

**Testimony of Department of
Homeland Security Principal
Deputy Inspector General
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**U.S. Commission on Civil
Rights**

**DHS OIG Oversight of FEMA's
Response to Hurricanes Maria
in Puerto Rico and Harvey in
Texas**





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Thank you for the opportunity to discuss our office's oversight of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) disaster response and recovery efforts for Hurricanes Harvey and Maria.

Within 30 days in August and September 2017, three unprecedented, catastrophic hurricanes devastated areas of the United States and its territories, causing significant destruction. Immediately following these events, destructive wildfires devastated northern California. In response to these hurricanes and wildfires, the President signed seven major disaster declarations, authorizing FEMA to provide Individual Assistance, Public Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation Assistance to affected communities within designated areas.

FEMA faced many situational challenges in responding to these events that affected its disaster response and recovery efforts. In particular, Hurricane Maria severely damaged Puerto Rico's transportation, electrical, and communication infrastructures. Damage to these critical infrastructures left Puerto Rico's entire population of 3.7 million without electricity and 95 percent of cell towers out of service. All the island's residents were disaster survivors who had to rely on FEMA's response efforts for basic commodities, such as food and water, for extended time periods. Hurricane Harvey made landfall in Texas as a Category 4 hurricane that caused catastrophic flooding and widespread destruction along Texas' Gulf Coast. In some locations, storm-related rainfall exceeded 50 inches with top wind speeds in excess of 130 miles per hour. For example, Hurricane Harvey dropped more than 60 inches of rain east of Houston, forcing 780,000 residents from their homes.

My testimony today will focus on the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Inspector General's (OIG) oversight work highlighting some of the challenges FEMA faced in its efforts to provide both Public Assistance (PA) and Individual Assistance to meet basic needs, such as food, water, and shelter, following Hurricanes Maria and Harvey. After a discussion of our audit work addressing programmatic issues and recommended improvements, I will discuss work done by our office's criminal investigators to combat disaster-related fraud and abuse.



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Background

Following disasters, state and local governments are typically responsible for disaster response efforts. When the magnitude of an incident exceeds the affected state, territorial, tribal, or local government capabilities to respond or recover, FEMA provides Federal assistance to aid their efforts, under the *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act*, as amended (Stafford Act).

The Stafford Act authorizes the Federal Government to provide necessary relief and assistance prior to and during a natural disaster. The Act directs the Federal Government to provide work and services to save lives and protect property, such as debris removal, search and rescue, emergency medical care, shelter, food, water, and essential needs that include movement of supplies or persons. The Act also requires awarding contracts to local businesses to help stimulate the economies of disaster-affected regions.

In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, states, as recipients, are responsible for proper administration of disaster grants from FEMA. States must ensure local entities (subrecipients) are aware of and comply with Federal regulations to fulfill applicable requirements. States are also responsible for monitoring subgrantees and their activities.

States and local entities must also comply with FEMA-issued guidance. FEMA provides guidance specific to each disaster assistance program and outlines eligibility requirements. In the 2017 disaster season, FEMA used the *Individuals and Households Program Unified Guidance* to administer Individuals and Households Program assistance. The *Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide* governed FEMA's PA program.

Results of OIG Audits and Our Recommendations Related to FEMA's Efforts Following Hurricanes Maria and Harvey

In March of this year, we issued a report¹ summarizing the findings and recommendations resulting from our work related to the 2017 disaster season, with the aim of informing FEMA's future disaster response efforts. We identified systemic vulnerabilities that negatively affected disaster survivors. In particular, we found:

¹ *Success of Future Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts Depends on FEMA Addressing Current Vulnerabilities*, [OIG-21-25](#), March 3, 2021.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

- Shortcomings in FEMA’s acquisition and contracting controls, which affected the provision of supplies to disaster survivors and could have delayed needed goods and services and led to increased fraud exposure and risk to survivors’ personally identifiable information.
- Deficiencies in FEMA’s management of commodities distribution in Puerto Rico, which led to lost visibility of commodities and delayed shipments.²
- Inadequate oversight by FEMA of disaster grant recipients and subrecipients, putting millions of Federal dollars at risk of fraud, waste, or abuse.
- FEMA did not always manage its disaster assistance funds to ensure financial accountability and safeguarding of the funds.
- FEMA did not provide adequate oversight of its information technology (IT) environment to support response and recovery efforts effectively.

