

AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

**DEFLECTING HURAKAN:
ENHANCING DOD AND DOS INTERAGENCY
HURRICANE RESPONSE OPERATIONS
IN CENTRAL AMERICA**

By

Glenn A. Rineheart, Major, USAF

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Advisor: Major Joel Bius

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Abstract

Home to over forty million people and the Panama Canal Authority, Central America serves as a pivotal commercial and energy gateway to the United States. Additionally, Central America stands as a vital U.S. political and security partner in the Western Hemisphere due to historical struggle against communist ideology and its proximity to contentious Latin American countries such as Cuba and Venezuela. Due to the combination of Central America's hurricane prone geographical location and its underdeveloped capacity to mitigate the effects of natural disasters, Central America has endured magnified levels of disaster hardships, perpetuating economic instability and inciting political volatility. If unchecked, this degraded capacity to mitigate human suffering in the wake of natural disasters such as hurricanes gives rise to greater influence by Cuba or Venezuela, illicit activities such as increased levels of narco-trafficking enterprises, or unsustainable levels of illegal immigration into the United States.

Although both the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) have collaborated for decades to effectively project U.S. relief to Central America to mitigate the effects of hurricanes, opportunities at the U.S. Government (USG) policy, operational, and tactical levels exist to enhance these collaborative efforts. This research paper will discuss the response roles of the Department of State (DoS) and Defense (DoD) in interagency Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Response (HA/DR) operations and will analyze the interagency lessons learned between Hurricanes Mitch and Felix. Based on these aforementioned interagency topics, recommend improvements at the policy, operational, and tactical levels will be asserted. The focus of these recommendations is to enhance USG interagency HA/DR capabilities while building host nation capacity against the destructive force of 'Hurakan' - the ancient Mayan god of wind and storm and origin of the word "hurricane".¹

Introduction

Central America, comprised of the countries of Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, is home to over forty million people who have come to comprise the seventeenth largest destination of U.S. exports worldwide since the establishment of the 2004 Central America Free Trade Agreement – Dominican Republic (CAFTA-DR).² As home to the Panama Canal Authority, Central America also serves as a pivotal commercial and energy gateway to the greater Latin America region whose “substantial energy reserves supply 28 percent of U.S. petroleum imports and 95 percent of U.S. natural gas imports.”³ In contrast, the Middle East provides the U.S. with only 17 percent of its oil imports.”⁴ In addition to its significant commercial and energy importance to the U.S., Central America is a vital U.S. political and security partner in the Western Hemisphere due to its historical struggle against communist ideology and its proximity to contentious Latin American countries such as Cuba and Venezuela.

Due to its geographical location which is prone to channel hurricanes into the region and its underdeveloped capacities to mitigate the effects of natural disasters, Central America has endured magnified levels of hardship imposed by hurricanes. Through the loss of thousands of lives and millions of dollars in property damage, hurricanes have inflicted tremendous developmental setbacks to this already politically fragile region of the Western Hemisphere. Although many of the losses sustained from hurricanes are unavoidable, some second and third order effects could be mitigated or averted all together through greater government mitigation capacity. The absence of this capacity and lack of demonstrated government resolve to conduct humanitarian aid, manifests populous doubt in the effectiveness and legitimacy of Central American governments charged to protect their citizens. In short, the wake of devastating

hurricanes in Central America perpetuates economic instability and political volatility. If unchecked, this will manifest into greater influence by Cuba or Venezuela, illicit activities such as increased levels of narco-trafficking enterprises, or unsustainable levels of illegal immigration into the United States. Although these courses of action are rooted in the name of human survival in Central America, they pose national security threats to the United States.

In light to the aforementioned threats to U.S. national interests and security, the U.S. Department of State (DoS) is interested in mitigating the devastating effects of hurricanes and other natural disasters in Central America. Through its extensive history of projecting aid to Central America in the wake of natural disasters, the DoS has strengthened U.S. diplomatic ties with these countries. Moreover, the DoS's projection of goodwill not only has assisted those struggling to rebuild their lives, but it has safeguarded those striving to live in free and democratic societies. In short, the DoS's projection of disaster relief into Central America enables "furthering America's foreign policy interests in expanding democracy and free markets while improving the lives of citizens of the developing world. This compassion stands as a hallmark of the United States around the world— and shows the world our true character as a nation and as a people."⁵

Correspondingly, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) has also recognized foreign aid in the form of humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HA/DR) as a formidable vehicle for achieving U.S. security objectives and fortifying security cooperation relations in Central America. The "strategic communication" generated from DoD presence during natural disasters and co-opt capacity building projects bolster positive public relations and good will towards the United States amongst Central American counties. Through strengthened security cooperation in Central America, the DoD also gains heightened visibility, insight, access, influence,

interoperability, and coalition-building with military and civilian host nation counterparts throughout the region. These gained capabilities not only reinforce U.S. security interests throughout Central America, but enhance the U.S.'s ability to shape the regional security environment, and bolster host nation capacity to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the effects of natural disasters.⁶

During this time of constrained government resources, it is imperative that the U.S. government as a whole integrates its instruments of national power to synergistically leverage their independent capabilities to counter the devastating first, second, and third order effects produced by Central American hurricanes. The DoS, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Office (OFDA), projects disaster relief and humanitarian assistance to Central America through the coordination and distribution of critically needed goods and services donated by U.S. federal agencies, private donors, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Adding to this effort, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), through U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHSCOM), projects HA/DR to Central America through the rapid deployment, delivery, and dispersion of critically needed goods and services geared to meeting emergency/first response requirements.

Although both the USAID and USSOUTHCOM have collaborated for decades to effectively project U.S. relief to Central America to mitigate the effects of hurricanes, opportunities to further enhance these collaborative efforts exist at the U.S. Government (USG) policy, operational, and tactical levels. This research paper will discuss the response roles of the DoS and DoD in interagency HA/DR operations and will analyze the interagency lessons learned between 1998's Hurricane Mitch and 2007's Hurricane Felix. Based on these aforementioned interagency HA/DR topics, recommended improvements at the policy, operational, and tactical

levels will be asserted. The focus of these recommendations is to enhance USG interagency HA/DR capabilities while building host nation capacity against the destructive force of ‘Hurakan’ - the ancient Mayan god of wind and storm and origin of the word “hurricane”.⁷

Department of State Response Role

In order to explore where improvements may be made in collaborative USAID/OFDA and USSOUTHCOM hurricane responses in Central America, it is important to establish the basic structure and processes that govern each of these organizations. Since the DoS is the US agency that is the initial responder to these disasters, it will be discussed first. USAID’s lineage stems back to the Marshall Plan which led the reconstruction efforts of many devastated European countries after World War II. Later in 1961, President Kennedy recognized the need for consolidating foreign assistance efforts, which at the time were dispersed across various government programs and federal agencies, by signing into law the Foreign Assistance Act which created USAID.⁸

In 1963, President Kennedy witnessed two foreign disasters that exposed the USG’s limited capacity to timely coordinate humanitarian assistance abroad. The first disaster occurred in March when Costa Rica endured an eruption of the Irazú volcano resulting in catastrophic destruction, hundreds of deaths, and thousands of wounded and displaced people. The second occurred in July when an earthquake struck Skopje, Yugoslavia (now the Republic of Macedonia) killing over a thousand people and demolishing most of the Macedonian capital. Frustrated by the inefficiencies uncovered in the USG’s ability to timely organize and project US humanitarian response to these disasters, Washington officials recognized the need for a central authority to coordinate foreign disaster assistance. As a result, in 1964, USAID’s Administrator, David E. Bell, expanded USAID organization by appointing the first Foreign Disaster Relief

Coordinator, whose office eventually became the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).⁹

Since 1964, USAID/OFDA has been the USG's first responder to foreign disasters and has adopted the mandate "to save lives, alleviate human suffering, and reduce the social and economic impact of humanitarian emergencies worldwide."¹⁰ Currently USAID/OFDA possesses a world-wide staff of approximately 250 personnel and responds to approximately fifty to sixty emergencies per year.¹¹ However, it is important to note that the primary responsibility for disaster relief rests with the government of the affected country. USAID/OFDA provides humanitarian assistance to effected countries, but it cannot substitute as the effected countries' principle plan nor agency for disaster response. With this being said, USAID/OFDA will only respond to a foreign disaster if and when the U.S. Ambassador or the Chief of Mission in an impacted country has officially declared a disaster has occurred based on three criteria:

- 1) The magnitude of the disaster exceeds the affected country's capacity to respond.
- 2) The affected country has requested or is willing to accept USG assistance.
- 3) It is in the interest of the USG to provide assistance.¹²

Once the U.S. Ambassador or the Chief of Mission has confirmed the three aforementioned criteria, he/she will issue a disaster declaration and is authorized to release up to \$50,000 of USAID/OFDA funds to assist local ground efforts to meet immediate needs. USAID/OFDA then coordinates closely with the U.S. embassy's attached USAID/OFDA field office to determine what further level of USG HA/DR response will be appropriate, if any. Depending on the severity of the disaster, various levels of the USAID/OFDA national, regional-assigned, and country-assigned organizational hierarchy will be alerted to respond. In the event of rapid-onset disasters such as earthquakes or flash floods, the USAID/OFDA's duty officer in Washington,

D.C., along with relevant regionally-assigned USAID/OFDA support staff personnel, will be alerted. Once alerted, these USAID/OFDA members are placed on standby to readily support the impacted country's USAID/OFDA field office. In the case of Central America, the relative USAID/OFDA regional advisor (RA) office responsible for all of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is located in San Jose, Costa Rica.¹³ The LAC RA not only provides continuous support and guidance to its region's USAID/OFDA field offices, but it serves as liaison between these field offices and the HQ USSOUTHCOM and Washington D.C. USAID/OFDA offices. Additionally, the LAC RA monitors all OFDA-funded Central American activities and maintains a close working relationship with of the host nation disaster response officials.¹⁴

Although the relationship between the LAC RA and the host nation disaster response officials is vital in responding to natural disasters, the key facilitator to the LAC RA's relationship and coordination with the host nation lies with the U.S. embassy's Mission Disaster Relief Officer (MDRO). Typically filled by USAID/OFDA personnel, the MDRO may also serve as the USAID/OFDA's field office for a particular country. During the first response phase of a disaster, the MDRO serves the pivotal role of providing LAC RA's initial understanding and scope of the disaster, as well as an initial estimate of what type and level of USG response may be required. Additionally, "the MDRO coordinates the embassy's disaster response efforts and prepares and maintains the mission disaster relief plan (MDRP). The MDRO ensures that mission personnel are familiar with the MDRP's contents, liaises with government disaster authorities on an ongoing basis to ensure familiarity with disaster risks and organizational response capacities or arrangements, serves as the chief operating officer for the

post's Emergency Action Committee (EAC) during all phases of a disaster, and acts as the post's coordinator of USG in-country disaster relief operations.”¹⁵

In the event of a slow-onset, impending natural disaster such as an approaching hurricane, USAID/OFDA may opt to augment pre-position personnel and/or staged relief supplies in countries expected to be impacted. This augmentation of assets enhances the Chief of Mission and MDROs posture to execute its MDRP and improves humanitarian assessment reports to the LAC RA office, critical for subsequent USG response planning. Depending on the complexity and magnitude of the disaster, USAID/OFDA may also deploy specialized technical specialists to better assess specific humanitarian needs.¹⁶ In the event of a large-scale, extended response disaster such as massive floods and landslides produced from hurricanes, it may be necessary for the USAID/OFDA Washington D.C. office to deploy a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to the impacted region.¹⁷

