

High and dry in Houma, LA
National Guard photo



Post-Landfall Evacuation

For several days after landfall, evacuation of New Orleans proceeded slowly, compounding the misery of residents stranded by the storm. The National Response Plan (NRP), the Louisiana Emergency Operations Plan, and the New Orleans Comprehensive Emergency Plan stipulate that, typically, emergency response is locally initiated and coordinated.

Federal, state, and local authorities knew long before the storm that at least 100,000 residents of New Orleans would lack the means to evacuate.¹ Nonetheless, the city failed to pre-stage buses and drivers outside the flood zone. Meanwhile, the state's lead agency for transportation during an evacuation ignored its responsibilities.

The plans mentioned above stipulate that local and state governments may call on federal support if their own resources become overwhelmed. For catastrophic events, the NRP, the federal government's blueprint for its preparation and response to national emergencies, adds that the federal government does not need to wait for requests from state or local government before offering assistance. Although details of this policy were still under development when Hurricane Katrina – an undisputedly catastrophic storm – struck, this should not have prevented federal officials from preparing before landfall to assist with post-landfall evacuation. Unfortunately, federal officials, including those working out of Louisiana's Emergency Operations Center in Baton Rouge, did little to prepare and were forced to scramble to provide assistance after Katrina struck.

As the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) stated in their own after-action report: "Hurricane Katrina has presented the need for a national focus on evacuation and sheltering."²

An Incomplete Pre-Landfall Evacuation Likely Compounded the Post-Landfall Evacuation

Some 10,000 to 15,000 New Orleans residents took shelter at the Superdome, the "refuge of last resort" for those without the means to evacuate,³ suggesting many may have preferred to leave the city altogether as part of a pre-landfall evacuation had they been offered the means. Their staying behind placed their lives in jeopardy and increased the strain on responders.⁴

Before Landfall, the City Failed to Designate Buses and Drivers for a Post-Landfall Evacuation

Before landfall, the city failed to designate buses or drivers for post-landfall evacuations. Although the Regional Transit Authority (RTA), the local municipal bus agency in New Orleans, did stage a fleet of buses at the Poland Street Wharf,⁵ a high-ground location inside the city that remained unflooded, no level of government attempted to move drivers to those buses until Thursday, three days after landfall,⁶ even though the route to the wharf remained open throughout the crisis.

Before Landfall, the Louisiana Secretary of Transportation and Development Ignored His Department's Responsibility to Prepare for the Post-Landfall Evacuation

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD) failed in its duty, under the state's emergency plan, to arrange transportation for post-landfall evacuation. As discussed in Chapter 16, in April 2005, the State of Louisiana transferred responsibility for transportation during an evacuation from the Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (LOHSEP) to the LA DOTD. Despite signing the agreement, LA DOTD Secretary Johnny Bradberry believed his organization was not suited to the task because it did not have an in-house stable of transportation and drivers like the state Department of Tourism or the Louisiana National Guard.⁷ The record shows no evidence that he raised these concerns outside his department between April 2005 and landfall.⁸ Before and after Katrina, Secretary Bradberry's agency provided no transportation for evacuation, except for five ferries to evacuate 6,000 people from St. Bernard and Plaquemines Parishes.⁹

Ultimately, thousands of buses were mobilized for evacuation through contracts with transportation providers, which LA DOTD – like any other state agency – could have arranged both before and after landfall. Secretary Bradberry conceded as much, admitting that his agency was best positioned in the state to contract with railroads and that it makes sense for the state's lead agency for transportation to be responsible for negotiating agreements with other transportation providers.¹⁰ The Committee concludes that LA DOTD's failure to carry out its duties under the state's emergency plan delayed the efforts to locate in-state buses.

LOHSEP, which was responsible under the state's emergency plan for making sure Secretary Bradberry's agency carried out its duties, did not urge him to take steps to prepare before the storm for post-landfall evacuation.¹¹ But the Committee finds Secretary Bradberry primarily responsible for his department's inertia after landfall to coordinate transportation resources.

Inadequate Planning Hamstrung the Federal Government's Assistance With the Post-Landfall Evacuation

As discussed elsewhere in this report, federal officials knew that (1) a catastrophic hurricane could leave hundreds of thousands of New Orleans residents stranded, as 2004's Hurricane Pam catastrophic-storm exercise had predicted (see Chapter 8, Hurricane Pam), (2) that such a storm would incapacitate state and local resources, and (3) that the NRP authorized federal officials to offer help without requests from state and local governments (see Chapter 27, Failures in Implementation of the NRP). Therefore, failures by the federal government to prepare before landfall for post-landfall evacuation were not failures of law, but, at least in part, of leadership.¹² Federal officials at the highest levels failed to make full use of existing authority and resources that were available despite the incompleteness of planning for catastrophic storms.

At a Hurricane Pam transportation workshop in late July 2005, federal, state, and local officials had discussed New Orleans' need, before landfall, for at least 600 buses and 1,200 drivers for post-landfall evacuation.¹³ A FEMA official suggested that, in fact, 5,000 buses a day would be necessary.¹⁴ However, unified federal, state, and local planning for evacuation after a catastrophic New Orleans storm was "less than 10 percent done" by the day before landfall and a written draft of the plan was not ready until September 9, 2005.¹⁵

One U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) official testified that "the people that were involved in that work group must have sensed the same thing that I did, that there was a large reliance [by state and local participants] on the federal team coming in and fix[ing] everything."¹⁶ Likewise, the head of Louisiana's National Guard, who was briefed about the workshop, testified that FEMA officials there agreed that they "would have the responsibility for the evacuation" of New Orleans.¹⁷ A FEMA official testified that, while at the work-

shop, he said the federal government would provide buses, upon a request from the state or local government.¹⁸

Officials at every level of government knew that getting buses to New Orleans would take at least 72 hours because of the time it takes both to change the tires on city buses for long highway trips and to drive to New Orleans from various points around the country. This meant pre-storm preparations were required for the post-landfall evacuation.¹⁹ However, during the weekend before landfall, federal officials took barely any action to prepare for a post-storm evacuation.²⁰

Sometime between early Friday night, August 26, and early Monday morning, August 29, Jules Hurst, a FEMA official who participated in the July Pam workshop, gave DOT a “heads-up” that it would need to check with its transportation contractor to locate between 1,000 and 2,000 buses for evacuations.²¹ DOT, in turn, called Landstar, its transportation services contractor, to determine availability, but did not ask Landstar to send buses to the Gulf Coast because FEMA had not given DOT the authority to request it.²² However, neither Hurst nor any other FEMA official tasked DOT with actually arranging for their delivery.

On Sunday, August 28, the day before landfall, FEMA Acting Deputy Director Patrick Rhode sent an e-mail to other FEMA officials asking what FEMA had done to ensure that state and local authorities were doing everything in their power to make transportation available. He also asked whether state or local governments had requested evacuation assistance.²³ Rhode recognized that FEMA would need 72 hours’ notice to help, time that was no longer available.²⁴ Despite the limited time and the likely pressing need for evacuation assistance, he failed to act in the absence of a cry for help from state or local governments. Rhode’s e-mail appears to have spurred no follow-up activity at FEMA.

President Bush, Secretary Chertoff, and Governor Blanco Demonstrated a Failure of Engagement and Initiative at a Time When Their Leadership Was Critical

Before landfall, Governor Blanco failed to ask for evacuation resources from the federal government,²⁵ while federal officials, including the President and Secretary Chertoff, failed to offer assistance. When Secretary Chertoff appeared before the Committee, he testified that “the biggest failure was not getting the buses in,”²⁶ adding that the federal government’s preparations during the weekend before landfall were inadequate, “particularly in the area of ... bus transportation.”²⁷

President Bush and Secretary Chertoff had an opportunity to extend aid at a video-teleconference call among federal, state, and local officials at 11 a.m. CT on Sunday, when the President informed the participants that the federal government was doing all it could to prepare for and respond to the storm.²⁸ Unfortunately, as Secretary Chertoff conceded before the Committee, that was not the case – particularly with respect to the evacuation of New Orleans.²⁹ If, before or during this call, the President had directed his Cabinet to do everything in its power to help evacuate New Orleans, the post-landfall evacuation may have begun much sooner rather than three days after landfall. According to the Louisiana Adjutant General Bennett Landreneau, the head of the Louisiana National Guard, had buses arrived in New Orleans on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, the Louisiana National Guard would have been able to get people from the Superdome to those buses.³⁰ There is no evidence that the President gave such orders.