We believe our work related to the 2017 disasters highlights ongoing issues FEMA must address to ensure it achieves its mission and improves the efficiency and effectiveness of its programs and operations.

Issues with Acquisition and Contracting Controls

In responding to the multiple 2017 hurricanes, we identified issues with FEMA’s application of acquisition and contracting laws, regulations, and its own internal policies and procedures. In particular, through our oversight of FEMA’s response and recovery efforts following the 2017 disaster season, we determined:

- FEMA inappropriately awarded two contracts to Bronze Star LLC to supply roof tarps and plastic sheeting to disaster survivors in Puerto Rico.³ Within a month, FEMA canceled both contracts because Bronze Star failed to deliver the tarps and plastic sheeting, delaying provision of crucial supplies and impeding Puerto Rican residents’ efforts to protect their homes and prevent further damage. OIG identified critical issues with FEMA’s technical evaluation of bid proposals, as well as the inclusion of incorrect Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) clauses. We

² *FEMA Mismanaged the Commodity Distribution Process in Response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria*, [OIG-20-76](#), September 25, 2020.

³ *FEMA Should Not Have Awarded Two Contracts to Bronze Star LLC*, [OIG-19-38](#), May 7, 2019.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

ultimately determined that FEMA wasted personnel resources by issuing, canceling, and reissuing contracts. We made two recommendations to FEMA and it did not concur with either recommendation.

- FEMA's PA grant to the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) and PREPA's contracts with Whitefish Energy Holdings, LLC (Whitefish) and Cobra Acquisitions, LLC (Cobra) did not fully comply with Federal laws and regulations and PA program guidelines. This non-compliance led to potentially ineligible contract costs and FEMA reimbursing PREPA more than \$852 million for contract costs without confirming PREPA provided proper oversight of the contract.⁴ As a result of OIG's findings and recommendations, FEMA took immediate actions to assess the Whitefish and Cobra contract costs for PA grant eligibility. FEMA requested additional cost information from PREPA and contracted with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to conduct an independent analysis of the more than \$900 million in Cobra contract costs to determine whether the costs were reasonable and eligible for the PA Grant program.
- As noted in our March 2020 report,⁵ because FEMA did not maximize the use of advance contracts and relied on poor contracting practices, it wasted personnel resources, time, and taxpayer money by issuing, canceling, and reissuing contracts for critical supplies. In addition, goods and services for people in need may have been delayed. We attributed FEMA's limited use of advance contracts to its lack of strategy and documented planning process for ensuring maximum use of advance contracts. Although FEMA reported to Congress in December 2007 it had a strategy in place, we determined it was a one-time strategy that did not meet the intent of the *Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006*. We made four recommendations to help FEMA improve its strategy for advance contracts, its process for identifying capability needs and gaps, and its contract file management practices. All four recommendations are open and unresolved.
- FEMA did not properly award and oversee a contract to administer disaster survivors' hotel stays under the Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) program⁶, which led to FEMA releasing personally identifiable information for about 2.3 million disaster survivors to its

⁴ FEMA's Public Assistance Grant to PREPA and PREPA's Contracts with Whitefish and Cobra Did Not Fully Comply with Federal Laws and Program Guidelines, [OIG-20-57](#), July 27, 2020.

⁵ FEMA's Advance Contract Strategy for Disasters in Puerto Rico, [OIG-20-20](#), March 23, 2020.