The DART provides specialists trained in a myriad of disaster relief skills to assist the Chief of Mission and MDRO with the assessment and prioritization of humanitarian needs, as well as the management of the USG's follow-on response. In order to quickly identify and better understand the priority of needs, DART personnel coordinate closely with local and international organizations that may have greater knowledge of the situation and/or better access throughout the impacted area. To enhance the capacities of these local or international organizations, DART personnel often provide them with technical and financial assistance in the field. These field organizations often include local branches of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and Inter-Government Organizations (IGOs) such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).¹⁸ “DARTs are the most visible form of a USG response and also

the least-used response option due to the high cost of deploying them. Upon arrival, team specialists in areas such as water and sanitation, health, nutrition, shelter, agriculture, livestock, or protection conduct rapid assessments. Administrative, communications, and information officers work to support assessment teams by relaying information on urgent needs and recommendations to Washington, D.C.”¹⁹ In addition to the assigned specialist, the DART may possess personnel from the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams from either Los Angeles County, California and/or Fairfax County, Virginia. Lastly, the DoD Combatant Commander (CCDR) responsible for the impacted country may coordinate with USAID/OFDA to deploy a military assessment team along with the DART to gain a coherent and inclusive picture of the situation.²⁰

Although a DART may deploy to respond to a disaster that impacts a single country, it may also be postured to support an entire region the size of Central America. As a DART is alerted to deploy, another USAID/OFDA agency known as the Response Management Team (RMT) is alerted in Washington, D.C. Designed to provide the DART an elevated level of USG support, the RMT is the DART’s liaison to the USAD/OFDA Washington D.C. office when coordinating USG strategy and response activities with other federal agencies. To maximize the unity of effort between activities on the ground and USG disaster response from the CONUS, the appointed DART leader reports to both the relative Chief of Mission(s) and to the RMT.²¹

As the need for relief supplies is recognized during the assessment of a moderate or massive disaster response, USAID/OFDA institutes a “pull” versus “push” method of delivering and distributing relief supplies in Central America. According to the HQ USSOUTHCOM USAID/OFDA office, USAID/OFDA deploys relief supplies to Central America based on the assessed need of a present crisis and not on the estimates of future disaster that may never occur.

The reason for this approach in Central America is twofold. First, USAID/OFDA does not have the personnel resources to manage the warehouses that would stockpile large quantities of emergency relief supplies in each Central American country. Second, if host nations were made responsible to manage warehouses of USAID/OFDA supplies, past experience has shown corruption and/or substandard management of these warehouses lead to the disappearance or illegitimate use of these supplies during non-emergency activities, resulting in gaps of supplies when real needs arise. Hence, USAID/OFDA relief supplies are provided based on the “pull” requirements vetted from disaster assessments versus “pushing” supplies for the sake of stockpiling.²²

Therefore, in the event a need for USAID/OFDA emergency relief supplies is recognized in Central America, the respective MDRO via the LAC RA office and/or the DART via the RMT will submit their vetted requests to the USAID/OFDA logistics officer in Washington, D.C. The USAID/OFDA logistics officer in turn publishes a solicitation for bid for transport to commercial shipping companies to quickly deliver stockpiled relief supplies from one of three USAID/OFDA warehouses to the disaster area. This solicitation for bid function, however, is now often delegated to the USAID/OFDA office embedded in USSOUTHCOM J9 directorate. Located in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Pisa, Italy, and Miami, Florida, USAID/OFDA warehouses stockpile plastic sheeting, water containers, water purification units, blankets, electric generators, chain saws, and general sanitary/health supplies.²³ Although the bulk of USAID/OFDA relief supplies warehoused are typically transported via commercial aircraft, the DoD has been utilized to transport urgently needed supplies depending on needs of the DoD elsewhere and the duration and complexity of the crisis. Once supplies are delivered to the disaster area, the MDRO or DART logistics officer ensures procedures are in place so these

supplies reach implementing partners for distribution to the affected populous. If the delivered USAID/OFDA-provided commodities do not sufficiently alleviate the disaster-affected populous, USAID/OFDA may also provide the funds to procure relief supplies from the local economy.²⁴

Department of Defense Response Role

In 1986 Congress first authorized the DoD to participate in HA/DR activities under the Office of the Secretary of Defense's (OSD's) Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC) office. Although these activities were initially limited to transporting DoD excess non-lethal property, privately donated humanitarian goods and relief supplies to countries in need, the DoD's recognized unique expeditionary capabilities would soon expand its HA role in 1996 to include initiating contracts and deploying U.S. military personnel to execute HA ground projects. Title 10 U.S.C., section 2561, instituted these expanded DoD HA Programs (HAP) and charged the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) to manage the Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA) appropriation, the primary funding source of for DoD HA actions.²⁵

The DoD in its foreign HA/DR role possesses two general response options to natural disasters. The first response option occurs during a rapid-onset disaster when lives are in immediate danger and the respective CDR is in a position to render timely life-saving assistance as requested by the U.S. Ambassador or Chief of Mission.²⁶ In this case the CDR has the authority to act without OSD approval and may render immediate aid. However, the CDR must report his/her actions to the OSD within 72 hours to secure OSD approval for continued assistance during this first-response phase and for follow-on phases of the HA/DR operation on hand. It is important to note that the CDR may not be reimbursed by the DoS for

operational expenses incurred during this first-response phase. Hence, as overseers of the OHDACA account, the SO/LIC office and DSCA must be closely involved during this phase of initial response to assure funding is available to DoD units. The second response option occurs outside of the rapid-onset/ time-sensitive situation where USAID/OFDA is the lead agency and the DoD is a “provider of last resort”. This role is implicitly stated below in the May 4, 2004 Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) message addressing “Policy and Procedures for Department of Defense Participation in Foreign Disaster Relief/Emergency Response Operations.”²⁷ Please note the below 2004 OSD message is available in its entirety under Appendix I.

POLICY

2. DOD'S ROLE IN DISASTER RESPONSE IS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE U.S.GOVERNMENT APPROACH IN WHICH THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/OFFICE OF FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE **(USAID/OFDA) IS THE LEAD AGENCY.** IN THIS CAPACITY, USAID/OFDA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING APPROPRIATE U.S. GOVERNMENT (USG) CONTRIBUTIONS AND COORDINATING OVERALL USG DISASTER RESPONSE ACTIVITIES. PRIOR TO THE COMBATANT COMMANDS' COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES TO DISASTER RESPONSE, USAID/OFDA VALIDATES THE HUMANITARIAN REQUIREMENT AND THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE APPROVES SPECIFIC REQUESTS FOR DOD SUPPORT.²⁸

Paragraph 3 purposely omitted.

4. **DOD IS A PROVIDER OF LAST RESORT** IN DISASTERS BECAUSE OTHER AGENCIES, BOTH WITHIN THE USG AND INTERNATIONALLY, ARE DESIGNATED AS THE PRIMARY RESPONDERS TO DISASTERS. DOD INVOLVEMENT IN DISASTER RESPONSE ON OTHER-THAN-IN-EXTREMIS TERMS DEPLETES LIMITED DOD RESOURCES AND DIVERTS PERSONNEL AND MATERIEL FROM CORE MILITARY MISSIONS AT A TIME OF EXTRAORDINARILY HIGH OPERATIONAL TEMPO. FURTHER, UNSOLICITED OR VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM DOD RISK BURDENING THE HOST NATION WITH UNNEEDED OR NONESSENTIAL RESOURCES AND POTENTIALLY SLOW DELIVERY OF MORE URGENT SUPPLIES AT AIR OR SEA PORTS IN THE HOST NATION.²⁹

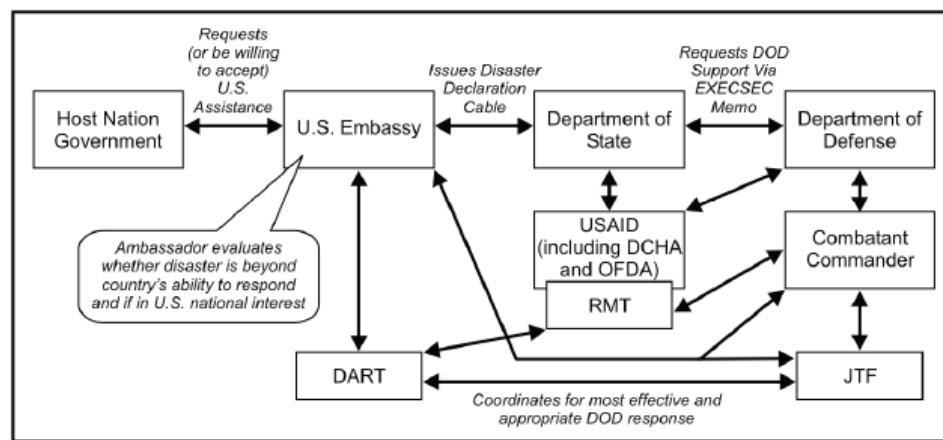
The 2004 OSD message also specifies that if DoD assistance is required by a DART or Chief of the Mission, their request cannot be submitted directly to the responsible CCDD, but must be processed through the USAID/OFDA office in Washington D.C. From the

USAID/OFDA office in Washington D.C, the request is forwarded up to the Secretary of State who in turn formally requests for DoD assistance through an official cabinet-level Executive Secretariat (EXECSEC) memorandum from the DoS to the DoD. The EXECSEC memorandum is a vital mechanism for interagency operations for several reasons. First, it ensures OSD visibility as well as decision-making authority over DoD assigned personnel and assets. Second, it ensures that any request for DoD assistance has been reviewed, vetted, and validated through DoS senior management. Third, the EXECSEC memorandum ensures that, based on the DoS's assessed needs and suggested responses, the DoD is capable to respond to the disaster at hand. Finally, the EXECSEC memorandum allows DoD HA/DR managers to review the request against other demands for limited DoD HA/DR resources.³⁰

Upon DoD receipt of the EXECSEC memorandum from the DoS, it is reviewed by the DoD's SO/LIC office which in turn researches, coordinates, and recommends an appropriate level of DoD assistance. The recommendation is then forwarded to senior DoD leadership for review. If the recommendation is approved, DSCA will then confirm financial and logistical specifics in coordination with the respective CDR, USAID/OFADA, the Joint Staff, and other pertinent USG agencies. Upon DSCA notification to the OSD that all preparations are finalized, the Joint Staff will direct the DoD HA/DR mission to be executed authorizing the CDR and/or JTF commander to further coordinate with the U.S. Ambassador and/or DART on how to best utilize apportioned DoD assets.³¹

Upon notification that DSCA's HA/DR recommendation to support USAID/OFDA efforts is approved by DoD senior leadership, the DoD and USAID will expeditiously exchange liaison officers either at the Joint Task Force (JTF), responsible CDR headquarters, and/or at the Joint Staff. The liaison officers fulfill a critical role by conveying assessments, requirements,

current operations status, and resources for HA/DR plan development. In the case of a large HA/DR operation, a JTF may be established at which time the DART will more than likely be co-located with it. If a JTF is not established, a military liaison officer will be assigned to the DART and/or the USAID/OFDA field office as well as the RMT staff in a Washington D.C.³² Figure 1, shown below, is taken from the U.S. Army's Graphic Training Aid (GTA) 41-01-006, WORKING WITH THE OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE and provides an illustration of the DoS request for DoD HA/DR assistance process.