Additionally, as detailed in Chapter 12, Secretary Chertoff failed to activate the Catastrophic Incident Annex to the NRP, which would have sent an even clearer message to federal agencies that it was permissible for them to push transportation resources to New Orleans.

Just when the people of New Orleans required engagement, initiative, and leadership from their leaders, the President, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Governor exhibited a lack of all three.

From Monday to Wednesday Night, No Government-Sponsored Buses Arrived in New Orleans

As the Hurricane Pam exercise predicted, many of the parish resources were unavailable after landfall, but the city had not planned to move many of its buses either outside the flood zone or to high ground within it.³¹

On the day of landfall, after learning that some of the city's major levees had broken, New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin directed his staff to compose a list of "critical needs" to present to Brown during a Tuesday morning meeting.³² Although the list included search and rescue assets, resources for the Superdome, law and order on the streets, and communications capabilities, it did not mention evacuation resources.³³ The record does not indicate whether Mayor Nagin made an oral request during the meeting.

However, on Tuesday, the Mayor did call Governor Blanco's chief of staff and identified buses as the "No. 1 priority" for help from the state.³⁴ Also on Tuesday, the city tried to obtain Regional Transit Authority (RTA) buses, but they were believed to be flooded and unusable, as were school buses because they were pre-staged in the flood plain.³⁵ In fact, as many as 200 buses were pre-staged on high ground at the Poland Street Wharf, but that information was never passed from the RTA to city officials.³⁶ On Wednesday, the Mayor spoke with President Bush and, according to the Mayor's communications director, purposely limited the conversation to a discussion about the levee breaks, search and rescue needs, and buses.³⁷

On the day of landfall, Governor Blanco had asked then-FEMA Director Brown for 500 buses.³⁸ Brown agreed, but no buses arrived Tuesday morning. Governor Blanco asked Brown again.³⁹ Once again, Brown agreed, but no buses arrived in New Orleans Wednesday morning either.⁴⁰ The Governor turned to the White House.⁴¹ When then- White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card called Governor Blanco later that morning, she requested his help in obtaining the promised 500 FEMA buses, adding that she might need as many as 5,000.⁴² The Governor reiterated her frustration about FEMA's failure to deliver buses in a phone call to the President later that afternoon.⁴³

FEMA did not ask DOT to send buses to New Orleans until 1:45 a.m. on Wednesday, August 31, two days after landfall and 36 hours after Brown's agreement to provide them.⁴⁴ Brown could not explain why it took so long.⁴⁵

Notably, when FEMA finally tasked DOT, FEMA requested 455 buses – not 500.⁴⁶ According to LOHSEP Acting Deputy Director Colonel Jeff Smith, a FEMA official at headquarters had overridden the state's request because that individual had found the request excessive in view of the "number of people" thought to have been left in the city.⁴⁷ Colonel Smith, a Certified Public Accountant, cited this episode as an example of how FEMA's bureaucracy failed the state: "I'll talk despairingly against one of my previous occupations; some bean counter looked at it and figured that, you know, we didn't need this. And I mean, the situations when you're going and it literally, it's life or death issues, it's no time to be quibbling about, you know, what you have there."⁴⁸

Poor communications between FEMA officials at the Superdome and those at the state Emergency Operations Center in Baton Rouge may have undermined FEMA's ability to obtain buses.⁴⁹ On Tuesday FEMA officials at the Superdome informed General Gary Jones, the

Louisiana National Guard official in charge, that they were trying to obtain buses.⁵⁰ But they had trouble reaching their superiors in Baton Rouge,⁵¹ which may have slowed the procurement. As DHS and FEMA noted in their after-action report: “During Hurricane Katrina, catastrophic communications failures caused confusion during the post-landfall evacuation operation.”⁵²

FEMA’s delays are regrettable, because buses arrived quickly after FEMA finally tasked the DOT with the mission. DOT officials immediately began contracting for buses,⁵³ the first of which arrived at a staging area at Mile Marker 209 (La Place, Louisiana) around 6:30 a.m. on Wednesday.⁵⁴ By midnight Thursday, less than 24 hours after DOT received the tasking order, approximately 200 buses were participating in evacuations.⁵⁵



Evacuee buses, Louisiana

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The Governor also turned to state resources,⁵⁶ asking Leonard Kleinpeter, a special assistant to the Governor and the head of the Office of Community Programs, an agency with contacts in all the parishes, on Tuesday to locate buses,⁵⁷ though without authority to commandeer those buses. Kleinpeter and his staff began to line up buses from local school districts and churches on Tuesday,⁵⁸ and lined up school buses that LOHSEP commandeered on Thursday, after the Governor issued an Executive Order on Wednesday.⁵⁹ The Governor’s staff did not perceive a need for an Executive Order before Wednesday because the bus owners, including school superintendents, contacted by staff were highly cooperative to that point. On Wednesday, however, the need for an Executive Order emerged when some school systems began to oppose the state’s request for buses and media reports of lawlessness became pervasive.⁶⁰

In all, the state and federal government obtained and sent 2,000 buses to New Orleans, which began heading there Wednesday, but did not arrive until Thursday.⁶¹

Conditions in New Orleans Deteriorated Throughout the Week

Highway Overpasses

During the Hurricane Pam working group, government officials planned to collect rescues on highway overpasses, which they referred to as “lily pads.”⁶² The state’s Department of Wildlife and Fisheries staged at least three highway-overpass collection points: the Elysian Fields exit (near the city’s Ninth Ward), the St. Bernard exit (the next exit some 2,000 feet away), and the Interstate 10 – Interstate 610 split (near the border of Orleans and Jefferson Parishes).⁶³ The Louisiana National Guard and Coast Guard also collected rescues from the Lower Ninth Ward and brought them to the third floor of Jackson Barracks and a highway overpass.⁶⁴

The overpass at the I-10 Causeway intersection (less than a mile into Jefferson Parish from the I-10 and I-610 split), which became known as the “Cloverleaf,” became one of the biggest collection points in New Orleans, as well as an ad-hoc triage point. The presence of medical assistance drew others, and soon the resources there (food, water, and medicine) were overwhelmed.⁶⁵

Dr. Scott Delacroix, who was treating patients at the Cloverleaf, reported severe shortages of medical supplies and other necessities to Dr. Jimmy Guidry, the Secretary of the Louisiana

Department of Health and Hospitals. At one point, Dr. Delacroix was forced to drive to Baton Rouge and raid the stockpiles of supplies languishing in the parking lot of the state emergency-operations center.⁶⁶

When government-sponsored buses began trickling into New Orleans on Wednesday evening, they picked up rescuees on highway overpasses like the Cloverleaf (which was not cut off by flood waters) in addition to heading to the Superdome or the Convention Center.⁶⁷

The Superdome

The Superdome lost electricity on Monday morning and plumbing on Tuesday, resulting in a sanitation crisis. The population doubled by Wednesday, as citizens who had stayed in their homes during the storm sought refuge. As a result, health officials were forced to move the special-needs population to the New Orleans Arena, across the walkway from the Superdome.⁶⁸

Security opened the doors of the Superdome for the first time late on Tuesday, so that people could see for themselves that the surrounding area was flooded and evacuation would be difficult. Even outside, the temperature and humidity were so brutal that the National Guard had helicopters hover over the concourse to function like massive fans.⁶⁹

Some 20,000 to 30,000 people languished under these conditions until Thursday at the earliest and as late as Saturday.

The Convention Center

Although the city had not planned before landfall to open the Morial Convention Center to the public as a shelter or refuge, Mayor Nagin opened the facility on Tuesday, August 30.⁷⁰ No officials had planned for the food, water, medical support, and security needs of the people who took shelter there.

