
Task Force Meeting

of

ASSEMBLY COASTAL NEW JERSEY EVACUATION TASK FORCE

*"Discussion of the Task Force's goals and objectives,
as well as the individual needs of each participating county"*

LOCATION: Cape May County
Administrative Building
Cape May Court House, New Jersey

DATE: May 31, 2007
12:30 p.m.

MEMBERS OF TASK FORCE PRESENT:

Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew, Chair
Assemblyman Brian E. Rumpf, Vice Chair
Vincent Jones
Mariana Leckner
Francis McCall
Wayne R. Rupert



ALSO PRESENT:

Assemblyman Nelson T. Albano

Thomas M. Kelly
Kristin A. Brunner
*Office of Legislative Services
Task Force Aides*

Christopher Jones
*Assembly Majority
Task Force Aide*

Jerry Traino
*Assembly Republican
Task Force Aide*

Meeting Recorded and Transcribed by
The Office of Legislative Services, Public Information Office,
Hearing Unit, State House Annex, PO 068, Trenton, New Jersey

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MR. KELLY (Task Force Aide): Good afternoon, everyone.

As you all know, we're here for the Assembly Coastal Evacuation Task Force. This is an organizational meeting.

My name is Tom Kelly. I'm with the Office of Legislative Services, which is the nonpartisan office of the State Legislature.

I'm opening the meeting by first order of business which, according to Assembly Resolution 146, establishing the Task Force, is to select a Chair and Vice Chair. So on that note, do I have a nomination for the Chair of the Task Force?

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Yes.

Thank you, Mr. Kelly.

I would like to nominate Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew to be the chair of the Task Force.

MR. KELLY: Do I have a second?

MS. LECKNER: Second.

MR. JONES: Second.

MR. KELLY: On the motion to nominate Assemblyman Van Drew as chairman of the Assembly Coastal New Jersey Evacuation Task Force: Zach, Rory. (no response)

Wentzell, Carl. (no response)

Joseph Sever. (no response)

William Polhemus.

MR. RUPERT: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Francis McCall.

MR. McCALL: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Mariana Leckner.

MS. LECKNER: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Vincent Jones.

MR. JONES: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Harry Conover. (no response)

Assemblyman Rumpf.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Assemblyman Van Drew.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Congratulations, Assemblyman. You are the
Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN JEFF VAN DREW (Chair): Thanks.

I will take a nomination for Vice Chair of the Task Force. And
I would like to nominate Assemblyman Brian Rumpf.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Thank you.

MR. JONES: Second.

MR. KELLY: On the motion to nominate Assemblyman
Rumpf as the vice chairman of the Task Force, William Polhemus.

MR. RUPERT: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Francis McCall.

MR. McCALL: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Mariana Leckner.

MS. LECKNER: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Vincent Jones.

MR. JONES: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Assemblyman Rumpf.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Assemblyman Van Drew.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Yes.

MR. KELLY: The motion has passed.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay. Thank you.

I welcome everybody.

Today is basically going to be an organizational meeting, where we're going to lay out the network -- the framework of, essentially, what we're going to do here. I don't think I can emphasize enough how important this work is. Everyone in this room certainly realizes that.

I would like to introduce -- in the back of the room is Senator Nick Asselta, as well -- he's here -- and Assemblyman Nelson Albano, who is here as well.

This is an Assembly Task Force, but it deals with an issue that affects all of us throughout the entire state. And today's organizational meeting -- what I was hopeful -- is that we could lay out the groundwork of where we would have the meetings, how many meetings there would be, who we would invite to these meetings. And then, at the end of it, we will have a brief overview of the Cape May County situation by Frank McCall, who is the coordinator here.

We are going to have an opportunity, Mr. McCall, to actually have a more in-depth discussion as we have the Atlantic-Cape May County meeting. And I would look for input from the rest of the members.

I thought it might be appropriate, regarding the numbers of meetings, to divide them geographically. We could divide them into an Atlantic-Cape May County meeting, a Salem-Cumberland County meeting,

an Ocean-Monmouth-Middlesex County meeting. Those include the appropriate counties that are in this legislation.

Is there any discussion on that? Does anybody have any viewpoint of that?

MR. JONES: It's a better idea, I think.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Good.

Because there are particular issues that deal geographically and regionally with those areas, obviously.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: I would agree.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay, good. So we will, obviously, put together some target dates, and coordinate those dates with everybody who is on the Task Force, and make sure that everybody can make it. I'm very hopeful that all of us can make all of the meetings. And I know it's very difficult with everybody's schedule. And I know it is certainly difficult for the folks from Middlesex County to get all the way down to Cape May. But we are going to do our very best to make it all the way up to Middlesex. So this has more meaning if everybody is at the meetings that exist.

The types of attendees that we would invite -- and I look for input on that, as well. I've instructed the Office of Legislative Services that we would like to see, at these meetings, the county prosecutors of the appropriate counties, the emergency management coordinators, local law enforcement, any traffic officials from those appropriate counties, any boards of freeholders, mayors, council people, and/or other elected officials of those counties, and any other appropriate individuals.

I mentioned it to you before. Was there anybody I haven't mentioned?

MR. KELLY: No, that was it.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: That was it.

Assemblyman Rumpf, do you have any--

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Perhaps, as well, the emergency management coordinators of the respective municipalities.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Thank you. That was the other one, the emergency management coordinators of all the respective municipalities, as well.

Anyone else that we should have there? (no response)

This is too easy.

ASSEMBLYMAN ALBANO: Jeff, somebody had suggested the State Police.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: And State Police.

