasters within four hours of occurrence (FEMA 1996; Schneider 1998). The director worked closely with the interagency Catastrophic Disaster Response Group that served as the focal point for the Federal Response Plan. He also promoted a risk-based, all-hazards emergency management system with state and local governments and directed regional offices to work more closely with their state and local counterparts on a regular basis (FEMA 1994).

The Establishment of an Effective FEMA Media and Political Presence

One of FEMA's most critical failings under President Bush, however, was its lack of public visibility and support. In the period following Hurricane Hugo and Loma Prieta, several FEMA officials cited the agency's relative obscurity as an indication that the agency functioned smoothly under most circumstances because it did not receive either much attention or criticism (McAllister, Oct. 6, 1989). By comparison, Witt aggressively increased the agency's attention on its public education function. He continued the *Recovery Times*, a newsletter first developed during Hurricane Andrew that provided direct information on FEMA disaster relief efforts. Under his leadership, FEMA introduced *The Recovery Channel*, a satellite-delivered television

President Clinton in Davenport, Iowa, at site of Great Midwestern Floods.

production that broadcasts over public television stations and cable networks in areas where disasters are declared.

Unlike many earlier directors of FEMA, Witt was especially sensitive to media and political implications of the agency's decisions. Senior FEMA staff credited FEMA's public affairs director at the start of Witt's tenure, Morrie Goodman, with a significant role in changing the agency's public image. Under Witt and Goodman, FEMA sought to make the media an active partner in the dissemination of disaster information. Given FEMA's poor history with Congress, Witt also aggressively pursued connections with Congress. He testified numerous times before congressional committees, doing so 15 times in his first year alone (FEMA 1994). The Office of Congressional and Governmental Affairs served as a two-way conduit of information between the agency and congressional offices. FEMA used information from these exchanges to improve disaster response in the field.

The Development of a Proactive Strategy

The long-term goal of all of the changes was to decrease disaster costs by refocusing the disaster management system on mitigation, defined as minimizing the probability and scope of future disasters. Witt pursued the mitigation strategy on several fronts. The creation of the Mitigation Directorate combined for the first time the Floodplain Management, Earthquake Hazards Reduction, National Hurricane, National Dam Safety, and post-disaster mitigation programs. In response to Witt's urging following the Great Midwestern Floods, Congress expanded the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program from 15 percent of public assistance funds to 15 percent of all disaster funds, increasing mitigation resources fivefold. Following the Northridge Earthquake, FEMA reinforced the role of the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) in future disasters by introducing a deputy FCO for mitigation.

The most significant mitigation activity that FEMA and Director Witt initiated, however, was Project Impact. Project Impact attempted to build disaster-resistant communities by developing public-private-nonprofit partnerships in local communities, by examining the community's risk of and vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters, by identifying and ranking risk-reduction actions in the community, and by communicating the benefits and responsibilities of mitigation to the disaster resistant community (FEMA, July 1998).

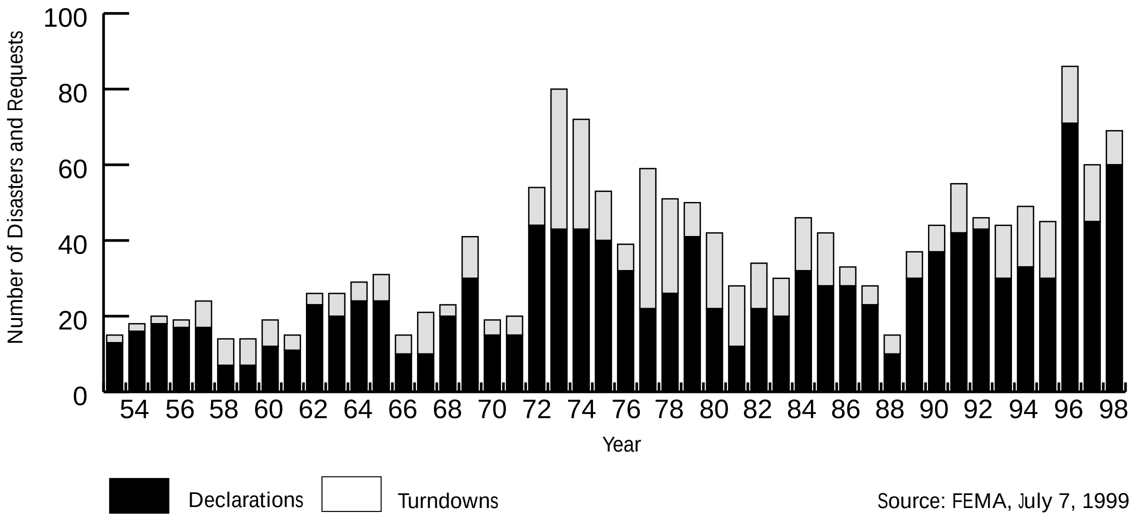
Challenges Ahead for the Next Administrator