Unlike the Superdome (rumors to the contrary notwithstanding), the Convention Center, where evacuees from the city's hotels may have become attractive targets for theft,⁷¹ experienced some crime, and the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) became overwhelmed there.⁷²

Although the record is inconclusive about when the federal government became aware that the city had opened the Convention Center to the public,⁷³ the state learned about it on Wednesday.⁷⁴ However, Adjutant General Landreneau instructed the Louisiana National Guard officers who were evacuating the Superdome to stick to their mission.⁷⁵

Late on Thursday night or early on Friday morning, however, the city's Director of Homeland Security and Public Safety asked General Landreneau to take control of the Convention Center, provide relief, and evacuate the 19,000 people who had gathered there.⁷⁶

The U.S. Army Located a Staging Area and Coordinated the Buses' Trip to New Orleans

At 5 p.m. Wednesday evening, as buses finally began arriving in LaPlace, Louisiana, Governor Blanco asked Lieutenant General Russel L. Honoré, Commander, First Army, and Commander of Joint Task Force Katrina, to coordinate the evacuation of New Orleans.⁷⁷ General Honoré delegated that responsibility to Brigadier General Mark Graham, who had arrived in Baton Rouge that day. General Graham established a staging area at Mile Marker 209 near LaPlace, Louisiana (up to this point the buses were staging on I-10 a few miles away by default), and informed DOT, which was responsible for procuring the buses and drivers.⁷⁸

On Thursday morning, General Graham learned that Governor Blanco wanted those buses heading to the Superdome to pick up 5,000 rescuees at the Cloverleaf first.⁷⁹ General Graham sent two liaison officers there, where they coordinated the convoys of buses arriving from Mile Marker 209.⁸⁰ The two evacuation operations ran simultaneously. General Graham estimated that the Superdome evacuation was set back only an hour by this diversion.⁸¹

The Louisiana National Guard Planned and Executed the Movement of Buses from Off-Ramps to the Superdome and Convention Center

The Louisiana National Guard (LANG) at the Superdome routed buses from the O’Keefe Avenue off-ramp (a few blocks to the southwest of the Superdome) to the Superdome.⁸²

First, National Guard officers designated a pick-up spot for buses to meet Superdome evacuees, as the area immediately adjacent to the Superdome was flooded. The National Guard designated the Loyola Street entrance to the Hyatt Regency Hotel as the pick-up spot because the road only had a foot-and-a-half of water.⁸³

Second, National Guard officers identified a path to the Hyatt Regency Hotel pick-up point for evacuees, from the outdoor concourse surrounding the Superdome to the adjacent mall, which connected indoors to the Hyatt. Guardsmen and NOPD officers lined the path, ensuring that only Superdome evacuees would be entering buses, and that they would not be harassed by other people who had not sought refuge at the Superdome, but who wanted to sneak onto buses designated for the Superdome evacuees.⁸⁴

Third, National Guard officers identified and secured a route for buses from the I-10 off-ramp to the Loyola Street entrance of the Hyatt, locating checkpoints strategically along the way.⁸⁵

Evacuation of the Superdome Swung into Full Gear on Thursday

Buses finally arrived in large numbers in front of the Hyatt on Thursday morning, September 1. The DOT also expended considerable energy trying to arrange for rail cars, but without much luck.⁸⁶ In the end, just 97 people were evacuated, in a single trip, by rail.⁸⁷

The Evacuation of the Convention Center Began and Ended on Saturday

On Friday morning, at 8 a.m., the National Guard’s General Jones ordered Colonel Jacques Thibodeaux to plan and execute a “rescue mission,” in coordination with the NOPD, at the Convention Center by noon that day.⁸⁸ Colonel Thibodeaux designed a plan to bring law and order to the Convention Center within the first 30 minutes, provide food, water, and medicine within five hours, and evacuate the premises within 48 hours.⁸⁹ Supported by National Guard units from five other states, Colonel Thibodeaux carried out the plan at noon, and National Guard troops secured the entire complex in under 15 minutes without incident. The 19,000 people taking refuge were evacuated the next day within eight hours, in buses sent by General Graham, helicopters, and the Canal Street Ferry.⁹⁰



Helping hands, Louisiana
U.S. Coast Guard photo

Every Level of Government Failed to Identify an Adequate Number of Shelters Before Landfall

Before landfall, neither the city, state, nor federal government identified adequate sheltering space outside the area that would become the flood zone. Adequate sheltering space was not identified until Wednesday, August 31, two days after landfall.



Small evacuee secured,
New Orleans
U.S. Coast Guard photo

Sheltering options within the State of Louisiana are limited in part because the American Red Cross, the entity primarily responsible for sheltering under the NRP, will not certify any shelters below the I-10 and I-12 split outside of Baton Rouge because the risk of flooding is too great.⁹¹

A FEMA situation report published at 10 p.m. on Tuesday, August 30 stated: “The State requested assistance in relocating all remaining victims of Hurricane Katrina out of the Superdome shelter. Limiting factors include identifying where they are to be relocated to and identifying the transportation required.”⁹² A Department of Homeland Security document published a few hours later noted, under the heading “Decisions needed,” that the state was “expected to identify location[s] of alternate shelter locations this morning.”⁹³

On Tuesday night, Governor Blanco had instructed Ann Williamson, the state’s Secretary of Social Services, to find a shelter for 25,000 people by 6 a.m. on Wednesday.⁹⁴ At 1:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Secretary Williamson called Texas to request the use of the Astrodome.⁹⁵ Secretary Williamson explained that she had to ask for the Astrodome because demand for shelter space exceeded what was available in Louisiana.⁹⁶ Between 8:30 and 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday morning, Governor Blanco called Governor Perry of Texas, who agreed to open the Astrodome to receive Katrina evacuees.⁹⁷ According to General Honoré, “the destination was Houston ... because Baton Rouge is full. Shreveport is full. Jackson, Mississippi is full. There’s no more capacity in the state.”⁹⁸

Family Reunification and Prevention of Missing Children and Adult Scenarios

A total of 13,502 adults were reported to the National Center for Missing Adults (NCMA) as a result of Katrina,⁹⁹ and a total of 5,088 children were reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).¹⁰⁰ Many shelters did not have intake forms or release forms to track individuals, or they did not use these forms. Additionally, FEMA did not fully cooperate with NCMA or NCMEC to help reunite families, citing privacy concerns (which could have been addressed). Finally, due to the lack of coordinated reporting or tracking of missing persons, family members often had to repeatedly call several organizations to seek help with finding family members.

1 Committee staff interview of Terry Tullier, Director, New Orleans Office of Emergency Preparedness, LA, conducted on Nov. 22, 2005, transcript p. 18. FEMA sent the Committee a 2003 document from the state that recognized that “250,000 to 350,000 people [would] remain in stranded conditions with limited self rescue capability” after landfall of a major hurricane in the greater New Orleans area. *Source:* Sean Fontenot, memorandum to FEMA, Aug. 22, 2003, p. 2. Provided to Committee; filed as Bates nos. DHS-FEMA-0079-0000004 through 0000005 (indicating the document was also sent on Aug. 25, 2004 to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.); Ron Castleman, memorandum to Lacy Suiter, “Catastrophic Planning for New Orleans,” Aug. 8, 2001. Provided to Committee; filed as Bates no. DHS-FEMA-074-0000027 (stating a need to evacuate 300,000 to 350,000 after landfall of a catastrophic hurricane in New Orleans.). According to a 2006 Emergency Response/Shelter Plan appropriations request document for which Col. Terry Ebbert is the point of contact, “The city of New Orleans faces the reality that it is impossible to conduct a mandatory evacuation in advance of a Category 3, 4, or 5 hurricane, as well as respond to other...disasters including terrorism. Even under the best conditions that currently exist in terms of emergency response in the New Orleans region, evacuation would leave 150,000 people in harm’s way.” *Source:* City of New Orleans, FY2006 Funding Request to Congress, Emergency Response Shelter/Plan Homeland Security Appropriations. Provided to Committee.

2 FEMA, *DHS/FEMA Initial Response Hotwash: Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana*, Feb. 13, 2006, p. 45 [hereinafter *DHS/FEMA Initial Response Hotwash*, Feb. 13, 2006].