Thank you, Assemblyman. Yes, I think it would be good to have a State Police presence, as well.

If anybody does have any other individuals that they believe should be invited there, please let us know. It was very important to point out emergency management coordinators in the individual towns -- certainly have a role. Some of them are extremely knowledgeable and would be helpful in this process, as well as county prosecutors.

MS. LECKNER: I have a couple of suggestions just for help with the hazards -- discussing the hazards. The United States Geological Survey has a New Jersey office. They work with the stream gauges and the flooding issues. The National Weather Service, out of Mount Holly, would

be the ones that would be giving us our advisories on hurricane forecasts and approaching storms. And we also have a State Climatologist, who is out of Rutgers University, who runs a dense network of weather monitoring stations.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Good. That would be helpful.
Thank you.

MR. McCALL: Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Yes.

MR. McCALL: I got lost in signing that.

Did anyone mention representation from the New Jersey State Police, Office of Emergency Management?

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Assemblyman Albano just did. Yes, that's a good point, as well.

Anyone else?

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Chairman, one issue that perhaps we should address, in terms of invitees-- There has been some discussion, I know, and debate concerning the bill, as to whether or not we should also consider the impact of a forced evacuation due to the nuclear facilities in Salem and Ocean counties. I don't know if we'd like to consider issues pertaining to that impact and the evacuation impact of that, as well. Perhaps somebody from the NRC or the respective facilities could be of assistance.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: I think it's a good idea, Assemblyman.

Any comment on that? (no response)

Any opposition to it? (no response)

Good. I think we should do that, as well.

MR. McCALL: Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Yes.

MR. McCALL: If we're looking at the time frame for evacuation, there's a lot going on throughout the state today, particularly with health care -- the movement of fixed facilities from point A to Point B, which may be inter- or intrastate. So you have the State Department of Health that's wrestling with a lot of those kinds of issues -- the special needs population, regional sheltering. So you may want to consider everything that effects the regional approach to emergency management and evacuation sheltering, which then would be the Red Cross.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Good.

MR. McCALL: The Department of Community Affairs is involved very heavily with that. The Department of Health is involved with the fixed facilities.

Some of the kinds of things that we're talking about-- Currently, the State Police, with the Army Corps of Engineers, is going through SLOSH model revisitation of population, and time to move people from the coast. The numbers, currently, are all over the place -- anywhere from 12 to 36 hours to 120 hours out.

So, Assemblyman, when you mention evacuation, and mandatory evacuation, that is something that this committee should be looking at. There may be a point in time, as often happens, where -- if you're going in that direction, you may be asking for a mandatory evacuation when the sun is shining. There is a population of 750,000 to 850,000 people on the beaches in Cape May -- certainly along the coast,

everything east of the Parkway. So if part of your deliberation is mandatory evacuation, you'll want to take into consideration, what does that mean and how far out. If somebody is going to be pulling the trigger at 96 hours, and the storm skirts the shore-- So that's an issue that I think you'll want to deal with, whether it's mandatory or not, and at what point in time.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Very good. I think we will, as well.

I see our county engineer is here, as well. So it probably would not be bad to invite county engineers, as well as county freeholders and any other appropriate staff.

What I failed to do is have everybody introduce themselves. And I think most of you know each other, but maybe not everyone.

So, Frank, if we could start with you--

MR. McCALL: Frank McCall. I'm the Emergency Management Coordinator for the county of Cape May.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Assemblyman Brian Rumpf from the 9th District, Ocean, Atlantic, and--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Burlington.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: --Burlington counties.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: You have a little Burlington. You get a little slice.

Peter (*sic*), introduce--

MR. KELLY: Thomas Kelly, Office of Legislative Services.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Tom, I'm sorry.

Jeff Van Drew.

ASSEMBLYMAN ALBANO: Nelson Albano.

MR. JONES: Vince Jones, Atlantic County Office of Emergency Management.

MS. LECKNER: Mariana Leckner, Assistant Professor of Math and Science, American Military University.

MR. RUPERT: Wayne Rupert, Undersheriff and Deputy Coordinator for Ocean County.

MR. JONES (Task Force Aide): Christopher Jones. I'm with the Assembly Democratic Office.

MS. BRUNNER (Task Force Aide): Kristen Brunner, with the Office of Legislative Services.

MR. TRAINO (Task Force Aide): Jerry Traino, Assembly Republican Office.

N E L S O N C O L O N J R.: Nelson Colon, with the Office of Legislative Services.

R E B E C C A S A P P: Rebecca Sapp, Office of Legislative Services.

C H A R L E S D. W E B S T E R I I I: Charles Webster. I'm with the Ocean County Sheriff's Department, Office of Emergency Management.

R O Y B U R N H A M: Roy Burnham, resident.

S T E P H E N O' C O N N O R: Steve O'Connor, County Administrator, Cape May County.

D A L E M. F O S T E R: Dale Foster, Cape May County Engineer.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Steve, you've got to do it, too.

S T E V E H A M P T O N: Steve Hampton, Deputy County Administrator.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Nicholas.

SENATOR NICHOLAS ASSELTA: Nick Asselta, Senator, 1st District.

MICHAEL J. DONOHUE: Michael Donohue, 1st District Assembly candidate, resident of Dennis Township.

TERI CALLOWAY: Teri Calloway, Dennis Township Committee candidate, as well as Department of Health.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay. Thank you all for being here.

What other orders of business do we have before we have our presentation?

The dates of the meetings will be forthcoming. And so we're not duplicative, we will have constant communication as to who will be at what meetings. We're not going to have the same individuals, obviously, repeat their testimony over and over again at the meetings. Some of the issues -- and I'd be interested to understand what you felt -- were issues that needed to be discussed, as well.

