

**STATEMENT BY**

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THE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF FLORIDA**

**BEFORE THE**

**HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
ON TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS  
AND CAPABILITIES**

**SECOND SESSION, 109<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS**

**ON**

**APPLYING LESSONS LEARNED FROM  
HURRICANE KATRINA: HOW DoD IS PREPARING  
FOR THE UPCOMING HURRICANE SEASON**

**MAY 25, 2006**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Sub-Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. This morning, I would like to outline the state of Florida's Emergency Management System and how the Florida National Guard provides Defense Support to Civil Authorities. My remarks will then describe in some detail how the Florida National Guard conducts Hurricane Relief Operations and our current readiness to execute those relief operations in conjunction with local, state, and federal supporting organizations. Finally, I would like to close with some current concerns regarding our current capabilities to execute future homeland security and homeland defense related operations.

## **FLORIDA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The daunting reality is there have been over 1,300 tropical storms and hurricanes in the last 150 years and a large number have impacted Florida. We prepare for hurricanes in Florida because we know we will deal with them every year. It is not a possibility -- it is a certainty. Because of this reality, and because of the leadership of Governor Jeb Bush and his State Coordinating Officer, Mr. Craig Fugate, the state of Florida has developed a very robust Emergency Management System.

In the past two years, Florida experienced two of the most devastating and challenging hurricane seasons in history. In 2004, five named storms (Tropical Storm Bonnie, Hurricanes Charlie, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne) impacted Florida within a period of six weeks. These storms impacted virtually the entire state, destroying more than 25,000 homes, significantly damaging another 40,000, and causing the evacuation of 9.4 million people. In addition, 368,000 Floridians were publicly sheltered, more than 8.5 million lost power, and 122 lost their lives. This was the first time since 1886 that one state had experienced four hurricanes in one year.

The 2005 hurricane season proved to be an even more challenging with four hurricanes (Hurricanes Dennis, Katrina, Rita, and Wilma) impacting Florida. This season was historic with records set for the number of named storms (28), hurricanes (15) and Category 5 hurricanes (4). This was the most damaging in our nation's history, causing more than \$70 billion in damage. Throughout these devastating hurricane seasons, the Florida State Emergency Response Team provided support and assistance to the citizens of Florida.

The Florida National Guard is part of a comprehensive emergency management team led by Governor Bush and Mr. Fugate. State law emphasizes that emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation capabilities will be developed through enhanced coordination, long term planning, and adequate funding. The state's focus is on disaster support to local emergency response efforts. The state is prepared to provide effective, coordinated, and timely support if these communities require assistance beyond their capabilities.

Governor Bush's operational philosophy may be described as "One Plan, One Team, Many Threats." The state's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan establishes an overall framework for nested or supporting plans. The Governor serves as the state's Incident Commander. Local and state elected officials and emergency response staffs form the core of our team. An assigned federal coordinating officer serves as our partner and is integrated into our team. This structure provides the basis for our response to hurricanes, fires, floods, mass migration, and any other natural or man-made disasters.

The Florida Division of Emergency Management is the Governor’s primary coordinator of Florida’s emergency management team. It provides direction and overall policy coordination of state disaster mitigation, response, and recovery activities; and coordinating the activities of all state agencies providing disaster assistance. Their efforts include:

- Development of a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) provides guidance to state and local officials on procedures, organization, and responsibilities for emergency management.
- Establishment of a web site ([www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org)) provides a comprehensive reference guide for Florida’s emergency managers and citizens.
- Development of the State Emergency Response Team, composed of state, local, volunteer agencies, and the private sector; the 17 emergency support functions, and the Emergency Coordinating Officers.
- Development of a communications system to facilitate contact between local and state government and emergency agencies.
- Investment in a state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center in Tallahassee.
- An aggressive public affairs campaign, emphasizing personal responsibility.
- Training for emergency management staff at local and state levels.
- Funding for programs that protect lives and mitigate property loss.
- Development of an Emergency Alert System which will alert the public of impending danger or other emergencies.