⁶ FEMA Did Not Properly Award and Oversee the Transitional Sheltering Assistance Contract, [OIG-20-58](#), August 5, 2020.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

contractor that it did not need to verify disaster survivors' eligibility for the TSA program. FEMA concurred with 6 of our recommendations, of which 5 are closed, and 1 is resolved and open.

Issues with the Distribution of Commodities in Puerto Rico

In September 2020, we reported on FEMA's mismanagement of commodities distribution in Puerto Rico following Hurricanes Irma and Maria.⁷ The commodities distribution process started with Puerto Rico municipalities submitting commodity requests to FEMA. FEMA coordinated the movement of these commodities from its distribution center in Atlanta, GA (or other suppliers as needed) through the closest port (Jacksonville, FL) via a maritime transportation services contract. Once commodities arrived at the Port of San Juan in Puerto Rico, FEMA Logistics⁸ (in the Joint Field Office in San Juan) coordinated the movement of these commodities based on municipalities' requests. FEMA Logistics directed the movement of the commodities from two Federal staging areas⁹ to the Puerto Rico government's regional staging areas¹⁰ (RSA) or points of distribution¹¹ (POD) across the island.

We found that FEMA lost visibility of about 38 percent of its commodity shipments to Puerto Rico, worth an estimated \$257 million. Commodities successfully delivered to Puerto Rico took an average of 69 days to reach their final destinations. Inadequate FEMA contractor oversight contributed to the lost visibility and delayed commodity shipments. FEMA did not use its Global Positioning System transponders to track commodity shipments, allowed the contractor to break inventory seals,¹² and did not ensure documented proof of commodity deliveries. Given the lost visibility and delayed shipments, as well as an undetermined number of lost commodities, FEMA could not ensure it provided commodities to Puerto Rico disaster survivors as needed to sustain life and alleviate suffering as part of its response and recovery mission.

⁷ *FEMA Mismanaged the Commodity Distribution Process in Response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria*, [OIG-20-76](#), September 25, 2020.

⁸ The Joint Field Office is a temporary Federal facility where FEMA coordinates disaster response in the area.

⁹ A Federal staging area is a federally managed area or facility where commodities and equipment are positioned by FEMA, generally in anticipation of or in response to an incident.

¹⁰ A regional staging area (RSA) (also called State staging area) is a state-managed area or facility set up and operated solely by the state.

¹¹ A point of distribution (POD) is a state-operated area where disaster relief supplies are distributed directly to survivors.

¹² FEMA awarded a transportation contract (Contract No. HSF70-16-D-0204) to Crowley on August 30, 2016. The OIG made no finding with respect to Crowley's responsibility.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

Water and food, two of the most important life-sustaining commodities, experienced average shipping delays of 71 and 59 days, respectively. Of the approximately 97 million liters of water FEMA shipped to Puerto Rico between September 2017 and April 2018, 36 million liters (approximately 37 percent) reached the RSAs or PODs for distribution. During the same period, of the 53 million meals FEMA shipped to Puerto Rico, 24 million (approximately 45 percent) reached the RSAs or PODs for distribution. The remaining commodity shipments for both water and meals that arrived in the Commonwealth either remained in FEMA's custody, were in contractor facilities, or had unknown destinations.

As part of our audit, we conducted a Puerto Rico municipality survey,¹³ the results of which supported this conclusion regarding delayed commodity shipments. According to our survey results, it took FEMA an average of 10 days immediately after the hurricanes to deliver the first food and water to the disaster survivors.¹⁴ Further, only 27 percent (8 of 30) of the municipalities received sufficient amounts of water and only 20 percent (6 of 30) received sufficient amounts of food in the first commodity delivery. Although commodity distribution improved over the first 2 months after Hurricane Maria, approximately 24 percent (6 of 25) of municipalities did not receive enough food and water to support their disaster survivors. Forty percent (12 out of 30) of municipalities said they experienced significant problems with receiving expired food.