I've always had concerns about exactly -- and I've heard different estimates and different discussions -- how long does it take to evacuate the various counties, for real? How long does it take during July 4th weekend? How long does it take during a normal weekend? How long does it take during the week, when the population isn't as great? And we would like to be even site-specific as to -- you know, for example, Route 72, coming off of Long Beach Island -- how long would it take there? How long does it take in Cape May County? How long would it take in Sea Bright? How long would it take in Perth Amboy? You know, those are some of the issues we really need to discuss, in my mind.

Secondly: exactly how the coordination works among the counties. What happens when this -- when we really know, truly, that a big nor'easter or a big storm is coming -- a Category 3 hurricane is coming. It's going to hit the entire coast. How does Cape May, Atlantic, Cumberland, Salem-- How does the entire coastal region-- How do they communicate with each other? How do they coordinate with each other? How do we really make sure that we get the people out?

Should we have somebody from the Guard there, as well, I wonder? Because they're obviously an integral part of all this. And I guess sheriffs' departments, as well.

Any other thoughts?

Yes.

MS. LECKNER: I would highly recommend having a presentation from the Corps of Engineers out of the Philadelphia District. They're the ones responsible for the SLOSH maps and also the Hurricane Evacuation Study, which Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan -- is the company that does the traffic modeling for that. They can explain how the numbers are created, how they're modeled.

In New Jersey, we only have one-half of a reversal that's ever been modeled. Part of Cape May County was modeled, but not the entire county. So there's actually-- Until Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan does the updated numbers, there's actually no modeled -- mathematically modeled numbers that we can work with at this point. We're sort of guessing until-- But those numbers should be done sometime within the next year.

Also, I would highly recommend a presentation from the National Weather Service to discuss the forecast, because of the fact that if you're looking at timing evacuations, you want to time evacuations when you're confident in the forecast. And really, within 36 hours, you're looking at the confidence. At 72, 96 hours, a storm could be down in the Caribbean. And you don't-- You wouldn't be calling them that far in advance. So part of it is understanding the forecast process and knowing what limitations you have, as far as when your confidence level is good enough to call evacuations -- considering that in the political and economic processes.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Very good.

Anyone else? (no response)

Okay. What else do we need to discuss?

Vice Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Well, hopefully we can fit in, with all the topics that we have, the local information as well. It would almost appear as if there may be a need for a preliminary meeting with the statewide coordinators, the Army Corps, the National Weather Service, what have you. I'm very interested to know, locally, what the concerns are, on a broader scope, when we're dealing with the statewide issue. I'm wondering, from a time perspective, if we need to have a more general meeting, at some point, to include all of those State agencies with the Red Cross, the Army Corps, the National Guard; and then boil it down locally, as well.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay. And I think you're right.

I think Assemblyman Rumpf is right. And what he is saying is that we have a responsibility in government to make the commitment to people that if a big storm comes we can actually get them out, and get them out safely, and we are not going to have a repeat of what's happened, obviously -- and this is what really sparked it with both of us, with all of us who really got into this -- a repeat of Katrina. And I know Assemblyman Albano has spoken about that, as well. We don't want to see that happen in New Jersey. Admittedly, different weather conditions, different infrastructure, different population-- We wouldn't get the same type of storm. However, the potential to get a storm is real. And I believe it is tomorrow that actually sets off the hurricane season. Am I correct? (affirmative response) I think the hurricane season starts tomorrow. So this is certainly a timely issue.

Any other--

MR. RUPERT: I think that one of the factors that exists in New Jersey, right now, existed in New Orleans in Hurricane Katrina. And that is that they had not been hit by a major hurricane in years, and years, and years. And we're in the same boat. I would like to think that our population is intelligent enough to say, "Yes, okay, it is going to happen," and would leave those places that are vulnerable.

One of the things that I think has been overlooked with -- particularly Louisiana-- Those folks chose not to evacuate. And I think they've got to-- People here have got to be given sufficient and competent information enough to know that they should choose to evacuate.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: I think you're right.

I would say the bottom line is-- Hopefully at the end of this Task Force, when we make our final report, we would have short-term recommendations for what we can do in the short-term, hopefully, to make the situation better. Hopefully we all feel confident -- that are up here -- that our coordination really does work, that we really can evacuate properly.

I can remember -- relating back to when I was on the board of freeholders, and we had a storm coming. And I don't -- can't recall the exact year. But it was so difficult to call the storm because of the patterns.

Frank, if you remember, I'm trying to think which one this was.

And being on the board, and going back and forth -- whether we really should start the process or not. At the end of the day, we did not. And it turned out that it was just some drizzle. So thank goodness that we didn't.

MR. McCALL: Hurricane Floyd.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Pardon me?

MR. McCALL: Hurricane Floyd.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Hurricane Floyd.

And do you remember going back--

And what a tremendous, awesome responsibility that was to sit here, going back and forth with emergency management, the Board of Freeholders, the State of New Jersey, whether we should begin the evacuation process in Cape May County. And we did not; and we did the right thing. But it is an ominous prospect to know that if you don't do the right thing -- can you get people out quickly enough?

And I think the reason that the Legislature, in its combined wisdom, decided to pass this legislation, that we decided to do it, is because

we want to be more sure, obviously more confident, that we are able to do that. And nobody, at least in my mind, has proven that to us yet. And hopefully that's the net result.