Florida’s functional approach divides assistance into 17 separate functions. These emergency support functions and lead agency responsibilities are listed below:

<u>Emergency Support Function</u>	<u>Lead Agency</u>
1. Transportation	Department of Transportation
2. Communications	Dept of Management Services
3. Public Works and Engineering	Department of Transportation
4. Fire Fighting	Department of Insurance
5. Information and Planning	Department of Community Affairs
6. Mass Care	American Red Cross
7. Resource Support	Dept of Management Services
8. Health and Medical Services	Dept of Health & Human Services
9. Urban Search and Rescue	Department of Insurance
10. Hazardous Materials	Dept of Environment Protection
11. Food & Water	Department of Agriculture
12. Energy	Public Services
13. Military Support	Dept of Military Affairs (FL National Guard)
14. Public Information	Department of Community Affairs
15. Volunteers & Donations	Department of Community Affairs
16. Law Enforcement & Security	Department of Law Enforcement
17. Animal Support	Department of Agriculture

## **FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD**

The Adjutant General of Florida serves as the senior military advisor to Governor Bush. Forces available to the Governor include formations assigned to both the Florida Army National Guard and Florida Air National Guard. The Florida Army National Guard has 10,000 Soldiers with the 53<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade (Separate), 164<sup>th</sup> Air Defense Artillery Brigade, 83<sup>rd</sup> Troop Command, and 50<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group as its Major Commands. The Florida Air National Guard has 2,000 Airmen with the 125<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, Southeast Air Defense Sector, 202<sup>nd</sup> Red Horse Squadron, 290<sup>th</sup> Joint Combat Communications Support Squadron, 114<sup>th</sup> Range Operations Squadron, 159<sup>th</sup> Weather Flight, and Weather Readiness Training Center as its Major Commands.

The Florida National Guard has been a significant force provider for the Global War on Terrorism, providing units that have served or are currently serving in Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle and other contingency missions. These Florida Guard members have been deployed to Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Philippines, Kosovo, Bosnia, Cuba, and other locations throughout the world while also conducting homeland security missions in the United States. The Florida National Guard has deployed over 8,000 troops for the Global War on Terrorism and currently has approximately 2,000 troops deployed overseas and in the United States.

Concurrent with conducting federal missions, the Florida National Guard remains fully prepared to conduct its state/homeland security mission in support of Governor Bush and the citizens of Florida. Governor Bush and I have coordinated with the Department of Defense, United States Northern Command, Forces Command, United States First Army, National Guard Bureau, other State National Guards, federal and state agencies to ensure National Guard forces are available at all times to support state missions. The Florida National Guard has responded to eight hurricanes in the past two years, while continuing our federal missions. With the support of all federal and state agencies, the Florida National Guard remains fully capable and prepared to conduct its federal and state missions.

Since 1992, the Florida National Guard has supported 55 domestic operations, operating for over 1,500 days. The Adjutant General of Florida is responsible for the coordination, employment, and control of National Guard forces and resources. The protection of life, property, and the maintenance of law and order within the state of Florida are the primary responsibility of civil authorities.

The Florida National Guard is normally employed only after local and state resources have been fully utilized or when the situation exceeds, or is likely to exceed, the capabilities of the local and state civil authorities. The Adjutant General of Florida serves as the primary military advisor to the Governor. This relationship is similar to that between the President and the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and is particularly important during domestic operations. The Governor relies on the Adjutant General for input on all military operations not just Florida National Guard roles and missions. In Florida, the Adjutant General is not the emergency manager, but works in close coordination with the State Coordinating Officer during Florida National Guard domestic operations.

At the direction of the Governor, and in close coordination with federal agencies, Division of Emergency Management, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and other state agencies, the Florida National Guard is prepared to support:

- **Hurricane Relief Operations.** Security, logistics, transportation, debris clearing, search/rescue, reconnaissance teams, rapid initial assessment teams, traffic control points, airport clearance, engineering assistance, humanitarian assistance, Logistics Staging Areas, distribution points, State Logistics Systems Support, airlift, aerial re-supply, communications, County Emergency Operations Center Liaison Officers
- **Wildfire Operations.** Security, logistics, transportation, aircraft control, helicopter fire suppression, finance, fire fighters
- **Reverse Laning.** Preparation and security of the state's major highway systems to permit rapid evacuation of large populations
- **Airport, Seaport, Nuclear Power Plan Security.** Security of key installations and sites

In addition, the 44<sup>th</sup> Civil Support Team provides support throughout the state to augment first response agencies in incidents involving hostile use of chemical, biological, or radiological agents.