In the case of Central America, USSOUTHCOM is the Combatant Command responsible for Central America as well as all of South America. Just as USAID and OFDA emerged from functional necessity in the years surrounding WWII, USSOUTHCOM's origins evolved from President Roosevelt's U.S. Caribbean Defense Command which was charged to defend the Panama Canal and surrounding region from 1941 to 1947.³³ In the 1950s, the command's scope of responsibility expanded from missions solely in the Caribbean to operations focused predominately in Central and South America. In 1963, just two years after President Kennedy established USAID and one year before he established OFDA, President Kennedy renamed the command to its current name in order to better define its scope of responsibility.³⁴ Today, USSOUTHCOM is headquartered out of Miami, Florida, and it commands an array of various

organizations capable of expeditiously conducting HA/DR operations via different mediums throughout Central America, South America and the Caribbean.³⁵ Although all of USSOUTHCOM's assigned organizations contribute to projecting HA/DR operations into Central America, the predominate organizations engaged with the operational aspect of HA/DR missions are the 12th Air Force (Air Forces Southern), the U.S. 4th Fleet (U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command), and Joint Task Force – Bravo (JTF-B).

Located at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, the 12th Air Force (AFSOUTH) represents U.S. Air Force capabilities in the AOR and executes command and control over all air activity USSOUTHCOM's region. AFSOUTH “serves as the executive agent for forward operating locations; provides joint/combined radar surveillance architecture oversight; provides intra-theater airlift; and supports USSOUTHCOM's Theater Security Cooperation Strategy through regional disaster relief exercises and counter-drug operations. AFSOUTH also provides oversight, planning, execution, and logistical support for humanitarian and civic assistance projects and hosts a number of Airmen-to-Airmen conferences.”³⁶

Augmenting AFSOUTH's air capabilities is Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) CORONET OAK which operates out of the 35th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron located at Muñiz Air National Guard Base, Puerto Rico. As an AEF, CORONET OAK operations are sustained by a constant two week rotation of Air Force Active Duty, Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC), and Air National Guard (ANG) C-130 aircraft, aircrews, support, and maintenance personnel charged to provide airlift support operations to the USSOUTHCOM AOR year round.³⁷ While under USSOUTHCOM's operational control (OPCON), AEF CORONET OAK C-130s deliver a variety of vital capabilities to USSOUTHCOM's HA/DR mission in Central America to include

theater airlift, search and rescue operations, embassy support, and evacuation of U.S. citizens capacity.³⁸

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command (USNAVO) is the USSOUTHCOM'S U.S. maritime authority and is charged to direct naval forces and collaborate with partner nations "to shape the maritime environment within United States Southern Command's Area of Focus (AOF)."³⁹ Headquartered out of Mayport Naval Base, Florida, USNAVO commands the U.S. 4th Fleet which in turn exercises OPCON over all assigned forces conducting Maritime Security Operations (MSO) in support of USSOUTHCOM objectives and assigned tasks. The U.S. 4th Fleet "acts in concert with other U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) components, coalition forces, and Joint Task Forces to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in the USSOUTHCOM area of focus."⁴⁰ Lastly, USSOUTHCOM's JTF-B, located at Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras, operates a forward, all-weather day/night C-5-capable airbase equipped with a permanently-based fleet of four U.S. Army C-47D Chinook and ten UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters from the US Army South's (USARSO) 1-228 Aviation Battalion.⁴¹ In addition to providing direct vertical lift supporting Central American HA/DR operations, JTF-B also organizes multilateral exercises and counterdrug operations in Central America.⁴²

Interagency Operations in Central America

Each year the DoD has historically participated in less than 5% of USAID/OFDA's HA/DR operations world-wide.⁴³ In contrast to this world-wide average, from FY 1993 to FY 2008, the DoD via USSOUTHCOM had participated in nearly 28% of Central America's 58 reported USAID/OFDA HA/DR operations delivering relief aid mounting to \$56.9 million in USAID funds (not corrected for inflation). Consequently, of these 58 reported USAID/OFDA HA/DR operations, 41 (or 70.7%) were in response to flooding caused by torrential down pours

from hurricanes or tropical storms which significantly disrupted land transit lines of communication. Although Nicaragua has historically been the Central American country most often assisted by USAID/ODFA with 15 HA/DR operations totaling \$11.4 million from FYs 1993 to 2008, Honduras has been the largest recipient of USAID funds mounting to \$17.5 million for its 11 HA/DR operations during this period. Additionally, Honduras has been the recipient of the greatest amount of DoD HA/DR support in Central America with 45% of its USAID/OFDA responses being supported by DoD assets. A historical breakdown of each of the USAID/OFDA Honduran HA/DR operations is listed in the Table 1, shown below. Note that nine of the eleven crisis endured by Honduras were due to flooding.

FY	Honduras		
	Crisis	USAID Funds \$1K	DoD Participation? (Type)
1993	Flooding (TS Gert)	\$76.80	No
1994	Flooding	\$25.00	No
1995	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	n/a	n/a	n/a
1997	Flooding	\$191.50	Yes (Strat Alft)
1998	Fire	\$1,250.00	No
1999	Flooding (Hcn Mitch)	\$14,809.80	Yes (Helo Alft, Strat Alft))
2000	Flooding	\$416.60	No
2001	Drought	\$175.00	No
2002	Flooding (Hcn Michelle)	\$191.50	Yes (Helo Alft)
2003	n/a	n/a	n/a
2004	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006	Flooding (TS Gama)	\$225.50	Yes (Helo Alft)
	Flooding (Hcn Beta)	\$91.90	Yes (Helo Alft, Strat Alft)
2007	n/a	n/a	n/a
2008	Flooding	\$50.00	No
Total =		\$17,503.60	DoD Participation = 45.45%

The content provided in Table 1 is derived from USAID/OFDA's annual reports from FY 1993 to FY 2003. Tables detailing the historical breakdown of USAID/OFDA's and DoD's HA/DR activities in each Central American country may be found in Appendix II.⁴⁴

In referencing the historical tables found in Appendix II, it is easy to conclude Central America's chronic vulnerability to flooding in the wake of hurricanes and tropical storms is the prevailing natural disaster throughout the region. Consequently, USSOUTHCOM and USAID/OFDA have recognized that Central American HA/DR operations is a problem that manifests itself every hurricane season and it will require continuous collaboration between these two agencies and Central American host nations for the foreseeable future. Hence, in order to optimize USG capacities to surmount these inevitable HA/DR challenges, USSOUTHCOM and USAID/OFDA must capitalize on the positive and negative lessons from past interagency HA/DR operations and seek improved methods to streamline collaborative operations. Two of the most challenging interagency HA/DR operations in Central America were 1998's Hurricane Mitch and 2007's Hurricanes Felix.

Hurricane Mitch

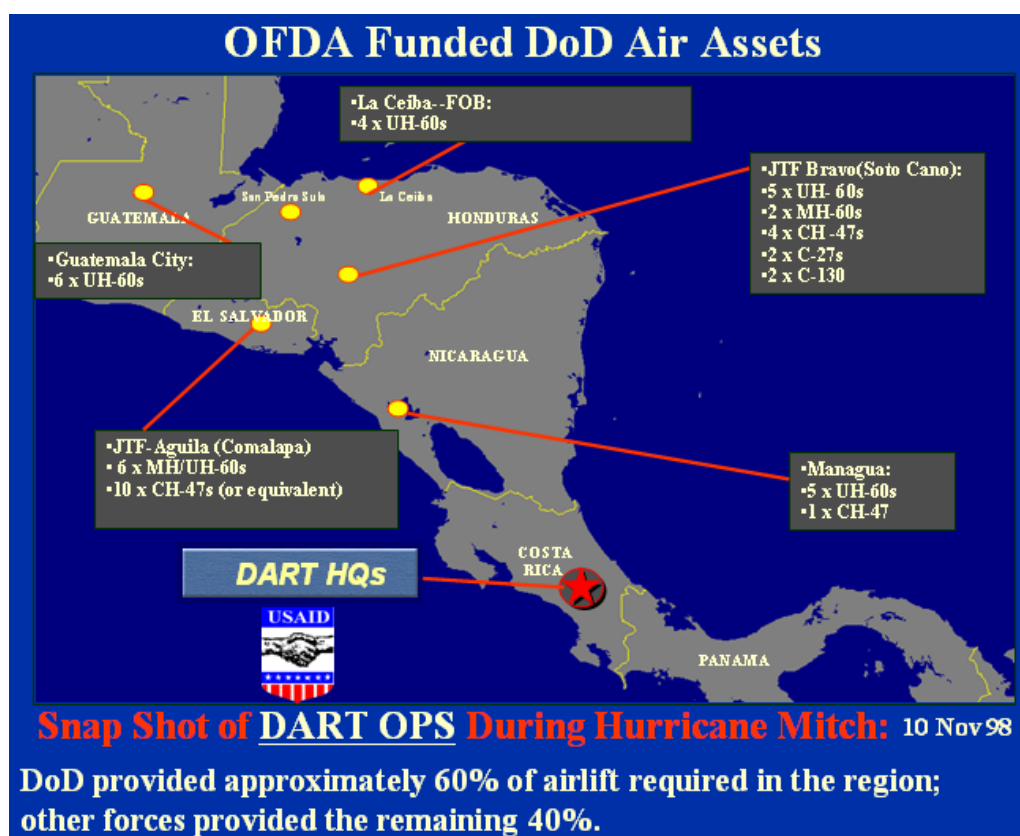
Between October 26th and 27th of 1998, Hurricane Mitch reached its peak strength as a category 5 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale with sustained winds of 180 miles per hour (mph) as it approached Honduras.⁴⁵ Fortunately, by the time Hurricane Mitch made landfall over Honduras on October 30th, its winds had diminished to 80 mph, reducing it to a category 1 hurricane. However, despite its degraded strength, Hurricane Mitch became the deadliest and most destructive Atlantic hurricane to impact the Western Hemisphere since the Great Hurricane of 1780.⁴⁶ While Hurricane Mitch impacted Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua the greatest, it also affected the countries of Belize and Costa Rica.⁴⁷ In total, the effects projected by Hurricane Mitch's ferocity would result in over 10,000 deaths, over 13,000 people missing, and over two million people left homeless or displaced due to their homes being destroyed.⁴⁸ Furthermore, 60 percent of the Guatemalan, Honduran, and Nicaraguan

transportation infrastructure was destroyed along with over 300 bridges and countless miles of road washed away.⁴⁹

