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Report to Congressional Requesters

September 2015

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

FEMA Collaborates Effectively with Logistics Partners but Could Strengthen Implementation of Its Capabilities Assessment Tool

GAO-15-781

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GAO Highlights

Highlights of GAO-15-781, a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

FEMA is responsible for integrating federal disaster logistics efforts—that is, the ability to deliver goods to disaster survivors. The NRF guides how the nation is to respond to all types of disasters, and its ESF 7 Annex describes the actions that FEMA is to take in collaborating with federal partners and state and local stakeholders to deliver disaster logistics support and assess state and local logistics capabilities.

GAO was asked to assess FEMA's disaster logistics efforts. This report discusses the extent to which FEMA has (1) implemented ESF 7 guidance and incorporated leading practices for interagency collaboration with its federal partners, and (2) implemented ESF 7 guidance in collaborating with state and local stakeholders and incorporated effective program management practices for its logistics assessment program. GAO reviewed relevant documentation such as interagency agreements and ESF 7 responsibilities, and data on delivery of resources from fiscal years 2010 through 2014. GAO also interviewed FEMA and federal partner officials, as well as a nongeneralizable sample of 10 states and 1 territory in order to gain insight into FEMA's efforts.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that FEMA identify the LMD and regional resources needed to implement the LCAT, and establish and use goals, milestones and performance measures to report on the LCAT program implementation. DHS concurred with the recommendations.

View GAO-15-781. For more information, contact Christopher Currie at (404) 679-1875 or curriec@gao.gov.

What GAO Found

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has taken actions described in the *National Response Framework* (NRF), Emergency Support Function #7 (ESF 7) Logistics Annex, to work with its federal partners in a manner that reflects leading practices for interagency collaboration. For example, FEMA's Logistics Management Directorate (LMD) has facilitated meetings and established interagency agreements with ESF 7 partners such as the Department of Defense and the General Services Administration, and identified needed quantities of disaster response commodities, such as food, water, and blankets. These actions reflect ESF 7 guidance to establish collaborative relationships and interagency agreements to leverage federal partners' capabilities to support disaster response efforts. Additionally, FEMA defined desired outcomes and measures to monitor the progress and success of federal ESF 7 collaborative efforts. For example, FEMA tracks the percentage of disaster response commodities delivered by agreed-upon dates, and available through FEMA and its ESF 7 partners. As a result of these actions, FEMA's work with its federal partners reflects leading practices for interagency collaboration—such as identifying a lead agency and shared responsibilities and defining outcomes to measure success—and should help LMD demonstrate preparedness to meet ESF 7 functions.

FEMA has taken steps to collaborate with state and local stakeholders in accordance with ESF 7, but could employ effective program management practices to strengthen the implementation of its Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT). FEMA—through LMD and its regional offices—offers training and exercises for state and local stakeholders, developed the LCAT, and established an implementation program to help state and local stakeholders use the tool to determine their readiness to respond to disasters. Specifically, the LCAT is designed to help state, local, and tribal officials identify strengths and weaknesses and improve logistics processes and procedures using a standardized approach and measurement criteria. For example, officials from one state told us that the results of their state's LCAT assessment helped them identify the need for additional airlift support as part of their evacuation planning efforts. While feedback from states that have used the LCAT has generally been positive, implementation of the program by FEMA's regional offices has been inconsistent. For example, since LMD transferred responsibility for implementing the LCAT program to the regional offices in 2013, 3 of 10 regional offices no longer promote or support LCAT assessments. Further, LMD's transition plan for the transfer of implementation responsibilities did not incorporate some leading program management practices identified in the *Standard for Program Management*. For example, LMD did not identify staff resources needed to implement the program, and did not develop program goals, milestones, or measures to assess the effectiveness of implementation efforts. As a result, LMD's ability to assess the effectiveness of regional implementation efforts is limited. Identifying necessary resources and defining goals and measures would help LMD and the regions more consistently implement the LCAT program, which could enhance state and local logistics capabilities in disaster response.

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Abbreviations:

DC	distribution center
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DLA	Defense Logistics Agency
ESF 7	Emergency Support Function #7
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FSA	federal staging area
GSA	General Services Administration
ISB	incident support base
LCAT	Logistics Capability Assessment Tool
LMD	Logistics Management Directorate
LSCMS	Logistics Supply Chain Management System
MHU	manufactured housing unit
NRF	National Response Framework
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
PMBOK® Guide	*A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge*
Post-Katrina Act	Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006
PSMA	pre-scripted mission assignment
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE
441 G St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20548

September 10, 2015

Congressional Requesters:

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for integrating federal logistics planning and response capabilities—that is, the ability to procure and deliver goods and services to support disaster survivors and communities in their response to and recovery from disasters. For example, during the national response to Hurricane Sandy in 2012, FEMA, along with its federal agency partners, delivered 20 million liters of water; 16 million meals; and numerous blankets, cots, and other provisions to disaster survivors.

In October 2006, the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (Post-Katrina Act) was enacted, addressing various shortcomings, including logistics capabilities, identified in FEMA's preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina.[1] Among other things, the Post-Katrina Act called on FEMA to develop a national logistics response system in order to provide disaster survivors with goods and services in a timely and effective manner.[2] Similarly, the *National Response Framework* (NRF) describes how the nation works together in disaster response, and the NRF's Emergency Support Function #7 (ESF 7) Logistics Annex describes in more detail the actions that FEMA, as the colead agency for ESF 7 along with the General Services Administration (GSA), is to take to collaborate with its federal partners and state and local stakeholders.[3] (For a full listing of FEMA's partners identified in the ESF 7 Logistics Annex, see app. I.) For example, ESF guidance calls for FEMA to establish interagency agreements with its federal partners, as

[1]Pub. L. No. 107-295, 120 Stat. 1394.

[2]6 U.S.C. § 724.

[3]DHS, *National Response Framework* (Washington, D.C.: May 2013). The NRF is a guide to how the nation responds to all types of disasters and emergencies, and describes specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents ranging in scope from local to large-scale, among other things. ESF annexes to the NRF describe the federal coordinating structures that group resources and capabilities into functional areas that are most frequently needed in a national response.

needed, for procurement of emergency supplies and services and to develop collaborative tools that assess the logistics capabilities and readiness of its state and local stakeholders.[4] FEMA's Logistics Management Directorate (LMD) facilitates ESF 7 activities and interactions with federal partners and other stakeholders. In December 2014, we reported that additional guidance, beyond the NRF and supporting documents, would help coordinators of ESF functions develop minimum standards for activities and deliverables necessary to demonstrate ESF preparedness. Accordingly, we recommended, among other things, that FEMA issue supplemental guidance to ESF coordinators detailing minimum standards for activities and product deliverables necessary to demonstrate ESF preparedness.[5] FEMA developed the recommended guidance in June 2015.

You requested that we review FEMA disaster logistics efforts. This report assesses the extent to which FEMA has (1) implemented ESF 7 guidance and incorporated leading practices for interagency collaboration with its federal partners, and (2) implemented ESF 7 guidance for logistics to collaborate with its state and local stakeholders and incorporated effective program management practices for its state and local logistics assessment program.

To address our first objective, we gathered and reviewed relevant documentation such as interagency agreements with ESF 7 partners; pre-scripted mission assignments; FEMA's *ESF 7 Mission Analysis Book,* which lays out the roles and responsibilities of ESF 7 stakeholders; briefings detailing FEMA's and partners' logistics capabilities (e.g., disaster response commodities available); after-action reports detailing actions taken by FEMA to address identified logistics issues; and other memos and internal documents. We gathered data on FEMA's efforts to quantify and measure on-time delivery of disaster response commodities beginning in fiscal year 2010 through 2014—the time frame for which FEMA has compiled and documented these data in DHS's *Annual Performance Report*—as well as the level of disaster response

[4]The ESF 7 Annex identifies support to be provided to "local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area governments"; for the purposes of this report, we will refer to these entities, as well as the District of Columbia, collectively as state and local stakeholders.

[5]GAO, *Emergency Preparedness: Opportunities Exist to Strengthen Interagency Assessments and Accountability for Closing Capability Gaps*, GAO-15-20 (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 4, 2014).

commodities on hand or available through FEMA and its partners in comparison with national targets. To determine the reliability of these data, we reviewed relevant documentation and internal and third-party reviews of data collection methods, and interviewed agency officials. On the basis of these efforts, we determined that the data are sufficiently reliable for the purposes of our review. We also gathered information on FEMA's logistics efforts and interaction with partners by attending an interagency logistics training session, an interagency logistics exercise, and the annual ESF 7 interagency conference.[6] While these events do not represent all of FEMA's interactions with ESF 7 partners, they provide valuable insights for our review. In addition, we conducted interviews with FEMA's Assistant Administrator for Logistics, Senior Logistics Advisor, key officials from each of LMD's operational divisions, Private Sector Division, Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, and logistics staff from each of FEMA's 10 regions to explore these mechanisms and interactions with federal, state, and local partners in greater detail. We also interviewed officials from key ESF 7 partners—specifically GSA, the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the American Red Cross—to discuss the nature of their partnerships with FEMA. We compared the data gathered and information learned through discussions with FEMA and partner officials with relevant criteria on FEMA's responsibilities under the ESF 7 Logistics Annex, as well as leading practices that our work across the federal government has shown to enhance interagency collaboration.[7]

[6]Specifically, we attended a January 2015 offering of FEMA's quarterly Interagency Logistics training course—which FEMA offers to federal, state, and local partners through its Emergency Management Institute—at FEMA's distribution center in Frederick, Maryland. The course familiarized students with general logistics planning considerations in disaster response, and provided an overview of the roles of key disaster response organizations. In May 2015, we attended 1 day of a 5-day exercise in Denton, Texas, that discussed and simulated the activation and operation of an incident support base used to stage equipment, commodities, and personnel following a disaster. This course also featured involvement from the Department of Defense, which provided information on assistance that it could make available to FEMA. In addition, in May 2015, we also attended an annual ESF 7 Summit presented by FEMA and GSA and held at GSA headquarters. The summit featured a number of briefings from FEMA and other federal and nongovernmental partners (such as the American Red Cross) about ongoing developments in enhancing disaster response logistics, among other things.