### **FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD HURRICANE RELIEF OPERATIONS**

The Florida National Guard prepares for homeland security and domestic operations with the same intensity as preparing to conduct combat operations. The continual threat during the hurricane season has required a preparation cycle that has become second nature to the Florida emergency management community to include the Florida National Guard. Preparation at all levels of the Florida National Guard is crucial to the successful conduct of hurricane relief operations.

The Florida National Guard's operational concept for hurricane relief operations is to remain prepared to rapidly and safely deploy resources in support of disaster response; work with state, federal, and local agencies to provide professional and effective support that meets the needs of the citizens of Florida; continue to support the Global War on Terrorism and other federal missions; conduct operations safely; and ensure the needs of Florida National Guard Soldiers, Airmen, and families are met, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of deployed servicemembers' families.

Hurricane relief operations present many unique challenges. The timeline for action is significantly compressed, as aid needs to reach affected citizens within 24 hours. There is minimal lead time for Guard members to report to their units and deploy to the affected area. Although the hurricane has passed prior to the start of relief operations, there can continue to be significantly adverse weather conditions. The destruction caused by hurricanes presents challenges for all phases of the operations, particularly safety. To ensure a timely response, the Florida National Guard prepositions forces immediately outside the projected hurricane impact area; however, there have been many instances where units had to reposition due to a change in the hurricane track. Communications are not normally operating in the affected areas. This means Florida National Guard units must supply their own communications. Guard members conduct relief operations operate in a very austere environment, and each unit must be self-sufficient for food, water, fuel, and communications.

## **Pre-Incident Strategy.**

Success in domestic operations is built on preparation, planning, and resource investment. The foundation of Florida National Guard hurricane relief operations is highly qualified leadership, starting with Governor Bush as the Commander in Chief. The Florida National Guard has tremendous experience in domestic operations at all levels of leadership. This is particularly important in senior leadership positions, as every senior leader has been involved in multiple domestic operations throughout their career.

The Florida National Guard has been completely integrated into the state's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and has published a Joint Operations Plan that is used as a template by other state National Guards. The Florida National Guard Joint Operation Plan for Military Support to Civil Authorities/Homeland Defense provides guidance to units of the Florida National Guard to use when planning, coordinating, or performing operations that support the state of Florida during emergencies. This document is in the doctrinal format of the *Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3122.03A*. The *Joint Operation Plan* contains all operations, personnel, intelligence, logistics, communications report formats and requirements, allowing all Florida National Guard units to work from a common operating picture. Publication and full implementation of this plan has enabled the Florida National Guard to conduct coordinated and planned operations regardless of the mission or conditions.

Frequent coordination with the state Emergency Operations Center and other appropriate entities ensures the Florida Guard is prepared for all contingencies. The Florida National Guard Joint Force Headquarters publishes updates on the State Threat Assessment, leveraging the broader intelligence community to provide the most current and relevant data. The Florida Guard has significantly upgraded its Emergency Operations Center located at state headquarters in St. Augustine.

Although Florida Guard personnel are deployed overseas for the Global War on Terrorism, prior planning ensures sufficient personnel are available to support any domestic contingency. Extensive coordination has been conducted with the National Guard Bureau and other state National Guards in case assets from other states are required through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, a mutual aid agreement between states which facilitates the rapid deployment and allocation of National Guard personnel and equipment to help disaster relief efforts in other states. Such agreements enable the National Guard to provide support assets across state boundaries.

The Governor and state legislature have made a significant investment in our readiness. Florida law provides job, health insurance, and school protection for Florida National Guard Soldiers and Airmen on State Active Duty. Florida National Guard members are paid at the federal military rate, with enlisted personnel paid an additional \$20 per day. Individual states determine the rate paid to personnel on State Active Duty. Florida has invested in the retention of our Soldiers and Airmen by paying at the federal military rate, ensuring our personnel do not suffer financially.

