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**BRIDGING THE GULF: A NEW PARADIGM FOR EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT ON AMERICA'S THIRD BORDER**

by

Andrew R. Slaten

March 2012

Thesis Advisor:
Second Reader:

Rodrigo Nieto-Gomez
Robert Bach

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**BRIDGING THE GULF: A NEW PARADIGM FOR EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT ON AMERICA'S THIRD BORDER**

Andrew R. Slaten
Deputy Director, International Affairs
Federal Emergency Management Agency
B.A., Loyola University in New Orleans, 1986

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requirements for the degree of

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**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
March 2012**

Author: Andrew R. Slaten

Approved by: Rodrigo Nieto-Gomez
Thesis Advisor

Robert Bach
Second Reader

Daniel Moran
Chair, Department of National Security Affairs

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ABSTRACT

The current U.S. government structure for engaging with emergency management issues on the international arena requires fresh analysis and review to determine efficacy and practicality for emerging threats and challenges. Issues of preparedness have taken second seat to humanitarian assistance. Support for key components of national resiliency for any country—preparedness and mitigation—receive only minimal support. Continuing and potentially increasing catastrophic disasters within the homeland’s “backyard” (a term commonly used to refer to the Caribbean/Gulf of Mexico area) will continue to present homeland security issues far into the future. A commitment to investment in preparedness, as well as new structures for initial support following a major disaster, will relieve pressure on the United States—and the international community—to invest heavily in costly humanitarian assistance. At the same time, it will serve to strengthen the national regimes in the area and strengthen the regional resiliency that well serves the hemisphere at large. It is safe to say that the traditional approach of the United States government has had a paternalistic flavor to it, jumping in to help after a crisis, but leaving under-developed and under-resourced countries to fend for themselves in developing organic capabilities to be ready for the next disaster. By developing a broader U.S. government capacity to address the fuller cycle of emergency management issues—preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery—in partnership with our neighboring countries within and bordering the Gulf of Mexico, we will be better prepared to handle the future catastrophes that are sure to come. By authorizing and resourcing the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to operate on behalf of the American people outside the domestic national borders, a new paradigm for inter-agency emergency management can be developed that achieves the goal of strengthened hemispheric disaster resiliency.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AECID	Agency for International Cooperation Development (Spain)
ARC	The American National Red Cross
CAD	Caribbean Area Division
CARICOM	The Caribbean Community and Common Market
CDEMA	The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CDM	Comprehensive Disaster Management
CEDERA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency
CEPREDENAC	Coordination Center for the Prevention of Disasters in Central America
CMEP	Civil-Military Emergency Preparedness
CNN	Cable News Network
COCOMS	Combatant Commands
COE	Center of Excellence
CONUS	Continental United States
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DOS	Department of State
DRF	The President's Disaster Relief Fund
ECHO	European Commission's Directorate for Humanitarian Aid
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FSAA	Foreign Assistance Authorization Act of 1961

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IAA	Inter-Agency Agreement
IAEM	International Association of Emergency Managers
ICS	Incident Command System
IFRC	The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMAT	Incident Management Assistance Team
INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IST	Incident Support Team
JICA	International Cooperation Agency of Japan
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MERS	Mobile Emergency Response Support
MHD	Ministry of Homeland Defense (Israel)
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDRP	National Disaster Recovery Plan
NEMA	National Emergency Management Authority (Israel)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization/Agency
NIC	The National Integration Center
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NORTHCOM	U.S. Northern Command
OAS	Organization of American States
OCHA	The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID)

OHDACA	Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid
ONEMI	Office of Emergencies of the Ministry of the Interior (Chile)
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
PAHO	The Pan American Health Organization
PKEMRA	Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act
PREMA	Puerto Rico Emergency Management Agency
QDDR	Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review
QHSR	The Quadrennial Homeland Security Review
RDAP	Regional Disaster Assistance Program
ROLAC	The Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
SICA	Central American Integration System
SOUTHCOM	U.S. Southern Command
TF	Task Force
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Fund for Children
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy For Disaster Reduction
US&R	Urban Search and Rescue
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USG	U.S. Government
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VITEMA	Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency
WCDR	World Conference on Disaster Reduction
WFP	The World Food Program

WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The current U.S. government's structures, plans and policies for responding to disasters outside its borders, particularly in areas contiguous to the homeland (America's "third border," which also encompasses the important U.S. territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands), are inadequate and/or nonexistent and have not evolved to address 21st century realities or evolving trends. This was clearly demonstrated following the catastrophic Haiti earthquake of January 2010, when President Obama committed the United States government to leading the international response. Some of the challenges were highlighted in a report commissioned by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID): "Overall, policy articulation by key Washington decision makers was caught up in operational/tactical level operations, creating confusion in the chain of command. The military's provision of logistics, assessments, transportation, aerial reconnaissance, engineering assistance and security were critical to the success of the immediate response, but questions were raised on its cost effectiveness. Furthermore, there was a lack of articulated requirements and end states from policy makers to the military, reducing the efficiency of the military involvement. The use of liaison officers between agencies, especially between the military and other civil agencies, was widely seen as positive and considered to have played a key role in communications and coordination." (Guha-Sapir, Hirsch, Sirois, & Dooling, 2010)

It would be reasonable to assume that another major or catastrophic disaster, natural or manmade, is likely to happen outside America's Third Border (the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico basins). With the increased activity of illicit trafficking in drugs, guns, money and people that has occurred in the Caribbean and along the U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canada borders, a catastrophic event could destabilize existing governments through dislocation of large segments of their population, increased crime, breakdown in law and order, and potential public health crises. This situation would present heightened challenges to U.S. homeland security.



Figure 1. Map of the Caribbean and Central America Region

From https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/maps/refmap_central_america.html

In its recently developed International Strategy, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) acknowledged the critical importance of the Caribbean area to the security of the United States, being an area with high potential for activities. “The Caribbean is important to the security of the American homeland for three main reasons. First, it lies in close proximity to the United States and is often considered the country’s “third border.” Washington, D.C. is closer to Port-au-Prince, Haiti than it is to El Paso. Texas and the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands lie in the Caribbean Basin. Second, the small geographic and demographic sizes (of the countries) make them vulnerable. Third, the Caribbean is a transit zone and holds great potential for illicit traffickers, smugglers, and possibly terrorists. It serves as a bridge between North

America and South America and connects supply and demand for the illegal drug trade.” (Security, Regional Strategic Engagement Framework for the Caribbean, 2011).

In the report *Disaster, Planning and Development: Managing Natural Hazards to Reduce Loss* issued in 1990, the Organization of American States (OAS) presented the scope of the challenge for this area:

Since 1960 earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, droughts, desertification, and landslides in the Latin American and Caribbean region have killed 180,000 people, disrupted the lives of 100 million more, and caused more than US\$54 billion in property damage. Rates of destruction increase decade after decade. The adverse effects on employment, balance of trade, and foreign indebtedness continue to be felt years after the occurrence of a disaster. Activities intended to further development often exacerbate the impact of natural hazards. Worst of all, the poorest countries and the poorest segments of their populations feel the severest impact. International relief and rehabilitation compensates the stricken countries for only a small part of their losses. (OAS), 1990)

The report goes on to chronicle the impacts of disaster in the region over decades:

With depressing regularity, natural disasters become international headlines. Each year one or more hurricanes strike the Caribbean region. Particularly destructive ones, such as Gilbert in 1988 and Hugo in 1989, can cause billions of dollars of damage. Flooding, too, occurs annually, but no reliable estimates are available of the cost in human lives and property. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur unpredictably with disastrous effects: the mudslide precipitated by the eruption of Volcán Ruiz in Colombia in 1985 killed 21,800 people, and earthquakes in Mexico (1985) and El Salvador (1986) together killed more than 10,000. Landslides are limited in area, but occur so frequently that they account for hundreds of millions of dollars in damage every year. While not as spectacular, drought can be more harmful to agricultural production than hurricanes. After the 1971 drought, for example, banana production in Saint Lucia did not recover fully until 1976. Disaster aid, however, is scarce in the region for this type of pervasive, slow-onset hazard.

Over the past 30 years the average annual costs of natural disasters to Latin America and the Caribbean were 6,000 lives, adverse effects on 3 million people, and US\$1.8 billion in physical damage. Moreover, the impacts are increasing: during the 1960s approximately 10 million people were killed, injured, displaced, or otherwise affected; the number for the 1970s was six times larger, and for the 1980s, three times larger. (OAS), 1990)

In spite of considerable attention in the Caribbean basin by the international community, its vulnerability continues to be of concern. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) states on its website: “Despite two decades of continued democratic development and the existence of several middle-income countries, the region continues to exhibit high levels of vulnerability due to an increase in the frequency and severity of natural disasters.” (United Nations, 2012)

Emergency managers from the area’s nations, as well as from international organizations, are also beginning to pay greater attention to the issues of climate change, global warming, and the impacts that these will have on the future of vulnerable island nations, such as compose the Caribbean. Shifting climate patterns could generate quantitative and qualitatively more virulent and destructive storm systems impacting the area and leading to greater requirements for humanitarian response from the United States and the international relief community.

In a preliminary report issued in January 2012 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)¹, concerns were raised about the impact on climate change that could have dire consequences for areas such as the Caribbean. Among its findings:

- Settlement patterns, urbanization, and changes in socioeconomic conditions have all influenced observed trends in exposure and vulnerability to climate extremes. For example, coastal settlements, including in small islands and mega-deltas, and mountain settlements are exposed and vulnerable to climate extremes in both developed and developing countries, but with differences among regions and countries.
- The uncertainties in the historical tropical cyclone records, the incomplete understanding of the physical mechanisms linking tropical cyclone metrics to climate change, and the degree of tropical cyclone variability provide

¹ The IPCC is the leading international body for the assessment of climate change. It was established by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to provide the world with a clear scientific view on the current state of knowledge in climate change and its potential environmental and socio-economic impacts.

only *low confidence* for the attribution of any detectable changes in tropical cyclone activity to anthropogenic influences.

- Fatality rates and economic losses expressed as a proportion of GDP are higher in developing countries. During the period from 1970 to 2008, over 95 percent of deaths from natural disasters occurred in developing countries....In small exposed countries, particularly Small Island Developing States, losses expressed as a percentage of GDP have been particularly high, exceeding 1 percent in many cases and 8 percent in the most extreme cases, averaged over both disaster and non-disaster years for the period from 1970 to 2010.

The impacts of climate change and global warming have serious consequences for the future of emergency management in the United States and our borders. Homeland security must factor in the repercussions of the changes that may trigger ever greater catastrophic events and challenge the stability of governments in the hemisphere. As noted by The Center for American Progress, the impacts “will have serious implications for U.S. national security interests as well as global stability—extending from the sustainability of coastal military installations to the stability of nations that lack the resources, good governance, and resiliency needed to respond to the many adverse consequences of climate change. They further state that “...the damage caused by storms and rising sea levels in the coastal areas of the Caribbean islands, where 60 percent of the ... population lives, will increase the flow of immigrants from the region and generate political tension.” (Knickerbocker, 2008)

“And as these effects accelerate, the stress will impact human migration and conflict around the world.” (Michael Werz, 2012) The need for new and innovative ways of approaching the inevitable inimical developments is critical. Progress towards resilient and sustainable development in the context of changing climate extremes can benefit from questioning assumptions and paradigms and stimulating innovation to encourage new patterns of response. Successfully addressing disaster risk, climate

change, and other stressors often involves embracing broad participation in strategy development, the capacity to combine multiple perspectives, and contrasting ways of organizing social relations (IPCC: Field, 2011).

B. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT VIS-À-VIS HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

One final issue needs to be brought forth in relation to the thesis topic. That is the strategic evolution of approaches to emergency management around the world. With the advent of the 24-hour news cycle (the CNN factor), major disasters now play out for the entire world to see. Ever since the tragic blow to the U.S. Gulf Coast by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, more and more countries are beginning to reevaluate their emergency management programs and structures. Historically, disaster relief has often been reserved to the national military via their Ministry of Defense or Interior. Minimal to nonexistent national preparedness programs were in place to build the community resiliency so vital to national continuity.