Moreover, the food that was delivered was nutritionally deficient. In an effort to quickly ship commodities to survivors, FEMA provided various food types such as meals ready-to-eat, snack boxes, and shelf-stable food that it deemed as meals.¹⁵ However, these meals varied widely in food type, and some meal types contained questionable nutritional value. For example, FEMA sent "meal" boxes that included Oreos, candy, cereal bars, and other similar items that lacked sufficient nutritional value.

¹³ In October 2018, OIG issued a survey consisting of 45 questions to Puerto Rico's 78 municipalities to obtain their perspective of FEMA's response to commodity distribution after Hurricane Maria.

¹⁴ While awaiting the arrival of commodities via maritime transportation, FEMA sent commodities by airplane and helicopter to Puerto Rico in the days immediately following the disaster. These airdropped commodities provided minimal assistance to the disaster survivors while waiting for the maritime shipments to arrive in Puerto Rico. However, these quantities were insufficient to meet the survivors' needs.

¹⁵ Shelf stable food is non-perishable food that can be safely stored at room temperature or on the shelf.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

We recommended FEMA develop a comprehensive strategy and implementation plans for improving logistical operations and visibility, which are critical to effecting change in future disaster and pandemic responses. In response to our recommendations, FEMA has agreed to make better use of technology to monitor supply and demand and tracking visibility; improve communication, collaboration, and accountability for third-party vendors; enhance contracting; and develop a risk-based approach to establish key performance metrics for timeliness and delivery.

Issues with Oversight of Disaster Grants Affected Program Effectiveness

FEMA experienced challenges overseeing recipients' and subrecipients' management of PA disaster funds related to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. DHS OIG published 21 reports analyzing and highlighting weaknesses in FEMA's program oversight during the 2017 disaster season. We identified recurring issues of FEMA not always:

- providing consistent and clear guidance to recipients and subrecipients;
- ensuring recipients and subrecipients established and implemented policies, procedures, and practices to expend PA grant funds according to Federal regulations and FEMA guidance; and
- reviewing project expenses in accordance with its policies.

As a result, FEMA risked reimbursing PA subrecipients for unsupported and unallowable activities. Our recommendations to improve FEMA's oversight deficiencies all fit into one of four categories. We recommended FEMA:

- review costs or require recipients to review costs and disallow and recover ineligible activities;
- provide technical assistance or require recipients to provide technical assistance to ensure subrecipients have adequate internal controls;
- develop and implement clear PA guidance and provide technical assistance or require recipients to provide technical assistance to ensure subrecipients develop and implement policies that adhere to Federal regulations and FEMA guidance; and
- conduct training for recipients on roles and responsibilities and on how to provide technical assistance to subrecipients and require recipients to



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

conduct training for subrecipients on specific requirements of the PA program, including use of FEMA's Grants Portal Tool.

Of the 81 recommendations made in the prior reviews and audits, as of June 2, 2021, FEMA had not implemented 52 recommendations (one of which remained unresolved), or 64 percent. FEMA has made progress, implementing approximately 20 percent of open recommendations in the last nine months. As FEMA moves forward with its recovery efforts, it must continue to hold recipients accountable for proper grant management and must complete implementing effective controls to overcome existing problems with managing and monitoring funds for disaster response and recovery. Without corrective action to increase accountability and institute effective controls, FEMA will face increased risk of fraud, waste, and abuse of taxpayer dollars in future disasters.

Issues with Managing Disaster Assistance Funds

In two audits related to the 2017 disasters, OIG found that FEMA did not manage its disaster assistance funds to ensure financial accountability and safeguarding of the funds.

- First, in response to Hurricane Harvey, FEMA overestimated the number of manufactured housing units it needed by nearly 2,600, which led to increased costs to purchase, transport, and store the units.¹⁶
- Second, in the TSA program, FEMA paid more than \$55.8 million in unverified taxes for hotel rooms, disbursed funds for unoccupied rooms, and left survivors to remain in hotels past the program's recommended 6-month timeframe.¹⁷

DHS OIG made a total of six recommendations related to FEMA's management of disaster assistance funds. Two recommendations have been closed while FEMA continues to implement corrective actions for the remaining four recommendations.

