

Session No. 40

Course Title: Social Dimensions of Disaster, 2nd edition

Session 40: Field Trip: Federal Emergency Management Agency

1 hr.

Objectives:

- 40.1 Describe the mission of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and how it supports the Department of Homeland Security
- 40.2 Discuss the organizational structure of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and how it fits into the structure of the Department of Homeland Security
- 40.3 Describe at least four types of key interagency relationships
- 40.4 Discuss the history of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and its predecessors, e.g., civil defense
- 40.5 Describe the management structure and major equipment that comprise the emergency operations center (EOC) within the Federal Emergency Management Agency
- 40.6 Describe the conclusions of at least one research study focused on the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Scope:

Through a field trip (or guest lecture) to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, students are introduced to the mission, structure, history, interagency relationships, and an example research study. Depending on the course location, the field trip may be to one of the ten FEMA Region offices.

Readings:

Student Readings:

Federal Emergency Management Agency. 2003. "FEMA History." Washington, D.C.: Federal Emergency Management Agency. (Accessed January, 2004 at: <http://www.fema.gov/about/history.shtm>).

Sylves, Richard and William R. Cumming. 2004. "FEMA's Path to Homeland Security: 1979-2003." *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* 1 (Article 11):1-21 (Accessed March, 2004 at: <http://www.bepress.com/jhsem/vol1/iss2/11>).

Professor Readings:

Blanchard, B. Wayne. (in preparation). *Hazards, Disasters and the U.S. Emergency Management System: An Introduction* (working draft). Emmitsburg, Maryland: Emergency Management Institute. (Sessions 5, 7 and 8 entitled "Historical Overview of U.S. Emergency Management"; "Federal Players in Hazard and Disaster Fields"; and "FEMA Organization and Role in U.S. Emergency Management").

<http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/edu/coursesunderdev.asp>

Background References:

Carley, Kathleen M. and John R. Harrald. 1997. "Organizational Learning Under Fire: Theory and Practice." (Last 14 sections only). *American Behavioral Scientist* 40:316-332.

Daniels, R. Steven and Carolyn L. Clark-Daniels. 2000. *Transforming Government: The Renewal and Revitalization of the Federal Emergency Management Agency*. Arlington, Virginia: PricewaterhouseCoopers Endowment for the Business of Government.

Durham, Tom and Lacy E. Suiter. 1991. "Perspectives and Roles of the State and Federal Governments." Pp. 101-227 in *Emergency Management: Principles and Practice for Local Government*, edited by Thomas E. Drabek and Gerard J. Hoetmer. Washington, D.C.: International City Management Association.

Haddow, George D. and Jane A. Bullock. 2003. *Introduction to Emergency Management*. Amsterdam: Butterworth Heinemann (see sections entitled "Federal Mitigation Programs," pp. 44-46; "The Federal Response," pp. 68-85; "Communications among Responding Agencies," pp. 86-88; "FEMA's Individual Assistance Recovery Programs," pp. 98-102; and "Other Federal Agency Disaster Recovery Funding," pp. 103-107.

Rubin, Claire B. and Irmak Randa-Tanali. 2002. "The Terrorist Attacks on Sept. 11, 2001: Immediate Imprints and Their Ramifications for the Federal Emergency Management in the U.S." *Journal of the American Society of Professional Emergency Planners* 9:1-18.

Schneider, Sandra K. 1998. "Reinventing Public Administration: A Case Study of the Federal Emergency Management Agency." *Public Administration Quarterly* 22:35-57.

Schneider, Sandra K. 1995. *Flirting With Disaster: Public Management in Crisis Situations*. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Sylves, Richard T. 1991. "Adopting Integrated Emergency Management in the United States: Political and Organizational Challenges." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 9:413-424.

Kreps, Gary A. 1990. "The Federal Emergency Management System in the United States: Past and Present." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 8:275-300.

General Requirements:

Field trip arrangements. Note: The professor may consult the FEMA website for content information. Click on FEMA Regions tab to locate Region of interest and point-of-contact information.

Student Handout 40-1 (appended).

See individual requirements for each objective.

Objective 40.1 Describe the mission of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and how it supports the Department of Homeland Security.

Requirements:

Field trip arrangements.

