

FEMA's Response to 911

Charles Jennings: If you had to get it at least you got it from a friend. Our last speaker from the panel is Maryann Jackson. She is a resident of New York City. She's been 20 years with FEMA. And she is Deputy Coordinating Officer for the World Trade Center disaster.

Marianne Jackson: Good afternoon. I'm not funny like Rich that's for sure. First slide please. I want to give you a perspective and overview of the federal role in supporting New York State and New York City. We know what happened. Next slide please. This is a description of the incident. I'm gonna talk first briefly, next one

Our first responders here have given you the details or some of the details of their heroic and compassionate response to the incident at the World Trade Center. Next slide. Rich gave you a painted a very clear picture of what the Mayor did and what New York City OEM did and what happened to their beautiful command center. Next slide Governor Pataki immediately declared a state of emergency and in Albany the state EOC was activated and of course state troopers and highway personnel and 500 national guardsmen were deployed to Manhattan. Next slide. More details of the New York State response. I think it's important to note that the stage establishing staging areas was critical and this was some of the planning we have done for hurricanes and other hazards so we had pre-identified sites where the state would move assets to. And the state also did an excellent job as far as their donations, management because we certainly did not want billions or millions of tons of donated goods flowing into New York City and the state did a good

job in keeping the donations in control Next slide please.

That day President Bush signed a Presidential Disaster Declaration and he directed Joe Albaugh who is the director of FEMA, he's appointed by President Bush, to activate the the President's federal response plan. And for those of who don't know it, the federal response plan is a concept of operations whereby resources at the federal level can be quickly made available to the impacted community. And we've used this on hurricanes, and we've used this on earthquakes and we used it in Oklahoma City and the plan works. It does work, and we have, and I'll talk a little bit about it in a few minutes. Next slide please.

Region two is located in 26 Federal Plaza. FEMA has 10 regions. Region 2, 26 Federal Plaza, for those of you who don't know, is in lower Manhattan. It's about 8 short blocks from the World Trade Center site. Some of the folks were already in the office in region 2. What the region did was they deployed their emergency response team to various locations but most of the team went to a continuity of operations site predesignated and equipped in New Jersey in Bayonne, New Jersey. Also at the same time, FEMA headquarters activated their emergency support team at FEMA headquarters in Washington. Our colleagues in Region 1 in New York activate their emergency operation center. We call them regional operation centers, it's the same thing, to support region 2 during the move to the alternate location and they were, they were in close coordination with the folks in headquarters. The federal response involves 11 functions and it's all functional all this planning and function stuff has to be functional. There are 11

emergency support functions and those were activated so that meant that representatives from those agencies showed up in Washington, showed up in region 1 and showed up at the back-up facility in New Jersey. Next slide please. Per our nation's disaster law, the staff are back, the governor did request federal assistance. I don't know if it was in writing or verbal. The President signed a major disaster declaration with no cost share for the major programs. Ted Minette was named the federal coordinating officer and he was in Washington that day and I happened to be there also on business from a flooding disaster in South West Virginia. In the early days we approved over, well almost \$400 million dollars in advanced payments to the city. Next slide please.

On any Presidential disaster declaration, all the designations are done by counties and of course the boroughs equal the counties. And we also added other counties on to make sure that the people that lived in surrounding areas could apply for assistance and also to make sure that responding responders from other parts of the state would you know eventually be reimbursed for the cost they had in responding to support the city. Next slide please. This will give you some idea of the assets that were brought in. We have a standard pack of assets that are automatically deployed, or quickly deployed in addition to what we know the city and the stated need for a particular incident. We activated 8 urban search and rescue teams and those are the firefighting units from across the country that are trained and equipped and ready to deploy and of course New York City has an urban search and rescue team but a number of members perished in the World Trade Center, particularly their leader, Ray Downing. We also brought in from HHS these demorts teams which are mobile morgue units and actually we still are funding one

working with the medical examiners office. For disaster medical assistance teams which are like MASH hospitals, and they were down at the site supporting the city. A management support team which are the folks that help the city purchase supplies, build and manage the caches that we had down there. A morgue unit and a veterinary medical team. And those came in, came in very, very quickly. Next slide.