Some countries have taken the challenging steps of establishing a more civilian-led emergency management profile. Israel created its National Emergency Management Authority in 2007, following Operation Cast Lead² (Jack L. Rozdilsky, 2009). Originally under the Ministry of Defense, a newly created Ministry of Homeland Defense (MHD) will oversee the activities of the NEMA (Hoffman, 2011). Other countries, such as Chile, have taken lessons learned from major disasters to reorganize and rebuild existing structure, authorities and programs. Following the 2010 earthquake that devastated areas of southern Chile, its National Office of Emergencies of the Ministry of the Interior (ONEMI) reached out to FEMA and to other national emergency management agencies to seek help in addressing perceived gaps in operational capabilities, as well planning for the future. ONEMI's operating statutory authorization has been expanded by the Chilean Congress and under the President's directions is moving to enhance its capabilities for an area active with volcanic and seismic activities (Ernst, 2011).

² For a good overview of the evolution of emergency management in Israel, see Emergency Management in Israel: Context and Characteristics by Jack L. Rozdilsky, Ph.D.

Annually, FEMA receives between 600 and 800 foreign visitors, seeking to exchange ideas, learn more about how to structure emergency management organizations and programs and establish long-term collaborations with FEMA. The challenge for FEMA is its limited ability to operate in the international arena, depending on authorities and financial resources of other U.S. government agencies such as USAID. Emergency management representatives from many countries often state that although they are familiar with USAID and its programs, and perhaps have a USAID/OFDA representative in their U.S. embassy, the desire is for collaboration with professional emergency managers and not humanitarian relief contractors. They acknowledge the vital and important programs on development that USAID provides, particularly in the times of crisis, but their desire is for a peer-to-peer relationship in emergency management, a partnership that recognizes them as equals in service to their countries.

Developing a new paradigm, strategic in focus and collaborative in structure, would benefit the U.S. government and support global resiliency in the 21st century. The Department of Homeland Security has a broad mandate to look at all avenues of threat to the nation and to provide the leadership for an all-of-government approach that is effective, cost-efficient and lasting. The international emergency management arena is ripe for new approaches and strategies.

C. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To more effectively respond to catastrophic disasters occurring outside the borders of the U.S., but impacting the Homeland strategically, economically and politically, this thesis will address the following questions:

- Can a new paradigm be created that brings focus to the U.S. government's varied resources and capabilities for emergency management activities and supports the Homeland Security enterprise?
- In an era of budgetary constraints, how can efficiencies be achieved through a remodeling and refocusing of the country's efforts in building a more disaster resilient global community?

- How can the current U.S. government system for providing full-cycle emergency management support be restructured for maximum effectiveness and efficiency, and, most importantly, strengthen to the homeland security enterprise?
- What are the adjustments that would need to be made, through legislation or other appropriate avenues, for funding, planning and program restructuring?
- What existing entities—national and/or regional—might be able to join in a collaborative effort with the U.S. government to build emergency management capacities and more resilient communities?

Each of these questions in itself presents complex challenges and opportunities that must be acknowledged and developed in greater detail than this thesis can provide. The payoff for the American people could be a stronger partnership in the western hemisphere that is capable of confronting evolving 21st century threats.

D. METHODOLOGY

The methodology utilized in this thesis project will take a program evaluation approach and include:

- Discussions with subject matter experts in the disciplines of international and domestic emergency management and foreign relations. The interviews will be focused on understanding current efforts in the field and the possible evolution toward newer models of international emergency management. The results of the interviews will be utilized to develop the new paradigm for U.S. government international emergency management, which will be produced in the thesis.
- Relative to the current Department of Homeland Security Strategy for the Caribbean and Latin America, a review will be conducted of current disaster trends in these areas, and their nexus with current HLS thinking on trans-border and international disaster capabilities. The thesis will

review current Homeland Security strategies and policies that impact the area, as well as existing initiatives within the USG and broader international emergency management community.

- The same approach will be taken to understand what emergency management capacities currently exist both “country by country” and regionally. Discussions with representatives from the Organization of American States (OAS), The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), as well as others, will help establish the existing gaps in emergency management capacities and highlight potential areas of collaboration and synergy.

E. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review addresses some of the resources that treat the current U.S. government structure for providing full-cycle emergency management support to our neighboring countries in the Caribbean, and how they might be restructured for maximum effectiveness and support to the homeland security mission.

Of first note is that the preponderance of available literature focuses on humanitarian response and assistance, rather than on international emergency management. The literature that addresses these concerns is sparse and episodic, many times resulting from and in reaction to perceived problems with our government’s response to an international disaster and its handling of the aftermath of such events.

Much of the literature that does exist is governmental in origin. Sources include documents that lay out the statutory basis for various U.S. agencies activities, especially related to international disaster response, humanitarian assistance; historical records, including congressional hearings and proposed legislation to reorganize current U.S. government structural response to disasters; and after-action reports and articles detailing challenges in recent international catastrophic disasters.

However, there is a growing body of literature from Non-Governmental Agencies (NGOs) and academia that looks at the Caribbean area’s disaster history, the historical

involvement of the United States, and systems and organizations that have been created to address shortcomings and provide impetus for strengthening of emergency management capabilities.

Although sparse, there are publications and literature that help to frame the world of international disaster response and relief, specifically the difference between humanitarian assistance and emergency management. It will show how it currently operates within the U.S. government and the opportunities for strengthening, in collaboration with existing regional entities within the Caribbean basin and neighboring countries. This literature review has been broken down into four subcategories based on types of literature having to do with U.S. policies and interests, with respect to support for Caribbean countries.

Sub-categories include:

1. Documents, books, reports and legislation focused on U.S. foreign assistance, current policies and structures, including the response to specific international disaster incidents.
2. Documents reflective of U.S. homeland security interests in the Caribbean basin.
3. Documents, reports and legislative proposals for the reformation of existing foreign U.S. government assistance programs and structures.
4. Documents and studies on international disasters, disaster organizations, country capabilities and hazards analysis.

1. Category 1: U.S. Foreign Assistance

Although a bit dated and arguably biased toward the current legacy structure under USAID, one of the broadest reviews of U.S. foreign disaster engagements is Andrew S. Natsios' *U.S. Foreign Policy and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, Humanitarian Relief in Complex Emergencies*. (Natsios, 1997) It reflects the pre-September 11 and pre-Department of Homeland Security world in focusing on humanitarian intervention in complex crises. His analysis of existing domestic and

international organizations, including the U.S. military and their roles in disaster “response” is rich in detail and insight. This is not surprising since Natsios was Director of USAID from 2001 to 2005. However, he does not objectively analyze the existing structures, only encouraging their strengthening and codification as they currently exist.

Key documents scope out the landscape for the U.S. government’s handling of disasters, domestic or international. **The Robert T. Staff Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (PL 93-288)** was signed into law November 23, 1988; it was amended by the **Disaster Relief Act of 1974, PL 93-288**. This Act constitutes the statutory authority for most federal disaster response activities, especially as they pertain to FEMA and FEMA programs. Key to international engagement is Sec. 612. Mutual Aid Pacts Between States and Neighboring Countries (42 U.S.C. 5196a), which states: “The Director shall give all practicable assistance to States in arranging, through the Department of State, mutual emergency preparedness aid between the States and neighboring countries.”

The Department of Defense is a major player in support of U.S. government foreign disaster assistance and of relative importance to this thesis is the **Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support** (2005), which calls for a layered defense that “is global, seamlessly integrating U.S. capabilities in the forward regions of the world, the global commons of space and cyberspace, in the geographic approaches to U.S. territory, and within the United States.” More recently, the Department of Defense issued its **National Military Strategy of the United States (2011)**, which further develops the strategic approach of the U.S. military in current and evolving homeland security and defense issues.

The main statutory basis for foreign aid as such given by USAID/OFDA resides in the **Foreign Assistance Authorization Act of 1961**. FSAA was designed for a specific purpose—that of providing humanitarian and development assistance around the world. Emergency management as a full cycle engagement was never addressed. No one U.S. agency has that responsibility.

In summation, much of this literature will show that while the focus has been on an American government humanitarian response around the world to crises, the documentation will also show that there's little strategy in how the United States government approaches emergency management as a bilateral or multi-lateral collaboration with other countries.

2. Category 2: The Caribbean and Homeland Security

Historically, there are various documents that treat the relationship between the United States and the Caribbean and Latin America. The most renowned, of course, is the *Monroe Doctrine*, which sought to create an “America for Americans” mentality that challenged European involvement in the Americas. It was first articulated by President James Monroe in 1823 to establish a buffer against further European colonization in the Western Hemisphere. But, it was mute to the issues of disaster and emergency management. Further refinement of U.S. policy toward the region was negligible for the next 140 years, until President John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress in 1961. It was broad and noble in scope, but still more of a policy designed for defense—now against Communism rather than European opportunism. It provided more of an interventionist mechanism to support friendly regimes and counter global communist initiatives (Encyclopedia.Com, 2008).

More recent presidential initiatives, such as The Partnership for Prosperity and Security in the Caribbean (1971), have kept the U.S. relationship with this region in the news, but, with the focus on evolving trade and security threats, little attention was paid to the increasing vulnerability of the region to natural and man-made disasters whose repercussions could be felt in the United States (Grant, 2005).

More recently in 2004, the United Nations issued its report *Living with Risk: a Global Review of Disaster Reduction Initiatives*, which notes an evolution on how nations approach the topic of disasters, from a focus on relief operations and crisis management to a comprehensive and integrated disaster risk reduction approach. This disaster risk reduction framework aims to “minimize vulnerabilities and disaster risks

throughout a society, to avoid or to limit the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development.” (UNISDR, 2004a, p. 7)

Regional Groups took the lead in the Caribbean to focus on disaster. The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) published its ***Community Emergency Guide: a Comprehensive Guide to Emergency Preparedness*** in 2004 in an effort to broaden the focus of emergency management in the region. It was followed in 2010 by the ***Central American Integrated Policy on Disaster Risk Management (Politica Centroamericana de Gestion Integral de Riesgo de Desastres)*** from the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Disasters in Central American (CEPREDENAC), which also attempted to put disaster response into a broader context including efforts to strengthen society against the impacts of disaster.

In 2005, the Congressional Research Service produced a report ***Caribbean Region: Issues in U.S. Relations***. It noted that the countries in the region with negative economic growth in 2004 were all impacted by major disasters, such as Hurricane Ivan and Frances. Once again, it highlighted the large amounts of U.S. aid to the region in response to disasters, but it made no mention of the broader emergency management spectrum of activities.

Finally, in internal strategy documents that seek to articulate the interests of DHS in different regions of the world produced in 2010, the Department of Homeland Security has pointed out the importance of the Caribbean region is to the homeland security of the United States. That importance derives from three issues: 1) The Caribbean is strategically located relative to the United States, sometimes being referred to as our “third border;” 2) Its very nature—dispersed island nations, most with limited resources for addressing security issues, and large areas of open international waters—invite maleficent activities; and 3) with the tightening of our land border with Mexico, activities such as smuggling of drugs and potential terrorist activities may shift to the more open Caribbean area.

In sum, the literature is sparse in relation to emergency management and the Caribbean. Documents highlight the vulnerability of the region, the historical and cultural ties within the region and to the United States.

3. Category 3: U.S. Government Structural Realignment

Little literature exists that directly looks at current U.S. government structures and programs engaged in international emergency management, and seeks to evaluate and recommend changes. Extensive literature does look at the very need for and value of foreign humanitarian assistance. When major international disasters occur, it is expected that the United States will contribute in some way, always through USAID/OFDA. However, in today's highly politicized environment, there are continuing calls from certain political factions for the defunding of USAID.³

Likewise, FEMA has attracted enormous levels of attention, with resulting proposed legislation, and studies (Marek, 2005). Whether as a result of its incorporation into the new Department of Homeland Security, or because of documented shortfalls in response to specific disasters in the U.S., there's extensive literature looking at the Agency and making calls for changes to its current structure. The most notable legislative response to such attention was the ***Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA)*** of 2006, which sought to remediate some of the perceived failures following the U.S. government's response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

In a 2005 report by the Congressional Research Service, ***International Disaster and Humanitarian Response: U.S. Governmental Response***, the lack of clarity in objectives, systems and structures was brought forth. "The U.S. role in humanitarian assistance is broad, far reaching, and covers many elements directly concerned with the provision of relief and strategies for strengthening how people survive over time. What is less clear is when an activity might be described as humanitarian, as differentiated from postconflict transition, or reconstruction, and to what degree this distinction needs to remain flexible to adapt to changes in policy or operations on the ground."