Student Handout 40-1.

Remarks:

- I. Agency arrangements.
 - A. **Student liability** waivers may be required.
 - B. **Directions** for student questions (as specified in the Course Syllabus; Session 1, Student Handout 1-2) should be reviewed.
 - C. **Directions** for the Field Trip Reaction Reports (as specified in the Course Syllabus; Session 1, Student Handout 1-2) should be reviewed.
 1. Length.
 2. Content.

- D. **Directions** for transportation.
 - 1. Driving instructions.
 - 2. Car pooling.
 - E. **Distribute** Student Handout 40-1; “Field Trip Questions: Federal Emergency Management Agency”.
 - F. **Explain:** the list of questions contained on Student Handout 40-1 (“Field Trip Questions: Federal Emergency Management Agency”) can serve as a note-taking aid.
- II. **Speaker briefing.**
- A. **Emphasize:** factual information is desired, not a “public relations” presentation.
 - B. **Emphasize:** students have been required to prepare questions; allow 15-20 minutes for this.
 - C. **Explain:** a list of questions and topics will be provided that can structure the presentation (Student Handout 40-1; “Field Trip Questions: Federal Emergency Management Agency”).
 - D. **Explain:** students have been assigned a research article (Sylves and Cumming 2004) and a FEMA (2003) publication; provide a copy or summary.
- III. Mission: Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- A. **Speaker** responds to **question number 1** on Student Handout 40-1; “Field Trip Questions: Federal Emergency Management Agency”.
 - B. **Student questions** may add illustrations and clarification.
 - C. **Professor** should refer **students** to required reading that summarizes the **history of FEMA**, i.e., FEMA 2003.

Supplemental Considerations:

Field trips can be a **high point** in the course. This depends, however, on the **thoroughness of preparation** by the professor. Experience suggests that some students may **arrive late** to the agency unless the importance of a **timely arrival** is stressed and **driving instructions**, including parking locations, are provided. Similarly, the **focus** and **quality** of the agency presentation will be **enhanced** if the professor **meets with** the representative a few weeks **prior** to the field trip. A copy of the **question list**, i.e.,

Student Handout 40-1; “Field Trip Questions: Federal Emergency Management Agency,” **Course Syllabus**, and the **article assigned** for student reading (Sylves and Cumming 2004), can provide **requisite context**. Given the creation of the **Department of Homeland Security** and changes within FEMA, the professor should **request** that the **speaker** place this study and its analysis into **historical context**. That is, how have FEMA operations changed? Experience suggests that time allocation for **student questions** must be **emphasized**. Most agency representatives **enjoy** describing their work, agency mission, etc., and **easily forget** the student question **requirement**. Students should be encouraged to **car pool** as this provides **opportunity** to discuss the agency visit during the return to campus. Some professors may wish to introduce the analysis by Carley and Harrald (1997) who documented FEMA’s response to Hurricane Andrew and resulting policy issues.

Objective 40.2 Discuss the organizational structure of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and how it fits into the structure of the Department of Homeland Security.

Requirements:

Field trip arrangements.

Student Handout 40-1.

Remarks:

- I. Agency arrangements and speaker briefing (see above, i.e., Objective 40.1, Sections I and II.
- II. FEMA organizational structure.
 - A. **Speaker** responses to **question number 2** on Student Handout 40-1; “Field Trip Questions: Federal Emergency Management Agency.”
 - B. **Student questions** may add illustrations and clarification.
 - C. **Professor** should remind students of materials presented in Session 6, Objective 6.9, i.e., “Describe the general role of the federal government in emergency management.”

Supplemental Considerations:

(Same as those for Objective 40.1).

Objective 40.3 Describe at least four types of key interagency relationships.

Requirements:

Field trip arrangements.

Student Handout 40-1.

Remarks:

- I. Agency arrangements and speaker briefing (see above, i.e., Objective 40-1, Sections I and II).
- II. Federal Emergency Management Agency interagency relationships.
 - A. **Speaker** responses to **question number 3** on Student Handout 40-1; “Field Trip Questions: Federal Emergency Management Agency.”
 - B. **Student questions** may add illustrations and clarification.
 - C. **Professor** should emphasize, as necessary, the **large number** of Federal agencies that are active in hazards, disasters, and emergency management (see Blanchard [in preparation] for relevant listings; i.e., Session 7; “Federal Players in Hazard and Disaster Fields”).
 - D. **Professor** should **recommend** that students download from the Internet the listing and discussion provided in Blanchard (in preparation), i.e., Session 7, “Federal Players in Hazard and Disaster Fields”).