The Florida National Guard's commitment to excellence in hurricane relief operations is a year round commitment and includes:

- **After Action Review.** At the end of hurricane season (normally November), the Florida National Guard holds a workshop with all major commands and task forces. An After Action Review is conducted to analyze all phases of the year's operations.
- **Plans Revisions.** The December-February timeframe is used to complete plan revisions, concepts of operations, and training programs. Interagency coordination is completed and the Florida National Guard educates local, regional, and state agencies on new tactics, techniques, or procedures that have been developed. The Florida National Guard participates in local, regional, and state level table top exercises that may focus on a particular issue noticed during the previous season.
- **Individual/Team Training.** During the February-May period, the Florida National Guard performs state-unique mission training for State Emergency Response Team Liaisons, Assessment Reconnaissance Teams, Joint Operations Center training, and State Emergency Operations Center Emergency Support Function 5 (Information and Planning) and 13 (Military Support). Units conduct training to their Soldiers and Airmen on Rules of Use of Force during emergency operations and special equipment training.
- **Interagency Coordination.** The Florida National Guard participates in national and state level conferences for additional interagency coordination and training. We offer these opportunities to our tactical commanders so they receive first hand knowledge of the civil authority plans. During these conferences, we also provide training to our civil authority counterparts on the role of the National Guard as part of our continuous education process. Internally, we perform our pre-hurricane season conference with participation by our field units and task forces where we train them on new tactics and procedures. This brings Florida National Guard leadership together immediately prior to hurricane season.
- **Collective Joint/Interagency Training.** The state of Florida sponsors collective training events and exercises centered on a different hurricane scenario each year to prepare the interagency team for the season. The Governor's Hurricane Conference provides workshops, training, and speakers to Florida's emergency management personnel. The statewide Hurricane Exercise is usually conducted in the May timeframe and involves the emergency management community at every level. Municipalities, counties, regions, state, and federal agencies all work together during that week to test the adequacy of their plans and make adjustments where a weakness is discovered. It is a combination of field movements and message play designed to stretch the capabilities of the system to its breaking point.

### **Pre-Landfall Strategy.**

The Florida National Guard continually monitors weather and other factors that may result in the deployment of our forces. As weather conditions develop for a possible hurricane landfall, the Joint Force Headquarters develops courses of action for possible missions. In coordination with the State Coordinating Officer, the Florida National Guard requests approval from the Governor to activate planning cells in the Joint Force Headquarters and Major Commands.

This decision is complicated due to funding considerations, as Florida must pay all costs with no federal reimbursement if the hurricane does not impact the state. Governor Bush has consistently authorized early planning cells to ensure the Florida Guard is fully prepared to render assistance. Warning orders are issued to Guard units for possible activation with timelines dictated by the projected hurricane track.

The Adjutant General ensures that simultaneous to hurricane relief operations, other missions continue. During both the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons, the Florida National Guard had approximately 2,000 personnel mobilized for Global War on Terror operations. Required federal training continued although Florida National Guard leaders had to modify previously scheduled training. While domestic/hurricane relief operations are the Florida National Guard's first priority during these emergencies, it is crucial other important missions continue.

At the early stages of any significant domestic operation, the Adjutant General travels to Tallahassee to be with the Governor. As the Governor's military advisor, the Adjutant General will provide advice on Florida National Guard and all military issues, to include the possible requirement for federal military forces. The Adjutant General retains overall command and control of Florida National Guard operations, but normally appoints a Joint Task Force Commander to run the operation. The Florida National Guard Joint Task Force has the capacity to command National Guard assets; and provide Reception, Staging Onward Integration, and control of active duty military units sent to the affected area. The Florida National Guard normally provides support through its area commands, based on geographic boundaries.

The Joint Force Headquarters establishes communication with all federal, state, local and other partners, to include the State Emergency Response Team, National Guard Bureau, 5<sup>th</sup> Army, and the Defense Coordinating Officer. Requirements are continually assessed, with this information passed to our partners at least daily.

In coordination with the Governor and his staff, the Joint Force Headquarters implements a media campaign to establish with the citizens of Florida that a comprehensive, coordinated plan is being implemented to meet their needs. The Adjutant General is the Florida National Guard's lead for this campaign although all personnel are expected to enhance media relations. This campaign emphasizes number of units, troops, trucks, and aircraft dedicated to hurricane relief operations.