[7]GAO, *Managing for Results: Implementation Approaches Used to Enhance Collaboration in Interagency Groups*, GAO-14-220 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 14, 2014). To identify criteria related to collaboration, we selected four interagency groups that met our key practices for enhancing and sustaining collaboration and identified successful approaches.

To address our second objective, we reviewed the various documentary information discussed above, as well as a logistics capabilities assessment tool provided by FEMA to state stakeholders and associated guidance and summaries, and leading practices identified in the Program Management Institute's *Standard for Program Management* and *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge*.[8] We interviewed logistics officials from FEMA LMD, each of FEMA's 10 regions, and a nonprobability sample of 10 states and 1 U.S. territory to discuss the nature of their interaction with FEMA in developing and enhancing their own logistics capabilities. These states and territory were selected in order to provide a mix of geographic locations, affiliation with various FEMA regions, and varied levels of interaction with FEMA in disaster logistics efforts (e.g., some had worked with FEMA in assessing their logistics capabilities, and some had not). While the information gained from these interviews cannot be generalized across all states and territories, the interviews provide useful insights into the nature of FEMA's collaboration with these stakeholders. We then compiled the documentary and testimonial information gathered and reviewed its alignment with provisions of the ESF 7 Logistics Annex and program management practices.

We conducted this performance audit from October 2014 through September 2015 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our finding and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

[8]Project Management Institute, Inc., *The Standard for Program Management* ®, Third Edition (Newton Square, PA: 2013), and *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)*, Fifth Edition (Newtown Square, PA: 2013). *The Standard for Program Management* ® describes, among other things, how resource planning; goals, milestones, and performance measures; and program monitoring and reporting are good practices that can enhance management for most programs. The *PMBOK® Guide* describes standard project management practices such as the collection and distribution of performance information such as status reports and progress measurements.

Background

FEMA Logistics Roles and Responsibilities

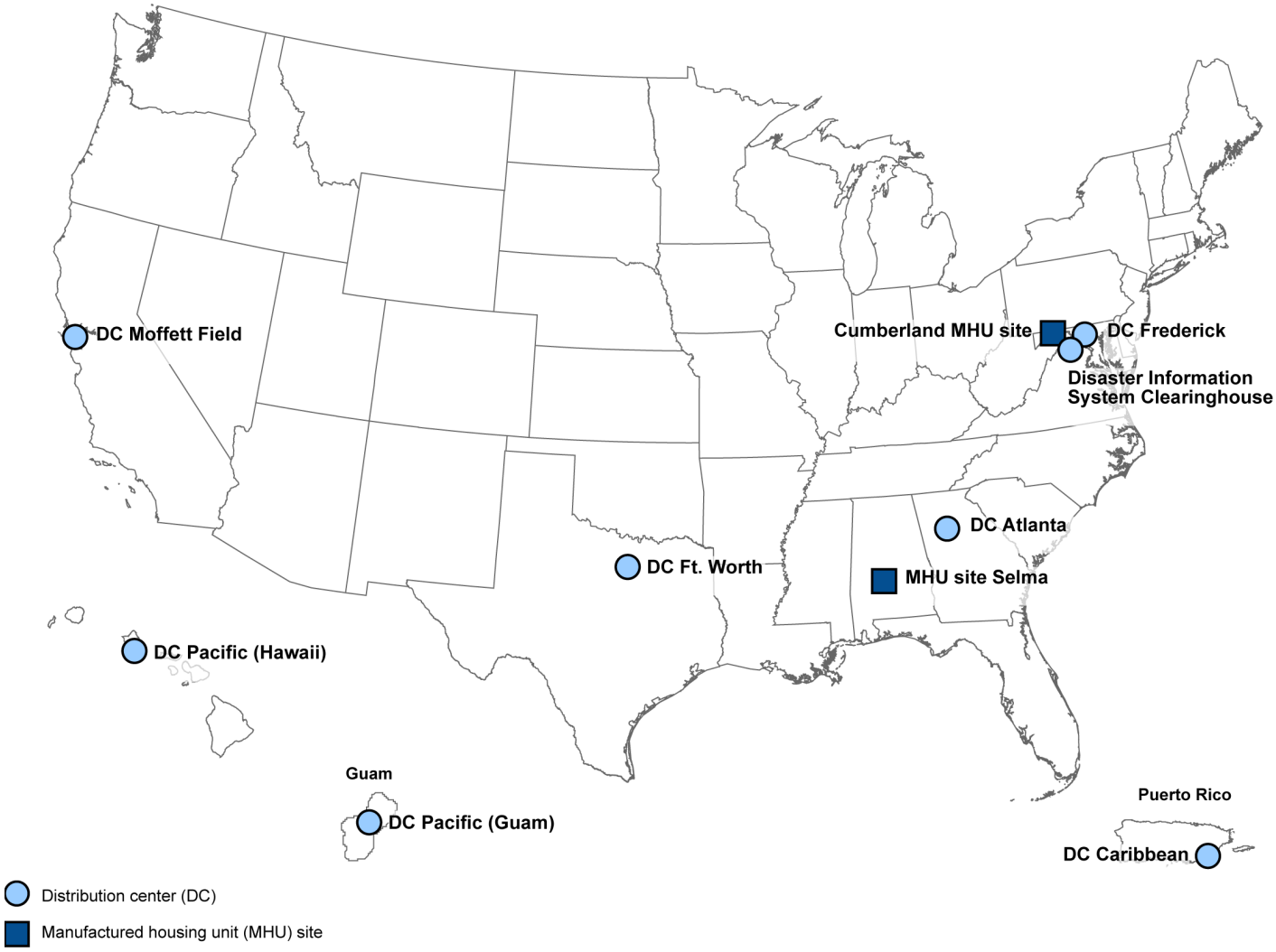
FEMA is the primary federal agency responsible for assisting state and local governments, private entities, and individuals to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from disasters. In April 2007, FEMA established LMD to provide policy, guidance, standards, execution, and governance of logistics services and operations. For example, among other things, LMD

- manages and oversees transportation of FEMA's inventory of disaster response commodities—water, meals, cots, tarps, plastic roof sheeting, and blankets—at eight distribution centers within and outside of the continental United States;
- facilitates the establishment of incident support bases (ISB) and federal staging areas (FSA), which are facilities used to position commodities and equipment in anticipation of or in response to a disaster; and
- oversees FEMA's inventory of manufactured housing units (MHUs)—temporary housing that can be made available to disaster survivors—at two national staging sites.

According to FEMA, LMD currently employs approximately 206 staff at FEMA headquarters, distribution centers, and MHU storage sites nationwide.[9] During fiscal year 2014, LMD obligated approximately $65 million for its salaries and general operating expenses. See figure 1 for a map of FEMA's distribution centers and MHU storage sites.

[9]Of these staff, 189 are permanent full-time and the remaining 17 are either temporary full-time or belong to the Cadre of On-Call Response/Recovery Employees, which are temporary employees with 2- to 4-year appointments who can be deployed to fulfill any role specifically related to the incident for which they are hired and qualified during disaster assistance response and recovery efforts.

Figure 1: Location of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Distribution Centers and Manufactured Housing Unit Storage Sites

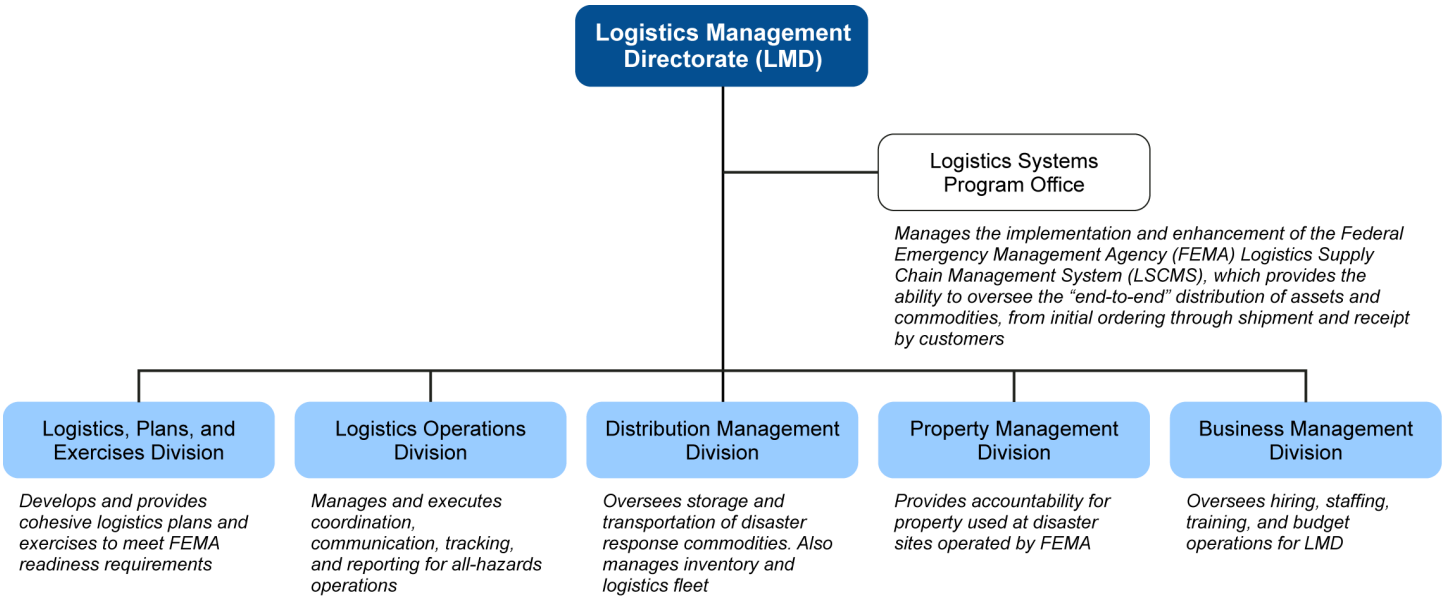


Source: FEMA; Map Resources (map). | GAO-15-781

Note: The Disaster Information System Clearinghouse is a facility used by FEMA to store information systems and communications devices, as opposed to disaster response commodities.