FEMA has the capability called, MERS, mobile emergency response support. We have good stand alone transportable communications capability so we had people driving these units from all over and they were able to get in there very, very quickly. And other federal agencies such as the corp of engineers also have their own transportable communication vans, and those came in because useful as well. Next slide please. Our initial priorities bring life saving support to New York City. Establish the mobilization centers which were outside New York City where we were most of them were able to fly in assets. Assess the damage infrastructure and listening to the you know to the two chiefs and you realize the uncertainty about what the infrastructure damage was particularly in the immediate aftermath of the attacks. I think we really weren't quite sure what we had, except it was bad. And then fourthly, you know, assess the debris management requirement. And these are priorities that were agreed to and worked with the city and and with the state. Next slide please. FEMA relocated from that New Jersey, from New Jersey to the Javits Center and then to Pier 90 on the west side of Manhattan which was you know one pier down from New York City OEM. And we do explain that New York City established their EOC at Pier 92. At the height of the disaster, we had federal and state people, over 6,700 people. Those are the ones we counted. I want to

credit you know staff who came from all over country really to assist us here. We had one person you know who drove overnight from Florida. Another person who drove from Chicago. Another person drove from St. Louis you know the airlines weren't operating and I think it's a testament to their dedication and their commitment. Next slide please.

The federal response plan. Let me just run down these federal agencies for you to give you a sense and some of them are represented here ESS1 transportation. This is the lead agency under the federal response plan and they can call in other federal agencies for support. They coordinated the transport of the urban search and rescue teams. They obtained overflight clearances. They obtained transport of emergency officials and supplies and there are you know there were waivers that were necessary and they did an outstanding job. So I don't know where you're seated Dave, but thank you very much.

ESF2 next one is coordination communications. National communications system and they coordinated our request for telecommunication service priorities which is something that you know is set up ahead of time with communications units to determine priorities that are needed in an instance like this.

ESF3 next one, is public works and engineering, that's the lead is the US army Corps of engineers. We have worked with, FEMA has worked with the Corps on many, many, many disasters. And on this disaster, their monitoring the debris operations out at the Staten Island landfill and assisting the city at the at the city. The landfill operation is a mammoth operation. The Corps is working closely with the New York City police

department and the FBI and I know that CSPAN has covered it recently. It's a mammoth operation. There are also, they also provided technical assistance on damage assessment and structural safety issues. They're you know they're engineers. They're good. They assisted in the in the dredging operations. We dredged a pier in lower Manhattan to make it easier to barge the debris from the site out to the out to the landfill. And they assisted Con Ed in power restoration.

ESF4 is firefighting. The lead is the US Forest service which the chief explained their experience is fighting fires. But they know how to buy things. They know how to organize. They know how to move quickly. And they supported the New York City down at the site. They brought in this incident management team and they also supported the DEMAT team and the USAR teams. They got the supply caches and they helped with warehouse operations.

ESF5 is information and planning which is which you know FEMA leads and we do the reports for Washington. And the strategic planning and the continuity of government planning because of course, while we were as we were taking up this challenge, we realized that there were other threats out there that we had to prepare for. That eventuality. Next one. ESF5 is also the home to the geographical information system experts and they coordinated with the city and with the states and we brought in some extra resources to help chart our path down at the site. ESF6 is mass care. The lead agency there is the Red Cross and I think we all know the great job that the voluntary agencies did you know providing meals, and it's not just the Red Cross. It was a lot of

other agencies. There wasn't on this disaster a need as you see, for example, on a hurricane, for a lot of shelters. I think there were just a couple of shelters opened in the early days and they didn't stay open too long. ESF7 is resource support. This is really buying things that people need and these are some of the things that we that we bought and they contracted for. And the it works is the city identified a need for something and they'd pass it through the state. It would be down at the site or it would be at Pier 92 and we would go out and buy it, you know we bought it, bought the stuff or brought it in from wherever as quickly as we could. Then remember we had the support of the of the team in Washington that could expedite things for us if we if weren't, if we were having difficulty in getting anything from Pier 90. ESF8 health and medical, that's public health service. They are one of the key emergency support functions. They brought in a pharmaceutical stock pile. They provided the DMATs and the DMORTs, the Veterans team, they also bring in nurses and they provided nurses to the disaster field office at Pier 92 and they provided nurses to the disaster assistance service centers.

ESF9 next slide, is urban search and rescue. These are the teams or the task forces that we brought in to, to help the city. These are the pre-identified pre-trained or trained equipped fire departments that we brought in from other parts of the country to help the city. ESF10, another player, another big player in this event, EPA. They continue to do a lot of air sampling down there. They are running the wash station for the trucks and they are providing guidance to the New York City fire department on hazardous materials disposal which has gone very smoothly as I think we would agree as far as a hazmat disposal. The next one is ESF11. Food. The Department of Agriculture, and on this

disaster, their primary mission was to provide disaster food stamps to people who lived in the area. There wasn't a shortage of food because of the nature of this incident so we didn't have to go the Department of Agriculture for food stuffs. We were able to purchase the food that was needed.