The majority of National Guard mission taskings will come through Florida Division of Emergency Management to ensure unity of effort and maximization of resources. In special situations, local Emergency Management Directors may coordinate directly with Florida National Guard units to ensure timely mission support. Upon the direction of the Adjutant General, the Florida National Guard implements the Joint Operations Plan and takes the initial actions outlined below (these actions may occur sequentially or simultaneously depending on the situation):

- Activate Planning Cell at Florida National Guard Joint Operations Center
- Activate Emergency Support Function 13 at State Emergency Operations Center



- Issue Warning Order to Florida National Guard Major Commands
- Authorize Planning Cells for Florida National Guard units
- The Adjutant General designates Joint Task Force Commander (if required)
- The Adjutant General moves to Tallahassee to be with Governor
- Mission Staff Coordination Assistant Team, Rapid Initial Assessment Team, Reconnaissance Teams and Liaison Officers
- Deploy Florida National Guard Liaison Teams to County Emergency Operations Centers
- Deploy Joint Force Headquarters Staff Coordination Assistance Team to Major Commands
- Activate Florida National Guard units
- Assign Areas of Responsibility by Major Command or Functional Area

The State Coordinating Officer provides guidance to Florida National Guard forces on mission and intent. Florida Guard units have been given wide latitude for early entry into affected areas as the presence of Soldiers provides assurance help has arrived. The Joint Force Headquarters establishes a red and yellow zone for priority of support. The red zone is normally the hardest hit area and is the primary focus of relief operations with the yellow zone requiring less support. This initial establishment of red and yellow zone is based on the projected storm path. The composition of each zone often changes after an assessment of storm damage post landfall. These zones are normally defined by county, as the Florida emergency response plan support is oriented to counties not individual cities.

Florida National Guard units are pre-positioned based on the projected storm path to provide immediate response once the hurricane has passed. Once an area has been assigned to a unit, our commander meets with local officials prior to landfall to preplan missions as post-landfall communications will be severely limited. Florida Guard units are issued a three-day supply of food, fuel, water, and other commodities to ensure self-sufficiency when moving into an affected area.

If the Governor determines that evacuation is required, he may implement a reverse laning (or contra-flow) plan for interstate highways or other major roads. This plan allows quicker evacuation by having traffic flow for four lane highways to flow in one direction. For example, evacuation from the south Florida area may call for all lanes on Interstate 95 and Interstate 75 to flow north. The Florida National Guard supports Florida law enforcement agencies to implement the reverse laning plan.

To supplement Florida National Guard forces, National Guard units from other states can deploy to Florida through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, a mutual aid agreement between states that was developed to allow for the rapid deployment and allocation of personnel and equipment to help disaster relief efforts in other states. The Joint Force Headquarters analyzes requirements and, if required, requests Emergency Management Assistance Compact support through the State Emergency Operations Center. This pre-landfall analysis is crucial as Emergency Management Assistance Compact forces

will need a longer lead time to respond. An important planning consideration is that the Emergency Management Assistance Compact agreement does not have a provision for conducting security missions across state lines; however, a Memorandum of Understanding can be developed and ratified between individual states to allow National Guard forces from outside the affected state to conduct such missions. The Emergency Management Assistance Compact was used extensively in the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons, with the National Guard response to Hurricane Katrina exceeding 40,000 troops.

### **Landfall Strategy.**

During hurricane landfall, the Florida National Guard maintains situational awareness of the operational area and constant communication with the State Emergency Operations Center and other partners. The Joint Force Headquarters ensures subordinate units are provided a Common Operating Picture, with specific information on Recovery Indicators and Projections, Damage Impact Assessment Models, weather effects, weather forecast, and wind effects. Mobilized Florida National Guard units are either pre-positioned outside the storm path or remain at home station preparing their troops to conduct operations. Units from outside the State of Florida activated through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact move toward locations designated by the Joint Force Headquarters.

### **Post-Landfall Strategy.**

The Governor's initial post-landfall emphasis is Search, Secure and Stabilize. For the first 72 hours a push system is in place that pushes water, ice, Meals Ready to Eat, and other supplies to the affected areas. The Standing Orders for these operations are:

- Establish Communication with Areas Impacted
- Search and Rescue / Security
- Meet Basic Human Needs:
  - Medical
  - Water
  - Food
  - Shelter
  - Ice is a distant fifth (Unless it's really hot)
- Restore Critical Infrastructure
- Open Schools / Local Businesses
- Begin the Recovery

The Joint Force Headquarters analyzes the operational area and provides guidance to subordinate units. Florida National Guard units move into affected areas when the winds drop below 40 mph and conduct pre-assigned and on-call missions:

- Reconnaissance / Rapid Assessment Team.
- Search and Rescue.
- Logistical Staging Areas.
- State Emergency Response Team Forward Support.
- State Emergency Operations Center Support.
- Reception, Staging, Onward Movement, and Integration.