Prior to it making landfall, USAID/OFDA closely monitored Hurricane Mitch's strength and forecasted route. As the storm's path narrowed in on Central America, USAID/OFDA assertively contracted commercial airlift to pre-position relief assets from its Miami warehouse to staging facilities throughout the region. Immediately after Hurricane Mitch made landfall over Honduras, a DART was established and headquartered in the LAC Regional Office in San Jose, Costa Rica where LAC Senior Regional Advisor, Paul Bell, assumed the dual role of DART leader.⁵⁰ Soon after, the newly established Hurricane Mitch DART headquarters began to receive quick-response DART support personnel from various U.S. locations. From San Jose, the DART headquarters lead team orchestrated the management of damage and relief assessments, matched inbound USG relief supplies, and coordinated multinational efforts through its liaison DART personnel forward deployed to Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. With more than 30 personnel assigned, the DART headquarters lead team was comprised of USAID/OFDA and Food for Peace (FFP) members, as well as liaisons and personnel from USSOUTHCOM and the Miami-Dade, FL Fire Rescue Department.⁵¹

Just as USAID/OFDA had quickly established a DART headquarters in at the LAC RA office in San Jose, the DoD expeditiously responded to the DoS's request for HA/DR support by immediately deploying support assets to Soto Cano AB, Honduras to augment Joint Task Forces Bravo (JTF-B). As USSOUTHCOM's designated lead forward unit in command, JTF-B became the coordination and execution hub of Hurricane Mitch HA/DR support operations known as Operation FUERTE APOYO ("Strong Support").⁵² USAID/OFDA liaisons would soon join JTF-B in order to relay DART headquarters direction and coordinate DoD aircraft logistics.⁵³

Due to the wide breadth of destruction sustained throughout Central America, USSOUTHCOM would expand Operation FUERTE APOYO's base of operations by establishing Joint Task Force-Aguila ("Eagle") at Comalapa Air Base, El Salvador, in order to coordinate medical, engineer, and humanitarian relief for 20.3 million people in the countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua.⁵⁴ Furthermore, as HA/DR needs were further assessed, smaller forward operating bases (FOBs) were established in locations such as La Ceiba, Honduras, and Guatemala City, Guatemala. Collectively, these DoD operating locations would ultimately establish an elaborate relief distribution network sustained by 39 DoD helicopters and six DoD fixed-wing aircraft.⁵⁵ Produced by the Center of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CDMHA), Figure 2 below illustrates where DoD air assets were eventually distributed in order to satisfy the needs assessed.⁵⁶



As JTF-B and the DART headquarters began to integrate host nation information and capabilities into their planning, there were regrettably clear signs that these Central American countries severely lacked the plans and disaster management structures to address a disaster of this magnitude - despite the historical recurrence of major hurricanes in the area.⁵⁷ Most Central American governments were found instituting ad hoc national crisis structures and plans as the destructive effects of Hurricane Mitch unfolded. Many host nation emergency structures soon became overwhelmed with the massive influx of uncoordinated international assistance leading to inefficiencies in distributing foreign aid. Additionally, the lack of host nation interior interagency cooperation amongst host governments led to several civilian agencies being marginalized by the nations' military which ironically had the resources to boost some of these civilian agencies' response capacities. To further exacerbate the situation, the sporadic flow of information from within and between the affected Central American countries hindered the coordination and distribution of emergency relief to those in need.⁵⁸

While the USG response to Hurricane Mitch was not as discombobulated as that of Central American governments', the USG interagency response did experience duplication of effort resulting from confused mandates and lack of coordination between the agencies, ultimately resulting in unnecessary costs to U.S. taxpayers.⁵⁹ As a result, various USAID recommendations were made to reinforce interagency unity of effort in future disasters. These recommendations included naming a senior manager for each major foreign disaster and establishing clarity on interagency division of labor as soon as possible.⁶⁰ Key to establishing clarity between USAID/OFDA and USSOUTHCOM was the identified need for persistent information sharing and planning coordination efforts. To affect this requirement, a permanent

USAID/OFDA office within HQ USSOUTHCOM was consequently established within its Interagency J9 Directorate.⁶¹

At the conclusion of Hurricane Mitch HA/DR operations, USAID/OFDA had provided \$38 million to fund commercial transport, NGO grants, and DoD aircraft supporting damage assessments, relief distribution, and search and rescue operations. Added to this, the DoD provided \$150 million in medical assistance, damage assessments, relief supplies transport, and infrastructure repair.⁶² Overall, “the USG regional response to Hurricane Mitch (was) the most significant contribution ever made toward a natural disaster by the USG, and it surpassed the magnitude of any previous disaster response in Latin America and the Caribbean.”⁶³ Following Hurricane Mitch’s initial-response phase, the USG announced that additional assistance in the sum of \$563 million would be granted to Central America for rehabilitation, reconstruction, and disaster management programs.⁶⁴ In addition to the above assistance, President Clinton ordered in March of 1999 the implementation of the Central American Mitigation Initiative (CAMI). Appointing USAID/OFDA as CAMI’s implementer, the \$11 million initiative aimed to “reduce or negate the impact of natural disasters in Central America by financing activities that increased the capability of regional, national, municipal, and community authorities and organizations to forecast, monitor, respond to, and prevent disasters.”⁶⁵

Following the imprudent remised disaster management displayed by the host nations during Hurricane Mitch, CAMI’s first order of business was to fund an assessment conducted by the International Resources Group (IRG) to determine the shortcomings of Central American disaster response and mitigation capacities. The findings within the IRG’s assessment eventually armed USAID/OFDA with the root causes behind the frailty of Central American disaster mitigation capabilities. USAID/OFDA then began formulating cooperation plans with other

USG agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to build disaster management capacity at the Central American national, municipal, and community levels.

Although various hurricanes such as Keith in 2001, Iris and Michelle in 2002, Beta in 2006, and Dean in 2007 would later moderately challenge host Central American and USG interagency HA/DR capacities, it was 2007's Hurricane Felix that would significantly engage Nicaragua's renewed emergency response programs as well USG interagency capabilities.⁶⁶

Hurricane Felix

Prior to the 2007 hurricane season, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) forecasters warned Atlantic hurricane activity for 2007 would be above average.⁶⁷ In light of this warning, USAID/OFDA heightened coordination/preparedness efforts early in the hurricane season with the Central American emergency management organizations created or enhanced after Hurricane Mitch. One of these emergency management organizations was Nicaragua's Sistema Nacional para la Prevención, Mitigación y Atención a Desastres (National System of Disaster Prevention) also known as "SINAPRED".⁶⁸ As previously accomplished prior to Hurricane Mitch making landfall, USAID/OFDA again contracted commercial airlift to pre-position relief supplies from its warehouse in Miami to vulnerable areas of Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, and Nicaragua as Hurricane Felix emerged from the Atlantic and honed in on Central America in early September.

On September 4th Hurricane Felix made landfall on Nicaragua's Mosquito Coast as a category five hurricane, ultimately claiming the lives of 102 people and affecting 180,000 others by destroying more than 19,000 houses located in the Nicaragua's northeast department known as the North Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAN).⁶⁹ Although a DART was not established for Hurricane Felix, a 10-person USAID/OFDA emergency response team was deployed to the

Nicaraguan capital of Managua on September 4th to initially assess the scope of the damage sustained. In light of the vast magnitude of RAAN destruction uncovered, the USAID/OFDA emergency response team commenced a coordinated response with the Government of Nicaragua (GON) authorities, Nicaragua's SINAPRED, U.N. agencies, the DoD, and various NGOs. Provided by the National Weather Service and NOAA, Figure 3 below depicts Hurricane Felix' track as it impacted Nicaragua on September 4, 2007.⁷⁰



On September 5th, U.S. Ambassador Paul A. Trivelli issued a disaster declaration, and in turn, a DoS EXECSEC memorandum was submitted to the DoD requesting disaster humanitarian assistance that same day.⁷¹ On September 6th, USAID/OFDA dispatched a forward assessment team to the RAAN capital of Puerto Cabezas (also known by its Miskito name "Bilwi"), where the team further coordinated with Nicaragua's SINAPRED, the Nicaraguan Red Cross, and Catholic Relief Services (CRS). As initial damage assessments were

reported up to HQ USSOUTHCOM's J9 USAID/OFDA office on September 6th, USAID/OFDA authorized \$675,000 to purchase local relief supplies and contracted commercial airlift to deliver initial response supplies from USAID/OFDA's warehouse in Miami, Florida to Puerto Cabezas. Upon delivery of the relief commodities to Puerto Cabezas, USAID/OFDA, DoD, and NGOs coordinated efforts to distribute food, blankets, hygiene kits, and plastic sheeting for temporary shelters to thousands of residents during the several days.⁷² However, access to some of the remote villages spread throughout the RAAN department were difficult, if not impossible, to access by ground due to roads being washed away or blocked by debris. Recognizing that vertical lift capabilities were essential to deliver time-sensitive relief to these inaccessible locations, USAID requested USSOUTHCOM to provide vertical and intra-theater lift support to transport relief supplies as per the September 12, 2007 USAID memorandum located in Appendix III.⁷³

Coincidentally, during this period USSOUTHCOM's multinational exercise, FA PANAMAX 2007 was underway near Panama testing the DoD's "ground, sea and air responses to any request from the government of Panama to assist in protecting and guaranteeing safe passage through the (Panama) canal and ensuring its neutrality."⁷⁴ Participating in FA PANAMAX 2007 was the amphibious ship, USS Wasp (LHD 1), and the guided missile frigate, USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58). Upon receipt of USAID's airlift request, USSOUTHCOM re-tasked the helicopters embarked on the USS Wasp supporting FA PANAMAX 2007 to augment those helicopters attached to JTF-B which was leading U.S. military relief efforts.⁷⁵ Immediately following this tasking, CH-47 Chinooks, MH-53 Sea Dragons, SH-60 Seahawks and UH-60L Blackhawks commenced a surge of air bridge missions transporting USAID/OFDA provided relief supplies from Managua to Puerto Cabazas.⁷⁶ These aircraft would also execute "spoke and hub" tactical

airlift missions from the Puerto Cabezas to remote affected RAAN villages delivering these supplies. In addition to rotary asset support, USSOUTHCOM tasked a USMC KC-130 to assist the Managua air bridge and a USAF C-130 to transport USAID/OFDA aid from Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida to directly to Puerto Cabezas.⁷⁷

These DoD aircraft would later be joined by other military airlift assets from Spain, Honduras, Brazil, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala and yes, Venezuela, aimed at assisting the Nicaraguan Air Force lift capacity.⁷⁸ The magnitude of this multinational airlift relief operation would soon come to resemble another massive airlift operation that sustained Berlin 60 years earlier. Provided by the “Ejército de Nicaragua” (Nicaraguan Army), Figure 4 below illustrates the “Puente Aéreo” (Air Bridge) aerial corridors and distribution hubs flown by multinational aircraft or “Medios Extranjeros De Ayuda Humanitaria” (Humanitarian Help form Foreign Mediums) supporting relief efforts in the RAAN region.⁷⁹