Despite the laudable changes in FEMA's mission, operations, and public image, the agency is still not free of problems. President Clinton's decision to increase the political profile of disaster management probably contributed to the increase in requests and declarations during his administration (See Figure 1). More seriously, FEMA was slow to develop explicit or more stringent criteria for providing major disaster assistance (FEMA-IG, March 1999; USGAO, March 26, 1998). Both GAO and the FEMA-IG criticized state governors, the President, and FEMA for failing to match requests and findings to factual data or published criteria. In fairness, much of this difficulty rested with the reluctance of members of Congress to abandon their roles as disaster ombudsmen for their districts and states.

Beyond ambiguity in the declaration process, FEMA's financial system was not operating up to federal standards until 1995. An audit by the FEMA-IG of the Disaster Relief Fund in July 1995 revealed unreliable fund financial data, unclear standards of appropriateness for expenditures, inadequate grants management, irregular and incomplete loan data, and, in several instances, inefficient and uneconomical field operations (FEMA-IG, July 1995).

FEMA did not use appropriate cost-effectiveness criteria to evaluate Project Impact programs. State and

Figure 1. Number of Major Disaster Declarations and Turndowns, 1953-1998



local governments did not always submit evaluation data when applying for hazard mitigation grants. Although FEMA reported cost-benefit analysis as the basis for grant recommendations, fully one-third of all hazard mitigation projects were exempted from cost-benefit analysis by FEMA policy. The criteria for these exemptions were rarely clear.

Overall, most of FEMA's current problems arose from Director Witt's decision to balance the dilemma of "works better" and "costs less" in favor of productivity. In practice, pursuing both goals proved unworkable. "Working better" suggested eliminating structures and procedures that inhibited the creative use of resources by FEMA officials. "Costing less" implied constraining those same officials with strategic plans and demanding the achievement of measurable outcomes. Witt clearly chose to "work better." The benefits of this approach were short term and were evident in FEMA's more rapid response and improved public image. The costs were longer term and resulted in poorer evaluation procedures and weaker financial management. A senior congressional staff member investigating Project Impact found it "difficult to measure before and after. Some people consider it [Project Impact] to be a political slush fund."

Director Witt's stature within the Clinton administration has deflected much of the criticism that might otherwise result from these financial and evaluation concerns. The director has proven to be adept at anticipating and minimizing dissatisfaction with FEMA policy and operations. He has also undertaken substantial financial reforms since the publication of the 1995 FEMA-IG report. A future director with weaker connections to the White House may find these concerns to be more critical. Pressures from Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, and the General Accounting Office may force the agency to shift the balance back from productivity ("works better") to cost-effectiveness ("costs less").

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Appendix I – History of Federal Emergency Management

Legislative History

The formal history of federal disaster management policy dates from the passage of the Disaster Relief Act of 1950. Prior to 1950, federal response to natural and man-made disaster was largely ad hoc. Between 1803 and 1950, the U.S. Congress enacted 128 separate laws to deal with individual disasters (Sylves 1996). After 1950 the federal government committed itself to supplementing state and local disaster relief on a more systematic basis. At the time, no one realized the precedent-setting nature of the policy change.

The Disaster Relief Act of 1950 for the first time provided a general, federal-level framework for the provision of emergency relief. The initial law provided only "public assistance" to restore public facilities and buildings to pre-disaster standards. Once the precedent of federal intervention had been established, however, considerable pressure developed in the system to expand the federal role (Schneider 1995).

The Disaster Relief Act of 1970 introduced temporary housing, legal services, unemployment insurance, and other individual assistance programs. The Disaster Relief Act of 1974 introduced the distinction between emergency and major disaster assistance and the Individual and Family Grant program. What is most important, the 1974 act broadened federal emergency management policy from the reactive policies of response and recovery to the more proactive policies of mitigation and preparedness. The act also introduced the concept of "multi-hazard" or integrated emergency management: National, state, and local policies should uniformly handle all types of hazards rather than deal with each disaster as a unique event.