LMD is organized into the five divisions and program office shown in figure 2.

Figure 2: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Logistics Management Directorate (LMD) Organization Chart



Source: FEMA. | GAO-15-781

Note: FEMA officials said that LMD is currently in the process of reorganizing in a manner that would dissolve the Property Management Division and move its functions into other areas of LMD.

FEMA Logistics Efforts

FEMA and GSA are designated by the NRF as primary agencies and coordinators for ESF 7 activities.[10] They work together with support agencies such as DLA and USACE to implement federal logistics planning and response capabilities. In 2010, FEMA assumed the lead role of national logistics coordinator—facilitating and coordinating response efforts from all federal, state, local, and nongovernmental stakeholders during declared disasters—and single integrator for national supply chain planning and coordination.

FEMA deployed a Logistics Supply Chain Management System (LSCMS) in 2005 to track the distribution of assets and commodities with FEMA's ESF 7 partners during disaster response efforts. In April 2015, we reported on the status of FEMA's development of the system as part of a

[10]Department of Homeland Security, *Emergency Support Function #7–Logistics Annex* (Washington, D.C.: May 2013).

broader look at 22 acquisition programs at DHS.[11] We reported that, according to FEMA officials, LSCMS can identify when a shipment leaves a warehouse and the location of a shipment after it reaches a FEMA staging area near a disaster location. At the time of our report, LSCMS could not track partner organizations' shipments en route to a FEMA staging area, and lacked automated interfaces with its partners' information systems. We also reported that DHS leadership had not yet approved a baseline establishing the program's cost, schedule, and performance parameters. According to FEMA officials, FEMA's partners and vendors can now receive orders directly from LSCMS and manually input their shipment data directly into a vendor portal, providing FEMA with the ability to track orders and shipments from time and date of shipment to the estimated time of arrival, but not the in-transit real-time location of shipments. They also said that the program baseline was still under consideration by DHS leadership at the time of our review. In addition, DHS's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) issued a report on LSCMS in September 2014.[12] The DHS OIG made 11 recommendations designed to address operational deficiencies that FEMA concurred with, such as identifying resources to ensure effective program management and developing a training program for staff. As of July 2015, FEMA officials report that 5 of the recommendations have been implemented, and the agency is taking steps to address the remaining 6.[13]

As one means of coordinating logistics efforts internally and with its partners, LMD established the Logistics Planning, Readiness, and Assistance Team in 2012 to coordinate logistics planning among FEMA headquarters, regional office logistics staff, federal government agencies, the American Red Cross and other nongovernmental organizations, and private sector partners. The team provides technical assistance and support and promotes new agency initiatives, doctrine, planning directives, and logistical initiatives and concepts.

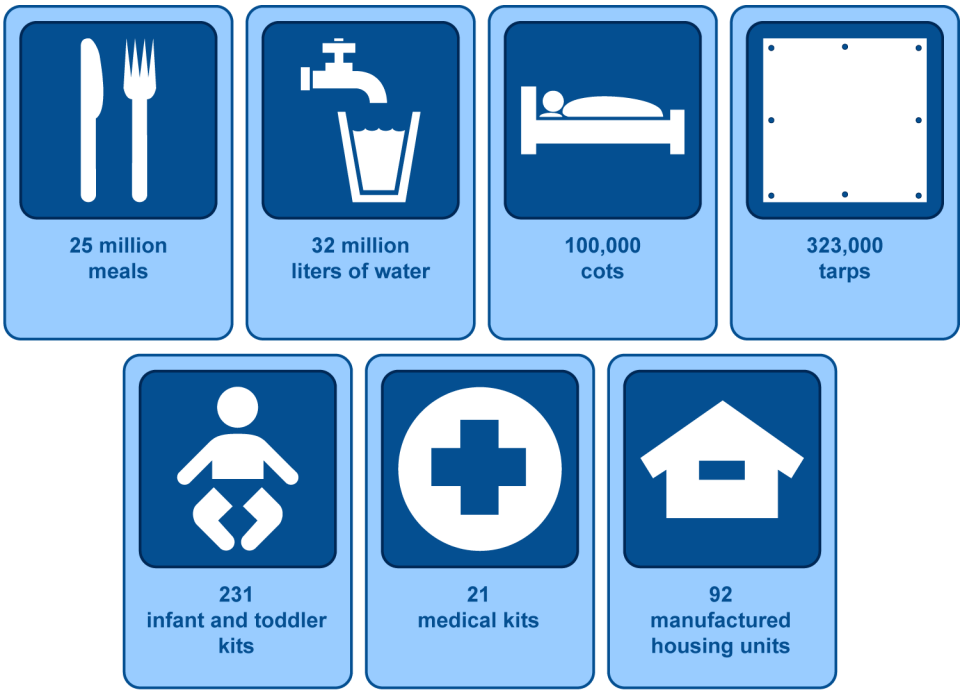
[11]GAO, *Homeland Security Acquisitions: Major Program Assessments Reveal Actions Needed to Improve Accountability*, GAO-15-171SP (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 22, 2015). Since this report was focused generally on DHS's major acquisition programs, we made no recommendations specific to LSCMS.

[12]DHS OIG, *FEMA's Logistics Supply Chain Management System May Not Be Effective During a Catastrophic Disaster*; Washington, D.C.: Sept. 22, 2014).

[13]Because of our own update on the status of LSCMS development, as well as DHS OIG's review of LSCMS, we did not include a review of LSCMS operations in the scope of this review.

As an illustration of logistics support efforts being led by FEMA, FEMA and its federal ESF 7 partners delivered millions of meals and liters of water; thousands of cots, blankets, and tarps; infant and toddler kits; durable and consumable medical equipment; and MHUs to disaster survivors in response to Hurricanes Isaac and Sandy and other disasters throughout the United States in 2012, see figure 3.

Figure 3: Disaster Response Commodities Provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and its Emergency Support Function #7 (ESF 7) Partners in 2012



Source: FEMA; Art Explosion (clip art). | GAO-15-781

FEMA Regional Structure

FEMA is divided into 10 regions to carry out its disaster preparedness, response, and recovery missions across the nation. Each region is headed by a regional administrator who—in partnership with state, local, and tribal governments, and other nongovernmental organizations—oversees emergency management activities within his or her respective

geographical area.[14] Each regional office has its own logistics branch to lead logistics planning and operational efforts within the region, including other federal, state, and local partners.

Role of Logistics in FEMA's Disaster Response

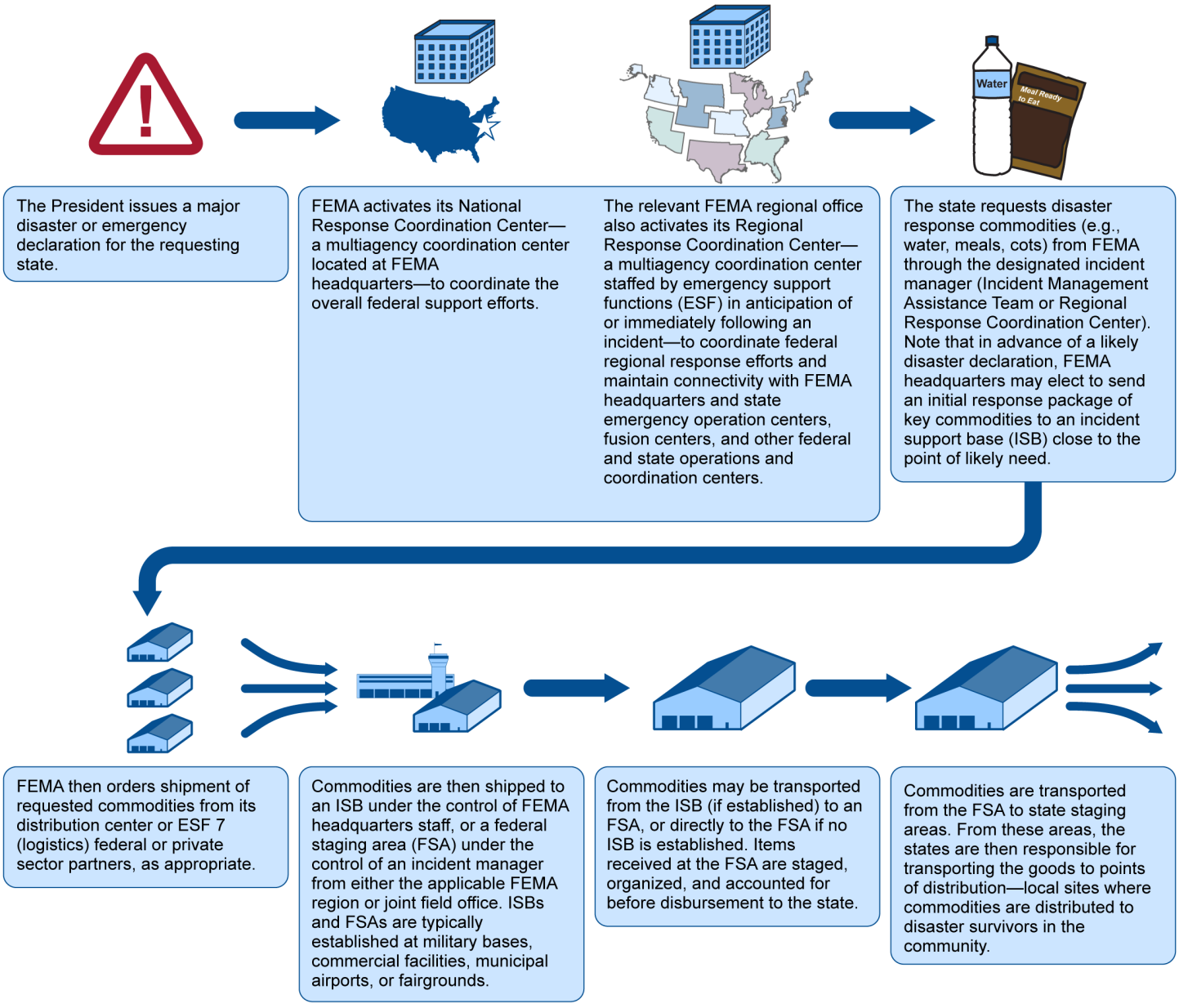
Local entities are responsible for initial response to disasters, and response then shifts to state agencies as needed by the scope and impact of the incident. When the actual or anticipated disaster exceeds the state's ability to respond, the governor of a state can submit a request for a declaration of a major disaster to its local FEMA regional administrator. The FEMA region reviews the request and sends its recommendation to FEMA headquarters, which then sends its recommendation to the President, who may ultimately approve the request.[15] Once the President approves a disaster declaration request, FEMA begins its logistics support efforts. Among these efforts, FEMA establishes an ISB, or an FSA near the disaster location.[16] The ISB or FSA is the base from which FEMA receives commodities and supplies—provided by FEMA through its distribution centers, other federal ESF 7 partners, or private vendors—and ships them out to state-controlled points of distribution for disbursement to disaster survivors. Figure 4 illustrates how FEMA disaster logistics support flows down to ultimately assist disaster survivors.