¹⁶ *FEMA Purchased More Manufactured Housing Units Than It Needed in Texas After Hurricane Harvey*, [OIG-20-15](#), February 26, 2020.

¹⁷ *Better Oversight and Planning are Needed to Improve FEMA's Transitional Sheltering Assistance Program*, [OIG-21-20](#), February 11, 2021.



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Department of Homeland Security

Issues with Oversight of the IT Environment

Technology is critical to supporting FEMA disaster response and recovery operations. In August 2019,¹⁸ we reported on FEMA's IT environment during the 2017 disaster season. In particular, we assessed the extent to which FEMA implemented federally mandated IT management practices and identified challenges to FEMA's IT systems' support for mission operations. We found that FEMA had not implemented federally mandated IT management practices essential for effective oversight of its IT environment. Specifically, FEMA did not have the planning and governance to facilitate day-to-day management of its aging IT systems and equipment. Moreover, FEMA did not provide its personnel with the IT systems necessary to support response and recovery operations effectively. FEMA's legacy IT systems were not integrated and did not have the functionality needed to keep pace with high-volume processing. The systems FEMA personnel relied on for situational awareness and emergency response coordination do not always contain real-time data, nor do they support information sharing with external partners.

We attributed longstanding IT management and planning challenges to:

- FEMA leadership not giving the Chief Information Officer adequate authority to plan and manage IT resources component-wide;
- FEMA's decentralized approach of allocating funds directly to program offices, resulting in fewer resources for support entities, such as Office of the Chief Information Officer;
- Perpetual de-prioritization of long-term IT planning in favor of disaster-related activities; and
- Inadequate funding to modernize FEMA's IT enterprise while continuing to support routine IT operations and maintenance.

These deficiencies are not new. In the past 13 years, DHS OIG has issued four reports on FEMA's IT challenges, including 20 recommendations to address longstanding technology and management deficiencies. Continuation of these problems leads to overspending and increased workload. During the 2017 disaster season, FEMA personnel engaged in inefficient, time-consuming workarounds, or relied on their personal IT accounts and devices to accomplish urgent tasks. Working in this manner introduces the potential for data errors,

¹⁸ *FEMA's Longstanding IT Deficiencies Hindered 2017 Response and Recovery Operations*, [OIG-19-58](#), August 27, 2019.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

exposes FEMA's network and IT infrastructure to security risks, and increases the potential for delays or duplication of disaster assistance and grants payments. Without progress in these areas, FEMA personnel remain dependent upon outdated and unintegrated legacy systems, inadequate equipment, and alternative solutions, such as manual workarounds and unauthorized equipment, to carry out critical disaster response and recovery operations.

OIG made four recommendations to address FEMA's longstanding IT management and planning challenges and better align IT resources with agency and mission priorities. FEMA concurred with all four recommendations and completed sufficient corrective actions. As a result, OIG closed all four recommendations.

In Funding Reconstruction of the Vieques Community Health Center, FEMA Followed Applicable Laws, Regulations, and Guidance

Hurricane Maria severely damaged the public health care facility on the island municipality of Vieques, off the coast of Puerto Rico. The following month, Vieques requested PA funds from FEMA. Members of Congress asked DHS OIG to evaluate FEMA's efforts to reconstruct the Vieques Center of Diagnostics and Treatment (Vieques CDT). OIG determined that, in its efforts to provide funds for reconstructing the Vieques CDT, FEMA followed applicable laws, regulations, and guidance.¹⁹

FEMA officials explained they made the determination to replace the Vieques CDT based on the facility's pre-disaster use and information provided by the award recipient and subrecipient. On July 9, 2019, FEMA issued an Eligibility Determination Memorandum to Puerto Rico's Central Office for Recovery, Reconstruction, and Resiliency (COR3) identifying the Vieques CDT as eligible for replacement and designating the replacement facility as a medical clinic. Although FEMA and COR3 disagreed about the designation of the Vieques CDT, Vieques did not exercise its right to appeal the designation or the final award amount. As required by FEMA guidance, *Puerto Rico's Public Assistance Alternate Procedures (Section 428)*, an expert panel reviewed and approved the cost estimate for reconstruction on December 16, 2019. On January 21, 2020, FEMA obligated about \$40 million to reconstruct Vieques CDT. As of January 2021, none of the funds had been disbursed by COR3 due to issues with Vieques' procurement of project management services that had not been resolved.