Discontent with the continuing ambiguities of federal disaster policies prompted the passage of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988. The act clarified emergency declarations, delineated the relief responsibilities of public institutions, reiterated the importance of mitigation and preparedness functions, and outlined the intergovernmental process for relief. No major legislative changes have occurred since 1988.

The net effect of these legal changes has been a gradual increase in the federal role in disaster assistance. Under the Disaster Relief Act of 1950, the federal government was primarily responsible for the restoration of public facilities. With the passage of the Stafford Act, federal aid expanded to include various kinds of individual, nonprofit, and private assistance. One long-term consequence (as indicated in Figure 1 on pg. 19) has been an uneven but steady increase in the number of federal disaster requests and declarations (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA], July 7, 1999).

Organizational and Administrative Change in Federal Disaster Management

The gradual expansion of the federal role in disaster assistance was accompanied by considerable organizational instability. The functions of federal disaster management had no long-term organizational home for much of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Many of the organizational changes that occurred during this period reflected the uneasy coexistence of the disaster assistance, national preparedness, and civil defense functions. The requirement that the statutory disaster agency coordinate the activities of 26 federal agencies (including itself) and the American Red Cross further complicated the organizational ambiguity of emergency management.

Excluding name changes, five different agencies coordinated disaster assistance between 1950 and 1979: the Housing and Home Finance Administration (HHFA), the Office of Defense Mobilization (ODM), the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization (OCDM), the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP), and the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration ([FDAA] National Archives and Records Administration [NARA] 1999, McLoughlin 1985, Schneider 1995). At various times, these agencies were organized as independent agencies, departments within the Executive Office of the President, and sub-cabinet agencies. Whereas FDAA and HHFA exercised only the disaster assistance functions, ODM and OEP performed both disaster and preparedness assignments, and OCDM executed all three primary functions.

Disaster assistance was also seriously understaffed and underfunded for much of its history. One senior FEMA official who worked under OEP, FDAA, and FEMA noted that during Hurricane Camille in 1969, only 15 people staffed the OEP response effort. Disaster relief traditionally was funded with emergency, off-budget appropriations. In some cases, the funding occurred completely independently of existing organizational and financial structures. Following the Alaskan Earthquake in 1964, the U.S. Congress was forced to set up a separate government commission to oversee the recovery effort. The Ford administration found itself confronted with a similar necessity after the collapse of the Teton Dam in 1975.

The Early Years of FEMA

By 1978, the President, Congress, and state and local officials all expressed concern over the state of disaster relief. The sub-cabinet status of the key operational agencies for disaster assistance, preparedness, and civil defense (FDAA, the Federal Preparedness Agency [FPA], and the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency [DCPA] respectively) made it difficult for them to direct the activities of other higher-level agencies. The separation of disaster assistance, preparedness, and civil defense functions under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 divided responsibility and generated conflict over appropriations. This division limited the disaster system's ability to produce integrated emergency management systems. The treatment of each disaster as an isolated event made the entire disaster assistance system sensitive to political manipulation. To respond to these shortcomings, the President's Reorganization Project recommended that President Carter combine FDAA, FPA, and DCPA into a single, independent disaster assistance agency, an action he approved reluctantly (McIntyre, May 25, 1978: 6).

FEMA, created by Reorganization Plan No. 3 and implemented by Executive Orders 12127 and 12148, had operational difficulties from the start. The FPA, DCPA, and FDAA components remained physically separated for nearly two years. The two main directorates, National Preparedness (created from FPA) and State and Local Programs and Support (created from FDAA), had different organizational cultures that led to "stovepiping" or vertical integration and horizontal separation. Very little communication or support passed between the two directorates. This tendency was exacerbated by the culture of secrecy in National Preparedness and by the Reagan and Bush administration's focus on national preparedness over disaster assistance. Despite these problems, agency response did not generate public criticism because no truly catastrophic disasters occurred between 1981 and 1988. The strongest hurricane was Gloria (Category 3) in 1985. The most powerful earthquake was the Coalinga quake in 1983. Although both caused extensive damage, neither produced the level of catastrophic damage that would occur under the Bush administration.