3 City officials interviewed did not know exactly how many people the RTA buses brought to the Superdome on Sunday, but the City’s Director of Homeland Security and Public Safety said that the majority of the total population at the Superdome before landfall arrived there by bus. *Source:* Committee staff interview of Col. Terry Ebbert, U.S. Marine Corps, (Ret.), Director, New Orleans Office of Homeland Security, LA, conducted on Jan. 10, 2006, transcript pp. 81-82. The total population of the Superdome before landfall is not known with certainty, but evidence in the record indicates that a range of 10,000 to 15,000 people were there before landfall. *Source:* Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (LOHSEP), Situation Report, Executive Summary, Hurricane Katrina, Aug. 29, 2005, 10 a.m. CT. Provided to Committee (stating that 10,342 were in the Superdome); Sally Forman, Communications Director, New Orleans Office of the Mayor, Timeline and Notes, Aug. 28, 2005. Provided to Committee (“Dome opens as shelter of last resort – 10,000 gather”); Col. Ebbert interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 52, 112 (estimating 12,000 to 15,000 were in the Superdome before landfall).

4 *DHS/FEMA Initial Response Hotwash*, Feb. 13, 2006, p. iii (stating that with Katrina’s “mass evacuation to locations throughout the country and other spillover effects nationwide, human resources were stretched particularly thin.”).

5 U.S. Department of Transportation, Hurricane Katrina-Situation Report, Aug. 28, 2005, 3 p.m., p. 3 (“All buses and large support vehicles not in use are being moved to the Poland St. Wharves, the highest place in New Orleans.”); Committee staff interview of Dwight Brashear, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, Capital Area Transit System, Baton Rouge, LA, conducted on Jan. 5, 2006, transcript pp. 56-57 (recalling conversation RTA Director William DeVille telling Mr. Brashear that the RTA “parked 180 buses up there”). U.S. Department of Transportation official circulated an e-mail, reporting that buses would be moved to “docks” before the storm hit, to a number of federal officials, including the Administrator for the Federal Transit Administration, Robert Jamison and the Homeland Security Operations Center. *Source:* Robert Patrick, e-mail to Anthony Tisdale, Aug. 28, 2005, 11:52 a.m. Provided to Committee; filed as Bates no. DHS-HSOC-0002-0000055 (“Buses not being used are being moved to docks. Oddly enough the high ground in new Orleans [sic]. Houma does not have high ground but are securing facilities. ... Please forward to all interestd [sic] paries [sic]. Ps. I’ve spoken with bill deville. Rta gm and he will keep us updated.”). Tisdale forwarded this e-mail ten minutes later to a number of U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) officials, including Robert Jamison, the Administrator of the Federal Transit Authority, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials, including one at DHS headquarters and one at the Homeland Security Operations Center. *Source:* Anthony Tisdale, e-mail to Roger Bohnert and others, Aug. 28, 2005, 12:02 p.m. Provided to Committee; filed as Bates no. DHS-HSOC-0002-0000055.

6 On Thursday, a Capital Area Transit Systems official, Dwight Brashear, learned of these buses from RTA Director William DeVille and immediately took steps to move drivers to those buses, so that they could participate in the evacuation of New Orleans. Brashear interview, Jan. 5, 2006, pp. 56-59.

7 Committee staff interview of Sec. Johnny Bradberry, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, conducted on Dec. 21, 2005, transcript p. 80 (“So it makes sense to me what would be an agency that would be more closely tied to a function that could provide both, drivers and buses and we needed to iron that out. Could it be – could it be tourism. They know, they have all the buses, companies in the State, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So I had a real issue with resources as it relates to this. Not only in terms of drivers and buses, but in terms of in my opinion not having the resources that National Guard had. They obviously have access to a lot more people, resources than DOTD people do.”). Although he signed the state’s April 2005 Emergency Operations Plan along with the Governor and every other state official, Sec. Bradberry testified that he “had serious issues” with LA DOTD’s responsibility under that plan because “we didn’t feel like we were the best quote agency or group to coordinate that.” *Source:* Sec. Bradberry interview, Dec. 21, 2005, pp. 78-79. Sec. Bradberry testified that he disagreed with the assignment of his department to lead the state’s ESF-1 effort because “My main issue is that it’s a resource issue. We don’t feel like, first of all, we’re not in the transit business, we have the title of Department of Transportation but we’re not in the transit business. We have no buses, we have no drivers.” *Source:* Sec. Bradberry interview, Dec. 21, 2005, p. 80.

8 Secretary Bradberry said that between April 2005 and landfall, he was not personally involved in any conversations with any Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness officials about his department’s new transportation responsibilities under the April 2005 plan. *Source:* Sec. Bradberry interview, Dec. 21, 2005, pp. 84-85. Sec. Bradberry’s chief subordinates, LA DOTD Assistant Secretary of Operations Gordon Nelson and LA DOTD Chief

of Emergency Services Joe Modicut learned about the assignment of this responsibility to LA DOTD in July 2005, after which Asst. Sec. Nelson tried to schedule a meeting with LOHSEP Acting Deputy Director Col. Jeff Smith, but the meeting did not take place before Katrina made landfall, even though Modicut does not recall becoming aware of the department's responsibility until the weekend before landfall. *Source*: Committee staff interview of Gordon Nelson, Assistant Secretary of Operations, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, conducted on Jan. 6, 2006, transcript pp. 52-59; IEM, Inc., notes from Unified Command Final Briefing, July 29, 2005, p. 3. Provided to Committee (placing Joe Modicut at the July 2005 transportation working group meeting); Committee staff interview of Joe Modicut, Emergency Services Coordinator, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, conducted on Jan. 5, 2006, transcript p. 38 (stating he did not know LA DOTD was responsible for transportation under the state plan until the weekend before landfall).

9 On Tuesday and Wednesday, the state's Department of Transportation and Development used five ferries to evacuate 6,000 people from those parishes. Sec. Bradberry interview, Dec. 21, 2005, pp. 108, 113-114; Nelson interview, Jan. 6, 2006, pp. 79-83.

10 Sec. Bradberry interview, Dec. 21, 2005, pp. 172-183, 192-193.

11 Sec. Bradberry interview, Dec. 21, 2005, p. 86; Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, *Emergency Operations Plan*, Apr. 2005, p. BASIC-4-A-1 [hereinafter *Louisiana Emergency Operations Plan*, Apr. 2005] (stating that the Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness would be the lead agency for Emergency Support Function 5 – Emergency Management – which required LOHSEP to “[p]repare detailed implementing procedures for all primary functions, to include the procedures by which the office will be alerted and activated for 24-hour operations when needed.”).

12 *DHS/FEMA Initial Response Hotwash*, Feb. 13, 2006, p. 45 (“The Federal government has neither generic nor specific evacuation plans.”). The Department of Homeland Security and FEMA recognized their failure to train personnel for an evacuation, before Katrina approached the Gulf Coast. *DHS/FEMA Initial Response Hotwash*, Feb. 13, 2006, p. v (“Hurricane Katrina highlighted the need to train operations personnel for evacuation.”).

13 Don Day, Region VI Regional Emergency Transportation Representative, Office of Intelligence, Security and Emergency Response, U.S. Department of Transportation, cited in notes from Unified Command Final Briefing, July 29, 2005, p. 4. Provided to Committee (reporting to other federal, state, and local officials: “600 buses needed just to move people from collection points. ... We need to pre-identify the sources for these buses and have them lined up and ready. There are plans to evacuate buses and operators out before the storm. Requires forethought, prior action. We have never looked into what it takes to make a bus staging/dispatch area.”); *Southeast Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane Plan*, prepared by IEM, Inc. for LOHSEP and FEMA, Sept. 2005, Appendix 1, p. 1 [hereinafter *Southeast Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane Plan*, Sept. 2005] (Noting that “local/state/federal” officials “pre-landfall” should “identify/validate ... 600 buses [and] 1,200 drivers”); Committee staff interview of Don Day, Region VI Regional Emergency Transportation Representative, Office of Intelligence, Security and Emergency Response, U.S. Department of Transportation, conducted on Jan. 17, 2006, transcript p. 57 (stating that the need for 1,000 buses “came out of the forethought, a little bit of the thought process of Pam.”).