ESF12, the last one, is the Department of Energy and they provided a lot of technical assistance and guidance to Con Ed and industry officials and they were very instrumental in helping us work together to restore the financial district power so they could operate. Next slide. An important player on disasters is the Department of Defense. We all know that the Department of Defense has tremendous number of assets. And when the President declares a major disaster, the Department of Defense oddly enough works for the federal coordinating officer to provide any support that is needed from the DOD side that we can't come up with on the city or the state, or from the civilian federal agencies. And the Department of Defense coordinator was outstanding. He was from Fort Drum, upstate New York. They did some training. They brought in small robots that were able to navigate areas tunnels in the World Trade Center in the initial days. They had lots of technology that they were able to bring in and of course they brought in the US Navy hospital ship Comfort which was the comfort and we kind of hated to see it leave when it sailed out of the harbor. Next slide please. This was a tragically unique disaster and our plans, our procedures were modified to meet the challenges of this incident. Next one. We created a fire support branch which was to provide support to New York City Fire Department down at the site. And Mike Byrne, who is another speaker today who was with FEMA at the time and who is now with Homeland Security, Mike I hope you'll be

able to in your remarks perhaps talk a little bit about the fire support branch. A component of that, next slide please, is a forward coordinating team. And you know recognizing the horrible loss that the fire department sustained as a result of this, we brought in resources and trained personnel to support, to support the city in dealing with the incident down there. And we brought in people from all over the country who were able to help. Next one please.

Another adjustment we had to make was logistics chief. We do have to talk about logistics. I mean you do have to have good logistics. I think we all realize that and because of the size of the disaster and the requirements, particularly for the forward coordinating team, we realized that really we needed an internal logistics and also an external logistics because our internal logistics was getting us set up so we could operate out of Pier 90, but the external logistics was to make sure that we were we were supporting the people at the scene who were dealing with the incidents. Next slide please. This we have I noticed outside in those display boxes it's a statement from one of the urban search and rescue teams that was sent to us and it was carried in one of the newspapers. It's very moving and I think it was appreciated. Next slide.

I'm going talk briefly about recovery assistance. I think we all know that there was a tremendous outpouring of generosity on the part of many people to the voluntary agencies and to special funds. The recovery assistance is made is complicated by that generosity and also by the fact that there are people out there with a lot of different needs including people who have long term economic needs. Next slide please. On disasters,

FEMA, the delivery of the assistance to individuals on this disaster has been coordinated by FEMA in coordination with other agencies including the voluntary agencies. To register for assistance people can call this FEMA 800 number and then if necessary they are referred to other agencies. One of the agencies that kicked in here was the Department of Justice Crimes Victims Board, not the Victims Compensation Act, but the Crime Victims Board, because under our nation's law, if there is a terrorist act, and this obviously was, certain programs kick in which are to aid the families of the people who suffered or people who were injured because they are they are truly crime victims. And those benefits are administered by the state, by the Crime Victims Board. So we worked that coordination out up front.

Disaster housing is a program that you know is a big one for us on hurricanes. Here we found that what we were doing is we were helping people who had to move out of their apartments in lower Manhattan. You know and it's not just Battery Park City, but a lot of those buildings down there are lost that were converted to residences. So we helped people pay their hotel bills, get another apartment for a long as they couldn't get back to their house. Some of them we'll continue to help them because they still can't get back in their house. We gave them money to clean up their apartments if their insurance wasn't going to cover it. So there were a number of things we did with people in their housing.

Under that disaster housing program is something called mortgage assistance. It's really mortgage and rental assistance and this is, this is a big program. It's for people who because of as a direct result of the attacks on the World Trade Center, are having an

economic problem and cannot pay their mortgage or rent. And we work with them and depending on how long it will take them to get back on their feet, we'll pay their mortgage and rent for up to 18 months. So that's an important program and you know considering the prices for mortgages and rents in New York City, it's a significant amount of money. There is another program called the individual and family grant program which the state administers where we'll helping people with a lot of needs. The Small Business Administration as you know probably has disaster loans for homeowners and renters. And then there's also a disaster and employment program which dovetails with the regular unemployment program. Next slide please. We set up disaster assistance service center.