[14]GAO currently has work ongoing reviewing other aspects of FEMA's (non-logistics-related) regional coordination efforts and plans to issue a report later this year.

[15]42 U.S.C. § 5170. In addition to issuing major disaster declarations, the President may issue emergency declarations. If the President declares an emergency, the federal government may provide immediate and short-term assistance that is necessary to save lives, protect property and public health and safety, or lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe, among other things. 42 U.S.C. § 5192.

[16]While functionally the same, ISBs function as an extension of FEMA's distribution centers and are overseen by FEMA headquarters staff, while FSAs are overseen by an incident manager from either the applicable FEMA region or local joint field office. A joint field office is a temporary federal facility that provides a central location for coordination of response efforts by the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and all levels of government.

Figure 4: Provision of Disaster Response Commodities from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to Disaster Survivors



Source: GAO analysis of FEMA information. | GAO-15-781

Note: The National and Regional Response Coordination Centers may be activated prior to a formal declaration by the President to begin the movement and prestaging of critical resources.

The ESF 7 Logistics Annex describes how FEMA is to integrate "whole community" logistics planning and support and facilitate technical assistance, training, exercises, and incident responses to leverage the capabilities and resources of its federal partners and state and local stakeholders and private sector organizations.[17] These actions include establishing collaborative relationships with federal partner agencies, leveraging partner capabilities, and establishing interagency agreements and related documentation as needed for procurement of supplies and services. For state and local stakeholders, FEMA is to conduct assessments, training, education, and exercise programs to improve their readiness, increase response capacity, and maximize the management and impact of homeland security resources.

FEMA's Collaboration with Federal Partners Generally Reflects ESF Guidance and Leading Practices

FEMA's Actions with Federal Partners Generally Reflect ESF 7 Guidance

FEMA, as the colead agency for ESF 7, has taken a number of actions described in the ESF 7 Logistics Annex to establish collaborative relationships, leverage partner capabilities, and establish interagency agreements with its federal partners to support disaster response efforts.

Establishing collaborative relationships. FEMA facilitates a number of meetings with ESF 7 partners throughout the year, including a year-end meeting to discuss successes and challenges identified by each partner, and subject area (typically hurricane) briefings to discuss assets and support available in each FEMA region. In addition, in 2015, FEMA renewed its annual ESF 7 Summit, typically slated to take place in

[17]The term "whole community" refers to FEMA's conceptual approach to emergency management that emphasizes that FEMA is only one part of a national emergency management team that also includes FEMA's federal partners and local, tribal, state and territorial stakeholders; nongovernmental organizations like faith-based and nonprofit groups and private sector industry; and individuals, families, and communities.

Logistics Supply Chain Project

In 2014, the Logistics Management Directorate (LMD) initiated a Disaster Logistics Strategic Supply Chain Assessment Project. This project is an ongoing effort expected to lead to stronger commercial partnerships for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) logistics and support development of a strategic vision for the future of FEMA logistics functions. As part of this project, FEMA plans to identify critical private sector partners and supply chain networks for food, water, fuel, and energy. FEMA envisions this project strengthening its "whole community" approach to logistics by providing a better understanding of how it can support stakeholders in the nation's supply chain following disasters and leveraging national commercial capacity to better provide disaster support to survivors and communities.

Source: GAO analysis of information from FEMA. | GAO-15-781

advance of each year's hurricane season.[18] We attended this summit and observed presentations on assistance available from partners (e.g., the American Red Cross, National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, and the Veterans Administration) as well as collaborative discussions of issues relevant to regional logistics officers. FEMA LMD (along with GSA) also sponsors a quarterly Interagency Logistics Training course through its Emergency Management Institute targeting federal, state, and local government logistics officers, as well as other nongovernmental and private sector entities. We attended the quarterly training in January 2015 and observed collaborative features of the course, including presentations and associated discussions on the roles and responsibilities of key partners such as the Red Cross, DLA, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Department of Defense coordination officers. In addition, LMD has sponsored exercises on logistics operations for both FEMA and partner staff. According to FEMA, participation in exercises, simulations or other activities, including real-world incidents, enhances collaborative efforts and helps organizations validate their capabilities and identify shortfalls.[19] For example, in May 2015, we observed a portion of a 5-day exercise facilitated by LMD. During the exercise, we observed how FEMA establishes an ISB, as well as a presentation by DLA on support available through its Distribution Expeditionary capability.[20] Officials from several of FEMA's key ESF 7 partners—GSA, DLA, USACE, and the Red Cross—that we spoke with during the course of our review indicated that they interact very regularly, often on a weekly basis, with LMD officials regarding ESF 7 activities. According to FEMA officials, FEMA has also established relationships with private sector partners through the National Business Emergency Operations Center and is working to strengthen relationships with tribal nations through its Intergovernmental Affairs office.

Leveraging partner capabilities. A Distribution Management Strategy Working Group led by LMD, with members representing key federal and nongovernmental partners, meets throughout the year to determine the

[18]While FEMA intends this to be an annual event, the summit did not take place in 2013 or 2014 because of budgetary constraints.

[19]FEMA, *National Exercise Program, National Level Exercise—Capstone Exercise 2014 Fact Sheet*.

[20]DLA's Distribution Expeditionary capability is a deployable, tailorable operation that receives, stores, issues, and ships military and humanitarian relief supplies.

level and types of asset support (e.g., disaster response commodities) that each partner can provide in the event of a disaster. LMD's regular meetings with key ESF 7 partners also contribute to an understanding of capabilities available. In addition, FEMA officials informed us that it has contracts in place for transportation and other services if needed in a disaster, and also leverages contract capabilities of partners such as GSA and DLA.[21] A FEMA official said the agency also has agreements in place with private sector partners, such as FedEx, to use their facilities as staging areas, if needed.

Pre-Scripted Mission Assignments (PSMA)

PSMAs provide mutually agreed-upon language to expedite the deployment of assets when needed. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) currently has 12 PSMAs in place with Emergency Support Function #7 (ESF 7) partners the General Services Administration, the Department of Defense, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Coast Guard for items such as personnel support, transportation support, use of military installations as incident support bases, and establishment of fuel distribution points. Additional PSMAs are in the draft development stage.

Source: GAO analysis of FEMA documents. | GAO-15-781

Establishing interagency agreements and other documentation. FEMA has worked with its partners to establish interagency agreements and pre-scripted mission assignments that establish the nature of assets and other support that these partners can be expected to provide to FEMA in the event of a disaster. In addition, we reviewed FEMA's *Mission Analysis Book*, which FEMA developed to provide the ESF Leadership Group—composed of the federal departments and agencies that are designated as ESF coordinators—with information on how ESF 7 is structured and operates, and the roles, resources, and capabilities of the agencies involved. This book contains information on partner liaisons, information requirements during disaster response, and resources and capabilities of each partner (e.g., GSA can provide delivery services for a certain number of cots and tarps; DLA can provide contracted fuel or shelf-stable meals as needed).

FEMA's Collaboration with Federal Partners Reflects Leading Practices for Interagency Collaboration

FEMA's collaboration with its federal partners also reflects leading practices for interagency collaboration by identifying a lead agency and clearly identifying and agreeing upon responsibilities as leadership is shared, by funding and staffing collaborative interagency mechanisms, and by defining desired outcomes and measures with which to monitor their progress and success.[22] The following sections discuss how FEMA's efforts address the leading practices for interagency collaboration.

[21]GAO currently has work ongoing studying FEMA's efforts to support and manage a contracting workforce and structure since the enactment of the Post-Katrina Act and plans to report on this subject later this year.

[22]GAO, *Managing for Results: Implementation Approaches Used to Enhance Collaboration in Interagency Groups*, GAO-14-220 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 14, 2014).

Identifying a lead agency and clearly identifying and agreeing upon responsibilities as leadership is shared. The NRF designates FEMA and GSA as primary agencies and coordinators for ESF 7 activities, and the ESF 7 Logistics Annex to the NRF (along with the interagency agreements and pre-scripted mission assignments described above) identifies their relative shared responsibilities for implementing ESF 7 functions by describing actions each agency is to take. In 2010, FEMA, through LMD, assumed the lead role of national logistics coordinator—facilitating and coordinating response efforts from all federal, state, local, and nongovernmental stakeholders during declared disasters—and single integrator for national supply chain planning and coordination.