As the U.S. representative to these partnering countries' military forces, DoD personnel soon became critical liaisons by which the Nicaraguan and the aforementioned foreign militaries could associate with and coordinate relief efforts, not only between each other, but with USAID/OFDA's orchestrated efforts. Although these foreign militaries were not operating as a structured coalition, they operated as a cooperative group. From the sharing of information supporting Puerto Cabezas flight operations to coordinating which airlift assets were responsible for which affected RAAN areas, this cooperation reduced duplication of efforts and enhanced relief distribution. On September 13th, the USS Samuel B. Roberts and its SH-60 Seahawk helicopters relieved the USS Wasp and its assets in order to sustain HA/DR operations with JTF-B for an additional two weeks.⁸⁰ Besides delivering relief supplies to these remote RAAN areas, DoD helicopters also performed medical evacuation and reconnaissance missions. As crews flew over the RAAN area they observed what areas were impacted the worst and relayed back their respective coordinates - greatly expediting USAID/OFDA and NGO partners capabilities to distribute relief where it was needed the most.⁸¹

By the end of the crisis phase on September 18th, USSOUTHCOM airlift had delivered "an estimated 165 MT of emergency relief supplies from OFDA's Miami warehouse as well as various donated supplies via 115 relief flights from Puerto Cabezas to 37 hurricane-affected communities. In addition, DoD transported 20 GON Ministry of Health personnel to various affected communities and airlifted 74 injured or sick persons to Puerto Cabezas."⁸² In total, the USG provided more than \$3 million in relief to Nicaragua in the wake of Hurricane Felix – more than \$1.5 million was provided via USAID/OFDA and \$1.5 million via the DoD. Although the scope of damage that Hurricanes Mitch and Felix projected over Central America differed considerably, the improvements triggered by the lessons of Hurricane Mitch ultimately enabled

the Nicaraguan people to surmount the effects of Hurricane Felix faster - saving an untold number of lives. Notably amongst these improvements were Nicaragua's SINAPRED's and HQ USSOUTHCOM's J9 USAID/OFDA office's ability to affect coordinated response efforts more efficiently. Although the availability of additional USN rotary-wing assets to augment JTF-B's fleet was a benefit of circumstance and DoD flexibility, the additional airlift assets provided by Spain, Honduras, El Salvador, Brazil, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and yes, Venezuela, provided a glimpse of what could be accomplished through enhanced interagency and multinational collaboration.

Recommendations

Since 1999 improvements, including the introduction of HQ USSOUTHCOM's J9 USAID/OFDA office and the Central American Mitigation Initiative (CAMI), have enabled the DoS and the DoD to make significant strides in improving interagency and host nation HA/DR capabilities in Central America. However, there are several policy, operational, and tactical improvements that are worth exploring in order to further promote efficiency and effectiveness during interagency HA/DR operations in Central America. From a policy level, USAID must be granted greater influence in determining what level of DoD assistance is required during the initial response phases rapid-onset HA/DR operations. There have been cases in the wake of rapid-onset disasters that U.S. ambassadors have gone directly to their respective Combatant Command (COCOM) to request military assistance prior to the commencement of the EXECSEC. Although the 72 hour rule enables COCOMS to quickly respond to save life and limb, it is important to note that this approach bypasses USAID/OFDA expertise and input, limiting US first response capabilities.⁸³ Another instance in which USAID/OFDA's inputs may be marginalized occurs during the EXECSEC process when the request for assistance

memorandum is sent between one cabinet-level office to another (DoS to DoD). In this case, “USAID’s authority and interaction with the DoD has often been subordinated to that of the U.S. ambassador, the regional bureaus, and more specifically, DoS’ Executive Secretariat” (who are normally not versed in HA/DR issues and procedures).⁸⁴ As a result, COCOMs sometimes render services even when USAID/OFDA assessments have concluded that such assistance may not be required, thus wasting taxpayers’ dollars.

In the case of a medium to small scale disasters such as Hurricane Felix where senior NSC direct attention is not pressuring the coordination process along, the DoS EXECSEC process requesting DoD support may take anywhere from 7 to 14 days to complete due to a lack of vigilant anticipation or urgency manifested either from a lapse in education and/or expertise within the processing staff. In the aforementioned cases, pointed and periodic education amongst the interagency community may be the solution. Consequently, the DoD has proactively developed programs to inform DoS EXECSEC and regional bureau personnel with non-USAID backgrounds on the correct procedures and rules governing the assessment of DoD-assisted HA/DR operations in order to avert delays and wasting assets.⁸⁵ USAID/OFDA has also joined in this venture by regularly presenting a Joint Humanitarian Operations Course (JHOC) to COCOM staffs to help COCOM personnel better understand HA/DR responsibilities and capabilities of non-DoD agencies and associated procedures and rules.⁸⁶ Another medium to further educate and inform vested parties is the Foreign Disaster Relief Standing Committee. Created in 2007, this forum provides the vehicle by which the USG’s main disaster relief offices, including the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency’s (DARPA) Contracts Management Office (CMO) within the DoD, USAID/OFDA, as well as the DoS bureaus of Political-Military Affairs (PM) and Refugees, Population, and Migration (RPM), “gather on a regular basis to

compare notes, float proposals, coordinate policies, and identify key areas for further improvement.”⁸⁷ Bottom line, continuous education amongst the vested interagency parties must be made a priority.

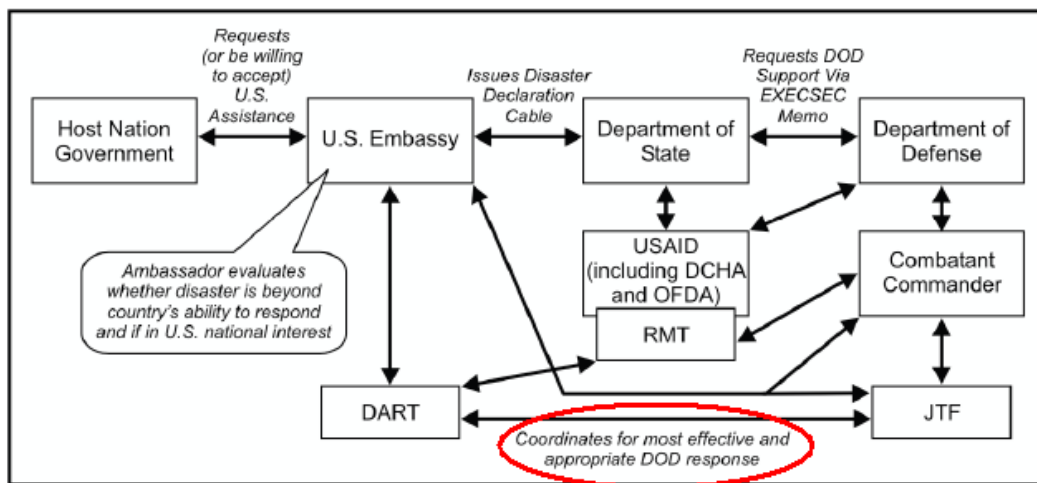
One potential solution to this situation may be the implementation of a National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) which grants USAID cabinet-level authority during rapid-onset HA/DR operations. This NSPD would empower USAID to bypass the DoS cabinet-level approval step altogether during time-sensitive HA/DR operations and directly submit a request for DoD assistance through the EXECSEC process.⁸⁸ Another potential solution and perhaps a more attainable improvement is revamping DoD policy which “generally discourages the sharing of DoD contingency plans with non-DoD agencies or offices unless the secretary of defense explicitly authorizes it.”⁸⁹ Currently in the case of HA/DR contingency plans, COCOMs must request interagency coordination “through the Joint Staff to the National Security Council (NSC) for interagency staffing and plan development.”⁹⁰ To streamline this process and enable a greater degree of interagency insight and “cross-talk”, the DoD should revise this policy and allow COCOM commanders to coordinate directly with its interagency partners during the planning of HA/DR contingency operations, versus staffing it through the Joint Staff and the NSC.⁹¹

Although the EXECSEC process has proven to be the right USG mechanism to manage large disasters such as the Haiti earthquake of 2010 where “a huge multi-agency, cross-institutional response over a wide geographical area” is required, a less detailed and cumbersome process maybe appropriate for medium and small disasters.⁹² In these cases where the type of DoD assistance needed is specific and limited in scope such as the requirement for vertical lift to deliver relief supplies, the approval to employ military this type of HA/DR assets should not require cabinet-level coordination. Therefore, for medium and small disasters it is more

efficient, accurate, and ultimately more effective for the appropriate officers from the “DoS, USAID/OFDA, DoD, and the local regional COCOM (to) have a four-way dialogue to determine if military assistance is necessary. If the answer is yes, then USAID/OFDA will fax a one-page “letter of commitment” stating that this is indeed the case to the regional COCOM, a copy of which is sent simultaneously to the CMO office in DoD.”⁹³ In this instance the efficiency of “parallel planning” can be gained for as the intra-DoD coordination is made to gain OSD approval for an appropriate course of action, the regional COCOM may simultaneously commence organizing response measures based of the faxed USAID letter of commitment. This “second tier” method of requesting DoD support in HA/DR would potentially reduced the traditional EXECSEC process (requiring two to three days just to complete the DoS-USAID-DoD coordination alone) down to approximately twelve hours.⁹⁴

Just as there are policy improvements that would expedite and enhance HA/DR interagency operations worth consideration, there are several operational improvements in the USSOUTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR) which are also worth exploring. One operational improvement within the USSOUTHCOM AOR worth consideration would be moving the USAID/OFDA LAC regional office from San Jose, Costa Rica to Soto Cano AB, Honduras. Although this operational improvement would require an initial monetary investment, moving the LAC regional office, comprised of 6 Regional Advisors (RA) and 15 to 20 administrative personnel, to Soto Cano AB possesses significant advantages and unparalleled crisis mitigation potential.⁹⁵ First, the host nation government/military insight, humanitarian assessment/assistance experience, streamlined interagency coordination, and unmatched personal relationships that would be gained between collocated personnel from LAC regional office, alerted DART headquarters personnel, and JTF-B would notably mitigate a myriad of

interagency operational disconnects. These disconnects include, but are not limited to, failed or misinterpreted expectations, the duplication of effort, misidentified implied tasks, confusion manifested from vague guidance, all perpetuating interagency cultural divergence. In referring back to Figure 1 from the US Army's Graphic Training Aid (GTA) 41-01-006, WORKING WITH THE OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE, the below illustration deliberately highlights that in HA/DR operations the most effective and appropriate DoD response is coordinated *between* the DART and the JTF. Collocation of these organizations unquestionably would greatly enhance USG interagency HA/DR capacities.



Although technology such as shared internet planning/coordination websites and video teleconferences (VTCs) currently enable these critical geographically separated organizations to closely coordinate HA/DR operations, these virtual technologies will never replace the flexibility, creativity, dialogue, perspective exchange, mission comfort, clarity, and enhanced command and control gained by the interagency personal and “faith based” relationships developed from these organizations operating from a collocated location. Not to mention all these communication technologies maybe susceptible to failure due to a myriad of reasons – especially during hurricanes.

Second, by being outfitted with a C-5 capable runway, the collocation of these organizations at Soto Cano AB would provide a large enough USG footprint and ideal location to manage a USAID relief supply warehouse comparable to the one located in Miami. Although this warehouse would still be required to be stocked by the warehouse in Miami, replenishment of supplies could be done via less expensive sea-lift or non-immediate commercial airlift during the hurricane offseason while still preserving USAID's "pull" versus "push" distribution of aid mandate. Ultimately, the time dividends gained by eliminating the necessity of commercial or DoD airlift to deliver HA/DR supplies from Miami to Soto Cano AB during a rapid onset HA/DR crisis are immeasurable.