Appendix II

Methodology

Research Questions

In this study, the researchers investigated the evolution of the disaster assistance programs of FEMA from the Bush administration to the Clinton administrations. Public perceptions of agency performance improved between the two administrations (Schneider, 1995). We investigated the following broad research questions:

- Do the improved perceptions reflect real improvements in agency performance?
- If real, do the improvements appear to be short term or long term?
- Do the improvements reflect technological breakthroughs, changes in leadership, managerial improvements, or some combination of these factors?

To answer the first question, the authors examined previous evaluations of agency performance by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), the U.S. General Accounting Office (USGAO), and the FEMA Inspector General's (FEMA-IG) office. We also analyzed the agency's 1997 strategic plan (FEMA, Sept. 30, 1997). The second question required an investigation of the change in the agency's organizational culture. The third research question required the identification of the sources of the transformation, which can serve as a model for enhancing the business of government.

Study Methods

Given the six-month period of the grant, the researchers used the case study approach to focus the investigation. The researchers compared FEMA's readiness and response to three catastrophic disasters during the Bush administration (Hurricane Hugo, the Loma Prieta Earthquake (both in 1989), and Hurricane Andrew in 1992) to the agency's reaction to two catastrophic disasters during the Clinton administration (the Great Midwestern Floods of 1993 and the Northridge Earthquake in 1994). This research allowed a comparison of disaster responses for which the agency received considerable criticism to ones that generated very positive public relations.

The three Bush administration disasters were evaluated from disaster records in the White House Central Files of the Bush Library in College Station, Texas, and published documents. The two Clinton administration disasters were assessed from FEMA records, documents, and Internet material, and interviews with FEMA staff in Washington, D.C., especially the Mitigation, Preparedness, and the Response and Recovery Directorates.

The principal issues relate to differences in management style, technological developments, and performance enhancements that occurred between the administrations. This information will allow the identification of best practices that distinguish the current FEMA effort and will also provide advice to future presidential administrations on the broader questions of policy implementation.

List of Interviews

Rob Alexander, Senior Legislative Assistant, U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer (D) – California.

Mike Armstrong, Associate Director, Mitigation Directorate, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Kris Balderston, Deputy Assistant to the President, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Clinton administration.

Keith Bea, Specialist in American National Government, Congressional Research Service.

Jane Bullock, Chief of Staff, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Bryan Giddings, Legislative Assistant, U.S. Senator Bob Graham (D) - Florida.

Morrie Goodman, Director, Office of Public Affairs, Office of the Secretary, Department of Commerce.

Kay Goss, Associate Director, Preparedness and Training Directorate, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

George Haddow, Deputy Chief of Staff, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Ann Hearst, Director of Special Projects, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D) – California.

Berke Kulik, Associate Director of Disaster Assistance, Small Business Administration.

Fran McCarthy, Acting Deputy Director, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Bill Medigovich, Director, Office of Emergency Transportation, U.S. Department of Transportation.

George Opfer, Inspector General, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Marcus Peacock, Senior Professional Staff Member, Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Emergency Management, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of Representatives.

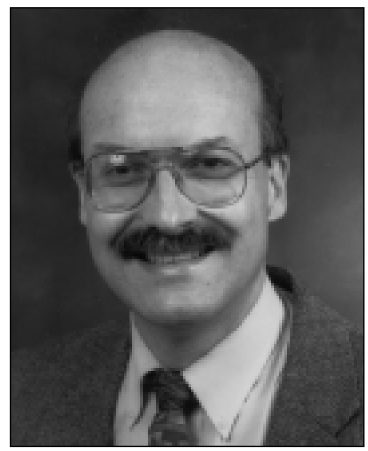
Lacy Suiter, Associate Director, Response and Recovery Directorate, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

James Lee Witt, Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

List of Abbreviations

ARC	Alaskan Reconstruction Commission
DAC	Disaster Assistance Center
DCPA	Defense Civil Preparedness Agency
FDAA	Federal Disaster Assistance Administration
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FEMA-IG	Federal Emergency Management Agency, Inspector General’s Office
FPA	Federal Preparedness Agency
HHFA	Housing and Home Finance Agency
NAPA	National Academy of Public Administration
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NPR	National Performance Review
OCDM	Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization
ODM	Office of Defense Mobilization
OEP	Office of Emergency Planning (Preparedness)
PCSD	President’s Council on Sustainable Development
USGAO	United States General Accounting Office
WHORM	White House Office of Records Management

About the Authors



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