¹⁹ *FEMA's Efforts to Provide Funds to Reconstruct the Vieques Community Health Center*, [OIG-21-41](#), June 9, 2021.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

FEMA also obligated about \$4.2 million to establish and operate a temporary medical services facility in Vieques that opened in May 2018. According to FEMA, the temporary facility can provide all the services previously available at the Vieques CDT, and FEMA will continue to fund the temporary facility until permanent facility reconstruction is complete. As of January 2021, \$4.1 million of those funds had been disbursed.

OIG made no recommendations in this report.

OIG Investigative Efforts

One of the chief challenges in a post-disaster environment is vulnerability to fraud and abuse. Unfortunately, there are those who wish to profit from disasters, turning survivors into victims. In addition to the programmatic audits and reviews I've already discussed, DHS OIG's criminal investigators investigate fraud and abuse related to disasters.

As our office receives and process complaints, we work closely with the National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline. Since August 2017, we have initiated 249 investigations related to Hurricanes Harvey and Maria.

We have activated or leveraged various resources aimed at combatting criminality in the areas of:

- contract, procurement, and grant fraud;
- disaster applicant benefit fraud;
- identity theft;
- impersonation of FEMA or Federal law enforcement officials; and
- employee misconduct.

For example, our Major Frauds and Corruption Unit has the capability to investigate complex financial crimes. This multidisciplinary team of experts — special agents, forensic auditors, and financial analysts — work together to proactively identify DHS-related fraud. In the aftermath of the 2017 disasters, this team interfaced with FEMA officials from Office of the Chief Security Officer, Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, Grant Programs Directorate, Office of Response and Recovery, and Office of Chief Counsel to pursue criminal investigations of FEMA benefit and related fraud, identify fraud victims, and assess the effectiveness of FEMA efforts in the hurricane-impacted areas. As a result, OIG uncovered a fraud scheme that targeted FEMA for over \$100 million. Through extensive analysis using a suite of IT software and hardware, we systematically identified leaders and organizers involved in the



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

fraud scheme. We were able to coordinate investigative leads throughout the United States that subsequently led to major enforcement actions in partnership with neighboring agencies. While this investigative effort is ongoing, to date it has resulted in 31 investigations nationwide that have yielded 9 Federal convictions, \$985,000 in cash and asset seizures and \$5.1 million in restitution.

We have also uncovered serious fraud schemes. For example:

- We engaged in a joint investigation with the FBI and state of Tennessee in which we determined the owners of Master Group and Textile Corporation of America entered into an agreement with various business partners to obtain a \$3 million Tennessee grant to establish a manufacturing plant in Pikeville, Tennessee. The owners then illegally used the Tennessee grant money to purchase substandard tarps from China in support of a \$30.7 million FEMA contract to provide over 500,000 tarps intended to cover the homes of victims affected by the 2017 hurricanes. The owners falsified documents that were provided to FEMA and the state of Tennessee in support of their conspiracy to defraud. As a result of the investigation, on Nov 13, 2019, the owners pleaded guilty to two counts of wire fraud and one count of Money Laundering Conspiracy. On May 7, 2021, the owners were both sentenced to 50 months of imprisonment, 5 years of probation, and ordered to pay \$7 million in restitution. Of this amount, \$3.78 million is to be paid to FEMA.
- We investigated the \$1.8 billion Puerto Rico electrical power restoration contracts. As a result, the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Puerto Rico indicted a (now former) FEMA senior executive, a second former FEMA employee, and the former president of an electrical company. The 15-count indictment alleged conspiracy to commit bribery, honest services wire fraud, Travel Act violations, and fraud in connection with a major disaster. One former FEMA employee pleaded guilty to one felony count of Acts Affecting Personal Financial Conflicts of Interest. The trial for the former FEMA executive and company president is pending.
- We uncovered a major fraud scheme involving the Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) program, which was administered by the U.S. Virgin Islands' Housing Finance Authority. As a result of the investigation, the defendant was sentenced to 14 months' jail time, 4