Third, the collocation of the LAC RA office and JTF-B would present an ideal location for USG/multinational conferences, training exercises, and host nation HA/DR capacity building programs. First-hand insight into on-scene resources, operational capabilities, and potential interoperability capacities would greatly enhance typically Miami-based HA/DR seminars such as the 2007 Integrated Regional Humanitarian Assistance (INTERHANDS) conference. Co-sponsored by USSOUTHCOM and USAID/OFDA, the 2007 INTERHANDS conference gathered senior representatives from regional governments and humanitarian relief organizations to discuss "coordination and cooperation between military and civilian agencies during disaster relief operations in the region."⁹⁶

In the realm of USSOUTHCOM fielded exercises, direct integration of the LAC RA office into this training would greatly heighten capacity awareness and expand USG insight into Central American civil and military culture. Two such USSOUTHCOM exercises are Beyond the Horizon (BTH) and Iguana Voladora ("Flying Iguana"). BTH exercises are designed to "provide persistent U.S. regional support through assessment, construction, and sustainment

activities over a three-year period. Construction projects normally include schools, clinics, community centers, water wells, and other quality of life enhancement facilities for the host nation.”⁹⁷ Each BTH exercise lasts several months and would greatly benefit by being augmented by USAID/OFDA personnel. Iguana Voladora is an annual multinational military airdrop training exercise hosted by JTF-B designed to bring together the “unique blend of various customs and cultures with a common effort towards understanding each country's military posture and decision-making processes.”⁹⁸ Iguana Voladora is a critical vehicle in uniting Central American leaders by providing them an “environment in which to meet their counterparts and execute high-risk and extremely motivating military operations together. It is intended to be a continuation of multinational operations that enhance participating countries' stability and abilities to support their neighbors in times of crisis.”⁹⁹ USAID/OFDA presence in these DoD exercises would lend the opportunity for USAID associate HA/DR capacities with foreign military leaders, expanding their insight while potentially planting the seeds for future multinational HA/DR operations.

Lastly, collocation of the LAC RA office and JTF-B would enhance USAID/OFDA programs currently based out of San Jose, Costa Rica such the Regional Disaster Assistance Program (RDAP). RDAP is the primary vehicle for USAID/OFDA's support of disaster risk management in LAC which supports a “consultant network of 21 disaster management specialists dispersed throughout the region.”¹⁰⁰ Through RDAP, USAID/OFDA renders technical assistance aimed to enhance “local and regional abilities to respond to emergency needs by increasing understanding of disaster preparedness and mitigation activities, as well as encouraging intra and inter-governmental coordination in all risk management initiatives.”¹⁰¹ The integration of DoD personnel in RDAP would not only enhance the program's breadth and

capabilities, but through association with DoD personnel, RDAP-sponsored non-military host nation agencies could gain enhanced credibility in the eyes of their host nation's military which often marginalize these non-military agencies.

Just as there are several interagency improvements in policy and operational realms worth exploring, multiple opportunities worthy of consideration within the tactical/embassy level also exist. First, in examining USSOUTHCOM's fielded airlift assets, the option of permanently moving CORONET OAK operations from Muñiz Air National Guard Base, Puerto Rico to Homestead AFB, Florida for the purposes of better staging DoD airlift assets in proximity of the USAID Miami warehouse was explored. However, upon interviewing CORONET OAK personnel and discussing alternative staging options to make HA/DR operations more efficient, it was discovered that the time gained by not having to deploy aircraft from Muñiz Air National Guard Base to Homestead AFB was not cost effective when taking into account that Homestead AFB does not have the capacity to maintain C-130 aircraft. However, temporarily staging CORONET OAK C-130s at Homestead AFB and or positioning USAID supplies at Homestead AFB as a hurricane approaches Central America may be an option worth pursuing.¹⁰²

Second, upon interviewing JTF-B personnel on what improvements could be pursued in enhancing interagency HA/DR operations, an operations officer from the 1-228th Aviation Regiment noted that there was a significant need for DoD airfield suitability reports (ASR) to be conducted on a more frequent basis for those airfields located at Central America's rural locations. The absence of current ASRs in these areas greatly limit the accessibility of C-130 or C-17 aircraft to deliver USAID/OFDA relief supplies which could then be distributed by JTF-B helicopters. Additionally, since JTF-B helicopters are not air refuelable, the inability for C-130

or C-17 aircraft to stage fuel bladders at these remote airfields limits JTF-B presence over the affected area.¹⁰³

Third, upon interviewing several U.S. embassy Military Group and MDRO personnel in Central America, the overarching opportunity for improvement in interagency HA/DR collaborations was the need for better communication between the two offices. Often serving as the USG's front line to establishing host nation relations and security cooperation, U.S. embassy Military Groups and MDROs throughout Central America play a critical role in facilitating interagency efforts focused toward building host nation HA/DR capacity through the Humanitarian Assistance of Disaster Preparedness Program (HAP).¹⁰⁴ In light of the CAMI findings following Hurricane Mitch, Guatemala was identified as severely lacking the capacity to manage large natural disasters. As result, a HAP project via the USG through the DoD, USAID, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) collaborated with Guatemala's "Coordinadora Nacional para la Reducción de Desastres" (CONRED) (National Coordinator for Disaster Mitigation) to build an Emergency Operation Center (EOC) in Guatemala City. The aim of the EOC HAP was to create an environment and central location where CONRED could plan for, train for, and execute government responses to natural disasters.¹⁰⁵ Since becoming operational, the CONRED's EOC HAP has been the keystone to Guatemalan disaster preparedness, response, and mitigation capacity development and served as an example for the rest of Central America.

During an interview with the operations officer for the U.S. embassy Military Groups in Guatemala, CONRAD's EOC was acknowledged as a key venue where Guatemalan disaster representatives and U.S. embassy Military Groups, MDRO and/or USAID/OFDA country personnel could meet and productively coordinate disaster response development.

However, due the fluidity of information outside of the EOC setting, ad hoc, separate, and uncoordinated discussions between the CONRAD and the Military Group and between the CONRAD and the MDRO ensued situations in which the Military Group and the MDRO were not always in “lock step” or operating from a common operating picture with respect to CONRAD-U.S. Embassy coordination matters. Consequently, the operations officer noted that USSOUTHCOM had initiated efforts to mitigate this information gap by ordering all Military Group personnel to coordinate all host-nation HA/DR discussions, assertions, and initiatives with the MDRO or the USAID/OFDA country representative.

Following the USSOUTHCOM directive emphasizing assertive communication, the operations officer observed that either a parallel mandatory mandate did not exist for MDRO personnel or the expected detail/urgency level of information originating from the MDRO was perhaps unintentionally limited due to dissimilarities in cultural paradigms. As a result, these information gaps led to interagency frustration manifested from the periodic duplication of effort and Military Groups and MDRO actions that were not always complimentary.¹⁰⁶ Although this gap in coordination between these agencies may be easily remedied through consistent communication between the agencies, it illustrates how a minor difference in organizational paradigms could fester into interagency divergence, mistrust, and counterproductive operations if unchecked. In sum, understanding and respecting the organizational cultural differences between USAID/OFDA and DoD personnel is key in fostering effective interagency working relationships enabling greater insight and access to each other’s organizational capabilities. The synergy gained through mutual respect and understanding ultimately adds velocity to finding solutions to multifaceted HA/DR problems. Hence, it is imperative that trusted interagency lines

of communication at every USG level are established early and continuously nurtured in order to in avert situations in which the projection of USG HA/DR relief could have been more efficient.

Summary and Conclusion

Central America has made substantial progress in strengthening its internal disaster mitigation programs. However, its substandard infrastructure will remain vulnerable to complex natural disasters such as seasonal hurricanes for the foreseeable future. Due to U.S. political, security, commercial, and energy interests dependent on a stable Central America, the need for enhanced USG interagency HA/DR capabilities to mitigate regional disaster vulnerabilities is imperative. This emphasis is reinforced in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review which states “Our defense posture in the Western Hemisphere will support interagency capabilities to address critical issues including control of illicit trafficking, detection and interdiction of weapons of mass destruction, border and coastal security, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.”¹⁰⁷

For decades USAID/OFDA and USSOUTHCOM have collaborated and succeeded in enhancing the projection of U.S. relief to Central America. However, opportunities exist at the USG interagency policy, operational, and tactical levels to further enhance these collaborative efforts. Although the policy and tactical level recommendations asserted in this paper are worth exploring, it is the operational recommendation of moving LAC Regional Office to Soto Cano AB, Honduras, which presents the greatest opportunity for enhanced interagency HA/DR operations. The synergy leveraged by the interagency personal and “faith based” relationships developed from these organizations operating from a collocated location would parallel the interagency success garnered by HQ USSOUTHCOM and its J9 USAID/OFDA office. Additionally, the trusted interagency personal relationships between these organizations would synergistically drive further policy corrections needed to remedy uncovered interagency

inefficiencies, considerably adding velocity to solution mechanisms focused to surmount multifaceted HA/DR challenges. In sum, the establishment and preservation of trusted lines of communication between these agencies at every USG level truly make the whole of USG interagency effort greater than the sum of its individual parts. The synergy and solidarity manifested from trusted USG actors actively cooperating to succeed in HA/DR operations will conclusively enhance the U.S. and Central American human endeavor of deflecting the destructive effects of ‘Hurakan’.

Appendix I

041549Z May 04

UNCLASSIFIED

FROM: SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//USDP/SOLIC/SO//

SUBJECT: POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
PARTICIPATION IN FOREIGN DISASTER RELIEF/EMERGENCY RESPONSE
OPERATIONS

STATE PASS MESSAGE TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS.
DIA PASS MESSAGE TO USDAOS.
COMMANDS PASS MESSAGE TO COMMAND SURGEONS.

REFERENCES:

- A. SECTIONS 401, 402, 404, 2557 AND 2561, TITLE 10, UNITED STATES CODE
- B. APRIL 2003 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION GUIDANCE
- C. SECTION 8077, FY04 DOD APPROPRIATIONS ACT (P.L. 108-87)
- D. SECTION 312, FY04 DOD AUTHORIZATION ACT (P.L. 108-136)
- E. DODD 5100.6 FOREIGN DISASTER RELIEF
- F. USAID/OFDA GUIDANCE MESSAGE (STATE 283715)
- G. USAID/OFDA SUPPLEMENTARY MESSAGE (STATE 019667)

1. SUMMARY. THIS IS A JOINT MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT (SO/LIC) AND THE DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY (DSCA). THIS MESSAGE PROVIDES GUIDANCE ON RESPONSE BY REGIONAL COMBATANT COMMANDS TO NATURAL OR MANMADE DISASTERS IN THEIR AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ELABORATES GUIDANCE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. END SUMMARY.

POLICY

2. DOD'S ROLE IN DISASTER RESPONSE IS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE U.S. GOVERNMENT APPROACH IN WHICH THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/OFFICE OF FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (USAID/OFDA) IS THE LEAD AGENCY. IN THIS CAPACITY, USAID/OFDA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING APPROPRIATE U.S. GOVERNMENT (USG) CONTRIBUTIONS AND COORDINATING OVERALL USG DISASTER RESPONSE ACTIVITIES. PRIOR TO THE COMBATANT COMMANDS' COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES TO DISASTER RESPONSE, USAID/OFDA VALIDATES THE HUMANITARIAN REQUIREMENT AND THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE APPROVES SPECIFIC REQUESTS FOR DOD SUPPORT (EXCEPT AS NOTED IN PARAGRAPH 5 BELOW).