³ As recently as January 2011, over 160 Republicans in the House of Representatives endorsed a plan to defund USAID, with purported annual savings in excess of US\$1.3 billion. See Spending Reduction Act of 2011. (Committee, 2011).

Again, the focus remains on humanitarian assistance, with little reflection on the need to strengthen and focus USG support to the full emergency management cycle in partner countries. The recently released ***Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) (Rogin, 2010)*** makes recommendations on consolidating and strengthening response to crises, but limits its focus to the humanitarian consequences of a major disaster. It is silent about the issue of crisis management. Again, most government documents focus on the procedures and mechanisms of government's response, rather than looking at the much fuller circle of emergency management.

The Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis issued in 2008 ***"The U.S. Foreign Disaster Response Process: How It Works and How It Could Work Better."*** The report focused mostly on maintaining and strengthening USAID's capabilities and developing more streamlined procedures for incorporating DoD assets in response. No attempt was made to make an objective and dispassionate whole of government appraisal of the issue.

Following the Haiti earthquake and eventual transition from crisis response to long-term recovery, USAID published its After-Action Report on the USG response to the Haiti Earthquake of 2010. An Independent Review (funded by USAID) of USG Response to Haiti Earthquake left in place the existing roles of various USG agencies, and only called for strengthening USAID's capabilities as currently outlined.

USAID as an agency is best placed to lead development and humanitarian crises response, both of which should be expertise led initiatives. As an agency, it should be able to shore up extraordinary needs of OFDA when required by providing short-term staff in areas where there are shortfalls and at the request of the OFDA director. U.S. humanitarian policy should make suitable provisions to engage development considerations in relief operations in the phases of relief.

(Guha-Sapir, Hirsch, Sirois, & Dooling, 2010)

Again, there's very little published material that specifically treats of a U.S. government reorganization/restructuring/refocusing in the arena of international emergency management. However, there are elements in some of the documents noted

that could apply to a proposal to reconfigure the U.S. government's emergency management relationship with neighboring countries, especially in the Caribbean.

4. Category 4: International Emergency Management

Much focus on disasters and disaster risk reduction came about as a result of the designation by the United Nations of the 1990s as the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (United Nations, 2004). In 1994, the *Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World* was published that called for a more determined international of resources for disaster risk reduction, especially for developing countries. In 2005, the United Nations organized the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR), in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan. The participating countries adopted the *Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (the Hyogo Framework)*, which among other things reinforced the urgent need to strengthen disaster preparedness and reaction capacities to support effective response at all levels of society. The World Bank has been active for decades, funding programs and publishing resources such as the *Disaster Management and Mitigation in Latin America and the Caribbean*, (The World Bank, 1999), which helps foster intra-regional dialogue and engagement.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), a key player historically in response to major disasters around the globe, along with other major humanitarian organizations, initiated the Sphere Project to establish universal standards for disaster response efforts worldwide. Acknowledging how successful disaster response is tied to vulnerabilities of affected populations, *The Sphere Handbook: a Humanitarian Charter* fails to tie addressing those vulnerabilities to a concerted program of preparedness that would be an integral element in a full-cycle emergency management program.

For the most comprehensive review of International disaster management, one needs look no further than Damon P. Coppola's *Introduction to International Disaster Management*. He makes the case for more attention to be paid to this sphere because of

increased risk from a wide variety of hazards and the mounting adverse impacts that these events have on the population, the economy and the environment.

There have been calls and efforts aimed at building regional capacity. These have been supported by the Organization of American States and other regional entities, but have been susceptible to the political winds blowing nationally in each country and within the broader global community. In a monograph for the Inter-American Defense College, Lt. Col. Mario Coronel, USA, challenges all parties to collaborate or else the consequences of not strategically approaching disaster risk reduction will be a higher loss of life, property and will hinder the economic prosperity so necessary for this region (Coronel, 2004). His views are echoed by Joseph Nuñez in his study for the U.S. Army War College (Nunez, 1999 The Program Chief at CDEMA has called repeatedly and worked tirelessly to foster regional approaches to emergency management issues (Grosvenor, 2002).

Again, the overwhelming preponderance of available literature reflects a focus on response and humanitarian assistance. Although organizations, such as the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), have been created to foment global capacity and standardization, national sovereignty and widely-disparate national resources and capabilities hinder truly effective internationalization of emergency management.

F. CONCLUSION

It is apparent that the current U.S. government structure for engaging with emergency management issues on the international arena has had little analysis and review to determine efficacy and practicality. Issues of emergency management capacity building have taken second seat to humanitarian assistance. The literature reflects this dichotomy. While the U.N. and other regional players have published materials fostering closer collaboration in the area of emergency management, the essential approach of the U.S. government has opted for a more paternalistic approach, jumping in to help after a crisis, but leaving under-developed and under-resourced countries to fend for themselves and work with under-funded nongovernmental organizations..

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II. CURRENT LEGACY U.S. GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

A. USAID/OFFICE OF FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

The United States Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance serves as the coordinator under the Department of State for providing USG disaster relief and assistance around the globe. Each year, USAID provides humanitarian assistance in the wake of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and volcanoes. To minimize the risks of these and future disasters, USAID funds numerous disaster preparedness and mitigation programs. By making these strategic investments, USAID is saving lives, alleviating suffering, and reducing the economic impact of disasters by organizing and preparing communities before they are in jeopardy. OFDA strives to tailor programs to the specific-and often multiple-hazards that communities face, while building local disaster management capabilities. By empowering individuals at the host government, community, and local levels to identify, prevent, mitigate, and respond to future crises, USAID continues to work toward advancing self-sufficiency in disaster management. When countries can effectively manage their own risks, human and economic investments are safeguarded and become part of a country's sustainable development.

USAID's involvement to the development of disaster risk management practices in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is best illustrated through the Regional Disaster Assistance Program (RDAP), a training program established in 1989. Early RDAP initiatives focused on "training of trainers" to transfer knowledge to local instructors and ensure that the program's impact would be multiplied many times over as host country institutions assumed full responsibility for implementation of the training course. As of June 2011, 71,797 people, including elected officials, civil service employees, and staff from local relief agencies, had participated in the RDAP training program, and 6,557 instructors had been certified in 30 countries. As a result, USAID's investment has returned huge dividends and reached the breadth of actors working in disaster management throughout the region. Following increased capacity by governments and disaster response organizations, USAID has adapted RDAP from a

strictly instrumental approach to providing more technical assistance for planning, strengthening, and centralizing the role of national organizations in disaster management (Development, 2011).

While the USAID publicizes the quantitative results of the RDAP program, a search of their website failed to find any program evaluation to determine the actual impact in capacity building in the Caribbean or Central America. Further study would be needed to determine how effective the program has been in strengthening the emergency management profile in the target area.

The annual funding for USAID has shifted up and down over the past few years as major sudden-onset events, as well as on-going chronic situations, have drawn the attention and support of the American people and the U.S. Congress. In the Department of State's 2010 Budget Request, an increase of over 85 percent was presented:

International Disaster Assistance

(\$ in thousands)	FY 2008 Actual*	FY 2009 Estimate**	FY 2009 Pending Supp	FY 2009 Total	FY 2010 Request
International Disaster Assistance	669,739	550,000	200,000	750,000	880,000

Table 1. Five Year International Disaster Assistance Budget

The overwhelming preponderance of this funding will go to humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction in countries impacted by major catastrophic events (State, 2010). It is telling that in its Fiscal 2011 Annual Financial Report, of the eight joint USAID-State high priority performance goals, none reflect an investment in strengthening emergency management capacities in targeted nations (USAID, 2011).

B. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD)

The Department of Defense has a long and proud history in providing support to nations impacted by catastrophic disasters. As an arm of the USG, it brings the response and logistical capabilities needed to provide rapid assistance to save lives and protect

property. In the decades before 1990, the U.S. Navy alone responded to over 60 international crises across the globe, not counting hundreds and hundreds of international sea rescues (Siegel, 1990). Most notable in recent years have been the DoD deployments in response to the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami that struck the southeast Asian area in December 2004, the horrific earthquake that struck in Haiti in January 2010, as well as the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis that devastated areas off Japan in March 2011.

The Department of Defense program under which the activities envisioned in this thesis are grouped is the DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA) component. Among a wide range of humanitarian assistance programs are those “enabling the Commands to assist countries by improving local crises response capacity and training in disaster planning and preparedness, which minimizes the potential for crises to develop or expand, thereby, promoting regional stability and reducing a requirement for large-scale deployment of U.S. military forces at a later date. Such activities include assessment of needs, rudimentary construction of clinics, schools, and roads, medical, technical and logistical assistance.” (Department of Defense, 2011)

While it is difficult to parse out the actual appropriated dollars requested and expended for the Caribbean and Central America, the FY2012 Budget request provides a glimpse into the amounts of dollars anticipated in the area.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA) Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Budget Estimates		
The approximately 500 HA projects by Combatant Command are reflected below.		
<u>Combatant Command</u>	<u>Number of Projects</u>	<u>\$ in Millions Estimated FY 2012 Baseline Funding</u>
USCENTCOM	42	6.0
USEUCOM	62	10.5
USPACOM	155	20.2
USSOUTHCOM	143	22.0
USAFRICOM	150	12.0
USNORTHCOM	4	2.0
Total	556	72.7

Figure 2. 2012 Funding for Combatant Commands OHDACA Activities

The Department of Defense (DoD) is structured to provide support to U.S. interests around the entire globe and has assigned combatant commands (COCOMS) to provide support to every part of the globe. Relative to the limited focus of this thesis to the “Third Border” of the Homeland, three components must be pointed out.

1. U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM)

NORTHCOM is the combatant command responsible for the air, land and sea approaches to the continental United States, Alaska, Canada, Mexico and the surrounding water out to approximately 500 nautical miles. It also includes the Gulf of Mexico, the Straits of Florida, and portions of the Caribbean region to include The Bahamas, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The commander of NORTHCOM is responsible for theater security cooperation with Canada, Mexico, and The Bahamas (Command, 2011).

2. U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM)

SOUTHCOM is the combatant command responsible for the Caribbean and Central America (as well as all of South America). It is headquartered in Miami, Florida. SOUTHCOM sponsors disaster preparedness exercises, seminars, and conferences to improve the collective ability of the U.S. and its partner nations to respond effectively and expeditiously to disasters. SOUTHCOM has also supported the construction or improvement of Emergency Operations Centers and Disaster Relief Warehouses, and has provided pre-positioned relief supplies across the region. This type of multinational disaster preparedness has also proven to increase the ability of SOUTHCOM to work with our partner nations (SOUTHCOM, 2011).

3. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

Civil-Military Emergency Preparedness (CMEP) is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) program focused on international disaster planning, preparedness, and response. CMEP focuses on international partner nations’ national and regional strategies related to disaster preparedness and consequence management for all hazards

(natural and technological disasters and terrorist acts) in areas that include Africa, South America, Southeast and Central Asia, Europe, and the Pacific. The CMEP mission has three critical components:

- Design and execute bilateral and multi-national activities to achieve security cooperation objectives by enhancing civil-military capability and cooperation in emergency planning and response.
- Encourage civil and military leadership to plan for mutual support with national capabilities in domestic, regional, and international emergencies.
- Increase a nation's resilience to prepare for and respond to all hazards: national and technological disasters and the consequences of the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) (Engineers, 2011).

As of 2011, a decision was made to relocate the CMEP program out of USACE and back to OSD U.S. Army HQ in Washington, D.C. While all indications are that the program will continue to be supported by DoD, it has yet to be determined how the focus of the CMEP might change or how continued inter-agency collaboration will be involved.

C. U.S. GEOLOGICAL SERVICE (USGS)

The USGS Office of International Programs supports activities that further U.S. foreign policy and national security interests by:

- Providing information and technical assistance in responding to catastrophic earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, and droughts in foreign countries.
- Providing technical assistance in the assessment of water, energy, and mineral resources and in the development of data and information standards and regional data-sharing networks.
- Using scientific cooperation to create nonthreatening environments to facilitate communication and negotiation among resource managers

- Conducting studies to control the spread and reduce the impacts of nonnative invasive plants, animals, and pathogens that have been introduced into the United States.
- Providing technical assistance to international organizations in documenting, managing, and integrating biological data and information.
- Coordinating multilateral sharing projects to ameliorate regional conflicts through the sharing of data and scientific expertise.
- Conducting global assessments of energy and mineral resources (U.S. Geological Survey, 2010).

D. THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)

As the principal federal agency responsible for coordinating the nation’s efforts in preparing for, responding to and recovering from disasters, FEMA’s mission statement declares:

FEMA’s mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

As indicated in this mission statement, FEMA is charged by U.S. Congress with addressing the entire emergency management cycle of preparedness, protection, response, recovery and mitigation, bringing together the resources and capabilities of every sector of the American society. From the entire family of federal agencies, to the state, local and tribal governments, to the private sector, and to families and individuals, FEMA takes a “whole community” approach to emergency management.

While essentially a domestic agency of the Executive Branch, FEMA has a long history of working with countries around the world in developing emergency management capacities. It has done this through partnership and collaboration with other federal agencies that have the authorities and financial resources to operate in the

international arena, viz. USAID, DOS, and DoD. Through the utilization of 607 Authority, under USAID, FEMA is authorized to provide technical assistance in emergency management to countries around the world. Under various Memoranda of Understanding and Bilateral Agreements, FEMA currently collaborates with its counterparts in Russia, Mexico, Canada, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Germany and Chile. Under the Robert T. Stafford Act, FEMA is directed to provide assistance to all states contiguous to a foreign country.

**Sec. 612. Mutual Aid Pacts Between States and Neighboring Countries
(42U.S.C. 5196a)**

The Director shall give all practicable assistance to States in arranging, through the Department of State, mutual emergency preparedness aid between the States and neighboring countries.⁴

In tandem with 607 Authority, this has been interpreted as authority for FEMA to work with the emergency management agencies of Canada and Mexico. Recently updated MOUs between DHS and Mexico and Canada continue to support the bilateral engagement in emergency management.

FEMA has provided technical assistance in emergency management to the Caribbean and Central American region in the past. From 1999-2001, FEMA shared the principles of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery in dealing with disasters with the countries of Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic through various technical assistance projects. This involvement was the result of an agreement that was signed between FEMA and USAID. The interagency agreement was the fulfillment of instruction from the U.S. Congress (contained in the 1999 emergency supplemental appropriations law) that U.S. Government Agencies (USGs) participate in reconstruction efforts in Central America and the Caribbean

⁴ The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended and Related Authorities, FEMA 592, June 2007.

following Hurricanes Mitch and Georges. USAID provided FEMA with \$3 million over a two year time period, and the interagency agreement ended in December 2001.

Routinely, FEMA is contacted through its International Affairs Division by representatives from many of the countries in this area, seeking specific technical assistance on a project or in general seeking to establish more structured partnerships between FEMA and its corresponding national society. SOUTHCOM has funded a number of FEMA activities in the Caribbean, including Incident Command System (ICS) training in Trinidad and Tobago. NORTHCOM has funded a variety of knowledge exchanges along both the U.S.-Canada border and the U.S.–Mexico border.

From an international perspective, of note was FEMA’s participation in the U.S. government’s response to the 2010 catastrophic earthquake that struck the nation of Haiti. As reported in public venues across the internet, FEMA mobilized immediately in support of President Obama’s call for action to the plight of the Haitian people. In support of USAID, which was designated as the lead U.S. government agency, FEMA responded by:

FEMA actions included:

- FEMA’s Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT-West) was activated, and deployed to Port-au-Prince on January 15, 2010.
- A FEMA liaison was activated at the State Department to support inter-agency coordination.
- The following U. S. Search and Rescue teams were activated under an Inter-Agency Agreement (IAA) with USAID, and deployed to Haiti to conduct operations:
 - o Fairfax County, VA – US&R VA-TF1 (Heavy/medium teams, 115 personnel)
 - o Los Angeles, CA – US&R CA-TF2 (72 personnel)
 - o Miami-Dade, FL – US&R FL-TF1 (82 personnel)
 - o Miami, FL – US&R FL-TF2 (84 personnel)
 - o Additional US&R teams have been activated for deployment

- o US&R Incident Support Team (IST) was activated and staged out of Homestead ARB, FL.
- Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) response:
 - o Frederick, MD MERS activated in support of US&R operations
 - o Thomasville, GA MERS personnel and equipment deployed to Port-au-Prince
 - o Maynard, MA MERS activated and deployed to Haiti
 - o Thomasville MERS activated in support of US&R operations

By February 10, FEMA, in coordination with DoD, delivered over one million meals, thousands of cots and blankets, hundreds of thousands of liters of water, and thousands of comfort kits to Haiti. Overall, through its support to USAID, FEMA delivered critical life-saving and life-sustaining resources to help the victims of the Haiti earthquake. As FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate stated in a speech in Washington, D.C. two months after the earthquake: “The beauty of the Obama administration’s direction is that even though this was USAID [United States Agency for International Development], the president put the entire federal family behind that response, which is really how it operates if we have a disaster in the United States where FEMA has that coordination role.” (Pastula, 2010)

While focused completely on response to a crisis event, the Haitian engagement by FEMA with the full inter-agency of the U.S. government provides an example of how U.S government capabilities can be conjoined in a unique and successful way. While ultimately successful in mobilizing the support of the American people, the coalition was ad-hoc, and not without challenges and some controversy⁵ (Herz, 2011).

⁵ As reported on The Nation website June 15, 2011, diplomatic cables released in the WikiLeaks scandal confirmed the militarization of the U.S. government response and subsequent attempts by the Department of State post-hoc to rationalize the heavy U.S. troop presence in Haiti.

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III. INTERNATIONAL DISASTER PROFILE—CARIBBEAN AND CENTRAL AMERICA

A. CURRENT AND PROJECTED HAZARDS

The area that is the focus of this thesis, viz. the Caribbean and Central American basins, is an area of active weather patterns that can generate substantial weather phenomena leading to major or catastrophic disaster conditions. Proximity to the United States points to common conditions with the Gulf Coastal region of the U.S. and common risks: tropical weather systems, hurricanes, earthquakes and sea-level changes.

It is important to recognize that the small size of these nations, as well as the fragile nature of their economies, which are so dependent on tourism and agriculture, heighten beyond the norm the impacts of various disasters. A report from the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CEDERA) highlights this vulnerability:

- 1988—Hurricane Gilbert caused Jamaica losses equal to or greater than 5 percent of GDP.
- 1989—Hurricane Hugo caused Montserrat losses equal to or greater than 200 percent of GDP.
- 1994—Tropical Storm Debbie caused floods and landslides that cost St. Lucia 18 percent of GDP.
- 1995—Hurricanes Luis and Marilyn caused Antigua and Barbuda losses worth 65 percent of GDP (CEDERA: Paul A. Bisek, 2001).
- 1995—Volcanic eruptions began in Montserrat totally wiping out the economy.
- 1998—Hurricane Georges affected 85 percent of the housing stock in St. Kitts & Nevis (CEDERA: Paul A. Bisek, 2001).

Table 1. Disaster Experience of CDERA Member Countries 1970-1999				
Country	No. of Occurrences	Total Fatalities	Economic Losses (1998 \$m.)	Economic Losses as % of GDP (1995)
Antigua & Barbuda	7	7	105.7	18.1%
Bahamas	4	5	290.4	9.5%
Barbados	5	3	148.4	6.3%
Belize	6	5	33.8	5.4%
Dominica	7	43	133.4	55.0%
Grenada	4	0	30.1	9.5%
Guyana	5	0	29.8	4.6%
Jamaica	19	271	1,988.1	29.3%
Montserrat	5	43	323.7	899.0%
St. Kitts & Nevis	7	6	312.5	116.5%
St. Lucia	8	54	1554.6	272.3%
St. Vincent	9	5	47.0	16.5%
Trinidad & Tobago	8	9	16.7	0.3%
From Table 1.10 in the IDB Research Department Report, "Natural Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean: An Overview of Risk, October 2000				

Table 2. CDERA Member Countries Disaster History 1970–1999

1. Earthquakes

The level of seismicity in most of the Caribbean has been extensively studied and is considered to be moderate to severe (Gibbs, 2001). The 2010 Haiti earthquake was only the latest in major earthquakes to impact the Caribbean, including the Antigua earthquake of 1974, the Trinidad earthquake of 1977, and the Jamaica earthquake of 1993. Continued and potentially increased seismic activity highlights the continuing requirements for emergency management capacity building in the area. Even two years after the 2010 Haitian earthquake, over 500,000 people remain in “squalid tents and makeshift shelters,” while government efforts bog down in rebuilding permanent housing (Robert Perito, 2012).

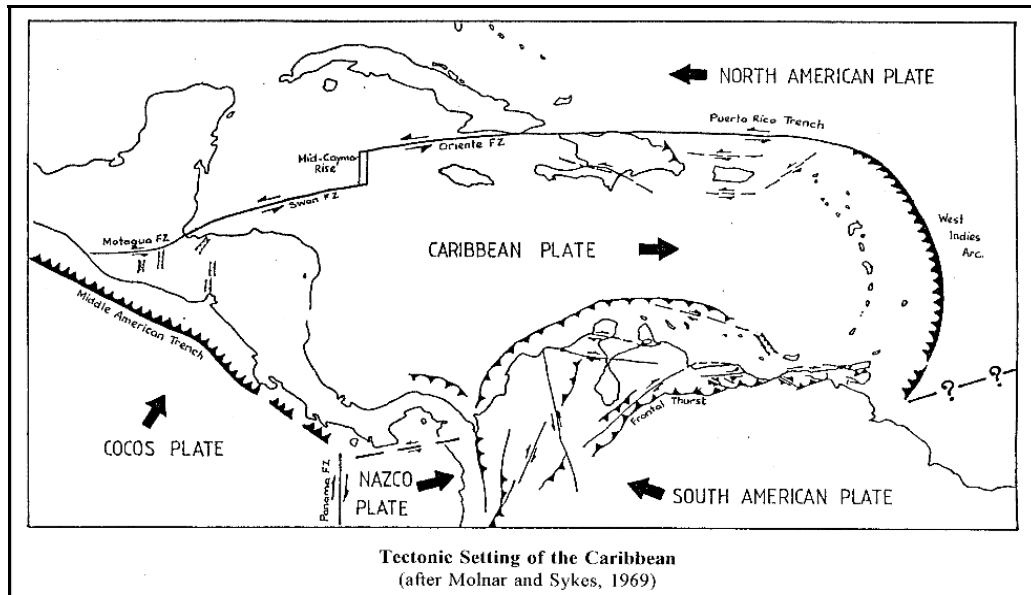
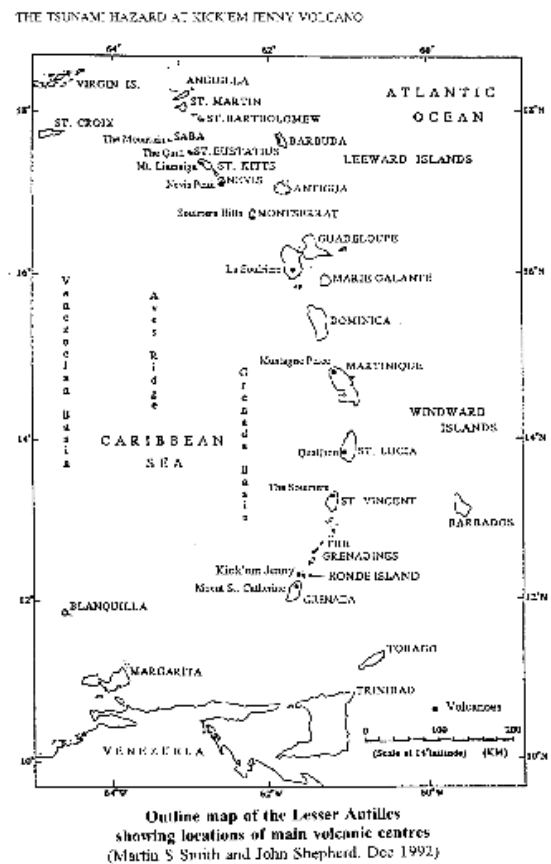


Figure 3. Map of Tectonic Plates. From (Gibbs, 2001)

2. Volcanic Activity

To a lesser degree, there has been some volcanic activity in the region, with resultant possibilities of tsunamis. While a few of the Caribbean islands are of volcanic origin, the most active current volcanic center is near the island of Grenada. A major eruption there could impact most of the eastern Caribbean with tsunami activity (Gibbs, 2001).