Supplemental Considerations:

(Same as those for Objective 40.1).

Objective 40.4 Discuss the history of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and its predecessors, e.g., civil defense.**Requirements:**

Field trip arrangements.

Student Handout 40-1.

Remarks:

- I. Agency arrangements and speaker briefing (see above, i.e., Objective 40-1, Sections I and II).

- II. History of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
 - A. **Speaker** responses to **question number 4** on Student Handout 40-1; “Field Trip Questions: Federal Emergency Management Agency.”
 - B. **Student** questions may add illustrations and clarification.
 - C. **Professor** should **remind** students of the required reading, i.e., FEMA 2003.
 - D. **Professor** should supplement, as necessary, relevant **historical highlights**; see Blanchard (in preparation), i.e., Session 5, “Historical Overview of U.S. Emergency Management.”
 - E. **Professor** should **facilitate speaker’s discussion** of how FEMA has **changed** over the years as documented by Sylves and Cumming (2004) (assigned Student Reading).

Supplemental Considerations:

(Same as those for Objective 40.1).

Objective 40.5 Describe the management structure and major equipment that comprise the emergency operations center (EOC) within the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Requirements:

Field trip arrangements.

Student Handout 40-1.

Remarks:

- I. Agency arrangements and speaker briefing (see above, i.e., Objective 40-1, Sections I and II).
- II. EOC management structure and equipment.
 - A. **Speaker** responses to question number 5 on Student Handout 40-1; “Field Trip Questions: Federal Emergency Management Agency.”
 - B. **Student** questions may add illustrations and clarification.

Supplemental Considerations:

(Same as those for Objective 40.1).

Objective 40.6 Describe the conclusions of at least one research study focused on the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Requirements:

Field trip arrangements.

Student Handout 40-1.

Remarks:

- I. Agency arrangements and speaker briefing (see above, i.e., Objective 40-1, Sections I and II).
- II. Federal Emergency Management Agency changes and challenges.
 - A. **Speaker** responses to **questions 6 and 7** on Student Handout 40-1; “Field Trip Questions: Federal Emergency Management Agency.”
 - B. **Student** questions may add illustration and clarification.
- III. Research study: Sylves and Cumming (2004) (assigned student reading).
 - A. Professor should emphasize that any **reorganization** of the **scope** of creating a new **cabinet level department** will remain a “work in process” for several years.
 - B. While federal bureaucracies reflect the **priorities** of the political party in **power** at any given time, other **historical contexts** and **agency cultures** impact the evolution of the implementation processes.
 - C. **Highlight** such factors as these (adapted from Sylves and Cumming, 2004).
 1. Actions of **five presidents** and new laws between 1979 and 2003.
 2. “**Turf wars**” among other federal departments and agencies.
 3. “**Generalist**” versus “**technocratic**” staffing decisions.
 4. Responses to **human-caused** disasters, including **terrorism** and other events, within an **all-hazards** framework.

- IV. Supplemental research study: Carley and Harrald (1997).
- A. **Professor** should emphasize the **dated nature** of this **case study** and the enormous **changes** that have occurred in FEMA since the attacks of 9-11 and the **creation** of the **Department of Homeland Security** as documented by Sylves and Cumming (2004) (assigned student reading).
 - B. **Professor** may refer to this study in questions posed to the speaker.
 - C. **Highlight** such points as these (adapted from Carley and Harrald 1997).
 - 1. **Event:** Hurricane Andrew (1992).
 - 2. **Location:** Study site was the Disaster Field Office (DFO) located in Miami, Florida.
 - 3. **Mobilization** (p. 316).
 - a. Extremely rapid due to prior preparedness.
 - b. Federal Response Plan created after Hurricane Hugo and Loma Prieta earthquake.
 - c. Quick appointment of a Federal Coordinating Office (FCO).
 - 4. **Interagency coordination** (p. 316).
 - a. All agencies represented at the DFO.
 - b. DFO coordination structure replaced by Presidential Task Force (Secretary Card).
 - c. Staff meeting schedule implemented (two per day).
 - d. Red Cross designated as lead agency for ESF6 (Mass Care).
 - 5. **Damage assessment** (p. 317).
 - a. Delay in obtaining accurate estimates.
 - b. FEMA plan replaced by Presidential Task Force and military.
 - 6. **Organizational learning** (pp. 318-329).
 - a. Planners were not practitioners (p. 318).