Day briefed another DOT official on what Day learned at Pam: “Don Day was the U.S. DOT rep in that [Pam] work group and I was mainly talking to him. I remember being debriefed as needing hundreds of buses, hundreds of buses to augment the hundreds of buses they already had there in New Orleans. ...” *Source*: Committee staff interview of Dolph Diemont, Region X Regional Emergency Transportation Representative, Office of Intelligence, Security and Emergency Response, U.S. Department of Transportation, conducted on Jan. 6, 2006, transcript p. 26 (“I remember Don Day agonizing over that. We were working long hours in there, trying to come up with a plan, a way, some way to move all those people. And we said oh, this is so huge, we’re going to need so many buses, we’re going to need all of this planning and communications and cooperation, coordination, all of this to come together. It’s really a massive effort.”). DOT official, Dan Prevo, who participated in that working group, recalled the needed number of buses discussed without prompting. *Source*: Committee staff interview of Dan Prevo, Region VI Regional Emergency Transportation Representative, Office of Intelligence, Security and Emergency Response, U.S. Department of Transportation, conducted on Jan. 17, 2006, transcript p. 14 (“They talked in terms of 600 buses. And the reason I remember that is that once we got into Katrina where we didn’t have the number of evacuees or number of injured that were estimated in this Pam exercise. But we ended up calling up about 1,100 buses. So even that, that 600 estimate had we gotten the number of evacuees and casualties that were estimated during Pam, we would have needed considerably more than the 600 than first estimated.”).

14 A FEMA official at the workshop suggested to the other participants that 5,000 buses per day would be needed. Committee staff interview of Jules Hurst, Transportation Supervisor, Logistics Branch, FEMA, conducted on Dec. 27, 2005, transcript p. 34 (“At first we were told that – I said you got to give me a number to work with here, and when they said how many buses do we need, they said, okay, 75,000 refugees a day – refugees? Evacuees a day for 10 days. And they said, What do you need? And I said 5,000 buses a day.”).

15 Don Day, Region VI Regional Emergency Transportation Representative, Office of Intelligence, Security and Emergency Response, U.S. Department of Transportation, cited in notes from Unified Command Final Briefing, July 29, 2005, p. 4. Provided to Committee (“We’re at less than 10% done with this trans planning when you consider the buses and the people.”). The inadequacy of local resources to evacuate New Orleans had been a longstanding concern. *Source*: Brian Wolshon, Elba Urbina, and Marc Levitan, Louisiana State University Hurricane Center, *National Review of Hurricane Evacuation Plans and Policies*, 2001, p. 18 (“The total number of busses in all of New Orleans would provide only a fraction of the capacity needed to transport all of these people.”). It also became known to DOT officials that city lacked drivers for the buses. *Source*: Prevo interview, Jan. 17, 2006, pp. 12-14 (stating that based on the Pam discussions, there was “no certainty that the drivers – if the buses would be made available, that the drivers would be available ... a whole

lot of research had to be done with regard to how many drivers would be available, or the liability issues that might be faced for the buses and for the drivers”); Hurst interview, Jan. 27, 2006, p. 37 (recalling that local officials in the Pam follow-up workshops reported “they didn’t know if they could get the drivers to report.”).

16 Diemont interview, Jan. 6, 2006, pp. 30-31; *Southeast Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane Plan*, Sept. 2005, Appendix 1, p. 1 (noting that “local/state/federal” officials “pre-landfall” should “identify/validate ... 600 buses [and] 1,200 drivers”) (emphasis added).

17 Testimony of Maj. Gen. Bennett Landreneau, Adjutant General, Louisiana, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, hearing on *Hurricane Katrina: The Defense Department’s Role in the Response*, Feb. 9, 2006; Committee staff interview of Maj. Gen. Bennett Landreneau, Adjutant General, Louisiana, conducted on Jan. 11, 2006, transcript pp. 68, 133.

The Secretary of Transportation and Development of the State of Louisiana also expected federal involvement in the pre-storm preparation for the post-landfall evacuation. Sec. Bradberry interview, Dec. 21, 2005, p. 87 (“My assumption was that once the Federal Government was informed that a disaster or a potential disaster was to strike that appropriate assets would be deployed accordingly, that included buses, that included National Guard from other areas, that included FEMA and their other assets besides buses, it included the whole gamut.”).

18 Hurst interview, Dec. 27, 2005, p. 36. However Scott Wells, the Federal Coordinating Officer during Katrina and a Hurricane Pam participant testified the state officials at Pam told him not to worry about evacuation because the state did not need help with that aspect. Committee staff interview of Scott Wells, Deputy Federal Coordinating Officer for Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana, FEMA, conducted on Nov. 14, 2005, transcript pp. 86-87.

19 Patrick Rhode, e-mail to Edward Buikema, Michael Lowder and Ken Burris, Aug. 28, 2005 10:16 a.m. Provided to Committee; filed as Bates no. HS-FEMA-0091-0000320 (“I know we need 72 hours to do this – we don’t have it.”); Committee staff interview of Vincent Pearce, Manager, National Response Program, Office of Intelligence, Security, and Emergency Response, U.S. Department of Transportation, Jan. 6, 2006, p. 72 (stating that DOT worked with the Metropolitan Transit Authority for the City of New York to get buses to New Orleans after landfall, but that “it wasn’t an instantaneous thing” in part because “you have to put different tires and wheels on inner-city buses to move them interstate,” and then “once they were ready to move, it was going to take ... about 24 hours just to get the buses ready to move downrange.”).

20 By contrast, in the run up to Hurricane Rita, FEMA deployed over 300 people to prepare for the evacuation. *DHS/FEMA Initial Response Hotwash*, Feb. 13, 2006, p. 5 (“When it came time to prepare for evacuation when Hurricane Rita threatened, over 300 people were reporting to the various teams.”).

21 Compare Hurst interview, Jan. 27, 2006, pp. 8, 44 (stating the heads-up would have occurred “about 48 to 72 hours prior” to the time when the task order was ultimately placed on Wednesday, at 1:45 a.m.) with Committee staff interview of Reggie Jones, ESF-1 Program Manager, Office of Intelligence, Security and Emergency Response, U.S. Department of Transportation, conducted on Jan. 17, 2006, pp. 23, 31 (stating that the heads up was made as early as “Friday night ... or Saturday morning”); See also: Committee staff interview of Mike Foran, Region IV Regional Emergency Transportation Representative, Office of Intelligence, Security and Emergency Response, U.S. Department of Transportation, conducted on Jan. 17, 2006, transcript p. 38 (recalling that he proposed 500 buses, and Hurst said, “you might have to double it”). Although Hurst recalled giving a handwritten note with this request to Reggie Jones, a DOT representative staffing the ESF-1 desk at the NRCC during Katrina, the DOT has not produced the note in response to the Committee’s document requests. Hurst’s request made its way into a DOT document published at 3p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 28, 2005, which reported that “coordination is underway... with the DOT national transportation contractor for possible provision of buses.” U.S. Department of Transportation, Hurricane Katrina – Situation Report #4, Aug. 27, 2005, 3 p.m., p. 4. Provided to Committee.

22 Landstar Express America Inc., Hurricane Katrina Response Research, Aug. 28, 2005. Provided to Committee; Foran interview, Jan. 17, 2006, p. 38.

23 Patrick Rhode, e-mail Edward Buikema, Michael Lowder and Ken Burris, Aug. 28, 2005, 10:16 a.m. Provided to Committee; filed as Bates no. DHS-FEMA-0091-0000320 (“Have we asked all eoc’s via emac or esf (transportation) to make transportation assets available to assist New Orleans today with evacuations? I know we need 72 hours to do this – we don’t have it – not sure what state is applying if someone can get some granularity on this issue.”).

24 Patrick Rhode, e-mail to Edward Buikema, Michael Lowder and Ken Burris, Aug. 28, 2005, 10:16 a.m. Provided to Committee; filed as Bates no. DHS-FEMA-0091-0000320.