Short-term ideas, short-term recommendations: how we can do better. Obviously, that doesn't include expanding Route 72. That's not a short-term, I don't think. It doesn't include Route 55. Those are going to be the long-term types of solutions. But I'm hopeful that, in the short-term, we can come up with some ideas and solutions that make it better, and that we'll also have long-term recommendations, as well -- what needs to be done infrastructure-wise.

Any other comment? Any other ideas? Anybody on the Task Force here-- (no response)

Did everybody have their coffee? (laughter)

MS. LECKNER: I have one more comment also.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: At least you're talking, for God's sake.

MS. LECKNER: Sorry, I always talk.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: No, you're good. It's good. (laughter)

MS. LECKNER: I used to be the evacuation coordinator and hurricane planner for the State of New Jersey. So I tend to talk a lot about these things.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: It's good.

MS. LECKNER: One suggestion, also, is that there is no State money allocated for hurricane preparedness, flood preparedness -- anything at the State level. There is zero dollars. And that always concerned me,

and still concerns me, because of the fact that any plan will fail if there is not the appropriate public outreach.

And I think that something else to be considered is, maybe, recommendations for possible funding sources -- whether they're external grants, or whether it's coming from State funds, or something. Because it ends up with really piecemeal activities -- as to who has the money to do the planning, and to do things, and to pay for traffic modeling -- rather than looking at a holistic picture of the State.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay. Good.

If nobody has any other comment, Senator, do you have anything?

SENATOR ASSELTA: (speaking from audience) I think the committee person up there really hit the nail on the head, as far as resources. They're going to have so many -- so much input through this process, that resources are going to be key to solving this problem, long-term.

And, quite frankly, I believe the State should have an obligation, as the Legislature -- but also, these counties that are represented should play a role in funding some of this outreach issue.

I don't know if you're picking me up? (referring to recording microphones) Are you picking me up all right? Usually they're pretty--

Yes, Mr. Chairman, as Ms. Leckner mentioned, resources are going to be the key to solving this problem. And it's outreach, it's public outreach, it's education -- all takes dollars. Obviously, the State is challenged all the time for resources. I would think the counties involved: Atlantic County here, Monmouth County, etc., Ocean County -- by the

way, pretty wealthy counties -- Cape May County -- with surpluses in their budgets -- should find the resources, also, to be a partner in this; I'm not saying the full brunt of it. The State wants to be a partner, but it can't do everything. And I think dollars spent on the local level probably are best utilized.

So that's a great comment and something I think is important to note, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay.

SENATOR ASSELTA: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Thank you, Senator.

I'll let you have a thorough discussion with Mr. O'Connor about that later.

SENATOR ASSELTA: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: I can see him wincing.
(laughter)

SENATOR ASSELTA: They have all the money.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay.

With that, Mr. McCall is going to give us--

Now, we're going to have an Atlantic-Cape May meeting. This is basically an organizational meeting to set, as you know, the Chair, the foundation, everything that we're going to do.

And, I'm sorry, before we go on with Mr. McCall, we did have some public comment from Mr. Burnham.

Did you want to comment?

You can come right to the microphone. You did want to speak, correct?

MR. BURNHAM: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay.

MR. BURNHAM: I'm on the clock right now, so I can't stay too long.

I had a few things that were concerns with me. And, in fact, I even cut out today's paper and yesterday's paper on vulnerability, and whatnot, in the *Press* and the *Herald*.

But a couple of things that I looked at-- I left the safe haven of Burlington County a couple of years ago to retire down on the Barrier Island. And I'm basically a concerned constituent of the Island and Cape May County.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Speak up a little bit. I'm sorry.

MR. BURNHAM: I'm sorry.

I'm kind of concerned as a resident -- a new resident from the Barrier Islands, in Cape May County. And I've tried to join a couple of the local associations, and fire company, and whatnot, to get localized, if you will. And as I have, I have seen a lot of things that, as a New Englander, and been through hurricanes -- Carol -- late '50s, early '60s -- see what they've done -- I can see that we're ill-prepared.

I spent 20 years in the military. Civil engineers -- they're like the Seabees, so we've seen it all. We've done several exercises on natural disasters with the National Guard. Little known to a lot of people, the Air National Guard has a civil engineering unit that's stateside doing nothing -- they're not doing nothing, they're doing a lot. But in a time of need, natural disasters, they're available. We've got a lot of our folks overseas

right now, in Iraq. And the Air National Guard has a lot of good talent there for emergencies.

I was looking at Mr. McCall's map -- the new map that we've had since post-Katrina, where the Barrier Islands -- and the new levels that we have, as far as elevations. That concerns me. We have-- I guess we'll have something later down the road to talk about, as far as the county itself.

As far as adding a few more invitees, you did mention the National Guard. And I just jotted down the local New Jersey representative from the Homeland Security -- possibly could be on board. The Department of Transportation could possibly be on board.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: I think we have them down.

MR. BURNHAM: You have that on board?

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Do we have Cañas down, too?

MR. KELLY: We did not.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay. We should have Cañas down.

MR. BURNHAM: We also have some lost talent that is available and was pretty well put out of commission, as far as members of the National Guard. There is a spin-off from the National Guard Bureau. The State of New Jersey had the Naval Reserve, which they called the *Naval Militia*. I was at Sea Girt when they were brought back into the fold for the National Guard, when we had the passing review with the Governor -- the Governor's Review, when they were welcomed in with, "Come on in." I almost joined it, because I was getting ready to get out of the service. They're there now in name only. There is no funding, there is no

equipment, and they're just there in name only. I have a whole package here I'm willing to leave with somebody if you want to review it. I can pick it up at the Chairman's office later. But I'd really like you to review it. There's a whole package out there that we could use down here on the coastal events, from Region 1, Region 2, Region 3, up the Delaware, however you would want to do it. It's there, but they need funding.

