

**Summary of Presentation of Marianne Jackson,
Deputy Federal Coordinating Officer,
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

**Session III—“Cross Disaster Experience:
Meeting the Challenge of Different Types of Disasters”**

FEMA, in partnership with state and local governments, follows a well-established response plan to deliver assistance in the event of natural disasters. This timely presentation explores how this protocol was successfully used in the wake of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center. It looks at the early stages of the assistance effort, which includes the first response—by New York City and the state of New York—followed by the federal government’s entry initiated by President Bush’s disaster declaration.

What were the initial priorities? How was such a massive response and recovery operation coordinated with myriad local, state, federal and voluntary agencies? Ms. Jackson’s remarks cover the 12 emergency support functions that FEMA orchestrates in bringing a broad spectrum of federal aid to all disasters. These include transportation, communications, firefighting, information & planning, health & medical services and urban search & rescue, among others.

In addition to outlining this framework, the presentation shows how FEMA addressed the New York City recovery effort in an unprecedented manner at the community or grassroots level, and how the agency is assisting the local government with long-term restoration of infrastructure, mitigation and other initiatives.

FEMA set about to provide a wide range of human services through the rapid creation of Disaster Assistance Service Centers, which essentially offer “one-stop-shopping” to disaster victims seeking crisis counseling, small business loans and housing assistance as well as access to services provided by New York State, New York City and the major voluntary agencies.

Forum attendees will also visually tour the nerve center of the federal assistance effort, the Disaster Field Office (DFO), which at its peak coordinated the activities of more than 6,000 federal and state employees. What were some of the considerations in running such a sizable operation, an emergency field office that by necessity came together in a matter of days? Successful management of the DFO entailed disaster employee issues complex in their own right: safety and security, logistics, information technology, equal rights, as well as legal and financial oversight of the assistance effort, for example. The DFO also served as the command center for FEMA’s information outreach effort for the World Trade Center disaster, supporting a significant community relations cadre along with public affairs and intergovernmental liaison functions.