25 It should be noted, however, that on Saturday, Aug. 27, 2005, the Governor did ask the President for funds to assist with the state’s coordination of the evacuation. Gov. Kathleen Blanco, letter to President George Bush, Aug. 27, 2005, pp. 2 and Enclosure A. Provided to Committee (requesting \$2.5 million for evacuation-related funds for the Louisiana State Police, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, but no request for transportation.).

26 Testimony of Sec. Michael Chertoff, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, before the U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, hearing on *Hurricane Katrina: The Homeland Security Department’s Preparation and Response*, Feb. 15, 2006.

27 Sec. Chertoff, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 15, 2006.

28 President George Bush, FEMA Daily Video Teleconference, Aug. 28, 2005. Provided to Committee; filed as Bates nos. DHS-FEMA-0105-0000079 through 0000080, 0000103 through 0000104;

- 29 Sec. Chertoff, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 15, 2006 (stating that after the video teleconference call of Sunday, Aug. 28, 2005, he “did not call the Department of Transportation and say, I want to see the plan.”).
- 30 Maj. Gen. Landreneau, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 9, 2006 (“We had procedures in place. We had contingencies to be able to get the personnel to the buses because the water was rising. In every case, from Monday through Thursday, there were – we had plans in place and we had contingencies to be able to get all of the personnel onto the buses.”); Col. Ebbert interview, Oct. 13, 2005, p. 121 (stating that “there was no reason not to move people ... out of the Superdome”).
- 31 *Southeast Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane Plan*, Sept. 2005 (“Parish resources in the most severely impacted areas will not be available for several weeks or even months, as they were not removed from the area prior to the storm.”)
- 32 Testimony of Mayor C. Ray Nagin, City of New Orleans, LA, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, hearing on *Hurricane Katrina: Managing the Crisis and Evacuating New Orleans*, Feb. 1, 2006; Col. Ebbert interview, Oct. 13, 2005, p. 121; Committee staff interview of Sally Forman, Communications Director, Office of the Mayor, City of New Orleans, LA, conducted on Jan. 10, 2006, transcript pp. 70-76; Mayor C. Ray Nagin, City of New Orleans, “Post-Hurricane Katrina Critical Needs Assessment,” Aug. 29, 2005, p. 1. Provided to Committee [hereinafter Mayor Nagin, “Post-Hurricane Katrina Critical Needs Assessment”]
- 33 The list did not list evacuation as a critical need, but it did state that “vehicles and drivers to coordinate the transport from the Dome to the Convention Center would also be required,” if and when the city were to open the Convention Center as a refuge of last resort “in lieu of the Superdome.” Mayor Nagin, “Post-Hurricane Katrina Critical Needs Assessment,” p. 1; Forman interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 75-76 (noting that transportation needs were not listed).
- 34 The mayor’s communications director provided the Committee with transcribed notes for each day’s activities immediately preceding and following landfall. For Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005, her notes stated: “Call to [Chief of Staff to the Governor] Andy Kopplin for No. 1 priority from state for buses.” Sally Forman, Communications Director, New Orleans Office of the Mayor, Timeline and Notes, Aug. 30, 2005. Provided to Committee; Forman interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 99-100 (noting that the city may have also made earlier requests for buses).
- 35 Forman interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 100-104.
- 36 Brashear interview, Jan. 5, 2006, p. 57; Committee staff interview of James Tillie, Safety Director, Regional Transit Authority, New Orleans, LA, conducted on Dec. 19, 2005, transcript p. 46.
- 37 Forman interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 92-93, 99.
- 38 Louisiana Office of the Governor, Response to the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Document and Information Request Dated Oct. 7, 2005 and to the U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina, Overview of Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco’s Actions in Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina, Dec. 2, 2005, p. 7 [hereinafter Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline] (Governor Blanco told the President on Monday, “We need your help. We need everything you’ve got.” Brown told Governor Blanco that FEMA had “500 buses on standby, ready to be deployed,” and that Governor Blanco recommended to him that FEMA put two drivers in each bus, so they can alternate shifts and rest without losing time.); Maj. Gen. Landreneau, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 9, 2006.
- 39 Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 9 (stating that Governor Blanco asked Maj. Gen. Landreneau on Tuesday to check on the status of the FEMA buses); Maj. Gen. Landreneau, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 9, 2006; Louisiana Office of Emergency Planning, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, and Louisiana State Police, “OEP, DOTD, LSP Timeline,” p. 18. Provided to Committee (“OEP, 8/31/05, 1:30:00, Verbal request to FEMA ESF-1 for 455 buses.”); Testimony of Michael Brown, former Director, FEMA, before the U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, hearing on *Hurricane Katrina: The Role of U.S. Department of Homeland Security and FEMA Leadership*, Feb. 10, 2006 (stating that Brown requested 500 buses from other FEMA officials, but that FEMA did not task the U.S. Department of Transportation for buses until Wednesday, August 31, 2005, two days after landfall).
- 40 Brown, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 10, 2006; Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 9 (“the expected and promised federal resources still have not arrived on Wednesday.”).
- 41 Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 9.
- 42 Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, pp. 9-10.
- 43 Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 10.
- 44 FEMA, Tasking Request and Assignment Form, Aug. 31, 2005, 1:45 a.m. Provided to Committee (tasking “Transportation” to send 455 buses to New Orleans).
- 45 Brown, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 10, 2006 (unable to explain why the buses did not arrive when expected, and why FEMA did not task the U.S. Department of Transportation for buses until Wednesday, Aug. 31, 2005); Sec. Chertoff, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 15, 2006 (incorrectly understood that 450 FEMA buses were on their way to New Orleans on Tuesday night, before any FEMA tasking order went out to DOT.); Sec. Chertoff, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 15, 2006 (stating that “the biggest failure was not getting buses in.”).
- 46 FEMA, Tasking Request and Assignment Form, Aug. 31, 2005, 1:45 a.m. Provided to Committee (tasking “Transportation” to send 455 buses to New Orleans).
- 47 Committee staff interview of Col. Jeff Smith, Louisiana National Guard (Ret.), Acting Deputy Director, Emergency Management, LOHSEP, conducted on Jan. 13, 2006, pp. 113-114 (stating that a FEMA official “at the headquarters

decided based on the number of people and everything that 455 would be enough.”).

48 Col. Smith interview, Jan. 13, 2006, p. 116.

49 The Governor’s efforts were also set back by a miscommunication from FEMA. Phil Parr, a FEMA official on the ground at the Superdome, developed a plan (which ultimately proved impracticable) to use Chinook helicopters to evacuate the Superdome. Testimony of Phil Parr, Federal Coordinating Officer, Region I, FEMA, before the U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, hearing on *Hurricane Katrina: Perspectives of FEMA’s Operations Professionals*, Dec. 8, 2005. At one point on Wednesday, that plan was communicated by FEMA to Ty Bromell of the state’s Office of Rural Development. *Source*: Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 11; Committee staff interview of Ty Bromell, Executive Director, Louisiana Governor’s Office of Rural Development, conducted on Jan. 10, 2006, transcript p. 19. Reacting to that information, Bromell then sent out a statewide e-mail at 10:30 a.m., which read, in part, “NO MORE CALLS FOR BUSES!” *Source*: Ty Bromell, e-mail to Rochelle Michaud Dugas and others, Aug. 31, 2005, 10:30 a.m. Provided to committee. Bromell interview, Jan. 10, 2006, p. 19. It is unclear from the record whether FEMA told Bromell to stop the buses, or whether he ordered the staff to stop getting buses on his own, communications between FEMA. Later in the day, the same staffer learned that the effort to obtain buses should continue and sent out an e-mail to that effect. *Source*: Bromell interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 28-29.

50 Committee staff interview of Brig. Gen. Gary Jones, Assistant Joint Forces Commander, Louisiana Army National Guard, conducted Dec. 7, 2005, transcript pp. 89, 90-91.