Also, when we get into the Cape May and Atlantic County-- I'd like to comment more on the railroad and some of the highway activities. The railroad seems to be about the highest point of the county. And evidently the old-timers, in their infinite wisdom, looked at that when they put that thing in there. It's going to take some money to put it back together, but it's an eyesore sitting there waiting for some funding. For us, it's ripe. Mass exodus, getting out of the county, out of the state, getting us up to high ground. Any way we can look at it, that's certainly something to talk about later down the road.

Also, while-- In New England, we didn't have the communications that we have today. And I think, with the communications that we have -- with text messaging now for -- since Virginia Technology. Everybody's got a cell phone. We've got tone-outs, we've got pagers; we can get text messages out to people with their cell phones that want to apply for it, for emergency notifications, to get the heck out of Dodge. There's a lot of activity here as a tourist trade. And God help us if we have a lot of people out here on a holiday--

Now, September is usually Hurricane Month -- Awareness Month. I don't know why we don't make it June. But that's--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: That's a good question. We should research that.

MR. BURNHAM: I mean, that's something that I don't understand.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Do we have an answer for that, Mr. Kelly?

MR. KELLY: We do not have at the moment, but we can research that.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: That's an interesting question. We're going to research that -- why it's--

MR. BURNHAM: Yes, I don't know why it's September.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Does anybody--

I think you know the reason.

MS. LECKNER: Yes. September is the middle -- is the peak of hurricane season. And it's our most likely month, statistically, to get storms. And there is -- usually it's the third week in May is -- the National Hurricane Center has Hurricane Awareness Week. And normally the states will follow along and promote with that.

MR. BURNHAM: Just a question.

MS. LECKNER: Unfortunately, I guess it didn't happen this year.

But usually the coastal papers will tag on to that. I know the *Asbury Park Press*--

MR. BURNHAM: Well, they had it out in '06.

MS. LECKNER: --and others do. And it's usually around that week, because that's, of course, just before the season.

MR. BURNHAM: And everybody is busy looking for Labor Day weekend, and Irish, and getting back to school. And nobody looks at it.

MS. LECKNER: I think it goes back to what Wayne says about outreach.

MR. BURNHAM: Right, awareness.

MS. LECKNER: And just making it more public, and maybe having PSAs, because it does exist with the Hurricane Center.

But September is our peak, that's why.

MR. BURNHAM: Right.

We have a lot of things to talk about, and I'd like to get involved.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay. We'll make sure that you're notified of the meetings.

MR. BURNHAM: You have my e-mail.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Yes.

And we'll make sure that--

MR. BURNHAM: I'll leave this package with you?

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Yes.

MR. BURNHAM: Allison.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay. And you'll be on the notification list.

MR. BURNHAM: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay.

Me having your e-mail, you've got a 50-50 shot. I mean, my staff having the e-mail, you have a 100-percent shot.

MR. BURNHAM: You're staff has it.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Probably less than 50-50.

MR. BURNHAM: Allison has it.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Thank you for testifying.

With that, I think Mr. McCall is going to give us a very brief overview.

And I will repeat, again, we're going to hear and see a lot more when we have the Atlantic-Cape May County meeting. We just asked Frank to give us an idea of some of the issues in Cape May and go over them a little bit. And then, again, we're going to go much more in depth when we have these in-depth meetings.

Mr. McCall.

MR. McCALL: Okay. Thank you, Assemblyman.

Just as an overview, and hopefully just to set the tone for where we're headed with this very, very important Task Force--

First of all, we welcome you to Cape May County and thank you for starting here. If a hurricane is coming up from the south, we're ground zero to get things started in the state.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Frank, before you begin, there's a question I always ask, because I hear different people report it differently.

Cape May County is the fifth most vulnerable, third most vulnerable? What parameters are used for that?

MR. McCALL: It's sixth, Jeff. And I'll show you that here.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Sixth. Okay.

MR. McCALL: And what we're looking to -- is take a look at an enhancement -- really an enhancement to the regional approach to emergency management issues. And we'll define some of that as we go. And I think my peers further north will have a concurrence with some of these things.

In the emergency management structure in New Jersey, the New Jersey State Police Office of Emergency Management is really the lead agency when it comes to emergency management in the state. It transcends, through ourselves in the Cape May County Emergency Management Communications Center, to the Cape May County municipal offices of emergency management. So there are tiered layers of emergency management in the state.

Our partners-- You mentioned some of the partners, Jeff.

Federal agencies, State agencies, county and municipal agencies: specifically police, fire, EMS, public works, the utility companies, the health-care industry, non- and not-for-profit service organizations, special needs population providers, the tourism industry, the recreational industry, private industry, the insurance industry, news media outlets, and most importantly -- and that gentleman just mentioned it -- volunteerism, and helping in emergency management.

To continue to set the tone a little bit: Cape May County's year-round population is about 105,000 people. Our wintertime population gets down to about 80,000, 85,000 people. In the summertime -- from the time school is out, to the time school goes back -- our summertime population is somewhere between 450,000 and 750,000 people. And we refer to them in Cape May County as *degree days*. When we have three or

more days of 90 degrees or more, we can expect a million people in Cape May County, particularly on the weekend.

A little bit about the demographics: 16 municipalities, about 85,000 year-round housing units, another 45,000 seasonal units, about 3,000 mobile homes, 15,000 campground sites, 100,000 boat slips, 11,000-plus hotel units, 37 schools, 23 health-care facilities, 67 day care centers, 29 fire companies, 18 EMS squads, and 13 police jurisdictions.