3. Hurricanes

Over the last 12 years, since Hurricane Mitch, which was followed by Stan (2005) and Agatha (2010), the region has seen thousands of deaths, hundreds of thousands of people affected, and severe economic losses and damages that have further worsened the prospects of impoverished populations, especially in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala.

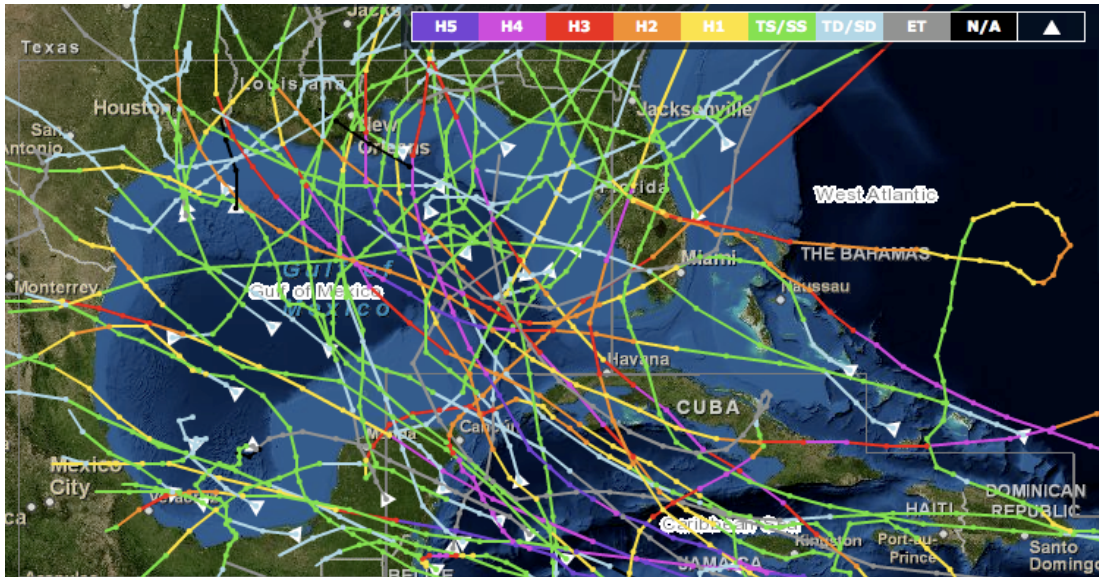


Figure 4. NOAA Historical Hurricane Tracks, Gulf of Mexico, 2000–2010.

From <http://blog.cleanenergy.org/2011/09/05/how-wind-farms-weather-hurricanes/>

Historically, the United States has played an active role in responding to major catastrophes in the region, from earthquakes and hurricanes in the Caribbean to major earthquakes and hurricanes throughout Central America and including its adjacent neighbor Mexico.

4. Climate Change and Global Warming

A recent report from the IPCC reiterated the long-term prognostication on climate change and extreme weather conditions in the area: “Coastal settlements, including in small islands and mega-deltas, and mountain settlements are exposed and vulnerable to

climate extremes in both developed and developing countries, but with differences among regions and countries” (IPCC: Field, 2011).

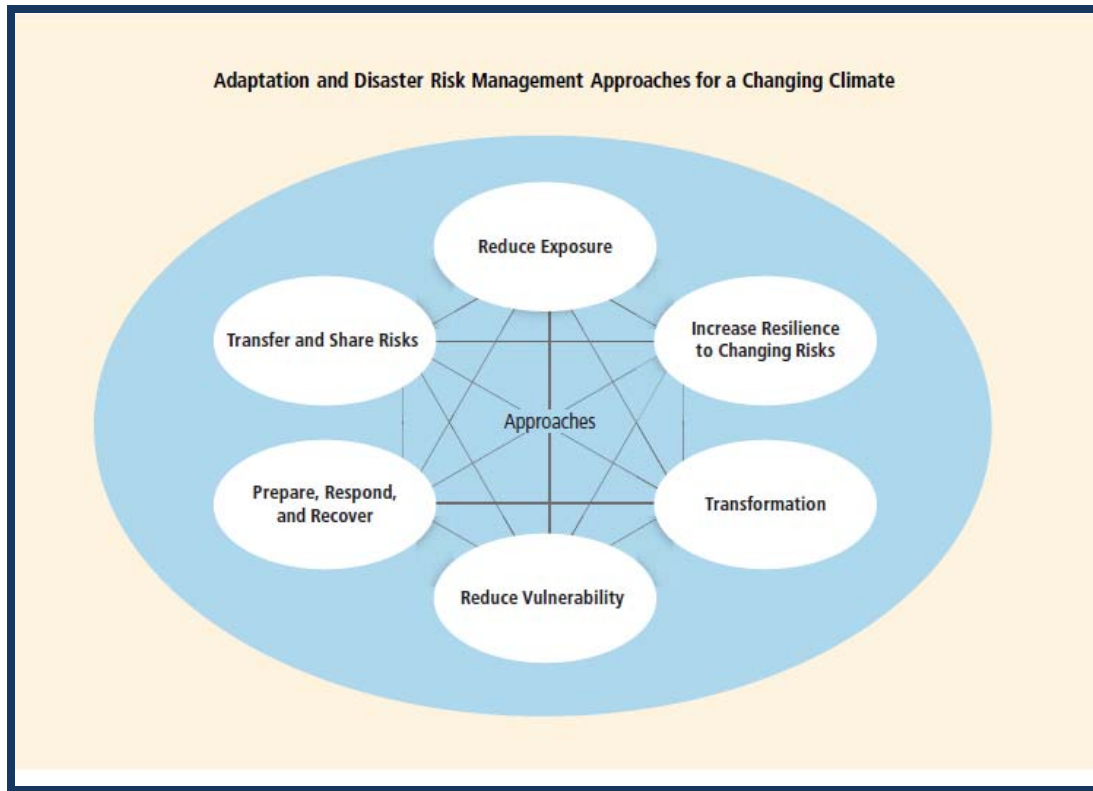


Figure 5. Climate Change Risk Management Approaches. From (IPCC: Field, 2011)

Even the U.S. Department of Defense has acknowledged the potential impact of global climate change on our nation and its implications for homeland defense. In its 2011 National Military Strategy of the United States, DoD states “The uncertain impact of global climate change combined with increased population centers in or near coastal environments may challenge the ability of weak or developing states to respond to natural disasters.” (Department of Defense, 2011)

A collateral issue to climate change is the prospect of sea level changes. The impact on Caribbean nations, as well as the coastal communities throughout Central America, would be disruptive, triggering social instability, possible governmental

destabilization, and potential mass dislocation of people. Just as in Haiti in 2010, the U.S. government would find itself in the position of leading the international response to the crisis. As the IPCC report clearly states,

It is very likely that mean sea level rise will contribute to upward trends in extreme coastal high water levels in the future. There is high confidence that locations currently experiencing adverse impacts such as coastal erosion and inundation will continue to do so in the future due to increasing sea levels, all other contributing factors being equal. The very likely contribution of mean sea level rise to increased extreme coastal high water levels, coupled with the likely increase in tropical cyclone maximum wind speed, is a specific issue for tropical small island states.

(IPCC: Field, 2011)

B. CURRENT CAPABILITIES IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

While humanitarian assistance, in response to the many catastrophic disasters in the region, has received much attention over the past quarter century, some international effort has been expended in supporting the development of stronger emergency management capabilities, with mixed results. Through the efforts of the United Nations and multiple nongovernmental organizations, regional efforts, as well as targeted national initiatives, have addressed both the structural and programmatic gaps in emergency management. Unfortunately, political shifts, as well as the recurring refocusing on humanitarian response to major events, bleed away both resources and energy in sustainable development of an effective architecture of emergency management. Paradoxically, the Caribbean has benefited from a long history of governmental collaboration. The Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) was formed in 1973 following 15 years of various confederative efforts by multiple countries in the region. It has continued to serve as a forum for joint planning and political dialogue that brings the singular voices of these small countries into a larger whole. At times unified and at times divergent, it nevertheless provides these countries an important structure for addressing common problems.

1. Governmental

a. National

Each of the nations of the Caribbean and Central America, due to proximity to active disaster zones, and with the support of the United Nations and other resources, has established a national level office for disaster. It is not within the scope of this thesis to detail and contrast the different capabilities of each, or determine their authorities and resources for meeting the emergency management requirements of their nation. However, through regional structures there has been vastly improved collaboration and attention to a minimum of standardization.

2. Regional

a. CDERA/CDEMA

Without a doubt, the most important development for the Caribbean area in emergency management was the establishment of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) in 1991 as a collaborative effort of most of the CARICOM nations. Initially envisioned as a response agency in 2010, it changed its name to the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA). This name reflected a growing requirement for more than just responding to disaster but addressing the full cycle of emergency management. Each country member has developed their own respective national EM agencies, which varying levels of financial support. While this may evolve over time, the broader collaborative efforts of CDEMA continue to depend to a great degree on international funding sources. Over 90 percent of funding for CDERA projects continues to come from international donors (Thompson, 2010).

Because of the enormous value of losses in the Caribbean over the past two decades (according to CDEMA exceeding US\$5 billion) the emergency management community has refocused its attention on Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM), which is a new thrust in disaster management for the 21st Century (CDEMA, 2011).

While the focus of CDM is on all cycles of a hazard, involving all sectors of the society, and concentrating on all hazards, it is telling that the functions detailed on their official website are heavily weighted to response.

3. Functions of CDEMA

- (a) Mobilizing and coordinating disaster relief;
- (b) mitigating or eliminating, as far as practicable, the immediate consequences of disasters in Participating States;
- (c) providing immediate and coordinated response by means of emergency disaster relief to any affected Participating State;
- (d) securing, coordinating and providing to interested inter-governmental and nongovernmental organizations reliable and comprehensive information on disasters affecting any Participating State;
- (e) encouraging—
 - (i) the adoption of disaster loss reduction and mitigation policies and practices at the national and regional level;
 - (ii) cooperative arrangements and mechanisms to facilitate the development of a culture of disaster loss reduction; and
- (f) coordinating the establishment, enhancement and maintenance of adequate emergency disaster response capabilities among the Participating States.

Regardless of the shortcomings in program direction, financial resources or trained personnel, the CDEMA stands out as a potentially outstanding partner for the USG to work with on the long-term emergency management strengthening in the region.

a. CEPREDENAC

The Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC) is an intergovernmental regional collaboration with CA that promotes and coordinates international cooperation and exchange of information, experience and technical and scientific advice on the prevention, mitigation, care, and

disaster response. It also systematizes and records information related to the prevention, mitigation, response, and disaster recovery impact in a dynamic, interactive and accessible regionally (System, 2011). CEPREDENAC is currently operating under a multi-year plan of action through 2013 that seeks to strengthen the national and regional response capabilities within a civilian and military context, in collaboration with the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation Development—AECID International Cooperation Agency of Japan—JICA, World Bank, U.S. Southern Command, the European Commission’s Directorate for Humanitarian Aid—ECHO, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Humanitarian Aid Office of the United Nations—OCHA, the Pan American Health Organization—PAHO, the World Food Program—WFP, United Nations Fund for Children—UNICEF, and the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance—OFDA, in order to strengthen:

- Executive Coordination of the response, organization and planning
- Operational coordination of the response field
- Coordination of humanitarian assistance (CEDPREDENAC, 2011)

4. The Organization of American States

While the Organization of American States (OAS) is not a disaster response agency, it does serve as a multi-national forum to bring focus to critical issues impacting its members. The OAS is composed of 35 independent states within North, Central and South America, including the Caribbean. The General Assembly is the supreme policy-making organ for the members, and meets annually to address important topics relevant to the prosperity of the Americas.