- Security Operations; Traffic Control Points; Law Enforcement Support.
- Airport Clearance.
- Engineering Assistance; Debris Removal.
- High-wheeled Vehicles for Flood Assistance.
- Points of Distribution Sites (PODS).
- Airlift; Aerial Re-supply.
- Construction of Temporary Structures.

### **Transition Strategy.**

The Florida emergency response team assists state, county, and local governments in reestablishing their governing responsibilities. As part of this team, the Florida National Guard remains in the affected area until local governments, agencies, and businesses are functioning and can respond to the needs of their citizens. The process to disengage from hurricane relief operations requires extensive analysis and coordination. Reducing (or rightsizing) operations require as much an interagency planning as the initial response. The Joint Force Headquarters monitors basic infrastructure statuses as key indicators of affected communities returning to some basic form of normalcy. Specific rightsizing criteria can include:

- 911 system availability
- Changes in power, phone, and water availability
- Traffic signal status
- Curfew enforcement changes
- Changes to state and local law enforcement requirements
- Changes in Logistics Support Area and Distribution Center throughput
- Changes in crime rates or civil frustration
- Coordinated Commander's assessment

As these services are restored, and the local agencies and responders are able to address the remaining needs of the victims, the Florida National Guard initiates a reduction in force plan. Infrastructure restoration, however, is not the only factor in determining when Florida National Guard support can be reduced. Every transition plan requires diplomacy and compromise to ensure all parties are in agreement that it is time for the military to depart and return to home station. Political influence can and often does play a role in this decision, thus elected officials should be an integral part of the planning process.

### **Redeployment Strategy.**

Upon completion of their mission, Florida National Guard units redeploy to home station and conduct maintenance and accountability of equipment. All equipment is repaired and returned to fully operational capability. Emergency Management Assistance Compact units return to their home state. Various administrative, medical, and finance actions are taken to ensure personnel receive all requisite pay, allowances, and medical treatment. There is command emphasis to release Soldiers and Airmen as soon as possible after mission completion; however, equipment maintenance may require that some personnel (normally volunteers) remain on duty for an extended period.



In every event the military undertakes, evaluation and after action reviews are part of the operation. The Florida National Guard captures lessons learned while the operation is fresh in the mind of participating units. The after action review process is a requirement, not an option. These lessons learned establish the foundation for our future improvements. This process is not solely a self-evaluation; the Florida National Guard solicits candid evaluations of the mission response from all agencies supported during the operation. Thorough evaluation enables the Florida National Guard to continually improve capabilities and begins our preparation phase for next hurricane season.

## **FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD CURRENT READINESS**

The Florida National Guard remains fully prepared to conduct hurricane relief operations. Our units maintain a high state of readiness with mature and experienced leaders. Although we face challenges, we are confident that we are more ready today to respond to hurricanes or other disasters than ever before.

### **Personnel and Equipment.**

The Florida National Guard is composed of more than 12,000 Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen. Approximately 2,000 are currently serving overseas in the Global War on Terrorism. We believe 8,000 Florida National Guard troops are immediately available for domestic operations. Additional personnel and National Guard formations could deploy into the state in accordance with our Emergency Management Assistance Compacts with other states. In terms of equipment, we have carefully assessed mission requirements. Although significant quantities of materiel have been left in Southwest Asia, we believe the Florida National Guard has the necessary items of equipment on hand to fully support the needs of our citizens during the hurricane season. This year we will employ a truck-mounted, mobile command center with a full communications suite and command and control software to support operations in an austere environment. We have increased the number of tactical satellite terminals as well as the number of handheld local civilian radios available to our units.

### **Assessment and Improvement.**

Based on lessons learned from last year's hurricane season, we have adjusted plans and refined procedures to accept additional support contingency forces which may be required to move into our state. Along with our southeastern state partners, we have revalidated our Emergency Management Assistance Compacts. We have conducted numerous training exercises and currently Governor Bush, his agency heads, and more than 170 state emergency operations center staff are redeploying their operations center in Tallahassee to our National Guard operations center in northeastern Florida. This exercise tests the state's capability to provide a continuity of government.

Florida National Guard senior leaders and staff have met with planning teams from Department of Homeland Security, United States Northern Command, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 5<sup>th</sup> U.S. Army, the National Guard Bureau, and other organizations to prepare for hurricane operations.