Jeff, this is the question you've asked. In our country, the 10 most difficult case areas for evacuation-- We're in some pretty fancy company there. Everybody likes to be in the top 10, I think, except for this list: southwest Florida, southeast Louisiana, the Delmarva Peninsula, southeast Florida, the Florida Keys. And we're sixth, by name -- Cape May County, New Jersey. And then it moves up to Long Island. You heard the gentleman from Boston -- New England -- talk about some of the strife in New England; Savannah, Georgia; Virginia Beach, Norfolk area; and the Outer Banks, in North Carolina, and Galveston, Texas, are tied for 10th. So we have our work cut out for us in dealing with some of these issues.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Does anybody know how the rest of -- you know, Monmouth County, Ocean County, Atlantic County-- Are they in the top 20, 30, or they're not even close to this vulnerability?

MR. McCALL: Jeff, they're in the top 25.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay.

MR. McCALL: In the top 25.

Access roads to Cape May County: People will always ask us about what are the evacuation routes. We're limited in the number of roads that come into Cape May County. Obviously, during a potential for

evacuation, we can't go out and create new roads. So we have limited access. It's the Garden State Parkway, Route 47, and County Road 347 -- is where we have a reverse lane strategy -- from the intersection of Route 88 to Route 55, via County Road 347. Route 9, to Route 50, to Route 49, in Westbound. The Ocean Drive Highway is here, but that's not an evacuation route. That's on the Barrier Islands. And we had the Beasley Point Bridge, but currently that's out of service. So our evacuation routes are limited. The highway infrastructure is very limited. And if you go back to the numbers, the people are coming in, and these are the roadways they're using to get here.

A picture of the evacuation routes in Cape May County-- This is kind of what the water looks like, when we talked about the Army Corps of Engineers projects that we're going through now, with the SLOSH model analysis. In a Category 3 hurricane, 80 percent of Cape May County is under water. Everything east of the Garden State Parkway is under water.

Coastal evacuation signage--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Frank, give us a sense of, in a Category 3 hurricane -- which is possible, even with our climactic conditions, correct?

MR. McCALL: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Give us just a sense of what it would look like. Is there going to be water close to Route 9? Is there-- What's the county-- What's Ocean View going to look like? Ocean View, main -- those areas. The Barrier Islands, we know, are pretty much under water, correct?

MR. McCALL: The only area, Jeff, that will not be affected is probably Woodbine, the Woodbine Developmental Center, northwestern Dennis Township, southwestern Upper Township -- which is about 20 percent of the landmass of Cape May County -- will not be affected. Everything else would be.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: I've heard you speak about this. I want to understand this better. Does that mean that there would actually be saltwater on these -- in these areas? Or is it just flooding?

MR. McCALL: The ocean will meet the bay.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: The ocean will meet the bay.

So, again, just to be more -- for me to understand better, the ocean would actually -- in what-- I live in Dennis Township. The ocean would actually be reaching the main areas in Dennis Township -- the eastern part of Dennis Township, the central part of Dennis Township. Actually, the ocean would make it to those areas?

MR. McCALL: Well, actually, Jeff, it's a dual effect. If you take the ocean side, east of the Parkway, and if you take the magnitude of a hurricane-- Typically, in this area, a hurricane can be anywhere from 10 to 20 miles, with an eye diameter -- which means the outer bands -- that will extend to 60 miles. So even if the eye of a hurricane-- Cape May County would fit nicely into the eye of a hurricane. The outer bands and the storm surge would take the waters from the ocean, and it would also take the Delaware Bay, and rise those waters. And if you look at that map, you'll know some of the creeks that are there. They will flood. The marshland will flood. And you'll have saltwater from probably where it says Dennis Creek south, under that circumstance in Cape May County.

MS. LECKNER: Frank, if I could interrupt.

That's the SLOSH map. The different colored areas indicate the the different categories of storms. So the lightest color would be Category 1, and then the darker purple is Category 2, the yellow is Category 3, and the orange is Category 4. So you can see what Frank is talking about with the distributions.

MR. McCALL: Now, Assemblyman, what that SLOSH model does not take into consideration is the daily tide, whether it's a new moon or a full moon. It does not take into consideration rainfall, which in some cases, as we've seen in the past-- You could have anywhere from eight to 20 inches of rain on top of the movement of the ocean water. And that model does not take into consideration wind shear factor.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: You know, one product I would like to see out of this committee is, in graphic detail so people understand it-- Because a lot of these words-- Average people don't understand the seriousness of this and how we have to focus on this more. At some point, I would like the work product of this committee to be in very graphic terms -- in the counties that are involved -- in Monmouth, Ocean, Atlantic, Cape May -- what this is going to look like. That Category 3 hits -- which, for those -- everybody here pretty much knows is a possibility. We're not saying a Category 1 or a Category 2. I'm not trying to be extreme here. If a Category 3 hits, I would almost, at some point -- at one of our next meetings -- want, in somewhat graphic detail, exactly what it's going to look like, what the destruction would be, the number of homes that are going to be affected, the amount of water that is going to be, how

difficult it's going to be to get people out. That's what I'm looking for, as well, for regular folks like me to understand that. Because I think--

And I know Assemblyman Rumpf, when we talked about this-- I don't believe-- Because, as he said, we've been so long since we've had a real storm -- the last storm we talk about is 1962, the nor'easter -- that people understand the depth and the dimension of what this would mean to southeastern New Jersey. And I think that we should.

So I would like somebody to be responsible for that.