At its Summit in 2009, the General Assembly adopted the following:

We instruct the relevant Ministers or pertinent high level authorities, in collaboration with the specialized national, regional and international disaster organizations, and in the context of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Hyogo Declaration and Framework for Action 2005-2015, to strengthen cooperation within the Americas in the areas of disaster risk reduction and management. (Declaration of Port of Spain, 2009) (OAS, 2009)

a. *Nongovernmental*

The scope of the presence of international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operative in the Caribbean and Latin America fluctuates with events. The numbers are in the hundreds, most with very issue-specific mission, whether in support of children, women, pets, water, and shelter. Their impact before, during and after disasters is immense. Efforts to coordinate their activities and hence maximize their impact have been on-going. In its role as one the largest global disaster agencies, the Red Cross developed a Code of Conduct for NGOs in 1994 (Cross I. R., 2011). For purposes of this thesis, following two key NGO entities should be highlighted.

5. United National Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

The United Nations currently maintains an OCHA office in Panama City, Panama. The Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) has as its main focus “in-country training and advice on the disaster response and preparedness tools and services at their disposal. It also supports the creation and continuous training of United Nations Emergency Technical Teams, which comprise emergency specialists from United Nations agencies who support national authorities during a crisis” (United Nations, 2012). The focus primarily revolves around response capabilities for major disasters.

6. The American National Red Cross

As an arm of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the American Red Cross (ARC) has operated in the Caribbean and Central America, both as a member of the world-wide Red Cross movement and as bi-lateral partner with its sister societies. Since 1998, when Hurricane Mitch devastated parts of Central America, the ARC has been active in both the response and long-term recovery, serving as an agent both of the IFRC and the U.S. government in initiating and managing projects to help the national Red Cross partners increase community access to clean water by improving hygiene promotion practices and training community water committees in systems operations and maintenance (Cross, 2011). In collaboration with

the IFRC, it maintains a Regional Office in Costa Rica, with warehousing capabilities for disaster relief supplies. Following the 2010 Haitian earthquake, the global Red Cross community responded with life-saving services and supplies. The ARC was one of over 100 Red Cross and Red Crescent societies that supported this largest single-country effort in the Movement's history (Cross, 2011). The ARC, and the broader IFRC, could play a vital partnership role with the U.S. government in helping to establish a broad-spectrum approach to national resiliency in the Caribbean and Central America.

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IV. CURRENT U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Because the premise of this thesis is the strategic restructuring of U.S. government capabilities in enhancing emergency management capabilities throughout the Caribbean and Central America, it is important to under the existing strategies that are operative in guiding U.S. government activities in this arena.

A. THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY 2010

As the highest level of expression for the nation's approach to the many homeland security issues facing it over the next quarter century, the National Security Strategy clearly highlights the need for inter-agency collaboration, new and creative ways of addressing issues, and confluence of our national interests and security with those of other nations. As stated in the Strategy,

Economic growth has alleviated poverty and led to new centers of influence. More nations are asserting themselves regionally and globally. The lives of our citizens—their safety and prosperity—are more bound than ever to events beyond our borders. (p. 7)

These steps complement our efforts to integrate homeland security with national security; including seamless coordination among Federal, state, and local governments to prevent, protect against, and respond to threats and natural disasters. (p.2)

We are building our capability to prepare for disasters to reduce or eliminate long-term effects to people and their property from hazards and to respond to and recover from major incidents. To improve our preparedness, we are integrating domestic all hazards planning at all levels of government and building key capabilities to respond to emergencies. We continue to collaborate with communities to ensure preparedness efforts are integrated at all levels of government with the private and nonprofit sectors. (p.18)

1. The Quadrennial Homeland Security Review (QHSR)

The QHSR, subtitled A Strategic Framework for A Secure Homeland, was issued in February 2010 to address current and future threats to the nation and establish a framework for a strategic response. It introduced the concept of the Homeland Security

Enterprise, which is composed of “the federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, nongovernmental, and private-sector entities, as well as individuals, families, and communities who share a common national interest in the safety and security of America and the American population.” (Department of Homeland Security, 2010) The QHSR outlines five homeland security missions:

Mission 1: Preventing Terrorism and Enhancing Security

Mission 2: Securing and Managing Our Borders

Mission 3: Enforcing and Administering Our Immigration Laws

Mission 4: Safeguarding and Securing Cyberspace

Mission 5: Ensuring Resilience to Disasters

Of the five missions, for purposes of this thesis, Mission 1, Mission 2 and Mission 5 serve as basis for the argument of expanding FEMA activities into the Caribbean Basin and Central America. Any activity that strengthens national governments, and the confidence of the people in their government, can be clearly seen as a clear strategic approach to enhancing the security of the homeland, and making it more difficult for these countries to serve as resources for terrorism. As the so-called Mariel Boatlift of 1980 clearly demonstrated, the potential for mass relocation of desperate people fleeing crises of all types exists and will continue to exist well into the 21st century. By working closely in partnership with emergency management professionals throughout the region, a FEMA-coordinated inter-agency coalition can measurably impact current and future capabilities of the various countries to manage their disasters appropriately and humanely. While the QHSR notes the vital contributions of all sectors of the American society in bringing about the success of the homeland security enterprise, it’s noteworthy that it makes explicit that “International partnerships are also essential to success” (Department of Homeland Security, 2010).

2. The Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR)

The QDDR was issued in 2010, and is sub-titled *Leading through Civilian Power*. It is a self-styled “sweeping review of diplomacy and development, the core

missions of the State Department and USAID, respectively.” (State Department, 2010) By their very mandate, the QDDR deals extensively with international engagement issues. “USAID will lead for operations in response to humanitarian crises resulting from large-scale natural or industrial disasters, famines, disease outbreaks, and other natural phenomena.” (State Department, 2010) Most interestingly, the QDDR calls for a new international operational response framework that would serve to coordinate U.S. crisis response by bringing together the wide variety of capabilities and expertise found across federal agencies and improve civil-military collaboration (State Department, 2010). It remains to be seen if new ways of operating are to be built on old ways of doing business, with legacy structures inadequate to rapidly evolving conditions in the world.

3. The National Military Strategy of the United States

Issued in 2011 in support of the 2010 National Security Strategy, the National Military Strategy lays out how DoD will support the overall mission of protecting the homeland from any and all threats. In relation to international disasters, the Strategy states clearly the critical role of DoD in a broader U.S. government initiative.

Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities employ the Joint Force to address partner needs and sometimes provide opportunities to build confidence and trust between erstwhile adversaries. They also help us gain and maintain access and relationships that support our broader national interests. We must be prepared to support and facilitate the response of the United States Agency for International Development and other U.S. government agencies’ to humanitarian crises.”

(Department of Defense, 2011)

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V. CURRENT U.S. LEGAL AND FUNDING MECHANISMS

The foreign engagement of the U.S. government is directed by a number of different laws, and specific agencies have been granted the authorities and appropriations necessary to fulfill the requirements of that engagement. These have evolved over many years, driven by changing world conditions, and changing national politics. A new paradigm for international emergency management will, in all likelihood, require modifications or additions to better address the new world order.

A. THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT PUB.L. 87-195, 75 STAT. 424, ENACTED SEPTEMBER 4, 1961, 22 U.S.C. § 2151 ET SEQ.)

The Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) was enacted by Congress in 1961 to modernize and restructure a variety of existing programs for U.S. government support to foreign countries. . It clearly distinguished nonmilitary from military aid and established the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In 1998, the FAA was updated to bring USAID under more control of the Department of State (Landsberg, 2004). Clearly, the major focus of the FAA is on development funding for foreign partners, and as such has become a political flashpoint in the current domestic political environment in the United States. Some efforts are underway to revamp the FAA (Berman, 2011), but there is still a need to better differentiate the types of assistance that could be provided to other countries, especially as we build a stronger homeland security profile.⁶ Of note in congressional attempt to modernize the FAA is S. 1524: Foreign Assistance Revitalization and Accountability Act of 2009, which sought “to strengthen the capacity, transparency, and accountability of United States foreign assistance programs to effectively adapt and respond to new challenges of the 21st century.” It never became law.

⁶ House Foreign Affairs Committee Ranking Member Howard Berman (D-CA) has taken on the challenge of rewriting the FAA to more adequately address evolving requirements.

B. ROBERT T. STAFFORD DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACT, PUB. L. NO. 93-288 (AS AMENDED PRIMARILY AT 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207)

The Stafford Act was signed into law in 1988 and provides the statutory guidance for most federal government disaster response. While directed at federal agencies, the design of programs under the Stafford Act was intended to foster and strengthen disaster preparedness and response at the state and local level. Under the tiered structure of authorities within the constitutional system of the United States, primary and initial response obligations resides at the local community level, with state government supporting as resources were exceeded, and the federal government coming into play when the state itself required additional resources. FEMA, which was created in 1979 by Executive Order, has historically been given the responsibility to carry out most functions of the Stafford Act through a delegation from the President to the DHS Secretary who has in turn delegated her functions to the FEMA Administrator.⁷

Within the Stafford Act, Section 612 Mutual Aid Pacts Between States and Neighboring Countries (42 U.S.C. § 5196a) gives the director of FEMA the authority and requirement to support the States who are contiguous to a neighboring country. This has been historically interpreted within FEMA as authority to collaborate on mutual emergency management issues with its counterparts, Civil Protection of Mexico (Protección Civil de México) and Public Safety Canada. A more expansive interpretation, supported by adjustments in both authorities and resources, would validate FEMA's ability to support the States along the U.S. Gulf Coast, facing America's "Third Border." This expansion fits in well within the Agency's role in the overall Homeland Security Enterprise (Department of Homeland Security, 2010).

⁷ Authority over the functions of Title VI of the Stafford Act, Emergency Preparedness, is the only part of the Stafford Act given directly to the FEMA Administrator.

C. HOMELAND SECURITY ACT OF 2002, PUB. L. NO. 107-296 (CODIFIED AS AMENDED AT 6 U.S.C. §§ 101-1405)

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 was signed into law on November 25, 2002, (Pub. L. 107-296) in response to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The Act brought together approximately 22 separate federal agencies to establish the Department of Homeland Security and sets forth the primary missions of the Department. The Act has been amended over 30 times since its original passage. (Department of Homeland Security, 2011) Specific to the mission of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Chapter I Subchapter V National Emergency Management, Section 313 and 314 details the mission of the agency and the responsibilities of the Agency's Administrator. Three specific responsibilities of the Agency that would support the premise of this thesis are:

- The primary mission of the Agency is to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the Nation from all hazards, including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters, by leading and supporting the Nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation.
- Shall lead the Nation's efforts to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and militate against the risk of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters, including catastrophic incidents.
- Shall develop and coordinate the implementation of a risk-based, all-hazards strategy for preparedness that builds those common capabilities necessary to respond to natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters while also building the unique capabilities necessary to respond to specific types of incidents that pose the greatest risk to our Nation. (Department of Homeland Security, 2011)

D. POST-KATRINA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REFORM ACT (PKEMRA) OF 2006, PUB. L. NO. 109-295

Congress passed PKEMRA in 2006 following extensive review and analysis of the failures of the federal government to respond to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the U.S. Gulf Coast. It substantially overhauled the way FEMA manages the federal government's support to the States. One of the most critical elements was language strengthening FEMA's ability to be more pro-active in that support, not awaiting passively for events to overwhelm a community, but seeking ways to engage in on-going collaboration. It reaffirmed FEMA's ability to use its authority and resources to mobilize support prior to an event, in support of and with the assent of the Governor of a State. It is this new attitude of collaboration and engagement that has supported a more successful partnership in the country in subsequent years.

1. Modification of FEMA Authorities

Integral to the premise of this thesis would be a modification of the Homeland Security Act that would provide FEMA with its own organic authorities to work in the international arena. This authority would take nothing away from the authorities and responsibilities of either USAID or the Department of State. Nor would it preclude a critical necessity of close inter-agency collaboration. While it would be left to the legislative process to design the appropriate modification to the Act, one possibility could be something as simple as:

The Secretary of Homeland Security, through the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in consultation with the Secretary of State, and in collaboration with the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, may enter into a reciprocal agreement with any foreign emergency management agency for the provision of technical assistance in the development of emergency management capabilities for the protection of lives and property from the impacts of catastrophic disasters.

In order to not conflate or confuse the domestic responsibilities of FEMA with any newly expanded responsibilities under this proposal, a new section could be added to the Stafford Act and labeled at Title VIII. This would lay out the specific responsibilities of FEMA in the Caribbean and Gulf areas, and establish the basis for programmatic developments targeted at fulfilling the mission of the Agency as laid out in the Homeland Security Act of 2002.