## **State of Florida Investment.**

During the recent legislative session, Florida legislature strongly supported Governor Bush's \$565 million proposal for disaster response. More than \$97 million has been allocated during FY 06-FY 07 for hurricane preparedness supplies, public education, and for strengthening home structures, with \$154 million committed to emergency power for special needs, shelters, evacuation planning, and county emergency operations centers.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Florida has developed a culture of preparedness. We make great efforts to evaluate our readiness and identify actions which increase our capability to respond. The following are areas which deserve attention.

### **Resourcing State Programs.**

Although the nation has invested in a number of initiatives since Hurricane Katrina, most of these have focused on improving federal response capability. It is important to improve the ability of the federal government to respond to disasters and support of the states; however, it is equally important to invest in states' response capabilities.

Since September 11<sup>th</sup>, this country has created a new federal agency, the Department of Homeland Security, and reorganized many others in an effort to improve the ability of the federal government to provide for homeland security and homeland defense. The Department of Defense has expanded the North American Air Defense Command, created the United States Northern Command, and redefined the mission of the 5<sup>th</sup> United States Army as United States Army North. Unfortunately, there has been little federal investment in strengthening the National Guard's domestic response capabilities.

**Equipment.** Although the Florida National Guard is sufficiently equipped to respond to citizen needs during the hurricane season, some equipment shortfalls exist. It is exceptionally important the communications equipment, vehicles, aircraft, night vision devices, and other materiel transferred to the federal government in support of overseas mission be replaced, and that the additional resources necessary to enhance our emergency response efforts be resourced.

**Communications.** Military communications equipment does not exist in sufficient quantities nor does it provide the long range, interoperable solutions commercial satellite-based equipment offers. The Townsend Report, issued earlier this year, recommends the Department of Homeland Security establish and maintain a deployable communications capability, to quickly gain and retain situational awareness when responding to catastrophic incidents. That same capability must exist in hurricane vulnerable states. The Florida National Guard, with the help of the Florida delegation, has obtained interoperable, commercial, off-the-shelf satellite communications. Additional funding is required to enhance this capability.

**Joint Operations Centers.** National Guard Joint Operations Centers serve an essential role in coordinating the complex interagency response of our Joint Task Forces. They also assist the National Guard Bureau and the United States Northern Command in maintaining situational awareness and an accurate common operating picture. Like other state operations centers, the Florida National Guard Joint Operations Center provides day-to-day “all-hazards” event tracking. It also works in close coordination with the state’s operations center. Immediately following September 11<sup>th</sup>, federal funds were available to staff a 24-7 capability. This around-the-clock operation supported a myriad of security mission requirements and facilitated the rapid call up of emergency response personnel. As funding has been reduced, Joint Operations Center activities have been significantly curtailed. With sufficient funding, we could maintain a much needed 24-hour capability.

**Joint Operations Training.** There is a significant requirement for military disaster response training. Joint Operations Center staff and other military first responders require access to procedural guidelines and best practices. We need the ability to share lessons learned across state lines to avoid repetition of past mistakes. The Florida National Guard has initiated an extensive Joint Operations Center training program and has trained military staff from 23 states in the past 60 days. We believe a joint operations training center curricula should be formalized and taught in a regional training center or school.

**Exercises.** National Guard units and staffs are experienced in many domestic response mission assignments; however, additional training and exercises centered on a broader range of threats including, pandemic influenza and Weapons of Mass Destruction events, are required. These threats necessitate specialized training, planning, and equipment to meet expected mission profiles. Appropriate funding would permit training with our interagency partners.

**Formalized Lessons Learned Process.** Our nations’ military possess a number of processes to share military lessons learned. However, no formal process currently exists to share new approaches, tactics, techniques, and best practices in domestic operations. We should develop and invest in a capability which would permit the National Guard and other military first responders to share lessons learned.

### **Command and Control Linkages - Federal Military Support.**

I would like to take this opportunity to discuss the individual state and National Guard linkage to federal military authorities and the deployment of federal troops in support of domestic disasters.

**Our Governors.** Our Governors have direct constitutional and legal responsibility for the protection and safety of our citizens. All supporting forces responding to domestic emergencies within the states should normally remain under the control of our Governors.