3. A REQUEST FOR DOD ASSISTANCE TRANSMITTED DIRECTLY TO THE COMMAND FROM A HOST NATION OR FROM A U.S. COUNTRY TEAM IS NOT SUFFICIENT

GROUNDS TO JUSTIFY DOD PARTICIPATION IN A DISASTER RESPONSE BECAUSE:
 (A) HOST NATIONS OFTEN MISDIAGNOSE THEIR MOST URGENT NEEDS OR MAKE
 INAPPROPRIATE REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE (E.G., REQUEST FOR HELICOPTER
 SUPPORT TO FERRY HOST NATION OFFICIALS AROUND A DISASTER ZONE); AND
 (B) COUNTRY TEAMS MAY LACK EXPERTISE TO MAKE A FULLY-INFORMED
 HUMANITARIAN ASSESSMENT.

4. DOD IS A PROVIDER OF LAST RESORT IN DISASTERS BECAUSE OTHER
 AGENCIES, BOTH WITHIN THE USG AND INTERNATIONALLY, ARE DESIGNATED AS
 THE PRIMARY RESPONDERS TO DISASTERS. DOD INVOLVEMENT IN DISASTER
 RESPONSE ON OTHER-THAN-IN-EXTREMIS TERMS DEPLETES LIMITED DOD
 RESOURCES AND DIVERTS PERSONNEL AND MATERIEL FROM CORE MILITARY
 MISSIONS AT A TIME OF EXTRAORDINARILY HIGH OPERATIONAL TEMPO.
 FURTHER, UNSOLICITED OR VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM DOD RISK
 BURDENING THE HOST NATION WITH UNNEEDED OR NONESSENTIAL RESOURCES AND
 POTENTIALLY SLOW DELIVERY OF MORE URGENT SUPPLIES AT AIR OR SEA PORTS
 IN THE HOST NATION.

5. ONE LIMITED EXCEPTION TO THE REQUIREMENT FOR PRIOR OSD APPROVAL IS
 WHEN LIVES ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER AND THE COMMAND IS IN A POSITION
 TO RENDER TIMELY LIFE-SAVING ASSISTANCE (E.G., AN AMPHIBIOUS READY
 GROUP/MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT OFF THE ANATOLIAN COAST RESPONDED
 WITH IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE 1998 TURKEY EARTHQUAKE.)
 HOWEVER, THE COMBATANT COMMAND WILL FOLLOW UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE,
 BUT NOT LATER THAN 72 HOURS, TO SECURE OSD APPROVAL FOR CONTINUING
 ITS ASSISTANCE. THE COMMAND WILL CURTAIL SUPPORT ONCE URGENT
 LIFE-THREATENING CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED UNLESS OSD GIVES
 APPROVAL TO CONTINUE PROVIDING SUPPORT. SUCH ASSISTANCE DOES NOT/NOT
 INCLUDE THE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL CONSUMABLES OR OTHER RELIEF ITEMS "IN
 THE BLIND," WHERE THESE SUPPLIES DO NOT CONTRIBUTE TO URGENT
 LIFE-SAVING EFFORTS.

6. SOLIC AND DSCA GUIDE THE OSD PART OF THIS PROCESS BECAUSE OF THEIR
 ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITY FOR HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ISSUES
 WITHIN OSD AND THEIR OVERSIGHT OF THE OVERSEAS HUMANITARIAN DISASTER
 AND CIVIC AID (OHDACA) ACCOUNT, WHICH PROVIDES THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF
 FUNDING FOR DOD HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITY. HOWEVER, APPROVAL FROM OSD
 FOR DISASTER RESPONSE IS REQUIRED REGARDLESS OF THE ULTIMATE SOURCE
 OF FUNDING FOR DOD PARTICIPATION.

PROCEDURE

7. IN THE EVENT OF A MAJOR OVERSEAS DISASTER, THE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO
 THE AFFECTED COUNTRY ISSUES A DISASTER DECLARATION. SUBSEQUENTLY,
 USAID/OFDA MAY RELEASE UP TO 50,000 USD IN DISASTER ASSISTANCE FUNDS,
 MANAGED BY USAID/OFDA, TO ADDRESS IMMEDIATE HUMANITARIAN NEEDS.

8. IF THE DISASTER REQUIRES SIGNIFICANT INTERNATIONAL RELIEF SUPPORT,
 USAID/OFDA MAY SEND A REGIONAL ADVISOR OR OTHER STAFF TO THE REGION,

OR DEPLOY A DISASTER ASSISTANCE RESPONSE TEAM (DART). THE DART HAS THE LEAD RESPONSIBILITY IN ASSESSING CRITICAL UNMET NEEDS IN THE AFFECTED AREA AND RECOMMENDING THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE USG RESPONSE, AS WELL AS COORDINATING THE OVERALL USG RESPONSE EFFORT. ALL REQUESTS FOR USG ASSISTANCE ARE VALIDATED BY USAID/OFDA REPRESENTATIVES. THE COMBATANT COMMANDS MAY ALSO DEPLOY A MILITARY TEAM FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES AFTER COORDINATION WITH USAID/OFDA. THIS MILITARY TEAM WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH THE USAID/OFDA REPRESENTATIVES TO ENSURE A COHERENT AND COMPREHENSIVE PICTURE OF REQUIREMENTS AND PROPOSED USG RESPONSE.

9. ALL VALIDATED REQUESTS FOR DOD ASSISTANCE ARE TRANSMITTED FROM THE DART OR OTHER DESIGNATED USAID/OFDA REPRESENTATIVE TO USAID/OFDA HEADQUARTERS AND THEN THROUGH STATE DEPARTMENT TO DOD WITH AN EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT (EXECSEC) REQUEST. THE EXECSEC REQUEST IS CRITICAL FOR SEVERAL REASONS: (A) IT PRESERVES VISIBILITY AND DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ON USE OF DOD ASSETS AND PERSONNEL; (B) IT HELPS ENSURE THAT THE REQUEST HAS BEEN VETTED AND VALIDATED THROUGH SENIOR MANAGEMENT AT USAID AND STATE; AND (C) IT ALLOWS OSD HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE MANAGERS TO REVIEW THE REQUEST AGAINST OTHER POTENTIAL DEMANDS ON LIMITED DOD DISASTER RESPONSE RESOURCES.

10. THE EXECSEC REQUEST IS FORWARDED TO THE SPECIAL OPERATIONS/LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT OFFICE (SO/LIC) IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (OSD), WHICH PREPARES AND COORDINATES A RECOMMENDATION ON THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF DOD ASSISTANCE TO BE PROVIDED. THIS RECOMMENDATION IS FORWARDED TO SENIOR DOD LEADERSHIP FOR REVIEW AND DECISION BASED ON THE FOLLOWING FACTORS: (A) AVAILABILITY OF THE REQUESTED DOD SUPPORT; (B) THE IMPACT OF SUCH SUPPORT ON OTHER MILITARY OPERATIONS; (C) THE URGENCY OF THE DISASTER SITUATION; AND (D) THE POLITICAL CALCULUS ASSOCIATED WITH DOD INVOLVEMENT.

11. IF SENIOR DOD LEADERSHIP APPROVES THE RECOMMENDATION, THE DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY (DSCA) FINALIZES LOGISTICAL AND FINANCIAL DETAILS IN COORDINATION WITH THE COMBATANT COMMAND, USAID/OFDA, JOINT STAFF, AND OTHER RELEVANT OFFICES. UPON NOTIFICATION BY DSCA THAT ALL PREPARATIONS ARE COMPLETE, JOINT STAFF DIRECTS THAT THE MISSION BE EXECUTED.

12. POINTS OF CONTACT: OASD(SO/LIC): TODD HARVEY, DIRECTOR HA/LP, (703) 697-3191; DSCA: DIANE HALVORSEN, DIRECTOR HA/MA, (703) 601-3660. DURING OFF-DUTY HOURS, POCS CAN BE REACHED THROUGH THE EXECUTIVE SUPPORT CENTER AT (703) 614-9058.

Appendix II

Table 2

FY	Guatemala		
	Crisis	USAID Funds \$1K	DoD Participation? (Type)
1993	n/a	n/a	n/a
1994	n/a	n/a	n/a
1995	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	n/a	n/a	n/a
1997	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998	Fire	\$1,781.20	Yes (Strat Alft, Helo Alft)
1999	Flooding (Hcn Mitch)	\$1,272.70	Yes (Helo Alft)
2000	n/a	n/a	n/a
2001	Drought	\$25.00	No
2002	Drought	\$500.00	No
2003	n/a	n/a	n/a
2004	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005	Landslides	\$30.90	No
2006	Flooding (TS Stan)	\$4,140.20	Yes (Strat Alft, Helo Alft)
2007	n/a	n/a	n/a
2008	Flooding	\$50.00	No
Total =		\$7,800.00	DoD Participation = 42.85%

Table 3

FY	Belize		
	Crisis	USAID Funds \$1K	DoD Participation? (Type)
1993	n/a	n/a	n/a
1994	n/a	n/a	n/a
1995	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	Flooding (Hcn Roxanne)	\$25.00	No
1997	Fire	\$7.50	No
1998	n/a	n/a	n/a
1999	Flooding (Hcn Mitch)	\$25.00	Yes (Helo Alft)
2000	n/a	n/a	n/a
2001	Flooding (Hcn Keith)	\$398.00	No
2002	Flooding (Hcn Iris)	\$349.00	No
2003	n/a	n/a	n/a
2004	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006	n/a	n/a	n/a
2007	Flooding (Hcn Dean)	\$112.30	No
2008	Flooding (TS Arthur)	\$134.40	No
Total =		\$1,051.20	DoD Participation = 14.30%

Table 4

FY	El Salvador		
	Crisis	USAID Funds \$1K	DoD Participation? (Type)
1993	n/a	n/a	n/a
1994	n/a	n/a	n/a
1995	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	n/a	n/a	n/a
1997	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998	Fire	\$1,250.00	No
1999	Flooding (Hcn Mitch) Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever	\$1,092.40	Yes (Helo Alft)
2000	7.6 Earthquake	\$25.00	No
2001		\$14,065.20	Yes (Helo Alft)
2002	n/a	n/a	n/a
2003	n/a	n/a	n/a
2004	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006	Flooding (TS Stan) & Santa Ana Volcano Eruption	\$200.00	No
2007	n/a	n/a	n/a
2008	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total =		\$16,632.60	DoD Participation = 33.33%