A further option for statutory adjustment to address this new direction for FEMA would be an amendment to the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide emergency management capacity building activities outside the Continental United States, and, as with the domestic emergency management mission, so delegate this to the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Critical to expansion of such authorities would be the adequate appropriation of funds to sustain such activities as would be initiated in the Caribbean and/or Central America. An amendment of the Stafford Act would require additional language such as:

Funds available to the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency for emergency management resources in connection with activities under the jurisdiction of such Secretary or Administrator may be used to carry out activities authorized under agreements or otherwise under this subchapter, or for reimbursements authorized under this Act.

Standard language for retention of funding received for services would also be required to ensure programmatic continuity. This would be similar to Section 304 of the Stafford Act that reads:

E. REIMBURSEMENT OF FEDERAL AGENCIES {SEC. 304}

Federal agencies may be reimbursed for expenditures under this Act from funds appropriated for the purposes of this Act. Any funds received by Federal agencies as reimbursement for services or supplies furnished under the authority of this Act shall be deposited to the credit of the appropriation or appropriations currently available for such services or supplies.

It would be imperative to establish a funding mechanism, through the standard appropriations process, that would not commingle this funding from its standard funding source for disaster relief in the United States—the President’s Disaster Relief Fund (DRF). Separate appropriations would ensure the Agency’s ability to account for its non-domestic activities, maintain the integrity of the President’s Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) for support to survivors of disaster events in the United States.

VI. A NEW PARADIGM

A. ARGUMENT

A new paradigm within the U.S. government that includes FEMA, USAID/OFDA, DoD, DOS, DHS and other agencies is needed to measurably impact both the increasing vulnerabilities, as well as the disaster response capabilities within the Caribbean-area basin. Each agency brings distinct and complementary capabilities for engaging in emergency management. FEMA brings its coordinative capabilities to the equation, including on-the-ground post event response coordination through its Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMATs), as well possible Search and Rescue (SAR) capabilities, and Crisis Communications support to the event. It also brings an established and recognized expertise in emergency management capacity building, through its preparedness, training and exercise programs.

USAID/OFDA brings its global experience in humanitarian assistance with expertise in program support, such as Food for Peace and its focus on long-term development following a crisis. The Department of Defense brings its robust logistical management capabilities to such an event, such as demonstrated most notably following the 2010 catastrophic earthquake in Haiti. The Department of State obviously brings its central and key role in representing the U.S. government to other foreign governments and would also provide the supporting services needed, such as passport and visa services. Other components within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would also be key integrants of such a partnership.

Utilizing the strengths that each brings to the table, the USG can begin to craft a new approach that builds partnerships, minimizes dependency, and creates opportunities for further homeland security collaboration. The new, unique element to the equation would be the focus on emergency management capacity building, designed and driven by professional emergency managers coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Working through legislative and policy reformation, a more coherent and cohesive USG program of international emergency management can be constructed that partners its capabilities with those of the various Caribbean-Area nations international partners to build national and regional resiliency, thereby supporting the overall Homeland Security goals of a stable and safe region capable to collaborating with DHS on the wider portfolio of homeland security issues.

B. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A serious and effective multi-agency approach to emergency management capacity building in the Caribbean basin will require not only the legislative adjustments and authorities enhancements noted earlier, but also a physical focal point that serves to bring the required on-going inter-agency attention needed to ensure the success of the investment in resources and time.

FEMA's strength lies in its decentralized regional structure that allows for flexible operational capabilities based close to the areas impacted by disasters. These regional offices have received augmented staffing over the past few years, as well as the authorities to operate in a proactive manner to develop collaborative relationships that strengthen whole community preparedness and response to disasters.

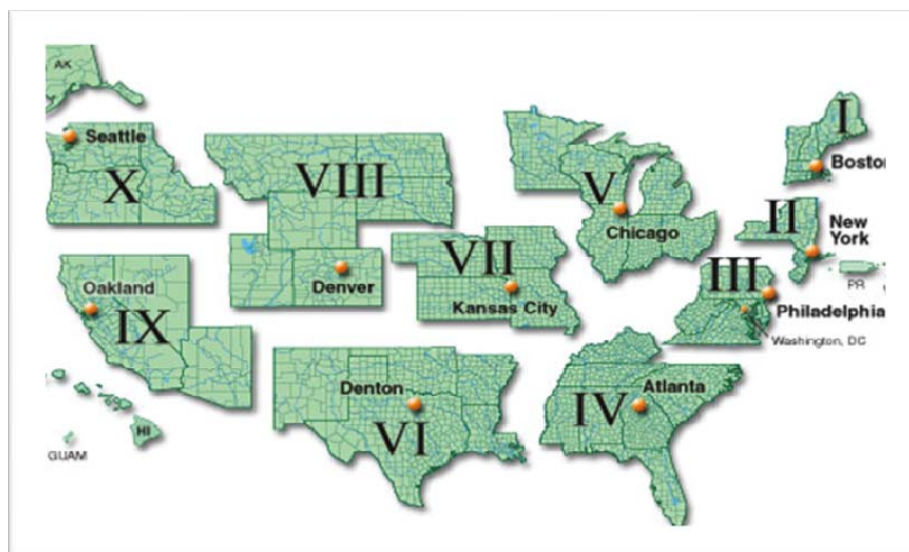


Figure 6. The National Response Framework, Figure 7, Page 61

FEMA already offers such a focal point in its Caribbean Area Division (CAD) office in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The CAD functions as a satellite office for FEMA Region II, providing a permanent FEMA presence in an area that is vulnerable to recurrent hurricanes and flooding and is also located within a major earthquake risk zone. The presence of the Caribbean Area Division has enabled FEMA to dramatically reduce response time to any disaster in the U.S. Caribbean jurisdictions. Established initially to serve as a permanent disaster field office, this office was expanded in 1991 with program management functions, and achieved full division status in 1993. The CAD has major responsibilities for planning and preparedness activities as well as response and recovery operations.

The mission of FEMA's Caribbean Division (CD) Office in San Juan, Puerto Rico is to coordinate emergency management programs to provide better and more cost effective service in the Caribbean. This satellite office of Region II in New York has a relatively small staff of employees that provide technical assistance, training, program coordination and program grants to the Puerto Rico State Emergency Management Agency (PRSEMA) and to the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) to strengthen emergency management capabilities. FEMA grants provide funds for salaries, administrative costs, training, equipment and special projects.

Operationally, this important FEMA presence in a major risk area vulnerable to recurrent hurricanes, flooding, and earthquakes greatly improves our responsiveness to any disaster in the region. During disasters this office serves as an Emergency Operations Center, as an assembly point for the Emergency Response Teams, and as a Disaster Field Office. In addition, FEMA also maintains a disaster field warehouse in Maunabo, Puerto Rico that is stocked with critical equipment and supplies for the region to support the first 72 hours of disaster operations pending external reinforcement from CONUS. A smaller warehouse is positioned in St. Thomas for the Virgin Islands.

By upgrading the status of the CAD to a multi-dimensional DHS nexus for international Latin American engagement, the U.S. government will be served by a ready resource both for engaging neighboring countries within the Caribbean and Central America. It could coordinate with other entities such as the USAID/OFDA regional

office in Costa Rica, as well as the disparate U.N. offices throughout the region. To address a current vacuum in capacity building, the CAD has the potential to become a Center of Excellence (COE) to support leadership development and standardization of emergency management and other homeland security capabilities for the region.

C. OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

To accomplish the goals of this new paradigm, various elements of the U.S. government's capabilities can be brought together to address each of the aspects of the *emergency management cycle*.

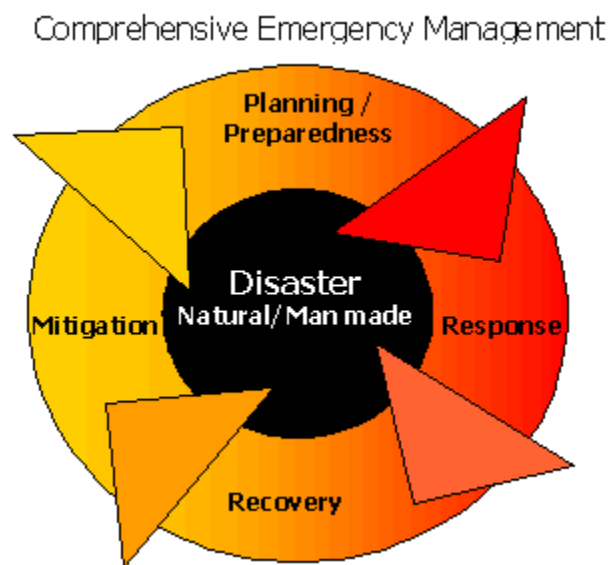


Figure 7. Emergency Management Cycle.

From <http://www.cityofws.org/Home/Departments/EmergencyManagement/Articles/WhatIsEmergencyManagement>

1. Planning/Preparedness

It is the core assumption of this thesis that a concerted and well-resourced investment by the U.S. government in disaster preparedness throughout the Caribbean and Central American areas of operation will produce tangible benefits to the homeland security of the United States. The Hyogo Framework clearly reinforced the connection between preparedness and the ability to respond and recover from disasters when it stated “At times of disaster, impacts and losses can be substantially reduced if authorities,

individuals, and communities in hazard-prone areas are well prepared, and ready to act and are equipped with the knowledge and capacities for effective disaster management” (Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, Para. 20).

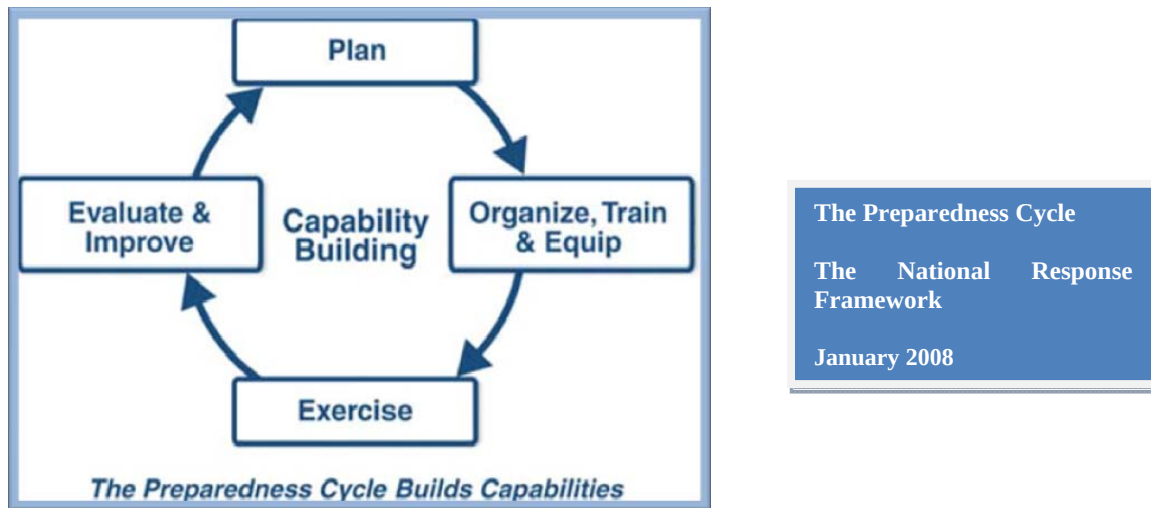


Figure 8. The Preparedness Cycle

FEMA’s Preparedness and National Protection Directorate is a well-resourced organizational element that can provide a wide variety of preparedness activities to the region. Its National Training and Exercise Division supports a variety of capacity building initiatives, from on-line web-based emergency management training to custom-designed planning and exercise offerings provided on site or at its two training centers: The Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, Maryland and the Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, Alabama. The National Integration Center (NIC), located in Washington, D.C., can provide support in disaster planning to strengthen each country’s ability to identify and organize its existing capabilities, identify shortfalls, and collaborate with partners to prepare for future disasters.