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

years' probation, and ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$179,033.

We will continue to review and triage the many complaints and allegations that pose the greatest threats to FEMA programs and operations. We will continue to work in coordination with our investigative partners, FEMA, and our oversight community.

Looking Forward: Related Ongoing Work

DHS OIG has six ongoing audits and reviews related to both disaster and pandemic oversight that we initiated based on our observations during visits to disaster sites and post-disaster analyses. These audits include:

- An audit of the Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power program in Puerto Rico to evaluate FEMA's effectiveness in meeting its goals and objectives relating to timeliness, procurement, and oversight.
- An audit of FEMA's Intergovernmental Service Agreement (IGSA) with Texas' General Land Office to determine the extent to which the IGSA has processes and controls to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations and meets program objectives.
- A review of FEMA's implementation of the Public Assistance Alternative Procedures Pilot Program, to determine the extent to which the goals of the *Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013* for the program were met in accordance with legislative and FEMA guidelines.
- An audit of FEMA's medical supply chain in response to COVID-19 to determine to what extent FEMA managed and distributed medical supplies and equipment in response to COVID-19 outbreak.
- An audit to determine the effectiveness of FEMA's coordination of Federal efforts to provide personal protective equipment and ventilators in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- An audit of FEMA's use of mission assignments in response to COVID-19 to determine to what extent FEMA develops and oversees mission assignments for COVID-19 in accordance with FEMA's policies and procedures.

Conclusion

FEMA faced tremendous challenges meeting mission requirements because of the catastrophic nature of Hurricanes Maria and Harvey and multiple, concurrent, nationwide disasters. We hope that our testimony today has provided the Commissioners with a holistic view of DHS OIG's oversight work



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Department of Homeland Security

of FEMA's response to these disasters. This concludes my testimony. I look forward to your questions.



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Department of Homeland Security

Appendix A
List of OIG Audit Reports

Report Number	Report Title	Date Issued
OIG Audits		
OIG-21-41	<u>FEMA's Efforts to Provide Funds to Reconstruct the Vieques Community Health Center</u>	June 2021
OIG-21-25	<u>Success of Future Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts Depends on FEMA Addressing Current Vulnerabilities</u>	March 2021
OIG-21-20	<u>Better Oversight and Planning are Needed to Improve FEMA's Transitional Sheltering Assistance Program</u>	February 2021
OIG-20-76	<u>FEMA Mismanaged the Commodity Distribution Process in Response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria</u>	September 2020
OIG-20-58	<u>FEMA Did Not Properly Award and Oversee the Transitional Sheltering Assistance Contract</u>	August 2020
OIG-20-57	<u>FEMA's Public Assistance Grant to PREPA and PREPA's Contracts with Whitefish and Cobra Did Not Fully Comply with Federal Laws and Program Guidelines</u>	July 2020
OIG-20-20	<u>FEMA's Advance Contract Strategy for Disasters in Puerto Rico</u>	March 2020
OIG-20-15	<u>FEMA Purchased More Manufactured Housing Units Than It Needed in Texas After Hurricane Harvey</u>	February 2020
OIG-19-58	<u>FEMA's Longstanding IT Deficiencies Hindered 2017 Response and Recovery Operations</u>	August 2019
OIG-19-38	<u>FEMA Should Not Have Awarded Two Contracts to Bronze Star LLC</u>	May 2019