51 Parr, Senate Committee hearing, Dec. 18, 2005; *DHS/FEMA Initial Response Hotwash*, Feb. 13, 2006, p. 46 (“An example of a problem associated with the lack of communications was during the Superdome evacuation coordination. The liaison team at the Superdome attempted to coordinate with the Federal and State elements at the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Baton Rouge. Communications to Baton Rouge failed, so the liaisons coordinated with the [FEMA Region VI Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC) in Denton, TX] and [the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) in Washington, D.C.]. Consequently, the EOC in Baton Rouge had no visibility on this operation.”). Although this communications failure limited FEMA officials’ visibility on the evacuation of the Superdome, it should not have eliminated their visibility, assuming they could share information with state officials at Baton Rouge.

52 *DHS/FEMA Initial Response Hotwash*, Feb. 13, 2006, p. 46.

53 At 3:47 a.m., DOT dispatched the first 50 buses with 200-250 more buses anticipated in the next 12-18 hours. U.S. Department of Transportation, *Actions for Hurricane Katrina, Annotated Chronology of Significant Events*, Oct. 6, 2005, p. 4. [hereinafter DOT, Timeline, Oct. 6, 2005].

54 DOT, Timeline, Oct. 6, 2005, p. 4.

55 DOT, Timeline, Oct. 6, 2005, p. 4.

56 It is not clear whether the Governor delegated the post-storm evacuation responsibilities outside of LA DOTD because she knew LA DOTD was supposed to be responsible for the post-storm evacuation. Committee staff interview of James Ballou, Senior Operating Officer, LOHSEP, conducted on Jan. 4, 2006, pp. 81-84 (stating that the likely conclusion from the Governor’s assignment of the post-storm evacuation to Leonard Kleinpeter was that she determined the LA DOTD was not able to fulfill its post-storm evacuation functions under the plan, but “maybe there is a possibility that maybe she wasn’t familiar with the plan itself enough to know who to call either. I am not sure. I really can’t say how she arrived at that decision.”).

57 Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 8; Committee staff interview of Leonard Kleinpeter, Special Assistant to the Governor and Director, Louisiana Office of Community Programs, conducted on Jan. 10, 2006, transcript pp. 6-9, 18 (“And I called my – remember the part about being director of [the Office of Community Programs] and rural areas and in charge of all of that. And my folks knew those people on a first named basis. I knew some as well. And I picked the phone up and said, “We need the school buses.” And we started calling for school buses. And we called for school buses and we put some in motion as fast as we could.”).

58 Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 8; Kleinpeter interview, Jan. 10, 2006, p. 18.

59 Executive Order No. KBB 2005-31, “Emergency Evacuation by Buses,” Aug. 31, 2005; Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 11.

60 Kleinpeter interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 28-30, 98-101; Bromell interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 43-47.

61 The evacuation was also assisted by Dwight Brashear with the Capital Area Transit System (CATS), whom the state enlisted on Wednesday night to follow up on the Governor’s Executive Order and procure school buses. *Source*: Brashear interview, Jan. 5, 2006, pp. 5-6. To that point, the state had been operating without a professional transportation logistics expert, and when Mr. Brashear arrived at the state’s EOC, he found not only a lack of planning for the use of buses in evacuation, but also little useful information to assist him in his task: “This was major ... but it was almost like they weren’t – like they were being hit with a hurricane for the first time. Maybe nobody thought it would ever happen, I guess.” *Source*: Brashear interview, Jan. 5, 2006, p. 85.

62 Committee staff interview of Maj. Jeff Mayne, Supervisor, Special Investigator Section, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, conducted on Nov. 30, 2005, transcript pp. 72-73, 156; Sec. Landreneau interview, Nov. 30, 2005, pp. 191-192; Committee staff interview of Avis Gray, Regional Administrator, Region I, Office of Public Health, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, conducted on Dec. 8, 2005, transcript pp. 157-161.

63 Committee staff interview of Lt. Col. Keith LaCaze, Assistant Administrator, Law Enforcement Division, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, conducted on Nov. 30, 2005, transcript pp. 70-71.

- 64 Committee staff interview of Brig. Gen. Brod Veillon, Assistant Adjutant General, Louisiana National Guard, conducted on Nov. 29, 2005, transcript pp. 31, 41-42.
- 65 According to Sheriff Harris Lee of Jefferson Parish, it is only by chance that he learned that thousands of people were sitting on I-10 in need of food and water. As a result, the people lacked food and water for as long as a full day. Committee staff interview of Harry Lee, Sheriff, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, conducted on Jan. 9, 2006, transcript pp. 34-37.
- 66 Committee staff interview of Scott Delacroix, M.D., resident, LSU, conducted on Feb. 20, 2006 (untranscribed).
- 67 Lt. Col. LaCaze interview, Nov. 30, 2005, pp. 143-144; Committee staff interview of Col. Glenn Curtis, Chief of Staff, Louisiana National Guard, conducted on Dec. 6, 2005, transcript pp. 264-265; Committee staff interview of Lonnie Swain, Assistant Superintendent, New Orleans Police Department, LA, conducted on Nov. 9, 2005, transcript pp. 101-102.
- 68 Louisiana National Guard (LANG) officials on the ground at the Superdome began talking about evacuation planning to some extent on Monday night, but those conversations intensified on Tuesday, when the area around the Superdome flooded. On Tuesday, Maj. Gen. Landreneau ordered Gen. Gary Jones, who was in command of the LANG officers on the ground in New Orleans during Katrina, to take control of the evacuation, even though LANG usually served in a supporting role. Gen. Jones assumed his job would be to provide security for the people at the Superdome and get people to the buses, when they arrived. *Source:* Brig. Gen. Jones interview, Dec. 7, 2005, p. 93 (“FEMA was saying we’ll get you the buses, and I was responsible for the security of the people until the buses came.”). Nevertheless, Gen. Jones had his soldiers experiment with high water vehicles to see if they could be used to evacuate people, but the vehicles had limited capacity, and there were concerns about whether they could handle the volume of passengers given the depth of water on the ground. *Source:* Brig. Gen. Jones interview, Dec. 7, 2005, pp. 106-107.
- 69 Swain interview, Nov. 9, 2005, p. 102.
- 70 Mayor Nagin, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 1, 2006.
- 71 Col. Ebbert interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 115-116, 137-138; Mayor Nagin, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 1, 2006 (stating that people from the hotels evacuated to the Convention Center).
- 72 Maj. Gen. Landreneau interview, Jan. 11, 2006, p. 265 (“New Orleans Police Department was becoming overwhelmed at the Convention Center.”).
- 73 Mayor Nagin, Senate Committee hearing, Feb. 1, 2006 (“With all due respect to Secretary Chertoff and Mr. Brown, I don’t understand how anyone in authority, with this type of crisis, can say that they were not aware that we had a crisis in New Orleans, and we had people that were stranded on roofs, on highways, and at the Convention Center, and they didn’t know about it. That is just next to impossible. The entire Nation was enthralled on this disaster, so I categorically reject their claims.”). Key DOD officials did not learn of the need until Thursday, Sept 1. Committee staff interview of Brig. Gen. Mark Graham, U.S. Army, Deputy Commanding General, Fifth U.S. Army, conducted on Jan. 12, 2006, transcript p. 105.
- 74 Brig. Gen. Jones interview, Dec. 7, 2005, pp. 96, 190-191.
- 75 Brig. Gen. Jones interview, Dec. 7, 2005, p. 196.
- 76 Maj. Gen. Landreneau interview, Jan. 11, 2006, pp. 265-266 (stating that Col. Ebbert called him late on Thursday night); Col. Ebbert interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 151-155 (stating that he called Maj. Gen. Landreneau late on Thursday night); Lt. Col. Jacques Thibodeaux, memorandum on the events surrounding the Louisiana National Guard rescue mission of the Morial Convention Center, Dec. 2, 2005, p. 1 [hereinafter Lt. Col. Thibodeaux, memorandum on the Convention Center, Dec. 2, 2005] (“Early Morning Hours (Approximate 0200), 2 Sep 05–MG Landreneau receives a verbal request from NO Emergency Operations Manager, COL(R) Terry Ebbert to conduct a rescue mission at the MCC. COL(R) Ebbert requests the mission be conducted in coordination with the New Orleans Police Department and that it commence the same day.”).
- 77 Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 10; Brig. Gen. Graham interview, Jan. 12, 2006, pp. 26-28.
- 78 Brig. Gen. Graham interview, Jan. 12, 2006, pp. 54-55. By Wednesday evening, a sufficient number of buses had amassed at Mile Marker 209. *Source:* Brig. Gen. Graham interview, Jan. 12, 2006, p. 81. He developed a plan: 10 buses at a time would leave mile marker 209, escorted by two State Troopers; they would travel to the Hyatt Regency (adjacent to the Superdome complex) where evacuees would board. *Source:* Brig. Gen. Graham interview, Jan. 12, 2006, pp. 78-79. The convoys (or “serials”) would be appropriately spaced – when buses arrived at the Hyatt, the liaison officers on site would call back to Mile Marker 209, at which point another serial would leave. By the time the first serial was loaded, the next serial had already arrived. *Source:* Brig. Gen. Graham interview, Jan. 12, 2006, p. 55.
- 79 Brig. Gen. Graham interview, Jan. 12, 2006, pp. 95-96.
- 80 Brig. Gen. Graham interview, Jan. 12, 2006, p. 57.
- 81 Brig. Gen. Graham interview, Jan. 12, 2006, p. 96.
- 82 Committee staff interview of Lt. Col. Jacques Thibodeaux, Joint Director of Military Support to Civilian Authorities, Louisiana National Guard, conducted on Jan. 12, 2006, transcript pp. 44-49.
- 83 Committee staff interview of Lt. Col. Jacques Thibodeaux, Joint Director of Military Support to Civilian Authorities, Louisiana National Guard, conducted on Dec. 16, 2005, transcript p. 261; Lt. Col. Thibodeaux interview, Jan. 12, 2006, pp. 44-49, 64; Brig. Gen. Graham interview, Jan. 12, 2006, pp. 53, 64, 69.