- b. “. . . federal plans served more as a treaty setting limits on intervention . . . “ (p. 318).
- c. Examples for FEMA (p. 329).
 - 1) Clarification of federal organizational roles and responsibilities.
 - 2) Interorganizational coordination.
 - 3) Damage assessment.
 - 4) Information management.

Supplemental Considerations:

Through **questions** to the speaker and **very brief** comment, the professor may assist students in **bridging the gap** that too often remains between material presented in an academic journal article and a personal visit to a state agency. The enormous **changes** that have occurred since the **attacks** of 9-11 and the **creation** of the **Department of Homeland Security** should be **highlighted**. Given the relative **scarcity** of academic research on FEMA, the Carley and Harrald (1997) article **illustrates** one approach that **requires future replication** and systematic **comparisons** to more **recent** disaster responses. **Depending** on the **quality** of the speaker responses to **questions 6 and 7** and the student questions, **minimal comment** may be necessary by the professor. It is **essential**, however, that any **deficiencies** be overcome if there is a gap between the academic material and the practitioner presentation.

Course Developer References:

- I. Blanchard, B. Wayne. (in preparation). *Hazards, Disasters and the U.S. Emergency Management System: An Introduction* (working draft). Emmitsburg, Maryland: Emergency Management Institute.
<http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/edu/coursesunderdev.asp>
- II. Carley, Kathleen M. and John R. Harrald. 1997. “Organizational Learning Under Fire: Theory and Practice.” (Last 14 sections only). *American Behavioral Scientist* 40:316-332.
- III. Daniels, R. Steven and Carolyn L. Clark-Daniels. 2000. *Transforming Government: The Renewal and Revitalization of the Federal Emergency Management Agency*. Arlington, Virginia: PricewaterhouseCoopers Endowment for the Business of Government.

- IV. Durham, Tom and Lacy E. Suiter. 1991. "Perspectives and Roles of the State and Federal Governments." Pp. 101-227 in *Emergency Management: Principles and Practice for Local Government*, edited by Thomas E. Drabek and Gerard J. Hoetmer. Washington, D.C.: International City Management Association.
- V. Federal Emergency Management Agency. 2003. "FEMA History." Washington, D.C.: Federal Emergency Management Agency. (Accessed January, 2004 at: <http://www.fema.gov/about/history.shtm>).
- VI. Haddow, George D. and Jane A. Bullock. 2003. *Introduction to Emergency Management*. Amsterdam: Butterworth Heinemann.
- VII. Kreps, Gary A. 1990. "The Federal Emergency Management System in the United States: Past and Present." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 8:275-300.
- VIII. Rubin, Claire B. and Irmak Randa-Tanali. 2002. "The Terrorist Attacks on Sept. 11, 2001: Immediate Imprints and Their Ramifications for the Federal Emergency Management in the U.S." *Journal of the American Society of Professional Emergency Planners* 9:1-18.
- IX. Schneider, Sandra K. 1998. "Reinventing Public Administration: A Case Study of the Federal Emergency Management Agency." *Public Administration Quarterly* 22:35-57.
- X. Schneider, Sandra K. 1995. *Flirting With Disaster: Public Management in Crisis Situations*. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe
- XI. Sylves, Richard T. 1991. "Adopting Integrated Emergency Management in the United States: Political and Organizational Challenges." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 9:413-424.
- XII. Sylves, Richard and William R. Cumming. 2004. "FEMA's Path to Homeland Security: 1979-2003." *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* 1 (Article 11):1-21 (accessed March, 2004 at: <http://www.bepress.com/jhsem/vol1/iss2/11>).