Funding and staffing collaborative interagency mechanisms. As discussed above, FEMA LMD staff facilitate a number of interagency meetings and training sessions that serve to enhance collaboration. FEMA has established the Distribution Management Strategy Working Group, and, in the event of a disaster, FEMA and its federal partners also staff collaborative interagency response structures, like FEMA's national and regional response centers, in accordance with the NRF and ESF 7 guidance. FEMA generally funds much of the federal interagency response effort through the Disaster Relief Fund when a major disaster is declared.[23]

Defining desired outcomes and measures to monitor progress and success. FEMA has defined desired outcomes and measures with which to monitor the progress and success of federal ESF 7 collaborative efforts, additional mechanisms our work has shown to enhance interagency collaboration. For example, interagency agreements and pre-scripted mission assignments make clear the types of assets and levels of support that partner agencies are to provide in the event of disaster—clear short-term outcomes for FEMA's federal ESF 7 partners. FEMA LMD officials have also identified two measures that the agency uses to determine its success in providing assets in response to, and preparing for, disasters. The first measure tracks data on the percentage of disaster response resources delivered by an agreed-upon delivery time. This measure includes assets provided by both FEMA and its ESF 7 partners.

[23]FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund is the major source of federal disaster recovery assistance for state and local governments when a major disaster is declared.

Table 1 shows that FEMA has met or exceeded its target over 4 of the last 5 fiscal years.

Table 1: Percentage of Orders for Required Life-Sustaining Commodities and Key Initial Response Resources Delivered by the Agreed-Upon Date, Fiscal Years 2010-2014

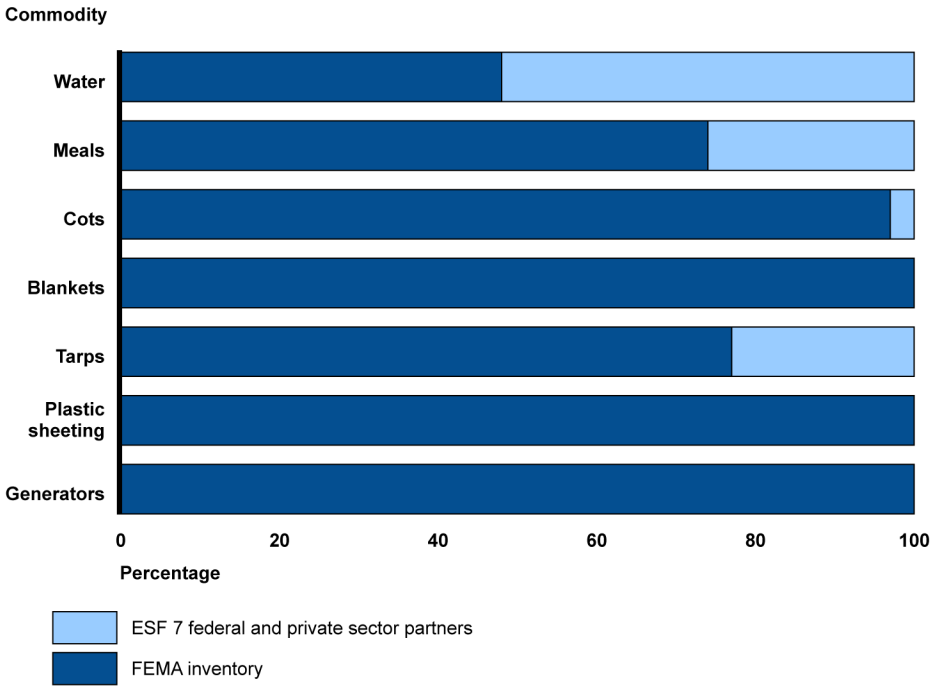
Fiscal year	Target value (percent)	Actual (percent)
2010	80	97.5
2011	85	93.3
2012	95	92.8[a]
2013	95	95.4
2014	95	97.9

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency. | GAO-15-781

[a]In the U.S. Department of Homeland Security *Annual Performance Report, Fiscal Years 2012-2014*, FEMA stated that there were several reasons for 2012 performance falling short of the target, including a lack of availability and delayed arrival of shipments for some transportation carriers during weather events in late June 2012, changes in original delivery locations of shipments without an adjustment to the established order requested delivery date, and a small number of partner-sourced vendors that did not meet planned timelines for sourcing and movement during Hurricane Isaac. FEMA added that none of the delayed orders affected mission support.

The second measure tracks levels of inventory held or readily available via contract support by FEMA and its ESF 7 partners for seven categories of commodities in comparison with target levels for these items. The target levels are based on FEMA's calculations of commodities necessary to deliver enough postdisaster resources to support 1.75 million survivors for 3 days, a long-term outcome. Through data collected, FEMA has determined that the agency and its ESF 7 partners have enough inventory on hand or readily available to support this outcome across all commodity types as of July 2015, as shown in figure 5.

Figure 5: Percentage of Required Disaster Response Commodities On Hand or Available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Its Emergency Support Function #7 (ESF 7) Partners, July 2015



Source: FEMA. | GAO-15-781

Note: This figure represents requirements and availability for commodities in the continental United States. According to officials, LMD also tracks the commodity levels available outside of the continental United States and is working to better define required commodity levels in those areas.

In December 2014, we reported that additional guidance, beyond the NRF and supporting documents, would help coordinators of all ESF functions develop minimum standards for activities and deliverables necessary to demonstrate ESF preparedness. Accordingly, we recommended, among other things, that FEMA issue supplemental guidance to ESF coordinators detailing minimum standards for activities and product deliverables necessary to demonstrate ESF preparedness.[24] FEMA concurred, and developed the recommended guidance in June 2015. LMD's collaboration with its federal ESF 7 partners through the use of collaborative mechanisms that our work has shown to enhance

[24]GAO-15-20.

interagency collaboration described above should help LMD officials implement this supplemental guidance and serve as a model for other ESF coordinators.

Collaboration with State and Local Stakeholders Generally Reflects ESF Guidance, but FEMA Could Strengthen Implementation of Its Logistics Assessment Tool

FEMA Has Taken Actions to Address ESF 7 Guidance

FEMA has taken actions described in the ESF 7 Annex with state and local stakeholders to (1) provide logistics training, education, and exercises and (2) establish an assessment program to help them validate their logistics capabilities and identify shortfalls. The following sections discuss FEMA's actions to address ESF requirements for collaborating with state and local stakeholders.

Training, education, and exercises. LMD (along with GSA) sponsors a quarterly Interagency Logistics Training course through its Emergency Management Institute for state and local government logistics officers, as well as federal partners. FEMA regions also work with state and local stakeholders through various national and regional exercises to enhance their readiness in disaster response. For example, Region V officials in Chicago, Illinois, have conducted planning, training, and exercises for state, local, and other stakeholders related to potential earthquake activity

in the New Madrid Seismic Zone.[25] Officials from 8 of 10 regions said they meet regularly to hold discussions (either in person or via teleconference) with their state and local stakeholders to discuss specific logistics plans and strategies in place within the state. In addition, regional logistics staff from all 10 regions said they also meet with state and local stakeholders who may attend Regional Interagency Steering Committee meetings—held to coordinate federal interagency responsibilities and help resolve interagency operational and preparedness issues relating to response and recovery activities—to educate state and local officials by providing planning guidance for their logistics plans and activities. Regional logistics staff also said they support state and local logistics exercises and regularly involve state and local officials in federal exercises, as appropriate. Generally, state officials we spoke with said that such FEMA-sponsored training courses and meetings provide collaborative opportunities to discuss logistics issues, challenges, and potential solutions that were useful.

Assessment program to validate capabilities and identify shortfalls. The ESF 7 Logistics Annex calls for FEMA to develop collaborative tools for use by state and local stakeholders to evaluate their disaster logistics readiness and identify capability gaps and plans for improvement and for FEMA, along with its ESF partners, to conduct assessments to improve state and local readiness and maximize the management and impact of homeland security resources. In addition, a 2006 conference report directed FEMA to form innovative public and private logistical partnerships to improve readiness, among other things.[26] In response, LMD, in conjunction with representatives from 4 FEMA regions and officials from 8 states, began developing the Logistics Capability

[25]The New Madrid Seismic Zone is the most active earthquake region in the United States east of the Rocky Mountains. It covers parts of Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee. According to FEMA officials, if a major earthquake were to strike in the New Madrid Seismic Zone, midwestern states such as Illinois and Indiana could each see approximately 200,000 people affected—raising significant concerns about the number of logistic support sites available to receive and stage resources and commodities needed for disaster survivors.

[26]The conference report accompanying the 2007 DHS appropriations act directed FEMA to use no less than $5,000,000 to develop a demonstration program with regional and local governments in the formation of innovative public and private logistical partnerships and centers to improve readiness, increase response capacity, and maximize the management and impact of homeland security resources. H.R. Rept. No. 109-699, at 162 (2006) (Conf. Rep.).