Table 5

FY	Nicaragua		
	Crisis	USAID Funds \$1K	DoD Participation? (Type)
1993	Flooding (TS Bret)	\$205.80	No
1994	n/a	n/a	n/a
1995	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	Flooding (Hcn Ceasar)	\$177.20	No
1997	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998	Fire	\$1,250.00	No
1999	Flooding (Hcn Mitch)	\$6,645.10	Yes (Helo Alft)
2000	n/a	n/a	n/a
2001	Drought	\$465.00	No
	Flooding (Hcn Keith)	\$25.00	No
2002	Flooding (Hcn Michelle)	\$191.50	No
	Fire	\$47.20	No
	Flooding (Simultaneous Atlantic TS#8 & Pacific Hcn Alma)	\$50.00	No
2003	n/a	n/a	n/a
2004	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006	Food Insecurity	\$50.00	No
	Flooding (Hcn Beta)	\$420.90	No
	Methanol Poisoning	\$50.00	Yes (Helo Alft, Med Team)
2007	Flooding (Hcn Felix)	\$1,217.50	Yes (Strat Alft, Helo Alft from USS Wasp, USS Roberts JTF-B)
2008	Flooding	\$576.90	No
	Flooding (TS Alma)	\$50.00	No
Total =		\$11,422.10	DoD Participation = 20.20%

Table 6

FY	Costa Rica		
	Crisis	USAID Funds \$1K	DoD Participation? (Type)
1993	n/a	n/a	n/a
1994	Flooding	\$14.00	No
1995	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	Flooding	\$228.80	Yes (SAR Helo Alft)
	Flooding (Hcn Ceasar)	\$536.10	Yes (HDR Trans)
1997	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998	Fire	\$1,250.00	No
1999	Flooding (Hcn Mitch)	\$45.00	No
2000	n/a	n/a	n/a
2001	n/a	n/a	n/a
2002	n/a	n/a	n/a
2003	Flooding	\$50.00	No
2004	n/a	n/a	n/a
2005	Flooding	\$100.00	No
	Flooding	\$50.00	No
2006	n/a	n/a	n/a
2007	n/a	n/a	n/a
2008	Flooding	\$50.00	No
	Flooding (TS Hanna)	\$40.00	No
Total =		\$2,363.90	DoD Participation = 22.22%

Table 7

FY	Panama		
	Crisis	USAID Funds \$1K	DoD Participation? (Type)
1993	n/a	n/a	n/a
1994	n/a	n/a	n/a
1995	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	n/a	n/a	n/a
1997	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998	n/a	n/a	n/a
1999	n/a	n/a	n/a
2000	n/a	n/a	n/a
2001	n/a	n/a	n/a
2002	n/a	n/a	n/a
2003	n/a	n/a	n/a
2004	Flooding	\$50.00	No
2005	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006	n/a	n/a	n/a
2007	Fire Flooding	\$25.00 \$93.00	No Yes (Strat Alft, Helo Alft)
2008	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total =		\$168.00	DoD Participation = 33.33%

Appendix III



September 12, 2007

UNCLASSIFIED

**MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL JAMES STAVRIDIS
USSOUTHCOM COMMANDER**

FROM: USAID/OFDA Director, Ky Luu *Carol Chan* *for*

CC: DOD USD (P), Ambassador Eric S. Edelman

SUBJECT: USAID/OFDA Request for Transportation Support for Hurricane Felix Relief Effort in Nicaragua

The U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) requests the assistance of the Department of Defense (DOD) in Nicaragua to provide transportation assistance to support ongoing humanitarian assistance efforts due to massive infrastructure damage and flooding caused by Hurricane Felix.

USAID/OFDA requests that DOD provide vertical lift from Puerto Cabezas to remote areas in the surrounding region to transport emergency relief commodities and/or personnel. To augment Nicaragua and other partner nations, OFDA also requests that DOD assist with the transportation of emergency relief commodities and personnel from Managua to Puerto Cabezas. USAID/OFDA will coordinate with Nicaraguan Authorities and implementing partners to identify to DOD the commodities and/or personnel to be transported.

USAID/OFDA requests that this transportation assistance and associated fuel costs be provided on a reimbursable basis, not to exceed \$1,000,000. This request is made under the authorities referenced in the September 5, 2007 Executive Secretariat Memorandum Request for Humanitarian Disaster Assistance (Tab 1). USAID/OFDA anticipates that this delivery will be accomplished in seven days.

U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20523
www.usaid.gov

- 2 -

Request that DOD capture and submit costs to USAID/OFDA Program Support Division Director Ms. Carol Chan, CChan@usaid.gov, 202-712-0841 for reimbursement.

Attachments:

Tab 1 – 9/5/07 Executive Secretariat Memorandum Request for Humanitarian Disaster Assistance

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- ¹ Micha F. Lindemans, “Hurakan”, *Encyclopedia Mythica* (August 1997), <http://www.pantheon.org/articles/h/hurakan.html>.
- ² CAFTA-DR (Dominican Republic-Central America FTA), Office of the U.S. Trade Representative website, <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements/cafta-dr-dominican-republic-central-america-fta>.
- ³ U.S. House, *Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Committee on Oversight and Government reform: Hearing on National Security and Latin America: Challenges and Opportunities on Energy Cooperation*, 110th Cong., 2nd sess., 11 Mar 2008, http://www.oversight.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4430&Itemid=30.
- ⁴ *ibid*
- ⁵ GTA 41-01-006. *Working with the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance*, October 2007. Headquarters, Department of the Army
- ⁶ SECDEF OHDACA Direction Message; “Policy and program guidance for FY05 Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) Activities and Humanitarian and Civic Assistance (HCA); 1 March 1999.
- ⁷ Micha F. Lindemans, “Hurakan”, *Encyclopedia Mythica* (August 1997), <http://www.pantheon.org/articles/h/hurakan.html>.
- ⁸ GTA 41-01-006. *Working with the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance*, October 2007. Headquarters, Department of the Army
- ⁹ *Ibid*
- ¹⁰ Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2008; OFDA Website, http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/publications/annual_reports/pdf/AR2008.pdf.
- ¹¹ Phillip Wilhelm, *USAID and DOD Roles in Foreign Disaster Response* Fact Sheet, <http://www.usaid.gov>
- ¹² Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2008; OFDA Website, http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/publications/annual_reports/pdf/AR2008.pdf.
- ¹³ *ibid*
- ¹⁴ *ibid*
- ¹⁵ GTA 41-01-006. *Working with the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance*, October 2007. Headquarters, Department of the Army
- ¹⁶ *ibid*
- ¹⁷ *ibid*
- ¹⁸ *ibid*
- ¹⁹ *ibid*
- ²⁰ DoD Message, 041549Z May 04, FROM: SECDEF Washington DC, Subject: Policy and procedures for Department Of Defense participation in foreign disaster relief/emergency response operations.
- ²¹ GTA 41-01-006. *Working with the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance*, October 2007. Headquarters, Department of the Army
- ²² Kate S. Legates (USAID/ODFA at HQ USSOUTHCOM, Miami, FL), interview by author, 21 Dec 2009.
- ²³ *ibid*
- ²⁴ *ibid*
- ²⁵ Tom Smith, *Foreign Disaster Relief / Emergency Response (FDR/ER)* Fact Sheet; <http://www.usaid.gov>
- ²⁶ DoD Message, 041549Z May 04, FROM: SECDEF Washington DC, Subject: Policy and procedures for Department Of Defense participation in foreign disaster relief/emergency response operations.
- ²⁷ *ibid*
- ²⁸ *ibid*
- ²⁹ *ibid*
- ³⁰ *ibid*
- ³¹ *ibid*
- ³² GTA 41-01-006. *Working with the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance*, October 2007. Headquarters, Department of the Army
- ³³ USSOUTHCOM *Command History Overview*; <http://www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/factFiles.php?id=76>.
- ³⁴ *ibid*

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- ³⁵ USSOUTHCOM Humanitarian Assistance webpage;
<http://www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/pages/humanitarianAssistance.php>
- ³⁶ USSOUTHCOM Component Commands and Units webpage; <http://www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/pages/team.php>
- ³⁷ MSgt Stan Coleman, "Aircrew, maintainers tackle Haiti relief effort", USSOUTHCOM Public Affairs webpage, 5 Feb 2010; <http://www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/news.php?storyId=2149>.
- ³⁸ Maj Una Cuffy, "Southern Airlift: Guard, Reserve and active duty airmen keep Coronet Oak flying - U.S. Southern Command's airlift arm", Air Force News Agency, Dec 2001;
http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0IBP/is_12_45/ai_81581381/.
- ³⁹ COMUSNAVSO-C4F website; <http://www.public.navy.mil/comusnavso-c4f/Pages/default.aspx>.
- ⁴⁰ *ibid*
- ⁴¹ US Army South 1-228th - Bravo Company webpage; https://www.arsouth.army.mil/228th/Bravo/About_Us.aspx
- ⁴² *ibid*
- ⁴³ Phillip Wilhelm, *USAID and DOD Roles in Foreign Disaster Response* Fact Sheet, <http://www.usaid.gov>.
- ⁴⁴ Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Annual Report for Fiscal Years 1993-2008; OFDA Website, http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/publications/annual_reports
- ⁴⁵ National Weather Service, National Hurricane Center, *The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale*;
<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutsshws.shtml>.
- ⁴⁶ NOAA Satellite and Information Service; *Mitch: The Deadliest Atlantic Hurricane Since 1780*;
<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/reports/mitch/mitch.html>.
- ⁴⁷ Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1999; OFDA Website, http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/publications/annual_reports
- ⁴⁸ Disaster Center website; *Hurricane Mitch Reports from the Disaster Center*;
<http://www.disastercenter.com/hurricmr.htm>.
- ⁴⁹ *ibid*
- ⁵⁰ *ibid*
- ⁵¹ *ibid*
- ⁵² *ibid*
- ⁵³ *ibid*
- ⁵⁴ *ibid*
- ⁵⁵ *ibid*
- ⁵⁶ Center of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CDMHA) Lessons learned from Mitch;
<http://www.cdmha.org/ppt/CDMHA%20Mitch%20Lessons.ppt>
- ⁵⁷ *ibid*
- ⁵⁸ *ibid*
- ⁵⁹ *ibid*
- ⁶⁰ USAID Key Lessons Learned and Recommendations from Hurricane Mitch Response: USG Inter-agency Coordination; http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADG041.pdf.
- ⁶¹ Kate S. Legates (USAID/ODFA at HQ USSOUTHCOM, Miami, FL), interview by author, 21 Dec 2009.
- ⁶² Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1999; OFDA Website, http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/publications/annual_reports
- ⁶³ *ibid*
- ⁶⁴ *ibid*
- ⁶⁵ *ibid*
- ⁶⁶ Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Annual Report for Fiscal Years 1993-2008; OFDA Website, http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/publications/annual_reports
- ⁶⁷ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 2007 Hurricane Outlook;
<http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2007/s2905.htm>.
- ⁶⁸ Sistema Nacional para la Prevención, Mitigación y Atención a Desastres (SINAPRED);
http://www.sinapred.gob.ni/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=45&Itemid=116

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- ⁶⁹ Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1999; OFDA Website, http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/publications/annual_reports
- ⁷⁰ National Weather Service Hurricane Felix Track, 4 Sep 2007; <http://www.kinshipcircle.org/disasters/images/relief/felix-map.jpg>
- ⁷¹ Luu, Ky, USAID/OFDA Director. To Admiral James Stavridis, USSOUTHCOM Commander. Memorandum 12 Sep 2007.
- ⁷² Task Group 40.0 Public Affairs, "Navy ships, helicopters support Hurricane Felix relief ops", 11 Sep 2007; <http://www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/news.php?storyId=764>.
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