

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE

SUITE 2320 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6301  
(202) 225-6371  
TTY: (202) 226-4410  
<http://www.house.gov/science/welcome.htm>

September 30, 2005

The Honorable R. David Paulison  
Acting Under Secretary/U.S. Fire Administrator  
Office of the Director  
500 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Under Secretary Paulison:

I write because of my committee's jurisdictional responsibilities over the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and more specifically over the National Weather Service (NWS) and its National Hurricane Center (NHC).

The oversight responsibilities of the Science Committee make it imperative that the committee fully understand the depth and substance of the communications between the NHC and local, state and federal emergency response, including FEMA. It is impossible to fully assess the Federal preparedness for Hurricane Katrina without understanding specifically what the NHC's representatives were telling the participants in the HLT briefings in the two days prior to Hurricane Katrina making landfall.

Specifically, the Hurricane Liaison Team (HLT), which consists of FEMA, NWS, and state and local emergency management officials, is tasked with coordinating closely with FEMA Headquarters Staff by phone and video conferencing systems. According to NOAA records, the Hurricane Liaison Team was launched by the Director of the National Hurricane Center on August 25 in anticipation of Hurricane Katrina making landfall.

We ask for all records relating to the Hurricane Liaison Team briefings of August 27 and August 28. Our request includes, but is not limited to memos, transcripts, notes, recordings, and meeting minutes, whether in paper or electronic form, related to Hurricane Katrina that were generated during or because of the August 27 and 28 briefings. This request includes a list of the names and affiliations of all parties who were invited to participate in these calls as well as indications that the invitees were actually involved in the call.

September 30, 2005

Page 2

Given the importance and magnitude of the questions associated with the governmental response to Hurricane Katrina, we trust that you will provide a prompt and full response. As you may be aware, on Friday, October 7, 2005, the full Science Committee will be holding a hearing on NOAA's hurricane forecasting. As such, we ask that you respond by the c.o.b. Wednesday, October 5, 2005.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact my staff at (202) 225-4494.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Bart Gordon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bart" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Gordon".

**BART GORDON**

Ranking Member