Assessment Tool (LCAT) in March 2008 as a voluntary tool intended to help states determine their readiness to respond to disasters.[27] FEMA designed the LCAT as a set of questions that, when answered and analyzed, provide the basis for a detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses in core logistics functions to help local, county, tribal, and state jurisdictions improve their logistics processes and procedures using a standardized approach and measurement criteria. For example, the tool asks about the extent to which the state has identified the most likely catastrophic disaster scenario and its potential impact on the state. These types of questions are intended to encourage state and local jurisdictions to think about the potential impact of catastrophic disasters and help define resource and commodity requirements for specific hazards as well as identify those resources that are common to all hazards. See appendix II for a list of the questions in the LCAT *State Content Guide*.[28] Six of the 11 state and territorial jurisdictions we selected have participated in an LCAT assessment, while the remaining 5 have not. Officials we interviewed from 4 of 6 participating jurisdictions found the tool to be useful. Officials said, for example, that they found opportunities to improve their state's logistics capabilities based on feedback from their LCAT assessment. Specifically, officials from 1 state told us that the results of their state's LCAT assessment helped them identify the need for additional airlift support as part of their evacuation planning efforts. Officials from the remaining two participating jurisdictions told us that although LCATs have been administered for their jurisdictions, the assessments were conducted either before the officials assumed their current positions or by others in their organization and thus they were not very familiar with the program. Officials from the 5 states that we selected who had not participated in an LCAT assessment had a variety of views regarding the potential utility of the LCAT program. For example, one logistics official said his state was not interested in participating in an LCAT assessment, in part because his state has developed its own assessment tool that provides it both a quantitative assessment of its

[27]FEMA LMD solicited input from Regions II, IV, VI, and VII, as well as from state officials in Louisiana, New York, New Jersey, Iowa, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Florida to develop the LCAT for use by states to evaluate their disaster logistics readiness capability.

[28]While FEMA interchangeably refers to the LCAT as the Logistics Capability Assessment Tool and Logistics Capability Assistance Tool, for the purposes of this report, we refer to the LCAT as the Logistics Capability Assessment Tool. In the LCAT *State Content Guide*, FEMA uses the term "assistance".

local jurisdiction's logistics capabilities and a comprehensive gap analysis that he believes offers state officials a sound and logical foundation for making resource investments in the wake of a disaster. As mentioned above, the ESF 7 Annex calls for FEMA to conduct assessments to improve state and local readiness, increase response capacity, and maximize the management and impact of homeland security resources. Accordingly, the analysis of LCAT assessment results can provide FEMA regional logistics staff with comprehensive and detailed information on the logistics capabilities (and capability gaps) of their state and local stakeholders.

FEMA's Implementation of the LCAT Could Be Enhanced to Reflect Leading Program Management Practices to Better Support Needs

In 2013, LMD transferred responsibility for its LCAT program to FEMA's 10 regional offices, but its transition plan did not incorporate some leading program management practices that could enhance the regional offices' efforts to manage the LCAT program.[29] For example, LMD did not identify the resources needed to implement the program, or establish goals, milestones, or performance measures to monitor the regional offices' efforts and ensure more comprehensive and consistent regional implementation of the LCAT program. As a result, the regions' implementation of the LCAT program has been inconsistent.

From fiscal years 2009 through 2012, LMD conducted 31 LCAT assessments with 26 states and territories. LMD transferred responsibility for implementing the LCAT program to the 10 regional offices in fiscal year 2013. To manage the LCAT transition to the regions, LMD developed a transition plan to define the tasks and activities that it deemed necessary to prepare the regions to begin administering LCATs. For example, while LMD retained administrative oversight of the program, LMD directed regional logistics personnel to lead LCAT outreach efforts, including marketing the program to state, local, and tribal governments and coordinating their implementation activities. According to LMD officials, these responsibilities were more appropriate for regional offices, given the program's inherent focus on state and local logistics readiness.

Since LMD transferred management responsibility for implementing the LCAT program to the 10 regional offices in 2013, 4 of the 10 regional offices have completed 13 LCAT assessments within 12 states and

[29]Project Management Institute, Inc., *The Standard for Program Management ®*.

territories. Of these 13 LCAT assessments, 6 were new assessments (in states that had not participated in a prior assessment); the other 7 assessments were administered in order to update prior LCAT assessment findings. Figure 6 shows the number of LCAT assessments conducted since FEMA transitioned the program to FEMA regions in 2013. The 6 FEMA regions that have not completed LCAT assessments since the transition in 2013 include 18 of the remaining 24 states and territories that have yet to participate in an LCAT.

Figure 6: Annual Number of New and Updated Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT) Assessments Conducted by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Regions, Fiscal Year 2013 to Present

Region	Fiscal year 2013	2014	2015 (as of May)	Total
I				
II				
III	Washington, D.C.	Delaware	Maryland	3
	Virginia	Washington, D.C.		2
IV				
V	Ohio			1
		Minnesota		1
VI	New Mexico	Arkansas		4
		Louisiana		
		Texas		
VII				
VIII				
IX	Arizona	American Samoa		2
X				

Initial baseline assessments

Assessment updated subsequent to baseline assessment

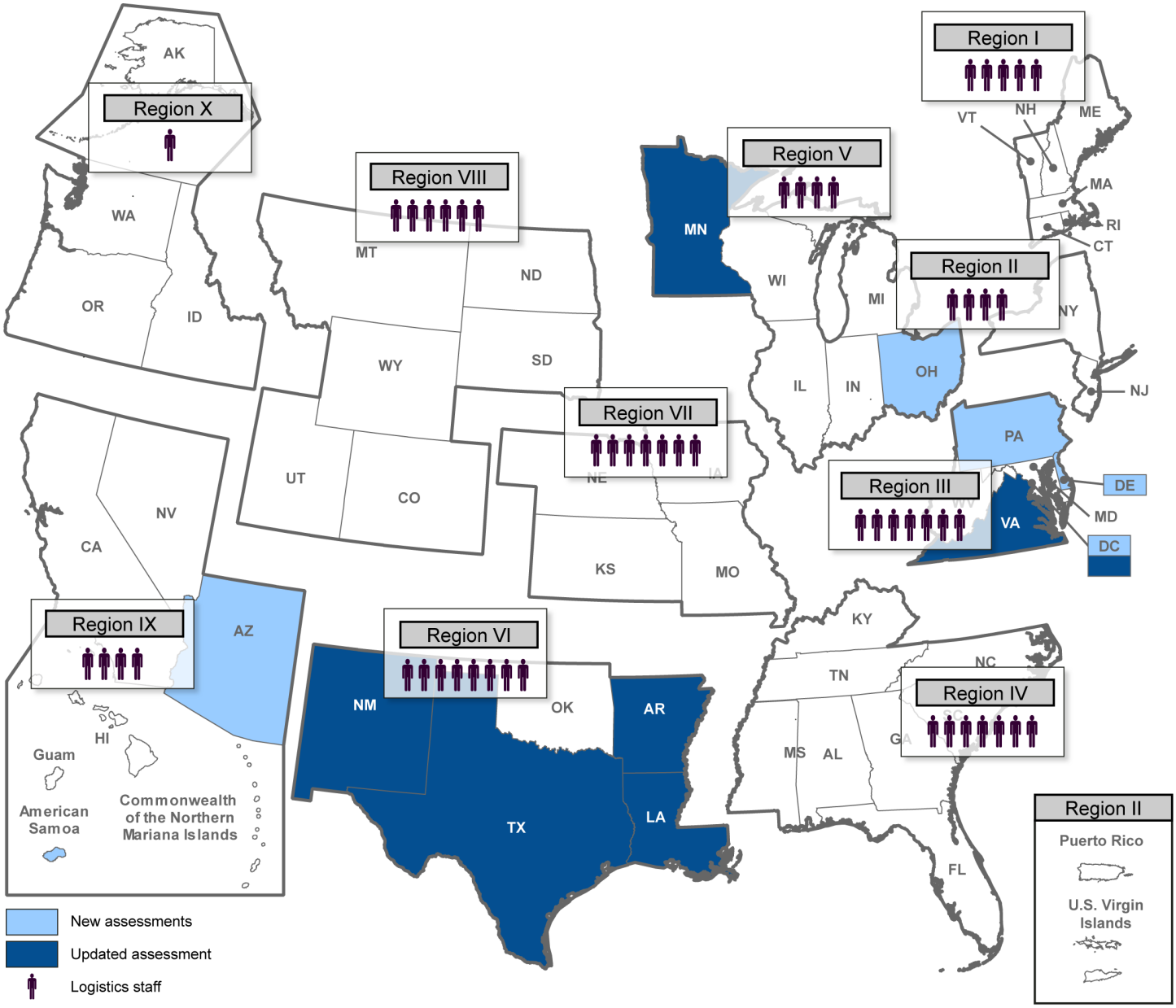
Source: GAO analysis of FEMA data. | GAO-15-781

Identifying Resources Needed Could Enhance Regional Implementation of the LCAT Program

LMD officials did not determine the number of logistics staff required in each of the 10 regions or the LMD staffing resources needed to support them in planning the transfer of LCAT program implementation responsibilities to the regions. As a result, the lack of sufficient staff resources has limited regional implementation of the LCAT program. Specifically, regional logistics officials from 3 of the 10 regions said they no longer promote or support state and local stakeholders' use of the

LCAT because they do not have adequate resources, in terms of staff and expertise, to implement the LCAT program. For example, one regional logistics director said that after conducting LCAT assessments in 3 of the 4 states in the region, officials were not able to conduct the subsequent analysis and provide LCAT reports to these 3 states because the region does not have staff capable of performing the analysis. As a result, neither the participating states nor the regional office was able to fully benefit from the time and effort invested in conducting the LCAT assessment. According to an LMD official, the analysis reports for these 3 states were completed in March 2015; however, these states have yet to receive the reports. He said that, as a result, the 2015 reports on the status of logistics capabilities in these 3 states are out of date and likely of little use. He added that he planned to encourage regional logistics staff to conduct follow-up assessments with these states in the near future. In contrast, regional logistics staff in 3 of the 4 regional offices that have facilitated a LCAT assessment since LMD transferred responsibility for implementing the program said that while they do not have staff specifically trained to complete the analysis resulting from an LCAT assessment, they have been able to complete and provide analysis reports to participating states. The number of logistics staff and the LCAT assessments they have facilitated in FEMA's 10 regional offices since FEMA transferred responsibility of the LCAT program are shown in figure 7.