MR. KELLY: Right.

MS. LECKNER: Cumberland County put something out last year, where they took this SLOSH map, and they made it more public-friendly. Because this actually does take interpretation. It also does not include wave height activity on top of that. So there is some interpretation needed. But they made a public map that had, on its overlays-- They put the health facilities, those sorts of things. And zones -- evacuation zones, and they put it in the paper. And they had the whole article with it in there.

So when we have-- When Joe or whoever shows up from Cumberland, they can talk about that.

MR. McCALL: Okay, continuing. The critical issues to continue: to enhance working with the New Jersey State Police Office of Emergency Management during large-scale emergency events. We're going to just not assume responsibility locally or at the State. We need strong support from our Federal partners who have more resources than either the State, county, or municipality can provide. We obviously need State resources and State support from all the State departments.

From an evacuation perspective, we really need to look at a regional approach to reverse lane or contraflow strategies, lifting of the tolls, emergency proclamations.

For sheltering: Cape May County has no shelters for a Category 1 or greater hurricane. If you go back and you look at the list -- at the map, and we talk about SLOSH modeling -- we're not going to leave people in harm's way. Anybody who is in Cape May County is going to be evacuated. The original State of New Jersey Hurricane Evacuation Study that came out in 1992 was presented to me in 1991, and had 475 shelters listed in Cape May County. There was 190 on the Wildwood Boardwalk, 125 on the Ocean City Boardwalk. And I refused to sign off on the program and the compliancy to the study until the wording was changed -- and I actually had to create the writing myself -- that there are no shelters in Cape May County for Category 1 or greater hurricanes.

So when we look at sheltering, we need to take a regional approach to all of that. And just from my perspective, as a layman, somewhat professional, in emergency management, we need inter- and intrastate sheltering. There are no shelters in Cape May County during hurricanes.

If you saw the effects of Katrina and Rita-- There were actually shelters established for people in Louisiana and Mississippi in the state of Iowa. So that's the kind of approach -- a regional approach -- that I think we need to be thinking about. And I'm just talking Cape May County. I'm not talking the balance of the coast, east of the Parkway, for the populations in my counterparts' areas.

Health-care facilities: We need a regional approach to emergency relocation to other areas with similar facilities. The number of health-care facilities we have in Cape May County are all licensed by the Department of Health and Senior Services. Part of their licensing agreement doesn't suggest -- it states, "shall have in their emergency operations plan the ability to move their patients for whom they're caring for to like facilities."

The special needs population -- we need a regional approach to that. First of all, the identification and then the care of that special needs population.

And then the one thing we haven't talked too much about is the reentry. I think we need to talk about that some more. After a large-scale event, including a regional approach to debris removal, reopening of the infrastructure -- that's the utility companies, the sewer plants, the water facilities -- and how to continue with mitigation. There is no county in the State of New Jersey that can manage individually on a Category 3 hurricane the amount of activity that it's going to take to deal with the reentry. We're going to need tremendous support from the Federal and State government, and to be able to work with our sister counties who have not been affected in this kind of an event.

And I limited it to five. I limit it to five. And there's certainly a task in those five areas that can keep this Committee busy for a while.

The basic components -- and you know, it's sometimes tough to say -- but sometimes we just need to get back to basics: the planning, the exercising of those plans, the response, the recovery, and the mitigation. And interestingly enough, what we really need to focus on is what I'm going

to refer to as a Gap Analysis. And the Gap Analysis is the difference between what any individual municipality or county may have, what the State may have, and understand the resources that they have; and more importantly, to be able to fill the difference between the available resources and what's really needed to perform the task. And that comes in the form of a Gap Analysis, which is probably more important, or just as important, as any one of the items listed above that.

Under the leadership of the New Jersey State Police Office of Emergency Management, in conjunction with our partners on the Federal, State, county, and municipal level, we need to continue to improve upon the way we manage emergency events to ensure the safety of our residents and visitors -- including grasping and understanding of the Gap Analysis -- by capturing the necessary components to protect lives and mitigate the loss of property damage.

Locally, we're beginning. It's been underway since the year 2005. This happens to be where we are in the program. We're going through a 2007 tabletop exercise series. It's going to start June 13, every Wednesday through the end of the month, and we're bringing in all the towns, in a regional basis. The first one -- the first tabletop exercise is June 13. We'll be bringing in Avalon, Sea Isle, and Stone Harbor. Then we'll continue to bring in our communities by region, because of the familiarity they have with each other and some of the common threads that bind them as regions. We'll be doing this through the end of the Summer. We'll have an exercise summary in late August. And this is all leading to a full-scale exercise in April 2008. And this process has been going on since 2005.

The 2008 tabletop exercise series will be hosted by ourselves at the Cape May County Emergency Management Communication Center, and the facilitator for the exercise will be the New Jersey State Police Office of Emergency Management.

To summarize, the request of Cape May County Emergency Management Communication Center to the Coastal New Jersey Evacuation Task Force is to provide a permanent funding source, to the proper level, to the emergency management community to allow for physical infrastructure improvements and to enhance the regional activities of the basic emergency management components of planning, response, recovery, and mitigation, including the ongoing exercise of those plans.

And there is a God. The good Lord speaks to us daily. We've been listening and hearing for a number of years, and we're a little beyond what the original Emergency Management Coordinator's task was. And we're looking forward to working and continuing with the Coastal Evacuation Task Force.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay.

Thank you, Mr. McCall.

Any questions, comments, discussion?

MS. LECHNER: Not surprisingly, I have a comment.
(laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: That's good. That's why we're here.