2. Response

Through FEMA’s National Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT), there exists the ability to rapidly support target nations prior to and during major disaster

and crisis situations. Working closely with the USAID/OFDA's Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DART), a multiplying effect could be achieved in working with the government as well as with the nongovernmental sector that might be operating in the impacted area. FEMA's MERS teams can quickly support restoration of critical communications to support the U.S. Embassy, the host nation and the other responder elements. FEMA has the Urban Search and Rescue capability, including two INSARAG-qualified teams that presently are deployed internationally through USAID/OFDA. FEMA currently has 28 national task forces staffed and equipped to conduct round-the-clock search-and-rescue operations following earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, aircraft accidents, hazardous materials spills and catastrophic structure collapses. These task forces, complete with necessary tools and equipment, and required skills and techniques, can be deployed by FEMA for the rescue of victims of structural collapse. . With FEMA's new authority to operate in the international arena, USAR deployments of either of the Fairfax, VA Task Force or the Los Angeles County Task Force could be effected much more quickly and with better coordination.

3. Recovery

While both short-term and long-term recovery would continue to be led and coordinated by USAID/OFDA, FEMA would be able to support those efforts by supporting on-going development of long-term recovery plans similar to the recently released NDRP—National Disaster Recovery Plan of 2011. As the lead agency for ESF-14 (Long-Term Recovery) under the National Response Framework, FEMA supports the planning and project implementation designed by community coalitions to initiate, sustain and enhance community short and long term recovery. This supports well the direction agreed upon at the XXXVth meeting of the Chiefs of State and Government of the member countries of the Central American Integration System (SICA) in June 2010, which calls for “early recovery as a multidimensional process that connects the phase of humanitarian action to the phase of reconstruction from a development perspective, by restoring the capacities of people, their livelihoods, institutions and the territories, to plan and in the recovery and reconstruction with transformation actions” (Central American Integration System, 2010).

4. Mitigation

As resources are available, FEMA's Disaster Mitigation Directorate can bring expertise in addressing the ways to protect both people and property from the devastating losses often incurred by major disasters. Mitigation programs can provide the means to family and community protection, and minimize the impacts of disaster by taking action to reduce or prevent future damage, preferably before a disaster strikes.⁸ Again, this is an area where an investment by the U.S. government through full inter-agency partnership, led by the Department of State and coordinated by FEMA, would pay dividends to the Homeland and help focus limited foreign assistance dollars to more effective utilization.

It has long been recognized that investments in mitigation, however minimal, can yield far greater results in the area of vulnerability mitigation. The island nations of the Caribbean are especially vulnerable, due to size, and limited redundant resources, systems and capabilities. This fragility has long been recognized by the international community, strategies have been developed, but to date tangible results are limited (CEDERA: Paul A. Bisek, 2001).

D. CHALLENGES

Organizational change is not easy, especially within government. Structural components bring with them legislative authorities, and appropriations. Established workforces become tied to programs and initiatives. However, the very structures in place afford us the very muscle needed to wrestle ourselves out of restrictive, legacy patterns and to contemplate new ways of operating, and creative ways of addressing ever evolving challenges. In *Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour Through the Wilds of Strategic Management* (Henry Mintzberg, 1998), the authors explore the approaches to the process of change, one being "planned. "Planned change is programmatic; there exists a system or a set of procedures to be followed. These range from programs of quality improvement

⁸ At the December 2011 meeting of the Consultative Group Meeting for Reconstruction and Development in Central American of SICA, the group of national leaders asked the international community to support their efforts to be recognized internationally among the countries most impacted by climate change to support initiatives in international climate change negotiations so that mechanisms of loss and damage could be established in response to countries affected by climate change. (System, 2011)

and training (micro) to ones of organization development and strategic planning (more macro).”

It is the contention of this thesis that now is the opportunity for the U.S. government to manage change in a focused, strategic manner, before real world conditions force it to do so. The well-documented organizational inertia that militates against rational change and evolution must be acknowledged and confronted in a collaborative atmosphere. Whether the factors that strengthen inertia are internal, (investments in plant, equipment and personnel; established relationship; or precedents as normative standards), or external (legal strictures; financial obligations; or identity or legitimacy), (Hannan & Freeman, Vol. 49, No. 2., April, 1984), they cannot preclude a dispassionate reappraisal and strategic approach to organizational change.⁹

In order to bring this newly-designed paradigm into existence, legislation would have to be introduced to amend FEMA’s authorities to allow for permission and funding to work outside the domestic borders. FEMA currently has no appropriated funds for such activity. Its current small International Affairs office would need to be expanded to support this new expanded mission. While a possible merger of FEMA and OFDA would provide a strong base for developing the new paradigm, this would be an option for long-term strategy, leaving USAID to focus on its strengths, which are humanitarian assistance and developmental projects.

Although the Department of State is the lead U.S. government agency for relations with foreign countries, there is currently no lead agency with the expertise in emergency management to respond to the increasing requirements of so many of these countries. Funding and program design in both DOS and USAID are focused on humanitarian assistance. The Department of Defense is often activated to provide life-saving timely humanitarian assistance following a disaster, e.g., Haiti and Japan. However, little effort is expended in working with partner nations to strengthen their own organic capacities in emergency management.

⁹ For an excellent disposition on the challenges of organizational change, see *Structural Inertia and Organizational Change* by Michael T. Hannan and John Freeman, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 49, No. 2. (April, 1984), pp. 149–164.

A variety of USG agencies, such as DoD , USACE, USFS and USAID, provide a limited amount of ICS and NIMS training around the world, as well as supporting exercises, but there is no comprehensive approach to the topic, that takes into account the long-term support requirements many of these countries in the Caribbean and Central America require. Our international partners are often confused by the wide variety of U.S. government agencies that they are called upon to interact with. Therefore, the current approach has limited impact and fails to optimize limited taxpayer dollars. Multiple national agencies and regional organizations have approached FEMA repeatedly over the past ten years for help and technical assistance in emergency management issues. The challenge for FEMA is that it is not resourced to respond appropriately and must resort to other agency funding and authority to provide the support requested.

1. Authority to Accept Transfer of Funds from International Entity

FEMA does not have the authority to accept the transfer of funds from an international entity. This inhibits its ability to provide training and participate in joint exercises with foreign governments.

Section 607 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, (FAA) permits the "selling" of services and commodities by any U.S. government agency to foreign governments, international organizations and registered NGOs on a reimbursable basis. FEMA does not have Section 607 Authority on our own; instead USAID must delegate that authority to FEMA. USAID requires that FEMA renew this delegation of authority on a regular basis. Its current expiration is September 30, 2013.

Trainings and exercises with foreign governments are especially important to secure our borders and for disaster preparedness for international incidents. Through training and exercises with foreign governments FEMA improves the expertise of its teams and increases their understanding of response methods and disaster operations in other countries. This exchange of ideas and information is invaluable to our disaster teams. In the evolving culture of emergency management, exchange of best practices and lessons learned is critical to the continued professionalism of the discipline.

Also, the authority to accept the transfer of funds from international entities would be helpful when trying to provide commodity assistance to a foreign government on a reimbursable basis. For example, when the United Kingdom experienced extreme flooding in July 2007, they inquired about ‘wag-bags’ from FEMA’s storehouses. In October 2010, following the wide-spread flooding in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, FEMA was directly petitioned by authorities from two of the countries for direct assistance with food commodities. Although USAID had representatives in Central America coordinating U.S. government relief support, the countries felt that a more responsive approach to FEMA would achieve their desired results. As a domestic agency, FEMA does not provide direct support to foreign entities. With the authority to accept funds from an international entity, FEMA can provide assistance on a reimbursable basis.

Without direct FEMA authority, FEMA must go through USAID for a delegated authority to receive the transfer of funds. Therefore, decisions regarding domestic preparedness are left to the authority and discretion of USAID. With this legislative proposal, FEMA would be given its own authority to accept the transfer of funds from foreign sources for reimbursement of commodities, services and training.

E. CONCLUSION

1. Paradigm Development: Summary of Recommendations

The proposed paradigm development will require a complex series of actions, decisions, negotiations and developments in order to set in motion the steps toward an integrated, inter-agency approach to emergency management capacity building in the Caribbean and Central America. To better understand some of these key elements, a condensed listing of these paradigm components is listed below.

- **Authority for FEMA:** Through legislative action by the U.S. Congress, the Robert T. Stafford Act would be modified to include language granting the Federal

Emergency Management Agency its own organic authority to engage with its international partners.

- **Authority to Accept Transfer of Funds from International Entity:** Through legislative action by the U.S. Congress, FEMA would be granted the authority to accept payment for services provided (training, exercise development and other emergency management capacity building activities) from international entities. This is currently only available through the granting of 607 authority by USAID/OFDA.
- **Financial Restructuring and Resourcing:** Through legislative action by the U.S. Congress, appropriations would be established to provide FEMA with appropriate funding to establish an autonomous robust international engagement program, including:
- **Change of Status of the Caribbean Area Division:** Through legislative action, FEMA's Caribbean Area Division would be elevated to formal regional status, becoming FEMA's Region XI, with appropriated funding to establish and maintain operations in support of designated emergency management capacity building efforts.
- **Establishment of DHS Inter-Agency Hub:** Through direction of the Secretary of Homeland Security, FEMA's Region XI office would be established and supported as an operational nexus for an all-DHS center for homeland security.

F. SUMMATION

It is important to reiterate the most salient point of this proposal: By investing in a new, more strategic, more professional initiative in emergency management capacity building with the vulnerable countries on America's Third Border, which includes the Caribbean and Central America, homeland security will be enhanced. And it is through a greater focus on the nonresponse, nonhumanitarian assistance aspects of disaster engagement that this will occur.

Regional stability and resiliency depends on increasing national and regional preparedness levels. It was well stated in the U.N. Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World that disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness are more effective ways to reduce disaster risks, because disaster response (which includes humanitarian assistance) is inadequate, yielding short-term results at an extremely high cost (Cappola, 2011).

The world of the 21st century can no longer be contained by the legacy dichotomy between domestic and international. Globalization of the economy is an established fact and the inter-dependence of countries on each other, and of regions on each other, will only grow. Policy makers in the United States must look at the issues confronting the homeland with new and fresh perspectives. As renowned author Philip Bobbitt stated in his book *Terror and Consent*, "...the threat from global, networked terrorism has blurred the traditional division between the foreign (the realm of strategy) and the domestic (the realm of law) that has transformed the rules of engagement that hitherto allowed nation states to achieve internal peace and external stability." (Bobbitt, 2008)

DHS can take advantage of this continually increasing demand by supporting FEMA's international role in nondomestic emergency management activities and, through emergency management capacity building, supporting the stabilization and strengthening of governments and societies susceptible to disasters. The risks of not developing a more coherent EM approach to our neighbors may cost the USG both economically and politically as disaster activities and vulnerabilities in the target region are impacted by changing climatic conditions, changing social and political conditions, and potential political instability. The relationships and trust developed through a focus on life-saving emergency management will pay dividends in both the short and long term in building coalitions able to confront the thornier issues of homeland security.

As far back as 1971, leading authorities were pointing out the strategic importance of the Caribbean to our national security and the need to establish viable partnerships in the region. "It is essential to ensure that inimical forces are not allowed to obtain additional bases and areas of operation on this doorstep of the United States.

Peaceful development in the area and avoidance of conflict or arms competition are similarly in the United States' strategic interest. These goals are essential to our commitment to meaningful human progress and to our national security; instability and violence would increase the opportunities for outside exploitation inimical to American interests." (Barrett, 1971)

As President Barack Obama stated at the Summit of the Americas held in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009: "Our safety is endangered by a broad range of threats. But this peril can be eclipsed by the promise of a new prosperity and personal security and the protection of liberty and justice for all the people of our hemisphere. That's the future that we can build together, but only if we move forward with a new sense of partnership" (News, 2009). He went on to further state "There is no senior partner and junior partner in our relations; there is simply engagement based on mutual respect and common interests and shared values."¹⁰

It is imperative that the region move away from reliance on postevent reaction and dependence on international relief. "Rather than taking a proactive approach towards risk management focused on risk reduction and preparedness, the region continues to rely upon costly reconstruction processes and postdisaster international assistance. This reactive stance is not only costly in terms of lives and destroyed assets, but also appears largely unsustainable as worldwide international assistance decreases and natural disaster proneness increases everywhere. This is why the improvement of risk management appears essential to guarantee the protection and future progress of economic and social development in the region." (Charvériat, 2000)

¹⁰ This statement was repeated by Arturo Valenzuela, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Dept. of State, in testimony before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Peace Corps, and Global Narcotics Affairs of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Washington, DC, February 17, 2011.

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