Figure 7: Logistics Staff in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) 10 Regional Offices as of July 2015 and Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT) Assessments Conducted in Each Region, Fiscal Year 2013 through May 2015



Source: FEMA; Map Resources (map). | GAO-15-781

Logistics staff in 7 of the 10 regions said they had asked for support from LMD to conduct LCAT assessments since 2013. Of these, logistics staff from 2 regions said that LMD provided the assistance, 4 regions said their requests for assistance were denied, while 1 other region has yet to complete the assessment for which it has requested assistance from LMD. In contrast, LMD officials said that they have generally provided staff resources—primarily members of the Logistics Planning, Readiness, and Assistance Team—to assist those regions that have asked for their help. LMD officials cited one instance in July 2014 when a region requested support and LMD denied the request because of a lack of available personnel at that time. We were unable to determine the basis for the apparent discrepancy in the statements of LMD officials and regional logistics staff.

LMD officials said that while they did initially plan to create eight logistics planning positions to assist regions in assuming management responsibilities for regional implementation of the LCAT program, they did not assess or determine the staff required in each of the 10 regions or the LMD staffing resources needed to support them (or ultimately create new regional positions) because (1) they believed that the number of LMD staff would be sufficient to support the regions and (2) regional resource planning is the responsibility of FEMA's 10 regional administrators. However, leading practices call for resource planning as a part of program management and LMD retains agency-wide responsibility for the LCAT program. Specifically, to better enable management oversight for monitoring the implementation of a specific program, the *Standard for Program Management* calls for agencies to engage in resource planning to determine which resources are needed and when they are needed to successfully implement the program.[30] Determining what resources are needed and where they are needed to successfully implement the LCAT program could help LMD and regional logistics staff more consistently and comprehensively implement the program. LMD officials agreed that identifying the resources needed to implement the LCAT program at the regional level would further their ability to ensure that the regions are adequately supported in implementing the program.

[30]Project Management Institute, Inc., *The Standard for Program Management* ®.

Program Goals, Milestones, or Measures Could Enhance Regional Implementation of the LCAT Program

LMD officials have not developed goals, milestones, or performance measures to assess the effectiveness of the regions' LCAT program marketing and implementation efforts. LMD officials monitor the number of LCAT assessments performed in each region on an annual basis by the stakeholder audience type (state, local, or tribal) and said they generally encourage regional logistics staff to brief states on the LCAT program. In addition, LMD reports annually on the state and local stakeholder results and regional trends in logistics capabilities and shortfalls captured in LCAT program assessments. For example, among the areas of strength reflected in these reports, LMD found that many state logistics personnel have recognized the importance of logistics in their state emergency management organizations and generally have good information-sharing procedures within their organizations. Conversely, among the weaknesses detailed in these reports, LMD has consistently noted that identifying points of distribution for commodities intended for survivors in communities who need them remains a critical weakness in the disaster logistics supply chain, and few states have logistics support plans and transportation requirements in place to support evacuations by ground or air. LMD has produced its annual LCAT program analysis report since fiscal year 2011, and the annual reports from fiscal years 2013 and 2014 both included recommendations that regions encourage states to participate in an LCAT assessment to better identify their logistics readiness needs. However, LMD's annual report does not include goals, milestones, or performance measures to assess the effectiveness of the regions' LCAT program marketing and implementation efforts.

LMD officials said they have not established goals, milestones, or performance measures for the regional offices' implementation of the LCAT program because they focus their management oversight efforts on the LCAT support provided by LMD Logistics Planning, Readiness, and Assessment Team members. For example, LMD officials said they try to ensure that their staff have the requisite LCAT marketing materials and are prepared to promote the program during speaking opportunities involving state and local logistics stakeholders. Nonetheless, the *Standard for Program Management* calls for agencies to develop meaningful measures to monitor program performance and to track the accomplishment of the program's goals and objectives. It also describes how, in monitoring programs, agencies should collect, measure, and disseminate performance information so that program managers can

determine the program's status and trends, and point to areas in need of adjustment.[31] Further, the *Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge* recommends collecting and distributing performance information, including status reports and progress measurements and reporting to all appropriate stakeholders.[32] LMD officials agreed that identifying and reporting on goals, milestones, and performance measures would enhance their oversight of the LCAT program and ability to assess regional efforts to promote and implement the program.

Implementing leading program management practices for developing measures to monitor program performance and to track the accomplishment of the program's goals and objectives could help LMD and regional logistics staff more consistently and comprehensively implement the LCAT program. Ensuring LCAT program implementation will also help LMD (1) address ESF 7 provisions calling for FEMA to conduct assessments to improve state and local logistics readiness, increase response capacity, and maximize the management and impact of homeland security resources and (2) implement guidance in FEMA's *Logistics Management Operations Manual* that holds regional logistics staff responsible for determining the infrastructure, resources, and preparedness of state and local governments to respond to likely disaster scenarios within their purview.

Conclusions

In the years since Hurricane Katrina, FEMA has taken steps to enhance collaboration with its federal partners in providing greater logistics capabilities following disasters. Specifically, FEMA's efforts in collaborating with its partners through regular meetings, working groups, exercises, training, and identification of commodities available for disaster response, as well as its development of metrics to track the on-time delivery and measure the level of disaster response commodities available have positioned the agency well to meet its federal logistics response requirements. FEMA also reaches out to state and local stakeholders, most notably through its development of the LCAT and facilitation of LCAT assessments with a number of states. While the LCAT program has yielded improvements for some states and also heightened

[31]Project Management Institute, Inc., *The Standard for Program Management ®*.

[32]Project Management Institute, Inc., *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge* (PMBOK® Guide).

FEMA's knowledge of state and local capabilities, opportunities exist to standardize and improve its implementation. For example, working to ensure that regional offices have the support and resources necessary to implement the LCAT program to the greatest extent possible could help ensure that states in all regions across the nation benefit from assessments that could highlight areas for improvement in their logistics capabilities. In addition, developing goals, milestones, and metrics could also assist LMD in overseeing and guiding greater implementation of the program across all regions. These efforts, taken together, could strengthen FEMA's efforts in helping to ensure that state and local stakeholders are as prepared as possible to respond to the needs of disaster survivors within their jurisdictions.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To enable more comprehensive and consistent regional implementation of the LCAT program, we recommend that the Secretary of Homeland Security direct the FEMA Administrator to

1. identify the LMD and regional resources needed to implement the program, and
2. establish and use goals, milestones, and performance measures to monitor program performance and report on LMD's progress in implementing the LCAT program.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We provided a draft of this report to DHS, GSA, and the Department of Defense for their review and comment. DHS provided written comments, which are reproduced in appendix III. In its comments, DHS concurred with our recommendations and described actions planned to address them. In e-mails received August 26 and 28, 2015, GSA and Department of Defense liaisons, respectively, stated that their departments had no comments on the report.

With regard to our first recommendation, for FEMA to identify the LMD and regional resources needed to implement the LCAT program, DHS stated that it recognizes the need for additional resources to continue effective LCAT program implementation. As such, DHS stated that LMD will work closely with regional logistics staff to identify additional resources—to include funding and staffing—for effective implementation of the LCAT program. DHS estimated that these actions will be completed by December 31, 2015. These actions, if implemented fully, should address the intent of the recommendation.

With regard to our second recommendation, for FEMA to establish and use goals, milestones, and performance measures to monitor program performance and report on LMD's progress in LCAT program implementation, DHS stated that LMD will work with its regional offices to develop a plan of action to include goals, milestones, and performance measures for monitoring program performance. DHS added that LMD will also periodically provide a progress report on continued LCAT program implementation, and estimated that these actions will be completed by November 20, 2015. These actions, if implemented fully, should address the intent of the recommendation.

We are sending copies of this report to the Secretaries of Homeland Security and Defense, GSA Administrator, and interested congressional committees. In addition, the report is available at no charge on the GAO website at http://www.gao.gov.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact me at (404) 679-1875, or curriec@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. GAO staff who made key contributions to this report are listed in appendix IV.

Chris P. Currie
Director, Homeland Security and Justice

List of Requesters

The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate

The Honorable Michael T. McCaul
Chairman
The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
House of Representatives

The Honorable Martha McSally
Chairman
The Honorable Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications
Committee on Homeland Security
House of Representatives