First it was at Pier 94 where the family assistance center was, now it's been moved to 51 Chambers in lower Manhattan. We also set up another one at Worth Street, also in lower Manhattan, where the disaster field office has been, has been moved to and that's basically a one stop center for people who were victims of the World Trade Center. And we're emphasizing that most of the assistance that people are going there for, by they probably can get it by phone. But some people prefer to talk to someone face to face and we understand that entirely. Next slide please. Crisis counseling is another program that that FEMA funds. It's 100%. It's it's to set up a network of counseling services for people who need it in New York City and throughout the counties and in adjacent states. And you may have seen the project, it's called Project Liberty. And they've taken out ads in the newspaper and in New York City it's the Lifenet number is the number that they are funding and they've brought in you know trained workers and given them more

training and they're there to help people because we know from other disasters and from what research has told us is that you know the psychological effects of disasters can be very severe. You know you see an increase in everything -- substance abuse, child abuse. Whatever problems that people have are exacerbated plus they're going to get new problems. Next slide please.

Voluntary agencies, I mentioned them before. There are so many of them. They deserve so much credit for their generosity and for their commitment. Next slide please. The other side of our, our other big program is called Public Assistance which is Aid to Government, the name is somewhat misleading. For this disaster, basically in public assistance, we pay for emergency work and permanent work. Emergency work, debris operations falls under emergency work. So basically we're paying for the cost, we will pay for the cost to remove the debris from the World Trade Center site and also the cost to run the Staten Island recovery operation. And we're supporting the city on that and when there's insurance coverage you know that would be deducted but that is something that the federal government will pay for 100%. We're also paying the city overtime for emergency workers, replacement of emergency equipment and materials so there are a whole host of eligible items that would be paid for under the public assistance program. We've already reimbursed the city for the cost of 52 new fire trucks. Next slide.

Public assistance also will take care of the permanent restoration. And we know if you read the papers, that's going to be complicated in New York City because of the because of the leases, because of how much insurance the lessor of the World Trade Center has.

Also what our intentions are as a city for rebuilding. But the permanent restoration are things that will be paid for under the public assistance program, again not duplicating what insurance costs there would be. The city is working on transportation plan. It's moving along very fast. There's hope that 1 and 9 train which went through the World Trade Center that there are going to be a temporary service restored I think in November they're saying. Plus the whole challenge of what are we going do with World Trade Center site and the PATH. And the other transportation capabilities that were disrupted there. Next slide please.

Under the public assistance program we've tried to streamline the process as much as we can, technical assistance contractors are people who are working with FEMA and they are assigned to city agencies and state agencies to help them determine what their eligible costs are. We also are streamlining the process in so much as we can. We're using something called the last one called incremental cost approach which means that we don't expect you to give us all your records for overtime. You know let's just come up with a reasonable average and do it that way. And then the next slide we have mitigation which is another effort to see how we can help the city and the state take steps to to strengthen New York as a community from similar future events. And finally, and this is my final slide, we have long term recovery and the FEMA speaker I believe later today, Brad Gair, is going to talk a little bit about long term recovery which is very, very complex. So thank you very much. I hope I've given you an overview.

Charles Jennings: For the panel. What would you say for each of you in turn and

particularly the response agencies, what would you say you learned from this event that probably was the biggest surprise for you in terms of you know looking back on it at this point, things that you picked up that you didn't really think you were surprised by I guess in terms of lessons learned in the response?

Blaich: As I pointed out in the presentation. Our biggest concern was we started we stated out operate as if this were normal emergency operation that we normally wrap in a few days or a week at most. And as it blossomed into this long involved process, we realized that had deficiencies in logistics, deficiencies, in communications, deficiencies in a lot of sustained operations. We could do things very well in sort periods of time, but we had no sustainability and that's something we really have to look at within a department. The other thing that had to be looked at was the response, the uncontrolled response of large numbers of fire fighters and police officers and whatever that we actually at one point lost control at one point of how many people were going into these buildings. All well intentioned, all well meaning but we have to go look, research that again, look at it again, get a better handle on it so that we hopefully don't have another situation like we had at the World Trade Center.

Morris: The response, the responding agencies, what the they were trained to do. They went setting up the command post where they were supposed to be. Nobody ever envisioned this type of attack and again Chief said it has to be a disciplined response and you have to set up further away and make sure you know what you have going before everybody goes in. And there was a lot of people with good intentions and unfortunately

results were not good. My own thinking is thank god the buildings came down when they did because there probably was at least another 500 people ready to go into that building, fire, police, and even people volunteers responding to the scene. So, the loss could have been much more.

(End of tape)