

of the State of West Virginia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the National Capital Region decision-making and planning process for mass evacuation.

Office of Chief Counsel

The Committees on Appropriations are aware stumbling blocks remain within FEMA, preventing it from transforming into a first-class proactive emergency management agency. One concern is the Office of Chief Counsel (OCC), whose role should be to advise FEMA within the bounds of the law, to best protect and serve American citizens during emergencies. FEMA is directed to brief the Committees on Appropriations on plans to revamp OCC to allow it to better support FEMA's mission and leadership. The plan should include office structure, staffing levels, and training.

Regional Offices

FEMA is directed to fulfill the requirements of section 507 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, which requires robust FEMA regional offices. Additionally, the Committees on Appropriations recognize the importance of promoting interoperability and strong regional collaboration and direct FEMA to ensure personnel who understand the technical and administrative issues surrounding interoperability are located in each regional office.

Disability Coordinator

The Committees on Appropriations expect the Department to fully support the Office of the Disability Coordinator (ODC) as discussed in the Senate report. ODC is directed to work with disability organizations in emergency preparedness and response efforts to ensure the needs of the more than 54 million Americans with a physical, sensory, or cognitive disability are incorporated into disaster plans. ODC is further directed to build on long standing programs, such as the Emergency Preparedness Initiative program, in order to serve as a resource for the nation on special needs.

Federal On-Scene Coordinator

The Committees on Appropriations direct FEMA to provide a briefing on the toxic pollutant work of the Federal On-Scene Coordinator following Hurricane Katrina.

Federal Preparedness Coordinators

The Committees on Appropriations do not prevent the hiring of Federal Preparedness Coordinators (FPCs) as proposed by the Senate. The role of FPCs has been clarified by FEMA, alleviating original concerns that the position was duplicative.

Emergency Alert System

The Committees on Appropriations direct FEMA to provide a briefing on its plans to address GAO's recommendation on the shortcomings of the Emergency Alert System.

The Committees on Appropriations are concerned adequate systems are not in place nationwide to provide information to the public prior to, during, and after disasters. In particular, a gap remains in the use of an integrated system combining the use of desktop applications, mobile devices, and the web to educate the public. Therefore, the Committees on Appropriations provide \$1,000,000 to pilot technology that would facilitate the use of direct messaging to the public. FEMA should share lessons learned with other State and local governments.

Disaster Logistics

The Committees on Appropriations provide \$61,553,000 for disaster logistics as proposed by both the House and Senate. FEMA is directed to provide quarterly briefings on its progress to improve its logistics program. FEMA is encouraged to continue to preposition critical supplies needed during disaster response, including generators, blankets, water, and portable water purification systems near potential disaster areas.

Information Technology

The Committees on Appropriations direct FEMA to provide a five-year plan for its information technology systems ten months after the date of enactment of this Act as discussed in the Senate report.

Document Management And Records Tracking System

The Committees on Appropriations direct FEMA to fully fund, at no less than \$6,000,000, based on competitive award, the completion of the Document Management And Records Tracking System.

National Fire Incident Reporting System

The Committees on Appropriations provide \$1,000,000 for development of a web-based version of the National Fire Incident Reporting System. The Committees on Appropriations expect this investment to improve the timeliness and accuracy of data, and help Federal, State, and local governments identify nationwide trends in fire and emergency-related deaths and property loss. The United States Fire Administration should lead this initiative.

Integrating Preparedness and Response

The Committees on Appropriations provide up to \$1,000,000 for FEMA to enter into a grant or contract with the National Academy of Public Administration to review the integration of preparedness and response programs, as proposed in the House report. This review should focus on organizational structure, hiring plans and goals, coordination and integration mechanisms, and other areas FEMA may identify. This study shall be completed by the end of fiscal year 2008 and provided to the Committees on Appropriations.