- 84 Lt. Col. Thibodeaux interview, Jan. 12, 2006, p. 64; Brig. Gen. Graham interview, Jan. 12, 2006, p. 83.
- 85 Lt. Col. Thibodeaux interview, Jan. 12, 2006, pp. 39-65 (discussing story of LANG officials catching U.S. Navy officers in the act of posing as hotel contractors and stealing buses headed to the Superdome, so that the officers could use them to evacuate the stranded families of Naval officers in New Orleans); Lt. Col. Thibodeaux, memorandum on the Convention Center, Dec. 2, 2005, p. 3.
- 86 Diemont interview, Jan. 6, 2006, pp. 99-100.
- 87 U.S. DOT, Timeline, Oct. 6, 2005, p. 6.
- 88 Lt. Col. Thibodeaux, memorandum on the Convention Center, Dec. 2, 2005, p. 1 (“BG Jones further advises LTC Thibodeaux that ... the mission must start not later than 1200 hours.”).
- 89 Lt. Col. Thibodeaux, memorandum on the Convention Center, Dec. 2, 2005, pp. 1, 3 (“LTC Thibodeaux establishes goals for each phase: Law & Order: 30 Minutes, Relief: 5 Hours and Evacuation: 48 Hours.”); Lt. Col. Thibodeaux interview, Jan. 12, 2006, pp. 31-32, 132-133.
- 90 Lt. Col. Thibodeaux interview, Jan. 12, 2006, p. 35. DOD assets on the ground at the Convention Center created some confusion for the LANG officers at times. For example, LANG Lt. Col. Thibodeaux, in charge of the Convention Center missions for the Guard, discussed the unannounced landing of a limited number of DOD helicopters on Friday, which if used at that time to evacuate people, would have forced the Guard and DOD to decide who would get on the helicopters, thereby potentially enraging the rest of the crowd. *Source:* Lt. Col. Thibodeaux interview, Jan. 12, 2006, pp. 147-149. Lt. Col. Thibodeaux explained that he made arrangements with the DOD helicopter pilots to have the helicopters return to the Convention Center on Saturday to participate in the coordinated evacuation at that time. *Source:* Lt. Col. Thibodeaux interview, Jan. 12, 2006, pp. 147-149. Although Lt. Col. Thibodeaux initially thought 20,000 to 22,000 people were at the Convention Center, he later determined that 19,000 people were there, and they were evacuated by Saturday, September 3, 2005, at 6:30 p.m. CT. *Source:* Lt. Col. Thibodeaux, memorandum on the Convention Center, Dec. 2, 2005, p. 9 (“1830 hours, 3 Sep 05-LTC Thibodeaux reports evacuation complete to JOC. LTC Thibodeaux estimates the total numbers evacuated: 2000 via the Canal Street Ferry, 14000 via 269 buses and 3000 (mostly elderly and medical) via helicopters.”).
- 91 Committee staff interview of Kay Wilkins, Chief Executive Officer, Southeast Louisiana Chapter, American Red Cross, conducted on Dec. 20, 2005, transcript pp. 14-18. *See also:* Col. Ebbert interview, Jan. 10, 2006, pp. 34-35 (characterizing the Red Cross’s ban on sheltering South of I-10 as “arbitrary”).
- 92 U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Region VI RRCC Spot Report #26, Aug. 20, 2005, 10 p.m. CT. Provided to Committee; filed as Bates no. DHS-HSPC-0003-0001157.
- 93 U.S. Department of Homeland Security, HSOC Spot Report #30, Aug. 31, 2005, 2 a.m. ET, p. 2. Provided to Committee; filed as Bates nos. DHS-FEMA-0061-0000575 through 0000576 (“New, alternate shelter locations have not been determined but sites have been considered and the State is making a decision early today.”).
- 94 Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 9; Committee staff interview of Sec. Ann Williamson, Louisiana Department of Social Services, conducted on Dec. 7, 2005, transcript pp. 98-99. Sec. Williamson and her team analyzed the shelter capacity in Louisiana and determined that the demand outstripped the supply. At around 10 or 10:30 that evening, they arrived at the final plan – use the Astrodome in Houston, TX. Sec. Williamson immediately conveyed this plan to the TAG and the Governor’s executive staff. Sec. Williamson and her team reached out to officials in Texas that night. Sec. Williamson interview, Dec. 7, 2005, pp. 98-99, 102-106.
- 95 Sec. Williamson interview, Dec. 7, 2005, p. 105.
- 96 Sec. Williamson interview, Dec. 7, 2005, p. 102.
- 97 Louisiana Office of the Governor, Governor’s Timeline, p. 10; Sec. Williamson interview, Dec. 7, 2005, pp. 105-106. According to Gen. Russell Honoré, “... the destination was Houston ... because Baton Rouge is full. Shreveport is full. Jackson, Mississippi is full. There’s no more capacity in the state.” Committee staff interview of Lt. Gen. Russell Honoré, U.S. Army, Commanding General, First U.S. Army, conducted on Jan. 9, 2006, transcript p. 93.
- 98 The Committee’s investigation has revealed that the insufficiency of in-state sheltering options was also an obstacle to pre-landfall evacuation, and even to pre-storm planning in the months leading up to Katrina. When RTA representative James Tillie called Chief Matthews over the weekend to offer their services, he was told that city planners had not yet identified destinations for potential evacuees. *Source:* James Tillie, e-mail to William Deville, “RTA Actives for Hurricane Katrina,” Oct. 23, 2005, 11:29 a.m., p. 1. Provided to Committee. Similarly, the lack of available in-state sheltering options was an obstacle to efforts to conduct advance planning for evacuation; for example, one of the obstacles to the finalization of draft MOUs between the City and Amtrak to procure emergency means of evacuation was that the city planners could not provide destinations for the evacuees. *Source:* Committee staff interview of William Crosbie, Senior Vice-President of Operations, The National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), conducted on Feb. 17, 2006, transcript p. 77.
- 99 Kym I. Pasqualini, National Center for Missing Adults, e-mail to Patricia Rojas, Senate Committee staff member, Mar. 29, 2006, 10:53 p.m. *See also:* National Center for Missing Adults. <http://www.missingadults.org>.
- 100 National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, “National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Reunites Last Missing Child Separated by Hurricane Katrina and Rita,” press release, Mar. 17, 2006. http://www.missingkids.com/missingkids/servlet/NewsEventServlet?LanguageCountry=en_US&PageId=2317. Accessed on Mar. 30, 2006.