MS. LECHNER: I'd like to emphasize what Frank is saying about that local level support, because all disasters are local disasters no matter how widespread an area they impact. And the wider the area, the

less support we'll actually get from FEMA. In an exercise we had last year with FEMA, they told us that -- very plainly -- that if a storm were to come up; skirt New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts, the resources would go to New York and Boston because of their importance as financial centers. And priority would be given in those areas. And we are on our own. So we have to think of the fact that those Federal resources may not be available to us, not in the first 24, 48, possibly not 72, or further out. So it really is important, I think, to make the difference locally.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: I think you're right. And I guess what I was trying to-- What I hope I get out of this besides-- And Frank covered, I think, really a good number of important areas -- at least in my mind. By the time we're done with this I'd almost -- and you would all call it a *tabletop* -- but I just would call it just understanding actually, structurally, what would happen. So when I discussed before that we said, you know, I'd really like to see-- Somebody at some point is going to describe to us, if a Category 3 hurricane comes and it hits -- and Brian Rumpf -- Assemblyman Rumpf is going to want to know exactly what his county is going to look like: where is the water going to be, how deep is it going to be, what's the destruction going to be, how far inland is it going to be, how are we going to get people out, how are we going to coordinate with other counties when we do that process of getting them out, as well as just understanding who is really going to come in and help us, or not help us, in the process? Because I think we really need to have that candid conversation. Everybody is assuming it's going to be there. But we learned from Katrina that a lot of it wasn't there.

And hopefully, we're going to be candid enough to say, are we truly really prepared or are we not? You know, are we really ready to deal with this or are we not? I have a sense that in some ways we may not be able to. So I think that's something that we really need to discuss--

MS. LECHNER: I would recommend adding to the list of people--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: --in a real way.

Yes.

MS. LECHNER: --adding to the list of people to invite is Stephen Kempf. He's the Director of FEMA Region II. He's a wonderful man and always willing to help and willing to listen. I have his contact information.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Very good. We welcome him.

MR. McCALL: Assemblyman, in dispelling myths -- and no disrespect to the Assemblyman from Central New Jersey -- but mile marker 28.6 of the Garden State Parkway is the mythical line for where North Jersey begins, and we'd like to--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: I think Assemblyman Rumpf would argue vehemently with you on that. (laughter)

Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: I would just like to make a brief comment. Only two weeks ago, we experienced a much lesser-scale need for evacuation near my hometown in Ocean County, and that involved the fire that was initiated due to the bombing range. We had 6,000 people that were forced to evacuate their homes in a certain period of time, and we saw on a very small scale -- compared to what a Category 3 hurricane would

bring us -- what happens in our communities by way of an evacuation. I think the lessons that we learned from that is, that the planning, certainly for that scale of an evacuation, was well in order. However, infrastructure-wise, we were at a complete loss. Traffic was at a standstill. You had scenes of Houston and following Hurricane Rita, with people just idling in their cars for hours on end.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: And there were some communication issues as well, were there not?

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: There were. I think that they were perhaps minor in comparison to what we have heard of in New Orleans, but on a much smaller level that can serve as instructional, perhaps, to what we might imagine on a massive scale, if a hurricane were to be heading our way.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Yes, I think you're right. And of course, as terrible as that fire was, it was still nowhere near the dimension of what the emergency would be if you had a Category 3 hurricane.

ASSEMBLYMAN RUMPF: Correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: So I think that's the point.

So at one of these meetings -- I know I'm reiterating this -- but at one of these meetings, just to really clarify here, we're going to want to go through an exercise where we are going to, in a tangible way, understand what's going to happen to these communities. And in a very tangible way. And I guess -- would you call that a tabletop? Is that what you all do in a tabletop -- who is going to deal with it, how they would deal with it, where the resources would come from, and how it would work? In other words, if there is *X* number of feet of water on Route 9 at a given point in time, how are we getting people out? How many hours notice do we need to get them

out before that happens? I don't have the answer. That's what I think we need to understand better. I know I'm repeating that, but I think that's an important--

Yes.

MR. WEBSTER: (speaking from audience) Yes, sir.

Two things I'd like to add, too.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Please come forward and sit at the table, and state your name, and speak in the mike. Well, you don't have to state your name, we've done that already. But they want to hear what you've got to say.

MR. WEBSTER: Charlie Webster.

Two things I'd like to add. Number one, is animals. It's another consideration.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: I agree. Thank you.

MR. WEBSTER: And I can tell you that people aren't leaving their animals, so-- And it becomes a big issue. And even in the fire we had the same issue, and we did evacuate quite a few animals.

And the other thing that you did mention, that I think needs to be emphasized statewide, is a communications exercise. Because that is always a problem. I don't care what you're involved in, where you're involved in it -- and we keep devising ways to make our interoperability work. But I still think that it's a big issue -- when you start talking about coordinating counties in the state, and all these various assets, all these various first-responder organizations -- that they can, in fact, communicate with each other on a large scale. And I don't think it's ever been done, that I'm aware of, in this state.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay. Well, that's what we want to really approach. Who's going to be responsible for that -- lack of a better term, description -- that process? In other words, when I say I want to know what's going to happen when the water comes up and who's going - - of putting that all together -- what it's going to look like, how they're going to get out, who's going to come in.

You're going to interact with the Office of Legislative Services, if you want to interact.

MR. KELLY: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: If any of you have any thoughts, please communicate with them.

MR. JONES: We have -- yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: Okay.

Any other comments? (no response)

Motion to adjourn?

MR. JONES: I make a motion to adjourn.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAN DREW: We're adjourned.

(MEETING CONCLUDED)