The Honorable Susan W. Brooks
House of Representatives

Appendix I: Emergency Support Function #7 (ESF 7) Support Agencies

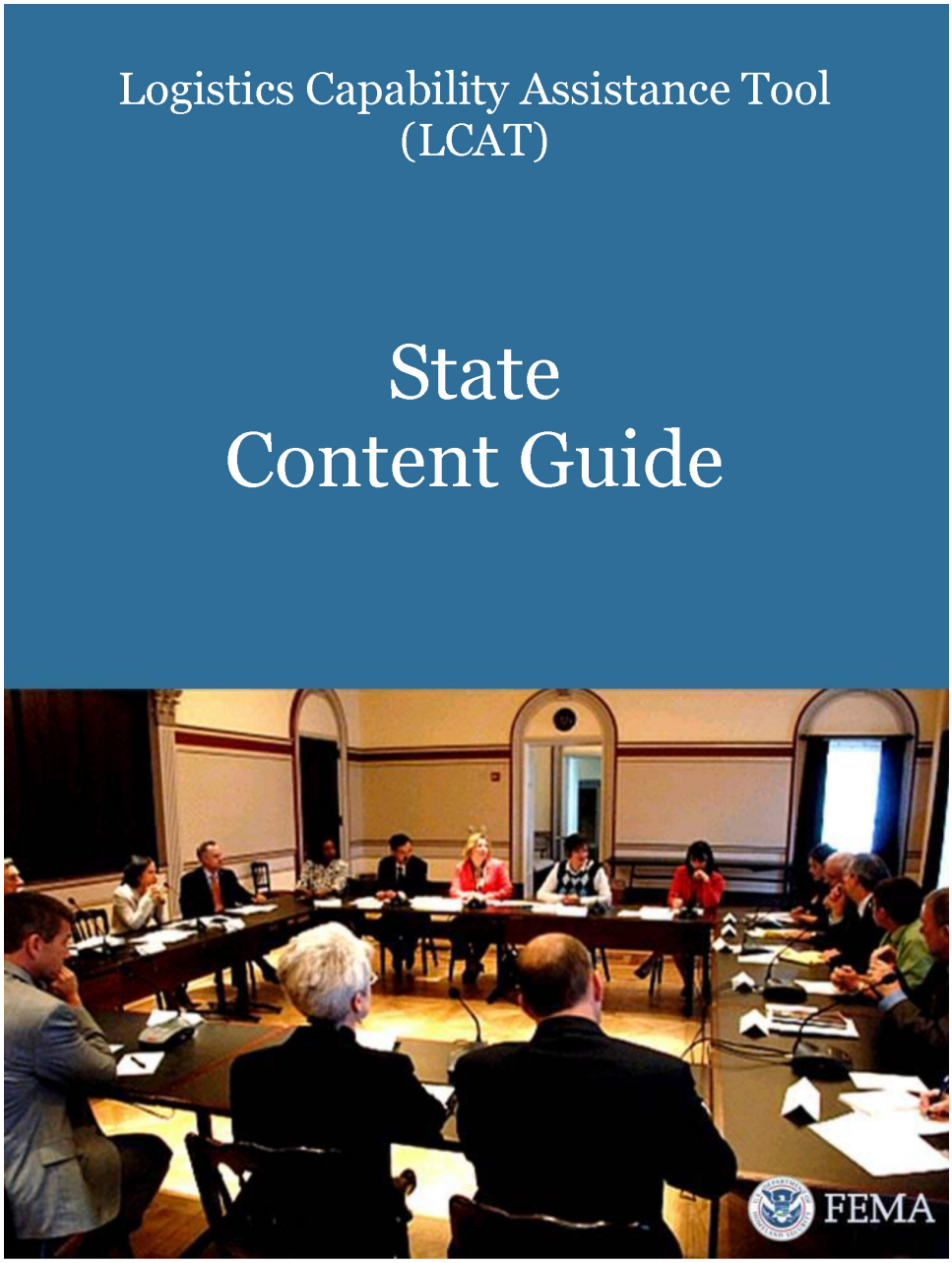
The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the General Services Administration (GSA) serve as primary ESF 7 coordinators. Other agencies that partner with FEMA and GSA in providing disaster logistics support under ESF 7 are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Support Agencies Identified for Emergency Support Function #7 (ESF 7)

Support agency
Department of Agriculture
Department of Commerce
Department of Defense
Department of Energy
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of the Interior
Department of Labor
Department of Transportation
Department of Veterans Affairs
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Office of Personnel Management
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Postal Service
American Red Cross
National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters

Source: ESF 7—Logistics Annex | GAO-15-781

Appendix II: Questions in the Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT) *State Content Guide*



Federal Emergency Management Agency – Logistics Management

1.1.1 (Q1) Has your state identified the most likely catastrophic disaster scenario and its impacts? 44

1.1.2 (Q2) Does your state have a current formal logistics plan? 45

1.1.3 (Q3) How does the state use modeling and/or geographic information system (GIS) analysis to determine logistics support requirements? 47

1.1.4 (Q4) Does your state logistics plan support an all-hazards EOP that addresses the eight key scenarios described in National Response Framework (NRF)? The eight key scenarios are explosive attack, nuclear attack, radiological attack, biological attack, chemical attack, natural disaster, cyber attack and pandemic influenza. 48

1.1.5 (Q5) How is (are) your state logistics plan(s) reviewed? 48

1.1.6 (Q6) How does the state exercise your logistics support plan? 49

1.1.7 (Q7) How is your state logistics plan incorporated into the overall emergency operations plan? Is the plan feasible? 50

1.1.8 (Q8) How does the state Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) meet requirements outlined in Comprehensive Preparedness Guidance (CPG) 101? 51

1.1.9 (Q9) How does your state capture logistics response requirements for a catastrophic disaster? 52

1.1.10 (Q10) If your state has considered a catastrophic disaster scenario(s) and its impact, what type of catastrophic scenario response planning is accomplished? 53

1.1.11 (Q11) How does your state prepare to provide commodities to affected populations in all-hazard situations? 54

1.1.12 (Q12) How does the state determine the quantities and types of critical commodities needed to support affected populations during the first 72 hours of a likely or catastrophic scenario? 55

1.1.13 (Q13) How does the state logistics plan address donated goods management? 56

1.1.14 (Q14) How does the state logistics plan address the use of volunteers? 57

1.1.15 (Q15) Have safety equipment and procedures been addressed in logistics plans and operational activities? 57

1.1.16 (Q16) What security provisions are made for distribution points? 58

1.1.17 (Q17) How are logistics requirements identified for evacuating local residents and visitors and receiving evacuees from other jurisdictions or states? 59

1.2.1 (Q18) How are risks associated with logistics plans addressed? 60

1.2.2 (Q19) How does your state identify logistics contingency response resource shortfalls? 61

1.3.1 (Q20) What access to information on post-disaster damage to transportation infrastructure does your state logistics team have? 61

1.3.2 (Q21) How are state staging areas addressed in plans? 62

1.3.3 (Q22) How are operational requirements used to determine state staging area locations? 63

1.3.4 (Q23) How are staff and material requirements for state staging area operations identified? 64

1.3.5 (Q24) To what extent have minimum buffer (safety) stock levels and restock protocols been established for commodities at state and local staging areas? 64

1.3.6 (Q25) How are PODs addressed in state's logistics plans? 65

1.3.7 (Q26) What is the state methodology for identifying POD locations? 66

1.3.8 (Q27) How has the state captured the POD concept of support in plans? 68
1.3.9 (Q28) How has the state identified staff and material requirements for POD operations? 69
1.3.10 (Q29) How has the state worked with jurisdictions (county, local, tribal, etc.) to identify or determine capabilities of other agencies or the private sector to support food distribution? 69
1.3.11 (Q30) How extensive is transportation planning for commodities and assets during an incident? 70
1.3.12 (Q31) How do state plans address transporting materials through restricted areas? 71
1.4.1 (Q32) How does the state participate in the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP)? 72
1.4.2 (Q33) Have state logistics planners completed NIMS Incident Command System (ICS) training? 73
1.4.3 (Q34) How does the state sponsor or provide staging area and/or POD training? 73
1.4.4 (Q35) How does the state plan for exercises? 74
1.5.1 (Q36) What standard operating procedures (SOP) are in place for vetting potential commodity and service providers in the state? 75
1.5.2 (Q37) Do state logistics plans include public-private engagement? 75
1.5.3 (Q38) How has the state identified potential providers for commodities, trucking, and evacuee transport? 76
1.6.1 (Q39) How does the state disaster logistics organization minimize risk of nonperformance by vendors and service providers? 77
1.6.2 (Q40) What standard operating procedures (SOP) are in place for ordering and acquiring resources and services? 78
1.6.3 (Q41) How are state sourcing decisions tied to a critical resource management plan? 79
1.6.4 (Q42) How are contracts and emergency purchase procedures linked to state accounting practices and procedures? 80
1.6.5 (Q43) If applicable, how does the state utilize General Services Administration (GSA) sourcing and contracts with the private sector? 81
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Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency. | GAO-15-781

Appendix III: Comments from the Department of Homeland Security

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Homeland Security

August 31, 2015

Chris P. Currie
Director, Homeland Security and Justice
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Re: Draft Report GAO-15-781, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: FEMA Collaborates Effectively with Logistics Partners but Could Strengthen Implementation of Its Capabilities Assessment Tool

Dear Mr. Currie:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft report. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) appreciates the U.S. Government Accountability Office's (GAO) work in planning and conducting its review and issuing this report.

The Department welcomes GAO's positive recognition that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has taken steps to enhance collaboration with its federal partners "in a manner that reflects leading practices for interagency collaboration." These efforts through regular meetings, working groups, exercises, training, identification of commodities available for disaster response, and the development of metrics to track the on-time delivery/measure the level of disaster response commodities available, have helped posture FEMA to provide greater logistics capabilities during disasters and to meet its federal logistics response requirements. FEMA remains committed to providing an efficient, transparent, and flexible logistics capability to procure and deliver goods and services to support disaster survivors and communities responding to and recovering from disasters.

The draft report contained two recommendations, with which the Department concurs. Specifically, GAO recommended that the Secretary of Homeland Security direct the FEMA Administrator to:

Recommendation 1: Identify the LMD (Logistics Management Directorate) and regional resources needed to implement the program.

Response: Concur. FEMA recognizes the need for additional resources to continue effective implementation of the Logistics Capability Assessment Tool (LCAT) program. In 2011, the LMD transferred 15 full-time positions to the FEMA Regional Offices for

additional planning support and to enhance their overall logistics capabilities. During 2012-2013, LMD developed a transition plan and transferred the LCAT facilitation responsibility to the 10 FEMA Regional Offices. As part of that transition, LMD also provided subject matter experts for training and travel funding to assist in the transition and continued facilitation sessions with the states.

LMD will work closely with the regional logistics staff to identify the additional resources needed, including funding and positions, to continue effectively implementing the LCAT program. Estimated Completion Date (ECD): December 31, 2015.

Recommendation 2: Establish and use goals, milestones and performance measures to monitor program performance and report on LMD's progress in implementing the LCAT program.

Response: Concur. LMD will develop a plan of action with the Regional Offices to include goals, milestones and performance measures to monitor program performance and to periodically provide a progress report on continued implementation of the LCAT program. ECD: November 30, 2015.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft report. Technical comments were previously provided under separate cover. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Jim H. Crumpacker, CIA, CFE
Director
Departmental GAO-OIG Liaison Office

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Appendix IV: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

Chris P. Currie, (404) 679-1875 or curriec@gao.gov

Staff Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact above, Christopher A. Keisling (Assistant Director), Adam Couvillion (Analyst-in-Charge), David Alexander, Dominick Dale, Dorian Dunbar, Eric Hauswirth, Tracey King, and Landis Lindsey all made key contributions to this report.

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