**Our National Guard.** The National Guard is organized, trained, equipped, and experienced to function in the chaotic and challenging environments surrounding domestic emergencies. National Guard forces are forward-deployed throughout the United States with a presence in 2,700 communities. This decentralization enables the Guard to establish long term relationships with state and local officials. We believe the Adjutant General or his designated

Joint Task Force Commander should normally have operational control of military units that respond to a domestic emergency in our state. This arrangement is especially important when coordinating with civilian responders who do not fully appreciate the differences between Soldiers operating under *Title 10* and those operating under *Title 32* orders.

**Federal Support.** The National Response Plan identifies the Department of Defense as a support agency for support to civilian authorities in disaster response circumstances. Federal military forces possess unique capabilities that may be needed during catastrophic domestic operations. Ideally, this support would be facilitated through the state's assigned Defense Coordinating Officer. The Defense Coordinating Officer system has worked exceptionally well for decades in Florida.

**Unity of Effort.** The National Response Plan prescribes the process by which Department of Defense and Active Duty *Title 10* forces can be tasked to support a lead federal agency. This agency, in itself, supports the lead state agency in charge of a state's emergency management operations. Since all disasters and all emergencies are local in nature, Guard forces will already have been deployed pursuant to the Governor's emergency orders. The units will have been or are fully integrated into the mature and ongoing state and local emergency response team prior to the arrival of federal military forces. We believe unity-of-effort can best be achieved by having the latter arriving *Title 10* forces operate under the control of the Adjutant General or his Joint Task Force commander.

Although federal military forces would be under the control of the Adjutant General, full command and control of federal forces remains with the *Title 10* authorities. The deployed *Title 10* forces are merely directed to operate under the control of the Adjutant General. This force employment policy would ensure the priorities and operational objectives established by the Governor are accomplished. This force employment recommendation is consistent with existing doctrine and does not require any statutory, regulatory or doctrinal change. Depending on the level of federal military support, a *Title 10/32* dual status commander could provide the best unity-of-effort. This would be appropriate when active duty forces are used for logistics and presence missions and can be assimilated into existing National Guard forces already on the ground. The National Guard Bureau has conducted specific training for National Guard dual status commanders and is working closely with Joint Forces Command to develop this doctrine.

Regardless of the ultimate command and control structure used to employ federal assets, the National Guard will continue to be the Governor's primary military asset to address emergencies. It is critical that all federal, state, and local assets support the Governor's plan to address the disaster. State and local officials normally have the experience, critical information, and local knowledge to ensure federal assets are properly employed.

Interagency and intergovernmental relationships are essential to the success of any disaster response. To improve response efforts in the future, the National Guard, Department of Defense, other government agencies, state, and local authorities must continue to exercise and train together regularly. Additionally, to improve coordination and the readiness of United States Northern Command to assist states in domestic crises, we should significantly increase the number of National Guard personnel serving in that command full time, to include General Officer positions. The leveraging of unique National Guard domestic

operations experience will significantly enhance Northern Command's capacity to seamlessly integrate federal military support with the state's emergency management plan.

## **SUMMARY**

I want to thank the Members for the opportunity to testify. We have outlined the state of Florida's Emergency Management System and how the Florida National Guard provides Domestic Support to Civilian Authorities. We described how the Florida National Guard conducts Hurricane Relief Operations and outlined our current readiness to execute relief operations in conjunction with local, state, and federal supporting organizations. We also identified current concerns and recommended ways to improve our collective ability to support Florida's citizens during homeland security and homeland defense operations. In many ways, how we respond to catastrophic events defines our government, organization, or agency. The most critical time of the event is the initial response. We must be well prepared and capable of providing immediate relief in those most challenging environments. If we have not made investments in leadership, resources, training, and exercises we will fail and we will fail with much notoriety.

Since Hurricane Andrew, the entire state of Florida and the Florida National Guard have made significant investments in leadership, training, and funding. We have conducted numerous exercises designed to stress our systems in order to identify weaknesses. We have developed and implemented new tactics, techniques, and procedures to address those weaknesses. During the hurricanes of 2004 and 2005, the state of Florida demonstrated to the state and nation what a well prepared, well lead emergency response team can accomplish.

There are no quick fixes or shortcuts to achieving a high level of readiness in Emergency Preparedness. Only hard work, involved senior leaders, adequate funding, and sufficient training will suffice. Excellence is achieved through continuous training and, just like any professional organization; we must go out and re-earn our reputation during every hurricane. I would like to thank the members of the committee for allowing me the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

Thank you for your time and attention.

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